

At a meeting of the SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on THURSDAY, 12th SEPTEMBER, 2013 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Tate in the Chair

Councillors Bonallie, Kay, T. Martin, Shattock, Waller and Ms. A. Blakey

Also Present:-

Councillor James Blackburn – Portfolio Holder City Services

Councillor Louise Farthing – Scrutiny Panel Member

Councillor Graeme Miller – Portfolio Holder Health, Housing and Adult Services

Councillor Harry Trueman – Deputy Leader

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Howe and N. Wright and from Ms. R. Elliott

Minutes of the last Meeting of the Committee held on 11th July, 2013

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 11th July 2013 (copy circulated), be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)

There were no declarations of interest made.

Scrutiny Policy Reviews 2012/13: Response from Cabinet - 17th July 2013

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) providing feedback from the Cabinet meeting held on 17th July 2013, regarding the final three of the second round of Scrutiny Policy Reviews undertaken during 2012/13.

(for copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Tate introduced the report advising that proposed actions to be taken on each of the Policy Reviews and progress on delivering those actions was detailed in appendices 1-3 of the amended report.

Members of the Cabinet had been invited to attend for this item of business and brief the Committee on Cabinet's consideration of the policy reviews and how they

intended to deliver the recommendations of each of the policy reviews of the Scrutiny Panels which came under their Cabinet portfolio responsibility as follows:-

Scrutiny Panel	Policy Review	Portfolio Holder
Skills, Economy and Regeneration	Delivery of Apprenticeships in Sunderland	Cllr H. Trueman
City Services Scrutiny Panel	Waste and Recycling in Sunderland: Approach to Resident Engagement	Cllr Blackburn
Health, Housing and Adult Services	Empty Properties in Sunderland	Cllr G. Miller

Councillor Tate, Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, welcomed Councillors H. Trueman, Blackburn and G. Miller to the meeting, together with Ms. Stephanie Rose, Associate Policy Lead for Culture, Sport and Learning, Mr. Colin Curtis, Assistant Head of Street Scene, Ms. Joanne Moore, Communications Officer and Mr. Alan Caddick, Head of Strategic Housing.

The Cabinet Members welcomed the opportunity to attend the meeting, provide feedback and answer questions asked by Members of the Scrutiny Committee. Once they had presented their feedback and answered questions and comments from Members, Councillors Trueman, Blackburn and Miller left the meeting.

Councillor Tate referred to the recommendations in relation to delivery of apprenticeships in the city and asked if it was possible to include clauses in Council tender documents that successful contractors should, where possible, have apprenticeship positions for residents of Sunderland. Ms. Rose advised that this was an issue that was currently being explored through procurement and the tendering process and where possible, the Council were looking to include social and economic clauses within tender documentation.

In response to a question from Councillor Bonallie regarding the incentive schemes, Members were advised that so far research had shown that the schemes had been met positively by residents but that to date there was no increase in tonnage so it would be hard to prove that they were making a positive impact without the schemes having run a greater length of time and research being undertaken.

2. RESOLVED that :-

- i) the proposed actions detailed within the Action Plans appended to the report be noted, and
- ii) each Action Plan be referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Panel for further consideration.

At this juncture the Chairman proposed that Item 6 – Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group – ‘Better Health for Sunderland’ and Item 7 – Improvement to Urgent and Emergency Care Services in Sunderland be considered next on the agenda to allow partners from the CCG to present their items and leave the meeting.

Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group – ‘Better Health for Sunderland’

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which advised that representative of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) were in attendance to provide Members with a presentation about the priorities, aims and objectives of the Sunderland CCG.

(for copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. David Gallagher, Chief Officer, Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), gave a presentation to Members which gave them an update on the outline aims and objectives of the Sunderland CCG in regard to improving the health of Sunderland and addressing the key health challenges the city faces through having meaningful engagement and working in partnership with agencies and service providers.

Councillor Shattock thanked the representatives from CCG for the informative report and looked forward to continuing to receive updates as developments continue to be made but asked how much of the elected GP's time was taken away from their core work of treating patients to be involved with the Board. Dr. Iain Gilmour, Clinical Vice Chair and elected GP, advised that practices were fully in support of GP's being able to carry out their role effectively with the board and that individual practices would organise time to identify and cover those times that GP's would be involved with the work of the board.

