

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 28 March 2017.

PRESENT: Councillors J Sharrocks (Chair); A Hellaoui, T Higgins, C Hobson, J McGee, L McGloin, D Rooney and J A Walker

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillor M Thompson - Executive Member for Communities and Public Health

OFFICERS: B Carr

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Councillor E Dryden, Councillor L Lewis, Councillor T Mawston, Councillor M Walters.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None Declared.

1 MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - 28 FEBRUARY 2017

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 28 February 2017 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

2 ATTENDANCE OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AT THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

The Democratic Services Officer submitted a report to provide information in respect of the scheduled attendance of Members of the Executive at the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB). 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.

The Chair welcomed the Executive Member for Communities and Public Health to the meeting.

The Board was advised that the Executive Member was currently the Chair of Community Safety Partnership which was responsible for:

- Domestic Abuse
- Homelessness
- Prevent
- Landlord Licensing
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Domestic Homicide Review
- Begging

The Executive Member was also a member of the following Committees/Groups:

- Executive
- Executive Sub Committee for Property
- Chief Officer Appointments Committee
- Works Council
- Corporate Health and Safety Committee
- Middlesbrough Emergency Management Response Team

The Executive Member also held regular meetings with the Head of Children's Services.

The Board was advised that the Executive Member was Chair of the Tees-Wide Emergency Planning Joint Committee which had responsibility for:

- Flooding
- Major Chemical Accidents

- Nuclear Power Station
- Serious traffic/rail/aircraft incidents

The Executive Member also had responsibility for Public Health which involved:

- Drugs and Alcohol
- Sexual Health
- Mental Health - Headstart
- School Nurse Service
- Attendance at Health and Wellbeing Board
- Live Well Centre - Dundas Arcade

In terms of Stronger Families, the Executive Member was responsible for:

- School Readiness/Early Years
- Early Intervention
- Young People not in education, employment or training (NEETS)
- Youth Service

In terms of the Executive Members portfolio for Communities, the Executive Member had involvement in:

- Community Hubs
- Community Councils
- Physical Activity Grants Panel
- Community Chest Grant Panels

The Executive Member was also Chair of the North East Strategic Migration Partnership and he attended Stakeholder meetings, community and voluntary sector meetings and was responsible for liaison with the Home Office regarding people seeking asylum/refugees.

The Executive Member represented the Council on the following Outside Bodies:

- North Ormesby Community Land Trust/NONDET
- Langridge Initiative Centre
- Erimus Board
- Unity City Academy Trustee
- Governor of St Pius Primary School
- Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency (MVDA)

The Executive Member represented the Berwick Hills and Pallister Ward and he also attended informal and formal Executive meetings, and Executive Member briefing meetings with the Heads of Service associated with his portfolio.

The Executive Member advised that as part of the Prevent agenda, there were issues with people being radicalised and there was an issue with some right wing organisations.

In terms of the Selective Landlord Scheme in North Ormesby, the first court case where a Landlord had failed to obtain a licence had taken place and the landlord had been found guilty. In response to a query whether there were any plans to expand the scheme, the Board was advised that the operating the scheme was very labour intensive in terms of enforcement and taking legal action and resources had reduced significantly. The teams worked closely with the police and an examination of enforcement as a whole was required.

The Board was advised that Domestic Homicide reviews was a new function to the portfolio the aim of which was to look at domestic abuse to see what preventative measures could be put in place. Domestic abuse in Middlesbrough was much higher than some other parts of the country.

As part of the Tees wide Emergency Joint Committee, the Executive Member was part of a team that looked to see that all the appropriate measures were in place in case of major

incidents.

The Executive Member advised that the Health and Wellbeing Board were looking at mortality rates and they advised that the rates were increasing. It was suggested that Health Champions were needed. Reference was made to a cervical cancer smear campaign and a member stated that the best advocates in encouraging people to have smears were the parents in the school playground collecting their children. The member stated that people in communities needed to discuss the issue.

A member queried why mortality rates were increasing and the Board was advised that Peter Kelly, the Director of Public Health for Stockton Council was at a loss to explain. He advised that Durham University was carrying out a number of studies. He advised that in some areas the life expectancy of woman was decreasing and this needed to be looked into.

A member stated that the take up of smear tests needed to be increased and Members thought the age of take up needed to be lowered and they queried whether public health was looking at this issue. The Executive Member stated that we needed to have an approach to public health that was tailored to individuals and communities. Reference was made to the public health statistics in Thorntree and it was suggested that something should be piloted and trialled in different communities. The Executive Member said he would speak to the Director of Public Health.

