

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

At a Meeting of **Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Committee Room 1A, County Hall, Durham on **Tuesday 25 February 2014 at 9.30 am**

#### **Present:**

**Councillor D Boyes (Chairman)**

#### **Members of the Committee:**

Councillors J Armstrong, J Charlton, P Conway, J Gray, D Hall, M Hodgson, J Maitland, N Martin, J Measor, P Stradling, J Turnbull and C Wilson

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

Mr A J Cooke, Mr M Iveson, Mr B Knevitt and Mr T Thompson

#### **Co-opted Employees/Officers:**

Chief Inspector C McGillivray

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Forster, C Hampson, G Holland, T Nearney and K Shaw and Chief Superintendent G Hall, Mrs H Raine and Mr J Hewitt.

### **2 Substitute Members**

No notification of Substitute Members had been received.

### **3 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held 3 December 2013 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Jonathan Slee noted that further to the meeting in December, the response to the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service's (CDDFRS) Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) had been passed to CDDFRS and the Chairman and Overview and Scrutiny Officer had attended a Restorative Approaches event in January. Councillors were reminded that additional information requested as regards local performance figures and data in respect of alcohol harm and road traffic accidents had been circulated to the Committee.

The Chairman noted that the Restorative Approaches event had highlighted the national recognition of the high quality of the work of Durham County Council (DCC), Durham Constabulary and partners in respect of Restorative Approaches.

#### **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.

The Chairman noted that Co-opted Member Mr J Hewitt, Deputy Chief Executive from the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) was leaving the CDDFRS and accordingly would be stepping down as a Co-opted Member of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members of the Committee noted their appreciation of the work and input of Mr J Hewitt and noted that a letter of thanks and best wishes for the future be sent to him on behalf of the Committee.

#### **Resolved:**

That a letter of thanks be sent to Mr J Hewitt on behalf of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### **6 Media Relations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to the recent prominent articles and news stories relating to the remit of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (for copy see file of minutes). An article related to tackling abuse within Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) relationships, with a multi-agency conference recently held with representation from Durham Constabulary, DCC, Darlington Borough Council, the NHS and other partner organisations. Members noted other articles relating to the recent anti dog fouling campaign, backed by former Newcastle United and current Durham City FC owner Olivier Bernard, and expansion of the Pubwatch scheme in the Bishop Auckland area.

#### **Resolved:**

That the presentation be noted.

#### **7 Public Mental Health Strategy and Suicide Prevention in County Durham**

The Chairman introduced the Public Health Portfolio Lead, Children and Adults Services, Catherine Richardson who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Public Mental Health Strategy (PMHS) 2013 – 2017 and the Suicide Audit and Suicide Prevention in County Durham.

## Public Mental Health Strategy

The Public Health Portfolio Lead informed Members of Government mental health strategies “No Health Without Mental Health” and “Preventing Suicide in England, A Cross Government Strategy to Save Lives” and added that the PMHS for County Durham was developed in line with those strategies, acknowledging the combined impact of public mental health improvement and suicide prevention. Councillors noted that projections for mental health issues within the County predicted a rise in those suffering from depression from approximately 8,000 in 2011 to approximately 12,000 by 2030 and for cases of dementia to rise from approximately 6,000 in 2011 to approximately 11,000 by 2030. The Committee noted that other factors compounded mental health issues, such as physical illness and the current economic climate.

Councillors were asked to note the 10 key objectives as set out within the PMHS under 4 areas of: Promoting Good Mental Health; Prevention of Mental Ill-Health; Early Identification of those at risk of Mental Ill-Health; and Recovery from Mental Ill-Health. It was added that treatment was not covered in the PHMS, this was dealt with by the relevant Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

Members noted that there were several priority groups identified including: children and young people; people with learning disabilities and behavioural conditions; those at high risk of suicide and self-harm; people who are unemployed; people who are homeless; people with co-morbidity of drug and alcohol misuse; carers; veterans; and people over 65 years.

The Chairman thanked the Public Health Portfolio Lead and asked Members for their questions as regards the PMHS.

Councillors asked questions relating to: reductions in the provision of mental health wards within hospitals; the impact on the mental health of carers; on what basis the predictions of increases in mental health issues were made; whether further detailed action plans would be brought forward, with resource availability and implications set out; potential cross-cutting issues in the face of an aging population and the economic position; and what the difference would be in the role of schools and colleges in tackling bullying in comparison with the approach currently being undertaken.

