

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the **Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Morpeth on Tuesday, 3 October 2017 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT

Councillor J. Watson
(Chairman, in the Chair)

COUNCILLORS

Dungworth, S.
Horncastle, C.W.
Nisbet, K.

Rickerby, L.J.
Simpson, E.

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Daley, W.

Deputy Leader and Children's Services

OFFICERS

V. Bainbridge

Director of Adult and Community Care
Services

A. English

Senior Manager - Specialist Services

J. Hillery

Complaints Manager

K. Thompson

Rights Team Manager

S. Nicholson

Scrutiny Co-ordinator

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

M. Cotton

NE Ambulance Service

D. Nugent

HealthWatch Northumberland

C. Riley

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust

S. Young

NHS Northumberland Clinical

Commissioning Group

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors J.D. Foster, R. Lawrie and R. Moore.

21. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing OSC, held on 25 July 2017, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

22. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator presented the latest Forward Plan of key decisions (October 2017 - January 2018). (Forward Plan enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix A).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

23. HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD - MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 13 July 2017, be noted. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix B).

24. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS

23.1 Joint Children's and Adult Services Customer Experience: Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2016-17

James Hillery presented this report which informed the Committee of the activities of the Children's and Adult Services complaints services, including work on behalf of the NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group; how customer experiences were sought and provided an overview of what people had said about the services; how complaints were handled and statistical information from 2016/17; matters of general note arising out of those complaints including some examples where action had been or was to be taken in order to improve services; decisions made by the Local Government Ombudsman in respect of complaints they received about children's and adult services; and other feedback from people who used the services. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix C).

On the completion of the presentation, members made comment and sought clarification as follows:

- members were advised that all service users who raised concerns received a response, and officers worked with them to explore whether constructive outcomes could be achieved prior to those concerns being escalated to a formal complaint;
- members emphasised the need for all staff who have contact with service users to be fully aware of the complaints procedure, so that any concerns or complaints received were directed to the relevant officer to ensure that the correct response was provided by the appropriate person;

- the users surveyed were selected on a random basis through a number of methods, and
- children, particularly those with disabilities, who raised concerns, were contacted with sensitivity by specialist officers with expertise in the relevant area.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

23.2 New National Ambulance Response Times

Mark Cotton, North East Ambulance Service, gave a detailed presentation about the new national ambulance response standards. A copy of the presentation is enclosed with the signed minutes.

On the completion of the presentation, members made comment and sought clarification as follows:

- although it was anticipated that the new standards would be published in January/February 2018, they formally come into effect on 1 April 2018. The existing standards would be recorded in parallel with the revised version during that two to three month run-in period;
- due to the proposed changes in the revised standards, it would be no longer possible to benchmark performance against previous years up to April 2018. Performance could be compared to other ambulance services;
- a study by the University of Sheffield analysed more than 14 million 999 calls and found that the proposed changes to call handling and despatch would enable ambulance services to use their resources much more effectively, so that up to 750,000 vehicles would be available to immediately respond to emergency calls each year in England. The evaluation further found that there would be no safety issues for patients from those 14 million calls arising from the proposals;
- members were concerned that patient expectations of the service, heightened by media campaigns, may not be matched by the revised standards. The Act FAST campaign relating to having a stroke, for example, advised people to call “999”, but the new standards may result in an ambulance response time of up to 40 minutes, which may then lead to further patient distress. This may then lead to a loss of confidence in the ambulance service, and
- although ambulances despatched to rural areas had further to travel to reach patients, it was unlikely that they would be diverted to other calls, given the sparsity of the population in those areas.

RESOLVED that

- (a) the report be noted, and

- (b) representations be made to NHS England requesting that it gives consideration to ensuring that its health campaigns are consistent with the new standards, so that the public have realistic expectations of the ambulance service.

23.3 Safeguarding Adults Annual Report 2016-17

Anna English presented this report which provided an overview of work carried out under multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding adults in 2016-17. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix D).

The Committee welcomed the report and expressed their support for the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, agreeing that it was important that organisations shared intelligence on the dangers facing vulnerable young people, particularly in respect of sexual exploitation. Members also agreed that the Education Welfare Service had a role in helping to identify those potentially at risk.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

23.4 Welfare Rights Annual Report 2016-17

Keith Thompson presented this report, which updated members about the activities of the Welfare Rights Advisory Unit for the year ending 31 March 2017, and on key current issues about supporting people with benefits during a time of ongoing major changes to the benefits system. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix E).

The Committee welcomed this report, although members expressed their concern regarding the impact that the proposed Universal Credit would have on the poorest residents in the county. Members requested that they receive a presentation on the implications of the new system in due course.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

24. PRIMARY CARE APPLICATIONS WORKING PARTY

A copy of the notes are enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix F.

RESOLVED that the notes of the last meeting of the Primary Care Applications Working Party held on 25 July 2017, be received.

25. REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR

Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator presented the Committee's Work Programme. (Report enclosed with the signed minutes as Appendix G).

Members requested that reports and/or information be given to members on the following:

- Blyth Community Hospital
- Ambulance Service - Implementation of the New Standards
- Universal Credit
- Update on the number of available surgical beds in Northumberland.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

26. INFORMATION REPORT - POLICY DIGEST

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised the Committee that the Policy Digest gave details of the latest policy briefings, government announcements and ministerial speeches which may be of interest to members. The report could be accessed through the service finder element of County Council's web site at www.northumberland.gov.uk.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Chairman _____

Date _____