
OVERVIEW OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform and update Members on progress within Adult Social Care and Housing since the last meeting of Council. The following are the main areas of work under the Portfolio for Adult Social Care and Housing.

Adult Social Care –Strategic Commissioning

2. The Annual Learning Disability Self-Assessment has been completed and returned to Public Health England. The self -assessment is an amalgamation of two previous self-assessments, one which was a Health return and one which was a Learning Disability Partnership Board return. The return covers a wide range of topics those of staying healthy, keeping safe, living well, demographics, cancer screening, wider health, mortality and general hospital services. The return is a combination of data and assessment using a RAG rating. The involvement of carers and people with a learning impairment in the self- assessment has always been central to its completion, however this year there were a number of questions which were directed at carers and people who use services. Carers were asked if they thought the people that supported their family members did so with compassion, dignity and respect. The return indicates that most do. The same question was put to people with a learning disability and their response was the same, most do. The return will be evaluated by Public Health England and a final version returned. An action plan will then be developed through the Learning Impairment Network to improve local outcomes for people and their families. In relation to the RAG rating, there were no red submissions from Darlington.
3. The Annual Autism Self-Assessment has also been published. The self- assessment is comprised of 56 questions designed to evaluate local progress in implementing the national autism strategy. The self- assessment is due to be returned by 3rd March 2015. A provider market event was held in the Dolphin Centre on 3rd December 2014, the event involved 15 local service providers showcasing the support that they can offer to people with autism and their families and carers and other key stakeholders. The event also encouraged people to contribute to the developing action plan to support the outcomes identified in the national strategy.
4. The work to deliver the change needed to support people with a learning disability, mental health problem and/or autism who have behaviour that challenges following the scandal of Winterbourne View continues. The initial audit of people living in Assessment and Treatment services following Winterbourne view showed that at

that time there were four people from Darlington who were ready to be discharged. There is now one person who is currently living in hospital identified as part of that group. However, there is a robust discharge plan in place and it is likely that they will move in April 2015.

Adult Social Care – Operational Developments

5. Work is ongoing in relation to all of the Care Act work streams. We have now appointed to the role of the Care Act Implementation Lead Officer, and we are expecting them to start their employment in April. Training is on-going with staff across the authority, particularly Adult Social Care staff, and we are continuing to work with the other regional authorities to purchase e-learning training and other training packages. An additional piece of ongoing work relates to the first point of contact to ensure the local authority is meeting its duties in relation to the Care Act. This involves staff within the Contact Centre and Adult Social Care staff. The consultation on the 2016 parts of the Act was significantly delayed; it was expected in Q4 of 2014 but didn't arrive until early February 2015, meaning the consultation time is significantly shortened. The consultation closes at the end of March. The national consultation exercise for this region took place at the end of February.
6. A Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Manager has been appointed and took up her post on 19th January 2015. A development day was arranged involving all parties on 19th February 2015. Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings (MDT's) for all partner organisations have been arranged to take place weekly in the Safeguarding Hub. Operational Meetings have been arranged monthly with a view to planning for The Care Act/Making Safeguarding Personal.
7. Work is on-going in relation to Making Safeguarding Personal; it has been recognised by members of the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board that work is required to review the current policies and procedures to ensure they meet the requirements of the Care Act and Making Safeguarding Personal. There is a real shift in focus from safeguarding being a process to it becoming something which is person centred with an emphasis on identifying the outcomes the individual wants to achieve and keeping them at the heart of the decision making. This work will be completed through the sub-groups and a dedicated multi-agency task and finish group.
8. Better Care Fund/Multi-Disciplinary Teams (BCF/MDT) – A recent stakeholder event was held which gave the opportunity to review the achievements to date and the plans for future work. The feedback from the MDT's aligned to the GP practices has been very positive with Practice Manager's contacting Adult Social Care direct to thank staff for their assistance and support with this. The escalation MDT as part of the Responsive Integrated Assessment Care Team (RIACT) service are now up and running; taking place every Monday and Friday morning at Dr Piper House. Representatives from Health and Social Care are leading on these meeting. An Operational Steering Group has now been developed, chaired by the Head of Service for Adults. This group will be responsible for further development work in relation to RIACT plus and services required to support this. Work is ongoing to look at how Social Care can support the Hospital to Home project.

9. Operational staff have been working hard over recent weeks to support the hospitals in terms of the demands and pressures they have been experiencing. Feedback from the Hospital Discharge Team has been very positive in terms of the response we have provided and this has been achieved through excellent communication and a shared understanding of what each organisation's pressures are and how we can best work together to secure the best outcome for the individual. There has been increased demand for both health and social care support services during this period particularly RIACT services. Work has commenced which will be looking at how health and social care services within the community can help to meet these demands.

