

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 2, County Hall, Durham** on **Friday 19 June 2015** at **9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor D Boyes (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors J Armstrong, J Charlton, S Forster, J Gray, C Hampson, M Hodgson, G Holland, H Liddle, J Maitland, N Martin, J Measor, T Nearney, K Shaw, P Stradling, F Tinsley, J Turnbull and C Wilson

Co-opted Members:

Mr A J Cooke

Co-opted Employees/Officers:

S Errington and Chief Inspector C McGillivray

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Cordon, S Iveson, Mr J Welch and Chief Superintendent G Hall.

The Chairman noted that this was the first meeting since changes in membership of the Committee, and offered his thanks to those Members that had left the Committee and welcomed the new Members to the Committee.

The Chairman also noted that changes to the Portfolio Holders meant that Councillor J Allen was the new Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities, with Councillor A Bonner as the appropriate Cabinet Support Member.

The Chairman noted the thanks of the Committee to Councillors L Hovvells and A Laing as the previous Portfolio Holder for Safer and Healthier Communities and Cabinet Support Member respectively, and for all their support and attendance at Committee during their tenure.

2 Substitute Members

No notification of Substitute Members had been received.

3 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held 23 March 2015 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Assistant Chief Executive's, Jonathan Slee noted with reference to Item 6 of the Minutes, Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, that a further report would come back to Committee in due course and that the Deputy Chief Constable, Durham Constabulary, M Banks was retiring. The Committee noted their appreciation for the work of the Deputy Chief Constable over the years and the Chairman asked that the Committee's best wishes for an enjoyable retirement be passed on to the Deputy Chief Constable.

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 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). The articles included: Government plans for a blanket ban for so-called "legal highs", with associated jail terms of 7 years, which had gained cross-party support and had been in all party manifestos leading up to the recent General Election; Durham Constabulary carrying out a number of roadside test for drug driving; and illegal tobacco being seized through the work of Durham Constabulary and the Council's Consumer Protection Team, with over 20,000 cigarettes seized.

Resolved:

That the presentation be noted.

7 County Durham Youth Offending Service - Youth Justice Plan 2014/16 - Progress Update 2014/15

The Chairman introduced the Strategic Manager, County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS), Children and Adults Services, Gill Eshelby who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Youth Justice Plan 2014/16, specifically a progress update for 2014/15 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS explained that since 2007/08 there had been an 82.9% reduction in the number of first time entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system, from 1129 young people aged 10-17 in 2007/08 to 193 in 2014/15.

The Committee noted that the offending summary for the period 2010/11 to 2014/15 showed a 46.8% decrease in all offences and a 51.5% reduction in the number of young people offending over that time. There had been a 54.5% reduction in custodial sentences and a 65.9% reduction in the number of remand bed nights over the same period. The cost of remand bed nights is now the responsibility of the Local Authority. Members were informed that there was a Youth Justice Board (YJB) Remand Grant of £43,000; a Reducing Remand Bed Nights strategy in place; and also arrangements for CDYOS officers to attend Court on Bank Holidays and weekends, as required.

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS noted that the reducing re-offending rate (Ministry of Justice (MoJ) data) over the period 2007/08 – 2012/13 had shown a slight percentage increase in binary rate in the final year, though this was in line with other YOS in the country. The Strategic Manager stated that over that period, the cohort in County Durham had reduced from 2,145 to 489 young people (77.2% reduction); the number of young people re-offending had reduced from 728 to 189 (74% reduction); and the number of re-offences committed had reduced from 1,950 to 612 (68.6% reduction). Councillors were informed that the Pre Reprimand Disposal (PRD) now Pre Caution Disposal has had a significant impact on reducing re-offending and the number of young people in the cohort. Members were also informed of key achievements in relation to the Service Improvement Plan 2014/15.

Members learned that research by the Office of the Children's Commissioner indicated that 60-90% of young people in the youth justice system had speech, language or communication needs. CDYOS had implemented its Speech, Language and Communication Need Strategy which included training for staff to support screening and pathways for young people who offend. It was noted that work was in partnership with North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust (NTHFT), with a Speech and Language Therapist seconded to CDYOS. CDYOS had developed a range of communication friendly resources (including some for restorative justice) under the "ClearCut Communication" brand, with a lot of national interest in the work. It was added that money had been raised for the Royal British Legion in respect of "bling poppies", produced as part of young people's court ordered reparation.

