

**At a meeting of the SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE
SUNDERLAND on THURSDAY, 16th JULY, 2015 at 5.30 p.m.**

Present:-

Councillor Dianne Snowdon in the Chair

Councillors D. Dixon, Fletcher, Howe, Scanlan and David Snowdon and Mr Williamson.

Also in Attendance:-

Councillor John Kelly – Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Wellness and Culture

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Davison and N. Wright

Minutes of the last Meeting of the Committee held on 25th June, 2015

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 25th June, 2015 (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 2014/15: Response from Cabinet – 24th June, 2015

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide feedback from the Cabinet meeting held on 24 June, 2014, regarding three of the scrutiny policy reviews undertaken by scrutiny in 2014/15.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Members of the Cabinet had been invited to attend for this item of business to provide feedback on Cabinet's consideration of the policy reviews undertaken by the scrutiny panels and how it intended to deliver the recommendations of each panel as follows:-

Scrutiny Panel	Policy Review	Portfolio Holder
Health, Housing and Adult Services	Tackling Loneliness and Social Isolation	Cllr Graeme Miller & Cllr John Kelly

Public Health, Wellness and Culture	Tackling New Psychoactive Substances	Cllr Harry Trueman & Cllr John Kelly
Public Health, Wellness and Culture	Strategy for the Prevention of Suicide	Cllr John Kelly

Councillor Kelly (Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Wellness and Culture) and supported by Graham King (Head of Integrated Commissioning) and Gillian Gibson (Consultant in Public Health) briefed the Committee on the Cabinet's consideration of the Health, Housing and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel's review of 'Tackling Loneliness and Social Isolation', and the Public Health, Wealth and Culture Scrutiny Panel's reviews of 'Tackling New Psychoactive Substances' and 'Strategy for the prevention of Suicide'. He submitted apologies on behalf of Councillors Miller and Harry Trueman who were engaged elsewhere and whose Portfolios were partly covered by two of the reviews. He advised that the Panel's recommendations had been endorsed in their entirety by Cabinet. Action plans to implement the recommendations had been developed for each of the reviews and these were attached as appendices 1-3 to the report.

Councillor David Snowdon referred to Appendix 3 to the report regarding the appointment of a Councillor Champion And asked if this would be one Champion to cover city wide issues or whether there would be scope to appoint one champion per Area of the city. Councillor Kelly commented that he was a big fan of local knowledge being utilised through a Council Lead Champion and could see no reason why the issue should not be put forward to each of the Area People Board's for consideration and comment.

The Chairman having thanked Councillor Kelly for each of his presentations on the reviews, it was :-

2. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the proposed actions detailed within the Action Plans appended to the report at appendices 1, 2 and 3 be noted; and
- (ii) the action plans be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Panels for further consideration.

Change in Order of Business

At this juncture the Chairman asked that Item 6 be brought forward to allow time for the representatives from the CCG to be in attendance for their item.

Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2014/15

The Head of Service: Safeguarding submitted a report (copy circulated) which set out for information the annual report of the Corporate parenting Board, including information and analysis on the performance of the Council and partners in relation to looked after children.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Martin Birch, Head of Looked After Children presented the report advising that the number of Looked After Children had increased each quarter throughout 2014/15 with an overall increase of 76 young people looked after compared with 2013/14. He advised that a number of panels and procedures were put in place to look at ways to reduce this number in the future. Members were advised that the Ofsted report was due the following week which could have significant impact on how social work was delivered in Sunderland.

Councillor Fletcher commented on the increase of care leavers who were NEET and commented that the Health, Housing and Adult Services Panel had agreed to look at the issue of transition from children leaving care to adult social care and commented that as part of the review she would be grateful if Members could be kept up to date with the ongoing situation.

Councillor David Snowdon referred to the rate of looked after children per 10,000 population as set out in the table at 4.3 of the report. He commented that this comparator for the North East did not give actual numbers of looked after children in each authority and asked if this could be changed to include that data next time the report was submitted to the Committee. He also asked why Elected Members had not been advised that the Council were so much higher than the national average with 104.32 rate of looked after children per 10,000 population when the national average is 60. Mr. Birch advised that there were no issues to report, nationally the figures had increase after the Baby P findings and some authorities had not been able to reduce this since, whereas others had bringing the national average down.

In response to a question from Councillor David Snowdon regarding the expense to the authority of having children placed outside of Sunderland Mr. Birch advised that some of the children were placed with our own foster carers outside of the authority so the cost would remain the same, others who were placed with external residential providers did incur further costs and that this was an area for further exploration for the service.

