

**MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL**  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

**AGENDA ITEM: 5**

**10 APRIL 2018**

<p><b>FINAL REPORT OF THE SOCIAL CARE AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL – ASTER CARE HOME (FORMERLY BELLE VUE CARE HOME)</b></p>
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Explanatory Note:

*Following consideration of this report at the 7 November 2017 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, the Chair, having reconsidered the report and recommendations further, requested that the report be deferred from submission to the Executive in order for the outcomes to be explored further. Following supplementary discussion with officers and Councillors, the report has been amended and therefore replaces the report previously submitted/considered.*

**SUMMARY**

1. The Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel (SCASSP) has had concerns about the Belle Vue Care Home since its meeting of 16 November 2016. Following a Care Quality Commission (CQC) report dated 5 May 2017, which was discussed by the Panel on 24 July 2017, the Panel decided to establish a working party of the SCASSP with a remit to visit the home, hold discussions with the manager, residents and their families, and to report back to the full Panel. The working party carried out the visit on 15 September 2017 and were assured from discussions with Council officers and Managers of the home that the care home (now called Aster Care Home) was safe, that management was appropriate and that staff and their families were satisfied with the care and / or treatment that they were receiving.

**INTRODUCTION**

2. The SCASSP's report on 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults' approved by Executive on 16 May 2017 recommended 'That the Panel receives copies of any CQC formal inspection reports that have raised concerns, for information'. During the SCASSP meetings held on 16 November 2016 and 13 February 2017, concerns about the Belle Vue Care Home (now known as the Aster Care Home) were discussed by the Panel.
3. On 19 June 2017, the Chair was alerted to the CQC report on Belle Vue Care Home dated 5 May 2017, which rated the home as inadequate. This was discussed by the Panel on 24 July 2017 with commissioning officers of the Council, and it was agreed that a working party of the Scrutiny Panel would be established in order to visit the home to speak to the manager, residents and their families.
4. Belle Vue Care Home had been sold on 23 June 2017 to a company named Atlas Care Homes Limited and was renamed Aster Care Home.

## EVIDENCE / DISCUSSION

5. On 15 September 2017, Councillors J McGee (Chair of the SCASSP), J Walker (Vice Chair of the SCASSP) and T Higgins (Ward Councillor for Longlands and Beechwood Ward and Member of the SCASSP) visited the care home with Daniel Lloyd (Commissioning Officer – Nursing Middlesbrough Council), where they met the manager of the care home.
6. Councillors were informed that a new robust structure with increased leadership and management provision had been implemented, which included a deputy manager and the establishment of team leaders. The new owners of the care home also offered significant support, by either phoning and / or visiting the home on a daily basis. One director has a background in nursing.
7. There are 37 residents currently living at the home. The home has the capacity to accommodate over 100 residents. The care home provides for the needs of young adults with complex and very varied needs, and this unit has 24 hour nursing care provision. There has been an embargo on admissions but the home has recently admitted some new residents.
8. 76 staff are employed at the home including kitchen staff, domestic and auxiliary staff and registered nurses. Although it has been difficult to recruit nurses, the home is now less dependent upon 'bank' nurses and uses only one agency in order to maintain consistency of staff where possible. Levels of staffing are determined according to the 'dependencies' of the residents of the home at any one time. Staff are employed to work 12 hour shifts with some flexible working.
9. The home has now established an induction process and there are 7 carers currently in the recruitment / induction process. A rolling programme of training has been established for all staff with certification for all courses. Staff are paid whilst attending training which covers all aspects of the needs of the home and residents.
10. Care plans were discussed with the manager who explained that the home was working towards a person-centred approach to care with appropriate risk assessment. Quality assurance was raised and the manager explained that a number of audits take place. However although there is now a strong 'core' of staff in place, the manager recognised that there are still improvements to be made, including annual appraisal systems.
11. Councillors took the opportunity to visit residents during meal time; catering was not considered to be problematic, with residents feeling positive about their meals.
12. Review meetings are held every month for residents and their families to discuss any issues, concerns and to review the provision of activities with the manager. A range of activities is provided, but residents would like to access or purchase a mini-bus to provide for more outings.
13. An annual satisfaction survey, in addition to the Council's annual survey and a governmental survey, is carried out and the outcomes show high levels of customer satisfaction.
14. A formal complaints procedure is in place. There are strict procedures and protocols in place with regards to safeguarding.
15. At the moment there are no language barriers. There is one Indian resident who is unable to speak English. This resident is supported by her family and one of the owners who speaks a common language.
16. The manager explained that she had been fully supported by officers of Middlesbrough Council throughout a difficult period of transition, both before, during and after the CQC inspections. The support included monitoring and evaluation and the offer of support in order to ensure the best interests of the residents were provided for. Officers from the authority continue to support the care home on a regular basis appropriate to assessed need.
17. The home was in the process of redecoration with consideration being given to increasing the size of some of the bedrooms if possible. The environment of the home was clean, homely and welcoming.

18. Councillors visited residents in their rooms and also in activity areas where they were able to converse with residents and their families. Residents said that they were happy with the services and care that they were receiving in the home.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

19. The working party was satisfied and re-assured that the home was offering a safe environment; that measures were in place to ensure positive staff recruitment; that staff received proper induction and on-going training; that leadership and management had been strengthened; that quality assurance procedures were being developed; and that the environment of the home was improved through decoration.
20. From its discussions with residents and their families, the working party concluded that levels of satisfaction with the care and living conditions were high.
21. It was agreed that the Panel will maintain contact and that the local Ward Councillor will visit, when invited, and support the home where possible.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

22. The SCASSP recommends to the Executive that, for information only, the Panel receives a quarterly report, on a confidential basis, identifying any major safeguarding concerns that have been raised by the CQC and/or the Local Authority in respect of any care home within Middlesbrough. For clarity, this will be in the following instances:
- Where the Council has taken the decision to suspend placements in a care home; or
  - Where the Council is placing a care home into the formal safeguarding arena, where it is a serious concern and multi-agency protocols have been evoked.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

23. The Chair of the SCASSP and the working party would like to thank the following for their assistance with its work:
- L Grabham - Head of Commissioning and Strategic Procurement, Middlesbrough Council.
  - D Lloyd - Commissioning Officer - Nursing, Middlesbrough Council.
  - E Scollay - Director of Adult Social Services, Middlesbrough Council.
  - Staff and residents at Aster Care Home.

## **ACRONYMS**

24. A-Z listing of acronyms used in the report:
- CQC - Care Quality Commission
  - SCASSP - Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

25. The following sources were consulted or referred to in preparing this report:
- Report of the Care Quality Commission - Inspection of Belle Vue Healthcare Limited - 5 May 2017.
  - Reports to, and Minutes of, the Executive meeting held on 16 May 2017.
  - Reports to, and Minutes of, the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel meetings held on 16 November 2016, 13 February 2017 and 24 July 2017.

**COUNCILLOR JULIE MCGEE**  
**CHAIR OF SOCIAL CARE AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL – 2017/2018**