The Committee noted that CDYOS operated on Saturdays to be able to offer wrap around services to reduce re-offending. The Strategic Manager, CDYOS explained that young people's feedback on the service via an electronic survey from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) had been very positive. The service had also established a young people's group (all members have been victims of crime). The group was working with CDYOS on a range of issues to ensure the voice of young victims informs service delivery, and members were offering support to other young victims of youth crime.

Members noted the County Durham Young Carers Charter; development of ClearCut Communication; and Team Manager reviews of all cases to ensure young people's feedback informs service delivery. Members noted that the role of CDYOS volunteers had been expanded, including support for Stronger Families, with examples given of how young people were helped.

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS noted several positive quotes from the Youth Justice Board, March 2015, as set out within the presentation.

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS concluded by noting the achievements were a reflection of excellent partnership work, with all CDYOS staff and partners being willing to adapt and change, working hard together to provide a quality service.

The Chairman thanked the Strategic Manager, CDYOS, noted the positive work of the service and partners, and asked Members for their questions.

Members asked if there were any challenges on the horizon for the service. The Strategic Manager, CDYOS noted that there was a rapidly changing partnership environment, though the Transforming Rehabilitation changes had been well managed, and her experience as a Youth Justice Peer Reviewer had shown the partnership arrangements in Durham were good and effective.

Councillor N Martin congratulated the Officer regarding the impressive work of the service and noted that while the number of those re-offending was going down, the number of offences was increasing. Councillor N Martin asked whether there was a point at which further improvement would not be possible and a “minimum rate” of re-offending would be reached. Councillor N Martin also asked whether this point had been reached now and whether the “law of diminishing returns” now applied.

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS noted that the service worked hard to reduce re-offending and the number of re-offences was decreasing. She stated that although the frequency rate had increased (1.25), the actual number of re-offences had gone down (612). She stated that the MoJ data did not give the full picture; it did not reflect the significant reduction in cohort size due to the successful impact of early intervention and diversion, nor did it reflect the detailed local analysis in County Durham. It was added that the number of those re-offending was more useful an indicator than the percentage. She also noted key issues such as the majority of the cohort now falling within the 16 to 18 age range and not the 10 to 13 age range. It was added that work would continue with the aim to improve, looking to target resources according to need; however, there were challenges in respect of those young people with more than six offences each.

Mr AJ Cooke asked whether there was any defined difference between rural and urban areas. The Strategic Manager, CDYOS stated there was not; CDYOS covered all of County Durham, though it was noted that the number of offences was very low in the Teesdale area. Members were informed that staff were able to work remotely, having the requisite encrypted IT equipment, and therefore were able to reach out into rural areas.

Councillor G Holland noted that communication skills were very important in being able to give confidence and self-belief to young people and asked what CDYOS did to support this. The Strategic Manager, CDYOS noted that all young people supervised by CDYOS are screened for speech, language and communication needs and anyone requiring and consenting to a specialist Speech and Language Therapy assessment (and intervention if necessary) will receive that from the seconded Speech and Language Therapist. Young people are also given practical strategies to help them. It was noted that the new national assessment tool (AssetPlus) incorporates a SLCN screen and CDYOS had developed an innovative version to obtain the young person’s view of his/her needs.

Councillor S Forster asked whether the issues of identifying speech and language needs had been communicated with those in the wider Authority and with partner organisations. The Strategic Manager, CDYOS noted that: all staff within CDYOS had received extensive training; there had been briefings for Magistrates and Police; and there was work with appropriate staff within Children and Adults Services in specific cases, such as looked after children. Members noted that CDYOS also worked with families, under the “think family” approach.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That an update is provided to the Committee in 12 months.
- (iii) That the Committee received the Youth Justice Plan 2015/17 in due course.

8 Novel Psychoactive Substances

The Chairman introduced the Consultant in Public Health, Children and Adults Services, Lynn Wilson who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS), or “legal highs” (for copy see file of minutes).

The Consultant in Public Health, noted that the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) defined NPS as “psychoactive drugs which are not prohibited by the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs or by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and which people in the UK are seeking for intoxicant use”. It was noted the “legal highs” were not new as such and that one of the issues had been the identification of a substance, with a slight change to the structure of the chemical meaning that technically it was a difference substance. Members were reminded of the rise of mephedrone, which was often sold as bath salts or plant food which was marked “not fit for human consumption”, however there was a degree of collusion between buyer and seller as regards the ultimate use of the substance.

It was noted that the Government put forward the Psychoactive Substances Bill which proposed a blanket ban on the sale of psychoactive drugs by making it an offence to produce, supply, offer, possess with intent, import or export psychoactive substances. The Consultant in Public Health explained that NPS could be sub-divided roughly into four categories: synthetic cannabinoid receptor agonists (SCRAs); stimulant-type drugs; hallucinogenic; and opiates.

Members noted that the label “legal highs” had given an impression that they were a “safe” option and studies, albeit through self-reporting, had shown that the prevalence of use ranged between 0% and 9% across several European countries. It was added that presentations of the users of NPS had shown notable differences in comparison to drug/alcohol users, with key harms being severe, including violence, aggression and self-harm. Members were informed of the data for the Durham Force area over the period January 2014 to January 2015, noting the highest number of cases in the Crook area and the most common substance was synthetic cannabis. It was noted that within the POPPIE reporting system for drug and alcohol there was no separate field to capture data as regards NPS, however, data that was available for the period June 2013 to May 2015 showed 36 clients where NPS was reported to have been used. It was added that in 16 of the cases NPS was reported as the main drug of choice, with stimulant-type NPS being the most commonly used.

The Consultant in Public Health noted that while there had been no reported deaths in 2014/15 caused by NPS in County Durham, one reported adult suicide had noted use of NPS as being related, though not as a the cause of death. Members were made aware that intelligence from the LGBT community had reported “a noticeable percentage” of young people taking legal highs, especially methadone or “bubble”. Councillors learned that the Durham Drug Strategy Action Plan aimed to work with partners to enhance the knowledge and evidence gathering relating to NPS, though once the Bill was enacted then information gathering would be “routine” data collecting.

Members were asked to note the challenges in respect of NPS included: the growth of internet sales of NPS; sales of NPS via “head shops”, none known in County Durham at this time, though suspected sales via markets in Newcastle, Sunderland and Darlington; and the collecting of data on the use of NPS.

The Chairman thanked the Consultant in Public Health and noted that when he attended a conference last year the increasing use of the NPS within prisons had been mentioned. The Consultant in Public Health noted an example where prisoners would club together to secure a NPS and then one prisoner would be chosen to take the substance, with the others watching the effects as a form of entertainment. The Chairman asked the Committee if they had any further questions for the Officer.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer, S Errington asked whether there were any links to Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) in respect of the opportunity to sell NPS. The Consultant in Public Health noted that once the Act came into effect then there was potential, though it was noted that there was ongoing work in this respect.

Councillor F Tinsley noted that the Republic of Ireland had a similar blanket ban in place for several years and the impact had been for people to source NPS from Northern Ireland and the Great Britain. Councillor F Tinsley added that pushing the problem underground may cause more problems and asked whether there the ban would encompass Scotland in addition, or whether they were pursuing a different approach.

The Consultant in Public Health noted she would check as regards whether the Act would cover Scotland and added that while there was always the worry that any drug use could be “pushed underground”, existing legislation was not able to keep up with the number of NPS that were being produced and that it was important to change young people’s perception of “legal highs” and the implication that NPS were “safe”.

Councillor T Nearney noted the severe level of physical and mental impact NPS could have on an individual and asked what work was being undertaken via the education system to inform young people of the dangers. The Consultant in Public Health noted that NPS were often highly addictive and that Durham Police and the new drug and alcohol service provider, Lifeline, would work to go into schools and provide information. Members noted the comments of work experience pupils present at the meeting, chiefly that there was a general knowledge of NPS, however, not a specific knowledge of the dangers associated with their use. The Consultant in Public Health added that it would be important to be able to have a reliable evidence base to give an accurate picture of the use of NPS, noting currently that information was not recorded by GPs and that the Police had limited information. It was added that once enshrined in law, then data would be collected as an “illegal substance”.

