

ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 3 September 2019

PRESENT – Councillors Crumbie, Mrs Culley, Curry, Holroyd, Layton and M Nicholson.

APOLOGIES – Councillors Clarke, Preston, Renton and A J Scott.

ABSENT – Councillor Bell.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – James Stroyan (Assistant Director Adult Social Care), Pauline Mitchell (Assistant Director Housing and Building Services), Janette McMain (Housing Manager - Options and Lifeline), Yvonne Hall (Service Manager - Contracts and Brokerage, Children and Adult Services), Sam Baty (Contracts Officer, Children and Adult Services) and Paul Dalton (Elections Officer).

AH8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

AH9 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 JULY 2019

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of this Scrutiny Committee held on 2 July 2019.

RESOLVED - That the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 2 July 2019 be approved as a correct record.

AH10 HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY

The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report that invited Members to consider the proposed changes to the Common Allocations Policy for the Tees Valley Lettings Partnership.

Members were informed that the current policy had been updated to enable the Council to meet its commitments in respect of the Tees Valley Lettings Partnership, and to ensure consistency of policy across the sub-region, providing clarity and transparency for applicants. The updates also ensured that the policy is aligned with the legislative requirements of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and reflected stakeholder feedback provided during the consultation process.

The Committee noted the removal of the additional preference to those under-occupying their property and was reassured to learn that support and alternative options were offered at each stage of contact. Members were also pleased to learn that those subjected to domestic violence were treated as a priority. Members also discussed the prioritisation of Forces personnel, the support offered to Prison Leavers, and the response to the consultation exercise from Darlington residents.

RESOLVED – That the proposed amendments to the Tees Valley Common Allocations Policy be noted.

AH11 QUALITY STANDARDS MONITORING OUTCOMES 2019-2020 (YEAR 7): AGREEMENT FOR THE PROVISION OF RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR ADULTS AND OLDER PEOPLE AND OLDER PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS 2013-2021

The Director of Children and Adult Services submitted a report that provided information on the outcome of the annual Quality Standards visits for 2019-2020.

The Committee were informed that there had been an overall increase in compliance this year in respect of homes achieving an A Grade, however noted that five previously 'C Graded' homes had failed to improve their grading.

Members enquired about the work being conducted to support those homes which consistently scored lower than others, and the involvement of Regional Managers and Home Owners in driving improvements. Concerns were raised in relation to contingency planning for Brexit, both in terms of medication management and the recruitment of staff, and the Committee were advised that one of the greatest concerns surrounded non-clinical consumables, however Members noted that many care homes had limited space to stockpile appropriate products.

Members noted that there was a steady reduction in the number of care homes who subscribed to the Agreement and were informed that one care home opted out as they wished to introduce third party 'top-ups', whereas another had subsequently re-opened as a specialist brain injury unit. Members heard that some smaller homes no longer subscribed to the agreement as a business decision.

RESOLVED – That the information provided within the submitted report be noted.

AH12 WORK PROGRAMME

The Managing Director submitted a report requesting that Members gave consideration to the Work Programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during 2019/20, and to any additional areas that Members would like to be included.

Councillor Holroyd submitted a Quad of Aims requesting that this Scrutiny Committee considered undertaking a piece of work on 'Loneliness and Connected Communities'.

RESOLVED - That a number of visits to Extra Care, Residential and Nursing Homes be scheduled.