Councillor Scanlan referred to the increase in the number of looked after children to 76 and asked if the service were aware of anything that may have attributed to the increase. Mr. Birch advised that as he had only been in place a matter of weeks it was early days for him to specify anything in particular for the increase although he was aware that there was a problem in Sunderland in that they used a number of agency staff and this had been noted to have a direct correlation with the number of looked after children. He informed the Committee that there were a number of policies and procedures which were not well embedded at the moment due to a high staff turnover of social workers, etc. and that they were undertaking a larger piece of work to ensure that the children currently looked after were in the correct placements for the right reasons. He advised that a quick scoping exercise had been carried out which had confirmed that the last ten cases of looked after children were correctly placed.

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

3. RESOLVED that the Corporate Parenting Annual Report for 2014/15 and the Committee's comments be received and noted.

Sunderland CCG Operational Plan Refresh 2015/16

The Chief Officer Sunderland CCG submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided an overview of the key points outlined in the refreshed operational plan for Sunderland CCG in 2015/16.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Debbie Burnicle, Deputy Chief Officer, Sunderland CCG gave a presentation to Members which provided the Transformational Changes and progress so far to the Operational Plan for 2015/16, alongside the revised Plan for 2014/15 – 2018/19 and any risks to delivery of the plan.

(for copy presentation – see original minutes)

Councillor David Snowdon referred to the maximum quality payment which was expressed as £5 per head which equates to approximately £1,425,000 and raise concerns that this would still leave a deficit of approximately £4,000,000. Ms Burnicle explained that every year the CCG would have the opportunity to receive more funds if they achieved certain targets. Sunderland CCG were overfunded compared to other areas and it was Government's decision as to how and when targets would change, in the meantime the CCG could were looking to reduce recurring running costs and the situation would be monitored.

He went on to ask the Officer to explain the proposed measure of the increase in the number of patients admitted for non-elective reasons, who are discharged at weekends or bank holidays and Ms. Burnicle advised that this was about patients receiving the same level of service irrespective of whether they were attending on a weekday, weekend or bank holiday and therefore reducing the danger of patients waiting for discharge at these times.

The Chairman, Councillor Dianne Snowdon, congratulated the CCG on having been chosen as one of the 14 nation Vanguard speciality community providers sites and it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the report and presentation on the key points of the CCG Operational Plan for 2015/16 be received and noted.

Commissioning the Scrutiny Panels 2015/16

The Head of Scrutiny and Area Arrangements submitted a report (copy circulated) which requested that the Committee give consideration to, and approve, the policy reviews to be undertaken by the Lead Scrutiny Members and their supporting Panels.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Mr Nigel Cummings, Scrutiny Officer, introduced the report and advised that all of the scrutiny panels had now met and agreed their reviews to be undertaken for 2015/16.

The Chairman invited each of the Lead Scrutiny Members to present their proposed topic to the Committee:-

Children's Services Scrutiny Panel	CAMHS Service
City Services Scrutiny Panel	Street Licenses to support a vibrant city Enforcement and the powers available
Health, Housing and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel	Transition from Children to Adult Social Care Houses of Multiple Occupation
Public Health, Wellness and Culture Scrutiny Panel	Self-Harm Sexually Transmitted Diseases
Responsive Services and Customer Care Scrutiny Panel	Customer Care Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act Universal Credit
Skills, Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel	Key Cities Universal Credit Pilot

6.
 - a. The list of suggestions for policy review topics and the relevant Lead Scrutiny Members be tasked to undertake this policy review work as part of the annual work programme; and
 - b. The Scrutiny Committee receive regular updates on the progress of the work of the Lead Scrutiny Members and the supporting Panels.

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 23rd June, 2015.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman asked that Members having any issues to raise or requiring further detail on any of the items included in the notice, contact Nigel Cummings, Scrutiny Officer, for initial assistance.

7. RESOLVED that the Notice of Key Decisions be received and noted.

Annual Work Programme for 2015-16

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided the annual Scrutiny work programme for 2015-16 for the Committee's information.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

8. RESOLVED that the Committee received and noted the information contained within the work programmes.

Lead Scrutiny Member Update : July 2015

The Lead Scrutiny Members submitted a joint report (copy circulated), which provided an overview of the work of each of the six Lead Scrutiny Members and supporting panels to date.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

9. RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the update of the Lead Scrutiny Members be received and noted;
- (b) The current expenditure and remaining scrutiny budget for 2015/16 be noted; and
- (c) The Scrutiny Debate evaluation feedback from delegates be received and noted.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and closed the meeting.

(Signed) DIANNE SNOWDON,
Chairman.