



DARLINGTON

Borough Council

Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee Agenda

10.00 am

Wednesday, 27 April 2022

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT

Members of the Public are welcome to attend this Meeting.

1. Introduction/Attendance at Meeting
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny held on 23 February 2022 (Pages 3 - 8)
4. County Durham and Darlington Adult Mental Health Rehabilitation and Recovery service: Reprovision of Primrose Lodge, Chester le Street inpatient service - Update – Report of the Director of Mental Health and Learning Disability, Durham Tees Valley Partnership and the Director of Operations County Durham and Darlington, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust
(Pages 9 - 24)
5. Care Quality Commission - Update – Verbal Update by Care Group Director for Adult Mental Health Services, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust
6. A & E Wait Times – Presentation by the Director of Performance, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
(Pages 25 - 32)
7. Darlington Drug and Alcohol Service –

Presentation by the Contracts Manager and Executive Director of Services, We Are With You
(Pages 33 - 38)

8. Housing Management Policy –
Report of the Assistant Director – Housing and Revenues
(Pages 39 - 78)
9. Work Programme –
Report of the Assistant Director Law and Governance
(Pages 79 - 96)
10. Health and Wellbeing Board –
The Board last met on 17 March 2022. The next meeting is scheduled for 30 June 2022.
11. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM(S) (if any) which in the opinion of the Chair of this Committee are of an urgent nature and can be discussed at the meeting.
12. Questions



Luke Swinhoe
Assistant Director Law and Governance

Tuesday, 19 April 2022

Town Hall
Darlington.

Membership

Councillors Bartch, Bell, Dr. Chou, Heslop, Layton, Lee, McEwan, Newall, Wright and Vacancy

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on this agenda please contact Hannah Miller, Democratic Officer, Operations Group, during normal office hours 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. Fridays email: hannah.miller@darlington.gov.uk or telephone 01325 405801

HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 23 February 2022

PRESENT – Councillors Bell (Chair), Layton, Lee, McEwan and Newall

APOLOGIES – Councillors Bartch, Dr. Chou and Heslop,

ABSENT – Councillors Wright

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Jill Foggin (Communications Manager, County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust), Jennifer Illingworth (Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust), David Gallagher (NHS Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group) and Andrew Izon (County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Penny Spring (Director of Public Health), Anthony Sandys (Assistant Director - Housing and Revenues) and Hannah Miller (Democratic Officer)

HH41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

HH42 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES/NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY HELD ON :-

(1) 15 DECEMBER 2021

Submitted – The Notes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 15 December 2021.

RESOLVED – That the Notes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 15 December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

(2) 5 JANUARY 2022

Submitted – The Notes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 5 January 2022.

RESOLVED – That the Notes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 5 January 2022 be approved as a correct record.

(3) 19 JANUARY 2022

Submitted – The Notes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 19 January 2022.

RESOLVED – That the Notes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 19 January 2022 be approved as a correct record.

(4) 2 FEBRUARY 2022

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 2 February 2022.

RESOLVED – That the Notes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 2 February 2022 be approved as a correct record.

HH43 INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM

The Chief Officer, Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group gave a presentation (previously circulated) providing Members with an update on the development of the Integrated Care System (ICS).

The presentation outlined the engagement with local authorities to develop the ICS which included one-to-one meetings with the ICS Chair, council leaders and executives, Joint Management Executive Meetings, which were held throughout October-November to develop proposals on the ICS governance and operating model, ongoing engagement with local and regional scrutiny meetings and engagement on the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Constitution.

Reference was made to the current CCG statutory duties and powers; the existing structures for the eight CCG's in the North East and North Cumbria; and the current CCG commissioning spend in the ICS area.

Members were provided with details of the potential distribution of the ICS functions at both a System and Place level; particular reference was made to joint work between NHS and Local Authorities including participation in Health and Wellbeing Boards to develop Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies, joint initiatives to promote health, prevent disease and reduce inequalities and joint commissioning and leadership of local services. Members also noted the governance options for place based partnerships and that the ICB would be in place by June 2022.

The presentation outlined the core elements of the ICB governance arrangements; governance features of the ICB; and that membership had been proposed to NHS England in December 2021, with 25 voting Members, 13 non-executive and 12 executive, with a commitment to review after one year.

Members were informed of the requirement to establish an Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) alongside the ICB; the ICP would have a key role to play in setting the tone and culture of the system, operating a collective model of accountability, including to local residents; and the ICP was required to mutually agree terms of reference, membership, ways of operating and administration. Reference was made to the four ICP's in the North East and North Cumbria ICS; and the Chief Executive Officer designate and ICB Chair designate had been appointed.

Discussion ensued regarding concern in respect of the scale of the management structure; the importance of engaging with place; and engagement opportunities with regional and local scrutiny committees.

RESOLVED – That the Chief Officer, Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group be thanked for his informative presentation.

HH44 DIGITAL HEALTH

The Chief Information Officer, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT) gave a presentation providing Members with an update in respect of Digital Health.

It was reported that CDDFT Digital Strategy which was developed with patients, staff and partners was published in 2016; had been extended up to 2022 due to COVID and was now approaching the end of its lifespan.

The presentation outlined the aims and status of the six strategic themes of the strategy, of which 'Working Together', 'Working Securely', 'Paper-light to Paperless' and 'Quality Services' had green status. Members were informed that the status of 'Working Smarter' was amber as the implementation of the electronic patient record (EPR) had not commenced and 'Citizen Access' had red status as this was awaiting development aligned to the Great North Care Record (GNCR).

It was reported that a baseline assessment of the Trusts digital maturity was undertaken in 2021. The assessment identified known gaps in provision however these gaps would be met through the adoption of the EPR and supporting technologies; and it was anticipated that this would take the Trust from Stage 1 to Stage 5.

Members were informed that the Trust straddled two of the four ICP's within the North East and North Cumbria ICS and played an active role in the development of the ICS digital strategy; the trust had established a 'Digital Durham Place' meeting with an intention to duplicate this in Darlington; and the Trust had worked with partners to develop a Digital OGIM within each ICP, which outlined how the ICP's schemes would contribute to the delivery of the ICS Digital Strategy and identifies key areas for investment and activity within the region in the future.

In relation to digital care in the community it was reported that as a response to COVID and to support the Trusts activity recovery programme, the Agile working provision had been extended; Health Call Digital Care Home had been deployed in all of the care homes for older people in Darlington, enabling patients to be seen in the home, reducing unnecessary visits to the hospital; and to ensure outpatient services continued for patients during the pandemic, the Trust adopted a nationally procured solution for Video Consultations, alongside teleconsultations, as an alternative to face-to-face sessions.

It was reported that the Trust had adopted the GCNR and this would be further enhanced with the development of the Public Engagement Platform; reference was made to the work being undertaken by the Trust for staff and patients in relation to digital health and digital exclusion; and details were provided of the next steps for the Trust.

Members raised concern regarding the sharing of information with private care providers and possible security risks and issues associated with the transfer of medical records from the GP to a hospital setting. Members were assured that robust processes were in place regarding access to patients information and that further development was required by the

GNCR team to address issues associated with GP information sharing.

RESOLVED – That the Chief Information Officer, CDDFT be thanked for his informative presentation.

HH45 CRISIS SERVICE CHANGES

The Director of Operations, Durham and Darlington, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust provided Members with an update on the Crisis and Home Treatment Team.

Members were informed that the Durham and Darlington teams were merged in 2019 following redesign work; the teams were relocated to a base in Bishop Auckland; reference was made to the purpose of the merger; and the purposes of the crisis and home treatment team were outlined.

It was reported that the model had been revised; implementation of the revised model and ongoing quality improvement work commenced in July 2021; the revised model consisted of a hub and spoke model, with a central access point at Bishop Auckland Hospital and two locality cells, one based at Lanchester Road Hospital and the other at West Park Hospital.

Details were provided of the current challenges, including increased referrals and high staff turnover and sickness; and these challenges provided opportunity to review the model and further develop and refine the service. Members were informed that a restructure in the Trust was ongoing which would bring together all crisis services across Durham and Darlington and the Tees Valley and it was suggested an update on the restructure be provided at a future meeting.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

HH46 DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICE CONTRACT - WE ARE WITH YOU

The Chair informed Members that the Executive Director for Services, We Are With You was not in attendance at the meeting and expressed disappointment that an update on the service had not been forthcoming.

RESOLVED – (a) That Members submit any questions to the Democratic Officer in relation to the drug and alcohol service for consideration by the Executive Director for Services, We Are With You.

(b) That a letter be sent to the Executive Director for Services, We Are With You from the Chair on behalf of this Scrutiny Committee to express Members disappointment that an update has not been forthcoming.

(c) That an update be provided at the next meeting of this Scrutiny Committee.

HH47 WORK PROGRAMME

The Assistant Director Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee' work programme and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest be included in the previously approved work programme.

RESOLVED – That the current status of the work programme be noted.

HH48 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

The Director of Public Health informed Members that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled for 17 March 2022.

RESOLVED – That Members look forward to receiving an update on the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board at a future meeting of this Scrutiny Committee.

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County Durham and Darlington Adult Mental Health (AMH) Rehabilitation and Recovery services; Re provision of Primrose Lodge, Chester le Street inpatient service, report following the outcome of targeted engagement

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide details of the outcome of the further targeted engagement to support the proposal to relocate Primrose Lodge Inpatient Rehabilitation and Recovery unit from Chester le Street to Shildon. The service is commissioned for Darlington and County Durham residents. The initial paper was presented to the Darlington Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee in January which explained the rationale for the change, the engagement that had taken place up to that point and plan to undertake further targeted engagement in February and March before finalising the relocation. We agreed to bring back a paper detailing the outcome of the engagement to this committee.

2.0 Background

The paper submitted in January outlined the rationale for the change, the key factors are:

- Poor physical environment of Primrose Lodge which does not meet CQC requirements
- Service improvement work which has been undertaken over the last 18 months to review the rehabilitation role, function and pathway. The processes that have been implemented will further improve and support the recovery pathway for people using the service
- Significant investment in the community rehabilitation team and for the voluntary and community sector which has meant additional multi disciplinary staff to expand the service and offer more comprehensive support and to a wider number of service users. The investment has also enabled the service to enhance the community rehabilitation pathway to reduce the duration and reliance on bed-based interventions.
- The accommodation at Shildon meets the required privacy and dignity standards and significantly improves the physical environment whilst ensuring the principles of rehabilitation can be met. The ground floor accommodation would also improve access for patients with mobility issues. The building is configured to support and meet the Trust Privacy and Dignity Policy, including Eliminating Mixed Sex Accommodation Requirements. There are 8 bedrooms which are gender zoned, have en-suite facilities and a female only lounge has been identified.

- The pathway redesign events to improve the pathway and access to services, along with the significant investment in the community rehabilitation means that the service are confident, based on demand modelling that 8 beds would be sufficient and allows the adoption of a more person centred and less institutional therapeutic milieu than a larger 15 bedded unit.
- We will retain and continue to develop the existing access to community venues and public transport from the Shildon base and ensure the social, leisure, education and health facilities which are key factors to support each individual's recovery continue to be accessed. The expanded community rehabilitation team will continue to support patients with accessing local amenities and activities within their local/home area. The unit's relocation in Shildon is more accessible for Darlington residents.

3.0 Key Issues

The targeted engagement plan: how we engaged and with whom

How we engaged: We developed a briefing document which explains the proposal, background and rationale and offered the opportunity to contact the TEWV Locality Director to discuss further and /or to provide more detailed information. This is shown in Appendices 1.

We developed bespoke surveys, which were distributed on line and hard copy (postal) with tailored questions in each. The first survey was for service users, families, carers. The 2nd survey was for referring organisations/other organisations who support mental health rehabilitation. The questions sought to get feedback on respective stakeholder views of the current service, what works well and what can improve, from their perspective and role. The survey also asked them to rate their support for the proposal.

The surveys are shown in Appendices 2 , 3 and 4.

The briefing and/or surveys were issued w/c 31 January and 7 February.

The stakeholders: the matrix below details the stakeholders we targeted and identifies if they received the briefing and/or survey. Following the distribution of the briefing we were contacted by a number of organisations with questions and also opportunities to attend forums to explain the proposal further and seek direct feedback via this route. These were:

- Durham VCS resilience forum – 21 February - the proposal was well received and no concerns raised. Engagement with the forum has also helped develop as we were made aware of support organisations in Shildon that can further support the recovery pathway of service users
- County Durham CCG Patient and Public Engagement forum – 25 February
- We also held discussions with Shildon Local Area Action Partnership lead Officer

Stakeholder	Briefing	Patient/Carer/ Family Survey	Referring/Other Organisations Survey
Service users of Primrose Lodge and those supported by the community rehab team	X	X	
Families and carers of rehab service users	X	X	
Durham Community Mental Health Framework (CMHF) steering group members	X	x	x
Darlington CMHF steering group members	x	x	x
Tees Valley MH Alliance (Darlington members)	x		x
TEWV Governors in Durham and Darlington	X		
Shildon Town Council (at the request of Durham OSC)	X		
Healthwatch, Darlington and County Durham	X		
Durham and Darlington MPs	x		
Durham VCS organisations (via Chair of Durham county wide group) - attendance at 21 Feb mtg	X		X
LA housing and rehabilitation leads in County Durham and Darlington	X		
Durham MH Alliance - 8 providers, 6 sub contractors, covers housing, welfare rights, bereavement, women support	X		x
County Durham CCG Patient/Public involvement group - attendance at mtg 24 February	X		X
Durham and Darlington PCN clinical directors/ business leads	X		
Durham Community Foundation	X		X
Police and crime commissioner	X		
Shildon and CLS Area Action Partnerships (AAP), respectively	x		
Shildon councillors and CLS east councillor	x		
TEWV AMH Modern Matron, acute ward managers,	x		x
TEWV AMH Locality Manager, community team managers	x		x
Recovery College - Durham	x	x	x

4.0 Survey feedback and analysis:

We issued 53 surveys to patients and 43 surveys to family/carers. The survey was also made available to the referrers and other organisations mentioned above. We received 22 responses :

Individuals open to rehabilitation service - 9

Family/carers of those open to the rehabilitation service- 9

Other- 1

We received 2 completed surveys from referrer/ other stakeholders:

- Housing.com
- Durham County Council Commissioning Team and MH Strategic Operational Management

The office of the Police & Crime Commissioner responded to advise she had liaised with Durham Constabulary Force Leads on Vulnerability and the Neighbourhood Chief Inspector and there have been no issues raised with this proposal.

A full analysis of survey responses from service users, carer, family can be found in Appendices 5.

As there were only 2 responses from referrers and other organisations we have not completed a separate analysis, these responses have been included in the themes below.