The Executive Member stated that we needed to look at social regeneration. A member queried whether the Council could lobby local MPS in respect of getting the age for cervical smears lowered. The Executive Member advised that we were building an emphasis on preventative services and we had been successful and he suggested that JCUH should be encouraged to do more preventative work.

A member referred to the School Nurse Service and the fact that there was a need to make them more prominent. She stated that contact with schools was limited and that the school nurse system needed to be reinvigorated.

The Executive Member stated that schools were much better at dealing with safe-guarding but we would need to look at what was included in the school nurse contract. A member queried whether school nurses were only based in primary schools and the Board was advised that they were based across all schools and that the Council commissioned the service. Members queried whether there was a school nurse service based in academies and colleges and the Executive Member advised that he would find out and report back.

Reference was made to Sexual Health and the Board was advised that Virgin Health Care provided the service. It was commented that there was a gap in Sexual health and the service was not as prominent as it was and some provision appeared to have disappeared. Members stated that they had tried to get a condom machine into Middlesbrough College and the University. Members commented that the condom machine also gave information out. A member stated that the Linx service provided some sexual health awareness sessions and they also carried out work in secondary schools.

A member stated that there used to be a Healthy Schools programme but it appeared to have disappeared from the agenda and she queried whether anything had replaced it. The Executive Member advised that he was not aware, he was a Governor on two schools and he got the impression that it was up to the individual schools but provision was sketchy.

The Executive Member advised that the issue of Wellbeing was an emerging one. He stated that he had been asked to provide advice to JCUH about providing a Wellbeing Centre in JCUH. It was commented that an article on the news had stated that prisoners were getting more exercise than children. A campaign leaflet was being circulated which encouraged people to take half an hours exercise. The Board was advised that the Live Well centre provided information on Sexual Health. The service had been commissioned twelve months ago and it was a Teeswide commissioned service lead by Hartlepool.

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board requested that the Board receive an update on the

Sexual Health Service as she had tried from February to September to get an appointment. It was suggested that Sexual Health provision could be a potential scrutiny topic.

A member commented on the use of technology to monitor health such as apps on phones. The Executive Member advised that the telecare industry focussed on older people and the Council needed to look at how the service was promoted.

A member commented on the fact that the youth service had dwindled. The Board was advised that Branardos had been commissioned to carry out outreach work and the Council had discussed with Linx and the voluntary sector with regard to how funding could be levered in to deliver a better service to the young people in the town.

A member commented that many of the community centres/hubs closed early because of the lack of staffing and it was commented that there was very little provision for over 16 year olds. The Council needed to look at what kind of provision that 16 year olds wanted as they were old enough to define their own needs.

Reference was made to the NEETS, and it was commented that the authority used to have a team that were responsible for ringing these people up and visiting them to encourage them to take up training etc. The secondary schools now had responsibility for their pupils beyond leaving school and it was commented that the numbers had reduced because of joint working with schools.

reference was made to the North Ormesby, Hemlington and Thorntree Hubs and the fact that they had proved to be very popular. It was commented that the hub idea needed to be extended into other areas. A member stated that in Acklam/Trimdon/Ayresome there was no provision apart from Acklam library. The model at Hemlington had proved to be a great success because of the wide ranging activities that took place at the hub and the number of volunteers involved in running the hub.

A member commented that there was no provision at Marton and Nunthorpe. There had been difficulties in obtaining space for the marton community council to meet and they had moved downstairs in the Southern Cross, but because it was a public house, it was not the ideal venue for a community council to meet.

A member commented that schools should be used when people wanted to hire rooms but there could be cost implications if there was a charge for a caretaker to come out and many of the groups wanting to hire rooms had charitable status.

The Executive Member referred to the North East Strategic Migration Partnership. He advised that there were five members of a team funded by the Home Office, carrying out valuable work with refugees/asylum seekers and he advised that he was due to attend a meeting of the Partnership the next day.

The Chair thanked the Executive Member for his update to the Board.

3 **FINAL REPORT - ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL - POTHOLE REPAIRS**

The Chair of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel outlined the Panel's main findings, conclusions and recommendations following a scrutiny investigation of the topic of Pothole Repairs.

The Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel recommended to the Executive:

a) That a planer, and either bobcat or JCB 3CX attachment is purchased from the capital expenditure programme.

b) That Middlesbrough's Executive Director of Economic Development and Communities makes a formal enquiry to the Tees Valley Combined Authority regarding the joint purchase of a Jet Patcher machine.

ORDERED that the findings and recommendations of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel be endorsed and referred to the Executive.

4 **FINAL REPORT - CHILDREN AND LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL - FAMILY AND FRIENDS CARE (KINSHIP CARE)**

The Chair of the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel outlined the Panel's main findings, conclusions and recommendations following a scrutiny investigation of the topic of Family and Friends Care (Kinship Care).

