

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Chair: Cllr Darryl Dixon

Vice-Chair: Cllr Juliana Heron

Committee Members: Councillors Kelly Chequer, John Cummings, Ronny Davison, Jill Fletcher, Kevin Johnston, Shirley Leadbitter, Barbara McClennan, Paul Middleton, Dorothy Trueman and Geoff Walker.

It once again gives me great pleasure to be able to introduce to you the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's report. It has again been a very busy year and the committee has looked to build upon the work and progress of the previous year.

The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has continued in 2017/18 where it left off in 2016/17 with an in-depth look at the state of GP Practices in Sunderland. The Committee has, over the last 2 years, been presented with information on practice mergers, branch closures, procurements as a result of contracts ending or being handed back and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections of general practice. The Committee has looked in detail at the current state of general practice as well as how Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (SCCG) is supporting the sustainability and transformation of local practices in light of the challenges they face. The Committee will continue to monitor the situation through regular reporting by SCCG and also from CQC Inspections of local practices.

The school nursing service, commissioned by the local authority, delivers a number of mandatory and non-mandatory health interventions in schools across Sunderland. There have been a range of issues with the delivery of this service and the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has held a workshop to discuss these issues in addition to receiving performance and progress updates in relation to this issue. Members of the committee have provided robust challenge around the key issues relating to the school nursing service. The Committee continues to monitor the situation and will look forward to further updates in the future as commissioners look to re-commission the service.

The health service landscape continues to change and reconfigure to meet the needs and demands of local populations against a backdrop of challenging issues including the recruitment and retention of staff and finite resources. With this in mind the committee has looked at two major issues related to this, the first around urgent care transformation and the second around Multispecialty Community Providers or MCP's.

Urgent care is currently too complicated and people want to be able to see a GP when they have an urgent care need. Sunderland CCG has therefore embarked on a programme of change to ensure that the provision is fit for purpose and the future. The Scrutiny Committee continues to monitor and provide challenge to this programme and we will continue to receive progress reports from SCCG. This is certainly an issue that the committee will keep on its work programme and will continue to provide the requisite response and challenge.

Sunderland CCG believes there is benefit from including and integrating all out of hospital services it commissions into a multispecialty community provider model. The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee recognises this as a fundamental development in how health services are delivered across Sunderland. Committee Members have highlighted a number of areas of concern and will continue to closely monitor the development of the MCP and we will be very interested in the outcomes of both market and public engagement.

It is important that as a health scrutiny committee we develop links with our key health partners and providers and to this end I am pleased to report that we have a good,

professional working relationship with Sunderland CCG. We have also started to develop our relationship with Sunderland's Healthwatch organisation and recently received their annual report at committee. We hope that this is the beginning of a more active relationship and I feel sure that both organisations can benefit from such an association.

The North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) are yet another example of an organisation that the committee would like to develop further links with. The committee are very interested in the ambulance services performance in Sunderland and the impact that winter pressures exert on their resources. With service re-designs and reconfigurations, Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STP's) and MCP's all taking shape it will be critical to understand the ambulance services role in many of these this plans. In beginning the conversation with NEAS I feel that the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee is placing itself in a position to be able to do this in the future.

Members continue to receive quarterly progress updates on the care and support provider market which provides awareness of current and on-going issues within the care home market in Sunderland. As a result of these regular updates Members have been proactive in requesting further assurances around the market where there are issues of concern. It is crucial, as scrutiny members, that we do not disregard the issues that are presented to us but seek assurances that the remedial actions put in place are carried through and result in an improved quality of service.

The Committee has conducted a varied and detailed work programme over the past year and the challenges that lie ahead for health services are monumental. The Committee will continue to develop relationships and consider the issues facing the health landscape in Sunderland and more importantly such changes will impact local residents.

Finally on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members, officers and partners who have contributed to the work of the committee over the year. It is only through this level of commitment and collaboration that the Committee is able to look at the issues in such detail, and I am confident that this will continue in the future.

Councillor Darryl Dixon
Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee