

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a meeting of **Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 1A , County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 11 May 2023 at 1.30 pm**

Present

Councillor P Jopling (Chair)

Members of the Committee

Councillors J Howey, V Andrews, R Crute, O Gunn, D Haney, J Higgins, C Martin, S Quinn and T Stubbs

Co-opted Members

Mrs R Gott and Ms A Stobbart

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Bell, I Cochrane, K Earley, L Holmes, A Savory and M Simmons.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Declarations of Interest

Councillor D Haney declared an interest in respect of agenda items 7 and 8 advising that he was a public governor of Tees Esk and Wear Valley Foundation Trust.

5 Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

G McGee, Healthwatch County Durham raised an issue regarding mobile breast screening units advising the units had not been mobile since the pandemic and asked if there were plans for the units to be made mobile again. She also asked whether this had impacted on the number of people accessing breast screening.

S Gwilym, Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that the following response had been received from the Public Health Programmes Manager, NHS England:

- University Hospital of North Durham (UHND) mobile unit was permanently sited there and was used to serve patients whose GPs were linked with Gateshead Breast Service Provider (Durham City areas).
- Bishop Auckland Hospital mobile unit was provided by North Tees Breast Service Provider to serve patients in the west Durham area (Bishop Auckland, Durham Dales, Shildon and recently, Newton Aycliffe) Residents in Newton Aycliffe were included for the last visit as the usual area in Aycliffe was undergoing refurbishment, however this had since been resolved and the next planned visit would be back at the Pioneering Care Centre Aycliffe. This was the same mobile unit that moved around from Bishop Auckland Hospital and other areas across Tees Valley.
- Stanley mobile unit was provided by Newcastle Breast Service Provider to serve patients in the North Durham area (Stanley, Consett and surrounding areas) and was also moved around to serve other areas across Northumberland.

The response from the Public Health Programmes Manager advised there were no plans to increase the number of sites visited by any of the Service Providers. She was aware that one premises in Durham had recently been lost (Crook North House Surgery) due to estates being taken which meant that residents from Durham Dales had to travel to Bishop Auckland Hospital for their screening. Moving a unit takes up time on top of the regular maintenance services the units require to maintain clinical and radiological standards, in addition to staff capacity. The 3 year round length plans were coordinated by the service providers to ensure as much access as possible was available across the region for patients to attend within their due dates. The round length plans were monitored as a key performance indicator (KPI) and the team worked with providers to ensure KPI's were met or support offered where difficulties arose. The Public Health Programmes Manager advised that round length KPIs were within standards apart from Newcastle Breast Provider, this provider currently had a backlog caused by the pandemic, but this was expected to return to normal within the next three to four months. It was also noted that it had been difficult for service providers to identify suitable premises where units would be safe from vandalism and have access to facilities such as electricity and toilets.

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that further data regarding KPIs had been requested and would be shared with the Committee once received.

Councillor Quinn commented from experience that the service at Bishop Auckland hospital was impressive.

Councillor Gunn agreed with the high level of service at Bishop Auckland hospital but expressed concern regarding the locations of the mobile units. She explained that County Durham was a large geographical area and included a lot of rural areas and small towns and stated that it would be difficult for some residents to travel to these locations. Councillor Gunn stressed that support for these residents needed to be considered.

Councillor Stubbs stated that the mobile units appeared to be static and asked if the units would become mobile again to help those residents that were unable to travel. The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer confirmed that the mobile units would remain sited at the current locations. In response to a further question from Councillor Stubbs regarding the mobility of the units, the Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer clarified that the units were mobile in terms of the provider.

Councillor Haney felt that the current level of service was unacceptable and asked how many locations were served prior to the pandemic compared to now.

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer assured Members and Healthwatch that he would form a response that highlighted their concerns and would ask if locations for breast screening services could be extended.

Resolved

- i. That the response to the question from Healthwatch County Durham be noted.
- ii. That further clarification be sought from the Public Health Programmes Manager regarding the locations of the mobile units.
- iii. That further information regarding KPIs be shared with the Committee at a future meeting.

6 Draft ICB County Durham Plan 2023/24

The Committee considered a report of the Joint Head of Integrated Strategic Commissioning, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care which outlined the draft Integrated Care Board (ICB) County Durham Plan which was submitted on the 17 March 2023 (for copy see file of minutes).

H Bell, Provider Management Lead, North of England Commissioning Support Unit presented the report and informed Members that there was an opportunity to review the plan, refresh and seek assurance as part of a local engagement process before final publication of the ICB Joint Forward Plan on 30 June 2023. Members were asked to review the report and provide comment on the content and the proposed plan for engagement and assurance.

The Provider Management Lead advised that it was a draft plan and feedback from ICB colleagues had resulted in some minor changes. She advised that the draft

plan followed the County Durham Care Partnership and Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy approach and was aligned to:

- Starting Well
- Living Well
- Ageing Well
- Cross Cutting Transformation

The Provider Management Lead explained that mental health would be considered as a separate area and would be included in the second iteration.

