

**Safer and Stronger Communities
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

14 February 2019



**Progress of Recommendations
following the Overview and Scrutiny
Review of Home Safety – Safe and
Wellbeing Visits**

**Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and
Partnerships**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members with progress of recommendations following the Committee's previous review of Home Safety – safe and wellbeing visits

Executive summary

- 2 The report provides a summary of a report following review activity undertaken by the Committee on Safe and Wellbeing Visits in 2016/17. A progress report on implementation of recommendations was presented to the Committee in September 2017 to which Members were informed that a number of these recommendations were awaiting the findings of an evaluation of the initiative by the University of Teesside.
- 3 The evaluation was completed in 2018 and Appendix 2 to this report provides a progress update on recommendations from the Committee's review.

Recommendation

- 4 Members of the Committee are asked to note information contained within this report and presentation and comment accordingly.

Background

- 5 The Committee has a role to scrutinise work of the Safe Durham Partnership. Members of the committee agreed to establish a working group to undertake review activity looking at the objective of improved safety in the home which is contained within both the Safe Durham Partnership Plan and the Council Plan. This work focused on safe and wellbeing visits to which is led by County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) and is a major programme being undertaken in this area.
- 6 At the time of the Committee's work, CDDFRS firefighters were aiming to undertake approximately 18,000 home fire safety visits each year. The introduction of safe and wellbeing visits in February 2016 aims to build upon the previous home fire safety visits to focus on vulnerable people and enhance prevention through broadening the remit of these visits and aim to make every contact count.
- 7 The content of safe and wellbeing visits is for local determination to which included fire safety and lifestyle questions on slips, trips and falls, winter warmth, flu vaccination, dementia, smoking, alcohol and loneliness. To deliver this scheme, CDDFRS are working closely with a number of partner agencies including the council who will action referrals in relation to their specific lifestyle area.
- 8 The aim of the review was to gain assurance that processes are in place and being delivered through the safe and wellbeing visits to improve home safety, reduce risk and improve a person's health and quality of life. The review also provided an opportunity to identify any gaps or service improvements within the existing approach and raise awareness with elected members as community champions.
- 9 The review gathered evidence through desktop research, meetings with officers, service professionals and a resident who has benefited from the initiative. Focus groups were also held with firefighters and partner agencies and some observations of health and wellbeing visits were undertaken.

Review's Conclusions

- 10 From evidence gathered throughout the review, the working group applauded the approach led by CDDFRS with partner agencies to implement safe and wellbeing visits throughout the county. The working group noted the significance of organisational change for CDDFRS to lead on the scheme and the response by partner agencies to deliver this initiative in line with national strategies and local fire risk that aims to make every contact count and provide valuable support to vulnerable people.

- 11 At the point when the Committee undertook this review, safe and wellbeing visits were in their infancy and had effective governance, referral processes and partnership working in place that was making a positive difference. Up to the 31st October 2016, there have been 10,718 safe and wellbeing visits undertaken of which 3,733 people agreed to answer the lifestyle element of the questionnaire. This generated 1,235 referrals to partner agencies, many of which were the first contact with that service. The difference these visits have made was highlighted within the report through personal case study presentations, written evidence from partner agencies, recognition within the Alzheimer's Society national awards and a presentation to the National Emergency Services Show.
- 12 The working group also noted the positive working relationship between CDDFRS and partner agencies to design and review the safe and wellbeing questionnaire and address any concerns that have been identified to improve delivery of the scheme. The scheme had also been embedded within day-to-day activity for CDDFRS and firefighters were to receive further training by partner agencies.
- 13 The professionalism of firefighters and members of the Community Fire Safety Team was observed by councillors when accompanying firefighters undertaking safe and wellbeing visits. An area of development was for firefighters to receive feedback on outcomes of referrals and for partners to accompany firefighters undertaking safe and wellbeing visits.
- 14 The report highlighted that there had been a significant amount of data collected from safe and wellbeing visits to which provided an opportunity for partner agencies to work with CDDFRS to utilise anonymised data for service planning and prevention activity within the boundaries of the Data Protection Act.
- 15 The working group suggested that work is undertaken with CDDFRS and partner agencies to explore quality assurance activity on outcomes of safe and wellbeing referrals.
- 16 Whilst a positive difference is being made by the scheme, members noted that the initiative is currently funded from within existing resources for both CDDFRS and partner agencies. Information provided to the working group highlighted decreasing budgets for all partners and agencies and that funding sustainability is a risk to the success of the initiative. In addition partner agencies also identified a risk for the ability to meet any increase in further demand. It is suggested that the Safe Durham Partnership Board and Health and Wellbeing Board receive timely monitoring reports on the delivery of safe and wellbeing visits to highlight successes, challenges and risks to delivery of the initiative.

