

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 2 July 2013.

PRESENT: Councillors Brunton (Chair), Arundale, Cole, Dryden, C Hobson, Mawston, McIntyre, P Purvis, J A Walker and Williams.

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillor Rooney, Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development
Councillor Harvey, Assistant Executive Member.

OFFICERS: B Baldam, Mrs J Bennington, G Brown, P Clark, A Crawford, J Ord and N Sayer.

AN APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE was submitted on behalf of Councillor Sanderson.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point of the meeting.

MINUTES-OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 28 MAY 2013

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 28 May 2013 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

ATTENDANCE OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

By way of introduction the Senior Scrutiny Officer submitted a report which included a schedule detailing proposed attendance by individual Members of the Executive to meetings of the Board. It was intended for Executive Members to provide updates on their respective work in terms of their aims, aspirations, objectives, priorities and any emerging issues especially having regard to the current financial pressures and ways of mitigating such circumstances. The process was part of the scrutiny arrangements of holding the Executive to account and also provided the opportunity for the Board to identify or highlight any issues of concern or difficulty.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Rooney, the Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development and Councillor Harvey, Assistant Executive Member.

In his introductory comments the Executive Member confirmed that as part of the ongoing process of review, regeneration services had been consolidated under the new structure of the Neighbourhoods and Communities directorate. The scope and responsibilities of the Regeneration and Economic Development portfolio had broadened considerably to include Trading Standards, Neighbourhood Safety, Environmental Health, and Public Health service responsibilities. The Board was advised that given the challenging financial climate the main focus of the portfolio was on maintaining momentum with the Council's key regeneration priorities.

As a consequence of the wider downturn, reduced departmental budgets, and loss of grant income there needed to be a fundamental change in the way in which the Council worked and engaged with the public. Efforts continued to attract and maximise the opportunities for external funding. In balancing the budget it was necessary to prioritise statutory obligations against other desirable services.

It was noted that Middlesbrough was particularly disadvantaged by the loss of additional funds designed to tackle deprivation and bridge the gap between Middlesbrough's most deprived and more affluent areas. As at April 2013 the Tees Valley continued to have one of the highest unemployment rates at 6.6% almost double that of the national average. Given the high number of residents on welfare benefits it was considered likely for there to be more disproportionately disadvantaged by reforms to the welfare system.

Despite the challenges the Board was advised of key development schemes which were

progressing well which included Middlehaven, Gresham and Grove Hill and other areas such as Prissick, various housing developments, Enterprise Zones, Town Centre Development, cultural developments (with specific reference to the Middlesbrough Mela) and establishment of a number of Community Hubs.

The Board acknowledged the positive results and key developments which had been achieved and suggested that endeavours be made to maximise the opportunities of publicising such successes.

In commenting on the proposed improvements to the road network in Middlehaven, Members emphasised the importance for continued engagement with the bus companies with a view to providing appropriate links in this area.

In response to a Members' question with particular regard to the importance of securing the submission relating to an Advanced Manufacturing Park the Executive Member confirmed that such proposals together with others were the subject of a bidding process to the Government to the loan fund with the aim of stimulating development activity in Enterprise Zones for which a decision was shortly to be received.

Following Members' comments regarding an apparent rate of progress of housing development in South compared to North Middlesbrough the Executive Member indicated that specific reasons were unknown and to a large extent it was dependent upon interest shown by Developers.

ORDERED that the Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development be thanked for the information provided.

EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

As part of the Board's remit in terms of holding the Executive to account a report of the Executive Office Manager was submitted which identified the forthcoming issues to be considered by the Executive as outlined in Appendix A of the report submitted.

In response to a Members' request, further information would be provided regarding the mima governance review and Business Plan 2012 - 2015.

NOTED

EXECUTIVE FEEDBACK 23 MAY 2013 - ENERGY REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS OF LOCAL BODIES - FUTURE LOCAL AUTHORITY INVOLVEMENT IN ACADEMIES

As part of the scrutiny process and in a report of the Executive Office Manager it was reported that the Executive had considered the following Final Reports:-

Energy Reduction and Environmental Awareness of Local Bodies - Final Report of the Environment Scrutiny Panel
Future Local Authority Involvement in Academies - Final Report of the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel.

The Executive had considered and supported the Service Responses.

