

Overview, Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

3 November 2014

Present: Councillor S Graham (Chair)
Councillors J Allan, P Earley, Janet Hunter,
John Hunter, N Huscroft, D McGarr, J Pickard, G Westwater
and J O'Shea

School Governor Representatives
Mrs J Little

Church Representatives
Rev Vine

Others in attendance
Councillors B Pickard, L Spillard and A Waggott-Fairley

OV14/11/14 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Hall, Mrs M Ord - School Governor representative and Mr G O'Hanlon – Church representative.

OV15/11/14 Substitute Members

Pursuant to the Council's constitution the appointment of the following substitute Member was reported:-

Councillor J O'Shea for Councillor M Hall

OV16/11/14 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest reported.

OV17/11/14 Minutes

Resolved that the minute of the meetings held on 1 September 2014 be confirmed as a true record.

OV18/11/14 Adult Social Care – Cabinet Portfolio

Cllr L Spillard proposed that scrutiny consider carrying out a study into the support of young people leaving the care systems. She stated that many young people leaving foster homes etc have great difficulty adjusting to the responsibility they have for themselves and the consequences, which could result in unemployed, falling into debt, losing tenancies etc.

It was requested that a scrutiny study be undertaken into the opportunity to establish a Community Network that would benefit both young people leaving the care system and older people by bringing them together for mutual support.

It was thought that a study would highlight the benefits for young and older people, their communities and area such as the welfare bill, lost tenancies, debt management and unemployment.

It was decided that the proposal be discussed at the Scrutiny Chairs & Deputy Chairs meeting 2 December to consider, delegate and prioritise the proposal for a future scrutiny study topic.

Agreed that the proposal be considered at the Scrutiny Chairs & Deputy Chairs meeting to be held on the 2 December 2014.

OV18/11/14 Economic Development – Cabinet Portfolio

The Cabinet Member was unable to attend and this item was not considered.

OV19/11/14 Our North Tyneside Plan - Performance Report

The Committee considered a report that provided an update on the progress that had been made to deliver the aims and objectives of the Our North Tyneside Plan.

Following the last report in March a number of measures had been updated to better reflect the aims of the Plan.

There were now seventeen measures within the Our North Tyneside Plan, thirteen of which were reporting new or updated information in the report. Where new data was not available, information within the service reports would provide additional detail on what was taking place throughout the year.

Performance against the Our North Tyneside Plan was showing that five measures were improving, five had declined and there were three new measures where only baseline information had been provided. There were four measures that did not have updated performance information. These would be updated for the next report in March 2015.

Appendix A of the report provided the full Our North Tyneside Performance Report

Members raised that some measures in the report did not show data for 2013/14 and asked the reasons why. In response the Policy, Performance & Research Manager stated that the data for some measures go through a process of validation before they are published and so will not be shown until complete.

It was also asked if any measures were to have any associated stretch targets. In response it was stated that this was being investigated and as the performance reporting developed, targets would be aligned to the Council's Creating a Brighter Future (CBF) programme. In addition Cabinet Member – Cllr Bruce Pickard stated that resident's priorities change over time and as they do the relevant Cabinet Member and service areas responsible would be challenged to make any improvements. He also stated that there was a need to look at trend performance.

A Member raised to which residents were approached to provide opinions and if they were representative of those living the borough.

The Policy, Performance & Research Manager, informed that the resident's survey is carried out by Ipsos MORI who drew a random sample of addresses from which 1200 responded, he added that the selection was considered a good representation of residents and characteristics such as sex/age/faith/area residing in the borough and comparisons between wards were undertaken. The Cabinet Member added that the Council needed to

obtain the best data possible and have used Ipsos MORI to carry out this work as they are market leaders in research and analysis. He also stated that the Council was working on a new Communications Strategy that would enable more residents to submit their opinions in a manner that best suited them.

With respect to the measure for Gap in educational attainment across the borough, it was asked to what influence the Learning Trust had with regards to this measure. Cllr B Pickard stated he would ask the relevant Cabinet Member/Officers to respond.

With respect to measure for cessation smoking referrals, it was suggested that a possible study into the appropriateness and feasibility of having a pilot scheme to using e-cigarettes as a way to help quitting smoking.

A Member stated in relation to the number of business rate payers that this measure should not record only new businesses as many fail within their first year and that there should be support available that would help failing businesses.

The Cabinet Member informed the Committee that the measure records only the increase in the number of businesses and that support was available through the Business Factory.

A Member asked if data was collected on unemployed individuals not in receipt of benefits, who then start a business so they can have an income and to what level of income they achieve.

The Policy, Performance & Research Manager stated that information was currently being sought to investigate trends with this type of business start up.

