

---

**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 on-going work programme and I, and the Vice-Chair, will be meeting with the newly-appointed Assistant Director of Adult Social Care to discuss this further and prioritise our work over the next year. Our review into Dementia support services within Darlington is nearing conclusion and we are hoping to start our next piece of work in relation to adults with autism early in the New Year.

**Syrian Refugee Resettlement**

3. We have received an update on the Syrian Refugee re-settlement programme in Darlington. There are ten families to be re-settled into Darlington in the current year and, to date, four families have arrived, with the remainder expected by the end of November 2016.
4. The properties accommodating these families have been sourced from private landlords, wherever possible, however, two low demand Council first-floor flats are also being used. The properties are fully furnished and decorated according to the statement of requirements issued by the Home Office and all rental charges are covered by Housing Benefit but individuals are expected to cover all domestic charges including water rates, council tax and general costing from their benefit allocation.
5. The families have settled and integrated well in the local community and all are accessing and utilising local services and progressing well with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) lessons twice weekly. We were also advised of a 'Taste of Syria' evening which had been held in Willow Road Community Centre and had been a great success. A range of support for these families has also been provided by the voluntary sector and other agencies.
6. The Government does recognise that the increase in number of refugees into the UK will require an expansion of current networks and the impact on local communities and infrastructure will need to be carefully managed and it will continue to work with a wide range of partners, including local authorities, to ensure that families are integrated sensitively into communities. Attempts to locate a dentist in Darlington for these families had proved difficult due to waiting lists and a general lack of spaces, and, as this seems to be a general concern, not just for these families, we have agreed to bring this to the attention of a future meeting of

the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee.

## **Darlington Safeguarding Adults Partnership Annual Report 2015/16**

7. Scrutiny has also received the Annual Report of the Darlington Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (DSAPB) for 2015/16.
8. Although the DASPB has been in existence within Darlington since 2007, the Implementation of the Care Act 2014, placed Safeguarding Adults on a statutory footing and brought a range of new duties and responsibilities for Local Authorities to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board with a number of statutory agencies to be represented on it.
9. The DASPB has six priority outcomes of Empowerment, Prevention, Proportionality, Protection, Partnership and Accountability together with three core duties, one of which is to publish an Annual Report detailing what it has done during the year to achieve its main objective and implement its strategic plan. It must also outline what each partner agency has done to implement the Strategy, as well as detailing the findings of any Safeguarding Adults Reviews and subsequent action.
10. As reported elsewhere on this agenda, the Board has switched on its Joint Safeguarding Boards' website – [www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk](http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk) to communicate with practitioners and the general public and our views on that website are sought over the next few weeks prior to its formal launch.
11. In considering the report we sought reassurance about the governance arrangements around the Board and how it was held to account. We also had concerns about the risks associated with the budgetary constraints for 2017/18 and we were advised that the Independent Chair was meeting with Partners to agree future contributions from them to ensure its sustainability into 2017/18 to meet statutory requirements.
12. Safeguarding is a priority in any work we undertake as a Scrutiny Committee and we are keen to see, through the audits, reassurance around the quality of assessments and whether the adult at risk has been asked throughout their safeguarding experiences what their outcomes were, even if they had no capacity to consent to the safeguarding process. Making Safeguarding Personal is key.
13. We are keen to continue to work and further develop our relationships with the Board and we discussed how this can be achieved. We will, in future, be receiving, quarterly reports from the Board on its key issues and hope that the new Chair, Ann Baxter, will be able to attend a future meeting of our Scrutiny Committee.

## **Responsive Integrated Assessment Care Team (RIACT) Review**

14. We were advised of an in-depth joint review of the joint RIACT service and Intermediate Care provision in Darlington which has been commissioned by the Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Council and funded under the Better Care Fund (BCF) to ensure that the service can help people regain

optimum independence in a cost-effective way and reduce demand for other services. This review is a key deliverable within the Better Care Fund 2016/17 and is part of the hospital to home workstream.

15. The scope of the review, which will help ensure the service meets future needs against a changing health and social care landscape, has now been finalised by the CCG, the external consultant involved and the Council and will cover all elements of the service and associated provision including the reablement provider service, intermediate care beds, reablement beds and community beds, therapy and sensory impairment reablement. It is expected that the review will take around 23 days in total, spread over approximately two months from pre-visit to follow-up, and that any recommendations arising from the review will be available by the end of 2016.
16. Following a question around the data in relation to delay of transfer from care, it was confirmed that Darlington was below the National average and, although the quarter one figure showed a slightly higher position, it was still below the national average, however, it was more about ensuring the patient experience was correct and that the outcomes were right for each organisation involved.
17. In addition, we were also advised of the work being undertaken in relation to managing winter pressures and to discussions which were taking place to support safe and timely discharges from hospital, preventing and delaying needs for individuals and ensuring that independence was maximised wherever possible, and to the feasibility of the new model of discharge to assess being implemented as a pilot. This is where an individual would return from hospital to their home environment with assessments being completed in their own homes and surroundings, with no decisions about permanent care being made within the acute setting. Our Scrutiny Committee, together with the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee, intend to do a piece of joint work in relation to discharge to assess and its potential impacts.
18. It was noted that the model did have significant benefits, however we were aware of the potential risks in terms of system pressures being moved across from one organisation to another and we were advised of a Local Accident and Emergency Local Delivery Board which were meeting to consider this and identify where there were currently gaps in resources.
19. We have requested a report detailing all aspects comprising the BCF, performance metrics and outcomes for people, together with an update on the outcome of the RIACT review to a future meeting.

## **Adult Social Care Charging Policies**

20. Cabinet, at its meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016, considered a report in relation to three proposed new charging policies for adult social care. As a Scrutiny Committee we were advised of this and received a briefing from the Assistant Director Adult Social Care on the proposals to enable our views to be forwarded to Cabinet.

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