
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. I was pleased to see the range of activities that took place during Dementia Awareness Week (15 to 21 May). In particular the Alzheimer’s Society supported a number of people with dementia, and their carers, on an assisted journey to Beamish Museum. The journey was to help increase the confidence of those living with dementia and their carers to use public transport and remain part of their community. The group took the train from Darlington to Durham and then boarded a bus to Beamish where they spent the day participating in the ‘Big Dig’ followed by afternoon tea. Feedback on the day was that people were impressed with the level of policing on the railways by The British Transport Police and many said they would feel more confident to travel again now that they were aware of the assisted travel scheme.
3. The Darlington Dementia Action Alliance continues to support people to live independently, by offering regular activities throughout the year, including the Dementia Hub, Singing for the Brain sessions, Memory Cafes and Carer Support Groups.
4. Following endorsement from the Safeguarding Adults Board, Inspector Paul Gray from the Safer Neighbourhoods Team of Durham Constabulary gave a presentation to residential care home providers proposing that they adopt the Herbert Protocol. The Protocol, which is named after George Herbert, a vulnerable resident who lived with dementia, will see care home providers working closely with the Police to prevent residents going missing from the homes and improving systems for searching for them if they do leave the home. It is hoped that the adoption of this standardised scheme will assist in finding missing people more quickly and effectively. Introduction of the Protocol will include individual visits to the care homes to advise on steps that can be taken to prevent individuals leaving the homes unsupported and the completion of a one page document for all residents, containing vital information and a recent photograph. This can then be circulated quickly to all partners should a resident go missing from a care home.

Adult Social Care – Operational Developments

Better Care Fund

2015

5. Unscheduled hospital admissions were the bellwether for delivery of the 2015 Better Care fund. The Payment for Performance period for Better Care Fund 2015 ran from January to December and our cumulative performance resulted in a 1.8 per cent reduction in Non-Elective Admissions against a target of 3.5 per cent. This target was set against a calculated baseline derived from earlier years.
6. The table shows the quarter by quarter progress.

	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Baseline 13/14	3,313	3,373	3,247	3,393
Plan 14/15	3,197	3,254	3,133	3,274
Actual 15/16	3,261	3,207	3,138	3,493
Planned absolute reduction (cumulative)	116	235	349	468
Actual absolute reduction (cumulative)	52	218	327	227

It is important to remember that these numbers pertain to the whole population, while the BCF interventions have been directed at frail elderly people.

2016

7. Darlington Health and Wellbeing Board's submission for BCF 2016 has received 'full assurance' and we are now awaiting formal notification of this.
8. Initial meetings of new project groups are under way to specify and set indicators for new areas of work around Safe at Home, Hospital from Home, and Social Prescribing. These three areas of work add to the continuing projects on Long Term Conditions and Multi-Disciplinary Team (Frail Elderly).

Adult Social Care Transformation

9. It is essential for our services to be modern and fit for the future. In order for this to be achieved, scoping is currently underway. This will define the detail required for changes across Adult Services, and will form a Programme Plan, along with the work required to take plans forward.
10. There is clear crossover with the Better Care fund work and any specific projects that overlap will be integrated into one delivery work stream, to ensure effective and efficient delivery. The transformation scoping is in the early stages of set-up and has a project board led by Kevin Kelly reporting up to a programme board.

11. The 'Managing the cost of care' project deliverables such as telecare, and Just Checking, will be managed as part of the Adult Social Care Transformation programme.

Better Health Programme

12. Work is progressing in respect of the Better Health Programme and hospital discharges. Staff from Adult Social Care are working closely with colleagues from the health and social care economy to scope out and design new and improved ways of working to facilitate hospital discharges. The model is based on the principle of discharge to assess. The work is in the very early stages, further workshops will take place over the summer months to undertake much more detailed planning but the local authority is keen that it supports people to maintain independence and well-being and avoid unnecessary admissions to residential care.

Performance

13. Reporting from the final quarter of the year shows that there have been some improvements in the key indicators but some areas where performance has not been as strong as the previous year.
14. Areas of improved performance relate to people with learning disabilities living at home or in their own accommodation (84.79 per cent) and people in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation (77.6 per cent). People in paid employment from both of the above groups have also increased at 5.83 per cent and 8.23 per cent respectively. Performance in respect of self-directed support remains strong with the figure being comparable to the previous year and there has been an increase in the number of carers in receipt of self-directed support. At the end of March 2016 performance in this area was at 96.63 per cent which is an increase on last year's performance which was at 87.31 per cent.
15. Permanent placements into long term residential care, for all age groups, have increased. There are a number of contributing factors but this also reflects the regional picture, with 11 out of 12 North East Local Authorities reporting a higher level of admissions to residential and nursing care than the national average. Furthermore 2015/16 has seen a lower attrition rate. A detailed analysis of the information has informed a clear set of actions to address the upward trend.
16. Work is continuing to develop a robust performance framework within Adult Social Care, regular performance clinics are taking place with staff and there is a much greater understanding of the data and how this can be used to highlight any areas of improvement but also to assist with service design and future planning.

Liquid Logic Preparation

17. The project group are making progress in respect of the work that needs to be completed in preparation for the next phase of the implementation programme. Full

implementation and the system being ready to 'go live' are expected to be next year. Configuration and design workshops are planned with Liquid Logic in the near future. In readiness, staff are currently working on reviewing our processes and ensuring they are efficient and support good practice. Where changes are required, new processes are being developed with a view to supporting the day to day practice, but also the changes required as part of the adult transformation programme.

