

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 23 June 2015.

**PRESENT:** Councillors J Sharrocks (Chair), J G Cole, J Culley, T Higgins, N Hussain, T Mawston, J McGee, F McIntyre, J Rathmell, D Rooney and J A Walker

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** R Broad, A Crawford and P Duffy

**AN APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE** was submitted on behalf of Councillor C Hobson

**DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations at this point in the meeting.

**1 INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

**2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

Nominations were sought for the appointment of Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Councillor Mawston was nominated and seconded and, therefore, appointed as Vice-Chair of the Board until amended by Council.

ORDERED that Councillor Mawston be appointed Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board until amended by Council.

**3 MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - 28 APRIL 2015**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 28 April 2015 were approved as a correct record.

**4 TEESWIDE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD - DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC PLAN - CONSULTATION**

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report, which outlined the background to this matter.

The Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board had been established to ensure that adults at risk across Teesside were protected and safeguarded.

The Board brought together representatives of the main agencies responsible for protecting adults from abuse and neglect.

The Council was being consulted on the development of the organisation's Strategic Plan, received from Stockton Council, which was providing administrative support in respect of the development of the Plan.

The Executive Director for Well Being, Care and Learning took Members through the draft and made the following points, in particular:-

- It was important to raise awareness of adults safeguarding. It was only recently that there had been a statutory responsibility on local authorities for adults safeguarding and, compared to children, the safeguarding of adults was not as developed.
- From the Council's perspective, a key element was to be assured that these issues were being taken seriously.
- The Board had a number of Sub-Groups one of which, Performance and Quality, was chaired by the Executive Director.
- The draft outlined objectives and measures intended to achieve the Board's strategic aims. These were:-

- *Personalisation* – putting adults at the centre of the process and aiming to tailor services to their needs.
- *Prevention* – measures to reduce the risk of abuse or neglect.
- *Protection* – keeping people safe from abuse or neglect.
- *Partnership* – ensuring links to other parts of the health and social care system. There was now a serious case review process, in the same way as for children's services, where cases could be taken for consideration. The review could decide whether to commission an Independent Chair or a Learning Review.
- *Professional Accountability* – this stressed that all agencies had a responsibility – not just in safeguarding adults, but in the delivery of the service.

A Member commented that, amongst the partners listed, there was no mention of housing providers, who were now under the umbrella of the Thirteen Group. The Executive Director agreed that this was a gap and said she would raise this.

A Member referred to a situation in a Care Home that she had visited. The Executive Director asked the Member to let her have more detail outside of the meeting and she would arrange for it to be looked into.

A Member commented that there had not been enough time for her to make informed comments, as the draft Strategic Plan had only been circulated one day before the meeting. The Executive Director acknowledged this. She had pushed for the draft to be circulated by the lead authority sooner. She suggested that Members email the Scrutiny Support Officer with any additional comments, so these could be fed into the review. The Scrutiny Support Officer advised that the deadline for comments was not until mid-July, so there was time for this.

A Member raised some queries about care generally and facilities provided for care staff. A Member, who was also on the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel, advised that that Panel had considered issues such as this and any questions or views that the Member had on matters such as this would be welcomed at that Forum.

In response to further comments and questions by Members, the Executive Director said that:-

- The aim was to establish clear mechanisms for reporting back.
- Evidence was derived from a variety of sources, including safeguarding alerts.
- Whilst it was known that there had been instances of abuse in care homes, the level of abuse in the community was also a factor.
- Systems for measuring information were relatively under-developed, compared to those in children's services, which were well established. Whilst the categories were different, the processes were similar. Therefore, work was being undertaken to see how systems in children's services could be used in adult services. The aim was to achieve the same level of rigour and scrutiny that existed in children's services.
- The policy of supporting people to remain in their own homes, for as long as possible could, potentially, impact on providers.
- Middlesbrough was a living wage Council and was working with providers to encourage them to do the same (The living wage was a higher rate than the minimum wage and was paid to all Council staff, apart from apprentices).
- Despite the number of agencies involved, confidentiality and sharing of information was not an issue.

The Chair summed up: The Board had no particular concerns with the draft, but any additional comments could be fed in, via the Scrutiny Support Officer. The Board would want

to see the finalised document.

ORDERED:

- a) That the production of the Strategic Plan and the approach taken to addressing the safeguarding of adults be supported.
- b) That it be requested that local Registered Social Landlords (e.g. organisations covered by the Thirteen Group) are included in organisations represented on the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board.
- c) That Members be given more time to consider the Plan and submit further comments.
- d) That the draft Plan be forwarded to all Members of the Council for information/comment.

## 5 EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered a report by the Head of Democratic Services.

For the particular benefit of newly-appointed Members, the Scrutiny Support Officer advised that the Forward Plan was one method by which information was fed into the Board. The Plan included all items that the Executive was aware it would be considering and regularly updated. Whilst the Plan was primarily for information, it afforded the Board the opportunity of considering a matter in advance of any decision made by the Executive.

The next meeting would consider suggestions for the Board's work programme for the year. Ideas for topics had been received from several sources. The Chair said that she would be seeking topics from Community Councils over the coming months, as well as updating them on the work of the Board. It was important that the Board was open and transparent.

A Member mentioned that she had raised the issue of scrutiny topics at Ayresome Community Council.

The Chair added that she intended to retain the practice of asking Members of the Executive to attend meetings to appraise the Board of their role and the main issues they were dealing with as part of their portfolio.

A Member queried what the issue headed "Orange Pip Market Update" related to. The Scrutiny Support Officer said he would find out more about this and advise Members.

## 6 DATES OF MEETINGS FOR THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - 2015/2016

Dates and times for meetings of the Board in 2015/2016 had been circulated.

The Chair indicated that the date of the August 2015 meeting might need to be changed, as she would be unavailable.

ORDERED:

- a) That the Scrutiny Support Officer liaise with the Chair as to the date of the August 2015 meeting.
- b) That the other meetings be held as follows:-

Tuesday 28 July 2015 at 4.00 pm  
Tuesday 15 September 2015 at 4.00 pm  
Tuesday 13 October 2015 at 4.00 pm  
Tuesday 10 November 2015 at 4.00 pm  
Tuesday 8 December 2015 at 4.00 pm  
Tuesday 5 January 2016 at 4.00 pm  
Tuesday 2 February 2016 at 4.00 pm  
Tuesday 1 March 2016 at 4.00 pm  
Tuesday 29 March 2016 at 4.00 pm  
Tuesday 26 April 2016 at 4.00 pm

**7 URGENT ITEM - THE ROLE OF THE BOARD**

As there were several Members who had recently been appointed to the Board, the Scrutiny Support Officer provided a brief outline of the Board's role. This included:-

- acting as the main body for scrutiny processes;
- appraising work programmes of the individual Scrutiny Panels;
- considering final reports from Scrutiny Panels, following their topic reviews;
- scrutinising the performance of Council services;
- scrutinising and monitoring capital and revenue budgets;
- commenting on the budget prior to its consideration by Council;
- holding the Executive to account via, for example, the call-in procedure. This referred to the provision that an item considered by the Executive could be "called in" for further consideration by the Board if the call-in was signed by at least 5 Councillors – the effect being to put the decision "on hold". The Board could then decide to refer the matter back to the Executive with its reasons why, or confirm that it was happy with the decision; and
- deciding, itself, to look at particular scrutiny topics. For instance, last year it had examined enforcement in private car parks.