

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

SPECIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

At a Special Meeting of **Overview and Scrutiny Management Board** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Tuesday 1 April 2014 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor J Armstrong in the Chair

Members of the Committee:

Councillors P Stradling, R Crute, A Hopgood, P Lawton, J Lethbridge, H Liddle, T Nearney, A Shield, M Simmons, R Todd, J Turnbull and S Wilson

Co-opted Members:

Mr A J Cooke and Mr D Kinch

Also Present:

Councillor M Nicholls

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Batey, R Bell, J Chaplow, B Graham, D Hall, and Reverend K Phipps.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members in attendance.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 In-house Residential Homes Consultation Process

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Adult Services that summarised the formal consultation process used when consulting on the review of five in house residential care homes in County Durham. A detailed presentation was given by the Head of Commissioning (for copy of report and slides, see file of minutes).

The Head of Commissioning reported that final recommendations would be presented to Cabinet on the 16 April 2014.

Members acknowledged that the consultation had been a robust and comprehensive process that had been carried out with service users, carers, families, members of staff, trade unions, elected members and stakeholder groups.

Mr Kinch asked if the residents had been examined by a medical professional to ensure the process would not affect them mentally or physically. The Head of Commissioning advised that a capability test had been carried out prior to the interview. After seeking advice, they would be reluctant to carry out medical assessments prior to the decision being made as conditions may change.

In response to a question from Councillor A Hopgood regarding member involvement in the project group that was set up to oversee the development of the consultation framework, the Head of Commissioning confirmed that there had been member involvement along with the Cabinet Portfolio holder and senior officers.

Councillor Hopgood acknowledged that the consultation had been comprehensive but thought that the council may be subject to criticism from the public as the preferred option may not be the one agreed by Cabinet. The Chairman responded that the decision would be made by Cabinet and the scrutiny role was to ensure that the consultation process had been carried out correctly. Councillor P Stradling added that scrutiny did not take part in making the decision. Cabinet have three options to consider and the consultation exercise was to determine the recommendations for Cabinet to approve.

Resolved:

That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board accept the report detailing the process, and approve the release of the consultation report to Members in advance of the Cabinet meeting on 16 April 2014.