

**ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

5 September 2017

**PRESENT** - Councillor Knowles (in the Chair); Councillors Culley, Kane, Lister, Lyonette, Mills, T Richmond and Storr. (8)

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Copeland, D Jones and M. Nicholson (3)

**ABSENT** –

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Councillor S. Richmond

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – James Stroyan, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care, Pauline Mitchell, Assistant Director, Housing and Building Services, Barbara Copson, Performance Manager and Mark Humble, Development and Commissioning Manager.

**AH9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

**AH10. MINUTES** – Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of a meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2017

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**AH11. COUNCIL HOUSING NEW BUILD PROGRAMME** – The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report (previously circulated) giving an update on progress in respect of the Council Housing New Build Programme.

The submitted report outlined the need, as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment completed for Darlington in 2015, for 160 affordable dwellings for rent to be built across the Borough each year, together with the business need; and the additional funding which would be received through the New Homes Bonus.

It was reported that the current new build programme commenced in 2015 and that by the end of 2017, 160 additional dwellings will have been completed, funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), in addition to £3.2 million grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency's Affordable Homes Programme. All of the seven sites had been developed with a mix of houses and flats and had been designed to be energy efficient and meet lifetime homes standards, with ground floor flats having flat floor showers and higher levels of mobility.

Discussion ensued on the new build programme for the period 2017-2020 which was now being developed and it was reported that a total of £17.7 million had been identified with the HRA to support that programme with additional funding being sought from the Homes and Communities Agency.

Particular reference was made to the make-up of the contributed funding to the new build programme; the use of commuted sums from developers in lieu of building affordable housing and the forward thinking approach to future provision which would meet a range of needs if needed.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received.

**AH12. ADVOCACY** – The Director of Children and Adult Services submitted a report (previously circulated) advising Members of the range of Advocacy available in Darlington to those people who needed social care or who were detained under the Mental Health Act.

It was reported that Darlington Association on Disability (DAD) was the Council's single commissioned provider of statutory advocacy services to qualifying individuals and its services ensured that those people without a 'voice' through ability or capacity were supported to stay in control and exhibit choice and were safeguarded where necessary.

A representative from DAD outlined the services it provided and, following questions by Members, outlined the monitoring and supervision process in place for advocates, the duty to inform about advocacy services available and the training available to support family members who were undertaking an advocacy role.

It was reported that, for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, there had been 715 referrals to the service and that the current contract spend was £180,000.

It was suggested that this Scrutiny Committee could undertake some further work around the service in terms of the referral and assessment processes, awareness raising and signposting and support and that this could be done through a task and finish review group.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received and a task and finish group be established to look into Advocacy services in more detail.

**AH13. CONSULTATION ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA** – The Director of Children and Adult Services submitted a report (previously circulated) seeking Members' views on a review of the Council's eligibility criteria for Darlington residents who accessed adult social care services.

The submitted outlined the background to the review, which it was proposing would remove 'managing medication' as an outcome within the eligibility criteria, to bring it in line both with the national criteria that was set out within the Care Act 2014.

The Scrutiny Committee were advised that there was no legal requirement to include managing medication within the eligibility criteria and that, if agreed, it was anticipated that the majority of those currently receiving care and support from the Council would not see any significant change to their support plan as the majority of them already met two or more of the agreed outcomes as specified within the Care Act.

Discussion ensued on signposting to other avenues of support to for those who might be affected.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received.

**AH14. ADULT SOCIAL CARE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME** – The Director of Children and Adult Services submitted a report (previously circulated) updating Members on the current position in relation to the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme, which was being implemented and delivered to meet service demands and pressures within that area.

The submitted report outlined the need to deliver the programme of changes, together with details of a number of projects and task and finish activities which were being undertaken to meet the objectives.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received.

**AH15. WORK PROGRAMME** - The Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2017/18.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

**AH16. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS Q1 – 2017/18** – With the prior approval of the Chair to the matter being treated as urgent to enable Scrutiny to consider the quarter 1 performance at the earliest possibility, the Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) giving an updated position against those key performance indicators under the remit of this Scrutiny Committee for the period April to June 2017.

It was reported that three of the housing indicators had a year-end target, with all three on course, at quarter 1, to achieve or exceed the year-end target, with the trend in relation to the number of days spent in bed and breakfast and homelessness prevention being positive across the first quarter.

The submitted report also referred to the adult social care indicators which were based on the Adult Care Outcomes Framework and were more detailed in view of the diversity of information and the scale of the budgets involved.

Reference was also made to the new casework system, Liquid Logic, which had now been introduced and, although the previous system had been frozen in June in preparation for this, a large number of indicators had shown an improvement in performance from that previously reported last month or when compared to the same period last year. The Scrutiny Committee noted that all of the Self Directed Support indicators had performed significantly better than the same period last year and that both permanent admissions indicators also continued to perform better, with 15 less permanent admissions of older people aged 65 plus than the same period in 2016/17 and no permanent admissions for 18-64 year olds.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received.