Theme	Who responded with this theme	Comments	Our response
Recognition of the benefits of better facilities in the Shildon facility e.g. ensuites, ground floor access.	-Current/ previous service users -Families/carers -Referrers and other organisations	There was consensus and recognition of the importance of the environment at the Shildon unit.. 'Comfortable environment', 'access to an en-suite' and 'ground floor access' listed as the most important for recovery in the survey answers, with 56% of service users responding that a 'comfortable environment' was most important to them.	Positive to see that the importance of a good environment is noted and recognised
Concerns around reduced bed numbers	- Families/carers -Referrers and other organisations	There were several respondents who expressed concerns around the reduction of beds and the ability of the community teams to manage service users in the community with the bed reduction. One of the referrer organisations questioned whether a more single	The service has established a mobilisation group – overseeing each patient's discharge plan which is reviewed weekly.

		occupancy supported type unit should have been explored to promote greater independence.	There will be a phased bed reduction based on each service users agreed discharge plan – over a number of months. We will agree how we can share with stakeholders on a regular basis the impact of the enhanced community team and their ability to facilitate earlier discharge and support more service users in the community
Request for more activities in the new facility (with a focus on Activity of Daily Living)	-Current/previous service users - Families/carers	The responses from the service user questionnaires showed Activities of Daily Living were the most useful to support recovery. There was a request for more activities in the new facility with 'lifestyle skills' to promote independence and recovery. A response from a service users families advised "Need constant help, activities and support."	This is helpful feedback for the service to continue to develop their rehabilitation and recovery offer and increase provision when necessary to meet individual needs
Praise for clinical staff and the value of the support they provide	- Current/previous service users - Families/carers	There was widespread praise for the clinical staff and the support they provide. "there is always someone to answer my calls I am grateful for the staff." There was recognition from responses that the multi disciplinary staff who support service users are all valued with each discipline receiving a high level of support as aiding their recovery . "Nursing and clinical team very important but the availability of psychology/other support is useful too. "	Positive to receive this feedback and see the impact the staff roles have to service users and their family. We continue to develop new roles with our voluntary sector partners including activity coordinators.
The new location has been recognised as a	-Families/carers -Referrers and other organisations	The survey responses recognised the importance of access to local community resources and therefore the support or concern reflects the home address of each respondent to the current or new	We recognise as a county wide facility that any location will not be ideal for all Durham residents.

<p>positive and a negative change depending on the respondents address in County Durham</p>		<p>unit. Some responses highlighted the good community facilities in Chester le Street and questioned whether there was the same level in Shildon.</p> <p>The Service Manager attended the VCS forum in February to present the proposal and received feedback on the range of community activities that can support the rehabilitation service. This included feedback from Shildon community organisations who gave details of walking and other groups in the area.</p> <p>When asked if service users had been offered support in their area 67% of service users surveyed had been offered support in their local home area.</p>	<p>However, we have very good links with community organisations across county Durham and Darlington, and these have been developed further through this engagement process, in particular for community facilities available in Shildon. We recognise we will need to continue to work hard to ensure we have knowledge of and links with relevant community support, and keep this regularly updated.</p>
<p>Rating the proposal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Current/ previous service users -Families/carers -Referrers and other organisations 	<p>The rating scale for this question was between 1-5; 1 is 'do not support' and 5 is 'fully support'. The average rating for the proposal was 3.9, with 9 respondents rating the proposal as '5- fully support'. 3 respondents rated the proposal as 1 or 2 with limited support.</p>	<p>The responses recognise the importance of environment to aid recovery, with concerns about reduced beds and accessing community facilities. An overall positive rating for the proposal</p>

5.0 Conclusion:

The targeted engagement has been with a range of stakeholders with each provided with a summary of the proposal and the opportunity to provide further feedback, based on their experience of the service, either as a service user, a family member or carer or as a referring organisation via a be-spoke survey. We also invited any stakeholder to get in touch, with the offer of a meeting and provision of further information if required. We attended a CCG involvement meeting and a VCS County wide forum as well as individual discussions with Area Action Partnership leads. The office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has confirmed that the Durham Constabulary Force Leads on Vulnerability and the Neighbourhood Chief Inspector have no issues raised with this proposal.

Analysis of survey responses shows the average rating for the proposal is 3.9 (5 is fully support) with recognition and support of the importance of an improved environment of the Shildon unit and the ability of the staff to continue to support service users recovery. Concerns regarding the bed reduction and the range of community facilities in Shildon were expressed. We have outlined our responses to the feedback and we recognise we need to increase our communication with service users and their families about how the move will be managed, via a phased bed reduction. We recognise we need to provide more information to them and other stakeholders about the range of support the expanded community rehabilitation team provides and the impact they have had on reducing the reliance on beds. We will improve the range of information we have available regarding community facilities and how we share and discuss this with service users and their families and referrer organisations so they have more re-assurance about the level of support available.

On balance, this engagement along with feedback from the previous improvement events, highlights the strength of support and recognition of a good environment to support recovery. The engagement highlighted concerns regarding bed numbers, however we remain confident we can manage the reduction safely and effectively. For those who responded to the engagement there was a high level of rated support for the proposal.

6.0 Recommendations:

- The Local Authority Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee is requested to receive the report detailing the outcome of the targeted engagement to support the proposal to re-provide the Primrose Lodge unit from Chester le Street to Shildon with a reduction from 15 to 8 beds
- The Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee is requested to support the proposal and relocation of the inpatient rehabilitation service to Shildon.

Jennifer Illingworth
Director of Operations
County Durham and Darlington, TEWV

Mike Brierley
Director of Mental Health & Learning Disability
Durham Tees Valley Partnership

Appendix

Appendices 1 – stakeholder briefing

This briefing explains the Trust and County Durham CCG proposal to relocate the TEWV Primrose Lodge Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit from Chester le Street to Shildon as part of our rehabilitation environment and pathway improvements.

The current facility has 15 beds and is commissioned for County Durham and Darlington residents. It provides supportive interventions for service users with mental health needs who need a period of rehabilitation to support them to live safely and well in the community. The Unit offers opportunities for education and skills building, for a period of up to 9 months, allowing for future independent/ supportive living. The current building is located in Chester le Street, however it is no longer fit for purpose and does not meet CQC regulatory standards for privacy and dignity and accessibility (bedrooms are located upstairs). The preferred option is to re-locate the service into a vacant Trust building in Shildon. The facility has 8 en-suite bedrooms, ground floor accommodation with access to good outside space and offers a significantly improved environment for staff and patients. This property has previously been utilised as a rehabilitation facility and most recently a crisis and recovery house. We have experience of being a good neighbour and partner in Shildon and it is important to us that this continues.

TEWV also has a 15 bed rehabilitation unit at West Park Hospital Darlington (Willow Ward) which will remain and is unaffected by this proposal.

There have been significant improvements and investment to the rehabilitation service pathway to strengthen the needs led approach and to enhance rehabilitation community based support in line with national policy. This additional investment will ensure that service users have access to an enhanced multi disciplinary team and can be supported in their local home area. This strengthens the ability of service users to utilise the support mechanisms in their own community which play a vital role in keeping them safe and well in the community. Rehabilitation pathways have been improved to ensure voluntary sector and third sector organisations are embedded within the pathway. Shildon is well located as a county wide inpatient rehabilitation service as well as offering outreach to a range of activities and support organisations across County Durham and Darlington.

These factors mean we will reduce the duration and reliance on inpatient stays and are confident we can manage within the reduced number of beds. For those individuals who need an inpatient stay to support their recovery, the unit at Shildon offers a much improved environment and a modern health facility. We will continue to work collaboratively with service users and our partner organisations to help establish meaningful activities and support mechanisms for each service user as they move from inpatients and to maintain their recovery in their local community.

I hope this briefing has been helpful in explaining the proposal and the reason for the change of location. We want to be a good neighbour and partner and are happy to discuss the proposal further with you if this would be helpful. We are happy to receive any comments and have also developed a short on line survey for patients, families and referrers to complete.

Please provide any comments or to request further information, the survey or a meeting to Jennifer Illingworth, Locality Director, TEWV at jenniferillingworth@nhs.net, or write to me at West Park Hospital, Edward Pease Way, Darlington, County Durham. Please get in touch or provide your comments before the end of February so that they can be included in the report we will submit to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Appendices 2- Families and carer survey :

Q1 please can you indicate your role:

- Carer
- Family member/friend
- Other

Q2. Have you been supported by the rehab service as a family member/carer?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please explain answer

Q3. In your experience what has made the biggest difference to your family member/friend etc

- Activities/community work
- Nursing/Clinical Team
- Other

If other please let us know what this is/was:

Q4: Please can you score your support for the proposal to relocate Primrose Lodge from Chester le Street to Shildon.

Do Not support 1 2 3 4 5 Fully support

Q5. Please provide any other comments you would like us to consider:

Appendices 3- Service user survey :

Q1. Are you a:

- Current service user at Primrose Lodge
- Previous service user in Plodge

Q2. From you experience what would you say is the most important to you to help your recovery, (please choose as many as applicable) :

- Comfortable environment
- Access to an En-suite
- Ground Floor/disabled access
- Access to activities
- Accessing community resources
- Other

Comments:

Q3. From your experience who are you receiving support from:

- Nurses
- HCAs
- OTs
- Psychologists
- Activity coordinators
- Physiotherapist
- Pharmacy
- Physical health nurse

Q4. Following on from the above question, who do you feel is beneficial to your recovery?

- Nurses
- HCAs
- OTs
- Psychologists

-Activity coordinators

-Physiotherapist

-Pharmacy

-Physical health nurse

Comments:

Q5. What do you think is helpful to support your recovery (please tick all that apply to you) :

-Leisure/outdoor/physical activities

-Creative/technology activities

-ADL activities e.g. cooking, personal care etc

-Social/community activities

-Vocational/educational activities

-Faith activities

-Other

Comments:

Q6. Have you been supported in your local home area (area in which you will be discharged to) by rehabilitation staff:

-Yes

-No

-Don't know

Comments:

Q7: Please can you score your support for the proposal to relocate Primrose Lodge from Chester le Street to Shildon.

Do Not support 1 2 3 4 5 Fully support

Q8: Please provide any other comments you would like us to consider.

Appendices 4- Referrers and other organisations survey :

Q1. Please specify what organisation you currently work in:

Q2. How can we ensure that the current pathways into the rehabilitation service from your organisation can be maintained or improved:

Q3. From your professional viewpoint and/or any feedback you have received about the Rehabilitation services, what do you think the main strengths of the service currently based at Primrose Lodge:

- The facilities
- Access to meaningful interventions
- Support from the Multi disciplinary team
- Support from Voluntary/third sector organisations
- Other

Please provide any comments:

Q4. How can we work with your organisation to enhance/improve rehabilitation services for our service users:

Q5. Do you have any other comments you would like us to consider for this proposal:

6. Please can you score your support for the proposal to relocate Primrose Lodge from Chester le Street to Shildon.

Appendices 5- Analysis of responses from the service user, family and carer surveys

These responses are both service users, carers and families combined, as the survey was created under the same entity.

1. Are you a...?

[More Details](#)

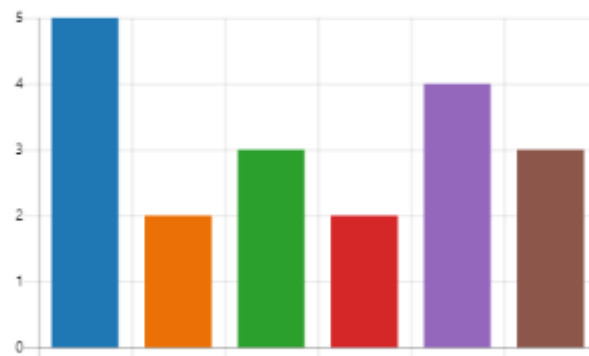
● Current service user of Primro...	6
● Previous service user of Primr...	2
● Carer/advocate	1
● Family Member/friend	8
● Other	1



2. From your experience, what would you say was most important to you to help your recovery? (Please choose as many as applicable)

[More Details](#)

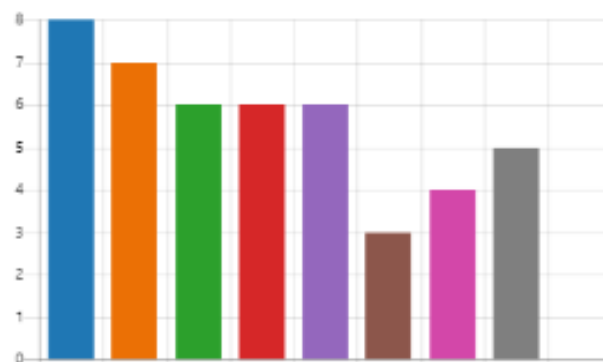
● Comfortable environment	5
● Access to an en-suite	2
● Ground floor/disabled access	3
● Access to activities	2
● Accessing community resources	4
● Other	3



3. From your experience at Primrose Lodge, who did you receive support from?

[More Details](#)

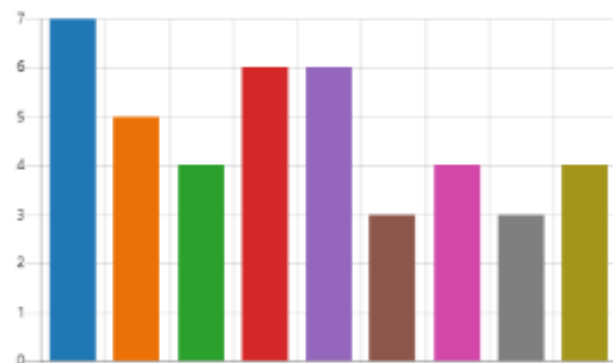
● Nurses	8
● HCAs	7
● OTs	6
● Psychologists	6
● Activity Coordinators	6
● Physiotherapist	3
● Pharmacy	4
● Physical health nurse	5
● Other	0



4. Following on from the above question, who did you feel was beneficial to your recovery at Primrose Lodge?

[More Details](#)

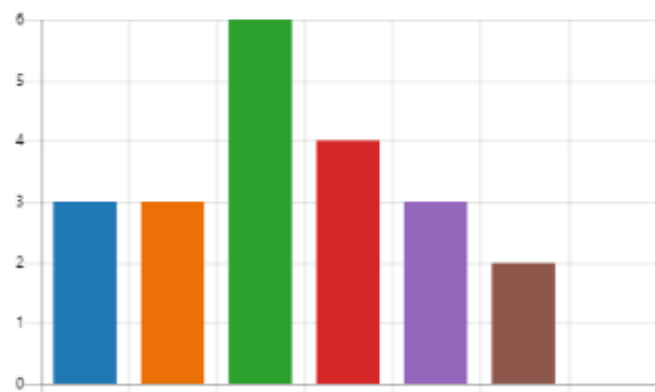
● Nurses	7
● HCAs	5
● OTs	4
● Psychologists	6
● Activity coordinators	6
● Physiotherapists	3
● Pharmacy	4
● Physical health nurse	3
● Other	4



5. What do you think is helpful to support your recovery? (Please tick all that apply to you)

[More Details](#)

● Leisure/outdoor/physical activ...	3
● Creative/technology activities	3
● ADL activities e.g. cooking, pe...	6
● Social/community activities	4
● Vocational/educational activiti...	3
● Faith activities	2
● Other	0



6. Have you been supported in your local home area (the area in which you will be/were discharged to) by rehabilitation staff?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	6
● No	2
● Not sure	1
● Other	0



7. Have you been supported by the rehab service as a family member/carer?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	8
● No	1
● Not Sure	0
● Other	7



Please note the 'other' responses are where respondents provided comments to go alongside their answers, this should not be counted as a separate response.

