

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

At a Meeting of **Overview and Scrutiny Management Board** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Friday 22 November 2013 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor J Armstrong in the Chair

Members of the Committee:

Councillors P Stradling, B Alderson, A Batey, D Boyes, J Chaplow, B Graham, D Hall, A Hopgood, P Lawton, J Lethbridge, C Potts, A Shield, M Simmons, R Todd and J Turnbull

Faith Community Representative:

Revd K Phipps

Co-opted Members:

Mr D Kinch

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Bell, J Blakey, A Bonner, R Crute, K Henig, T Nearney and S Wilson, and Mr A J Cooke.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members in attendance.

3 Minutes

Councillor Shield referred to the last sentence on Page 3 of the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2013 stating that his comment on the Participatory Budgeting was incorrect. He clarified that funding was needed to stimulate interest and that rural areas had been excluded. He added that 7 out of 10 projects awarded went to the Consett area and rural areas do not receive a fair share. The Chairman stated that it was up to each AAP to service their individual area.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11 October 2013, with the above amendment were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Head of Planning and Performance stated that the two issues from the previous meeting from Councillor S Wilson on youth employment and Councillor Hopgood on smoking figures would be covered under agenda item 7.

In relation to item 7 of the previous minutes regarding the AAP coverage, the Head of Planning and Performance confirmed that all 14 AAP's were included in the report and will also be included in future reports.

With reference to communication channels, AAP coordinators were reminded to circulate information monthly and good practice was being fed through task and finish groups. If Members require further information they should contact their local AAP Coordinator.

4 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

5 **Any items from Co-opted members or interested parties**

There were no items from Co-opted members or interested parties.

6 **Update on the Delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan 3**

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive that provided an update on the progress made at the end of September 2013 on the delivery of the 2013/14 to 2016/17 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP3) (for copy see file of minutes).

The Head of Policy and Communications reported that the MTFP3 agreed by Council in February 2013 takes the overall savings target for the period from 2011/12 to 2016/17 to over £188m, however at Cabinet on 9 October 2013, Members were advised that the latest forecast had increased the total savings required for the period from 2011 to 2017 to £222m, based on the impact of the 2015/16 Spending Round and the 2014/15 and 2015/16 Local Government Finance Settlement Consultation.

The Council continues to deliver well against the savings target for the current year of £20.87m of which £17.17m had been achieved by the 30 September 2013 which represents 82% of the 2013/14 target.

The Chairman requested the figures for temporary staff employed by the Council. He commented that the Council have a duty of care to those affected by the MTFP and felt that opportunities to retrain should be given to employees through the Council's redeployment process. The Head of Policy and Communications would forward comments to the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

Resolved:

That the content of the report and the progress being made in delivering the £20.87m of savings for 2013/14 where 82% of the savings have been delivered by 30 September 2013 be noted.

7 **Quarter 2 2013/14 Performance Management Report**

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which presented progress against the council's corporate basket of performance indicators (PIs) and reported other

significant performance issues for the second quarter of 2013/14. A presentation was given by the Head of Planning and Performance (for copy of report and slides, see file of minutes).

Referring to youth employment, Councillor S Wilson had asked at a previous meeting, as referred to in item 3, whether there was any information relating to the types of employment young people go into. The Head of Planning and Performance responded that there had been a fall in those claiming JSA, but that fall could be due to people no longer being eligible to claim JSA. Overall there wasn't a strong picture of what type of employment young people are going into, but an example in relation to apprenticeship schemes was given.

Councillor Boyes added that qualified young people and high achievers move away to other parts of the country where there are more job opportunities. He asked if there was any information regarding migration levels. Members commented that partners need to work more closely together to ensure the courses provided match the job opportunities in the area.

The Principal Partnership and Local Councils Officer advised that County Durham Economic Partnership reports have been produced on young people and unemployment levels, and was requested by the Chair to bring a report on this to a future meeting.

Referring to the smoking target, Councillor Hopgood asked at a previous meeting, as referred to in item 3, if it was possible to have figures for young people who have started smoking to compare with the number of people who stop. The Head of Planning and Performance advised that information isn't available on smoking starters, but there are annual estimates of smoking prevalence. These show that 20.9% of adults in County Durham are estimated to smoke regularly, equating to around 89,500 smokers aged 16 or over. This reflects good progress over the last couple of years with prevalence estimated by FRESH to have fallen by more than 5% since 2009/10, equating to an estimated 22,000 fewer smokers in the county.

Councillor Shield referred to the higher rate of improvements of Private Sector Properties and queried whether this was linked to changes in council tax charging for empty properties. The Chair asked that this be referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee for it to be looked into.

Councillor Shield referred to the crime PI's and asked if there were any crime statistics available on areas without CCTV, and whether any information was available on any link to CCTV removal. A number of Members commented on the shift in crimes being reported. Previously alcohol was the major target for shoplifting, currently the items being targeted now include food, toiletries and baby items.

Councillor Hopgood referred to the staff appraisals and commented that 80% was still far too low. She requested the percentage of people absent from work longer than 12 months be made available to support the statistics.

Councillor Hall referred to the homelessness figures and asked what happens to the non statutory applications. The Head of Planning and Performance advised she would pass onto the appropriate officer to respond to Councillor Hall.

Mr Kinch requested that the figures for the number of passenger journeys made on the Link2 service be broken down into individual areas.

In response to a query from Revd Phipps regarding the effect of the Lindisfarne Gospels and the impact it would have on performance targets and reporting for next year, the Head of Planning and Performance responded that Members would have a chance to comment during next years consultation process when considering the performance indicator targets.

Resolved:

That the information contained in the report be noted.

8 County Durham Partnership Update

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including summaries from the Board, the five Thematic Partnerships and all Area Action Partnerships (AAP's). The report also included updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the County (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the information contained in the report be noted.

Resolved: Councillor P Stradling in the Chair

9 Notice of Key Decisions

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which provided a list of key decisions which were scheduled to be considered by the Executive (for copy see file of minutes).

The Committee Services Manager reported that no items had been removed from the previous notice unless they had been considered by Cabinet. The only change was to the scheduled date for the Adoption of Climate Change Policy report which would now be considered at Cabinet on the 18 December 2013.

Councillor Hopgood requested more information on the Parking Strategy which was scheduled to be considered at Cabinet on the 12 February 2014. Parking is a major issue in her area and without a policy the Council are unable to enforce. She felt that development of the policy should have Member input and should be discussed at Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee. Further information would be requested from the Head of Transport.

Resolved:

That the information contained in the report be noted.

10 Information Update from the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update of overview and scrutiny activity between October and November 2013 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the information contained in the report be noted.