

---

**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.

**Work Programme**

2. We have considered our work programme for the next Municipal Year and have developed a comprehensive programme with topics from within our remit. The two main areas which we will focus on in depth are to continue with our work in relation to safeguarding adults, particularly in Domiciliary Care, and Dementia Services.
3. The work programme is a rolling programme and will be developed throughout the year as issues arise and we did discuss the need for Quad of Aims to be completed if Members wished to include items on the work programme to ensure that our work remains focussed and contributes to the strategic aims of the Council.

**Healthwatch Darlington**

4. Michelle Thompson, Chief Executive Officer of Healthwatch Darlington, attended our meeting to give an overview of the work of that organisation; its key priorities; and work recently undertaken.
5. As Members will be aware, Healthwatch Darlington is an independent consumer champion for health and social care. It helps to shape and improve local health and social care in the community; helps Darlington residents to get the best out of their health and social care services; access the right services through information and signposting and gathers views and experiences of residents to see what is working in health and social care and what is not.
6. One of the ways of doing this is through gathering comments and information from users of services and surveys which have been undertaken in the past or are in progress. In addition to web-based surveys, Healthwatch continue to provide outreach drop-in sessions to take comments via telephone or letter.
7. Michelle made particular reference to work which was being undertaken to develop effective ways of working with Black and Minority Ethnic Groups and young people to ensure that their views influenced policy and strategy and delivery.
8. The presentation was extremely useful and interesting and we will work with Healthwatch Darlington to ensure that where our work programmes are aligned we work together

## **Care Act an Update on Progress**

9. 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 came into force on 1 April 2015.
10. We were advised of work which had been undertaken as part of the first phase of implementation which included an on-going project within Adult Social Care to develop the Assessment documentation to ensure that elements of the Care Act are embedded in practice and that the assessment facilitates a cultural change within the community. A consultation event to seek views on the documentation is being held on 15 October 2015 with organisations and partners from within the third sector.
11. Training has also continued to ensure that all involved are fully briefed and trained to understand the requirements of the Act and to ensure that those who are not directly impacted in their day to day role understand the potential impacts.
12. The second significant phase of implementation has been delayed until 2020 to enable time to be taken to ensure that everyone is ready to introduce the new system and to look at what more can be done to support people with the cost of care.
13. The Care Act continues to present all Local Authorities with a complex and demanding project plan that is currently working with a significant number of demands, however we will continue to monitor the implementation and challenges of this Act.

## **New Models of Care – Outcomes from the Health and Care Summit**

14. We were advised of work being undertaken to develop a new local model of care for health and social care services within Darlington and to the outcomes from Darlington's Health and Care summit which had been held on 11 June 2015.
15. The development of a new model of care is needed to ensure that the five key partner organisations in Darlington can guarantee to have sustainable and high quality services for Darlington residents, in view of the significant budget pressures faced, and the Summit, which was attended by around 130 health and care professionals, was held to communicate the work in progress to develop the model and to seek views and listen to national best practice
16. Officers felt that the Summit was a useful and effective launch point for the 2020 vision and associated new models of care discussions and the five partner organisations will be facilitating a further session to develop a change management plan to take forward the delivery of the 2020 vision.

## **Darlington Director of Public Health Annual Report 2014**

17. We received the Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2014, which was based on the theme 'Public Health: A Shared Agenda', which reflected the partnership working that is necessary to tackle the causes of health inequalities by all sectors not just the Council or the NHS and to help residents who experience disadvantage over the course of their lifetime.
18. This is the second annual report following the transfer of public health responsibilities from the NHS to the local authority, as part of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The first report in 2013, described some of the key health issues people face in Darlington and proposed key actions to improve the health of our population and to reduce health inequalities, and the 2014 report, provided us with an update on 2013-14 and outlined work which will be on-going in 2015-16.
19. The presentation focused on areas within the report which related to this Scrutiny Committee and reference was made to the link between health inequalities and social inequalities and how action is needed across all social determinants of health e.g. housing, education, employment, poverty over a person's lifetime.
20. The presentation also focussed on the key challenges faced by the authority in relation to the need to create the environment and opportunities for people to live healthier lives; the need to move from a reactive to a preventative approach to health and well-being; earlier detection of cancer through increased awareness and access and uptake of screening programmes and public sector financial challenges.

### **Management of Change Programme**

21. We were provided with an update on the current position in relation to the management of change programme for those projects under the remit of this Scrutiny Committee as at August 2015. The update provided us with a brief summary of work progressing under the developing change programme aiming to provide both assurance in terms of progress as well as an indication of the future timetable of approvals.

### **Compass**

22. The Head of Housing Services gave a presentation on Compass, the choice based lettings scheme that is a partnership made up of all of the Council's and most of the registered providers (Housing Associations) in the Tees Valley, which gives applicants more choice about where they live and helps them to choose the right home from a list of available properties in the areas they would like to live in.
23. The presentation covered how the scheme operated in practice, the eligibility criteria which was based on a banding system; how homes were advertised and how the bidding system operated; the number of current active applications and to a number of improvements which were being made following feedback from partners and applicants.

## **New Build Programme**

24. We were advised of proposals for the provision of 166 new flats and houses during 2015-18 at various locations within the Borough.
25. The proposed programme of 60 two and three bedroomed houses and 106 two bedroomed flats reflect the type of properties in greatest demand and a number of developments are programmed for completion in 2015/18. As funding was received from the Housing and Communities Agency (HCA) in respect of their Affordable Housing Programme 2015/18, the monitoring of progress in relation to the projects will be closely monitored by the HCA.
26. The total cost of the new build programme has been estimated at £23.3 million and with Housing and Communities Agency grant of £3.2 million, the contribution required from the Housing capital programme is £20.1 million.

**Councillor Sue Richmond**  
**Chair of Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee**