

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 28 July 2015.

PRESENT: Councillor J Sharrocks (Chair), Councillors J G Cole, J Culley, E Dryden, T Higgins, T Mawston, D Rooney and J A Walker

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillor J Rostron, Executive Member for Adult Health and Social Care

OFFICERS: C Breheny and P Duffy

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors C Hobson, N Hussain, J McGee, F McIntyre and J Rathmell

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations at this point in the meeting.

1 MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - 23 JUNE 2015

The Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 23 June 2015 were approved as a correct record.

2 ATTENDANCE OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS: COUNCILLOR ROSTRON, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

A report by the Scrutiny Support Officer had been circulated which provided information in respect of the scheduled attendance of Members of the Executive at the Board.

The intention was to enable the Board to hear from each Executive Member on progress towards objectives and priorities and any emerging issues or pressure areas within their portfolio.

Today's meeting was attended by Councillor J Rostron, Executive Member for Adult Health and Social Care. Councillor Rostron advised that there were two main aspects to her portfolio – Adult Health and Social Care. She updated the Board on both elements as follows:-

Social Care

- The majority of social care services were now commissioned.
- Regular checks – including “spot” checks – were made on providers’ services and action taken where standards were not met
- The Council was keen to help people to remain in their own home for as long as possible – this would have an impact on residential care.
- A major challenge was work arising from the introduction of the Care Act. All carers were now entitled to an assessment and a cap on the cost of care of £72,000 over a person’s lifetime would be introduced. However, following representations, the Government had put back the implementation of this measure until 2020.
- Councils had been asked to estimate the costs for the additional work involved. Middlesbrough had estimated this at £1.2 million, but had received £677,000.
- Work was on-going with health to integrate services, as part of the Better Care Fund.

- The Health and Well Being Board was working closely with health, the voluntary sector and other partners.
- A Transformation Board been established to oversee changes required in Children's Services.
- A recent High Court ruling meant that everyone in a Care Home must be assessed under Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. This was a huge task and 6 Social Workers had been seconded to undertake the assessments.
- As part of regulatory transfer of care, efforts were being made to bring people with learning disabilities back to live in the community.
- There was a shortage of Approved Mental Health Practitioners. Consideration was being given as to how these staff could be retained in the short term and an overall review, covering Children's Services, would be undertaken.

In response to questions from Members, the Executive Member said that the Care Act was being publicised in the media and the Council was providing advice and information in a number of ways, including via the Independent Living Centre. Community Hubs would also be used to provide information and advice.

Adult Health

- The portfolio covered Trading Standards and Public Protection.
- The Executive Member chaired the Smoke Free Alliance - a multi-agency partnership that sought to encourage people to stop smoking. The annual "Stoptober" campaign was a part of this.
- An increasing issue was with people selling illegal tobacco and counterfeit goods from their home.
- Licensing was another area covered by the portfolio. The introduction of a Selective Licensing Scheme in North Ormesby, where private sector landlords are required to obtain a licence from the Council for every property they rent out, whilst a positive initiative, would create pressures on the service.
- Middlesbrough was one of the areas working with the Home Office on Local Area Alcohol Action and would look to address the issue of street drinking as part of this.
- In summary, the main challenge in both areas – adult health and social care – was to continue to provide services to the same standards as they were currently, with less money and staff.

In response to questions from Members, the Executive Member said that:-

- The Public Health Service advertised stop smoking services.
- The value of pharmacists in public health was recognised.
- Whilst the Council had implemented the living wage for its employees, it could not insist on Residential Care Homes doing so – it would be a matter for the Care Homes to decide.

The Chair thanked Councillor Rostron for her presentation and for responding to Members' questions.

3 **FINAL REPORT OF THE HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL – FUTURE OF GP PROVISION IN MIDDLESBROUGH**

The Board considered a report by the Scrutiny Support Officer which presented the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Health Scrutiny Panel, following its investigation into the topic: Future of GP Services in Middlesbrough.

The Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel advised the Board that the number of GPs in the town could become a real issue in a few years if action was not taken.

He added that a number of GPs were reaching retirement age and many not of retirement age wanted to change career and, of the 150 places available in the Medical School at the University of Newcastle for Middlesbrough GP training placements, less than one third of places had been taken.

He suggested that the recommendation in the Report “That the various health organisations consider how they can encourage doctors to enter General Practice and to remain in practice into their late 50s/early 60s, through different means” be deleted and that a new recommendation be added: *That the Department of Health be asked about the impact of the decreasing number of GPs.*

Members commented as follows:-

- The entry requirements could be too high and should not focus unduly on academic ability.
- If people from a medical background wanted to retrain to become a GP they should receive exemptions from some examinations and when GPs who have been away from practice return, their re-training should be capable of being undertaken whilst they were at work as there would surely be aspects of the GP role that they could continue to do – rather than having to wait to be fully re-trained before practising again.

