

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a remote meeting of the **Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on Tuesday, 2 August 2021 at 1.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor J. Reid
(Chair, in the Chair)

COUNCILLORS

Bowman, L.	Humphrey, C.
Dodd, R.R.	Hunter, I.
Ferguson, D.	Nisbet, K.
Hill, G.	Wilczek, R.
Homer, C.R.	

CABINET MEMBERS

Pattison W.	Cabinet Member
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OTHER MEMBERS

Bawn, D.	Oliver, N.
Jackson, P.	Taylor, C.
Morphet, N.	

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Angus, C.	Scrutiny Officer
Bennett, L.M	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Lally, D	Chief Executive
McEvoy-Carr, C	Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Children's Services
Morgan, L.	Director of Public Health
Taylor, M.	Director of Business Development

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Murphy and A. Wallace.

REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION BY SCRUTINY

REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

21. DISSOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTHUMBRIA HEALTHCARE

Members received information and a presentation about the planning taking place for adult social care and public health services affected by the decision of Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to terminate the partnership between the Trust and the Council which had been in place since 2011, and about the proposed future model for these services.

The Chair informed the Committee that the dissolution of the Partnership item was a pre-scrutiny item and the reports would be considered by the Cabinet on 3 August 2021. It was noted that members of all the Council's Scrutiny Committees had been invited to attend as it was felt that this matter raised issues which were within the terms of reference of each of the Scrutiny Committees.

Daljit Lally, Chief Executive, and Cath McEvoy-Carr, Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Children's Services, introduced the report and presentation. Daljit Lally outlined the history behind the arrangements which had been in place for approximately 20 years. A review of the arrangements had been undertaken during 2020/2021 and it had become clear that it would not be possible to overcome the significant differences between the two organisations and the agreement would end in September 2021. It was stressed that the dissolution of the Partnership was not the outcome that the Council had sought on initiating the review. The differences between the two organisations included HR issues such as terms and conditions, policies and procedures; and cultural, governance and accountability arrangements. There were no concerns over the delivery of services or safety and security of care provided. An expanded partnership model, Northumberland Care Services Together (CaST) reporting to both organisations had been proposed in 2020 but was not supported by the Northumbria Trust. The Trust had indicated that it may continue to host as an employer to adult social care staff, however, legal advice to the Council was that this would not be lawful.

Cath McEvoy-Carr highlighted the new service models for supporting adults with long-term care and support needs. The following services were included within the current Partnership arrangement and revised arrangements were being put in place:-

- Adult Social Care Services
- Hospital Discharge and Reablement Service
- NHS Continuing Health Care
- Learning Disability Community Nurses
- Nursing Staff in directly Provided Care Services
- The Joint Equipment Loan Service
- The Integrated Wellbeing Service
- The 0-19 Public Health Service

Members were strongly of the opinion that they wished to understand more clearly the reasons why the Northumbria Trust had decided to bring the Partnership to an end. The Chair stressed that the meeting was being held to discuss the new arrangements being put in place going forward and not the reasons why the Trust had decided to withdraw. There were also concerns about the potential practical and financial impact of the changes

and reassurances sought that the transferring staff would not be disadvantaged. Members were informed that the first priority was to ensure that all the services were unaffected by the changes. There would be some additional costs but the figure was not known yet. There would also be no detriment to any member of staff although some individual issues around TUPE were to be resolved and discussions in this regard were ongoing. This was not a cost saving exercise. It was added that the Council would now have the opportunity to work more closely with other organisations such as CNTW and Northumberland Communities Together to further enhance the current provisions to support vulnerable residents.

The Chief Executive stressed that nothing could be done about the Northumbria Trust's decision but that the Council now had endless opportunities to re-focus on and deliver localised community based services and services would be provided by the same people. The services had been well provided over the last 15 years and would continue to be delivered to Northumberland residents.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be received and
- (2) that the Cabinet be informed that the Committee supported the recommendations contained in the report and hoped that the changes would support the advancement of social care and drive further improvement for the residents of Northumberland.
- (3) an update be provided in early 2022 along with complete and detailed financial information to allow Members to fully understand all the implications arising from the changes.

22. PROPOSED PARTNERSHIP FOR 0-19 PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – CONSULTATION

Members were invited to comment on a consultation currently taking place about a proposed partnership between the Council and Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT), under which HDFT would deliver health visiting and school nursing services.

Cath McEvoy-Carr reported that the 0-19 Public Health Service became part of the partnership with Northumbria Healthcare Trust in 2018. However, whilst the Trust had recently indicated that it would want to continue to provide this service, it was clear that the two organisations had differing views as to how partnerships should operate and the kind of management and decision making arrangements which would best support the joint development of services.

Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT) had been identified as a suitable provider for this service. A consultation was underway and comments should be received by 16 August 2021. Several staff events had been held and officers had met with the LMC, a small group of paediatricians and a group of health visitors and school nurses. Further details and FAQs were on the County Council's website and there was an opportunity to comment via that route. Questions from staff were being received regularly and the answers to those questions would be added to the FAQs.

The HDFT provided services to a number of other Local Authorities and the feedback from these Local Authorities had been taken into consideration in recommending the partnership. The HDFT was the preferred partner as it offered the required skills and expertise. The delivery of local services would be by the same staff as currently. The Director of Public Health reported that the operational management would remain as at present but be accountable to the Director of Nursing at HDFT. Other support such as IT and HR services would be provided by locally recruited staff. The partnership would offer an opportunity to take a strategic view of integration over a range of areas including schools and Early Years. It was noted that staff would be transferring from one NHS organisation to another and so the financial situation was simpler than that for the Health and Social Care staff transfer from the Northumbria Trust to the County Council.

RESOLVED that

- (1) The report be received.
- (2) A review be carried out in six to nine months.

23. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would take place on Tuesday, 31 August 2021 at 1:00 p.m. at County Hall, Morpeth.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____