

ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 16 April 2024

PRESENT – Councillors Crumbie (Chair), Anderson, Donoghue, Layton, Mammolotti, M Nicholson, Toms and Tostevin.

APOLOGIES – Councillors Renton and Storr.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillors Curry, Holroyd and Porter.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Joss Harbron (Assistant Director - Adult Social Care), Neil Bowerbank (Head of Strategy, Performance and Communications), Paul Dalton (Democratic and Elections Officer) and Olivia Hugill (Democratic Officer).

AD35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

AD36 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 20TH FEBRUARY 2024

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 9 January 2024.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of this Committee held on 20 February 2024, be approved as a correct record.

AD37 SOCIAL CARE REFORMS - UPDATE

The Assistant Director, Adult Services, advised Members that there was no further update in relation to Darlington subsequent to the previous meeting, however Members were informed that Adult Services at Durham County Council had now received their inspection date from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and that Adult Services at Northumberland County Council and Gateshead Council had been contacted by the CQC for their self-assessment, with an inspection anticipated in September/October 2024.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

AD38 COUNCIL PLAN 2024-27 - DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

The Chief Officers Executive submitted a report (previously circulated) to introduce the draft Council Plan to Members of this Scrutiny Committee and sought comments from Members.

The submitted report stated that the Council Plan outlined the long-term ambitions for Darlington and the priorities the Council sought to deliver over the forthcoming three years (2024-2027). It was highlighted that the Plan gave strategic direction to the Council, defined priorities and shaped delivery, whilst providing clarity to residents, businesses and stakeholders on the Council's values, what the Council identified as important and what the Council would do.

It was reported that the public consultation on the draft Plan was open and ran from 6 March 2024 to 25 April 2024, and that the Council was seeking views from residents, businesses, charities and key stakeholders. The submitted report stated that it was intended that the finalised Plan would be submitted to Cabinet and Council in May for approval and adoption. In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Adults Services outlined the key aims for the 'Living Well' priority within the Plan.

Discussion ensued on the plans and strategies that underpin the Council Plan, and whether any relevant plans and strategies would be presented to this Committee. Members were keen to understand what performance measures were being drafted to enable them to scrutinise the work being undertaken to achieve the priorities identified within the Council Plan. More specifically, Members were keen to see more work undertaken to analyse the provider market and high cost care packages, and were interested to learn more about the support being offered around mental health.

Members wanted to ascertain how the consultation had been publicised more widely, and requested greater focus on improving the lives of the elderly and encouraging healthier lifestyles, both in terms of diet and physical wellbeing.

RESOLVED – That the draft Council Plan 2024-27 be noted.

AD39 ADULT SOCIAL CARE DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC TASK AND FINISH REVIEW - FINAL REPORT

The Assistant Director, Adult Services, submitted a report (previously circulated) which presented the final report of the Review of Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic Task and Finish Group, which had been established by this Scrutiny Committee on 20 April 2021.

The submitted report stated that, at a meeting of this Committee on 20 April 2021, Members had given consideration to a Quad of Aims submitted by Councillor Holroyd, and approved the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to ascertain how Adult Social Care services had coped during the Covid pandemic; how service users and their families felt about the services provided; and identify any changes needed in relation to future waves of coronavirus and associated restrictions or lockdowns, or any other future disease outbreak response. The final report of the Task and Finish Group was appended to the submitted report, alongside the notes of the meetings of the Task and Finish Group.

Councillor Holroyd attended this meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, and provided a presentation which outlined the work of the Task and Finish Group, highlighting the methodology of the work undertaken, a summary of the findings, and the recommendations of the Group.

RESOLVED – That the work undertaken by the Review of Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic Task and Finish Group be recognised and endorsed.

AD40 WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

The Assistant Director, Law and Governance, submitted a report (previously circulated)

which requested that Members gave consideration to the Work Programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during 2023/24, and to any additional areas that Members would like to be included.

RESOLVED – That the content of the report be noted.