NOTED

EXECUTIVE FEEDBACK 18 JUNE 2013 - GROVE HILL REGENERATION - PAPERLESS COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As part of the scrutiny process and in a report of the Executive Office Manager it was reported that the Executive had considered the following Final Reports:-

Grove Hill Regeneration Scheme - Final Report of the Economic, Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel
Paperless Committee Meetings - Final Report of the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel.

The Executive had considered and supported the Service Responses.

NOTED

REVENUE OUTTURN 2012/2103

A report of the Director of Strategic Resources was presented concerning the 2012/2013 Revenue outturn position.

The final outturn position for 2012/2013 was reported as a net budget saving of £191,000 which represented a 0.14% saving against the 2012/2013 revenue budget of £133,588 million. A breakdown of Gross Expenditure and Income budgets against projected Expenditure and Income outturns was outlined in Appendix A of the report submitted.

The outturn of the Council showed a strong, positive financial position with all services showing improvements on the figures reported at Quarter 3. All services had made savings on staffing and running expenses during 2012/2013, some of which were an early achievement of 2013/2014 saving proposals. Whilst Members noted the savings which had been achieved with regard to staffing it was acknowledged that experienced staff had left the Authority and examples were given of the impact of having less staff with particular regard to the Youth Support Service.

The Board's attention was drawn to a number of key budget pressure areas on which Members sought clarification on the action being taken to address the position.

Such areas included the continuing demand led pressures within safeguarding as outlined in the report submitted. Of particular note related to the endeavours being made to accommodate as many placements as possible in house to reduce the impact on the Independent Fostering Placement budget. Members indicated that the outcome of the various measures being pursued would be the subject of consideration by the scrutiny process and/or update reports to the Board. It was confirmed that further information would be provided on the outcome of negotiations with regard to the Five Rivers contract and the involvement of the young people and what they see as their priorities as part of the overall consultation process on measures being pursued.

In terms of Social Care the full year impact of increases in demand was reported as £1,906,000. Specific reference was made to Winter Pressures with particular regard to the financial penalties, if any, associated with bed blocking when delays occurred in respect of people being discharged from hospital when support from social services or services in the community were not available.

Although there were significant pressures on car parking budgets as a result of reduced car parking income the overall pressure had reduced (-£77,000) following the approval of a virement from the Corporate Initiatives budget to fund the Mayor's Christmas Parking Initiatives.

ORDERED that the Officers be thanked for the detailed information provided which was noted.

BME COMMUNITIES: ACCESS TO SOCIAL CARE SERVICES - FINAL REPORT OF THE SOCIAL CARE AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

The Chair of the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel outlined the Panel's findings, conclusions and recommendations following a scrutiny investigation on a review on BME Communities: Access to Social Care Services.

The Board considered the following recommendations of the Panel based on the evidence submitted and conclusions reached:-

- (a) That an assessment is undertaken by the Department of Wellbeing, Care and Learning to examine whether the domiciliary care currently commissioned by the Council is adequately meeting the cultural needs of BME service users or whether there is a need for the Council to commission an element of domiciliary care for a BME specific provider.
- (b) That information on the services and support available to BME service users/ families who may require residential/nursing care be highlighted in the residential care brochure published by the Council and that the brochure be made available in community languages to local BME organisations.
- (c) That a proportion of the funding received from health for the provision of carer support services/carers breaks be used to commission an element of carer support services from a BME specific organisation to ensure that the needs of BME carers are fully met.
- (d) That a BME representative be appointed to the Carers Partnership to ensure that the BME community has a voice on this forum (the Executive should also note that the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel intends to appoint a representative from the BME community, as a cop-opted member to the panel).
- (e) That the outreach work undertaken by BECON and Humanah to identify hidden carers in the BME community be taken forward by the Department of Wellbeing, Care and Learning and that sustained efforts be made to increase the number of BME carers in Middlesbrough who are accessing a carers assessment and benefitting from the carer support services on offer.
- (f) That the Department of Wellbeing, Care and Learning, in conjunction with the Clinical Commissioning Group, develop joint arrangements and a project plan in order to determine how future funding of carer support services in Middlesbrough will be utilised and sustained. An update report on these arrangements should be submitted to the Panel at the earliest opportunity.
- (g) That a partnership approach between the Department of Wellbeing, Care and Learning, the MVDA and the voluntary and community sector BME organisations, delivering social care support services for the benefit of the town's BME population, be developed and an improved dialogue established.
- (h) That the MVDA actively seeks to provide development support and secure funding for VCS organisations that are looking to provide social care support services to the BME community. The panel expressed a view that there is a lack of evidence to suggest that the MVDA is currently providing the appropriate support and assistance to develop social care services for the BME population.
- (i) That the data/intelligence detailed in Middlesbrough's Carers Strategy be updated and that the information on the health needs of carers available for inclusion in Middlesbrough's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) be reported to the Panel at the earliest opportunity.
- (j) That the recommendations put forward by the Sahara Project in respect of the provision of mental health services for South Asian Women in Middlesbrough be revisited by the Department of Wellbeing, Care and Learning and the Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust. A joint report on the progress made against each of the recommendations is to be submitted to the Panel and provided to the Tees Valley Asian Welfare Forum.

