

# **ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD**

19 September 2011

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

**Present:**

Councillor: Gerard Hall, Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder

Officers: Geraldine Martin, Head of Service  
Leigh Keeble, Development Officer  
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **11. Annual Complaints Report (1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011)** *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

**Type of decision**

Non key.

**Purpose of report**

To present the Annual Complaints and compliments Report of the Child and Adult Services Department on complaints and representations for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011. The Annual Report was attached as Appendix A to the report.

The Annual Report provided information on the complaints and representation frameworks appropriate in the department. It draws together information in relation to complaints that have been received and dealt with during the reporting period.

The report included details of complaints relating to Children's Services and Community Services. These come within either a statutory framework or the Authority's Corporate Complaints Framework and were also reported to the Children's Services Portfolio Holder and the Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

It is a legal requirement in adult social care that an Annual Report be published on complaints, presented to the Portfolio Holder and made available to staff, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and general public. It was noted that this was the first full year with the new complaint policy in place.

The report offered an opportunity to demonstrate learning that had occurred from complaints also consider trends emerging through the year's activity within the Complaints Framework.

The content of the Report included the following areas:

- Types of complaints and representations received 2010/11
- Profile data on service users who were the focus of the complaints
- Outcomes of complaints
- Compliance with timescales
- Learning lessons and service improvement

The report provided an analysis of recorded complaints, compliments and representations and draws comparisons with the previous year. Performance was highlighted in a range of areas so that practice issues may be considered.

In addition to the above, it was noted that the remit of the Local Government Ombudsman had changed to include the role of investigating complaints by self funders which would involve the provision of much more intelligence from the local authority. In response to a question from the Portfolio Holder, the Development Officer confirmed that a similar process to that followed in relation to safeguarding would be followed in that any complaints received by the local authority about external providers, if appropriate, would be brought to the attention of the Care Quality Commission.

The Portfolio Holder noted that there appeared to have been a number of complaints about financial issues and contributions. The Development Officer indicated that work was underway to develop more effective public information as some of the complaints had been raised due to service users not being fully aware of the charging arrangements. A discussion ensued on the level of personal cash service users of residential care had remaining once all their care costs were met. The Head of Service indicated that this was recognised as an issue and it was hoped that the commission for funding reform findings and the White Paper to be issued next year would deal with that. The Development Officer confirmed that the User Property and Finance Team works closely with all service users to maximise service users' benefits whilst ensuring the balance of contributions.

The Portfolio Holder was pleased to note the number of compliments

received by the Department and was keen that the compliments were passed onto the particular members of staff concerned. In addition to this the Portfolio Holder commended officers for the clear and concise report submitted. In conclusion it was noted that the new complaints regime had proved effective and had worked reasonably well with most complaints being resolved through a person centred approach.

### **Decision**

The report was noted.

## **12. HealthWatch** *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

### **Purpose of report**

To provide the Portfolio Holder with an update on the introduction of HealthWatch in Hartlepool, the successful application for Pathfinder status and the initial steps planned for developing the local model for HealthWatch.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The report included brief details of the government's proposals for Healthwatch. As a result of being awarded Pathfinder status, the report also outlines the planned initial steps for the development of a local Healthwatch.

The Head of Service informed the Portfolio Holder that the current contract with LINK finishes at the end of March 2012 and a short term alternative provision would need to be identified as the introduction of Healthwatch had been delayed until October 2012. This was a national issue that was subject to much discussion through regional networks. The Portfolio Holder was informed that the successor organisation would be commissioned and work was underway with LINK on how to progress this. Consultation was also being undertaken on a Teeswide basis to develop a model for rolling forward Healthwatch. The results of this consultation would be considered at an event to be held at the end of October involving Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency and other partner agencies and stakeholders.

The Portfolio Holder suggested that the involvement of the local media may encourage the further involvement of local people in the development of this service.

**Decision**

The report was noted.

The meeting concluded at 2.35 pm

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 23 September 2011**