

LEAD SCRUTINY MEMBER UPDATE: JANUARY 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 10 December 2013, the Scrutiny Committee met informally with the Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Secretary and Sonia Tognarelli, Head of Financial Resources to be consulted on the budget proposals for 2014/15. At the meeting the Chair, Vice Chair and Lead Members discussed the sheer scale of the challenge facing the council in the coming years. Many questions were asked in regard to how efficiencies would impact on the residents of Sunderland going forward. Members concluded that given the task facing us, the council has robust plans in place to mitigate the impact of the reductions as much as is feasible.

Children's Services (Cllr Debra Waller)

- 2.2 The Panel met with Professor Mike Kelly from the NICE Organisation and discussed a variety of issues including the purpose of NICE and a number of general public health issues. The panel also discussed childhood obesity with Professor Mike Kelly and some of the initiatives that local government could take or influence around this issue. It was good meeting and Professor Kelly was interested in returning to Sunderland in the future, as is practice, to discuss new policy developments with local authorities and get their feedback to them.
- 2.3 The Panel also held a meeting to discuss the child and adolescent mental health services, as commissioned by the Scrutiny Committee, and this is covered in a separate report on the agenda. It is, though, worth pointing out that the commissioning model has allowed for a detailed look at this particular issue. The Panel has over the last 15 months monitored and challenged the service and Members from the Children's Services Scrutiny Panel have been actively involved in this.
- 2.4 The next meeting of the panel takes place in early January and will be with families who have undertaken or been involved with Sunderland's Lifestyle, Activity and Food Programmes and Specialist Childhood Weight Management Programmes.

City Services (Cllr Stephen Bonallie)

- 2.5 At its meeting on 11 December, the Panel looked at the issue of alcohol misuse and the development of licensing policy in the city, with particular regard to public health and the impact on emergency services. To this end, Nonnie Crawford (Director of Public Health) Dr Kate Lambert (Consultant in Emergency Medicine, City Hospitals) and Elaine Griffiths (Chairperson of Sunderland City Centre Pub Watch) were invited to the meeting.
- 2.6 The Panel discussed the impact and cost of alcohol misuse on society, including its effect on health and its role in instances of anti-social behaviour and domestic violence.
- 2.7 Reference was made to the dangers of irresponsible advertising campaigns and the very low unit price of alcohol sold in many supermarkets and off licences. It was also felt that alcohol was becoming too accessible, with even garages and motorway service stations being permitted to sell alcohol.
- 2.8 The Panel stressed the importance of changing the cultural approach to drinking though it was recognised that this would be a long term goal. However, it was important that the Council's approach to licensing policy should reflect its commitment to tackling these problems. Elaine Griffiths referred to the important role of Pubwatch in persuading local publicans to take a responsible attitude to the sale of alcohol to customers and particularly young people.
- 2.9 Reference was also made to the importance of the Council working with all its partners and the whole of the North East in order to ensure a coordinated and combined approach.

Health, Housing and Adult Services (Cllr Christine Shattock)

- 2.10 The HHAS Scrutiny Panel conducted its Expert Jury Day on 6 December where a number of key witnesses provided evidence to the Panel around supporting carers. The event was attended by representatives from Sunderland Carers' Centre, Sunderland CCG, Age UK, Job Centre+, City Hospitals, NTW and South Tyneside Foundation Trust. The panel also heard evidence from a young carer and this was particularly interesting from the perspective of a carer.
- 2.11 The Panel are to meet with representatives from Gentoo early in the New Year. This meeting will be an opportunity to discuss a number of initiatives and support that Gentoo have put in place to help carers as a result of the implications emerging from welfare reforms. The Panel will also begin to look at some of the themes that are coming out of the evidence gathering and begin to develop some conclusions and shape recommendations for the final report.