The Chair of Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel advised that the topic had been a very emotive subject as people who were currently kinship carers had attended the panel. A judge had also attended the panel and a number of recommendations had been formed as a result of her attendance at the meeting. It was commented that the scrutiny investigation had resulted in an excellent piece of work.

The Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel recommended to the Executive:

a) That the Local Authority implements the necessary measures to ensure that all assessments demonstrate:

- A full investigation of the commitment to the long-term permanent care of the child.
- A thorough evaluation of support, both practical and financial, which determines short-term and long-term plans.
- The complex and multifaceted issues of mediation and evidence that short-term and long-term contact arrangements have been considered and addressed.
- A detailed account of the realistic options/orders that have been considered, and are appropriate, and the advantages and disadvantages associated with these options.
- That the completion of the assessment is both fair and balanced.

b) That Her Honour Judge Matthews QC undertakes work with fellow judges to ensure that assessments are only requested for those family and friends carers who are willing, and able, to provide suitable care for a child.

c) That the local judiciary receives information on the Local Authority's policies, procedures and practices and is notified when these have been revised.

d) That a Court Liaison Officer post be created to act as a conduit between the Court and the Local Authority.

e) That the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel writes to the Secretary of State for Education:

- To outline its concerns in respect of the conflicting legislation when applying care planning and fostering regulations to family and friends care.
- To request that the Government revises current legislation and develops regulations specifically for family and friends care.

f) That, when possible, the Local Authority tests family and friends care placements to provide an informed evidence-base for placement decisions.

g) That an information pack/resource be developed for all family and friends carers to provide clear and helpful advice and information on the different types of care arrangements and legal orders and the support (practical, financial and legal) available from the Local Authority and local and national organisations and support groups. Furthermore, that the resource pack be utilised by practitioners and ward councillors and distributed to community hubs, libraries, GP Surgeries and other community facilities.

h) That, with the assistance of Grandparents Plus and kinship care support groups, the Local

Authority gathers data/intelligence on family and friends carers in Middlesbrough and conducts a detailed analysis of its findings to enable it to devise an informed plan for family and friends care.

i) That the Local Authority works in partnership with Grandparents Plus to deliver training/briefing sessions:

- To ward councillors on the context of care by family and friends.
- To the Local Authority's leaders and partners on the research, studies and work undertaken by Grandparents Plus and how this evidence can be utilised to inform/develop processes, policies and procedures.
- To frontline staff and social workers to enable them to provide professional and specialist advice in respect of family and friends care.
- To family and friends carers on relevant topics, such as safeguarding, contact, maintaining positive relationships and life story work.

j) That a transparent and thorough policy framework is developed specifically for social workers, in order to ensure consistency of practice and informed decision-making in respect of family and friends care.

k) In respect of the courses available for trainee social workers, that the Local Authority works with Teesside University to explore the possibility of including a core module on family and friends care.

l) That, to assist with decision-making, family and friends carers receive information on the relevant multifaceted risk analysis, which evidences why a child is no longer able to live with their parents.

m) That a group of designated officers be appointed to carry out family and friends care work.

n) That the Local Authority has one central contact telephone number and email address for family and friends carers.

o) That, to ensure the Local Authority's work is governed by consistent principles, an explicit eligibility criteria is implemented that states which family and friends carers, of children outside the care system, are eligible for financial assistance (including the level and duration of the support) and practical support (including universal, targeted and specialist services).

p) That the views of children in family and friends care, and their carers, be sought regularly to inform practice and the delivery of support services. Furthermore, that the Local Authority identifies how policies have been informed by their views.

q) That the Local Authority works with Grandparents Plus to develop and establish a town-wide family and friends care working group with key agencies in contact with children - including health services and schools - to create a culture of support and demonstrate a responsiveness to the needs of children in family and friends care.

r) In respect of Family Group Conferences (FGCs):

- That the Local Authority's policies and procedures be revised to reflect the importance of this practice.
- That measures be put in place to ensure all children and families are entitled to FGCs, prior to care proceedings.
- That the Local Authority submits a bid for Innovation Funding to plan and implement Family Group Conference (FGC) services in Middlesbrough. This would include employing a number of independent FGC coordinators.

s) That the Local Authority submits a bid for Innovation Funding to implement the Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) in Middlesbrough.

t) That the Local Authority engages with the work of the PAUSE Project.

