

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the Scrutiny Sub-Committee to Promote Strong, Healthy and Safe Communities** held at the County Hall, Durham on **Monday 4 December 2006** at **9.30am**.

### **Present**

**COUNCILLOR NICHOLLS** in the Chair

#### **Members:**

Councillors Barker, Cordon, Ebbatson, Hunter, Marshall, Mason, Robinson, Southwell, Stradling and Trippett

#### **Other Members:**

Councillors Chapman and Myers

#### **Co-opted Members:**

Mrs Gibbon and Mr K Ibbotson

### **A1 Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 4 September and 30 October 2006 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **A2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **A3 Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties**

There were no items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties.

### **A4 Adult and Community Services - Performance Management Surveys**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Performance Monitoring Manager providing an update on and key findings from the current survey programme within Adults and Communities Services (for copy see file of Minutes). Feedback from the surveys showed a general rise in levels of satisfaction, although there were some areas where managers would be investigating lower than expected satisfaction levels.

Councillor Robinson expressed concern about bed blocking in relation to EMI beds. The Performance Monitoring Manager advised that he was not aware

of any bed blocking resulting from the action/inaction of the County Council. Hospital discharge surveys do take place and the prevention of bed blocking is a top priority for the County Council.

Members commented that carers were completing the survey forms on behalf of service users and it was felt that there was a need to exercise caution about the results. The Performance Monitoring Manager explained that the surveys ask who is completing the form. Additionally visits are undertaken by the Contracts Team and their results have not revealed any disparity in the outcomes of the surveys.

It was further explained that audit trails enable the Service to drill down to find out the facts underlying the results and where performance was an issue further investigations would be conducted.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**A5 Promoting Strong, Healthy and Safe Communities – Quarter 2 Performance 2006/07**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Head of Corporate Policy providing a performance update for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2006/07 (for copy see file of Minutes).

Members were concerned that data on teenage pregnancies was only available from 2004 and that more up to date information was needed. It was suggested that local sources of data such as the Primary Care Trust should be investigated.

Members also made reference to the information in relation to young people's mental health and it was suggested that more accurate data might be available from the NHS Mental Health Trust. Officers agreed to investigate this issue.

Members sought information on what percentage of road traffic collisions were caused by illegal drivers. It was explained that the County Council had no data, but enquiries would be made with Durham Constabulary.

Members commented on the level of sickness absence in comparison to the private sector. Peter Appleton explained that there was a steady improvement in performance in those former Social Care and Health branches, which the Scrutiny Working Group had previously investigated, and year on year targets had been set to bring the levels of absence down further still.

The Senior Scrutiny Support Officer advised that levels of sickness absence across the Council had been discussed at a recent Corporate Scrutiny Sub-

Committee and a further piece of scrutiny work examining the levels of sickness absence across the Authority may be undertaken in the near future.

In relation to the LAA Children and Young People's stretch target 1c (Number of children aged 7-14 who spend a minimum of 2 hours per week on high quality PE and Sport) measure, members asked about the disparity between performance across the Districts. It was suggested that this might form the basis for a future presentation to the Sub-Committee.

**Resolved:**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That subsequent reports on quarterly performance be received.

**A6 "Who's Afraid of Crime?" – Review of Fear of Crime Scrutiny Project**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny reviewing progress on implementing recommendations of the "Who's Afraid of Crime?" scrutiny report (for copy see file of Minutes).

**Resolved:**

That an update on the progress of outstanding recommendations be submitted to the Sub Committee for consideration in 12 months time, including an assessment of the effectiveness of those recommendations implemented.