

Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

31st January 2013

Briefing Note: Northamptonshire County Council's Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee

1 Background

- 1.1 Councillor Danielle Stone is Northampton Borough Council's representative to Northamptonshire County Council's (NCC) Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 A meeting of NCC's Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee was held on 28th November 2012.
- 1.3 As reported to previous meetings, the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising and reviewing issues and services relating to:
 - health care;
 - adult social care; and
 - adult and community learning.

2 Update

- 2.1 Details of the main issues discussed at the meeting held on 28th November 2012 are detailed below:
- 2.2 The agenda comprised the following items:

Children's Services Improvement Programme and delivery of services in the following areas:

- a) Safeguarding children
- b) Fostering and Adoption
- c) Support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

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- 2.3 This item was very detailed and comprehensively covered the programmes of work put into place to improve services. Some of this has been done through the co-location of key services in order to facilitate communications and prevent children falling through the gaps

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)

- 2.4 Mash workers access information held on a child by all the different agencies and make decisions based on a multi - agency assessment.

JCPT (Joint Child Protection Agency Team)

- 2.5 The Joint Child Protection Agency Team, set up as a 3 month project to test the effectiveness of the co-location of police and social workers with a paediatric rota health consultation weekly drop in for consultation on complex cases. As a result of the pilot a larger more permanent team has been established based at the new Criminal Justice Centre.
- 2.6 The good news was that the numbers of children looked after is falling and has currently gone from 830 to 770
- 2.7 The County has a strategy in place to provide alternatives to residential homes for young people of 14 and over.
- 2.8 Fostering and Adoption has recently had a “Good” Inspection. Waiting times for adoption have got shorter with the process becoming more intense and shorter between application, approval, placement, but just as rigorous.

Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Recovery Programme

- 2.9 The Committee considered an overview of the action being taken by the Trust in response to the finding by Monitor, Lorene Read, Chief Executive
- 2.10 This paper highlighted the cause of concern was the budget and poor performance of its A & E.
- 2.11 Measures have been put into place to understand why A & E were not meeting its performance targets and changes to practice have been implemented, such as referral back to primary care, introduction of the GP commissioner led weekly review. The Trust has taken a number of mitigating factors to strengthen its financial position including delaying its capital programme, reviewing credit terms, and reduction in expenditure.

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- 2.12 In addition to this meeting panel members have also been involved in workshops looking at changes to mental health provision with more of an emphasis on prevention and early intervention.
- 2.13 The panel has also visited Kettering and Northampton General Hospitals to receive a briefing on Winter Pressures.
- 2.14 Part of the pressures are due to bed blocking. There are 150 beds out of 650 in Northampton blocked for a variety of reasons. One of them is a lack of suitable accommodation for the old and vulnerable to be transferred in to another is the time it takes for adaptations to be made to their existing property.

3 Centre for Public Scrutiny – Action Learning Set – Care Quality Commission

- 3.1 Councillor Stone and Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer, are, along with four other district councils, members of an action learning set (ALS) facilitated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The purpose of the ALS is to investigate methods how district councils can be involved/raise awareness of the work of the CQC.
- 3.2 It is suggested that an update on this work be provided to a future meeting of this Committee.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1 That the update is noted.
- 4.2 That regular updates of the work of Northamptonshire County Council's Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee be provided by Councillor Danielle Stone to this Committee.
- 4.3 The next meeting of Northamptonshire County Council's Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 27th February 2013 – commencing at 10:00am.
- 4.4 That the Committee receives an update on the work of the National Action Learning Set that Councillor Stone and the Scrutiny Officer, Northampton Borough Council, are involved in.