

30 MARCH 2016

SCRUTINY PROGRESS REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To update the position in respect of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) and scrutiny panels. The current position regarding progress made by the Board and each of the panels is set out below.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

2. Since the last Council update, the Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 1 March to consider the following:
 - a) Attendance of the Executive Member for Communities and Public Health
 - b) Interim Report of the Health Scrutiny Panel – temporary Changes to the Breast Radiology Department at James Cook University Hospital.
 - c) Better Health Programme
 - d) Final report of the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel – reoffending and Rehabilitation – How does Middlesbrough Fare?
 - e) Report of the Environment Scrutiny Panel – Bereavement Services
 - f) Executive Forward Work Programme
 - g) Scrutiny Panels' Progress Reports

SCRUTINY PANEL UPDATES

3. The updated position in respect of the work of each of the Council's scrutiny panels is shown below.

Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel

4. The Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel's has been established to undertake a review in respect of the Council's use of consultants.
5. To date, the scrutiny panel has received information on:
 - How consultants are engaged and for what projects/service areas.
 - How projects involving consultants are managed and objectives achieved.
 - Work that is being undertaken by the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) in respect of the use of consultants by local authorities regionally.
6. The panel is awaiting information on the costs involved in using consultants across the Council and will next meet on 24 March 2016.

Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel

7. At the meeting held on 24 February 2016, the scrutiny panel continued to gather evidence in respect of its review of Safeguarding and Children in Care.
8. At the meeting, the scrutiny panel considered evidence in respect of Terms of Reference i) and j):
 - To examine the profile of the professional workforce of social workers and the effectiveness of care planning across the Local Authority.
 - To determine the responsibilities of corporate parents and how this role can be enhanced.
9. The Director of Wellbeing, Care and Learning, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Children's Care and Lead Executive Member for Children's Services were in attendance at the meeting.
10. The scrutiny panel found that the professional workforce of social workers is relatively stable and there are initiatives in place to retain staff. However, there is a requirement for the Local Authority to recruit to vacancies to alleviate current workload demands on staff, therefore improving capacity to undertake statutory visits within expected timescales. There is also a need for work to be undertaken to ensure all care plans are sufficiently specific and measurable.
11. From the evidence received, the Local Authority recognises the importance of strong corporate parenting and embedding the voice of children in care in local practice. Middlesbrough's Pledge demonstrates the strong commitment to corporate parenting. However, it was recognised that Councillors would benefit from formal training that supports them to champion the needs and interests of children in care
12. The last meeting was held on 16 March 2016. At the meeting, the scrutiny panel considered, discussed and agreed the final report on this topic and determined its conclusions and recommendations.
13. In 2012, the scrutiny panel undertook a review of Substance Misuse Among Parents and Carers. At the 16 March meeting, Members received an update/overview of the progress made with the implementation of the agreed actions, since the panel's report was submitted to the Executive.
14. The Risk and Reduction Manager, the Project Manager for Care Coordination and the Coordination and Development Officer were in attendance at the meeting.
15. Data demonstrates that there are a high proportion of substance users, in Middlesbrough, who have children or parenting responsibilities. Subsequently, the scrutiny panel received data and information on the key areas of work that are presently being delivered, or are being developed, to tackle the risk of substance misuse. Members heard that a new Integrated Drug and Alcohol Service is being developed. It was advised that the service will provide engagement, preventative and early intervention through to treatment and recovery support services for all individuals, irrespective of age or substance used.

Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel

16. The panel met on the 14 March 2016. At that meeting, the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Children's Care was in attendance to provide an update to the panel on the topic of Child Sexual Exploitation. The panel was advised that between October 2015 and December 2016 there were 10 young people assessed as being high risk of CSE within Middlesbrough; 1 young person recorded nationally as trafficked, 12 young people classed as regularly missing from home or care and 17 young people assessed as vulnerable. The Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) Practitioner Group (VPG) discussed 16 perpetrators or suspected perpetrators of CSE in Middlesbrough.
17. The panel was informed that the VPG is also witnessing higher levels of online 'sexting' (i.e. the sending of self-generated indecent images). The panel is keen to assess the problem profile in Middlesbrough in respect of this issue. A briefing paper and written evidence provided by the Council's Risk and Reduction Manager on this particular issue will be considered by the panel at its April 2016 meeting.

Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel

18. Since the last update to Council, the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel has met twice, on 18 February and 9 March 2016. Details of those meetings are summarised below.
19. On 18 February 2016, the panel heard from local bus operators on a number of issues, including:
 - Concessionary fares.
 - Commercial considerations concerning routes.
 - The continuation of non-subsidised routes.
 - The good working relationship with Middlesbrough Council and how operators and the local authority can work together on areas of mutual interest and benefit.
20. The scrutiny panel agreed to note the current position.
21. In addition, the meeting also heard an update on the Economic Regeneration and Transport (ERT) Scrutiny Panel's 2014 investigation of Business and Job Creation. Information was submitted on the recommendations made by the scrutiny panel and progress made to date in implementing these.
22. At the panel's next meeting, on 31 March 2016, Members are scheduled to receive an update in respect of the previous review of Gresham Regeneration.

Environment Scrutiny Panel

23. The panel met on the 11 February 2016. At that meeting, the Chair of North Ormesby Neighbourhood Development Trust (NONDET) and the Council's Community Regeneration Manager were in attendance to update the panel on the transfer of North Ormesby Market to NONDET. It was confirmed that the transfer is set to take place on 1st April 2016 and legal agreements are in place in respect of the Council's expectations

for maintaining the cleansing and operational standards of the market. The panel was reassured by the information provided and wished NONDET well in its undertaking of this venture

24. At that aforementioned meeting the panel finalised its conclusions and recommendations on the topic of Bereavement Services. The report sought to examine the level of investment required in Bereavement services to meet the future needs of the town; examine how people in Middlesbrough are affected by funeral poverty and consider ways in which the local authority can assist in helping residents to arrange an affordable funeral. The panel's report on this topic was submitted and approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 1 March 2016.

Health Scrutiny Panel

25. The panel's last meeting was 23 February and Members continued with their review of Cancer Screening and Reducing Cancer Related Deaths in Middlesbrough. The panel met with the Programme Manager from the Macmillan Integrated Care Project, which looks at end to end care, from pre-diagnosis to end of life. The panel were invited to see the cancer facilities at the James Cook University Hospital. Members also received a presentation regarding the three areas of cancer screening by representatives from NHS England.

South Tees Health Scrutiny Joint Committee

26. The South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is currently consulting on their plans for Urgent Care in the South Tees area. In addition to the information received from the CCG the committee met on 7 March to hold a 'round-table' discussion to gather independent views from various representatives including the North East Ambulance Service, Healthwatch, Teesside University, the Local Medical Committee, the Pharmacy Network, Public Health and Adult Social Care. There was in-depth debate about the implications of the urgent care plans and the committee will use the information as a basis for their response to the proposals.

Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel

27. In 2014/15, the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel undertook a review of Assistive Technology – How New Technology Can Transform Care. The current review of Prevention Services in Adult Social Care follows on from this work and both topics are closely linked.
28. The last meeting was held on 25 February 2016. At this meeting, the Assistant Director for Social Care and the Prevention and Access Lead provided Members with an update on the progress made with the implementation of the agreed actions - since the panel's report was submitted to the Executive.
29. The scrutiny panel heard that Connect are currently exploring the use of a device as a gateway to Telecare and as a link to 24/7 monitoring services, therefore enabling service users to go out into their local community, knowing that they are safe regardless of what happens.
30. It was advised that the importance of considering assistive technology has been built into departmental training and into updated practice guidance, which is provided to

all staff. It was highlighted that the department continues to develop the self-service model through Autonomy, online self-assessment and the Middlesbrough Matters online directory.

31. Members heard that a Market Management Officer has recently been appointed, whose role includes liaison with the voluntary and community sector (VCS). It was also advised that the Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency (MVDA) is being funded to develop the VCS capacity and introduce a local model of support focused on primary prevention – assistive technology will form part of this model.
32. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 14 April 2016. At this meeting, the scrutiny panel will continue to gather evidence in respect of its current review of Prevention Services in Adult Social Care.
33. On 14 April, representatives from the MVDA, Carers Together, Hope North East and My Sisters Place will be in attendance to provide the scrutiny panel with information in respect of the following enquiries:
 - An overview of the preventative work that the VCS undertakes and the role of the VCS in providing preventative services.
 - A list of the VCS organisations that provide preventative services, namely those seen to improve wellbeing and support resilience and self-help.
 - An outline of how preventative work is co-ordinated between the public sector and the VCS and information on the work currently being undertaken.
 - Case study examples of the preventative impact of the sector’s activities.

SCRUTINY REPORTS SUBMITTED TO EXECUTIVE

34. Since the last update to Council, the following scrutiny panel reports have been submitted to, and approved by, The Executive:
 - Health Scrutiny Panel - Health Inequalities: Improving Breastfeeding in Middlesbrough.
 - Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel - Albert Road Regeneration.

COUNCILLOR JEAN SHARROCKS

CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

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