Learning Disability Project Group

18. Staff from within the Life stages service have been working with individuals to improve their independence and well-being as part of a targeted piece of work which has seen a shift in culture from a 'maintenance model of support' to a progression model which is focused on outcomes. To date the work has been very successful in terms of the benefits for individuals and the improvements in terms of their independence and well-being.
19. Following Darlington being selected for the LGA Efficiency Programme in 2014, Professor John Bolton, who has been leading the work nationally, undertook his final project closure meeting. He was very complimentary of the staff and work that has been completed to date in Darlington. His findings will be included in the LGA report, highlighting good practice, which will be shared nationally.

Housing Services

Energy Efficiency

20. A specialist contractor is being engaged to deliver energy efficiency advice to Council housing tenants in their own home. This service will help tenants in financial difficulties or experiencing condensation problems to make sure they are on the right tariff for energy and physically help them to move to a better tariff or provider if appropriate. They will look at payment methods, for example moving from key meters and assess eligibility for fuel benefits. While carrying out the home visit they will also advise tenants on how to make the most efficient use of their heating systems and advise on any life style issues that might lead to problems of condensation.
21. Evidence suggests that as a result of these visits tenants on average will save between £150 and £200 per annum and where fuel arrears are a major issue savings can be significantly higher.
22. The contractor will carry out a minimum of 400 home visits over an 18 month period beginning in July/ August. The visits are expected to take between one and two hours. The Housing Service will notify tenants that they have been referred and the contractor will arrange the visits to suit the tenants. This will include evening and weekend visits. The contractor will provide a follow up service contacting all tenants following the visit to deal with any additional queries and to gather information on the impact of the intervention and where necessary provide

additional support and advice.

23. The Council will receive monthly progress reports, case studies and a final report. Throughout the contract there will be close contact between housing staff and the contractor to ensure that emerging issues are dealt with and where necessary appropriate referrals are made where the visit uncovers the need for additional support.
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Housing and Planning Act 2016

25. The Housing and Planning Act received Royal Assent in May and introduces three significant changes for the housing service. A number of amendments were made during the progress of the bill through Parliament and all three initiatives are subject to further guidance or secondary legislation:
26. Pay to Stay - Tenants will be expected to pay a higher rent if they are on a higher income. Changes were introduced to increase the threshold for paying a higher rent to £31,000 for outside of London and that the rent would increase by 15p in rent for every pound they earn above the income thresholds. This means an annual increase in rent of £150 for every £1000 over the threshold or £2.88 per week.
27. The Government also confirmed that the assessment will be based on taxable income of the two highest earners in the household and that nondependent children would be excluded. It was also confirmed that those in receipt of benefits would be excluded.
28. End of Secure Tenancies - This will apply to properties as they become available to let. A number of changes have been introduced that will allow the Council to offer a range of different lengths of flexible tenancy depending on family circumstances. These will be 5 year, 10 year and for families with children below the age of 9, up to the time they finish school. Tenants who transfer will also be given a flexible tenancy. There are some exemptions and detailed definitions that are subject to future guidance.
29. The charge for higher value Council tenancies – The term was changed to higher value so that it could be applied to each Council's stock. Council's will not be forced to sell properties but they will be charged as if they had been sold. Council's will have to consider the sale of higher value properties as they become available to let. The detail including the definition of higher value is subject to further Parliamentary consideration.

Buy to Let

30. Prince Bishop Homes, a subsidiary of Derwentside Housing Association, is planning to develop the first Rent to Buy development in Darlington. The aim of the scheme is to give tenants the opportunity to save up for a deposit to buy their home while renting the property. There will be 16 three-bed properties.
31. **Grace Court** - This scheme of six self-contained units was previously used as supported housing for mothers and children. This service was re-provided and the scheme has been successfully converted to a much needed housing scheme for people with learning disabilities. The housing provider, Thirteen Group, has worked very closely with Adult Social Care in managing a transition that has taken a year.

Joint Protocol Children Services and Housing Options 16/17 Year Olds

32. Joint working with Children Services has developed a Positive Support Pathway to deal with 16/17 year olds that will stop young people being placed in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation. A joint support plan is formulated with the young person, a Social Worker and a Housing Options Advisor to support their needs and build their skills or providing mediation for either a return to home or into supported accommodation.

Street Beggars

33. It was recognised by services within Darlington that the numbers of beggars was increasing. Housing worked alongside the Police and the third sector to identify these people and to ensure that accommodation was not an issue. The police supported us with publicity to raise public awareness of the support services available and that it was not appropriate to give money. This was a very positive piece of work and has significantly reduced the number within the town.
34. I have also :-
 - (a) chaired a meeting of DAWN;
 - (b) met, along with Councillor c Hughes, with the Young Peoples Homeless Charity;
 - (c) attended the Foundation Trust Governors Council;
 - (d) attended a further meeting of the Healthy New Town Project;
 - (e) attended the commemoration of the start of the Battle of the Somme;
 - (f) attended a meeting of the Health and Well Being Board;
 - (g) attended a meeting of the Tees Valley Armed Forces Federation;
 - (h) attended a Housebuilders presentation; and
 - (i) attended a military dinner at the Reservists Centre.

Councillor Veronica Copeland
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adult Social Care and Housing