

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 4

HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL

18 FEBRUARY 2014

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES CAPACITY

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide the scrutiny panel with an outline of today's meeting.

BACKGROUND

2. Members will recall that at the meeting on 28 January the panel received evidence from Dr Henry Waters from the South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group and John Stamp from the North of England Commissioning Support Unit.
3. As part of the overall review the panel had been interested in the Mental Health and Well-being Partnership, in particular its influence in setting mental health priorities in Middlesbrough. After the evidence received at the last meeting, Members agreed to invite John Stamp to come back to the panel and hold a round table discussion to also include the Mental Health representative from within the Council and the Chief Executive from Middlesbrough and Stockton MIND.
4. The panel had learnt that for a number of reasons the Mental Health and Well-being partnership needed to be refocused and the panel wanted to look in to this issue further. The panel also wanted to investigate the effects that the local authority's austerity measures were having in this area.

Today's meeting

5. Therefore, in attendance at today's meeting are the following representatives
 - Colin Holt – Head of Assessment and Care Management, Department of Wellbeing, Care and Learning, Middlesbrough Council
 - Emma Howitt – Chief Executive, Middlesbrough and Stockton MIND
 - John Stamp, Senior Commissioning Manager, North of England Commissioning Support Unit

Areas for Discussion

6. The following lines of enquiry are not exhaustive, and it is suggested that they are to be used as a guide for discussion at the meeting today.
- a) Is there still a place for the Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership and if so what can be done to refocus it and what role should it have?
 - b) Is there a risk that the good partnership work that has built up in recent years will be undermined because of the current economic climate and lack of strategic direction by the Government and what can be done to mitigate this?
 - c) Has there been a reduction in the number of staff in integrated teams and are vacant posts being frozen due to financial pressures, and if so what is the overall impact of the Council's austerity measures on service delivery?
 - d) If there is a reduction in the number of social workers in integrated teams what evidence is there that this has caused greater bureaucracy and increased numbers of assessments. Could this lead to breakdown in communication between sectors and if so what risks would that present?

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. It is recommended that the scrutiny panel note the information from today's meeting and agree if any further evidence is required for this review.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8. The next meeting is scheduled for 11 March 2014.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in this report.

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