8. In your experience, what has made the biggest difference to the service user?

[More Details](#)

● Activities/community work	0
● Nursing/Clinical Team	5
● Other	4



9. Please can you score your support for the proposal to relocate Primrose Lodge from Chester le Street to Shildon.

[More Details](#)

Insights

16
Responses

3.81
Average Number

This was rated 1-5, 1 being 'do not support' and 5 being 'fully support'. The number shown above differs from the average rating as shown in the main body of the text as this includes the 2 surveys completed by referrers and other organisations.

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Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee

27 April 2022

Agenda Item 6

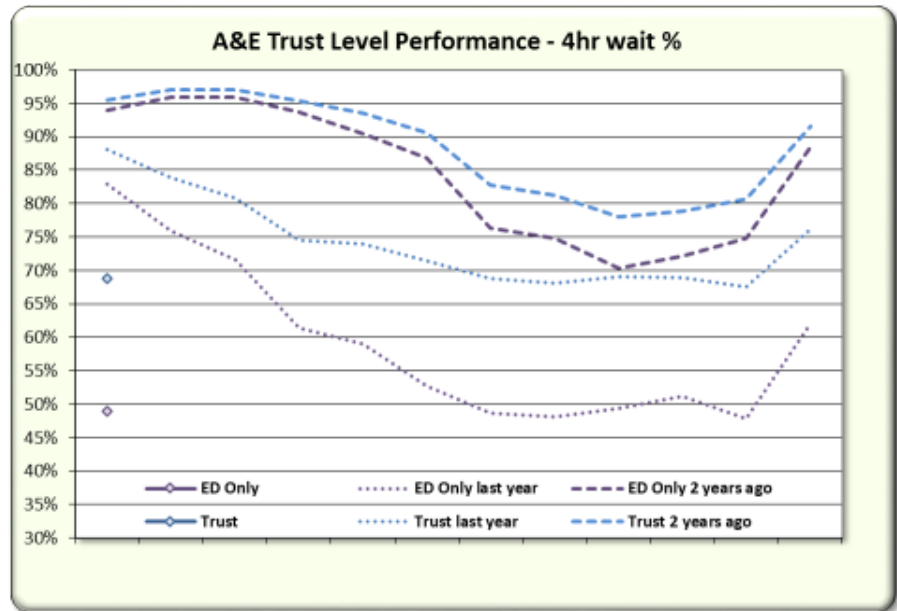
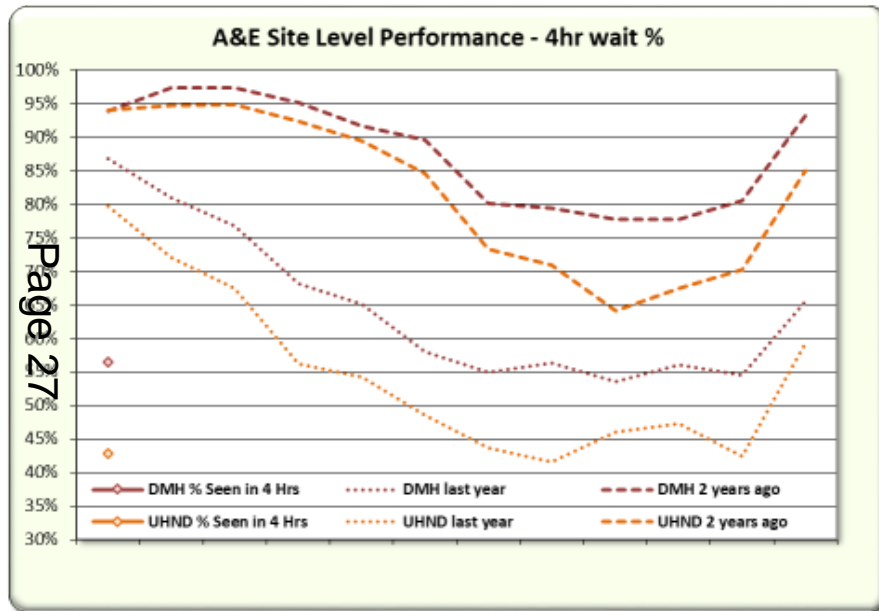


A&E Wait Times

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A&E 4hr Standard

Following the peak of the winter pressures period, performance has been improving throughout March.



There were no 12 hour trolley waits during March.

New ED Measures in Shadow Form

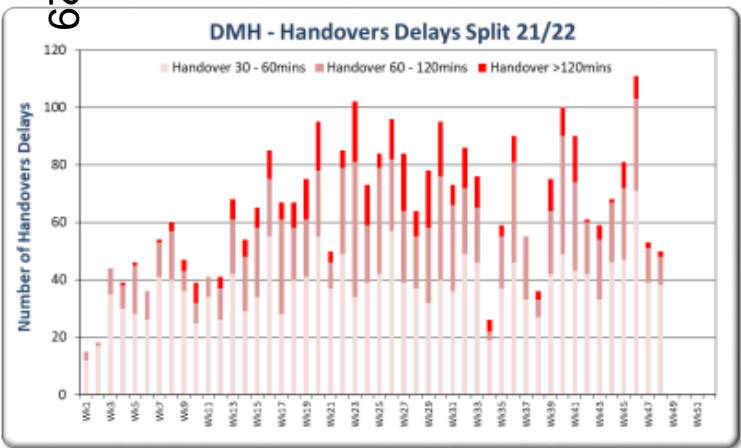
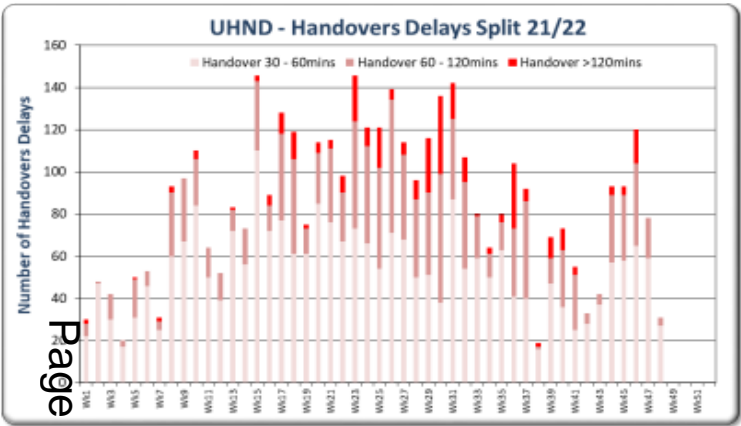
Reduction in patients waiting more than 12 hours in the dept. in March on both acute sites.

Overall in March, 72% of patients assessed within 15 minutes of arrival.

Standard	Month:	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22
DMH ED attends		5,257	4,883	6,056
DMH ED Time to Initial Assessment – within 15 minutes		3,975	3,706	4,588
DMH ED Time to Initial Assessment – % within 15 minutes		75.61%	75.90%	75.76%
DMH ED Patients spending more than 12 hours in A&E		489	424	336
% DMH ED Patients spending more than 12 hours in A&E		9.3%	8.7%	5.5%
Average time(mins) in DMH ED – Admitted patients		513	490	417
Average time(mins) in DMH ED – Non-admitted patients		236	244	224
UHND ED attends		6,406	6,047	7,041
UHND ED Time to Initial Assessment – within 15 minutes		4,193	3,520	4,848
UHND ED Time to Initial Assessment – % within 15 minutes		65.45%	58.21%	68.85%
UHND ED Patients spending more than 12 hours in A&E		511	657	391
% UHND ED Patients spending more than 12 hours in A&E		8.0%	10.9%	5.6%
Average time(mins) in UHND ED – Admitted patients		553	612	480
Average time(mins) in UHND ED – Non-admitted patients		270	302	256
Trust ED attends		11,663	10,930	13,097
Trust ED Time to Initial Assessment – within 15 minutes		8,168	7,226	9,436
Trust ED Time to Initial Assessment – % within 15 minutes		70.03%	66.11%	72.05%
Trust ED Patients spending more than 12 hours in A&E		1,000	1,081	727
% Trust ED Patients spending more than 12 hours in A&E		8.6%	9.9%	5.6%
Average time(mins) in Trust ED – Admitted patients		533	549	447
Average time(mins) in Trust ED – Non-admitted patients		255	278	242

Responsive: ED & Ambulance Handover Spotlight Report

	Average Arrival to Clear Times (Minutes)											
	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	
Darlington Memorial A&E	35.1	37.5	38.1	49.0	50.9	54.2	55.3	50.0	43.3	45.1	40.1	
UHAND A&E	33.9	36.5	40.0	43.1	44.8	54.0	54.3	45.6	43.3	35.2	37.9	



Commentary

- Average arrival to clear times in February are 40.1 minutes in DMH and 37.9 minutes in UHND.
- There has been no further trolley breaches in March.
- March performance overall is notably improved at 76.22%.
- The Trust received a visit by NHSEI regional leads for UEC on 9th March to review both EDs and pathways. A report is awaited.
- From 1st April, some dedicated clinical and management support will be provided for the emergency departments and AMUs at both UHND and DMH, to further enhance the quality and safety of our services.

Risk and mitigating actions

STRATEGIC UPDATE	
New ED UHND – Bid submitted to New Hospital Programmes and included in regional TIF bid submission	Outcome March 22
Interim ED works to improve footprint UHND -Enhanced SDEC (Modular build) -CDU designated -Reassignment of former fracture clinic to ED	22 June 9 June 19 Aug
Workforce - Junior doctor BC	Approved recruitment under-way
Front door model extended to 24/7	Primary Care Hub evaluation under-way 24/7 BC in development
Optimal G&A bed base	c60 beds Oct 22 BC under-way

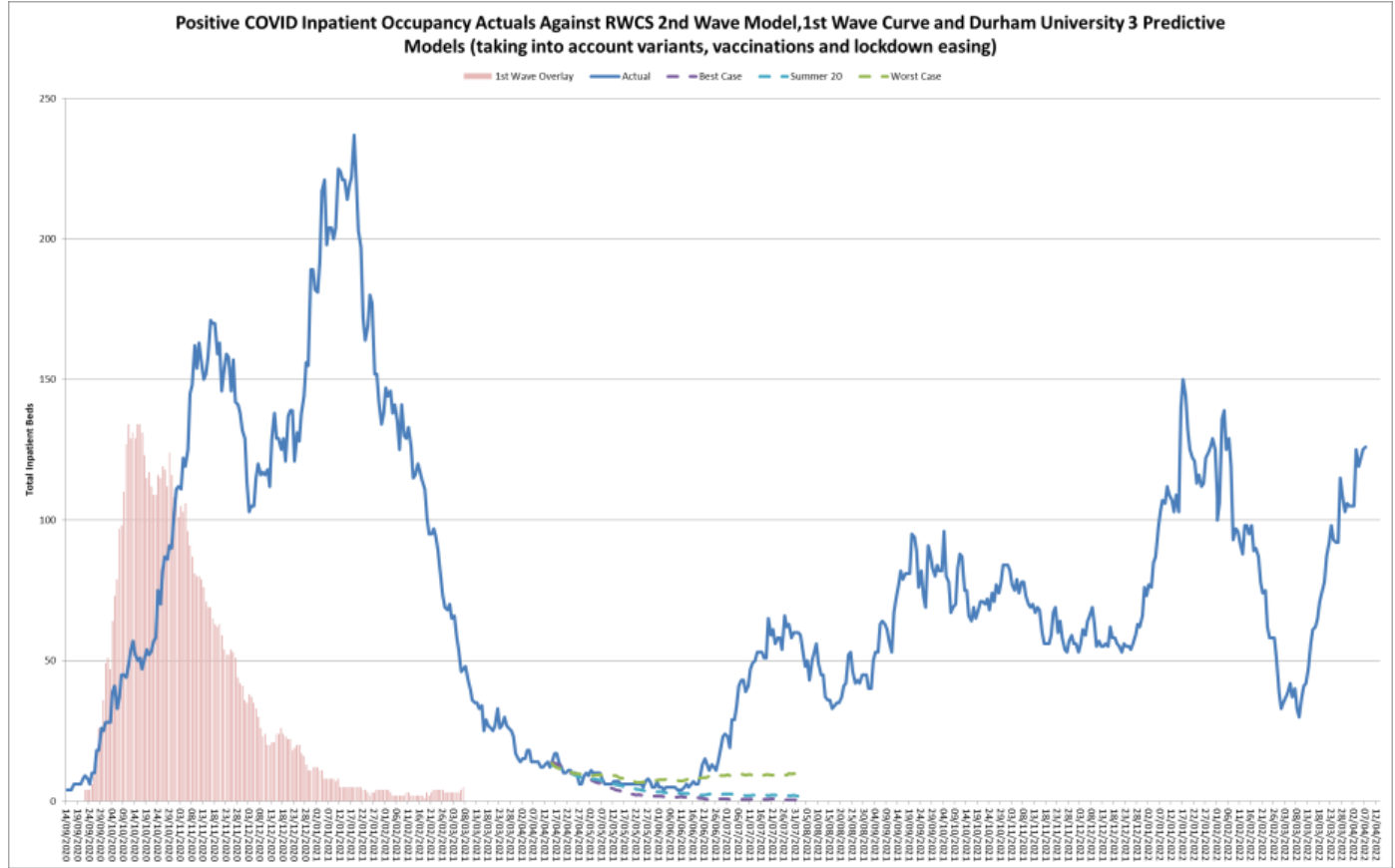
IMPROVEMENT ACTION UPDATES	
Works as One. Live	●
Refreshed OPEL. Launch slipped, now live and requires evaluation	●
Vocera expansion (UHND). In progress, roll out Feb/March	●
Real time reason to reside reporting. In place	●
Team Transfer Policy. In place following review of Referrer Decides Policy. Monitoring to be established.	●
Fit to Sit. Additional trolleys and chairs purchased	●
New Ambulance Handover SOP. in place. Requires review	●
UHND estates works. Delayed	●
Increased workforce to support ambulance handover bay. Plans to convert CIPHER paramedic transport time to handover from 5/3	●
Site Director. In place from December until end April. Review of model to conclude in March.	●
Internet messaging. Commenced Feb.	●
Review of tertiary pathways with NEAS and partners. Meeting scheduled.	●

DATA QUALITY. Areas being actively being worked on	
Reason to reside	ECDS
ED Breach validation and time of discharge	UTC reporting

Commentary	Risk and Mitigating Actions
<p>Work as One is being embedded as business as usual.</p> <p>The work is focussed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Criteria to reside – Criteria to admit audit – Discharge lounge utilisation – Length of stay – Acute infrastructure <p>Discharge information pack/training commenced in February through March</p> <p>Daily reason to reside reports have been iterated to enable improved monitoring of patients delayed. The list now has an average of 50 patients on the list each day of which 22-25 are within the acute setting eg, UHND, DMH and BAH. The lists are validated each day with an average of 6.2 patients per day awaiting package of care/care home. The visibility enables expediting discharges where safe and appropriate.</p> <p>Discharge Lounge utilisation is improving overall.</p> <p>Long wait patients volumes are reducing, from 62 in January to 52 as at 16 March.</p> <p>To achieve best flow, discharge volumes need to exceed average daily admissions. This is being tracked and there is some evidence of improvement since WaO.</p>	<p>Work has been ongoing with the Nervecentre Team to modify the list of reside/delay reasons to provide a more detailed report. These changes were communicated w/c 14 March.</p> <p>Next actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit on ‘what makes a service acute’. • CHC digital referral training. • Improvement in TTO scripts for the discharge lounge. • Review of management support hours of operation. • Identify and appoint a Clinical lead for Discharge on each acute site. • Emphasis on improving weekend discharges and reinvigorate Criteria Led Discharge.