The Public Health Portfolio Lead explained that national strategy was to move, where appropriate, towards better care in the community for those with mental health issues rather than specific wards, with local commissioning in this regard being by the CCGs. Members noted that there was a high impact upon carers emotional wellbeing and that there was links to the County Durham Carers’ Strategy, with there being opportunities to input into this and there were some community interventions that could be taken at the local level. Councillors noted that statistics were from Office of National Statistics’ (ONS) Surveys and that the background and analysis could be shared with Members at their request.

The Head of Planning and Service Strategy, Children and Adults Services, Peter Appleton explained that the County Durham Partnership had identified mental health as a cross-cutting issue and had noted that there were many contribution factors. It was added that it was important to “do things” and accordingly, the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) were reviewing actions plans and looking at how to help people who are often difficult to engage with.

The Head of Planning and Service Strategy stressed that it was important to continue to work hard to break down the stigma associated with mental health problems and to encourage people to come forward and seek help. Chief Inspector C McGillivray, Durham Constabulary noted that there were instances where it was difficult to be able to separate out single issues, in some cases there were issues of alcohol abuse in addition to mental health issues.

The Public Health Portfolio Lead explained that the Public Mental Health Strategy Group had around 50 members and was a cross-organisational resource, developing the Action Plan and other Strategies including a Dementia Strategy, with a separate Action Plan, and Children and Young People Plan regarding mindfulness in schools. The Chairman noted that there had been a step-change in the tackling of bullying in schools, and that those issues were also picked up via Safeguarding. The Head of Planning and Service Strategy added that details were emerging and actions were taking place accordingly, citing the example of a recent presentation by young people on transgender issues to the Children and Families Partnership, which included representatives of Head Teachers and leaders in children and family services. Members noted the details were emerging, however, noting that if Members were to make decisions regarding prioritisation of resources in the future those details would need to be known.

### Suicide Audit and Suicide Prevention in County Durham

The Public Health Portfolio Lead explained that there had been changes to the landscape in this regard following the Health and Social Care Act 2012, with CCGs and Public Health now being within the County Council. It was added that the commissioning of primary and secondary care mental health services was the responsibility of the CCGs, including: services for individuals with suicide ideation; the treatment of self-harm; suicide prevention - crisis centre; and the deep dive audits into individual cases. Councillors noted that the DCC role, via Public Health, related to protecting and promoting the public's health, especially around primary prevention.

The Committee were made aware of the current position, using data pooled over a 3 year period, noting a higher rate than the England average, with more male suicides than female. It was added that there was an increase nationally and that data tended to have a lag of around 9 months and therefore a system was in place to provide a real time picture of suicide trends with the North Durham CCG being the lead CCG with responsibility for managing the system.

The Chairman thanked the Public Health Portfolio Lead and asked Members for their questions as regards the Suicide Audit and Suicide Prevention in County Durham.

Councillors asked questions as regards: the level of resources committed to Public Health services as set out within the report and whether these budgets were ring-fenced; how the strategy would be judged as being successful; and identifying peaks and trends and understanding the issues behind such trends.

The Public Health Portfolio Lead noted that there was a mix of services and providers, adding that there was a performance framework set out within the strategy and there were measures of "emotional wellbeing" within the Household Survey. Members were informed that there was specific evaluations look at pre and post intervention data. It was explained that there was a need to ensure that any information brought forward, for example as a case study, was such that the individuals concerned could not be identified.

## **Resolved:**

- (i) To note the current and projected mental health needs within County Durham.
- (ii) To note that the County Durham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy specifies a strategic action to develop and implement a multi-agency Public Health Strategy, including Suicide Prevention, for County Durham.
- (iii) To note that the Public Mental Health Strategy will form a key strand on the Mental Health Framework for the County.
- (iv) To note that the Public Mental Health Strategy has been developed by a multi-agency group that involved stakeholders, service users and carers.
- (v) To endorse the County Durham Public Mental Health Strategy.
- (vi) To note that there is a detailed action plan in development, with timescales and named leads to ensure implementation of this strategy.
- (vii) To note the current position on suicides within County Durham.
- (viii) To note that the responsibility for audit and management of the alert system is now held by the Clinical Commissioning Group, supported by the North of England Commissioning Support Service.
- (ix) To note that suicide community prevention is commissioned by the Local Authority in line with national guidance and is informed by local suicide information.
- (x) To note that as a result of the new health and wellbeing structures, the accountability of suicide prevention and suicide response will be reported to the Mental Health Partnership Board.

## **8 Safe Durham Partnership Plan 2014-17**

The Chairman introduced the Community Safety Manager, Children and Adults Services, Caroline Duckworth who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Safe Durham Partnership (SDP) Plan 2014-17.

