

ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 22 June 2021

PRESENT – Councillors Tostevin (Chair), Mrs Culley, Curry, Donoghue, Holroyd, B Jones, M Nicholson, Renton and A J Scott.

APOLOGIES – Councillors Layton.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor Mills (Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adults)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Sukhdev Dosanjh (Head of Service), Sharon Raine (Head of Performance and Transformation) and Paul Dalton (Elections Officer).

AD1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

RESOLVED - That Councillor Tostevin be appointed Chair of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

AD2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

RESOLVED - That Councillor Donoghue be appointed Vice-Chair of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

AD3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

AD4 TO CONSIDER THE TIMES OF MEETINGS OF THIS COMMITTEE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22 ON THE DATES AGREED IN THE CALENDAR OF MEETINGS BY CABINET AT MINUTE C97/FEB/21

RESOLVED – That meetings of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2021/22, be held at 10 a.m. on the dates, as agreed on the calendar of meetings by Cabinet at Minute C97/Feb/2021.

AD5 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY HELD ON 20 APRIL 2021

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of this Committee held on 20 April 2021, be approved as a correct record.

AD6 COVID RESPONSE - VERBAL UPDATE

The Head of Service provided a verbal update on the ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically in relation to care home settings and care providers. Members heard that, from a commissioning perspective, services were now moving into a period of recovery, and that there had been no further outbreaks.

Members enquired about compulsory Covid vaccinations for those working in care settings,

which had recently been reported in the national media, and were advised that further guidance would be forthcoming. Members were reassured that 94 per cent of care home staff in Darlington had received both Covid vaccinations, which exceeded the national threshold of 90 per cent. Discussion ensued on how such a high take up rate had been achieved.

Members entered into discussion on the measures in place to combat new variants of Covid, and were keen to receive clarification around the number of care home residents who had received their vaccinations. Members were informed that 100 per cent of residents had received their initial vaccination, and that 91 per cent had received their second vaccination.

Further discussion ensued on the return of day services, and Members were informed that this was a challenging area, that many residents had found alternative forms of support during the pandemic, and that it would be a slow pathway to recovery in terms of this service.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the update be noted.

AD7 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS END OF YEAR 2020-21

The Group Director of People submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with performance data against Key Performance Indicators for 2020/21 at Quarter 4.

The submitted report outlined performance information in line with an indicator set and Scrutiny Committee distribution agreed by the Monitoring and Coordination Group on 4 June 2018, and subsequently agreed by Scrutiny Committee Chairs.

The submitted report stated that the indicators were aligned with key priorities and the majority are used to monitor the Corporate Plan. It was stated that other indicators may be referenced when appropriate in narrative provided by the relevant Assistant Directors, when providing the Committee with performance updates. Twelve indicators were reported to this Committee, ten on a six monthly basis and two annually.

It was reported that, of the ten indicators reported at six months, two of the indicators showed performance better than at this time last year, three indicators showed performance was not as good as at this time last year, yet was still continuing to be monitored and managed, two indicators showed performance that was the same as at this time last year, and that three indicators were not comparable, as were reviewed at a point in time. No surveys were completed in relation to the two indicators reported on an annual basis due to the ongoing Covid pandemic.

Members entered into discussion on the report, noting the impact that the Covid pandemic had on services, particularly in relation to the permanent admittance of adults to residential or nursing care homes during 2020-21, and on the percentage of people who have no ongoing care needs following completion of a reablement package.

Members also expressed ongoing concerns in relation to occupancy levels in care homes, and were keen to understand what level of occupancy might ensure market sustainability, whilst

balancing that against the need to ensure that residents could maintain independent living for as long as possible.

Members felt that some of the current indicators did little to add value, and it was suggested that work be undertaken on a revised set of indicators.

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

AD8 WORK PROGRAMME

Members gave consideration to Work Programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during 2021/22, and to any additional areas that Members would like to be included.

Members agreed to undertake some work on revised performance indicators, and discussed the potential for a piece of overarching work with other Scrutiny Committees in terms of health, incorporating drug and alcohol abuse services and Mental Health. Members were keen to revisit the previous work undertaken on dementia, and wanted to receive more information about signposting for dementia services.

Members also expressed an interest in examining regional funding opportunities for Adults Services and how that impacts on Darlington, and scrutinise how the Disabled Facilities Grant, and other funding streams, could be used more proactively.

RESOLVED – That the Work Programme be updated accordingly.