

# NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

22 February 2023

## STATEMENT OF CHAIR

### CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### Trailblazer

1. North Yorkshire had agreed to be one of six “Trailblazers” for the new proposals on Adult Social Care reform and has been working with those other councils and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to look at the impact of the proposals. The committee made this one of its key priority topics for scrutiny.
2. DHSC has recently advised that although Charging Reform was still government policy, its introduction had been delayed - but only until October 2025. Therefore, for the time being at least, the Trailblazer project would be stood down.
3. Knowing that so much useful, detailed work had been undertaken preparing for the change, we wanted to understand what had been learned, and which areas of work, begun as a Trailblazer, we may wish to continue with for now. We were encouraged that these might include what we had come to see as especially progressive aspects, namely:
  - Continuing to explore a digital/self-service model where appropriate.
  - Working with providers to better understand the self-funder market
  - Care accounts for all users.
4. As we hoped, and to a large extent expected – because of the quality of the preparations and research the directorate committed to - some of these areas could help to deliver efficiencies and more responsive customer care.
5. Much remains to be clarified with DHSC – for example, funding for the extra staff recruited in good faith, and what further work ought to be carried out. So, rather than shelve this as a scrutiny topic, our intention is to return to it later in the year.

#### All Age Autism Strategy

6. For the third year running, we fulfilled a commitment to review progress on developing the “All age strategy for Autism in North Yorkshire”.
7. The uniqueness of each person with autism makes the experience of living with autism different for each and every family. But there are some consistent themes or issues that most families should be aware of to be able to provide the best support to the individual and to family members. Having looked at how the strategy set out to deliver this, we concluded that the support available is of a high standard. Most importantly, this has been done with the active engagement of people with autism.
8. We should aim to build upon this success. In that context, I am sure we can all get behind the following aims of the proposed new strategy:

- Improving understanding and acceptance of autism within society.
  - Improving autistic children and young people's access to education and supporting positive transitions into adulthood.
  - Supporting more autistic people into employment.
  - Tackling health and care inequalities for autistic people.
  - Building the right support in the community and supporting people in inpatient care.
  - Improving support offered within the criminal and youth justice systems.
9. Our interest in autism is equally shared by the Scrutiny of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has, over a number of meetings, focussed more closely on the current "deep dive" to understand the system, challenges, population needs and gaps in service provision.
10. My committee will, of course, lend as much assistance as the Scrutiny of Health OSC feels it needs to ensure that the shortly to be finalised revised strategy is robust and effective.

### **ASC Framework**

11. Committee members attended a briefing, examining the new obligations under the Adult Social Care Assurance Framework. This is the government's plan to reintroduce inspections of local authority's adult social care functions by the Care Quality Commission, with councils being potentially subject to government intervention for failings.
12. We were completely reassured that the directorate is preparing well and thoroughly for this new inspection regime.

### **Older Peoples Champions Report and Heathy Ageing**

13. In giving her annual report as Older Peoples Champion, Cllr Caroline Dickinson facilitated a broader presentation on Healthy Ageing and ensuring North Yorkshire is an age friendly place where people can live healthy and active in later life.
14. Caroline talked us through some examples she had come across where, through partnership and collaboration, activities have been fostered that help older people live an independent and active life. So many of these schemes and initiatives that we admire are founded on local action. Small schemes that excel at single things - churches keeping people warm, walking groups, singing and dancing for people with dementia. We agreed with Caroline's view that we have such a strong community and voluntary sector in North Yorkshire and through HAS and Stronger Communities, as a council, we help these local groups to flourish.
15. Looking to the future, whilst LGR presents opportunities not just to bring together all services under one roof - adult services, transport, housing, culture and leisure, through our commitment to localism, we have the platform to encourage older people's groups to make their voices heard.

### **Looking Ahead**

16. For the next meeting in March, we will be looking at:

- Care Market pressures.
- Local Account.
- Adult Social Care, Public Health and Climate Change.
- Safeguarding.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR KARIN SEDGWICK**

**10 February 2023**