

**SCRUTINY POLICY REVIEWS 2012/13:
RESPONSE FROM CABINET – 13 FEBRUARY 2013****REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE****1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide feedback from the Cabinet meetings held on 13 February 2013, regarding two of six of the first round of scrutiny policy reviews undertaken by scrutiny in 2012/13. It is anticipated the remaining policy reviews will be considered by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting of 25 April 2013.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Within the revised scrutiny arrangements, it is now the responsibility of the Committee to consider feedback from relevant portfolio holders on Cabinet's consideration of the policy reviews undertaken by the scrutiny panels and how it intends to deliver the recommendations of each panel.

2.2 Cabinet considered the Final Reports on 13 February as follows:-

Scrutiny Panel	Policy Review	Portfolio Holder
City Services	Tell us Once for Bereavement (Appendix 1)	Cllr J Blackburn
Responsive Services and Customer Care	Reducing Reoffending (Appendix 2)	Cllr H Trueman
Children's Services	Education Act 2011 (to be considered 25 April 2013)	Cllr P Smith

2.3 This report provides feedback from the Portfolio Holders following Cabinet's consideration of, and decisions in relation to, each of the scrutiny panel's recommendations.

2.4 Following the Scrutiny Committee's consideration of feedback from Cabinet on each of the Policy Reviews of 2012/13, progress towards completion of the actions contained within each Action Plan will be monitored on an annual basis by the Committee.

3. RESPONSE FROM CABINET TO THE POLICY REVIEW

3.1 Following consideration of the Final Reports, Cabinet approved the recommendations in their entirety. Details of each policy review's

recommendation and proposed actions to be taken are provided in the Action Plans attached at **appendices one and two**.

3.2 Cabinet thanked the Scrutiny Lead Members, Scrutiny Panels and its officers for their hard work in undertaking the policy review and additional work.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 That the Committee:-

- (a) Notes the proposed actions detailed within each of the Action Plans appended to this report (**Appendices 1 and 2**) and seeks clarification on content where felt appropriate; and
- (b) Refers each of the action plans to the relevant panels for further consideration.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

5.1 The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Cabinet Agenda, 13 February 2013.

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Appendix 1
City Services Scrutiny Panel
Tell Us Once for Bereavement Service: Policy Review recommendations 2012/13

Ref	Recommendation	Action	Owner	Due Date	Progress Commentary
(a)	that whilst the level of take up for the Tell Us Once Service in Sunderland has been good to date, we consider that the Council should continue to look at new and innovative ways to promote the existence and potential benefits of the service to local residents and continue to monitor accordingly;	Take up of the Tell Us Once Service for both birth and bereavement is monitored monthly by comparing the number of births and deaths registered in Sunderland, to the Management Information reports received from the DWP which details the number of Tell Us Once notifications received from Sunderland City Council. This monitoring methodology will continue to be used as the most robust way to assess take up of the service.	Karen Lounton	Ongoing	Reports received monthly and information regarding take up reported back to staff.
		Steps have already been taken to roll out publicity material across some GP practices, with the objective that all practices in the city will have received promotional material about Tell Us Once by March 2013.	Karen Lounton	March 2013	List of all GP practices across the city provided by Corporate Communications team. Distribution of material to remaining GP practices pending.
		Promotional material relating to Tell Us Once for Bereavement is to be rolled out to the Bereavement Service at Sunderland Royal Hospital.	Karen Lounton	January 2013	Publicity material provided to Sunderland Royal Hospital.

(b)	that the Council should explore ways of building on the principles of the Tell Us Once Service in other areas of service delivery, transferring any 'lessons learnt' or best practice realised from TUO to other service areas;	<p>The Tell Us Once model can be adapted and used across other services, with longer term plans in place at the DWP to extend the principles of this project across other areas such as 'change of address'.</p> <p>Colleagues in the Transformation, Programmes and Project Team were involved with the implementation of Tell Us Once for birth and bereavement and have a full understanding of the benefits realised by the services involved, and how this established good practice can be built upon further.</p>		Ongoing	
(c)	that the Council should continue to work closely with the DWP on a national level to ensure the TUO service, systems and databases continue to evolve and improve.	<p>Regular communication is established between Gillian Priestley, the DWP Account Manager for the North East Tell Us Once project and the Bereavement and Registration Manager.</p> <p>This affords us an opportunity to continue to have input into the future</p>	Karen Lounton	Ongoing	

		<p>development of the Tell Us Once service for birth and bereavement.</p> <p>Areas on the agenda for development include the introduction of connectivity between the General Register Office (GRO) database and the DWP Change Reporting System (CRS). Developments in this area will speed up the birth or death registration and Tell Us Once interview process, allowing better use of resources in the Registration Service.</p> <p>Other development areas include extending the scope of Tell Us Once for birth and bereavement, and introducing new services and organisations to the list of 'end users' who receive information relating to birth and death events. This development area will be managed by DWP, but with input from Local Authority representatives.</p> <p>The DWP also have representation at quarterly Regional Registration Service Manager meetings where TUO is a standing item on the agenda. The Bereavement and Registration Manager attends these meetings as the representative from Sunderland City Council.</p>	<p>Karen Lounton</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>Gillian Priestley, DWP Tell Us Once Account Manager to attend next Regional Registration Service Manager meeting, scheduled for March 2013.</p>
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Appendix 2