Councillor Waller raised concerns over the average waiting times for young people with mental health issues and was informed that reducing waiting list times and lists was one of the key areas they were looking to improve. The Chairman commented that a report was being prepared by NTW, one of the service providers, to be considered by the Children's Services Scrutiny Panel, which may address some of the issues and concerns Councillor Waller had.

In response to a query from Councillor Tate regarding the reaching of any key milestones, Mr. Gallagher advised that the CCG were making big in roads in a number of areas making lots of little impacts. As work followed through improvements would continue to be made and bigger impacts and differences on services would be identified. He explained that the work being undertaken with regard to the urgent and emergency care, which was to be covered under the next item on the agenda, would make big improvements to services.

In response to a question from Councillor Tate, Dr. Gilmour confirmed that GP practices were now working together within their localities to come up with plans to solve issues in their own areas.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Gallagher for his informative report and looked forward to receiving further updates at future Committee meetings, and it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the information within the presentation and report on the Sunderland CCG be received and noted.

Improvement to Urgent and Emergency Care Services in Sunderland

The NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) submitted a report (copy circulated), which provided Members with an update on the programme of reform work related to the pathway for Urgent Care in Sunderland.

(for copy report – see original minutes).

Dr. Iain Gilmour, Clinical Vice Chair and elected GP, gave a presentation to the Committee on the Sunderland Urgent Care Reconfiguration which set out the background to the reconfiguration, the aims of the unscheduled care board and the timetable to be followed identifying the implementation dates for 'new' service provision.

For clarification, Dr. Gilmour advised that the Kaizen event scheduled during October – November, 2013, was an exercise whereby front line staff were brought together and asked for their views and opinions on the best way to solve problems and issues.

Councillor Farthing expressed her disappointment in the Houghton Walk In Centre not being expected to open for another year and advised that there was a lot of concern from residents about the lack of those services in the Coalfields area. Members were advised that there were three sites that had to go through due process and that the best way to commission them would be together to ensure that the best solution is sought and all offer the same. Mr. Gallagher also explained that a lot of use of the urgent care system was by patients who had followed the wrong route for services and should be directed elsewhere. He advised that a piece of work was being undertaken to direct patients to the most relevant and best service for them at that time and not to continue to access urgent care when it was not necessary.

With regards to Houghton Primary Care Centre, Dr. Gilmour informed the Committee that the other services such as the rehabilitation unit were working well and that the centre was providing a lot of useful services to the local community and that the minor injuries unit (walk in centre) would be only one of them.

Councillor Kaye referred to Sunderland Royal Hospital, which was sited within his ward, and commented that residents felt that there was no connectivity or consultation with the local community to advise them of when developments were being undertaken so that they were prepared and aware of them. Mr. Gallagher commented that although they did not manage the hospital site he was more than happy to take the views back to the hospital to discuss with them how they may effectively engage with local communities and residents more.

In response to a query from Councillor Farthing around plans over the winter months to plan for emergency care, Ms. Ann Fox, Director of Nursing, Quality and Safety advised that the CCG recognised the importance of these issues and as such had well established plans in place for emergency care. There was a sustained demand and challenges placed upon them and they were aware of the pressures. She explained that it had been a priority for the CCG over the last few months to look at the plans in place and go through the process of ensuring they provided the assurances to manage emergency care. As part of this piece of work assessments

were made to ensure they were fit for purpose and if not they would refocus the plans to ensure that the whole system worked as effectively as possible.

The Chairman having thanked the partners for their informative report, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the Health Protocol be endorsed for referral to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Reference from Cabinet – 4 September, 2013 – Youth Justice Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (copy circulated) which set out for advice and consideration of the Committee, a report on the Youth Justice Plan 2013/2014 to 2015/16 outlining the background, purpose and intentions of the Plan.

(for copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Louise Hill, Youth Offending Services Head of Service, presented the report advising that the Cabinet at its meeting on 4 September, 2013 gave consideration to the report identifying that the Youth Justice Plan as the primary document of the Youth Offending Team Partnerships to set out how they will deliver against the Youth Justice Board's Performance Management Framework for Youth Offending Teams and was a key source for local planning.

Councillor Shattock congratulated Officers on the report and commented that the service had a long standing reputation which she hoped they could continue to maintain and asked about the current staffing situation and how the service was being affected by, if at all, by staff turnover. Ms. Hill confirmed that the service had faced cuts but that they had reconfigured services to ensure they were maintained. They were continuing to work to secure income through other routes and were confident that any reductions would not effect the front line services being currently provided.