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

5 **FINAL REPORT OF THE SOCIAL CARE AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL - SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS.**

The Chair of the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel outlined the Scrutiny Panel's main findings, conclusions and recommendations following a scrutiny investigation of the topic of Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.

i) That measures be put in place to improve partnership working between the Local Authority's Scrutiny Panels, and/or between the Authority and its neighbouring Local Authorities, in order to scrutinise the topic of safeguarding more effectively and efficiently.

ii) That work be undertaken to ensure that safeguarding remains part of Middlesbrough's core business, through effective partnership working and by designing services to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people within the community. For example:

a) Improving awareness of safeguarding in all service areas by considering the topic at all Local Authority meetings, and referencing any matters raised within the associated minutes; and

b) Consideration of safeguarding during the preparation of service area policies and procedures - e.g. in respect of report writing, identification of safeguarding as a key factor, alongside such other matters as Ward, Equality Impact and Financial Assessments.

iii) That the Panel receives further information following the outcomes of the TSAB's Safeguarding Mapping Report work, in order to achieve a greater understanding of the comparative data and its validity. In addition, that the reporting systems are streamlined to ensure consistency of data across the four Local Authorities.

iv) That the TSAB framework develops in order to improve the transition process for children.

v) That the Panel receives on-going updates in respect of the work and development of the TSAB; matters of interest to be identified by the Panel and correspondence undertaken accordingly with the TSAB representatives.

vi) That publicity and marketing campaign work continues to be undertaken in conjunction with Marketing and Communications, and partners, via such communication methods as Love Middlesbrough Magazine, the Local Authority's website and intranet site (and those of its partners), advertisements in public buildings such as community hubs and libraries, and radio campaigns, as appropriate, in order to:

a) Deliver the message that safeguarding is 'everybody's business';

b) Encourage volunteering to address the issues of loneliness and isolation;

c) Demonstrate that the professional caring role is highly valued and essential, and significant in terms of addressing loneliness and isolation; and

d) Facilitate exploration of opportunities for service areas in raising the profile of carers, and to reward both members of staff and the general public for undertaking exceptional care-related work.

vii) That the CQC be requested to consider whether it can:

a) Shorten the timeframe for the formulation and publication of reports following formal inspections; and

b) Notify the Local Authority of any potential issues following a preliminary inspection via the provision of shorter 'notification' or summary reports.

viii) That the Panel receives copies of any CQC formal inspection reports that have raised

concerns, for information.

ix) That formal monitoring of 'Band D' contracts be kept under review.

x) That work be undertaken to ascertain the amount of time carers spend travelling between appointments and the impact of this on service users, with findings to be reported back to the Panel.

xi) That data be collected and analysed to identify the levels of staff turnover, for those employed by the Local Authority and commissioned service providers, and the reasons for this.

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

6 **EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which identified the forthcoming issues to be considered by the Executive as outlined in Appendix A to the report.

The report provided the Overview and Scrutiny Board with the opportunity to consider whether any item contained within the Executive Forward Work Programme should be considered by the Board or referred to a Scrutiny Panel.

NOTED

7 **SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS REPORTS**

In the absence of the Chair of Health Scrutiny Panel, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board advised that in terms of FASD there were currently 441 children Looked After by Middlesbrough - of whom there were only 3 who have a diagnosis of FASD.

Within the Children with Disabilities team there were only 5 children (and they are not looked after) out of 200 cases in total who were suspected of having FASD i.e. there was no diagnosis.

It had been suggested that the low number could be due to there being no diagnosis due to medical reluctance to label and/or reluctance of families to attend appointments. A major issue was that there were limited numbers of paediatricians who are prepared to diagnose in our surrounding areas.

Rather than re-visit any information presented at the all Member briefing on the STP the Chair used the opportunity to have a conversation about the STP and how members could influence its future development.

It was proposed that the format of the debate could take the form of a 'Council Conversation', which would be held as part of the Council meeting to ensure maximum Councillor involvement.

The Chair of Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel advised that the panel was currently looking at the topic of School Exclusions and the reasons for the exclusions. The Board was advised that the situation with regard to school exclusions was better than was originally envisaged.

The Chair of Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel advised that the panel could look at the issue of the future of the Southlands Centre and receive updates on the Town Hall project and the proposed development in Centre Square.

The Chair of Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel advised that the panel was due to receive an update in respect of a previous investigation into Middlesbrough Voluntary

Development Agency (MVDA).

The Chair of Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel advised that the panel was due to consider the draft Final Report in respect of its investigation into Sextortion. A Police Inspector with responsibility for Cyber Crime would provide information for inclusion in the Final Report.

The Panel was due to receive an update in respect of a previous topic in relation to Alternative Delivery Methods (ADM) for Supporting Sport and Leisure.

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board reminded members of the following training sessions:-

- Wednesday, 29 March 2017 - Audit Training - 2pm-4pm; and
- Thursday, 30 March 2017 - Budget Scrutiny - 10.30am-12.30pm.

NOTED