Councillor G Holland asked if there were any known traits or patterns as regards the users of NPS. The Consultant in Public Health explained that there was no one type of user, though it was noted that young people in general were more likely to take risks and therefore it was important to give young people the information as regards the harm of NPS use.

Chief Inspector C McGillivray noted he was tasked with the Education Portfolio in terms of Durham Constabulary and noted that it was a specialist area, and it was vital those involved had the requisite knowledge. Members were informed that the Bill set out issues of enforcement and while this was a necessary part of the approach to tackle NPS, this would lead to the requirement for evidence to be collected. It was added that therefore the strategy should be that of changing the attitudes of young people, for example through the “safe choices” programme. Chief Inspector C McGillivray noted that it was important to give young people the tools in order for them to be able to make good choices and that it was often difficult to fit such activities into an already busy school curriculum. It was added that the Police would need to work with partners from Health and also the Police have been invited into companies to speak to employees regards issues of substance misuse, where employees have been dismissed for substance misuse.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the Drug Strategy Partnership (multiagency) is collating information on Novel Psychoactive Substances and that this will be included in the Action Plan be noted.

9 Safe Durham Partnership - Draft Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy

The Chairman introduced the Alcohol Harm Reduction Coordinator, Children and Adults Services, Kirsty Wilkinson who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Safe Durham Partnership - Draft Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy (for copy see file of minutes).

The Alcohol Harm Reduction Coordinator asked Members to recall the Committee was consulted at its meeting in February as regards the draft Strategy and now Members were being given a further opportunity to feed into the process, noting that there had been a number of consultation activities that had taken place. Members noted that the draft vision of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy remained unchanged, being:

“To change the drinking culture in County Durham to reduce the harm caused by alcohol to individuals, families and communities while ensuring that adults who choose to drink alcohol are able to enjoy it responsibly.”

Members noted the associated objectives that related to the five “Altogether” themes:

Altogether Safer

Objective 1: To reduce the harm caused to communities by tackling alcohol related crime and disorder and vulnerability.

Altogether Healthier

Objective 2: To improve health inequalities and reduce early deaths in County Durham by reducing alcohol consumption across the population

Altogether Better for Children and Young People

Objective 3: To build resilience and develop a culture where children and young people choose not to drink alcohol; and to reduce the negative impact alcohol has on the lives of children, young people and their families through parental alcohol use.

Altogether Wealthier

Objective 4: To increase the number of competitive and successful people in the County Durham workforce by reducing the negative impact that alcohol has on work attendance and productivity, and,

Objective 5: To expand the night time economy offer through the promotion of responsible drinking practices and through the development and promotion of alcohol free alternatives.

Altogether Greener

Objective 6: To reduce the negative impact that alcohol has on the physical environment in County Durham.

The Alcohol Harm Reduction Coordinator noted that Scotland had reduced the blood alcohol level in respect of drink driving offence and therefore the impact this may have on drink driving levels would need to be monitored. Members noted that alcohol harm also included drunkenness as factor in respect of anti-social behaviour and violence, and also in issues of vulnerability in terms of the capacity to consent to sex.

The Chairman thanked the Alcohol Harm Reduction Coordinator and asked Members for their comments and questions on the draft Strategy.

Councillor N Martin noted that the draft Strategy was very good and commented that given recent issues in the city and cases considered by the Licensing Committee, could there be a line to reflect a position of a “robust” approach to licensing enforcement, adding that he felt no sympathy if the licensing route was used to close “rogue operators”. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer noted that in many cases a lot of agencies are involved and that rather than agencies being a “soft-touch”, the most appropriate legislation or enforcement route was used to tackle any issues.

