

**LEAD SCRUTINY MEMBER UPDATE: MARCH 2014**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE LEAD SCRUTINY MEMBERS**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Scrutiny Committee regarding the work of each of the six Lead Scrutiny Members and supporting Panels.

**2. SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBER UPDATE**

***Scrutiny Chair and Vice Chair (Cllrs David Tate and Norma Wright)***

- 2.1 On 24 January I chaired the Joint Regional Scrutiny Network meeting. The CQC discussed its revised approach to the inspection of health and adult social care services and the organisations relationship with scrutiny and the Equalities Commission discussed its findings into home care support.
- 2.2 On 5 March myself, the Vice Chair and the Lead Member for HHAS met with Meg Boustead, Head of Safeguarding to discuss an issue related to Sea View Rd West, a short breaks respite centre for children with disabilities. As a result of this meeting the issue was discussed at the Scrutiny Committee on 13 February 2014.

***Children's Services (Cllr Debra Waller)***

- 2.3 The Children's Services Scrutiny Panel has completed its policy review into Child Obesity and I am pleased that the Scrutiny Committee have received and agreed its content. As Lead Member I look forward to presenting the report to Cabinet in April and receiving the feedback from Cabinet Members.
- 2.4 The Panel have also submitted a report on the commissioned item – The Children and Young People's Plan refresh. A full report outlining the Panel's comments is contained elsewhere in the agenda.
- 2.5 The next meetings of the Panel take place in March and April and will be looking to agree the Children's Services section of the Annual Report as well as looking at another potential policy review in sexual exploitation. This had been considered as a topic at the beginning of the Municipal Year and the Panel will look at a brief overview of the Council's strategies and procedures and it may well come under consideration for a fuller investigation in the next year.

***City Services (Cllr Stephen Bonallie)***

- 2.6 The Panel's draft policy review report into alcohol misuse and licensing was considered and approved by the Scrutiny Committee on 13 February.
- 2.7 In December, the Panel began its review into the approach being taken to flood risk management in the city. The Panel were informed of the main causes flooding; including

coastal, river, surface water and failure of infrastructure (e.g. sewer system). It was noted that historically flooding in the city has been a mix of coastal, surface water and sewer capacity issues. The Panel was also informed about the respective roles of the key players; including the Council, Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water.

- 2.8 On 20 February, the Panel heard more in more detail about the roles of the planning and highways management functions in preventing and mitigating the risk of flooding. The Panel discussed the effects of 'Urban Creep' where large parts of developed land is being paved over through drives, pavements and extensions causing the problem that water no longer has anywhere to drain.
- 2.9 On 6 March, the Panel will be meeting with representatives from Northumbrian Water and the Environment Agency in order to discuss their role in flood management and the work going on in the city to deal with flood risk.

### ***Health, Housing and Adult Services (Cllr Christine Shattock)***

- 2.10 The HHAS Scrutiny Panel has concluded its evidence gathering and is meeting on Wednesday 5 March to consider the draft report as well as preparing conclusions and recommendations. The final report will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in April.
- 2.11 The Panel have also submitted a full report on the draft Housing Financial Assistance Policy Plan following the commissioning of the item by the Scrutiny Committee. A full report outlining the comments and recommendations is contained elsewhere in the agenda. All Members of the Scrutiny Committee were invited to attend the meeting and contribute to the discussions.

### ***Public Health, Wellness and Culture (Cllr George Howe)***

- 2.12 The Panel met to consider a proposed policy for raising participation in physical activity and sport. The policy proposes a new strategic direction and one which involves partners in achieving shared priority outcomes for the people of Sunderland.
- 2.13 The Panel was informed that the challenge now facing the council is to create the conditions for more people to become more active on a more regular basis, whether through informal activity such as going for a walk, cycling, swimming, or in more formal activity such as joining a sports club or gym. Adopting a strategic approach to improving participation levels will enable the council to maximise the impact that sport and physical activity has in Sunderland.
- 2.14 The Panel considered whether the proposed vision statement is appropriate, whether it is sufficiently aspirational, or alternatively whether it is unachievable. We considered the scale of the consultation to be carried out and the proposed objectives.
- 2.15 The Panel is also continuing to review public and patient engagement in the health service and will be producing conclusions in the near future.

### ***Skills, Economy and Regeneration (Cllr Tom Martin)***

- 2.16 At its last meeting met with Jill Laverick, Corporate Affairs Manager on "Make it Sunderland" and its contribution to the diversification of the local economy.

- 2.17 Make It Sunderland aims to raise the profile of Sunderland both nationally and internationally and help to create jobs and drive investment. Its work is focused on a number of key economic sectors; including automotive, manufacturing, software and offshore. The Panel commented on the extensive work being undertaken to raise the economic profile of the city both nationally and internationally.
- 2.18 On 14 March, the Panel will be undertaking a tour of regeneration sites within the city such as St Mary's Way and the Vaux site. The visit will provide an opportunity to meet representatives from the Sunderland City Centre Trading Association and discuss the implications of the Business Improvement District with Andy Bradley the Chair of the BID.
- 2.19 On 18 March, the Panel will also be visiting and meeting representatives from Nissan in order to discuss the contribution they can make to developing and diversifying the local economy.