Public Health, Wellness and Culture (Cllr George Howe)

- 2.12 The Panel is looking into patient and public engagement (PPE) in the health service, meeting on 17 December to take evidence from the Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group on the development of their Patient Experience Strategy.
- 2.13 Proposals for an Integrated Health and Wellness Model will underpin joint patient engagement arrangements through joint commissioning proposals. Proposals include the development of social media and a variety of other public consultation methods. Market research techniques are being adopted to bring rigour to engagement methods.
- 2.14 Witnesses were questioned about how GP member practices will be encouraged to operate good patient engagement in their own surgeries, and also, how existing consultation and engagement mechanisms will be used. Concern was expressed about whether the voice of patient groups is truly representative, the extent to which there are sufficient resources to deliver patient engagement as a quality measure in its own right and how all patient complaints and issues are picked up and analysed for identification of potential service improvements.

Skills, Economy and Regeneration (Cllr Tom Martin)

- 2.15 On 16 December, the Panel met with Anne Tye, Sector Specialist for Creative Industries from the Business and Investment Team. The meeting was held at the Sunderland Software Centre, Tavistock Place.
- 2.16 Ms Tye provided a presentation covering the following themes:-
- The content and objectives of the Creative Industries Strategy;
 - What we mean by creative industries and what they currently contribute to the local economy;
 - The potential for growth in the creative industries sector
 - Examples of partnership working within the sector
 - Measures being taken to raise the profile of the sector both nationally and internationally
- 2.17 The Panel heard that the Creative industries Strategy focused on the contribution that could be made by creative industries to the economic growth of the city. At the present time, it was estimated that there were around 440 firms employing 2,510 people in the creative industries sector and that there was the potential to employ a further 780 by 2015. Nevertheless it was felt that in comparison with other similar sized cities, the potential contribution could be much greater. In particular, there was considered to be a weakness in translating creative potential into business growth and instilling greater commercial awareness amongst some firms. There was also a strong voice from the sector that collaborative working

was being made more difficult by the lack of a central hub within the city centre.

- 2.18 Examples of successful initiatives included the Sunnyside Makers Quarter, the Urban Art Festival and the establishment of Pop Recs Ltd. The latter two in particular had generated extensive national and international publicity which was important in helping to improve perceptions of the city as a vibrant and creative place.

Responsive Services and Customer Care (Cllr Iain Kay)

- 2.19 The Panel is carrying out a review of volunteering with a focus on unlocking capacity and met on 16 December to take evidence on the impact of the voluntary sector on crime and community safety in Sunderland. VONNE is working on a project with the VCS, supporting its work to reduce crime, promote community safety, and reduce re-offending.
- 2.20 The 2-year funded project will map the voluntary sector; assess support needs and produce case studies of good practice to highlight the innovative work of VCS organisations in criminal justice and community safety.
- 2.21 Evidence was taken for the review on what is going well and what needs to change. We were told that issues, particularly for smaller organisations, include the use of large scale contracts, payment by results approach and being able to demonstrate the value of the sector.
- 2.22 The Panel took evidence about the organisations providing services in Sunderland. The project includes a pilot in Sunderland to support individuals with complex needs through the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach. This involves the design and delivery of better coordinated services for people facing multiple needs and exclusions. Ultimately, the project aims to Influence commissioners, in particular Police and Crime Commissioners, to positively engage the VCS.

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 6 January 2014 the breakdown of the budget stood as follows:-

Description	£
Scrutiny Development	2,540.74
Member Development	5,154.74
Policy Review Development	0.00
Total Expenditure to Date	7,695.48
Budget	15,000.00
Remaining Budget	7,304.52

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>City Services</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>Health, Housing & Adult Services</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 Lisa Smiles Cllr Barbara McLennan Cllr Dorothy Trueman Cllr Mary Turton Cllr Gemma Taylor</p>
<p>Children's Services</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>Skills, Economy & Regeneration</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>Public Health, Wellness & Culture</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>Responsive Services & Customer Care</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>