Increasing volume of patients admitted with COVID.

At this level, this accounts for 20% of beds, directly impacting on flow.

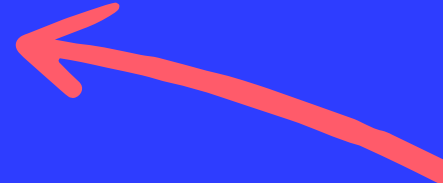


Any Questions

Health & Housing Scrutiny Committee

Darlington Drug and Alcohol Service

Gary Besterfield
Contracts Manager
Jon Murray
Executive Director of Services



Where we are



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Addaction

With You

English
Drugs
Strategy

Association
for Parents
of Addicts

Shrinking
Funding

Covid-19



Service Overview

Clinical Support

- Health Screening & Assessment
- Harm Minimisation
- Clinical Treatment
- Prescribing

Treatment & Care

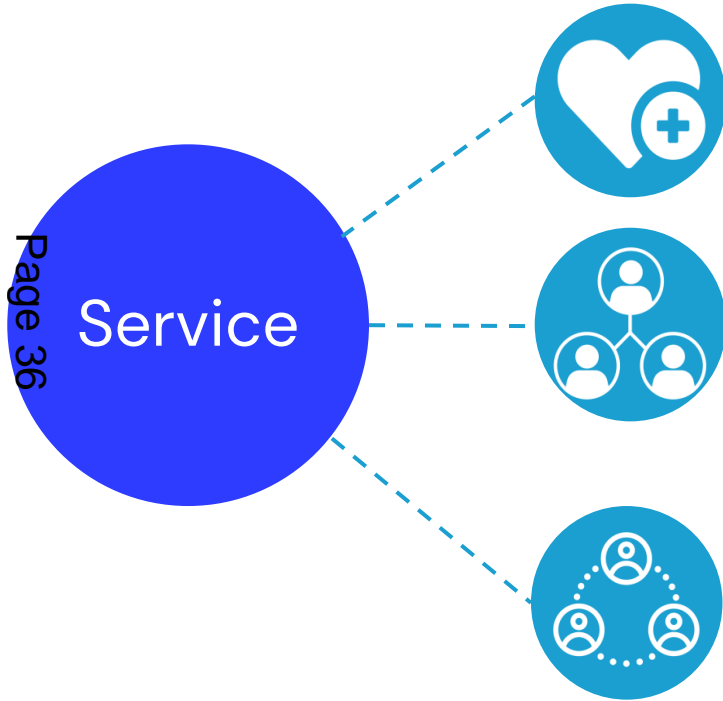
- Rapid Access
- Specialist Assessment
- Recovery Coordination
- Psychosocial Interventions

Abstinence, Recovery and Wellbeing

- Improving Health & Wellbeing
- Lifeskills
- Access to Education & Employment
- Volunteering & Peers

Priorities

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Staffing

- Pay and Reward
- Workforce Engagement
- Specialisms

Recovery Offer

- Community Outreach
- Mutual Aid
- Wider Provision e.g. Veterans
- Delivery Sites

Partnerships

- Effective Pathways
- Profile

withyou



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**HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
27 APRIL 2022**

HOUSING MANAGEMENT POLICY

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. For Members to consider the draft Housing Management Policy before approval by Cabinet on 14 June 2022.

Summary

2. Darlington Borough Council provides over 5,300 high quality homes for local residents. To enable us to manage these properties effectively, we need to maximise rental and service charge income from Council tenants to ensure we are able to provide them with a comprehensive range of good quality housing management and support services.
3. The Housing Management Policy at **Appendix 1** sets out how we will do this and is divided into 2 main sections:
 - (a) Income Management – how we collect rent and service charges and how we will recover arrears and debts from current and former Council tenants.
 - (b) Tenancy Management – how we manage our properties and how we make decisions across a range of issues such as, garage tenancies, mutual exchanges, abandoned properties, lodgers and sub-letting, disability adaptations and mobility scooters.
4. The Tenants Panel has been consulted on the draft policy and the outcome of this consultation is given at paragraph 10. However, the proposals have received overwhelming support.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that Members consider the report and draft Housing Management Policy at Appendix 1 and agree its onward submission to Cabinet.

**Anthony Sandys
Assistant Director – Housing and Revenues**

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Anthony Sandys: Extension 6926

S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no impact on the Council’s Crime and Disorder responsibilities as a result of this report
Health and Wellbeing	Well managed Council homes will have a positive impact on the health and well-being of Council tenants
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no implications on Carbon Impact and Climate Change as a result of this report
Diversity	This policy supports the promotion of diversity
Wards Affected	All wards with Council housing
Groups Affected	Council tenants and leaseholders
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Council Plan	This report supports the Council plan to maximise rental and service charge income from Council tenants to ensure we are able to provide them with a comprehensive range of good quality housing management and support services
Efficiency	There are no implications
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

6. Darlington Borough Council provides over 5,300 high quality homes for local residents. To enable us to manage these properties effectively, we need to maximise rental and service charge income from Council tenants to ensure we are able to provide them with a comprehensive range of good quality housing management and support services.
7. The Housing Management Policy at Appendix 1 sets out how we will do this and is divided into 2 main sections.

Income Management

8. This section covers how we collect rent and service charges and how we will recover arrears and debts from current and former Council tenants, including:
 - (a) The payment options available to Council tenants, garage tenants and leaseholders to pay their rent and service charges.

- (b) The support available to tenants and leaseholders to pay their rent and service charges and to apply for welfare benefits, through our Tenancy Sustainment Team.
- (c) The recovery and management of rent arrears and debts, up to including legal action and, where appropriate, seeking possession of the property.
- (d) The processes for the write-off of unrecoverable debt and the refund of credits.
- (e) The circumstances where the Council will consider paying compensation, including mandatory compensation through law, quantifiable loss payments and discretionary compensation payments. Details of the amounts payable are given at appendix 1 of the policy.

Tenancy Management

9. This section covers how we manage our properties and how we make decisions across a range of issues, including:
- (a) How we apply a local lettings policy in certain circumstances, to ensure we make the best use of our housing and improve communities.
 - (b) The processes for the letting and management of our garage tenancies.
 - (c) Our approach and processes in relation to tenancy fraud, hoarding, lodgers and sub-letting.
 - (d) The criteria and processes for mutual exchanges, successions of tenancies and assignment of tenancies.
 - (e) The processes for the removal or addition of person(s) to a tenancy, overcrowding and under-occupation, ending a tenancy and the death of a tenant.
 - (f) The processes for identifying and dealing with abandoned properties.
 - (g) Our approach and processes in relation to responsive repairs, dealing with damp and condensation, and undertaking home visits and property inspections.
 - (h) Our approach and processes to a tenant's request to keep pets in their home.
 - (i) Our approach and processes in relation to tenants undertaking home improvements, the decoration of properties, requests for aids and adaptations to a property to meet disability needs, the storage and charging of mobility scooters and the availability of the garden tidy scheme.
 - (j) Details of our Housing Plus service, which provides intensive housing management to help tenants who may otherwise struggle to maintain their tenancy.
 - (k) The processes for dealing with void properties to ensure they are promptly inspected, repaired to an agreed standard and re-let as soon as possible.

Outcome of Consultation

10. The Tenants Panel were consulted in March 2022 and overall, the Panel supported the proposed Housing Management Policy. Examples of the Panel's comments were as follows:
- (a) "I think, although it is a large document, the level of details that has gone into is needed and it explains everything perfectly. Naturally I looked for things that would affect me the most, which is what I think most tenants will do rather than read the whole document. Everything is concise and makes sense to a casual reader. I like that it is all together rather than split over a number of documents and I think that will be preferred."
 - (b) "I believe that the document was a little long-winded in place. I understand the need to explain everything but I feel that people would lose interest with such a big document."
 - (c) "In general, I thought the document was quite an enjoyable read. Although the document was lengthy, I believe that it was necessary. It may put a few people off because of the size but once the final version has been published, I think it will be a lot more attractive."
 - (d) "Although I found it easy to read, there may be people that don't. As this will be a legal document it is completely understandable in the way that it is read but would there be an option for a 'dumber down simple version' that could be posted on social media / website? All in all, I think it is a well thought out, explanatory document."



DARLINGTON

Borough Council

Housing Services

Housing Management Policy

2022-2026

Introduction

Our aim is to ensure effective, efficient, and accountable management of our properties and tenancies. By providing robust and consistent management, we hope to build vibrant and resilient communities.

This Policy has been designed to be an effective tool to enable efficient management of our housing stock, not only within the context of the legal framework but also with reference to the economic and social issues that are faced by many of our tenants. This policy has been developed to incorporate best practice and strives for continuous improvements.

Policy Aims

- To deliver an efficient and effective approach to housing management.
- To provide an accessible and accountable tenancy management service review.
- To deliver a fair and consistent approach that reflects a commitment to creating sustainable tenancies and which balances enforcement, prevention, and support.
- To ensure that a value for money approach is embedded.
- To continually strive to understand and improve our performance.
- To ensure staff and tenants are aware of the policy and understand its aims.
- To ensure income is maximised for Housing Services and our tenants.
- To comply with legal requirements and the Council's financial and regulatory procedures.

Relevant legislation

The key areas of legislation, reference and statutory guidance material in this policy are:

- Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988
- Housing Act 1996
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Localism Act 2011
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Protection from Eviction Act 1977
- Data Protection Act 2018)
- Equality Act 2010
- Darlington Borough Council's Code of Practice – Sundry Debtors
- Sales Ledger Procedural Documentation
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Financial Regulations
- Complaints Policy
- Pre-action protocol for Possession Claims by Social Landlords

- Corona Virus Act 2020
- The Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space Moratorium and Mental Health Crisis Moratorium) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020
- Matrimonial Causes Act 1973
- Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013
- National Disability Strategy 2021
- The Charter for Social Housing Tenants – Social Housing White Paper 2021
- Building Safety Bill
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015
- Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012
- Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015
- Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Providing social housing for local people (statutory guidance)
- Land Compensation Act 1973 (as amended)
- Home Loss Payments (Prescribed Amounts) Regulations 2018
- Right to Repair – Commonhold and leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health & Safety Rating System
- Homeless Prevention Act 2017
- Care Act 2014

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all domestic properties managed by Darlington Borough Council. This includes garages and leasehold properties and focusses on managing a tenancy, in terms of tenant's rights and ensuring that tenants are aware of their responsibilities and adhere to them.

The policy covers the following areas:

- Income management:
 - Recovery and management of debt from former and current tenants and leaseholders
 - Approach to income management and support
 - Legal action
 - Debit/Credit write-off
 - Hierarchy of debt

- Refunds of account credits
- Compensation
- Tenancy management:
 - Allocation of properties including local lettings, new build, and rural properties
 - Garages
 - Tenancy fraud
 - Succession of tenancy
 - Assignment of tenancy
 - Mutual exchange
 - Addition or removal of person(s) from a tenancy
 - Abandoned properties
 - Lodgers and sub-letting
 - Overcrowding and under-occupation
 - Ending a tenancy
 - Death of a tenant
 - Repairs
 - Home visits and inspections
 - Damp and condensation
 - Pets
 - Hoarding
 - Improvements
 - Adaptations
 - Mobility scooters
 - Garden tidy scheme
 - Decoration of properties
 - Housing Plus
 - Void management

Performance

We will continually strive to understand and improve performance. There is an effective performance management framework in place to report, evaluate and review performance. Targets will be challenging, subject to regular review and will contribute to ongoing improvement. We will benchmark our performance with other housing providers both locally and nationally and use our website to show our performance and through our annual plan.

We will publish our performance online, through the Housing Connect magazine and our Annual Report.

Tenant Involvement

Tenants are at the heart of our service. Our Customer Engagement Strategy sets out how our tenants are involved in our policy and decision making, as well as suggesting improvements and better ways of working. We want them to challenge us and help us to meet our community's needs.

We will offer all our tenants the opportunity to be part of our Tenants Panel and will offer appropriate training to assist our tenants to become involved in our service.

We will consult with our tenants to help us to improve our service. We will carry out surveys online, via social media, through the post or by telephone. We will provide feedback on suggestions and surveys.

We will use any complaints as opportunities for learning and will review processes and policies where we recognise we need to improve.

DRAFT

Income Management

Recovery and Management of Debts from Former and Current Tenants and Leaseholders.

We will provide an accessible and accountable service to assist tenants in various ways to pay their rent and any money owed to us. This will include direct debit, standing order, card payment via telephone, online and cash payments via rent card. We will offer a range of support from specialist teams to assist our tenants who may find themselves in hardship. This will include money advice, budgeting support, Housing Benefit (HB) advice and Universal Credit (UC) support.

Tenants will be informed of changes to rent and other charges at least 4 weeks before these changes become effective. They will be informed annually on how much their rent and charges will be and for how many weeks this will be charged.

Tenants will also be informed of changes to rent and other charges for garages at least one week before the changes become effective.

On termination of a tenancy, the outgoing tenant will be advised of any rent arrears and other outstanding charges and settlement will be required.

Rent statements will be available online via the self-service portal or can be provided at any time.

Approach to Income Management and Support

Current Tenants

The aim of current rent recovery is to maximise rental income by preventing and controlling rent arrears.

We are committed to help our tenants to maintain a tenancy through prevention, support and debt recovery and will make all reasonable attempts to recover debts and provide practical advice and assistance to tenants facing difficulties with their rent payments.

To prevent arrears and instil a 'rent-first' culture, we will offer robust pre-allocation, affordability and vulnerability checks and procedures at sign-up stage to clarify a tenant's responsibilities including:

- Rent and other payments are being made consistently and regularly.
- Rent is payable weekly, preferably in advance.
- HB or UC is in payment.
- An assessment of the tenant's income and a calculation of benefit entitlement.
- Highlighting that whilst support will be provided, non-payment of rent is taken very seriously, and could lead to tenants losing their home.

Where required, applications for a tenant's housing costs to be paid directly to the landlord will be made via an Alternative Payment Arrangement and, for arrears, payments to be collected via Third Party Deductions in line with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) guidelines.

The introduction of UC means new relationships with a range of external partner agencies and new support services has been identified, strengthened, and developed as these changes have been implemented.

We will provide a range of support services, both in-house and through partnership working, which cover money and financial inclusion advice. The approach taken to debt recovery will be proportionate and flexible, considering individual circumstances and vulnerabilities.

We will encourage our tenants to use the Darlington Home Online service to access their account and we will provide support to those who are unable to access online services for whatever reason.

