

ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 September 2018

PRESENT - Councillor Knowles (in the Chair); Councillors Copeland, Kane, Lister, Lyonette, Mills and M Nicholson. (7)

APOLOGIES – Councillors Storr and York (2)

ABSENT – Councillors Culley and Grundy. (2)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor S Richmond and T Richmond.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – James Stroyan, Assistant Director Adult Social Care; Pauline Mitchell, Assistant Director Housing and Building Services; Anthony Sandys, Head of Housing and Revenue; Sukhdev Dosanjh, Commissioning and Contracts; Pat Simpson, Senior Project Manager; and Barbara Copson, Performance Manager.

AH9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

AH10. MINUTES – Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of a meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 3 July, 2018.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

AH11. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 1 2018/19 – The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) providing Members with an update on performance against those key performance indicators for 2018/19 at Quarter 1

In relation to the Adult Social Care targets, the submitted report gave the performance position in relation to 10 key performance indicator and in relation to Housing Services Quarter 1 performance against six key indicators was reported; two Adult social Care indicators are reported annually and therefore data for these two indicators was not included in the report at this time.

RESOLVED – That the report be received.

AH12. WELFARE REFORMS AND UNIVERSAL CREDIT – (1) UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE – The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with an update on the roll-out of Universal Credit in Darlington and the potential impact on residents and Council services.

It was reported that Universal Credit was replacing a number of existing means tested benefits for working age people, including Housing Benefit administered by the Council and began to roll out in Darlington in November 2015. The full

roll-out commenced on 20 June 2018 so most working people making a new claim to benefit or reporting a significant change in their circumstances will now claim Universal Credit.

There are a number of measures and sources of advice and support in place to help residents to claim Universal Credit successfully and these were also detailed in the submitted report.

It was noted that implementation of Universal Credit had been successful in Darlington with the support of the Job Centre and the Department for Works and Pensions and the Chair acknowledged the hard work of all staff putting in place support for residents.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(2) UNIVERSAL CREDIT – QUAD OF AIMS – The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) to give consideration to a request received from a Member of this Scrutiny Committee for a task and finish review in relation to Universal Credit to be added to its work programme.

The request to undertake a piece of work to gauge the initial impact of the roll out of Universal Credit in Darlington; and the agreed procedure taking into account the views of the Assistant Director, Adults and Housing were also submitted with the report.

RESOLVED – (a) That this item be included on the work programme of this Scrutiny Committee.

(b) That Councillors Kane, Knowles, Lister and Mills sit on the task and finish review.

AH13. BETTER CARE FUND 2017-19 – The Director of Children and Adults Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to update Members on the delivery of the 2017-2019 Better Care Fund submitted and associated plans and the updated guidance received in July 2018 in respect of the second year of the plan; and to provide a short glossary of terms used across health and adult social care.

The submitted report outlined the seven broad workstreams of the plan to support the delivery of the Better Care Fund in the priority areas; the additional grant funding to Adult Social Care which will be used to offset expenditure on current pressures and demand to ensure sustainability while the service undergoes transformation; and provided a summary of the 2017/18 quarter 4 (year end) monitoring requirements to ensure that Darlington complies with the national conditions attached to the Better Care Fund.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

AH14. SUPPORT TO CARERS – The Director of Children and Adult Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide an update on the operation

of the Darlington Carers Support contract and the recently published National Carers Action Plan 2018-20.

It was reported that the Darlington Carers Support contract has been in place since 1 May 2017 offering a range of support and was performing well with 850 carers on the register being in support of the service.

The National Carers Action Plan 2018-20 was published on 5 June 2018 and sets out the cross-government programme of work to support carers over the next two years. It was reported that Darlington was well placed to develop a response to the newly published Action Plan which will build on and expand work that was already in progress. Darlington's response will be co-produced and carer's views will be sought during the process.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be noted.

(b) That the updated Darlington Carers Action Plan is shared with Members following its completion.

AH15. ADVOCACY SERVICES – The Director of Children and Adult Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide details of the advocacy arrangements within Adult Social Care Services.

The authority is under a statutory duty to provide independent advocacy services for people with adult social care needs who need care and support and a new contract for the provision of these statutory services within Darlington was awarded to Darlington Association on Disability (DAD) on 1 April 2018.

The submitted report outlined the Council's duty under the Care Act 2014; the new arrangements with DAD and monitoring information provided by DAD in respect of advocacy activities in the contract April to June 2018; along with the Advocacy Charter and Code of Practice DAD adheres to.

RESOLVED – (a) That the advocacy services commissioned by the Council to support individuals with adult social care needs be noted.

(b) That the monitoring information provided by Darlington Association on Disability in respect of advocacy services during 1 April 2018 to June 2018 be noted.

AH16. WORK PROGRAMME – The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2018/19 and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be included in the work programme.

Discussion ensued on the items scheduled to be submitted to the next ordinary meeting of this Scrutiny Committee and it was suggested that the item on the work programme to look at support services for Syrian Refugees also include asylum seekers and other refugees.

With regard to the item on End of Life and Palliative Care the Chair advised Members that she had spoken with the Chair of the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny who has made arrangements to meet with a representative of St. Teresa's Hospice and it was agreed that Councillor Kane would attend this meeting as a representative to this Scrutiny Committee.

Regarding the item on domestic abuse it was suggested to agree a date with the Director of Public Health to consider this item.

RESOLVED – That the work programme for the Municipal Year, as appended to the submitted report, be approved.