The Board endorsed the Panel's recommendations and in particular referred to the importance of an improved partnership approach with Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency and for them to actively seek to develop support to secure funding for voluntary sector organisations looking to provide social care support for the BME community.

ORDERED that the findings and recommendations of the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel be endorsed and referred to the Executive.

CHILDREN WITH COMPLEX NEEDS - FINAL REPORT OF THE HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL

The Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel outlined the Panel's findings, conclusions and recommendations following a scrutiny investigation into Children with Complex Needs.

The Board considered the following recommendations of the Panel based on the evidence submitted and conclusions reached:-

1. That the Health and Wellbeing Board should develop a new and redesigned stop smoking service, which has sufficient capacity and expertise to take on the sizeable and difficult task ahead of it. The service's formulation and structure is a matter for management, after considering the evidence around need and necessary capacity. Nonetheless, from a political point of view, the Panel considers that the service should have the following aspects:-

(i) To be sufficiently assertive to contact every pregnant woman in the town and ascertain their smoking status.

(ii) If smoking status is confirmed, the expectant mother should be provided with a key worker, perhaps this could be their named community midwife, to offer support through the stop smoking services. The Panel considers having a key worker may reduce the numbers of those 'lost to follow up'.

(iii) The new Stop Smoking Service should make a specific, structured effort to work with the partners and families of pregnant women, in an attempt to alter the home environment to help the pregnant woman stop smoking.

(iv) For this to happen, people need to have accessible clinics in the communities most affected by tobacco use in pregnancy, at times and locations that match local demand. It should certainly be the case that there should be an accessible service, both in times and location, for every ward that is judged to need it.

(v) If judged to be necessary, after considering all available evidence, smoking cessation classes should also provide a crèche facility, to eliminate a lack of childcare as a reason for expectant mothers not being able to attend.

(vi) Detailed consideration should also be given to the feasibility of the service including in its remit, all harmful substances which can be consumed in pregnancy and potentially damage the unborn child.

(vii) The Panel would suggest that detailed social marketing is undertaken to understand local need, in terms of times and accessibility, to enable good access to this service.

2. That the local health and social care economy undertakes detailed analysis of all available evidence regarding the likely changes in population, aimed at producing a reliable set of data, regarding the number of children with complex needs in the future. This will be critical in planning educational, health and social care capacity in the future.

3. That the local Health and Social Care Economy, with a specific focus on the Clinical Commissioning Group, prepares a strategy as to how it will take on the timely and equitable funding responsibility for EHSCPs and how they will be marketed to parents. The Panel would like to receive an update on this point in September 2013.

4. That the Director of Public Health is supported in his efforts to increase the immunisation rates in Middlesbrough, by the full weight of the local authority. This should include the suggestion to schools that they provide assistance in offering facilities for immunisation programmes or associated catch up programmes. Evidence suggests that schools can be a very useful tool in reaching children requiring immunisations.

5. That the Director of Public Health takes on an area of work, aimed at understanding why there is such a divergence between rates of immunisations in Middlesbrough. This should have a focus on GP practice, as well as electoral wards.
6. That the Director of Public Health reassesses how long term child patients at hospitals receive their immunisations, with a view to ensuring that all long term child patients at James Cook University Hospital receive immunisations when due. The Panel considers it to be completely unacceptable that such a cohort is most at risk of not receiving their immunisations.
7. That with the Health Scrutiny Panel's support, the Director of Public Health writes to the Secretary of State of Defence, seeking clarification around the immunisation support provided for the children of Armed Forces families.

ORDERED that the findings and recommendations of the Health Scrutiny Panel be endorsed and referred to the Executive.