- 17 Safe and wellbeing visits have been actively promoted at local and national levels and it was suggested an area of potential development could be further promotion of the scheme with elected members, town and parish councils and area action partnerships. However, it is acknowledged that a risk to increased awareness may lead to increased demand and that a balance must be maintained to ensure quality and consistency in operation is not compromised.
- 18 The review's key findings focused on strategic context, governance and data, process and questionnaire, referral routes and outcomes and demand effectiveness and identified recommendations for the Safe Durham Partnership, Council and CDDFRS. The Safe Durham Partnership was asked to consider reviewing the governance framework document, to work with partners to ensure best use of data for service planning and prevention and to receive regular reports on delivery of the safe and wellbeing initiative. The Council was asked to consider holding a Members seminar to raise awareness and with the Safe Durham Partnership explore opportunities for cybercrime to be included within the Safer Homes project that focuses on crime prevention and fire safety.
- 19 The Committee's report was presented to Cabinet on 27th March 2017 and the Safe Durham Partnership on 23rd January 2017 and included the following recommendations:
- (a) That the Safe Durham Partnership Board annually reviews the framework document to ensure it continues to remain fit for purpose.
 - (b) The Safe Durham Partnership Board works with partners, including clinical commissioning groups, to ensure that best use is made of data collected from safe and wellbeing visits for assessing demand, prevention and service planning.
 - (c) The scheme is monitored through regular reports to the Safe Durham Partnership Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board detailing successes, challenges and risks, particularly around meeting demand and funding sustainability. Furthermore appropriate information is communicated with firefighters on outcomes of safe and wellbeing visits.
 - (d) That CDDFRS through the framework document and partnership meetings explore approaches for quality assurance activity on outcomes of safe and wellbeing visits with partner agencies.

- (e) The council arranges a seminar to be delivered to elected members during 2017/18 to promote safe and wellbeing visits and that CDDFRS promotes the scheme locally with town and parish councils and area action partnerships
- (f) The Safe Durham Partnership Board (including the council's Consumer Protection Team) explores opportunities for cybercrime and fraud to be included within the Safer Homes project.

20 At its meeting in October 2017, the Committee received a progress report that identified recommendation five was complete and remaining recommendations were awaiting the findings of an evaluation by Teesside University. The evaluation was completed in 2018 and Appendix 2 provides progress on implementation of each of these recommendations. Chris Woodcock, Strategic Manager, Public Health will be in attendance at the Committee's meeting to present the update and respond to Member questions in relation to this topic.

Main Implications

Crime and Disorder

21 Information within this report is linked to the Safe Durham Partnership priority of protecting vulnerable people.

Conclusion

22 The report and appendix 2 provides an opportunity for Members to comment on progress of implementation of recommendations from the Committee's review on Safe and Wellbeing Visits.

23 Background papers

- None

Other useful documents

- Progress of Recommendations following the Overview and Scrutiny Review of Home Safety – Safe and Wellbeing Visits, Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, October 2017
- Overview and Scrutiny Review, Home Safety – Safe and Wellbeing Visits, Cabinet March 2017

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

None.

Finance

None.

Consultation

None.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

Information within this report is linked to the Safe Durham Partnership priority of protecting vulnerable people.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

None.

Procurement

None.

Appendix 2: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW – Improved Safety in the Home – Safe and Wellbeing Visits

Review Recommendation	Progress Report of Action taken to implement recommendation	Responsibility	Timescale
<p>Recommendation One – That the Safe Durham Partnership Board annually reviews the framework document to ensure it continues to remain fit for purpose.</p>	<p>The framework will be reviewed following the evaluation of the Safe and Wellbeing Visits to ensure it remains fit for purpose. The evaluation will be undertaken by Teesside University which is due to be completed by March 2018.</p> <p><i>Evaluation completed in October 2018. Evaluation presented to Health and Wellbeing Board November 2018 and Safe Durham Partnership in January 2019 available from the following link</i></p> <p>https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s99443/Item%2016%20-%20SWV.pdf</p> <p><i>The findings from the evaluation will inform the framework development. The Fire and Rescue Service are developing an action plan to incorporate the research findings and will report back to Safe Durham Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board in 6 months.</i></p>	<p>CDDFRS & DCC (Public Health)</p> <p>CDDFRS & DCC (Public Health)</p>	<p>May 2018</p> <p><i>June 2019</i></p>
<p>Recommendation Two – The Safe Durham Partnership Board works with partners, including clinical commissioning groups, to ensure that best use is made of data collected from safe and wellbeing visits for assessing demand, prevention and service planning.</p>	<p>The SDP will await the findings of the evaluation to determine the next steps in relation to ensuring that best use is made of the evaluation and the data collected from safe and wellbeing visits for assessing demand, prevention and service planning.</p> <p><i>An information sharing protocol has been developed through the Safe Durham Partnership to allow partners to share relevant data. The Fire and Rescue service and the Public Health intelligence team have discussed sharing anonymised data sets to help inform respective challenges. Discussions are ongoing across Durham County Council to explore data sharing acknowledging that it has to be relevant to the population approach taken to target the Safe and Wellbeing visits.</i></p>	<p>CDDFRS & DCC (Public Health)</p>	<p>May 2018</p>

