

ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 26 April 2022

PRESENT – Councillors Donoghue (Chair), Curry, Holroyd, Johnson, Layton, M Nicholson, Renton and A J Scott.

APOLOGIES – Councillors Mrs Culley and B Jones.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Joss Harbron, Assistant Director Adult Services, Christine Shields, Assistant Director Commissioning, Performance and Transformation, Ann Baxter, Independent Chair, Darlington Safeguarding Partnership, and Paul Dalton, Elections Officer.

AD35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

AD36 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2022

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of this Committee held on 22 February 2022, be approved as a correct record.

AD37 COVID RESPONSE - VERBAL UPDATE

The Assistant Director – Commissioning, Performance and Transformation provided a verbal update on the ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically in relation to care providers.

It was reported that although pressures on the care sector were easing, it was recognised that Covid-19 was still common in society, and Care Homes were still using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and utilising visiting arrangements for relatives. Members were informed that outbreaks were being managed in conjunction with the Infection Control Team, and that the Spring Booster vaccine was in the process of being rolled out to Care Home residents.

Members were advised that one of the greatest areas of scrutiny remained workforce capacity, and that the Rapid Response Service had been extended until June 2022. Members entered into discussion on the vaccine rollout to the remainder of the Care Sector and the Spring Booster.

RESOLVED – That the content of the update be noted.

AD38 SUMMARY OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE EXTERNAL FUNDING SOURCES

The Assistant Director – Adults Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to enable Members to consider the external funding sources received by the Council for Adult Social Care Services in 2021/22.

The submitted report provided an overview of external funding sources, however excluded

core Central Government funding received through the Revenue Support Grant and additional funding secured through the 3% Council Tax precept for Adult Social Care Services.

Members were keen to establish the number of people assisted by the Better Care Fund and the Disabled Facilities Grant, determine whether the Adult Social Care Infection Control funding was spent within required deadlines, and ascertain whether there were any other funding sources available to assist with the provision of Adult Social Care.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

AD39 DARLINGTON SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT - 2020/2021

The Group Director of People submitted a report (previously circulated) to enable Members to receive and comment upon the Annual Report of the Darlington Safeguarding Partnership (DSP) for the period 2020/21.

The submitted report stated that the Local Safeguarding Partnership was required to produce an Annual Report to account for the Partnership's achievements over the previous year and make an assessment of the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements within the local area. The submitted report outlined what the Partnership had done over the period 2020/21, drawing upon a range of data and information to outline the progress made and illustrate the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding partnership arrangements.

Members welcomed the report and were heartened to see an emphasis on coercive control, suggesting that more needs to be done to highlight this form of abuse. Members also discussed the number of referrals in terms of Domestic Violence, particularly throughout the pandemic period, and suggested that there might be delays in reporting. Members were also keen to establish whether the rationale for a joint safeguarding board was being borne out in practice.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

AD40 WORK PROGRAMME

The Assistant Director Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that Members gave consideration to the Work Programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during 2021/22, and to any additional areas that Members would like to be included.

IT WAS AGREED – That the content of the report be noted.