

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel was held on Tuesday 1 July 2025.

PRESENT: Councillors J Kabuye (Chair), J Banks, D Branson, D Coupe (Vice-Chair), D Jackson, M McClintock, T Mohan and Z Uddin

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: M Short (Integrated Care Board)

OFFICERS: S Disbury, S Hodge, C Jones, C Lunn and R Scott

25/11 **WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and read out the Building Evacuation Procedure.

25/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

25/13 **OVERVIEW OF SERVICE AREAS**

The Chair welcomed the following service area representatives to the meeting:

- Sarah Disbury, Head of Specialist and Lifelong Services – Adult Social Care.
- Suzanne Hodge, Head of Prevention, Provider and Support Services – Adult Social Care.
- Ruth Musicka, Head of Access and Safeguarding – Adult Social Care.
- Rebecca Scott, Public Health Principal – Public Health.

The representatives were in attendance to provide the Panel with an overview of the services provided across their Directorates, and to highlight the strategic and departmental priorities for the coming year.

The Chair also welcomed Martin Short, Director of Delivery for the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) to the meeting, who had been invited to provide the Panel with an overview of the Tees Valley health landscape; key health issues, challenges and opportunities; and matters for Members to note over the next twelve months.

Each of the representatives delivered, in-turn, a presentation to Members.

Integrated Care Board (ICB)

The Director of Delivery provided an overview of the ICB's Context for 2025/26, Integrated Care Strategy, Joint forward Plan 2023-2028, Local Place Based Plans and Neighbourhood Health.

Attention was drawn to Lord Darzi's report on the state of the National Health Service in England, alongside the Government's upcoming 10-Year Health Plan for England, which was scheduled for publication on 3 July 2025. The Government's health mission was discussed, including its priorities of preventative care, digital transformation and addressing health inequalities.

Members were advised that NHS England was being integrated into the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), and ICBs were to reduce their running costs. It was noted that these significant and ambitious changes would have an impact on service delivery.

The Integrated Care System's (ICS's) Integrated Care Strategy was presented, with the following priorities delivered to the Panel:

- Longer and Healthier Lives. Reducing the gap between how long people lived in the North East and North Cumbria, compared to the rest of England.
- Fairer Outcomes. Not everyone had the same opportunities to be healthy because of where they lived, their income, education and employment.
- Better Health and Care Services. Not just high-quality services but the same quality no matter where people lived and who they were.
- Giving our children the best start in life. Enabling them to thrive, have great futures and improve lives for generations to come.

Proactive Frailty Case Finding was explored in more depth, as a key priority for the ICB in relation to preventative care and a significant element of the ICB's Neighbourhood Health Guidelines. It was noted that Proactive Frailty Care Finding should be considered further by the Panel, when confirming the Scrutiny Work Programme.

A Member referred to preventative care and the outlined proactive approach of the ICB and Health Partners. A query was raised in respect of how health service providers, particularly GP Surgeries, would contact their patients anticipatorily, especially at a time when those with a health care need had difficulties in accessing primary care. It was explained that pharmacies had proactive assessment approaches, there were initiatives in proactive care in frailty and respiratory care and ongoing piloting approaches in screening such as targeted lung health checks. The Director of Delivery suggested that a further, more detailed item regarding Primary Care Access (satisfaction levels, appointment times, etc.) could be included in the Scrutiny Work Programme.

Members requested further information on the following:

- Mental Health Strategy. It was explained that there had been significant transformation in community mental health services over recent years and there had been a procurement exercise in regard to the children's mental health service.
- ICB Recruitment and Retention. The Director of Delivery advised recruitment pressures had varied depending upon professions. There was an ICB Workforce Strategy which focussed on recruitment, retention, and the health and wellbeing of staff.
- Joint forward Plan 2023-2028. Members were advised that progress had been made and the plan is reviewed and updated each year in March.

The Chair thanked the Director of Delivery for the information provided and invited the Adult Social Care Heads of Service, to deliver their presentation.

Adult Social Care

The Heads of Service for Adult Social Care each gave an overview of their service area and responsibilities, summarised as follows:

Head of Access & Safeguarding:

- Access Safeguarding Team.
- East and West Locality Teams.
- DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards) Team.
- Homelessness and Domestic Abuse.