Prior to legal action, we will try to contact the tenant in a range of ways, but not restricted to; text messaging, email, telephone, letters, and visits to their home. Tenancy Sustainment Officers will also try to engage with tenants to provide advice and support. If tenants fail to engage, we will seek legal action to recover any debt owed.

We will work closely with relevant debt agencies and the Insolvency Service when a tenant has applied for the Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space), Debt Relief Order, Bankruptcy, or Individual Voluntary Arrangements. We will ensure we meet our responsibilities and where appropriate stop all recovery action related to that debt and apply the relevant protections. In the case of Breathing Space, we will suspend any recovery action during the Breathing Space period. For current tenancies, the tenant must continue to pay any ongoing rent liability or an application to end the Breathing Space will be made.

Former tenancies

The recovery of former tenant debt is undertaken through the specialised Housing Income Management Team. This approach aims to ensure that recovery action takes account of the individual's whole indebtedness to Housing Services.

Recovery action will be firm but fair and will involve correspondence, telephone, text, email and personal contact where appropriate. Tracing agencies will be employed to establish the whereabouts of debtors, where this is not known.

Legal action will be taken to recover former tenant debts owed to the Council where appropriate.

External debt collection agencies will be used for recovery of non-payment.

Leaseholders

Leaseholders are charged annually for the costs incurred by the Council in repairing, maintaining and improving services and structures that are shared, in common with other occupiers in the building.

Recovery action will be taken for non-payment of charges, breach of lease obligations and payment arrangements.

We may apply for a charging order to be placed upon a leasehold property or forfeiture of lease for non-payment.

Garages

Garage tenants are charged rent weekly. Garage rents are VAT exempt for Council tenants unless they rent more than 2 garages.

Recovery action will be taken for non-payment of charges, breach of lease obligations and payment arrangements.

We will deal quickly and effectively on accounts for non-payment of garage rent with evictions being carried out where rent has not been paid regularly and arrears remain.

Sundry Debts

The recovery of sundry debts is undertaken by the Housing Income Management Team in line with Darlington Borough Council's Code of Practice – Sundry Debtors.

Housing Accounts Officers will ensure that invoices are raised promptly following the supply of goods or services, making agreements to pay, recording payments made and producing reminders to pay.

External debt collection agencies will be used for recovery of outstanding debts, or they may be referred to Legal Services.

Rechargeable Repairs

Housing Services have an agreed rechargeable repair procedure in determining when a recharge should be applied.

The circumstances leading to the need for repair following damage to property are varied, such as:

- When the Police have obtained a warrant to enter a Council property, where access has been refused and or if charges are brought against the tenant or household by the Police, the recharge will be brought against the tenant.
- In cases of alleged criminal damage to a property, the tenant will be recharged unless they can produce evidence that the matter has been reported to the Police and logged as a crime.
- Tenants who vacate their properties leaving items that must be removed will be recharged the cost of removal and where necessary cleaning and disposal including overgrown gardens and unofficial alterations.
- Tenants who misuse the repairs call-out service will be invoiced for the cost of the call-out service. Similarly, Tenants reporting similar repairs for repetitive damage and abuse of the property will lead to action under the tenancy conditions.

Rechargeable repairs for a current tenant will be added to their rent account. Recharges for former tenancies will be included in any other outstanding balance.

Legal Action

We will always seek to assist the tenant and will seek legal action only as a last resort. In the event of all efforts being exhausted, recovery action will be taken, which will include applying to the court for possession of the property, a charging order being placed upon a leasehold property or forfeiture of lease. In the case of ongoing, unpaid garage rent, a legal notice will be served to the garage tenant's last known address and possession taken 7 days later. Any items left within the garage would be stored for a month in line with legislation and disposed of, as appropriate.

Where possession action is required due to arrears on an Introductory Tenancy, we will issue a Notice of Possession Proceedings. Tenants will have the right of appeal. Introductory Tenancies may be extended by a maximum of six months if we have concerns about the tenancy. These concerns will include but are not restricted to; rent arrears or anti-social behaviour.

For tenants who are made subject to a bankruptcy order or Debt Relief Order, consideration will be given to seeking possession of the property as, although the debt may not be recovered, it remains a breach of tenancy as rent remains unpaid.

Debit/Credit Write-off

The Council has agreed procedures for determining whether and when debts are written-off. Under the current arrangements, the Director of Operations Group is authorised to write-off debts below £500. For debts above £500, Cabinet approval is required.

Write-offs will be authorised on an annual basis.

The Housing Income Management Team will routinely assess all debts for the likelihood of payment and consider the individual circumstances of each debt within a consistent framework for decision making.

Former tenant debts, including rechargeable repairs, may be written-off where recovery is uneconomical to the Council or the tenant's whereabouts remain unknown for over a year. Any debts written-off will be reinstated at any time if recovery is deemed to be appropriate.

Credit balances following tenancy termination checks may be refunded. Any credit balances will be refunded subject to former tenants producing satisfactory identification within the statutory period of limitations.

Current rent arrears will only be considered for write-off where the tenant is subject to the Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space), Debt Relief Orders, Bankruptcy or Individual Voluntary Arrangements.

Hierarchy of Debt

The range of services provided can sometimes result in a tenant receiving more than one chargeable service owing to Housing Services. In such circumstances the order of debt recovery for current and former tenancies will be:

- Current tenant rent account – dwellings and garages
- Current tenant sub accounts – legal fees, rechargeable repairs, overpayments of HB or UC housing costs
- Former tenant rent arrears – dwellings and garages
- Former tenant sub accounts – legal fees, overpayments of HB or UC housing costs, rechargeable repairs, void, and sanitisation.

The arrangements to pay debts will recognise the multiple types of debt and the allocation of payments made will be in order of the priority as set out above.

Refunds of Account Credits

Where a tenant has a credit on an account and requests a refund, all other accounts relating to the tenant will be checked before a refund is authorised. Refunds will only be given if the tenant has no other outstanding debts due to Housing Services or Revenues and Benefit Services. If other debts exist, any credits will be transferred to clear or reduce other debts owing to Housing Services using the hierarchy of debt, as shown above.

Where a genuine credit exists, refunds will be actioned in line with our service standards. Refunds will be in the form of a cheque.

Where a credit exists on a former tenant account following tenancy termination, checks will be made for other outstanding debts owed to Darlington Borough Council and that there is no overpayment of HB or UC housing costs due to be paid back. Any credit due after these checks will be refunded in line with our service standards.

Where no forwarding address is available, or where we are unable to contact former tenants to repay any account credit due, credits will be held on the former account for a maximum of 3 months prior to being recommended for a credit write-on against the bad debt provision.

Where a tenant owes debts to Darlington Borough Council, we will deduct amounts in lieu of payment from any compensation payment, redecoration, disturbance allowance or home loss payment.

Compensation

There may be occasions when tenants may suffer some disadvantage, inconvenience, or loss as a result of our actions or mistakes, and that in some instances compensation may be appropriate.

Through compensation, we aim to provide redress to restore a tenant to the position they were in had a service failure not occurred. There are several remedies available to put a situation right, but we recognise that in some instances financial compensation may be the only and appropriate form of redress.

We will offer compensation payments that are fair and proportionate, and each case will be considered on a case-by-case basis. We will also consider compensation when the damage or any detriment has been caused by a third party (contractor) working on our behalf.

There are 3 categories of compensation payments:

- Mandatory through law (such as home loss or disturbance)
- Quantifiable loss payments (where people can demonstrate actual loss)
- Discretionary payments (for time and trouble/distress and inconvenience)

We will not consider compensation in the following situations:

- Claims for personal injury.
- Claims for damage or service failure caused by circumstances beyond a landlord's control (such as, through storm, flooding or pandemic).
- Problems caused by a third party not working for the landlord.
- Claims that should be covered by a home contents insurance policy; this includes damage through flood or fire to tenants' belongings, furniture, and floor coverings.
- Claims for loss of earnings.
- Where there is impending legal action.
- The loss or damage was caused by a tenant, household member or visitor and includes failure to report a repair promptly or keep an appointment.
- The fault was unforeseeable and/or caused by a third party or we had no control over it, such as a water leak from a neighbouring property.
- Possessions are lost, stolen or damaged through no fault of Housing Services.
- Items which have been unavoidably damaged by improvement works, such as when the installation of central heating has unavoidably left holes in flooring to accommodate pipework.
- Damage was caused by condensation due to lifestyle.
- The damaged items were removed or replaced before we have inspected them.
- Loss of the supply of gas, electricity or water is outside our control.

Tenants should ensure they have sufficient home contents insurance to cover damage to their property. Compensation is not intended as a substitute for home contents insurance.

We will offset any payment of compensation against any rent or service charges arrears owed to us where it is fair to do so.

Mandatory through law

- Home loss payments
- Disturbance payments
- Improvements
- Right to Repair
- Damage to personal belongings, furniture and decoration following negligence

Home Loss Payments - The home loss payment compensates tenants who have lived in their property for a minimum of 12 months and are required to move home permanently because of redevelopment or demolition of their home.

Displacement must be of a permanent nature or where the works are so extensive that the dwelling has lost its original identity, for example, following works the property has more, or less bedrooms than prior to the works.

We usually make the payment after the date a tenant moves out, however in some circumstances we may release monies early to allow a tenant to pay a bond or deposit for new accommodation.

Lodgers or other people living in a property, who are not the named tenant are not eligible for a home loss payment.

The amount of home loss payment is set by the Government each year.

Disturbance payments - Disturbance payments are made to compensate a tenant for moving to another property temporarily or to people who have lived at the property for less than 12 months and are required to move home permanently.

The situations in which a disturbance payment can be made are broadly the same as those for home loss payments. Lodgers and other persons living in the property who are not the named tenant are not entitled to a disturbance payment.

Disturbance payments cover reasonable expenses incurred by the entitled person during moving. We will consider each claim on a case-by-case basis but in general we would class the following as reasonable expenses:

- Expenses that relate strictly to the move such as, removal firm costs.
- Expenses reasonably incurred as a direct and natural consequence of the displacement such as redecoration, re-connection of landline phones, redirection of post, re-fitting, or replacement of carpeting because carpets from a former dwelling do not fit, removal and refitting of gas or electric cookers and washing machines.

Improvement payments - Tenants may claim compensation for improvements they have carried out to their homes when they are leaving.

Prior permission from us must have been obtained for a 'qualifying' improvement and tenants can claim for the cost of materials and labour costs, but not for appliances or their own labour.

The amount payable can be up to £3,000 though claims under £50 will not be considered.

Payments will be adjusted for undue wear and tear or if any defects to the improvement exist at the end of the tenancy.

Any claims for compensation for improvements must be made in writing between 28 days before the actual end of the tenancy or up to 14 days after the tenancy has ended. Tenants must be able to provide the original receipts or proof of financial transactions to be eligible for the compensation. The improvement must still be in good condition and full working order. A full list of qualifying improvements is available in **Appendix 1**.

Right to Repair - The Right to Repair Scheme covers specific repairs which cost less than £250 and should be done within a set time limit. If we do not carry them out within that time, the tenant may be entitled to compensation. A full list of qualifying repairs is available in **Appendix 1**.

Damage to property/belongings - Housing Services has a responsibility to insure our buildings and tenants are responsible for insuring the contents of their home. If damage has occurred to a property which was our fault, the tenant may be able to make a claim to our insurer for compensation.

Quantifiable loss payments

Examples of quantifiable loss include:

- Increased bills due to electric heaters provided whilst a repair is carried out on a heating system.
- Alternative accommodation costs.
- Payments towards cleaning or removals where we have failed to meet our obligations.

Any such costs must have been reasonably incurred and tenants will be asked to provide evidence of such loss.

Discretionary payments

Discretionary payments for compensation may be made where there has been a loss of facilities, such as heating or hot water.

Goodwill payments may also be made when there has been a failure of service, which has caused delay or distress.

Examples of discretionary payments include:

- Failure to handle complaints appropriately.
- Unreasonable delays in providing a service, such as delays for repairs.
- Failure to provide a service that has been charged for (more than 10 working days) and due to Housing Services failures.
- Temporary loss of amenities (within Housing Services control).
- Failure to meet published response times.
- Loss of use of part of a property.

- Failure to follow policy and procedures.

Full details of how discretionary payments are decided is available in **Appendix 1**.

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Tenancy Management

Allocation of Properties Including Local Lettings.

Allocations of properties are made with reference to the [Tees Valley Common Allocation Policy](#) (external link) to ensure fair and transparent allocations across the Tees Valley Partnership.

We may apply a local lettings policy when appropriate, to ensure we make the best use of our housing and improve communities. To ensure transparency and fairness, some local letting criteria will require the agreement of the appropriate Cabinet Member.

We operate our lettings scheme through an agreed band quota system to allow social mobility and to meet housing need.

Local lettings criteria may include (please note this is not exhaustive):

- Rural properties - applicants with a local connection to an area may be awarded a higher priority over those that do not (see **Appendix 2** for areas this applies to).
- Age restricted - some properties may have an age criterion applied, such as sheltered schemes and adapted ground floor accommodation.
- New build properties - additional checks and criteria may be applied to ensure affordability and to ensure balanced communities.
- Sustainable communities – some properties may have stricter criteria applied to, for example, where there has been previous anti-social behaviour or criminal activity within the area.
- Areas of concentration - where there are areas of over concentration of, for example, children and youths creating the potential for management problems, some properties may be under-occupied, or the age criteria changed, or additional criteria applied at next let. Where this is applied, prior agreement will be sought from the Assistant Director and Cabinet Member for Housing.

It will be made clear on our adverts which properties our local letting policy applies to.

In the following circumstances an applicant may not need to meet the local connection criteria to qualify (not exhaustive):

- Members of the Armed Forces where the application is made within 5 years of discharge (includes bereaved spouses, civil partners and unmarried partners leaving service family accommodation following the death of their partner).
- Persons moving area to escape violence or harm, as well as enabling those who need to return, such as homeless families and care leavers and those who need support to rehabilitate and integrate back into the community.

Garages

We have a number of garages, which both council tenants and other residents living in the private sector can rent. Garage rents are VAT exempt for Council tenants unless they rent more than 2 garages.

Applicants should have no outstanding debt to Housing Services and a maximum of one garage can be rented by a household at any one time. In some exceptional circumstances, we may allow an applicant or household to rent more than one garage but this will be on a case by case basis. Any household that already rents more than one garage will not be expected to return their additional garages until the tenancy is terminated.

If a garage is situated within the garden of a property, the tenant of that property has first priority when the garage becomes empty, if they have an active garage application at the time of notice being given on the garage.

Those applicants that do not rent a garage from us will have next priority for empty garages over those that do, even if they have had an application registered for longer.

On application, applicants will be expected to provide documents to prove their identity and current address. These may include documents such as (list not exhaustive):

- Proof of current address, such as utility bills.
- Photo ID.
- National Insurance Number (NINO).
- Valid driving licence.
- Proof of date of birth.

We will use these personal identifiers to allow us to carry out security checks with tenants, to ensure we do not inadvertently divulge data such as rent arrears to incorrect person(s).

Tenants are expected to update us if they change their address to ensure we hold accurate records.

