
OVERVIEW OF ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

The Care Act – An Update on Progress

2. Scrutiny has received a further update on the progress being made both locally and regionally in relation to the implementation of the Care Act, which will come into force on 1 April 2015. We were advised that, although good progress is being made, the Care Act does present all Local Authorities with a complex and demanding project plan that is currently working with a significant number of unknowns.
3. We discussed the major challenges faced and those areas where demand on capacity might be following implementation of the Act; the two work-streams which we have previously expressed an interest in being involved with in relation to the workforce and finance; and the current position in relation to the consultation on the Care Cap, which has been significantly delayed, which will give the Council an opportunity to feedback on the funding challenges.
4. There is a requirement within the Act for the Council to provide information and advice to all its residents, whether or not they have an eligible care need or were known to the Authority in order to aid the prevention agenda and ensure that residents were considering their future care needs long before the need for that care arose and we were advised of the work currently being undertaken with the Customer Services Centre to design a front line information and advice offering service and the involvement of partners in other public services and the voluntary and community sector who were equipped to provide advice services and signposting to residents.
5. We will continue to monitor the implementation and challenges of this Act on the Authority.

Responsive Integrated Assessment Care Team/Reablement Performance Analysis

6. Following some concerns we had at a previous meeting that performance against a number of the indicators against the RIACT and Reablement Service had shown a decline in the first half of the 2014/15 financial year, we were advised of a number of possible factors which could have contributed to this decline, which included changed governance arrangements; changes to the Council's Eligibility Criteria; the Universal Offer provided by the Council rather than a targeted approach; access to intermediate beds; staff sickness levels; Domiciliary Care capacity; and changed

Governance Arrangements.

7. A detailed review of the RIACT and Reablement Service is being commissioned and we will receive updates on this and continue to monitor the specific Performance Indicators.

Multi-Disciplinary Team – Update

8. Scrutiny also received a presentation on the development of the Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) in Darlington. The Teams comprise staff from GP surgeries, Darlington Memorial Hospital, community and mental health staff, social workers and the voluntary sector and focus work on the five per cent of their patients who have the most complex needs and who are admitted to hospital on a regular basis.
9. It is expected that the MDT's working together with patients, will ensure that the right help and support is available at the appropriate time and will contribute towards achieving the shift in funding from unnecessary acute admissions and into community and preventative services.
10. We were advised that the Teams will be developed further over the next few months and will monitor its effectiveness through the Performance Management Framework.

Councillor Bryan Thistlethwaite
Chair of Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee