

COUNCIL
30 NOVEMBER 2023

OVERVIEW OF ADULTS PORTFOLIO

Purpose of the Report

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Adults Portfolio.

Operational Services

2. The Adult Contact Team continue to manage new referrals and are maintaining a small waiting list of people for a full assessment.
3. CQC have completed the 5 pilot inspections across the country, and we are awaiting the ratings for the Adult Social Teams in these areas. The service is currently completing the self-assessment document required by CQC as a baseline narrative. Once completed an executive summary will be shared.
4. The annual staff Health Check for 2022/2023 for the Adult Social Care Service has been completed. The Annual staff health check survey provided an opportunity for staff to feedback about how they felt the service valued them, their welfare and how could develop their professional practice and developments.
5. The survey produced many examples of positive and constructive feedback from staff with regards staff having a feeling of pride in working with, serving the Council and the community:
 - (a) 97% of staff felt they ***'Made a positive difference to people who use our services'***.
 - (b) 92.8% felt they ***felt confident talking to managers if working practices were feeling difficult or unsafe.***
6. There were 48% specific positive responses with a consensus that Darlington Borough Council is ***'a great place to work'*** and:
 - (a) Provides a caring culture.
 - (b) Both managers and colleagues are supportive
 - (c) Feeling valued as a staff member
 - (d) Good training opportunities
 - (e) Fantastic team spirit
 - (f) A sense of belonging
 - (g) Established and has a good reputation.

7. The outcomes from the Healthcheck will be shared via the DBC website and with Scrutiny Task and finish group in relation to understanding staff experiences through Covid.
8. On October 17 2023, Childrens and Adults Services held an award event at the Hippodrome for over 30 staff who had recently completed their first year of post qualifying experience, step up to social work, apprenticeships, experts in practice and practice educator courses. All received a certificate and as part of their continuing professional development they experienced two powerful drama performances from: Access27 and the cast and crew of Beyond Caring.

Commissioning and Contracts

9. The outcome of the annual Quality Standards Assessment of Older People Care Homes has now been agreed and was presented to Scrutiny on 24/10/23. 16/19 Care Homes gained a maximum of 10 Standards, with 3/19 gaining 9 Standards and 0/19 Care Homes gained 8 standards or less. This represents a marked improvement on the assessment outcome of the 2022/23 assessment year. In 22/23, 13/19 had achieved the highest A Grade, whereas in 2023/24, 16/19 care homes have now achieved this level of grading.
10. The Commissioning and Contracts Team have worked with Finance colleagues to distribute funds from the Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund Grant in line with National grant conditions. The funds will support Darlington to make tangible improvements to adult social care services with a particular focus on improving market sustainability. A number of schemes have been identified to support the care provider market and Direct Payment recipients particularly during the forthcoming Winter period.
11. A programme of work has been established with the Integrated Care Board to review Intermediate Care Services commissioned by the NHS in line with the recently published National Guidance <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/intermediate-care-framework-for-rehabilitation-reablement-and-recovery-following-hospital-discharge/?s=03>. These services help people to avoid going into hospital or residential care unnecessarily and helps people to be as independent as possible after a stay in hospital. Intermediate Care Services play an essential role in the recovery and rehabilitation of people across the health and social care system and not only provide better outcomes for people but are also more cost effective.

Climate Change

12. We have been working closely with the Climate Change Officer to develop key actions to support climate change. These include developing materials to share with people accessing social care services and using listening groups to consider how people can contribute to climate change.
13. Commissioners continue to review the contracts to support providers on the climate change agenda.

Darlington Safeguarding Partnership

14. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners held an extraordinary meeting in September to consider a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) referral following a fatal house fire. Partners agreed it did not meet the criteria for SAR, however, should be taken forward as a Learning Lessons Review (LLR) and to commission an independent reviewer to lead the review.

Councillor Anne-Marie Curry
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adults