Garages should not be used for the following purposes and may be classed as a breach of tenancy:

- To run a business or to trade from.
- The storage of flammable or hazardous equipment.
- Illegal purposes.

We will make all garage offers in writing and will be held for 3 working days. If an applicant fails to respond within this timescale the offer will be retracted.

We will cancel any garage application after 3 no responses to offers.

Garage tenancies are a legal contract and must be ended in writing.

We require one week's written notice and all keys should be returned upon termination as agreed by us. Garages should be left clean and tidy and empty of personal belongings and items. Tenants will be recharged for any removal costs or repair costs which are not due to

fair wear and tear. Any items left within the garage will be stored for a month in line with legislation, disposed of and tenants recharged.

Tenancy Fraud

We will take appropriate action in relation to possible social housing fraud including:

- Unauthorised sub-letting.
- Non-occupation by the tenant.
- Anyone fraudulently obtaining a social housing tenancy or garage.
- Anyone wrongly claiming succession or unauthorised assignment of a tenancy.
- Key-selling – where a tenant passes the keys for a property on to someone else in return for a payment or favour.

We will request personal information that is relevant and adequate to ensure we can carry out appropriate ID and security checks before, during and after a tenancy.

When we contact tenants, we may use confirmation of personal identifiers such as date of birth, NINO, normal payment method etc. to ensure we are talking with the right person and to avoid any disclosure of personal information to the wrong person.

Succession of Tenancy

Succession allows for a tenancy to be passed on to certain qualifying people when the tenant dies. The Housing Act 1985 provides the legislation for the right to succeed.

The law allows only one statutory succession to each tenancy. Consequently, on the death of the tenant there can be no further right of succession where the deceased tenant is classed as a successor. A deceased tenant is classed as a successor where:

- They became the tenant by succession.
- The tenancy was assigned to them as a potential successor.
- They previously exchanged from another property and had been a successor there.
- They became the tenant under a court order and the previous tenant was a successor.

Where a joint tenant dies, the tenancy passes to the surviving joint tenant/s automatically, regardless of the relationship between the joint tenants. This is called survivorship and counts as one succession. There can be no further statutory succession.

If a deceased tenant is not classed as a successor, an applicant will qualify to succeed to the tenancy if they were occupying the property as their main home at the date of the death and either:

- They are the tenant's wife, husband, civil partner, or partner (this includes same sex couples) provided he or she lived with the tenant in the home as their principal home prior to the death of the tenant; or

- They are another member of the tenant's family and they have lived with the tenant as a permanent resident for the preceding 12 months. Members of the family means parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece.

Statutory succession overrides any other claims to the tenancy (such as, under the deceased tenant's will).

Where there is more than one person qualified to succeed, the tenant's spouse or civil partner is to have priority. If there are two or more family members entitled to succeed, then they must agree between them which one is to be the successor. If they cannot agree, a management decision will be made as to whom the tenancy should pass to.

A person who succeeds to a tenancy is granted a continuation of the existing tenancy, not a new one.

There may be circumstances where a property would be more suitable for other individuals rather than a successor, for example if the successor is significantly under or over occupying, or the property is adapted for a disabled person. In such circumstances, we may look to rehouse the successor into a more suitable property. The successor would be considered for a direct match to an available and suitable property.

If the successor refuses to move voluntarily then we may serve a notice on the successor between 6 and 12 months after the previous tenant's death.

If no succession right exists, we may consider the granting of a discretionary tenancy of the current property. This will be an introductory tenancy and will be let in accordance with the Tees Valley Common Allocation Policy.

We will consider each case on its merits following receipt of a written request to remain in the property, which must be received no later than two months after the tenant's death.

Assignment of Tenancy

Assignment (passing on a tenancy) is only possible for secure tenancies in the following circumstances (as set out in the tenancy agreement):

- As a mutual exchange.
- Where a court orders it as part of divorce or judicial separation proceedings on a termination of a civil partnership under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984 or the Civil Partnership Act 2004.
- Where a court orders it in exceptional circumstances.
- To a potential successor, for example, someone who would have had the right to succeed to the tenancy on the death of the tenant. This is only possible if there has been no previous assignment or succession.

Assignment is not possible under any other circumstances and is not applicable to introductory tenancies.

Mutual Exchange

Requests for a mutual exchange can be accepted from any public sector tenant who has a secure tenancy. It is not applicable for introductory tenancies.

We will only refuse consent on the same grounds available for secure tenants and outlined in Schedule 3 of the Housing Act 1985. Where the tenant is in breach of their tenancy, including being in rent arrears, we can impose a condition requiring the breach to be put right. If a condition is imposed, the exchange cannot take place until the breach has been remedied.

We will give or refuse consent within timescales as dictated by legislation from the date the application is received.

We will carry out comprehensive inspections of Council owned properties where the tenant has requested a mutual exchange.

Permission for an exchange will normally be subject to all the tenancies concerned having been conducted satisfactorily and we will expect that all properties are in a good state of repair and decoration. All monies owed to Housing Services should be repaid in full before the exchange is agreed. Any alterations made to the property by the outgoing tenant will become the responsibility of the new tenant and Housing Services will not be responsible for any repairs that are the tenant's responsibility.

Requests for exchanges will be assessed in line with current Housing legislation and any reasons for refusal will be provided in writing.

When tenants have undertaken a mutual exchange without the consent of Housing Services it is known as an unauthorised mutual exchange.

If an unauthorised mutual exchange has taken place, Housing Services will visit the occupiers immediately and we will advise the occupiers that legal action will be sought by the council if they fail to return to their previous property. Housing Services will also advise on any implications related to welfare benefit claims for the property.

The occupier is responsible for paying full rent on their previous property.

A Notice to Quit (NTQ) will be issued to both parties and the tenants will be given 4 weeks to return to their previous property. If the tenants fail to return to their previous property, we will take legal action and commence possession proceedings.

We will recharge for any costs involved in gaining possession of a property through the Courts and for any associated costs in removals, gaining access and returning a property to a lettable standard.

Addition or Removal of Person(s) from a Tenancy

Sole to joint tenancy

There is no automatic right to the creation of a joint tenancy from an existing sole tenancy.

We will consider a number of conditions before allowing the addition of a joint tenant including (not exhaustive):

- Proposed joint tenant is the existing tenant's husband/wife/civil partner/partner.
- Proposed joint tenant is residing at the property at the time of application.
- Proposed joint tenant has been residing at the property for a period of at least 12 months immediately prior to the application.
- The rent account is up to date.
- Proposed joint tenant must not at any time have been evicted due to anti-social behaviour.
- Proposed tenant must not own a property in the UK or abroad.
- Is the property suitable for the joint tenants' needs in terms of its size and/or adaptations?

If a joint application is made for a transfer, it will be at our discretion whether to convert the sole tenancy into a joint tenancy, considering the above listed conditions.

If we agree to convert a sole tenancy to a joint tenancy, a termination of tenancy notice should be completed by the sole tenant to end their current tenancy. The new joint tenancy will need to be signed by both joint tenants and will start the day after the sole tenancy ends.

The existing sole tenant will be advised about the implications of creating a joint tenancy before it is entered into such as:

- A new tenancy agreement will be signed.
- The type of tenancy may change to a flexible tenancy.
- Rent charges may increase.
- Either party will be able to terminate the tenancy at any time.

Joint to sole tenancy

Either party within a joint tenancy can terminate the tenancy by giving 4 weeks' notice. However, there is no automatic right for the remaining tenant to take over the tenancy as a sole tenant.

A termination notice, in writing, must be provided to us by the outgoing tenant and the proposed date they are leaving the property must be provided.

We will consider a number of conditions before allowing the remaining tenant to take on a new sole tenancy for the property including the following (not exhaustive):

- Proposed sole tenant must be residing at the property at the time of application.

- Proposed sole tenant must have been residing at the property for a period of at least 12 months immediately prior to the application.
- The rent account is up to date and all sundry debts or Housing related debts should be cleared.
- The proposed sole tenant must be able to afford the tenancy (an affordability check will be carried out to confirm this).
- The proposed sole tenant must not at any time have been evicted due to anti-social behaviour or be involved in any current anti-social behaviour complaints.
- The proposed tenant must not own a property in the UK or abroad.
- The property must be suitable for the proposed sole tenant's needs in terms of its size and/or adaptations.

Abandoned properties

Tenants may be away from their homes for an extended period for several reasons. If a tenant leaves a property, this does not necessarily mean they have abandoned the property. Legally it is only when the tenant breaches the "only and principal home" requirement that the tenancy loses its security (section 81 Housing Act 1985).

We expect Tenants to notify us of any periods of absence as set out in the Tenancy Agreement.

We will ensure that we:

- Provide a consistent approach when dealing with suspected abandoned properties.
- Commence investigations promptly to:
 - a) help reduce rent loss,
 - b) reduce additional costs to tenants,
 - c) reduce the risk of criminal activity,
 - d) reduce the risk of damage to the property, and
 - e) prevent unauthorised occupation.

The law states that a tenancy may only be ended in the following ways:

- By the tenant leaving the premises after giving the landlord notice.
- By the tenant leaving the premises after a court order has granted possession.
- By the tenant failing to live in the property and therefore forfeiting their security of tenure.

When Housing Services are aware of a potentially abandoned property, we will make enquiries to establish if the tenant intends to return and will consider all individual circumstances. Examples of occasions when an un-occupied property may not have been abandoned include:

- When a tenant is in prison - the length of time is immaterial if they have the intention to return.
- When a tenant has gone on a long holiday.

- When a tenant is in hospital and has not had the time to let us know.
- When a tenant is in long-term care or rehabilitation.

At the first sight or report of abandonment, the Housing Officer will act promptly to substantiate the details of the case. We will arrange to secure, if appropriate, suspected abandoned properties within one working day of a report being received.

Where we believe that the tenant may have abandoned the property (including anonymous notification) we will take appropriate action, in accordance with the legislative requirements and our abandonment procedure. This may include:

- Changing of locks and securing of the property.
- Legal action to repossess the home.

We will take a multi-agency approach when investigating a potential abandonment and will ensure a thorough investigation is carried out. We will carry out checks to establish occupation or abandonment including (not exhaustive):

- Attempt to contact the tenant using all telephone numbers previously supplied by the tenant.
- Visit the property at various times of the day.
- Check if there a key on the other side of the lock, as this could indicate someone is inside the property.
- Check if there a car or other vehicle on the property.
- Check if there is condensation on the windows.
- Check if there is washing on the line.
- Check if there are any animals at the property.
- Check the condition of the garden.
- Check if the rubbish been taken out, or if the recycling box is full.
- Look through the letterbox and windows.
- Check if there is furniture inside the property (if this is visible).
- Speak with neighbours/family/next of kin.
- Check if there is a pile up of letters in the hallway (if this is visible).
- Take utility meter readings (gas/electric/water) if there are external meters.
- Check the rent account for the last payment.
- Check if recent repairs have been carried out by Building Services.
- Check if they are in prison, hospital or other care accommodation.

If, following on from any investigation, it is evident that the tenant is no longer residing at the property, a NTQ will be served on the property. This notice will warn the tenant that the property may be repossessed after 28 days unless the tenant makes contact. If it is a joint tenancy, then separate notices for each tenant will be served.

If the tenant returns before the NTQ has expired, then the NTQ becomes invalid and the security of the tenancy is regained. A Housing Officer will carry out a follow up visit to the property to confirm occupation.

On expiry of the NTQ, if no response has been received and the property remains empty, security of tenure has ended and access will be gained to the property and the locks will be changed.

Once Officers have completed all appropriate checks and authorisation has been given by a Senior Officer, and all are satisfied that the property has been abandoned, the tenancy may be terminated. There may be occasions where a court order will be required, and Senior Officers and Legal Services will work together around this.

We will recharge for any costs involved in gaining possession of a property through the Courts and for any associated costs in removals, gaining access and returning a property to a lettable standard.

On completion of the lock change, two members of staff will inspect the property and complete an inventory. The inventory will detail all contents left in the property and photographs may be taken. Both members of staff will agree and sign the inventory form.

Any items of value will be stored for 31 days in a suitable location and any damage to the items will be noted on the inventory.

Items in storage will be kept for a period of no less than 31 days, after which Darlington Borough Council will become the owner of the belongings and they may be disposed of. Any perishable items will not be stored and will be disposed of immediately.

Once the belongings have been placed in storage, the tenants forwarding address may be obtained or the tenant may make contact. In the case of a forwarding address being received, a letter will be sent to the tenant advising of the disposal date of their belongings. The letter will also explain that all costs incurred since the property was abandoned will be recharged to the tenant and this will also include any outstanding rent.

Lodgers and Sub-Letting

Under the terms of the tenancy agreement, Introductory tenants may not sub-let their property and must use it as their principal home. We may, however, allow a secure tenant to sub-let part of their home with our written agreement.

Tenants must request written permission from Housing Services before sub-letting part of their home.

The legal relationship between the tenant and the landlord remains the same. The tenant's responsibility for payment of rent and charges, and adherence to the tenancy terms remains unaffected.

Overcrowding and Under-Occupation

We recognise that in some instances, accommodation may, due to family circumstances, become too small or too large for the household's needs.

Where such issues arise, we will work with the tenant, if they wish to be rehoused, to find the most suitable housing option available to them through the Tees Valley Common Allocation Policy. We will also inform prospective tenants of the potential impact on their benefits if they under or over occupy their property, according to the government's definition of this.

Ending a Tenancy

When a tenant wants to end their tenancy, they must give four weeks' notice in writing, except in the case of the death of the tenant.

Once completed, the termination of a tenancy is a legal binding document and the decision to accept a written withdrawal of the notice to terminate is discretionary.

We will assess each request to withdraw a termination notice on a case-by-case basis and individual circumstances, and information available regarding the conduct of the tenancy will be used to make this decision.

A joint tenant may unilaterally bring a joint tenancy to an end by completing a termination notice. We will contact both tenants to advise the tenancy will be terminated and the date it expires.

Where one tenant wishes to remain in the property, we will work with them and assess their circumstances. We may offer them a new tenancy however, each case will be assessed on an individual basis, considering things such as (not exhaustive):

- Affordability.
- Size of the property.
- Conduct of the joint tenancy.
- Condition of the property.

All keys for properties and garages are due to be returned on the date and location as agreed with us. If all keys are not returned, the outgoing tenant will be recharged for any works involved in accessing the property or garage and replacing the locks.

Properties, gardens, outbuildings, and garages should be cleared of all personal belongings and furniture, and the property should be left in a clean and well decorated condition. We will recharge for any removal, cleaning or repair costs involved in returning a property, garden, or garage to a lettable condition.

Any items left will be stored for a period of no less than 31 days, after which Darlington Borough Council will become the owner and they may be disposed of. Any perishable items will not be stored and will be disposed of.

Death of a Tenant

When a tenant dies, their executor or administrator of their estate can end the tenancy by surrender (returning the keys to Housing Services) or by giving notice to quit. If we do not receive a termination notice or keys are not handed in, we may serve a Notice to Quit on the Personal Representative and the Public Trustee.