Head of Prevention, Provider & Support Services:

- Staying Put Agency.
- Connect & Assistive Technology Service.
- Contact Centre.
- Staying Included.
- Rekindle Digital Inclusion Project.
- Independence Hub & Blue Badge.
- Sensory Loss.
- Community Reablement.
- Occupational Therapy.
- Community Inclusion Services.
- North Ormesby Resource Centre.

- Orchard Resource Centre.
- Levick Court.
- Tees Community and Equipment Services.
- Living Life Services.

Head of Specialist and Lifelong Services:

- Older Persons Mental Health Team.
- Forensics Social Care Team.
- Mental Health Team.
- Learning Disability Team.

The following challenges of the Directorate were presented:

- Responding to the CQC inspection and progressing an improvement plan.
- Change Programme – overall service improvement including the vision & strategy for Adult Social Care, co-production and neighbourhood working.
- Homelessness – managing demand and ensuring access to suitable and appropriate housing.
- Working in collaboration with Public Health who were required to deliver significant savings in the forthcoming year while also recognising the impact this could have on the wider system.

Following the presentation, a Member acknowledged the good work delivered by many of the services but highlighted a lack of coordination between departments and the resulting impact on service users. The Head of Access and Safeguarding acknowledged the point and advised that a coordinated approach was being explored as part of the transformation agenda. This work would look at improving collaboration with the ICB, strengthening links between internal departments, and engaging with the Great North Care Record to ensure a more joined-up, patient-centred approach.

Members raised concerns about the lack of publicity in certain service areas and the challenges that Councillors faced in signposting residents as a consequence of this. The Heads of Service noted the comments and indicated that they would be reviewed further.

Members stressed that poor mental health was a significant concern, particularly in relation to the economic and social factors in Middlesbrough. It was also noted that individuals experiencing poor mental health were often reluctant to seek help, and there should be careful consideration of the systems and processes in place to identify and support them. The representatives at the meeting outlined the services available and processes currently in place: it was suggested that the Scrutiny Committee could receive a dedicated briefing on Mental Health Care at a future meeting.

The Chair thanked the Heads of Service for the information provided and invited the Public Health Principal to deliver their presentation.

Public Health

The Public Health Principal gave a presentation which included:

- The Roles and Responsibilities of Public Health, South Tees.
- Public Health Challenges.
- Life Expectancy – UK and Middlesbrough.
- Priorities.
- Programme Achievements.
- Performance.

Members were appraised of the priorities within the Directorate, which included:

- To protect the population of South Tees from the spread of communicable disease, prevent and manage outbreaks, and protect from environmental hazards.
- To develop and implement a system-led approach to creating places that promote healthy eating and moving more.
- To reduce inequalities in population health through the prevention and early detection of disease and support the people to manage their long-term conditions.
- To develop a person-centred approach across the full local vulnerabilities system. Leading a co-ordinated and collaborative approach with key partners was the only

way to achieve consistent, high-quality delivery and remove duplication.

Following the presentation, a Member raised concerns about childhood obesity and nutritional imbalance in children, suggesting that a radical approach was needed to address these issues. The Public Health Principal acknowledged the Member's comments and informed the Committee about the Healthy Weight Declaration, emphasising the need for a multi-faceted approach to tackle this national challenge.

The Chair thanked the officers and invited representative for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

AGREED that:

- 1) The suggestions made in respect of the scrutiny work programme would be added to the document in preparation for consideration at the Panel's next meeting on 22 July 2025.**
- 2) The information, as presented, was noted.**

25/14 PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES FOR 2025/26

A proposed schedule of meeting dates for the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel for the 2025/2026 Municipal Year was submitted for Members' consideration. A discussion took place regarding the best time for the Panel to meet for the remainder of the Municipal Year. It was resolved that future Panel meetings would take place on Mondays at 5pm.

AGREED that Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel would meet on a Monday at 5pm for the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

25/15 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING - 22 JULY 2025 AT 4.30PM - SETTING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

It was agreed that the next meeting scheduled for 22 July 2025 would have a revised start time of 2.00pm.

25/16 ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED

None.