Responsive Services and Customer Care Scrutiny Panel Reducing Reoffending: Policy Review recommendations 2012/13

Ref	Recommendation	Action	Owner	Due Date	Progress Commentary
(a)	That the Council identifies ways in which existing housing related support can be better utilised, and that the intelligence currently being gathered through the Council's Gateway informs housing related support commissioning intentions in 2014, specifically taking account of accommodation issues for offenders and particularly women offender.	Ongoing monitoring of the Gateway outcomes to inform the commissioning intentions of the Council for the re – commissioning of Housing Related Support services in 2014.	HHAS Head of Strategic Housing / HHAS Lead Commissioner	April 2014	Since April 2012 the introduction of the Gateway process for accessing Supported Accommodation has resulted in an improvement in the quality of need information being gathered. This continues on a quarterly basis and is assisting the development of clear commissioning intentions. Quarter 3 figures are currently being reviewed.
(b)	That key policies in relation to housing, including the Housing Strategy, the Strategic Tenancy Policy and the Hostel Strategy have a specific focus on the accommodation needs of offenders informed by intelligence.	<p>The accommodation needs of offenders have been included within the Hostel Strategy action plan informed by intelligence gathered from the Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment (PSIA). This work will continue to be overseen by the Hostel Strategy Working Group with particular focus on Camrex House and the Norfolk Hotel.</p> <p>The City Housing Strategy will capture the needs of vulnerable groups including offenders.</p>	<p>P&N, Safer Communities Officer</p> <p>P&N, Safer Communities Officer</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>July 2013</p>	<p>A multi-agency group is meeting on the 17 January 2013 to develop a closure strategy for managing down Camrex House and finding alternative accommodation for vulnerable residents including offenders. It is anticipated the hostel will close in early 2014.</p> <p>A meeting has been convened for the end of January to progress the vulnerable people section of</p>

					the Housing Strategy.
(c)	That the Council works with the city's private landlords to meet the accommodation needs of offenders.	<p>Build on existing relationships with Private Landlords to enhance the private rented offer for offenders specifically by –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting the need to the Private Landlord Forum to try and engage with a small number of landlords to develop an approach. • Work in partnership with all relevant parties to develop an agreed application process to minimise risk • Pilot a number of tenancies to build confidence in this new approach. 	HHAS Access to Housing Manager / Offender Accommodation Officer	April 2014	
(d)	<p>That the Safer Sunderland Partnership develops the appropriate channels and mechanisms to strengthen and embed its influencing role with the:-</p> <p>(i) Health and Wellbeing Board; and (ii) Clinical Commissioning Group;</p>	<p>The membership of the Health and Well-Being Board includes The Leader of the Council who is also a member of the Safer Sunderland Partnership. Links are to be strengthened over the coming months to ensure the correlation between crime and disorder and health are considered within relevant policies and strategies.</p> <p>The SSP will engage with the</p>	<p>P&N, Lead Policy Officer, Community Safety</p> <p>P&N, Lead</p>	<p>June 2013</p> <p>February 2013</p>	The SSP Responsible Authorities Group is providing a response to the Health and Well-Being Strategy at the end of January 2013 to ensure the health needs of offenders are included within the strategies main objectives.

		Joint Commissioning Group to identify the most effective ways to build relationships with CCG's.	Policy Officer, Community Safety		
(e)	That the Safer Sunderland Partnership improves the transition from custody to the community by:-				
	(i) Ensuring effective relationships with all prisons in the NE.	The SSP will continue to work with ANEC & NOMS on improving the relationship between the local authority and NE prisons identifying gaps in delivery.	P&N, Safer Communities Officer	June 2013	The SSP and HMP Durham are currently working together on a joint venture to improve the employment, education and training transition for offenders on release. The Family Focus Project has developed links with NE Prisons.
	(ii) Utilising the IOM Prison Officer roles of Durham and HMP Northumberland, to improve information sharing and links with community provision.	Meeting to be arranged with both IOM Prison Officer Links to develop an improved information sharing pathway.	P&N, Safer Communities Officer, HMP Durham, HMP Northumberland	February 2013	
	(iii) Improving accommodation outcomes for offenders through the 'Through the Gate' project.	Sunderland to nominate a rep for the Through the Gate steering group to ensure the needs & views of Sunderland are fully represented. To establish clear operational procedures between Through the Gate and the Access to Housing Team to enable the most successful outcomes for offenders returning to Sunderland.	HHAS Access to Housing Manager / Offender Accommodation Officer	July 2013	Meetings have taken place in early January with Through the Gate to agree the procedures for working with the Access to Housing Team. These will be embedded in the coming month by liaison between Through the Gate and the Access to Housing Offender Accommodation Officer. The offer of a Sunderland

					representative becoming a part of the Through the Gate Steering group has been made and is currently being considered.
(f)	That the Safer Sunderland Partnership and the Council seek to improve outcomes for women offenders, in particular accommodation and accommodation related support.	The needs of women Offenders will continue to be addressed as part of the Women Offenders Sub-group Led by Probation and overseen by the Reducing Re-Offending Delivery Network.	Probation, Director of Offender Management	July 2013	
(g)	That the Safer Sunderland Partnership and the Council ensures it fully understands the needs of current and future veteran offenders by engaging with relevant bodies and organisations.	SSP to strengthen links with the HHAS Veterans Champion to identify any issues regarding offenders.	P&N, Safer Communities Officer, HHAS Head of Strategic Housing	August 2013	