Until a tenancy is formally ended, rent and service charges continue to be charged to the estate. Charges will also be made for any costs incurred for clearance, cleaning, securing and storage of any items left within a property. Any items will be stored for a period of no less than 31 days after which Darlington Borough Council will become the owner and they may be disposed of. Any perishable items will not be stored and will be disposed of.

Should court action be required, we will recharge all costs related to this to the estate of the former tenant.

Repairs

We will carry out remedial repairs to a property or garage before a new tenant moves in, but this does not include internal decorating.

We expect that any subsequent repairs should be reported by the current tenant in a timely manner to reduce any further damage to the property such as, reporting a leak as soon as identified to reduce water damage. We may recharge for the cost of repairs if a repair has not been reported in a timely manner.

We operate an emergency repairs service out of hours 365 days per year. This service is for emergency repairs only and full details can be found in the Repair's Booklet at www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/repairs.

We will recharge for any repairs which are not due to fair wear and tear. We will also recharge for any repairs which are non-emergency but have been reported and attended to on an emergency basis.

We will carry out regulatory checks, assessments, and servicing to the following:

- Gas appliances (such as boilers and fires but excluding tenants' cookers).
- Electrics (excluding tenants' own appliances).
- Stair lifts (where fitted).
- Fire risk assessments (to communal areas).

Tenants must allow us access to carry out these checks for Health and Safety compliance. We will take legal and enforcement action to gain access if required.

Home Visits and Inspections

We will carry out a full inspection of your home within the first 6 months of an introductory tenancy. We will contact you before this appointment to arrange a suitable date and time.

If we identify any issues, such as damage caused by the tenant, we will highlight these and will expect the tenant to resolve these.

We may extend the introductory tenancy period to allow issues to be resolved.

In line with our tenancy agreement, we may carry out inspections of our properties at any time throughout a tenancy. Appropriate notice will be given to the tenant (normally 24 hours) wherever possible, however some visits such as those around non-payment of rent cannot be pre-arranged, and we will visit without an appointment.

We will always carry appropriate identification with us to assist tenants in identifying us as Council employees.

We may also, from time to time, carry out inspections to verify the occupants of a household as part of our anti-fraud and sub-letting measures (see above).

Damp and Condensation

Dealing with damp and mould is a high priority and we will always take reports seriously. We recognise that it can cause tenants distress and inconvenience, so we aim to take a proactive stance through improvements to ventilation and improving the energy efficiency of our properties.

Every home will get condensation at some point and is usually at its worst during the winter, when windows and doors are shut and it's cold outside and warm inside. Tenants may notice condensation in bathrooms, kitchens, and bedrooms most regularly.

Condensation is not necessarily a problem, if the surface has time to dry out each day. Damp occurs when the moisture collects but does not have chance to dry out.

We will take a proactive stance to reports of damp, mould, and condensation from our tenants. When a property is empty, we carry out full inspections, looking for any signs of dampness so we can carry out repairs before a new tenant moves in. We recognise that a number of our properties are older, so when we carry out improvements to our properties, we will improve ventilation to assist with reducing condensation.

We will offer advice to tenants as well as carrying out any necessary repairs to our properties. We will assess each report on an individual basis.

We recognise that tenants may struggle to maintain the warmth of their property due to financial issues. We will refer tenants, where appropriate, to our Tenancy Sustainment team for budget advice to assist with managing fuel bills. We may refer tenants to their energy suppliers direct or signpost to external agencies such as Citizens Advice when appropriate.

We expect that any repairs or signs of damp should be reported by the current tenant in a timely manner, to reduce any further damage to the property, for example, reporting a leak

as soon as identified to reduce water damage. We may recharge for the cost of repairs if a repair has not been reported in a timely manner.

Pets

We allow pet(s) within most of our properties. Tenants at some of our sheltered schemes have voted to not allow pets; this is reviewed regularly and is based on the majority decision of tenants.

Should a tenant wish to have a pet within their home, they must first seek written permission from us, and we will assess each application on its own merit.

We will take the following into account when assessing:

- Number of pet(s) within the property.
- Style and size of the property.
- Condition of the property.
- History of managing the tenancy.
- Type and number of pets.
- If the scheme allows pets.

Successful applicants will be required to sign the “Responsible Pet Owners” contract and are responsible for ensuring their pet does not cause any nuisance or annoyance. They must ensure that their property, garden, and pet(s) are kept clean and pest free. Dogs must be microchipped, and the information kept up to date as required by the Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015.

We may request that a tenant re-homes their pet(s) should we substantiate any complaints about the pet(s), the condition of the property or garden.

Hoarding

Hoarding has been classified as a mental disorder. As a clinical symptom, it can occur in many psychiatric disorders such as dementia, schizophrenia, depression, eating and personality disorders and post-traumatic stress disorder.

People who hoard may keep things for the same reasons as anyone else, including sentimental value or utility value (item is/could be useful). The hoarder may view their behaviour as a lifestyle choice, and to some extent this is the case.

We will take a multi-agency approach and work with the tenant, partner agencies, support agencies and statutory services in relation to hoarding issues.

We will take decisive action where hoarding causes a health and safety or safeguarding risk to the tenant, to other tenants, the property or Council operatives.

We will use a combination of intervention and enforcement measures, such as applying to Court for an injunction or possession proceedings.

Improvements

Should a tenant wish to carry out improvements to their home and/or garden they must first seek written permission from Housing Services.

We assess each application case by case, and no work should be carried out prior to written permission being granted.

We will carry out post inspections on all improvement works to ensure they are completed to a satisfactory standard.

If improvements are carried out without permission, tenants will be asked to return the property to its original condition or will be recharged for any works carried out by Housing Services to return the property to its original condition.

Some works may require permission from Building Control or Planning Permission, as well as Housing Services and work should not be started before this is granted. Tenants are responsible for applying and paying for any charges or application fees.

Adaptations

The Council is committed to ensuring that aids and adaptations are accessible to all residents, including our tenants.

We are committed to ensuring that we do everything reasonably possible to ensure that our tenants can live independently in their homes for as long as possible. We aim to ensure that tenants are aware of the range of options if we are unable for any reason to adapt their current home and to deliver a cost-effective service.

We will work in partnership with agencies including Occupational Therapists, NHS, Housing Asset Surveyors, GPs to ensure that we carry out effective, long-term adaptations that meet tenant's current and future needs and provide value for money.

It is not always possible for us to adapt a tenant's current or prospective home and we will work closely with them to find suitable, alternative accommodation when this occurs. We will do everything we can to support tenants through the re-housing process.

Applications for adaptations are assessed on a case-by-case basis and we will take the following into account:

- Availability of other suitable accommodation within the Borough.
- Individual circumstances and local connections.
- Future needs of the tenant.
- Location of the property.
- Type of property.
- Suitability of property for adaptation.
- Accessibility.

- Cost of adaptation.

Mobility Scooters

We will assess each application for an access ramp for mobility scooters on a case-by-case basis. We will consider (not exhaustive):

- Location of property.
- Size of scooter.
- Accessibility.
- Type of property.
- Space for suitable turning.
- Medical reasons for request.
- Extent of work required, including whether any structural work will be required.

It is not always possible for us to adapt a tenant's current or prospective home for a scooter, and we will work closely with them to find suitable, alternative accommodation when this occurs, or we will look at alternative solutions for their scooter storage in their current home. We will do everything we can to support tenants through the process.

Mobility scooters should be stored in a safe manner and not cause obstruction or a trip hazard either inside or outside the property. Mobility scooters are not to be stored in internal or external communal areas.

All mobility scooters should have appropriate insurance and be in good working order.

Some of our sheltered schemes have limited space for scooter storage. There may be a waiting list for a space and therefore, tenants should not purchase a scooter before seeking permission from Housing Services to ensure there is available space.

Garden Tidy Scheme

We offer a limited garden tidy scheme for tenants who cannot look after their own gardens. The scheme covers up to 6 cuts of grass each year and hedges are trimmed twice a year. The scheme does not include weeding or planting. This is a free service to all eligible tenants.

Tenants may be eligible for the scheme if:

- They are of state pension age; or
- They receive high-rate disability living allowance or enhanced level Personal Independence Payment; and
- They do not have anyone under the state pension age of 60 (or able bodied) living with them.

Decoration of Properties

Tenants are responsible for the internal decoration of their homes and are responsible for repairing internal decoration due to damage caused by the tenant or household members, such as a leak following DIY.

We may provide a contribution towards the cost of decoration in the following circumstances:

- At the start of a new tenancy to assist tenants to improve their new home.
- Following damage which was caused by our negligence.
- Following improvement works carried out by us, such as new kitchens, bathrooms, or central heating.

Tenants are recommended to take contents insurance to assist with claims for damage to decoration.

Housing Plus

We offer an intensive, pro-active housing management service to help tenants who may otherwise struggle to maintain their tenancy. For a weekly charge, tenants have a dedicated Housing Plus Officer who will carry out regular home visits and is on hand for assistance around:

- Managing the digital tenancy.
- Assisting with welfare benefit claims.
- Helping to set up bank accounts and budgeting skills.
- Advice on sustaining a tenancy appropriately.
- Assisting with any issues with neighbours.
- Signposting to relevant specialist agencies.
- Providing advice and intervention to help manage a tenancy.
- Offering relevant advice and taking enforcement action where necessary.
- Referring for tenancy support when required.
- Setting up repayment plans for rent arrears.

The service is available to new and existing tenants and referrals can be made by tenants or other agencies. We expect tenants to engage with the service and it may be withdrawn if there is a lack of engagement.

Void Management

We are committed to the efficient re-letting of empty properties and work in partnership with internal and external contractors to ensure that all voids are promptly inspected, repaired to an agreed standard, and provide value for money for our tenants.

We will carry out pre-termination inspections of our properties within 5 working days of a notice of termination being received. We will discuss at that inspection any remedial repairs that are required by the outgoing tenant and will provide information on recharges, clearance, and cleaning costs.

Tenants must allow prospective tenants to view their property before moving out.

Tenants are expected to ensure that all personal belongings, furniture, and rubbish are removed from the property, outhouses and gardens prior to handing the keys in and will be recharged for any repairs, clearance and cleaning that we deem as required.

We will recharge for any alterations which either the tenant has not had permission for, or which do not meet a good standard.

All keys for the property, windows and outhouses should be handed in promptly once the tenant has vacated the property. We will recharge for any lock changes required.

We will carry out a comprehensive inspection of the property once the keys have been returned to Housing Services within 3 working days. Where major works are required to bring the property up to a lettable standard, we may request further inspections by appropriate contractors for specialist advice outside of this timescale.

We will take meter readings for all utilities at the inspection and forwarding details will be passed onto utility companies for any outstanding debt. If a meter has been tampered with, we will refer this onto the Police and utility company.

Internal decoration is a tenant's responsibility; however, we may provide a decorating allowance if the decoration is particularly poor. This will not be provided until the tenancy agreement has been signed.

We will ensure that a property is at a lettable standard prior to the new tenant signing a new tenancy agreement. We will not provide keys prior to this for Health and Safety purposes.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years or when a change in legislation dictates.

Appendix 1

Discretionary Compensation Payments

The Head of Service may authorise compensation, up to a maximum of £500 where it is clear that a tenant has suffered serious inconvenience, or financial loss, due to our or a contractor employed by Housing Services.

Higher payments must be authorised by a Director or Assistant Director.

Compensation will be based on the level of responsibility for their loss or inconvenience and the impact on the tenant.

Level of responsibility	No impact on the tenant	Low impact on the tenant	Medium impact on the tenant	High impact on the tenant
None	£0	£0	£0	£0
Partial	£0	£25	£175	£250
Full	£10	£50	£250	£500

Low impact: The complaint has been upheld but there has not been significant inconvenience or distress caused. Impact has been no more than a reasonable person could be expected to accept and the compensation is a token in acknowledge of our responsibility.

Medium impact: Inconvenience and/or distress has clearly been caused because of a failure in service. A repeated failure of a low impact event could result in the impact being increased to a medium impact.

High impact: A serious failure in service has taken place. This could either be due to the severity of the event or a persistent failure has occurred over a prolonged period or an unacceptable number of attempts to resolve the complaint have failed. Payments should consider the level of stress, anxiety, frustration, uncertainty, and inconvenience caused. This will include the severity, length of time, number of people affected and their individual circumstances.

Goodwill gestures

Any member of staff can offer a goodwill gesture to tenants who have received a poor service or have suffered inconvenience without the need for the formal complaints process to be followed.

Goodwill gestures are generally in the form of a token, usually flowers or a gift voucher, and would not normally exceed £50 in value.

Right to Repair

Tenants will be eligible for compensation under the Right to Repair if we fail to carry out the repair within the specified time, and after a further request again fail to complete the work within the specified time period.

A maximum of £50 compensation can be claimed if any of the repairs listed below are not completed within the specified time. The actual amount will be £10, plus a daily rate of £2. In some cases, we may exceed the maximum allowed under this scheme.

Qualifying Repairs

Repair Type	Response Time (working days)
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Unsafe power of lighting socket or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Heating or hot water not working between 31 October and 1 May	1
Heating or hot water not working between 1 May and 31 October	3
Blocked/leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet	1
Toilet not flushing (only one in the property)	1
Blocked sink, bath or basin	3
Tap cannot be turned	3
Leak from water pipe, tank or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Insecure external window, door or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or handrail	3
Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	3
Door entry phone not working	7
Mechanical extractor fan not working	7

Right to Compensation for Improvements

Compensation for improvements will only be paid where the cost has been fully borne by the tenant and not if the work was grant funded.

Compensation is worked out based on the notional life of the improvement, divided by the cost of the improvement, minus the number of years left. For example, the improvement costs £500, the notional life is 10 years and the tenant is moving out after 2 years. $\frac{£500}{10 \text{ years}} = £50 \text{ each year}$; 2 years = £100. £500 cost less £100 = £400 compensation.

Time	Improvement Carried Out
------	-------------------------

20 years	Loft and/or cavity wall insulation Double glazing or other external window replacement of secondary glazing
15 years	Rewiring Provision of power and lighting or other electrical fitting (including smoke detectors)
12 years	Bath or shower base Wash-hand basin Toilet Central heating
10 years	Kitchen sink Cupboard Storage in Bathroom or Kitchen Work surfaces for food preparation Insulation of pipes, water tank or cylinder Any object which improves the security of the dwelling, excluding burglar alarms
8 years	Draft proofing of external doors and windows
7 years	Thermostatic radiator valves

Appendix 2

Local Lettings

Areas that rural lettings policy applies to:

- Hurworth
- Middleton St George
- Neasham
- Stainton
- Summerhouses
- Bishopton
- Sadberge
- Piercebridge
- Killberby
- High Coniscliffe
- Brafferton
- Walworth
- Heighington

Local connection includes (please note written proof will be required):

- Childcare, after or before school is already provided.
- Already reside in the area.
- Work (full/part/fixed contract) in the area.
- Need to move to provide support or care.
- Child within household already attends school in the village.
- Have a proven close family connection to the village where close family member has resided for 5 or more years (close family as defined in the Common Allocation Policy)

Ground floor apartments are restricted to people aged 55 or older or people with a disability where Lifeline equipment is fitted.