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2013/2014

The Senior Scrutiny Officer submitted a report, which outlined progress by the various scrutiny panels in considering the proposed scrutiny work programme for 2013/2014. The report summarised the suggested topics for investigation in respect of the following:-

Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Employability skills - care to work pathway for children in care.
- (b) Family approach to children's services- reducing the demand on social care.
- (c) Planning for SEN children - reducing the expenditure on SEN based services in light of new legislation.
- (d) Education of Children Looked After in children's homes/supporting care leavers.
- (e) Young people's participation in delivering Council services.
- (f) BME foster carers.
- (g) Teenage pregnancy rates.

Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Police Horses - Retention or Removal (Police Commissioner).
- (b) Prisoners placements - Day release for community service.
- (c) Crime Data - harmonisation of data and availability (SMP).
- (d) Dangerous Dogs - is it a growing problem in Middlesbrough.
- (e) Exploitation of children.
- (f) Tackling Obesity in Children - leisure contribution.
- (g) Repeat Offending - Police Action to reduce.

Health Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Mental health services capacity - to explore whether the current service configuration remained the best for the challenges faced by Mental Health services today, and the extent to which local people are placed in out of area placements.
- (b) Winter pressures - to consider how the local healthcare system is preparing for the 2013/2014 winter period.
- (c) Patient transport to hospital - to consider current and anticipated demand for services, as well as current service capacity.
- (d) Quality standards in the independent sector - to investigate how NHS Commissioners assure themselves of the quality and safety of services commissioned from the independent sector.
- (e) Healthcare Associated Infections - to continue to receive periodic updates.
- (f) NHS Finances - how the local NHS will deal with the ever-tightening NHS Financial picture.

(g) Neurological Services - a revisit of the Panel's Final Report.

Environment Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Borough Becks.
- (b) Revised Domestic Refuse and Recycling/Green Waste Collections.
- (c) Vacant Allotment Plots - Policy/Action (short topic/update).
- (d) Income Generation.
- (e) Botanic Centre/ Nature's World (update).
- (f) Waste Management Strategy (update).
- (g) Town Centre Streetscene /Cleanliness and Maintenance of Open Spaces/Flowerbeds/Planters - impact of Budget Reductions.
- (h) Improving Habitats for Biodiversity.
- (i) Cemeteries and Crematorium Services - Longer Term Strategy /Future Provision (including Safe Memorials/Headstones).
- (j) Junk Jobs/Bulky Waste (short topic/update).
- (k) Middlesbrough Environment City - Council Role and Involvement.
- (l) Promoting Household Energy Efficiency.

Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel:

Subsequent to the distribution of the report the Panel at its meeting held on 27 June 2013 had agreed the following topics as shown in a supplementary report circulated:-

- (a) New business creation and the impact of Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- (b) Traffic Calming and managing traffic speed (inc. 20 mph Zones).
- (c) Middlehaven - review of position and way forward.
- (d) Supporting the town centre/impact of reduced car parking charges.
- (e) Community Hubs - future role.
- (f) Empty residential properties - impact on Council Tax/financial implications.
- (g) Western Gateway.

Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Discharge from hospital - support provided by social services.
- (b) Continuing healthcare provision - to ensure the health economy funds health needs.

The Board was advised that it was anticipated that the Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee would shortly be meeting to establish its annual work programme details of which would be reported to the Board. In accordance with the agreed rotation the Chair of the Joint Committee for 2013/2014 was reported to be Stockton Borough Council.

A meeting of the South Tees Health Scrutiny Joint Committee was anticipated to be held in July 2013 to establish its work programme for the current Municipal Year details of which would be submitted to the Board.

ORDERED as follows:-

1. That the 2013/2014 Scrutiny Work Programme as outlined be approved subject to the addition of the topic Integrated Youth Service to the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel's work programme.
2. That the Board be advised of any suggested additions and/or revisions to the Scrutiny Work Programme of the Scrutiny Panels and Joint Committees accordingly.
3. That the Board considers subjects as they arise which are appropriate for the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel.

CALL IN

It was confirmed that no requests had been received to call-in a decision.

NOTED

ANY OTHER BUSINESS - SCRUTINY SUPPORT OFFICER - JON ORD

Both the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel expressed their gratitude for the excellent work and support provided by Jon Ord during his employment with Middlesbrough Council as a Scrutiny Support Officer.

Members extended best wishes and wished him every success for the future.

NOTED