

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday 13 July 2023.

PRESENT: Councillors J Walker (Chair), TA Grainge, D Jackson, L Mason and S Tranter

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillors

OFFICERS: S Blood, E Scollay, J Hedgley, S Hodge and R Musicka

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors J Cooke, M Nugent and G Wilson

23/1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

23/2 **MINUTES- ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL - 29 MARCH 2023**

Item deferred.

23/3 **AN INTRODUCTION TO ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES**

The Chair welcomed the panel to the first meeting of the municipal year and a round of introductions was provided. In attendance was Erik Scollay, Director of Adult social care and Health integration, who had been asked to provide a briefing in relation to the service area, including key strategic priorities and challenges for the coming year. The Director advised that he also had a statutory responsibility for Director of Adult social service (DASS).

The Director provided the panel with an overview of the following:

1. Adult social care and public protection teams- who we are, what we do.
2. Overview of basic legislation
3. Current key issues.

Adult social care and public protection teams- who we are, what we do.

The Panel were advised that in terms of staff, the service had approximately 550 staff, with 115 full time social workers. The service has a small senior staff team, consisting of the following:

1. Judith Hedgley, Head of Public Protection,
2. Ruth Musicka, Head of Access and Safeguarding
3. Suzanne Hodge, Head of Prevention, Provider and Support Services
4. VACANT - Head of Specialist and Lifelong services. Sarah Disbury from North Yorkshire would be joining the Council in the next few months.
5. Aside to the Heads of service for adult social care were two further officer. Mark Adams, Director of Public Health (Public Health South Tees) and Kathryn Warnock, South Tees Integration Programme Manager.

The Heads of service were in attendance and introduced themselves to the panel. They advised that they would return at a later date if requested by the panel.

The Director advised the panel of the Directorate teams:

- Social Work Teams – Access, Adult Safeguarding, East and West Locality Teams, Hospital at JCUH, LD and Transitions, Older People's Mental Health, Psychosis, Affective Disorder, Forensics, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Team (BIAs),

- Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs)
- Estates Team
 - Tees Community Equipment Service
 - Occupational Therapy Team
 - ACT - Homelessness Team, Rough Sleeper Support and Domestic Abuse Support
 - Residential Respite – Levick Court
 - Day Care – The Orchard, North Ormesby Resource Centre, Community Inclusion Service, Autism Day Unit
 - Independent Living Services – Staying Put Agency, Connect and Assistive Tech, Staying Included, Rekindle Digital Inclusion, Independence Hub, Blue Badge, Sensory Loss Service, Reablement Service, Hospital to Home
 - Selective Landlord Licensing Team
 - Public Protection - Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Housing Standards Team
 - Licensing Team
 - Metrology Service

Overview of basic legislation

In terms of legal literacy, the Director advised the panel that the service area work with many, however they are two fundamental Acts which underpin the work within adult social care:

1. **The Care Act 2014** (including the wellbeing principle for eligibility)
The Care Act 2014 came into effect in April 2015 and replaced most previous laws regarding both carers and people being cared for.

The Care Act outlines:

- the way in which local authorities should carry out carers' assessments and needs assessments (for the looked after person)
- how local authorities should determine who is eligible for support
- how local authorities should charge for both residential care and community care
- if they should charge for carer support and
- the local authority obligations.

The Care Act is mainly for adults in need of care and support, and their adult carers. There are some provisions for the transition of children in need of care and support as they move to adult services, parent carers of children in need of care and support, and some younger carers (<https://www.carersuk.org>)

The Care Act 2014 strengthens the rights of people with learning disabilities / autism and their family carers. It promotes fairer, more personalised care – and shifts the focus of local authorities from providing services for specific groups, to supporting individuals to achieve the outcomes that matter to them.

Duties sit within the

2. **Mental Capacity Act 2015:**

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) is designed to protect and empower people who may lack the mental capacity to make their own decisions about their care and treatment. It applies to people aged 16 and over. It covers decisions about day-to-day things like what to wear or what to buy for the weekly shop, or serious life-changing decisions like whether to move into a care home or have major surgery. The Act in essence, protects the rights of the individual.

Members of the panel had a brief discussion regarding dementia and their rights. The Director outlined that, wherever possible, the social worker will have a discussion with the service user who is judged to have mental capacity regarding power of attorney. If this is not in place, the social worker is trained

to have discussions with families in these circumstances.

Ongoing work and key current issues

The panel learnt that there were 12 key areas:

1. Preparations for CQC inspections of Adult Social Care (beginning in Sep 23) – re-building of capacity for reflection and continuous improvement. The CQC will inspect Local authorities against part 1 of the Care Act 2014 and are currently working with 5 pilot local authorities.

The CQC will do as much inspection as possible off site, in terms of inspection of safety and leadership. The CQC use the same reward criteria as Ofsted. The local authority is currently looking at an improvement plan.

As way of introduction, the Director outlined he would return to provide an overview of the CQWC framework at a later meeting.

1. Management of complexity and demand – containment of “in-year” spend and “transformative” action required to ensure sustainability. More of a lean to trauma informed approaches and ensuring our services have this in mind when dealing with complex cases.
2. Market responsibilities – duty to ensure sustainability of independent care provision.
3. Reducing our reliance on residential care - we are a national outlier.

Need to address ways of adapting peoples' homes so they are able to remain in their own properties. There is a whole host of areas to address, including for example, housing providers, temporary short term accommodation, strategic needs assessments, length of assessment for adaptations etc.

4. Development of housing/accommodation options – sheltered; extra-care; temporary accommodation?
What does Middlesbrough have to offer? What types of care homes do we provide?
5. Development of workforce plans to address national recruitment challenge across Social Workers/Environmental Health Officers. There has always been an issue of recruiting and retaining social workers within Middlesbrough, however this is not unique. A former scrutiny topic was undertaken on this issue and the panel may request an update at a future meeting.
6. Further development of independent living support services within the Staying Put agency and Staying Included – broad range of independent living supports; aids and adaptations; groups to support social inclusion and digital inclusion (the Rekindle Project) etc
7. On-going work to develop the integration of homelessness; domestic abuse and substance misuse services – Accessing Change Together
8. Planning work on the review of key policies such as the Statement of Licensing.
9. Continuation of Regulatory programme (housing; food hygiene inspections etc.)
10. Need to develop support for individuals with disability into employment.
11. Preparations for the implementation of government's social care reforms – work on charging (Care Cap) and provider funding
12. Developing further support to informal carers.

The Director was thanked for his informative presentation.

AGREED- That the information be noted and addressed by members at a future meeting to

formulate the work programme for the municipal year.

23/4 **NEXT STEPS- ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

The Chair advised the panel that at the next meeting of the panel, the Democratic services officers would be working with the panel to discuss possible scrutiny topics for the next municipal year.

The panel would have an opportunity to put forward suggestions, as well as accessing the information that has been provided by the Director.

23/5 **PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2023/24**

A proposed meeting schedule, for the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel, was submitted for the scrutiny panel's consideration.

AGREED

That the proposed meeting schedule, for 2023/24, be approved.

23/6 **ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.**

No Items.