

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE TO PROMOTE STRONG HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES**

**At a Meeting** of the **Scrutiny Sub-Committee to Promote Strong Healthy and Safe Communities** held at the County Hall, Durham on **Monday 2 September 2002** at **10.00 a.m.**

#### **Present:**

**COUNCILLOR M NICHOLLS** in the Chair.

#### **Members of the Sub-Committee:**

Councillors J Armstrong, Blenkinsopp, Douthwaite, Fenwick, Mrs Fergus, E Foster, Mrs Howarth, Mrs Hunter, G Hunter, Langham, Priestley, Rodgers and Stradling.

#### **Other Members:**

Councillors Dormer, Firby, Mrs Hodgson, Hogan, Lightley, Myers, Pye and Watson.

#### **1. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2002 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Head of Overview and Scrutiny referred to Minute A3, Council for Voluntary Services, and informed the Sub-Committee that a Working Group had been established which was currently considering the issue of funding. This Working Group will report in due course and the Sub-Committee would have the opportunity to consider this report.

#### **2. Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3. The Focus of the Committee - Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the Corporate and Best Value Plan**

The Sub-Committee considered a Report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny which suggested that its work should be particularly focussed on the issues raised by the recent Comprehensive Performance Assessment (for report see file of Minutes).

Councillor Nicholls suggested a Seminar be held to consider the aim of improving road safety in relation to child deaths and casualties, which is the focus of one of the LPSA targets.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the report together with the recommendation included therein be approved.
- (ii) That a Seminar be arranged to concentrate on road safety in relation to child deaths and casualties.

#### **4. Performance Management**

##### **(a) Presentation by Head of Overview and Scrutiny**

The Head of Overview and Scrutiny explained the relevant information for this Sub-Committee set out in the Corporate and Best Value Plan. It was recognised that this performance information related to the year 2001/02, the following areas of service had not achieved the target for 2001/2002:-

- BV49 % of Children Looked After who have had 3 or more placements in one year
- BV 58 % of adults and other people receiving a statement of their needs and how they will be met
- BV 162 Review of Child Protection Cases
- BV 126 Domestic Burglaries per 1,000 households

The key achievements in 2001/02 were highlighted together with the priorities which had been identified for 2002/03 (for copy of presentation slides see file of Minutes).

##### **(b) Presentation by Social Services Department**

The Sub-Committee also received a presentation by Keith Newby, Performance Monitoring Manager which provided an update on performance information in relation to the Social Services Department (for copy of report and presentation see file of Minutes).

Keith explained that the 50 performance indicators contained within the Performance Assessment Framework were used by the Department of Health to monitor the performance of the Social Services Department and that they were also used by the Social Services Inspectorate to determine the Authority's Star Rating.

Of the 24 Performance Indicators reported for this financial year; 8 were very good, 5 good, 8 acceptable, 3 were at the point where questions needed to be asked, leaving none needing an urgent investigation. With regard to trends Keith explained 15 indicators remained in the same banding, 6 had improved and 3 had got worse.

All indicators are reported to Social Services Department Performance Days where good performance is highlighted, as are areas needing improvement.

With regard to the performance indicators identified in the Corporate Plan for improvement Keith commented as follows:

- BV 49 (Stability of child care placements)  
The Department of Health has confirmed this performance was good compared with other Authorities.
- BV 58 (Adults receiving a statement of needs)  
Last year the definition of this Indicator changed, this in turn has had an impact on the final figure, when actually the true trend is one of improvement.
- BV 162 (Review of child protection cases)  
This is now in the very good category.

(for copy of presentation slides see file of Minutes).

## **5. Aids and Adaptations**

The Sub-Committee noted a Report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny which provided an update on progress made to secure improvements in the Aids and Adaptations Services within the County (for report see file of Minutes).

The Sub-Committee was informed that the Working Group, meeting on 5 September, would report back on its findings in due course.

## **6. Investing in Modern Services for Older People**

The Sub-Committee considered a Report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny about a meeting of a Working Group to consider the way in which the Authority is managing the implementation of the strategy for Investing in Modern Services for Older People (for report see file of Minutes).

### **Resolved:**

That the report together with the recommendations included therein be approved and that a non-executive member be nominated to serve on the Project Board.

## **7. Co-options**

The Sub-Committee considered a Report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny regarding progress about Co-options to the Sub-Committee (for report see file of Minutes).

The Head of Overview and Scrutiny recommended that one of the co-options should be from the Association of Town and Parish Councils and requested authority to issue the invitation prior to their AGM which is to be held shortly.

**Resolved:**

1. That the report together with the recommendation included therein be approved.
2. That the Association of Town and Parish Councils be invited to appoint a co-opted member to the Sub-Committee.

**8. Forward Plan**

The Sub-Committee noted the sections of the Council's Forward Plan which are within its jurisdiction (for report see file of Minutes).

**9. Work Programme**

The Sub-Committee considered a Report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny about the work programme for the Sub-Committee (for report see file of Minutes).

Councillor Mrs Hunter suggested that the Sub-Committee should consider the issue of supporting vulnerable 18 - 26 year olds with mental health problems.

**Resolved:**

1. That the report together with the recommendation included therein be approved.
2. That the Council's support for vulnerable 18-26 year olds with mental health problems should be investigated.