Councillor Quinn thanked the Provider Management Lead and commented it was positive that all ages were included. She expressed concern however regarding oral health and stated that this subject should be included in the plan. The Provider Management Lead agreed that oral health was a concern and reassured Members that this would be included in the second iteration.

Councillor Crute questioned how much flexibility was in the five year plan to adapt to changes and at what level could the plan be adapted. M Laing, the Director of Integrated Community Services explained that money should follow the priorities and services follow thereafter and explained that consideration had also been given to a more varied career path across several organisations but stated this came with a cost.

Councillor Andrews commented on the excellent report but asked if it was achievable without working with education services. The Provider Management Lead advised that there was a great deal of cross working taking place between education, health and local authorities.

Councillor Howey praised the great work but asked if it was possible to add complementary therapies into the report. The Provider Management Lead stated that there was a specific action focussing on moving activity away from hospitals and believed there would be a review of services and would enquire if this would include complimentary therapies.

It was noted that the social prescribing role may involve complementary therapies in the future.

A Stobbart, Co-opted Member stated that she would like to see some areas strengthened such as the benefits of integrated services and the prevention work around mental health and tobacco including communication campaigns. The Provider Management Lead gave assurance that these areas would be strengthened in the next iteration. A Stobbart also felt that it needed to be made clear why certain areas of the report had required changes to be made.

Councillor Crute stressed that the recommendation from Members needed to emphasise the need for funding to be allocated to the correct services. Councillor Gunn concurred.

Resolved

The Committee agreed:

- i. That the draft plan be noted, and the following amendments/additions be included in subsequent submissions;
 - a. Inclusion of oral health
 - b. Inclusion of complimentary therapies
 - c. Strengthen the benefits of integrated working and preventative work
 - d. That the recommendation emphasises the need for funding to be allocated to the correct services.
- ii. That the timescales for completion and local governance process be noted.
- iii. That the final sign off by delegated authority of the Chair / Vice Chair through the Health and Wellbeing Board be agreed.

7 NHS Foundation Trust Quality Accounts 2022/23

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which provided Members the opportunity to consider and comment on the draft 2022/23 Quality Accounts for:-

- North East Ambulance Services NHS Foundation Trust
- County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that the report introduced the draft Accounts of North East Ambulance Service, County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust and Tees; Esk and Wear Valley Foundation Trust.

M Cotton, Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement provided a detailed presentation for the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) and highlighted the key areas of performance for 2022/23 and proposed Quality Account priorities for 2023/24 (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor Stubbs asked what constituted a safety incident and how this differed from a serious incident. The Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement agreed to make enquiries regarding this and feedback to Members.

G McGee asked how much influence NEAS had on the delays experienced at A&E. The Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement advised that NEAS decide whether to take a patient to A&E but have no control over delays

experienced from this point forward. He stated that hospitals had access to NEAS systems and were aware of imminent admissions.

A Stobbart noted the feedback received from service users and how this helped to shape service improvements and asked if this information was published. The Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement confirmed that it was published and gave an example of a high profile issue involving a dementia friendly ambulance which had helped support patients with dementia, but stressed that more consistency was needed.

Councillor Andrews noted that health care services were co-dependent on each other and experienced issues with funding and asked if the plan was therefore achievable. The Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement reassured Members that many priorities had been carried forward to the following year and would continue to be a priority for the service. With regards to handover delays, he advised Members that the department of health had recognised this area as an issue and funding had been received to address this. He further advised that additional support had also been given by the Integrated Care Board (ICB).

W Edge, Assistant Director of Assurance and Compliance provided a detailed presentation for County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) and highlighted the key areas of performance for 2022/23 and proposed Quality Account priorities for 2023/24 (for copy see file of minutes).

With regards to the data given on sepsis, Councillor Haney was sad that this had an amber warning and asked what percentage of patients were given antibiotics within one hour and what the average delay was when this was not achieved. L Ward, Associate Director of Nursing (Patient Safety) agreed to obtain this data. She advised that antibiotics were given quickly wherever possible but that delays were incurred when there was sepsis with an unknown origin.

Councillor Stubbs referred to the colour ratings for 2022/23 and expressed concern that some quality priorities with zero tolerance had been given an amber status. The Assistant Director of Assurance and Compliance clarified that if there had been more than one incident then the quality priority would have been given a red status but agreed to feedback Councillor Stubbs concerns.

R Gott, co-opted member commented on a personal experience and praised the work of County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust. The Assistant Director of Assurance and Compliance thanked R Gott for her feedback. Further experiences were shared by Members who also expressed their appreciation.

Councillor Higgins suggested that information be made available in communities and at GP surgeries to enhance public awareness on sepsis so that treatment for patients was not delayed.

Councillor Howey asked why County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust had stopped giving pain relief medication to children after being discharged. The Director of Integrated Community Services assured that medication continued to be offered and agreed to follow up on the case given by Councillor Howey. Councillor Quinn advised that there had been information in the media recently regarding medication for children which had advised that parents could present at a GP surgery if they were struggling to afford it.

A Lowery, Director of Quality Governance provided a detailed presentation for Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV NHS FT) and highlighted the key areas of performance for 2022/23 and proposed Quality Account priorities for 2023/24 (for copy see file of minutes).