### ***Responsive Services and Customer Care (Cllr Iain Kay)***

- 2.20 The Panel held a meeting to take evidence on reporting incidents of hate crime.
- 2.21 ARCH is a network of organisations working together across the city to support victims of hate incidents and where possible take action against the suspect. All organisations in the partnership have agreed to objectives and responsibilities. Each organisation lists what support they can offer to victims of hate incidents and what action they can take against suspects.
- 2.22 A new ARCH system is being developed to be in place by April. Members of the Panel will be meeting with the staff who receive and process the reports and will see for themselves the ARCH system in operation.
- 2.23 Improvements to the system include: developing a unified approach; better risk assessment; identifying trends; raising the profile, making it easier to report incidents and being less bureaucratic. All of this is intended to provide better support for the victim. Panel members will seek further information about the intended benefits of upgrading and improving the current system.
- 2.24 We heard that the under-reporting of incidents could stem from fear of reprisals but were informed that anyone can report an incident on behalf of someone else, for example, local councillors could log an incident if they are aware of it in their ward. We suggested that in light of this, elected members may benefit from a development session, either at city or area level, on how to use the system.
- 2.25 The Panel is also continuing to carry out a review of volunteering with a focus on unlocking capacity and will be presenting conclusions and findings to the next meeting.

### **3. CHANGES TO PANEL MEMBERSHIPS**

- 3.1 Non-executive Members are allocated to a scrutiny panel; membership of the panels has been decided in accordance with current political arrangements.

3.2 Scrutiny Panels are informal; therefore there is flexibility within the arrangements to revise Panel memberships at any point in the municipal year to reflect changes to Member capacity and other commitments.

3.3 There are no changes to report; therefore the complete membership of the Scrutiny Panels is attached for information and consideration as **Appendix 1** of this report.

#### **4. DEDICATED SCRUTINY BUDGET**

4.1 A small budgetary provision of £15,000 per annum is available to the Scrutiny Committee and the supporting Panels to deliver the agreed Annual Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.

4.2 As of 3 March 2014 the breakdown of the budget stood as follows:-

<b>Description</b>	<b>£</b>
Scrutiny Development	5,154.74
Member Development	2,749.29
Policy Review Development	0.00
<b>Total Expenditure to Date</b>	<b>7,904.03</b>
<b>Budget</b>	<b>15,000.00</b>
<b>Remaining Budget</b>	<b>7,095.97</b>

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee notes and considers the update of the Lead Scrutiny Members.

#### **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Scrutiny Committee Agenda and Papers

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## APPENDIX 1

### SCRUTINY PANEL MEMBERSHIP

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>City Services</b></p> <p>Scrutiny Lead Member: Cllr Stephen Bonallie</p> <p>Cllr Neville Padgett Cllr Michael Essl Cllr Stuart Porthouse Cllr Lynda Scanlan Cllr Steven Foster Cllr Amy Wilson Cllr Dianne Snowdon</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Health, Housing &amp; Adult Services</b></p> <p>Scrutiny Lead Member: Cllr Christine Shattock</p> <p>Cllr Jill Fletcher Cllr Ronny Davison Cllr Alan Emerson Cllr Rosalind Copeland Cllr Darryl Dixon Cllr Barbara McLennan Cllr Dorothy Trueman Cllr Mary Turton Cllr Gemma Taylor</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Children's Services</b></p> <p>Scrutiny Lead Member: Cllr Debra Waller</p> <p>Cllr Florence Anderson Cllr Linda Williams Cllr Doris MacKnight Cllr Anthony Farr Cllr Philip Tye Cllr Robert Oliver Cllr Bob Francis</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Skills, Economy &amp; Regeneration</b></p> <p>Scrutiny Lead Member: Cllr Tom Martin</p> <p>Cllr Bob Price Cllr Christine Marshall Cllr David Snowdon Cllr Denny Wilson Cllr Len Lauchlan Cllr Tom Wright Cllr Peter Wood</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Public Health, Wellness &amp; Culture</b></p> <p>Scrutiny Lead Member: Cllr George Howe</p> <p>Cllr Debra Waller Cllr Louise Farthing Cllr Fiona Miller Cllr Julia Jackson Cllr Rebecca Atkinson Cllr David Errington Cllr Paul Maddison</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Responsive Services &amp; Customer Care</b></p> <p>Scrutiny Lead Member: Cllr Iain Kay</p> <p>Cllr Bob Heron Cllr Betty Gibson Cllr Barry Curran Cllr Anne Lawson Cllr John Scott Cllr George Thompson Cllr John Wiper</p>