

HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 23 October 2024

PRESENT – Councillors Layton (Chair), Baker, Crudass, Holroyd, Johnson, Mahmud, Mammolotti and Pease

APOLOGIES – Councillors Beckett and Mrs Scott

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillors Roche, Gary Besterfield (We Are With You), Michelle Burns (Recovery Connections), Vikki Brummwell (Recovery Connections), Lilly Volkmann (Recovery Connections) and Harvey Lyndon (Recovery Connections)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Lorraine Hughes (Director of Public Health), Anthony Sandys (Assistant Director - Housing and Revenues), Claire Gardner-Queen (Head of Housing), Mark Harrison (Public Health Portfolio Lead), Charlotte Hallatt (Public Health ACCESS Team Leader), Emily Crathorne-Tennick (Public Health Project Support Officer) and Hannah Miller (Democratic Officer)

HH20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

HH21 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY HELD ON 28 AUGUST 2024

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 28 August 2024.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 28 August 2024 be approved as a correct record.

HH22 SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICE UPDATE: SUPPORT TREATMENT AND RECOVERY IN DARLINGTON THROUGH EMPOWERMENT (STRIDE)

The Director of Public Health submitted a report (previously circulated) updating Members on the current performance, provision and composition of STRIDE specialist substance misuse treatment and recovery services delivered within Darlington. A presentation accompanied the report.

The submitted report stated that in May 2022 the Government had published guidance for local delivery partners outlining recommended steps that local areas should take to help deliver the three main priorities of the National Drugs Strategy, From Harm to Hope, which was published in December 2021; and in response to the strategy, Durham and Darlington established a Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (CDAP) which was chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

It was reported that three years of additional ring-fenced funding for treatment and recovery had been allocated to local areas in the form of the Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG) 2022-2025; funding allocations for Darlington's

treatment system were outlined and details were provided of performance outcomes.

Members were provided with a presentation by the Head of Service Delivery, WithYou, outlining the offer in Darlington; partnership working; figures for number of people support, which showed 88 people per month on average; and referrals to STRIDE for the year to date. Particular reference was made to the low referral rate from probation and Members were informed that increasing referrals from criminal justice, primary care and hospitals was a key area of focus for STRIDE. Members were provided with details of next steps for STRIDE.

Two service users in attendance at the meeting provided Members with their personal stories of substance misuse and recovery.

Discussion ensued regarding training for children and young people in primary and secondary schools. Members were assured that the training package was evidence based and age appropriate, with the primary aim of building resilience.

The Head of Service Delivery at With You highlighted the importance of increasing visibility of the service, including signage for the offices in the town, which was supported by both the Director of Public Health and the Portfolio Holder in attendance at the meeting.

Following a query, Members were informed that the Access Team or WithYou would be the first point of contact for anyone requiring support for drug and alcohol use; and Members were informed of the WithYou webpage, which included a range of resources and online referral into the service.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

HH23 HOUSING SERVICES TENANT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2024/29

The Assistant Director – Housing and Revenues submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the draft Housing Services Tenant Involvement Strategy 2024-2029 (also previously circulated) and agree its onward submission to Cabinet.

The submitted report stated that the Council's Housing Services had a long history of working with its tenants to help shape their communities and influence decisions about their homes and the services the Council provides; and the Tenants Panel had been consulted on the draft strategy in September 2024, who overall supported the proposed Housing Services Tenant Involvement Strategy 2024-2029.

It was reported that the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) new consumer standards from April 2024 set out their expectations for how social landlords must give tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlords strategies, policies and services; and reference was made to the requirements of social housing providers in relation to the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

It was also reported that the strategy sets out how the Council would involve and empower its tenants, including how engagement activities would be monitored and reported and how the Council would involve tenants in decisions about the services they provided. Details were provided of the areas covered by the strategy.

Members queried the mechanism for contribution for residents that were not on the Tenants Panel and highlighted the need to improve feedback to residents from estate inspections. The Head of Housing informed Members that a digital Tenants Panel had been established for residents unable to attend in person meetings; and tenants could provide feedback via coffee mornings, events and corporate complaints and comments. Members were informed that You Said We Did was being used to provide feedback to residents following estate inspections.

RESOLVED – That Members of this Scrutiny Committee agree to the onward submission of the Housing Services Tenant Involvement Strategy 2024-2029 to Cabinet.

HH24 JOINT LOCAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2024 - 2028

The Director of Public Health submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS) (also previously circulated).

The submitted report stated that the JLHWS sets out the local priorities for improving the health and wellbeing of the population of Darlington; sets out the vision that Darlington is a place where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and live well; and has adopted a life course approach with the themes of Best Start in Life – Children and Young People, Staying Healthy – Living Well and Staying Healthy – Ageing Well, with an additional theme of Healthy Places in recognition of the importance of taking action to address the wider determinants of health.

It was reported that the development of the strategy had been informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and a series of workshops with members of the Health and Wellbeing Board and wider partners.

Reference was made to the overarching priorities for each theme in the JLHWS; and it was reported that the JLHWS alongside the JSNA and local intelligence, would support a regular process of assessing need and agreeing actions to meet the identified needs. Members were informed that feedback on the JLHWS would be considered collectively as part of the consultation process. It was agreed it would be helpful to further strengthen detail on wider determinants of health within the strategy.

Discussion ensued regarding the additional theme of Healthy Places and the importance of addressing wider determinants of health. Following concerns raised, the Director of Public Health informed Members that Public Health have input into planning applications via the health impact assessment requirement, but there was more which could be included and nationally the planning framework and regulations were under review.

Members queried need for the Life Course Data Map within the strategy and were provided with details as to what this would capture.

RESOLVED – (a) That the draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy be received.

(b) That the contents of the draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including the

overarching priorities identified to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Darlington, be noted.

(c) That Members suggest any changes required to the content of the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy to the Director of Public Health by 8 November 2024.

HH25 WORK PROGRAMME

The Assistant Director Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the remainder of the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

Members also gave consideration, in line with the agreed procedure, to a Quad of Aims (QoA) which had been received in respect of mental and psychological support for residents in Darlington who are living with long term conditions and chronic illnesses. A number of Members raised concerns regarding the scope of the QoA which was felt to be too broad.

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

(b) That this Scrutiny Committee does not add an item to its work programme in relation to mental health and psychological support for residents in Darlington who are living with long term conditions and chronic illnesses, due to the scope being too broad.

HH26 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

It was reported that the Board last met on 12 September 2024 and that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled for 5 December 2024.

RESOLVED – That Members of this Scrutiny Committee continue to receive the Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

HH27 REGIONAL HEALTH SCRUTINY

The next meeting of the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for 7 November 2024.

RESOLVED – That Members look forward to receiving an update of the work of the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting of Scrutiny Committee.