
OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

Work Programme 2014/15

2. We have given consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee for the Municipal Year 2014/15 and possible review topics and in doing so, we have taken into account the reduced resources available and ensured that, in recommending our work programme to Monitoring and Co-ordination Group, any work we undertake will have demonstrable outcomes and contribute to the work of the Council and its strategic aims and objectives.
3. Our Work Programme continues to develop. Scrutiny Members have agreed to revive the work on Telehealth Care looking at the pilot projects which are already in place in Darlington and the wider digital Care programme across the Tees Valley. In relation to access to GP appointments the Scrutiny Committee has been advised by the CCG that three projects began in October as part of the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund which will be evaluated in May/June 2015. Members had hoped to use the NHS Area Team Patient Experience report to identify any gaps which required investigation. Unfortunately this has been delayed. In view of this and the need to wait for the evaluation of the projects to see if access to GP appointments has been improved Members have agreed to produce an interim report. Members will continue to monitor the progress of the co-location of Urgent Care Integration from Dr Piper House and Accident and Emergency at Darlington Memorial Hospital (DMH) and after considerable delays are pleased to note that an implementation date of September 2015 has been confirmed by the CCG.
4. Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny will consider the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) at its January meeting. We will use the reports, discussion and information from that meeting to inform a Special meeting to consider the impact of the problems affecting NEAS on DMH together with winter preparedness.
5. Members of Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee will be invited to the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee meeting in January when the Dementia Strategy is to be considered.
6. Scrutiny continues to monitor the implications of the temporary move of the Breast Clinic to Bishop Auckland from Darlington Memorial Hospital and in doing so expresses its concerns and disappointment that some Darlington patients are experiencing difficulty in attending follow-up appointments at Bishop Auckland. It is now some eight months since this temporary transfer took place and Members are

very concerned about the timescale likely to be involved before the review into Breast Clinics across the Trust is finalised.

Health and Well Being Board

7. Committee considered the work of the Board in particular the Mental Health Crisis Concordat which was welcomed by Members.

Performance Management

8. Members received a further presentation from the Head of Organisational Planning on the Performance Management Framework which included statistical data around the key performance indicators that were relevant to this Scrutiny Committee and which would be used to demonstrate and measure how those indicators were performing and contributing to the eight key objectives and overall vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).
9. It was pleasing to note that all data, once collated, would be in one place and could be looked at in a variety of ways and variables.
10. It was highlighted that the information would inform the budget process and that areas where there were issues could be investigated in more detail. It was confirmed that data would need to be re-aligned once the boundary changes were made and that changes would be highlighted in any affected wards.

Darlington Partnership Update

11. We received a report on the progress of Darlington Partnership since December 2013 and the revised One Darlington Perfectly Placed strategy.
12. Scrutiny was also shown an excellent short video outlining the key objectives of Darlington Partnership which is available for all to see on You Tube and Members agreed to promote the video on their Ward Newsletters.
13. The Chief Executive Officer of the Partnership outlined the current governance arrangements for the Partnership and highlighted several successes of the Partnership over recent years including Foundation for Jobs, which had received a National Award, the Good Friends scheme, Darlington Cares and Help Hubs.

Quality Accounts – County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust

14. Members met with the Trust to give consideration to the Trusts' Quality Accounts to enable Members to have a better understanding and knowledge of performance when submitting a Final commentary on the Quality Accounts at the end of each Municipal Year.

Eye Health

15. Scrutiny has established a Review Group to give consideration to eye health with particular emphasis on the impact of sight loss on Darlington residents and other related eye health issues.
16. Dr Joanne Darke and Angela Henderson, Chair, Local Eye Health Network gave a presentation to Members in relation to the Eye Health Needs Assessment for Durham, Darlington and Tees with particular reference to the findings for Darlington residents.
17. Members were advised that visual impairment levels were increasing nationally in line with an ageing population. We expressed concerns that Darlington was considered to have a vulnerable population and had higher rates, than the England average, for a number of important risk factors for sight loss including deprivation, smoking, obesity, diabetes, hypertension, stroke, dementia and learning disabilities.
18. Members were also concerned that diabetic eye screening services in Darlington were not currently meeting targets, although improving, and child eye screening services are not currently being delivered in line with national guidance.
19. The Eye Health Review Group continues and I will report further progress at future meetings of Council.

Councillor Wendy Newall
Chair of the Health and Partnership Scrutiny Committee