Applicants over the age of 18, whose housing need is met by the offer of an apartment, can bid for any apartment above ground floor, except for the following schemes designated for people aged over 55:

- Branksome Hall Drive
- Dinsdale Court
- Linden Court
- Rockwell House
- Roxby Court
- Ted Fletcher Court
- Windsor Court

The following Extra Care Housing Schemes are also excluded:

- Dalkeith House
- Oban Court
- Rosemary Court

DRAFT

**HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
27 APRIL 2022**

WORK PROGRAMME

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the 2021/22 Municipal Year and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be added to the previously approved work programme.

Summary

2. Members are requested to consider the attached work programme (**Appendix 1**) for the remainder of the 2021/22 Municipal Year which has been prepared based on Officers recommendations and recommendations previously agreed by this Scrutiny Committee.
3. Any additional areas of work which Members wish to add to the agreed work programme will require the completion of a quad of aims in accordance with the previously approved procedure (**Appendix 2**).

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Members note the current status of the Work Programme and consider any additional areas of work they would like to include.

**Luke Swinhoe
Assistant Director Law and Governance**

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Author : Hannah Miller 5801

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder
Health and Well Being	This report has no direct implications to the Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no issues which this report needs to address.
Diversity	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address
Wards Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Ward is considered to be minimal.
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Group is considered to be minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Council Plan	The report contributes to the Council Plan in a number of ways through the involvement of Members in contributing to the delivery of the Plan.
Efficiency	The Work Programmes are integral to scrutinising and monitoring services efficiently (and effectively), however this report does not identify specific efficiency savings.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

7. The format of the proposed work programme has been reviewed to enable Members of this Scrutiny Committee to provide a rigorous and informed challenge to the areas for discussion.
8. The Council Plan sets the vision and strategic direction for the Council through to May 2023, with its overarching focus being 'Delivering success for Darlington'.
9. In approving the Council Plan, Members have agreed to a vision for Darlington which is a place where people want to live and businesses want to locate, where the economy continues to grow, where people are happy and proud of the borough and where everyone has the opportunity to maximise their potential.
10. The visions for the Health and Housing portfolio is:-

 'a borough where people enjoy productive, healthy lives. They will have access to excellent leisure facilities and recognising the importance of having a home, there will be access to quality social housing.'

Forward Plan and Additional Items

11. Once the Work Programme has been agreed by this Scrutiny Committee, any Member seeking to add a new item to the work programme will need to complete a quad of aims.
12. A copy of the Forward Plan has been attached at **Appendix 3** for information.

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HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Update on Reprovision of Primrose Lodge	27 April 2022	Jennifer Illingworth, TEWV		To receive an update following stakeholder engagement on the proposal to reprovide the inpatient rehabilitation and recovery unit from Primrose Lodge to Shildon.
West Park Update	27 April 2022 Last considered 25 August 2021	Brent Kilmurray, TEWV		To update Scrutiny Members undertake any further work if necessary.
A&E Wait Times	27 April 2022	Nichola Kenny, CDDFT		To scrutinise A&E wait times.
Drug and Alcohol Service Contract – We Are With You	27 April 2022	Mark Harrison/Jon Murray		To update Scrutiny Members undertake any further work if necessary.
Housing Management Policy	27 April 2022	Anthony Sandys		To seek Scrutiny Members views prior to Cabinet.
Better Care Fund	29 June 2022 Last considered 20 October 2021	Paul Neil		To receive an update on the position of the Better Care Fund for Darlington.

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Health and Safety Compliance in Council Housing	29 June 2022 Last considered 20 October 2021	Anthony Sandys		To provide annual updates Scrutiny Members undertake any further work if necessary.
Affordable Home Ownership Policy	29 June 2022	Anthony Sandys		To seek Scrutiny Members views prior to Cabinet.
Housing Services Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Review	29 June 2022	Anthony Sandys		To update Scrutiny Members undertake any further work if necessary.
Performance Management and Regulation/ Management of Change Regular Performance Reports to be Programmed	Year End/Q4 29 June 2022 Q2 14 December 2022	Relevant AD	Full PMF suite of indicators	To receive biannual monitoring reports and undertake any further detailed work into particular outcomes if necessary
Customer Engagement Strategy 2021-2024 Update (Presentation)	August 2022 Last considered 2 February 2022 (Postponed from 15 December 2021)	Anthony Sandys		To provide six monthly progress reports to Scrutiny. To look at work being done within communities and how the Customer Panel engage with new communities.
Director of Public Health Annual Report and Health Profile	To be agreed	Penny Spring		Annual report
Strategic Housing Needs Assessment	To be agreed	Anthony Sandys		

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Healthwatch Darlington - The Annual Report of Healthwatch Darlington	To be agreed Last considered 20 October 2021	Michelle Thompson, HWD		To scrutinise and monitor the service provided by Healthwatch – Annual
Impact of Covid-19 on Mental Health	To agree how to proceed			
CCG Stroke Services/Review of Stroke Rehabilitation Services	Last considered 25 August 2021	Katie McLeod CCG		To scrutinise and challenge the CCG's and review of Stroke Rehabilitation Services in the community following discharge from Bishop Auckland Hospital
Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Update	Last considered 20 October 2021	Anthony Sandys		To look at progress following the implementation of the strategy. Update on current position within Darlington
Childhood Healthy Weight Plan (Childhood Obesity Strategy)	Last considered 20 October 2021	Ken Ross		To review the effectiveness of the Childhood Healthy Weight Plan on childhood obesity and mental health links in children and young people.
Community Mental Health Transformation (Right Care, Right Place)	Last considered 2 February 2022 (postponed from 15 December 2021)	Jennifer Illingworth, TEVV		To receive a briefing and undertake any further detailed work if necessary.

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Primary Care (to include GP Access to appointments)	Last considered 2 February 2022 (postponed from 15 December 2021)	Sue Greaves CCG/Amanda Riley		To scrutinise development around Primary Care Network and GP work
Integrated Care System (ICS) (Formerly Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) including the Better Health Programme (BHP)) Engagement and Communication Strategy	Last considered 23 February 2022	Simon Clayton, NECS/ David Gallagher, CCG		To scrutinise and challenge progress of the principles underpinning the ICS and BHP and timelines for progress.
Digital Health	Last considered 23 February 2022	Andrew Izon, CDDFT		To scrutinise digital health and its application, including signposting to services.
Crisis Service Changes	Last considered 23 February 2022	Jennifer Illingworth, TEWV		To receive a briefing and undertake any further detailed work if necessary.

JOINT COMMITTEE WORKING – ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
<p>Loneliness and Connected Communities</p> <p>Adults and Housing to Lead</p>	<p>Scoping meeting 28 January 2020</p> <p>Meeting on 5 October 2020</p> <p>Meeting on 15 December 2020</p>			

MEMBERS BRIEFINGS

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Voluntary Sector Funding (Adults, CYP, Health and CLS Scrutiny)	June 2022 Joint briefings 14 October 2020 and 10 March 2021	Christine Shields	Full PMF suite of indicators	To update Members following the monitoring and evaluation of this funded projects
CQC Ratings in the Borough of Darlington	October 2022 Scoping Meeting held 18 November 2019 Briefing note circulated 21 October 2020 Briefing note circulated October 2021			To monitor and evaluate CQC scoring across the Borough for health and care settings.

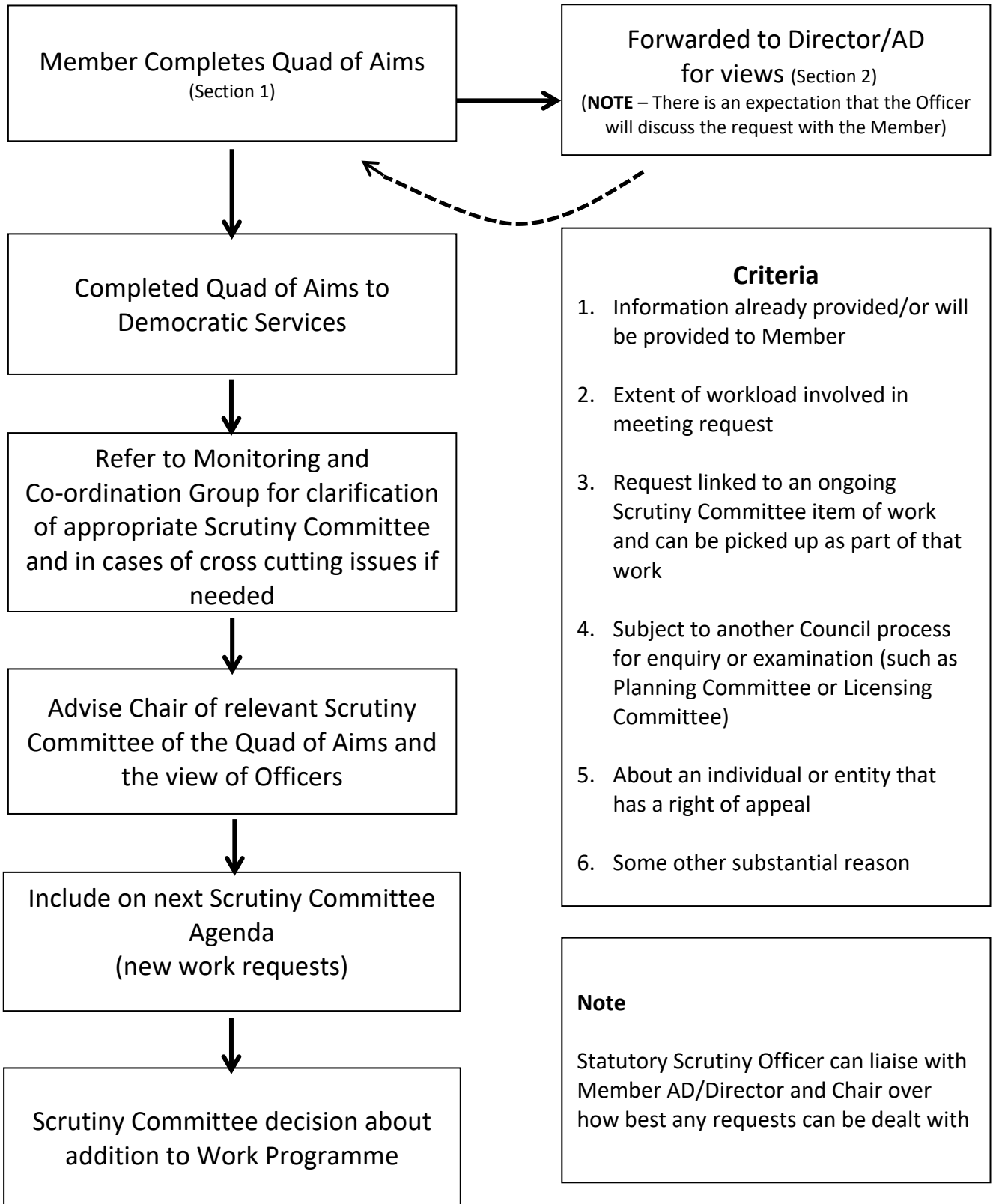
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Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer/ Organisation Involved	Link to PMF (metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
NHS Clinical Commissioning Group Financial Challenges and Impact on Services	Last considered 23 June 2021	Mark Pickering, NHS Darlington CCG		To scrutinise and monitor the CCG to ensure delivery of the necessary QIPP required in order to achieve its financial duties and service delivery
Our Big Conversation – Strategic Framework and Business Plan	Last considered 25 August 2021	TEWV		To update Scrutiny Members undertake any further work if necessary.
Childhood Obesity Planning Options in Relation to Hot Food Takeaways	Last considered 20 October 2021	Ken Ross		To update Members on the findings of the review into Childhood Obesity Planning Options in relation to Hot Food Takeaways

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PROCESS FOR ADDING AN ITEM TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WORK PROGRAMME



PLEASE RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

QUAD OF AIMS (MEMBERS' REQUEST FOR ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED BY SCRUTINY)

SECTION 1 TO BE COMPLETED BY MEMBERS

NOTE – This document should only be completed if there is a clearly defined and significant outcome from any potential further work. This document should **not** be completed as a request for or understanding of information.

REASON FOR REQUEST?	RESOURCE (WHAT OFFICER SUPPORT WOULD YOU REQUIRE?)
PROCESS (HOW CAN SCRUTINY ACHIEVE THE ANTICIPATED OUTCOME?)	HOW WILL THE OUTCOME MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

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Signed Councillor

Date

SECTION 2 TO BE COMPLETED BY DIRECTORS/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS
(NOTE – There is an expectation that Officers will discuss the request with the Member)

	Criteria
1. (a) Is the information available elsewhere? Yes No If yes, please indicate where the information can be found (attach if possible and return with this document to Democratic Services)	1. Information already provided/or will be provided to Member
(b) Have you already provided the information to the Member or will you shortly be doing so?	2. Extent of workload involved in meeting request
2. If the request is included in the Scrutiny Committee work programme what are the likely workload implications for you/your staff?	3. Request linked to an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and can be picked up as part of that work
3. Can the request be included in an ongoing Scrutiny Committee item of work and picked up as part of that?	4. Subject to another Council process for enquiry or examination (such as Planning Committee or Licensing Committee)
4. Is there another Council process for enquiry or examination about the matter currently underway?	5. About an individual or entity that has a right of appeal
5. Has the individual or entity some other right of appeal?	6. Some other substantial reason
6. Is there any substantial reason (other than the above) why you feel it should not be included on the work programme?	

Signed **Position** **Date**

PLEASE RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

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**FORWARD PLAN
FOR THE PERIOD: 6 APRIL 2022 - 31 AUGUST 2022**

Title	Decision Maker and Date
Council Chamber Refurbishment	Cabinet 3 May 2022
Release of Capital Allocation in the MTFP - Corporate Landlord Capitalised Repairs 2022-23	Cabinet 3 May 2022
Special Educational Needs (SEND) Accessibility Strategy 2021/24	Cabinet 3 May 2022
Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
CCTV Replacement Camera Programme	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
Darlington Station Improvement Project – Proceed to Delivery	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
Dolphin Centre Mechanical and Electrical Replacement – Release of Capital	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
Housing Management Policy	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
Land at Faverdale - Burtree Garden Village Development	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
Public Space Protection Order – Darlington Town Centre	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
Representation on Other Bodies 2022/23	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
Schedule of Transactions - June 2022	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
West Cemetery Drainage	Cabinet 22 Jun 2022
Collection of Council Tax, Business Rates and Rent 2021-22	Cabinet 5 Jul 2022
Council Plan Performance Report 2021/22 – Quarters 3 and 4	Cabinet 5 Jul 2022
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring Outturn 21/22	Cabinet 5 Jul 2022

Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring 2022/23 - Quarter 1	Cabinet 5 Jul 2022
Restoration of Locomotion No 1 Replica	Cabinet 5 Jul 2022
Revenue Budget Outturn 2020/21	Cabinet 5 Jul 2022
Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 - Quarter 1	Cabinet 5 Jul 2022
Xentrall Shared Services Annual Report	Cabinet 5 Jul 2022
Annual Audit Letter 2020/21	Cabinet 6 Sep 2022