The Community Safety Manager reminded Members that her colleague, Community Safety Coordinator, Graham McArdle had spoken to Members last year to give an update and now there was an opportunity for the Committee to provide feedback upon the objectives. It was noted there had been comments as regards alcohol misuse, drug dealing and hate crime as being areas Members felt were priorities. Councillors were informed that feedback on the delivery and monitoring of objectives would be through Safe Durham Partnership Board's thematic groups, and that the SDP had not changed the high level strategic objectives, those being aligned to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). It was noted that some of the outcomes had been amended slightly, and they were as set out in the report. Members noted that the draft SDP Plan would be considered by the SDP Board in March, with the draft to then be brought back to the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April prior to being formally agreed by the SDP Board and County Council corporate governance structures.

The Chairman thanked the Community Safety Manager and asked Members for their questions.

Mr T Thompson noted the term "inter-generational offending", replacing previous phraseology of "reducing first time entrants to the youth justice system" and wondered whether the latter was now not a priority.

The Community Safety Manager noted that the figure relating to reducing first time entrants to the youth justice system was still monitored, however there was a move to align with the “think family” approach, the Strategic Manager County Durham Youth Offending Service, Gill Eshelby being a key partner in the Think Family Group.

The Chairman queried how the objectives and priorities were themselves prioritised, within the context of funding reductions and reduced resources, and noted that it would be useful for the Committee to have details of the context attached to each of the objectives in order to understand and comment on where resources should be allocated to deliver those considered as priorities.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the content of the report be noted.
- (ii) That a draft version of the Safe Durham Partnership Plan be brought back to the Committee for comment in April 2014.

## **9 Hate Crime Action Plan - Update**

The Chairman asked the Community Safety Manager to speak to Members in relation to the Hate Crime Action Plan.

The Community Safety Manager reminded Members that in 2011, the Vulnerability Delivery Group had commissioned a hate crime problem profile which went on to inform the development of a SDP Hate Crime Action Plan for County Durham. It was added that actions focused on prevention, provision and protection and that in 2012, the newly appointed Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Ron Hogg identified tackling hate crime as a priority. Members learned that the PCC convened a Hate Crime Seminar in April 2013 covering County Durham and Darlington with the aim of bringing together a range of work and following the seminar a Joint County Durham and Darlington Hate Crime Action Group was established. It was added that the PCC was taking lead for Hate Crime, merging action plans and resources and for new action plans to be developed and coordinated through the PCC’s Office. The Community Safety Manager explained that work on the SDP Hate Crime actions had continued throughout 2011, 2012 and 2013 with the majority of the actions being completed. It was added that those outstanding and ongoing actions were incorporated into the work streams of the County Durham and Darlington Hate Crime Action Group. Members noted that the PCC’s new Hate Crime Action Plan was in development and covered the work streams such as: accuracy of police recording for hate incidents; satisfaction survey; networks “safe places”; support services network; communication strategy; community strategy; community education – increased awareness hate incidents; and community hands project (volunteer support for hate crime victims).

The Community Safety Manager explained that the Chairman of the County Durham and Darlington Hate Crime Action Group was a Co-opted Member of the Committee, Chief Superintendent Graham Hall, Durham Constabulary and that the project manager for the Hate Crime Action Plan work streams was Chief Inspector C McGillivray, Durham Constabulary.

Chief Inspector C McGillivray updated Members further noting: key blockages in the accuracy of police recording for hate incidents had been identified, now with 96-98% accuracy; 90-100% satisfaction with how incidents are dealt with, with a survey to be conducted in April 2014; the commitment by the PCC and Chief Constable in respect of tackling hate crime; inclusion of 10 groups within County Durham and Darlington, including the 5 national protected groups; ongoing work regarding safe places; work to have links to all agencies online, paralleling those for Domestic Violence; the "Helping Hands" project of voluntary advocates; and the next Hate Crime Conference, to be held 3 June 2014.

The Chairman thanked the Community Safety Manager and Chief Inspector C McGillivray and asked Members for their questions.

Members asked questions relating to: intelligence gathered from communities and third party reporting; whether "True Vision" reporting only referred to disability issues; the lack of use of the Disability Hate Crime Reporting Pack; the numbers of incidents across the County; and how incidents were identified as being a hate crime.

Chief Inspector C McGillivray explained that members of the network were equipped in respect of third part reporting and that there was a move away from only disability reporting, rather to include the 10 groups as previously stated. It was explained that in relation to the lack of use of the Disability Hate Crime Reporting Pack, in the past there was a lack of promotion to get messages across and a communication work stream had been established and noted that the usual geographical approach was perhaps not suitable as those groups are not geographically based. Chief Inspector C McGillivray noted that figures were available, however from national evidence it is thought that around 80% of incidents were not reported. The Chairman noted that figures were appended to the Safe Durham Partnership report at the end of the agenda, with a figure of 222 quoted for the 2012/13 period and 144 for the period April to September 2013.