Discussions took place with regards to skills shortages and the need for relevant training for young people that would support local businesses to close the gap. A comment was made that it was not only the responsibility of the Council, schools and colleges to train young people but also of businesses themselves. It was stated that many modern days skills require the use of costly resources and there was a need to look at possibly centralising resources.

Agreed that Our North Tyneside Plan - performance report be noted.

OV20/11/14 Alcohol Related Violent Crime Review

Councillor A Waggott-Fairley presented the findings of the study into Alcohol Related Violent Crime with the emphasis on domestic abuse.

The main objective was to examine the effectiveness of strategies, interventions and support in place by the Council and its partners and to identify gaps in service delivery and areas for improvement.

Areas reviewed were:

- interventions and support services
- prevention and educational awareness
- licensing
- workplace polices

First hand experiences were also provided by victims of domestic abuse.

It was asked to the areas of the borough from where women were seeking refuge came. Cllr Waggott-Fairley stated that most came from outside of North Tyneside. It was stated that victims of abuse often needed to leave the region they lived to seek safe refuge.

Members were informed of the services of the Harbour Refuge and Outreach Service, Acorns Outreach Service, Acorns Children Counselling Service and Independent Domestic Violence Advisor Services (IDVA) that received funding from the Council and the report detailed the funding they received. Members requested that a breakdown of the funding be circulated.

The Committee discussed the licensing of establishments to sell alcohol and the responsibility with particular reference to supermarkets and local shops. The Committee was informed of the various licensing functions the Council was required to carry out and the four licensing objectives.

1. Prevention of crime
2. Public safety
3. Prevention of public nuisance
4. Protection of children from harm

A Member raised the concern of children living in families where alcohol and domestic abuse was hidden and asked what support was available to them to report abuse.

It was stated that children are made aware through Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEe) programmes in schools. It was also stated that there were a number of charities that support children when they report abuse (e.g. Childline, NSPCC etc).

The Committee was informed that the support provided to victims of abuse would normally last 12 weeks to allow time for them to be re-housed or relocated.

A Member suggested that scrutiny should look to carrying out a future study in respect to repeat victims and the support provided to them.

The Committee agreed that the report and its 12 recommendations be referred to Cabinet.

Agreed that the report and its recommendations referred to Cabinet for consideration:-

R 1: That Cabinet ask the Domestic Abuse Strategic Commissioning Group to investigate ways of increasing the IDVA capacity in North Tyneside so that it is more in line with the recommended level.

R 2: That the Chief Executive of Northumbria Healthcare Foundation Trust explores the funding options to reinstate the IDVA post located in North Tyneside General Hospital's A&E Department.

R 3: That Cabinet ask the interim Housing Services Manager to explore the possibility of allocating up to two homes being built as part of the Quality Homes for Older People project, to be used for temporary emergency accommodation for older people fleeing domestic abuse.

R 4: That Cabinet ask the Director of Public Health to continue exploring a potential model and commission a Perpetrator Programme in North Tyneside.

R 5: That Cabinet ask the Head of Environment and Leisure to explore the possibility of providing leisure centre passes to victims of domestic abuse and their children whilst they are staying at the Harbour refuge, and extending this to victims of domestic abuse and their children accessing a outreach service.

R 6: That Cabinet ask the Family Partner Team to ensure that when they identify families with alcohol problems and/or domestic abuse they are referred to the appropriate service.

R 7: That Cabinet ask the Director of Public Health to investigate the feasibility of establishing a pilot project to work with young people involved in alcohol related violence.

R 8: That Cabinet ask relevant officers to raise awareness of the support and help available to children and young people who are living in families where alcohol and domestic abuse is hidden, through providing information in young people's newsletters and PSHEe programmes.

R 9: That Cabinet ask the Director of Public Health to focus on alcohol related violence, in particular domestic abuse and the impact this has on family relationships and children during alcohol awareness week.

R 10: That Cabinet ask the Director of Public Health to produce a public health statement relating to alcohol misuse for inclusion in the Licensing Policy and where relevant any other Council policies.

R 11: That the Elected Mayor and Director of Public Health continue to lobby and support the introduction of national minimum pricing.

R 12: That Cabinet ask the Public Protection Manager to include an annual article in the resident's newsletter 'Our North Tyneside' to raise public awareness of the alcohol exclusion zones in North Tyneside.

OV21/11/14 Child Poverty Review – Monitoring Report

The Committee requested that the Child Poverty Review - Monitoring Report be resubmitted to a future meeting with distinct information so that updated statements could be corroborated.

Agreed that the Child Poverty Review – Monitoring Report be resubmitted to a future meeting with distinct information.