Housing Services

10. Housing Services and Age UK have been exploring potential partnership initiatives to improve services to older people. Vacant Council owned homes suitable for older people are to be advertised by Age UK and their officers and volunteers are now aware of how our Choice Based Lettings system works so they can support or sign post potential applicants as appropriate. There has been some awareness raising regarding the range and quality of the facilities available in the Council's Extra Care and Sheltered Housing Schemes which are being made available to Age UK at no cost for any activities they organise and make available to our residents. Opportunities are also being explored regarding the provision of computer equipment, as well as, help and support to encourage usage. A small community fund has also been set aside for groups to bid for some money to help support new activities, or revive existing activities, for example, for the purchase of equipment
11. Making Spaces, the organisations who are contracted to provide home care in our Extra Care schemes, are building up good relationships with residents and local housing officers and some recent compliments received are a testimony to the success of this joint working. They have been particularly successful in enabling residents with dementia to do things for themselves. Examples include, decorating the Christmas tree already set up, creating a library to share books, knitting for the special care baby unit and starting to refurbish a reminiscence room at Rosemary Court.
12. Following a series of consultation events with local residents and key stakeholders during 2014, in respect of the regeneration of Redhall Estate, work has now commenced. Residents in the 56 dwellings identified for demolition have all accepted alternative accommodation and demolition will be completed by the 8th May 2015. Work is also starting on the provision of external wall insulation and energy efficient doors and windows as part of the Warm Up North contract with British Gas. The Master Plan linking Redhall to the wider strategic developments within the Eastern Growth Zone is due to be finalised shortly. Work has also recently commenced on the development of a Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy to further inform the ongoing regeneration of the area. The Strategy will seek to build the capacity of the local community, ensuring that health, employment and social issues are addressed alongside improvements to the physical environment. For example a Jobs Club has recently been established on the estate.

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

13. DHP is the scheme, which aims to provide people receiving Housing Benefit with further financial assistance with their housing costs. The scheme is funded by a cash limited grant from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The grant can only be used to top-up Housing Benefit payments and any unspent grant has to be returned to the DWP.
14. From April 2013 the amount of DHP grant available to Councils increased significantly to take into account the impact of the welfare reforms. For Darlington, the grant increased from £101k to £224k. As a result a revised DHP policy was developed and approved by Cabinet in May 2013, ensuring that the full amount of grant was used to help those in priority need.
15. The amount of DHPs spent in 2013/14 were as follows:
 - (a) Social sector tenants affected by the under-occupancy charge (£108k)
 - (b) Private tenants with a Local Housing Allowance restriction (£60k)
 - (c) Tenants with rent arrears for other reasons (£28k)
 - (d) Tenants affected by the benefit cap (£7k)
 - (e) Tenants helped into work (£7k)
 - (f) Other reasons (£14k)
16. For 2014/15, the DHP grant available for Darlington reduced to £207k and is again on course to be fully spent. However, in 2015/16, the DWP has reduced the grant further to £150k and the Council may need to revisit its DHP policy to ensure the available funds can be used to help those in most need.

GOLD

17. Council staff have continued to work on the future of GOLD once Council funding ceases by April 2015. Funding bids to County Durham Community Foundation and Ballinger Charitable Trust were submitted before Christmas. Bids are underway to Comic Relief and to Santander and potentially to Awards for All for office refurbishment. Further bids are being considered. An 'Exit Action Plan' has been developed and actions begun, including dissolution of groups and dispersal of assets, if appropriate, and enabling the sustainability of the annual Tea Dance.
18. The two Dignity and Respect training courses tutored in November are being internally verified and it is hoped that certificates will be issued soon to the 18 learners.
19. The Health Group continues to meet monthly. They held a stall to mark Dignity Action Day, in the outdoor market on Monday 2 February, 2015. They gave out over 140 flyers on the ten-step Dignity challenge, gave out information on our Dignity training and a range of organisations and services for older people, and promoted the idea of 'Dignity for All'. They also sold a small amount of crafts left from previous craft stalls. Seven members of the group attended a large regional event at Hartlepool Marina on Sunday 1 February 2015, where they learnt more about dignity and took information about our Dignity training. They will feedback to

the Health Group. A member attended a workshop on Muscular Skeletal services the week before Christmas, and told them of the difficulties in reaching this service now it has moved to the Darlington Football Arena.

20. The Positive Images and Publicity Group also continues to meet monthly. They are planning a Celebration Event, including their Annual General Meeting on 19 March 2015.
21. Members continue to represent GOLD on various boards and meetings and have attended, for example, the Tenants' Board and the Darlington Ageing Well Together Network.
22. I have also attended :-
 - (a) the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board development session on 24 February;
 - (b) a meeting of the Council of Governors of the County Durham Foundation Trust;
 - (c) a presentation of awards by the Lord Lieutenant, Mrs S Snowden at the Bradford Armoury; and
 - (d) the GOLD Celebration Event.

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