Ms. Hill advised that staff had shared comments over the changes and a significant piece of work was being undertaken to get firsthand feedback of staff experiences to help adapt if necessary. She informed the Committee that the Chief Executive had visited recently and spoke with staff who had welcomed the opportunity to hear from and remained well motivated following it.

Councillor Kaye referred to page 23 of the draft Youth Justice Plan and commented that it may have been of better comparison for the Committee if the report gave a more detailed cost benefit analysis in order to demonstrate value for money. Officers confirmed that this data was available and although it may be difficult to have it included in this version of the plan it was something that could be feasible in future reports.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was: -

3. RESOLVED that the Council be advised that:-

- the Scrutiny Committee recommend that future reports give more detailed cost benefit analysis in order to demonstrate value for money; and;

- the Scrutiny Committee were satisfied with the remaining content of the Youth Justice Plan and had no further comment than that to make.

Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2012-2013

The Executive Director People's Services submitted a report (copy circulated), which provided Members with the Annual Corporate Parenting Annual Report.

(for copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Meg Boustead, Head of Safeguarding, presented the report advising that it informs all Members of the current position of the Council as 'Corporate Parent' and demonstrates that elected Members are aware of their role as Corporate Parents. It also updates Members on the current performance of the Council in meeting this responsibility, and on action taking place to further improve outcomes for those children and young people for whom the Council has a parenting responsibility.

Councillor Tate asked why 14 year old children were the largest group of looked after children and was advised by Ms. Boustead that children over 10 years old were rarely adopted and therefore remained looked after by the local authority. She also advised that at age 13-14 they preferred as little movement and unsettlement as possible for the young people as these are key years in their schooling which they would not want to disrupt.

In response to a question from Ms. Blakey around the differences between how looked after children were performing at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4, Ms. Boustead advised that as the cohort of children was so small, at around 30, any change in the group of children could influence the performance data. She explained that as a service they individually monitored each child's performance and worked with them through a dedicated team (virtual school) to measure attainment but that they were judged and measured on the performance of the young people as an overall.

Councillor Tate asked what was being done to reduce the number of looked after children who offend and was informed that the figures had improved slightly but there was still the need to improve further through closer working relationships between the local authority, the youth offending service and in particular children's homes, as this is where most of the young people who offended resided. She advised that there was a particularly difficult cohort of young people at the moment with issues around criminal behaviour but that they were working together to try and change behaviours and divert young people into being involved in more positive activities.

Councillor Kay commented that the authority never seemed to perform well in this area and asked what was being done to improve performance in relation to other local authorities. Ms. Boustead advised that the North East region was generally different to the rest of the country and that this may be partly due to the challenges faced in this area. She explained that the area saw more movement of young people through the system than there may be nationally and that as the cohort of young people was so small, changes were often noticed year on year. She explained that working with multi agency partners they were looking into different

ways to improve performance but that the needs of the individual young person and having the correct care team in place around them continued to be of importance.

Councillor Tate referred to the DFE announced changes to the performance monitoring of young people leaving care whose 19th, 20th and 21st birthdays fall within the collection period and asked if this was likely to impact on our performance. Members were advised that this was an area of constant challenge but that it would be consistently monitored and reported to the Corporate Parenting Board and Members would continue to be updated and involved.

The Chairman having thanked Ms. Boustead for her report, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the Annual Corporate Parenting Report be received and noted.

Notice of Key Decisions

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions for the 28 day period from 10 September, 2013.

(for copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman asked any Members having issues to raise or requiring further detail on any of the items included in the notice, to contact the Scrutiny Co-ordinator, Ms. Helen Lancaster for initial assistance.

6. RESOLVED that the Notice of Key Decisions as detailed above be received and noted.

Annual Work Programme 2012/13

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) attaching for Members' information, the work programme for the Committee's work being undertaken during the 2013/14 council year.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

7. RESOLVED that the information contained in the work programme be received and noted.

Lead Scrutiny Member Update: September 2013

The Lead Scrutiny Members submitted a joint report (copy circulated) providing an update to the Scrutiny Committee regarding the work of each of the six Lead Scrutiny Members and supporting Panels.

(for copy report – see original minutes).

The Committee received an update from those Lead Scrutiny Members present on the work that had been carried out to date by the Scrutiny Panels.

Full consideration having been given to the report it was:-

8. RESOLVED that the update of the Lead Scrutiny Members be received and noted.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

(Signed) R.D. TATE,
Chairman.