With regards to feeling safe, R Gott stated that the report did not reflect information in the media and gave an example of how a patient with suicidal thoughts had been treated. She asked whether staff sat with patients and whether they understood what triggered patients to be violent and disruptive. D Gardner, Care Group Director, Mental Health Services for Older People and Adult Mental Health Services acknowledged that distressing stories had been covered in the media but assured Members that they were currently undertaking work to address this and explained that values, behaviour and culture of staff were integral to their work.

Councillor Higgins commented from experience that patient safety at University Hospital of North Tees was good.

Councillor Gunn left the meeting.

Councillor Stubbs referred to the question 'Were your family/carers involved in your care as much as you wanted' and asked why there had been a reduction from 81% to 72%. The Care Group Director explained that over the previous 12-18 months, the level of occupancy on wards had increased and it was difficult for staff to broadly engage with families when experiencing a high level of occupancy. He explained that they were currently undergoing a piece of work which would introduce a designated carer contact to ensure families were kept updated and engaged.

Councillor Stubbs asked if the carers that had responded to the inpatient survey were reflected in the statistics for the carer surveyor as the statistics did not correlate. The Care Group Director clarified that it was dependant on the size of the sample explaining that the number of people returning the survey from the community would be significantly higher.

Councillor Haney asked what level of access patients and carers would have with the new electronic system. The Care Group Director advised that the electronic system was due to go live on 1 July 2023 and a patient portal would subsequently

follow and agreed to obtain the schedule details for this. The Care Group Director noted that NEAS would also be given access to the electronic system.

Resolved

That the information detailed within the presentations be noted and the production of responses to the Draft Quality Accounts be delegated to the Democratic Services Manager as Statutory Scrutiny Officer be agreed.

8 Adult Learning Disabilities across Durham Tees Valley Update

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer informed members that S Halpin, General Manager (interim) Adult Learning Disabilities, TEWV NHS FT was unable to attend the Committee meeting but had provided the following update in her absence.

The General Manager (interim) Adult Learning Disabilities was sorry to hear that there were concerns about the availability of in-patient beds to people with a learning disability in the locality and offered the following assurance:

- The Adult Learning Disability (ALD) community teams worked proactively to avoid hospital admissions as far as possible by supporting people at home.
- Any person requiring an admission for a deterioration in their mental health would access a mental health bed within the Trust and these admissions (Green light) were jointly monitored between ALD & AMH services to ensure the right support was available.
- If the situation arose that a person did need admission to a LD bed which was out of area, then the locality teams in TEWV and the Partnership would continue to provide monitoring and support.

The services had recently been re-inspected by Care Quality Commission (CQC) and had received some positive initial verbal feedback. However, they could not pre-empt what the final report would say but hoped that a full update could be provided in July 2023. Positive feedback had also been received from Mersey Care who had been supporting some of the improvement work as 'critical friends' and had observed that significant improvements had been made.

The time frames for the temporary closure of the ALD wards at Lanchester Road Hospital were no clearer and there was a continued focus on the needs of the remaining patient. However, the work on the planning for this including the new bed design model and the wider community model to support this was ongoing as a primary concern was to provide safe, effective, person-centred services for the local population.

Resolved

That the information detailed within the update be noted and that the concerns of the Committee be forwarded to TEWV NHS FT and that an item be brought to the Committee's meeting in July 2023 be agreed.

9 Quarter 3 2022/23 Performance Management Report

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive Officer which presented an overview of progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework and highlighted key messages to inform strategic priorities and work programmes. The report covered performance in and to the end of quarter three, 2022/23, October to December 2022 (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor Stubbs pointed out an error in the report regarding healthy life expectancy for males. A Harrington, Strategy Team Leader, Corporate Affairs thanked Councillor Stubbs for highlighting this and agreed for this to be amended.

Councillor Higgins was concerned that reviews of adult social care service users had reduced again and stressed it was vital for regular reviews to take place. The Strategy Team Leader appreciated Councillor Higgins concerns and agreed to feed these back but gave assurance that the new central Review Team would address this issue and had to report weekly to the Director of Adult and Health Services. Further to this, the Director of Integrated Community Services advised that whilst it was preferable in terms of accountability for the caseworker to undertake the review as they knew the family, the central Review Team would help alleviate some of the pressures faced by the community teams but stated that this would be monitored.

Resolved

That the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter three performance, the impact of COVID-19 pandemic recovery and the external international factors driving inflation and cost-of-living on the council's performance, and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance including the significant economic and well-being challenges because of the pandemic be noted.

10 Other Business

Councillor Quinn stressed her concerns regarding oral health and the lack of access of NHS provision in her division and in County Durham. She expressed concern for all residents but specifically for children. Councillor Quinn asked for oral health to be formally raised as a concern and welcomed that someone attend a future meeting of the Committee.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer informed Members that he was aware of a national review for contracting arrangements for NHS dentistry services and that monitoring had been taken over by the Integrated Care System (ICS). The Principal Scrutiny Officer assured Councillor Quinn that he would write to the ICS to stress the concerns raised by the Committee.