

**2 November 2015**

**Agenda Item: 8**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING,  
ACCESS AND SAFEGUARDING**

**MEMBERS' VISITS TO COUNCIL AND INDEPENDENT SECTOR CARE  
HOMES**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The report seeks approval of the proposed methodology for involvement in quality monitoring visits by Members to Council owned and independent sector care homes, further to a report to Committee in March 2015.

**Information and Advice**

2. For a number of years the department has arranged visits by Elected Members to Council owned care services. This has allowed interested Members to review services and provide feedback to the department. Services visited have included the Council owned Care and Support Centres, day services, short breaks and supported employment services.
3. In 2012 the existing 'rota visits' system was reviewed, but continued, with at least 17 Members from across the political groups subsequently undertaking regular visits. This year, and in view of plans to review and strengthen governance around the care home sector, it was felt prudent to review the programme of Member involvement in care home scrutiny (alongside separate work being undertaken regarding Members' visits to day services, short breaks and supported employment services).

**Context**

4. In March 2015 it was proposed that, following the roll-out of a new methodology for the quality auditing of the care home sector (independent and Council-owned), now would be an opportune time to review the involvement of all interested Members.
5. An overview of the current quality audit methodology has previously been shared with Members which includes:
  - a quality audit framework/tool-kit
  - an annual quality audit of each service
    - for older persons care homes these un-announced audits currently take place between August and December each year and are used to identify the associated quality/fee band

- for younger adults care homes the un-announced audits take place over the year
  - analysis of desk-top information and intelligence held
  - responsive quality audits of services based on a risk-based approach.
6. The report to Committee in March 2015 proposed that those Members expressing an interest be supported to have an involvement in the annual audit process. This annual audit process includes the development of a confidential work programme but, due to the additional requirement to undertake responsive visits, is liable to change. There are 300 homes that the Council audit including our care and support centres and short breaks services and this is a significant number of homes in which to undertake audits. Following further consideration on how best Members could be involved, it is now proposed that they be included in the responsive quality monitoring of services, where particular concerns have been identified.
7. This would allow Members to be able to speak with people accommodated and/or their families, at services where concerns have been identified, and understand how this has impacted on them. Additionally Members would be able to see how the Quality Development Officers work to support improvements in outcomes for the people accommodated.
8. The current audit tools and methodology review five outcome areas:
- people's experience of person centred support
  - people's lived experience
  - people being protected from harm
  - people who use services are supported by competent staff
  - services are managed effectively.
9. This new methodology puts people who use services at the heart of the audit. Their views, opinions, wishes, lived experience and involvement in the running of the service provide key evidence about the quality of care and support. To that end a significant period of time is now spent talking with people who use services and observing the lived experience. The same methodology is used in conducting responsive visits, although the number and scope of the outcome areas viewed at a responsive visit is dependent on the issues of concern that has triggered the visit.
10. It is proposed that the same methodology is used by Members with a separate template being developed to support their visits/record their findings. Sample questions will be prepared in relation to each of the outcome areas to provide support in gathering people's views.
11. It is proposed that:
- a list of care homes, by area, allocated to each Quality Development Officer (QDO) will be shared with Members – to help them identify services within their ward
  - the Team Managers responsible for monitoring care quality in care homes will liaise with interested Members to arrange for a walk through of audit methodology, sample questions and the template for recording findings

- interested Members will be supported to shadow a QDO in the quality audit process, after which they can determine which services they wish to visit and report on
- after each visit is completed Members would complete a reporting template and return it to the lead QDO within a week of their visit to allow incorporation of their findings with other intelligence held
- within two weeks of receipt of the template the QDO will feed back to the Member with details of how the information has been, or will be, used
- the quarterly report presented to the Adult Social Care and Health Committee will include evaluation of Members' input and feedback.

### **Other Options Considered**

12. No other options have been considered

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

13. To involve interested Elected Members in the quality monitoring of care homes

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

14. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Financial Implications**

15. There are no financial implications.

### **Implications for Service Users**

16. People in receipt of care and support are often in vulnerable positions through being placed in care homes. It is imperative that the services that they receive are of good quality and are delivered with dignity and respect. The proposals in this report seek to reduce and wherever possible eliminate poor quality care home provision whilst at the same time supporting the development of further high quality care home services through improved partnership working.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That Committee approves the methodology for involvement in quality monitoring visits by Members to Council owned and independent sector care homes, as detailed in paragraphs 10 and 11.

**Caroline Baria,**  
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**Constitutional Comments (LM 20/10/15)**

17. The recommendations in the report fall within the Terms of reference of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.

**Financial Comments (KAS 19/10/15)**

18. The financial implications are contained within paragraph 15 of the report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members' visits to Council and Independent Sector Care Homes – report to Adult Social Care & Health Committee on 2 March 2015 (previously published)

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

ASCH348