Chief Inspector C McGillivray noted that the criteria for recording an incident as a hate crime was national and was on the basis of any perception of hate or prejudice, albeit a higher level of evidence would be required at any Court stage, as enshrined in law.

Mr AJ Cooke asked the Committee to note that he was Chairman of the Teesdale Travellers Forum and that they had seen good results in working practises in relation to raising awareness and the reporting of hate crime.

**Resolved:**

That the progress of the original Safe Durham Partnership Hate Crime Action Plan be noted.

**10 Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan 2012-15**

The Chairman introduced the Safer and Stronger Strategic Programme Manager, Children and Adults Services, Jeanette Stephenson who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan 2012-15.

The Safer and Stronger Strategic Programme Manager explained that the Strategy was developed via a multi-agency approach by the Domestic Abuse Forum Executive Group (DAFEG), a thematic group that is governed by the SDP Board.

It was added that this was the fourth iteration of a Domestic Abuse Strategy at a countywide level, building upon the ongoing work of partners in the voluntary and statutory sectors.

It was noted that the Strategy was to provide a framework to ensure active contribution in relation to services to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse within County Durham and to support those within our communities that were affected. Members learned that national framework has three guiding principles: prevention; protection; and provision and that there were several objectives that sat under these priority areas. The Committee learned that key objectives were also set out in the report and marketing campaigns included “Does this sound familiar?” aimed at women aged over 40, highlighting the repeat nature of incidents and how they can escalate and “Love is Many Things”, a new campaign focussing on domestic abuse in LGBT relationships. It was noted that the performance of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) were being reviewed, with Durham Constabulary taking forward the development of third party reporting in County Durham, with links to MARAC. The Safer and Stronger Strategic Programme Manager concluded by noting that there had been an allocation of £30,000 to the Remain Safe Service to provide target hardening for victims of domestic abuse and that a number of Domestic Homicide Reviews had been undertaken, with DAFEG leading on implementing actions to develop service delivery across agencies in line with lessons learned from Domestic Homicide Reviews.

The Chairman thanked the Safer and Stronger Strategic Programme Manager asked Members for their questions.

The Committee raised issues in relation to: pursuing perpetrators to court; recent fund raising activities in relation to a refuge at Bishop Auckland; and target hardening.

The Safer and Stronger Strategic Programme Manager noted that there were various types of target hardening, such as locks and chains to protect properties and that the pursuit of perpetrators was for the criminal justice system, the Strategy being about the provision of support and services for victims of domestic abuse.

**Resolved:**

That the progress in relation to the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2012-15 be noted.

## **11 Overview and Scrutiny Review - Neighbourhood Wardens**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer noted that the draft report relating to the Review of Neighbourhood Wardens was circulated to the relevant Management Teams and the report, incorporating feedback from those Management Teams, would be brought back to the Committee prior to being forwarded to Cabinet for their consideration in due course.

**Resolved:**

That the Committee receive an updated draft report at the next meeting.



## **12 Police and Crime Panel**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to the update report as contained within the agenda pack and the Chairman asked if there were any questions. There were no questions raised.

### **Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

## **13 Safe Durham Partnership Update**

The Chairman asked the Head of Planning and Service Strategy to highlight the key points as set out in the Safe Durham Partnership Update report.

The Head of Planning and Service Strategy noted that the corporate basket of performance indicators was appended to the report and that the Joint Anti-Social Behaviour and Mental Health Protocol was an important development. It was added that there had been a 25% reduction in the Government grant relating to PCC budgets for community safety projects and therefore there had been a need for PCCs, and CCGs too, to think creatively in order to maintain the programme of activities.

Members were reminded of Transforming Rehabilitation, reforms to the Probation Service and the work ongoing in this regard, and noted the pace of activities. It was explained that the SDP Board identified the transition to new arrangements as being important, with a Task and Finish Group being set up by the SDP Board accordingly. The Head of Planning and Service Strategy concluded by noting the new model being developed as regards multi-agency interventions, with partners to be consulted to make sure all are aware of the new processes and responsibilities.

The Chairman noted that in previous multi-agency approaches, such as LMAPs, due to the confidential nature of some issues local Councillors were excluded from the process and hoped that within new processes there would be an opportunity for Elected Members to contribute. The Safer and Stronger Strategic Programme Manager noted that there would be a case management approach and, if appropriate, Councillors may be part of the team involved.

### **Resolved:**

- (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That consultation on the new process and responsibilities of Multi-Agency Problem Solving Groups be presented at a future meeting of the Committee.