ORDERED that the report be approved and the following recommendations be made to the Executive:-

- a) That the Panel revisit this topic at appropriate times to consider how the various initiatives that are being put in place are making a difference.
- b) That the Council, the South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Local Medical Committee work together to promote the area’s attributes in order to encourage doctors to come and live and work in the area. This might include articles in Medical Journals and making reference to the relatively affordable cost of housing, the public health challenges in the area and the state of the art facilities at James Cook University Hospital.
- c) That the Council consider ways in which they can encourage student doctors to study in this area, for example creating a scholarship which would see the student committing to stay in the area following their studies.
- d) Building on the success of the A&E campaign, the Panel would like to see the CCG develop a publicity campaign involving information about the most appropriate times to visit a GP and details of other sources of help including pharmacists and self-help.
- e) That the Council write to the Department of Health, with their concerns about the numbers of GPs in Middlesbrough in the future, and the impact that this may have, and ask them to comment on what they intend to do to facilitate a GPs (especially women GPs, who may have taken a career break) return to practice easier.
- f) That the Department of Health be asked to consider whether the entry requirements are too high and, in terms of making GPs return to practice easier, that consideration should be given to re-training being undertaken “on the job”.

4 FINAL REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL – NORTH ORMESBY MARKET

The Board considered a report by the Scrutiny Support Officer which presented the findings of the Environment Scrutiny Panel's review on the topic of North Ormesby Market.

The Chair of the Environment Scrutiny Panel mentioned that the North Ormesby Market remained stable, but was not growing in terms of new goods traders. Therefore, the transfer to North Ormesby Neighbourhood Development Trust (NONDET) was considered to be a good way forward. As the management of the market by NONDET would be a new venture, the Panel had asked for quarterly reports on progress.

A Member commented that the plan to introduce a teenagers market in North Ormesby was a good idea.

ORDERED that the report be approved and the following recommendations be made to the Executive:-

- a) That the Panel be provided with quarterly updates in relation to progress of the transfer of the operation and management of North Ormesby Market to NONDET, particularly in relation to the issues of staff transfers, cleansing arrangements and promotion of the market.
- b) That quarterly meetings be held between NONDET, the Chair of the Market Traders Federation and the Council (involving the Community Regeneration Manager, Principal Trading Standards Officer and Head of Environmental Services collectively) to ensure progress is made against the action plan and NONDET receives the full support of the Council.
- c) That monitoring arrangements be undertaken to ensure cleaning and waste disposal arrangements are maintained at the current high standard following the transfer of the market.
- d) That NONDET establish links with Teesside University (including with the Head of Enterprise and the Head of the Student Union), Middlesbrough College and Cleveland College of Art and Design to generate interest in young people hosting a Teenage Market in North Ormesby.
- e) That NONDET establish links with the Love Your Market event and Mission for Markets Roadshow to develop NONDET's awareness of the key challenges and opportunities facing the market sector at this time.

5 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2015/2016.

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report which:-

- informed Members of the Work Programmes proposed by each of the Scrutiny Panels for 2015/2016; and
- asked Members to consider and agree topics for examination by the Board over the course of the Municipal Year.

Members were agreeable to the proposed Work Programmes for the Scrutiny Panels and made the following points in considering topics that the Board might look at:-

- The topic relating to verbal/physical abuse of front line staff should be considered by an Adhoc Scrutiny Panel. This should include looking at policies in place to protect staff; the legal responsibilities of the Council; and the standards that can be expected from staff.

- Following on from the above, the Adhoc Scrutiny Panel should look at the topic Training/education for Councillors - mandatory/voluntary. This should be with particular reference to equal opportunities; what constitutes bullying and harassment; media training; accreditation of training. This could include “do’s and don’ts” and how Members react with officers.
- Council use of consultants should be investigated.
- The topic of “City Region” should be considered at an early stage. This could include an update on the position regarding devolution of powers.
- Selective Landlord Licensing should be part of the Programme and scheduled in for January 2016.
- The establishment of Council Access Group/Forum for People with Disabilities should be considered.

ORDERED:

- a) That the range of topics identified by individual Scrutiny Panels for inclusion in their 2015/2016 Work Programmes be approved.
- b) That the topics to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny Board in 2015/2016 comprise the following:-
 - i. An Adhoc Scrutiny Panel should look at *Verbal physical abuse of frontline staff – is this an issue on the increase and what is the Council doing to promote safety?*
 - ii. Following on from the above, the Adhoc Scrutiny Panel should then examine *Training/education for councillors – mandatory and voluntary (particularly with reference to equal opportunities; what constitutes bullying and harassment; media training; accreditation of training).*
 - iii. *Council use of consultants.*
 - iv. “City Region”.
 - v. *Selective Landlord Licensing – to be scheduled for January 2016.*
- c) That when the topics identified in resolution b), above, have been completed, the list of possible topics for review by the Board be considered further, including the establishment of a Council Access Group/Forum for People with Disabilities.

6

EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered a report by the Head of Democratic Services which provided them with the opportunity to consider whether any Item within the Executive Forward Work Programme (a copy of which was appended to the report) should be considered by the Board or referred to a Scrutiny Panel.

ORDERED that the content of the Executive Forward Work Programme be noted.