Review Recommendation	Progress Report of Action taken to implement recommendation	Responsibility	Timescale
<p>Recommendation Three - The scheme is monitored through regular reports to the Safe Durham Partnership Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board detailing successes, challenges and risks, particularly around meeting demand and funding sustainability</p>	<p>The Health and Wellbeing Board and the Safe Durham Partnership will receive a report following the evaluation from Teesside University. The report was provided to the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Safe Durham Partnership. The full evaluation is available here. https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s99443/Item%2016%20-%20SWV.pdf</p> <p><i>The evaluation highlighted the significant reach and volume of Safe and Wellbeing visits, the role of FRS in the prevention agenda and how positively the visits were received by the beneficiaries. The main risks would be partners not sharing relevant data to ensure their own appropriate targeting of services. Close partnership working will prevent this scenario.</i></p>	CDDFRS & DCC (Public Health)	Completed
<p>Furthermore appropriate information is communicated with firefighters on outcomes of safe and wellbeing visits.</p>	<p>CDDFRS now receive anonymous case studies from partners of success stories that were initially created by a Safe and Wellbeing Visit. These are given to fire crews via a SharePoint page and an email to relevant staff within the area the case is based.</p> <p><i>Sustainability has been achieved because CDDFRS have incorporated the visits as part of their 'core' business.</i></p>	CDDFRS	Completed
<p>Recommendation Four – That CDDFRS through the framework document and partnership meetings explore approaches for quality assurance activity on outcomes of safe and wellbeing visits with partner agencies</p>	<p>Each month, CDDFRS Control contact members of the public by telephone, from various areas of County Durham and Darlington, who have received a Safe and Wellbeing Visit and ask for their feedback using a structured template. This allows answers to be collated and assessed accordingly.</p> <p>Public Health, DCC has commissioned Teesside University to evaluate the implementation of Safe and Wellbeing Visits (SWVs) by County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS). The objectives of the evaluation are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore FRS SWV implementation 	<p>CDDFRS – Community Safety Team</p> <p>DCC (Public Health)</p>	<p>Monthly</p> <p>Completed</p>

Review Recommendation	Progress Report of Action taken to implement recommendation	Responsibility	Timescale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staff felt that this work could fit into their daily practice but that there is a lot of paperwork and that changes need to be made to ensure it is easier to implement.</i> • <i>Explore with the fire service and partners understanding of the process for SWVs and what impacted on their role</i> • <i>The fire service delivery staff, CRM team and partner organisations felt that delivering SWVs was an important thing to happen they felt that the training could be improved.</i> • <i>Assess the referral pathways to see how many of the health areas they are being referred for, whether these referrals are appropriate, and if relevant health areas are covered by SWVs</i> • <i>Consideration to be given about number of health criteria that are referred based on feedback and throughput into services. Will form part of the action plan.</i> • <i>Gain feedback from beneficiaries of SWVs to assess impact and appropriateness of CDDFRS undertaking these visits</i> • <i>Most beneficiaries felt that the interaction over the SWVs was of use especially around issues relating to slips trips and falls, and loneliness and isolation in particular. Beneficiaries had a positive experience with CDDFRS.</i> <p><i>The evaluation cover report is attached and the full evaluation is available on request. The FRS are developing an action plan to address any of the learning points from the evaluation to ensure that the service continues to be an integral part of the prevention agenda across County Durham.</i></p> <p><i>The Quality Assurance process will be considered as part of the evaluation.</i></p> <p><i>The community risk officers attend session with the fire crews. This allows them to oversee the visits, provide feedback and share best practice. This ensures accurate and timely management of the safe and wellbeing process.</i></p> <p><i>Case studies provided by partners also act as a quality assurance process as they capture the experience from the partner's perspective.</i></p>		