

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: 9(b)

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

4th MARCH 2014

COMMUNITY SAFETY and LEISURE SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 To inform Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board of the progress made to date by the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2 It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Board approves the actions of the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel since the last update.

PROGRESS OF THE PANEL

- 3 The Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny panel met on the 12th February 2014. The following outlines the progress and intention of that meeting.

Exploitation of Children Background

- 4 The Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panels work programme identified the subject of "Exploitation of Children" and it was apparent through the BBC News that unfortunately it is a growing problem. The BBC had reported that helplines have seen a noticeable increase in calls from young people with thousands being reported to Police.
- 5 Against this background the panel wanted to know how significant this problem is in Middlesbrough and what can be done to arrest the problem and identify gaps where the Council and/or its partners could contribute to resolving this issue. Consequently at the panel has met with a number of organisation and services to gain a solid understanding of the depth of the problem before establishing its terms of reference.

12th February Meeting

- 6 Members requested a brief overview report which basically formed a position statement. Consequently, Members discussed the information received to date and the direction the panel should now take regarding their Scrutiny into this topic. In conclusion the panel wanted to meet with the Councils safeguarding service at its next meeting to ascertain the Council involvement in both preventative measures and actions

19th March meeting

- 7 The purpose of this meeting is receive the final stage of information before confirming the panels Terms of Reference and to provide Members with a good foundation of information and awareness to undertake this Scrutiny. Consequently, the panel intends to formalise its draft Terms of Reference at this meeting.
- 8 Panel members had asked that the Deputy Director – Safeguarding attend this meeting to outline how this service engages and actions issues relating to the exploitation of children. This was both as preventative measures, when a child may be considered at risk, and subsequently in response to the identification of vulnerable children.

9th April meeting

- 9 The panel considers that once they have received the information at the 19th March meeting Members will be equipped and informed to effectively undertake a Scrutiny into this topic. The panel considered that the meeting scheduled for 9th April should be a round table meeting involving a number of key organisations and services when the panel can get a collective view and also provide the opportunity to explore various lines of enquiry while all parties are present.
- 10 A number of organisations were referenced at the February meeting and these are presently being alerted or invited to the April collective meeting.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11 No background paper was used in the preparation of this report: -

COUNCILLOR FRANCES McINTYRE

**CHAIR OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LEISURE
SCRUTINY PANEL**

20th February 2014

Contact: Peter Clark
Senior Scrutiny Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.
Telephone: 01642 729 708 (direct line)