

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

13 NOVEMBER 2013

CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Making Difficult Decisions in Adult Social Care

1. We reviewed the consultation proposals regarding: fair access to care service eligibility threshold; the charges that people pay for their social care support; and targeting of prevention services. The Committee acknowledged that we must manage demand to cope with increasing demographic growth and meet savings requirements.
2. Given that in a relatively short space of time the response to questionnaires issued has been impressive, there is reason to believe that people feel their contributions are valid and, most importantly, that they matter.
3. Should the criteria remain at 'Moderate', arguably the Council is left with an unlimited liability. We acknowledged this as one reason for considering raising the threshold to protect services. But, it also means the Council can be more targeted in developing preventative measures and foster community based services that deliver better outcomes. This can defer or delay a person from needing costly, longer-term services – as can reablement, which is why we noted the statement that any tightening of the eligibility threshold will not directly affect the retention of this service.
4. The content of the Equalities Impact Assessments will inform our judgement whether some elements, particularly the arrangements about two people providing care, might unfairly affect certain people– especially those individuals who have savings and capital. This is one of a number of things that will be uppermost in our minds when, in January 2014 (before the Executive is asked to reach a view) we weigh up the consultation results and conclusions.

Local Account 2012-13

5. Given that the Local Account is now an essential part of sector lead improvement and must be an honest assessment of social care performance over the previous years, it was important that the Committee had an opportunity to review, pass comment and make suggestions for any

amendments, before it is published. We found the document well written and accessible. It passed what for us is perhaps the pivotal test: it is not self-congratulatory, evidenced in part by the included case studies which describe how the Directorate has learned from experience, and then improved practice.

2013 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire

6. The Director of Public Health's Annual Report reaffirmed the view I know many of us hold: public health is back where it belongs - within the sphere of local authorities. This gives the opportunity to influence activity which is not just of benefit to the population, but also complements our priorities, especially those of social care, which could prove critical in the challenging financial time ahead.
7. We congratulated Dr Sargeant on both the clarity of his report and for the inclusion of recommendations that are targeted, realistic and achievable.

Safeguarding Annual Report

8. Safeguarding is a range of activity aimed at upholding an adult's fundamental right to be safe, at the same time as respecting peoples' rights to make choices. We all share a responsibility for safeguarding, but scrutiny Members must also ensure that proper arrangements are in place with partners to ensure safeguarding of our communities is effective. The evidence in the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Board's report for 2012/13 convinced us (as previous years' reports have done) that partners demonstrate strong, strategic commitment to this agenda.
9. Raising the profile of safeguarding is as important as it ever has been which is why it's a major part of our in-depth review of the financial abuse of vulnerable adults.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR PATRICK MULLIGAN
Chairman, Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee

County Hall,
NORTHALLERTON
October 2013