Councillor T Nearney noted he felt that there needed to be a reference to the sharing of best practice, for example the on-street breathalysing that had been taking place to highlight the danger of “pre-loading” with alcohol. Councillor J Armstrong added that such activities could also be in partnership with retailers, to show how they are involved and acting responsibly. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Coordinator noted that there were positive approaches by both the on-licence and off-licence trade, with examples being the “Best Bar None” scheme and the work of “mystery shoppers”. It was added that the issue of pre-loading was a challenge and it would be interesting to see what actions the trade would take in terms of helping to tackle the issue.

Councillor F Tinsley noted the issue of parents buying their underage children alcohol and noted there needed to be a push in educating parents better as regards this practice. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Coordinator agreed and while some parents felt that this approach was protecting their children, this was not actually the case. It was explained that there was work ongoing with parents in this regard, and evidence to date suggested that the best approach was for parents to say no and delay the age at which young people are exposed to alcohol.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Draft Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy be noted.
- (ii) That any comments, amendments or identified omissions in relation to the draft document be provided to the Alcohol Harm Reduction Coordinator prior to 12 July 2015.

10 Quarter 4 2014/15 Performance Management Report

The Chairman introduced the Strategic Manager, Performance and Information Management, Children and Adults Services, Keith Forster who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Quarter 4 2014/15 Performance Management Report for the Altogether Safer priority theme (for copy see file of minutes).

The Strategic Manager, Performance and Information Management, referred Members to the report and noted key performance achievements, including: 94% of respondents to a survey of adult social care users felt the care and support they received helped them to feel safe and secure; the total number of offences committed by the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) cohort had reduced, with a projected 45.1% reduction for the full year; the improved position in respect of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System, noting the report earlier in the agenda; and drug treatment completions of 40.8%, above the target of 40.4% and the national figure of 39%.

Members noted tracker indicators that showed: a decrease in theft offences; a decrease in anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents reported to the Police; an increase in the reporting of hate crime, noting a Safe Durham Partnership Hate Crime Action Plan key objective was to have increased reporting of hate crimes; a decrease in the number of alcohol related ASB; an increase in the number of interventions through the Stronger Families Programme; and an increase in referral rates to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), albeit still lower than the national average.

It was noted that the key performance issues included a slight underperformance in respect of the number of people completing alcohol and drug treatment, though it was noted the new provider recently took over the service in April 2015 and that new targets had been set. Councillors noted that there was a data lag of between 6-9 months for information relating to completions and therefore early data would be available by the middle of summer 2015, with further details coming through by 2016.

Members learned that, in respect of tracker indicators that showed performance issues, the overall crime rate had increased slightly, however, Members were reminded that improved recording could be a reason for some increase, and ongoing cases regarding Medomsley having also an effect on the figures. Councillors noted that there was an increase in victim based crime, however, Durham has the lowest rate of victim based crimes per 1,000 population for the period April 2014 to February 2015 in comparison to its statistical neighbours.

The Chairman thanked the Strategic Manager, Performance and Information Management and asked Members for their comments and questions.

Chief Inspector C McGillivray informed Members that the new Deputy Chief Constable had noted Durham Constabulary's the high level of performance upon taking up his post. Chief Inspector C McGillivray noted the increase in hate crime and added that Durham had a detection rate of 48%, much higher than anywhere else in the country.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer asked as regards REDPI144 as set out on p82 of the agenda pack, relating to the number of people killed or injured in road traffic accidents, figure for the period 12 months earlier did not appear to add up, 17 and 123 not adding up to 201 as listed. The Strategic Manager, Performance and Information Management noted the 201 figure was correct and therefore one or both of the other two figures were incorrect.

The Chairman noted that there was an opportunity to visit the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centre at Peterlee to speak to new provider, Lifeline, and asked for any Members interested in attending to speak to the Overview and Scrutiny Officer.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

11 Review of the Committee's Work Programme 2015-16

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to a report in respect of a Review of the Committee's Work Programme, noting the Committee had received a report at its March meeting detailing the actions identified within the Council Plan 2015-2018 for the Altogether Safer priority theme and agreed to refresh the Committee's Work Programme accordingly. The Committee noted that a draft Work Programme was attached at Appendix 2 to the report for Members' consideration and that the topic of Novel Psychoactive Substances had been put forward as a potential area for a review, with Councillors also having the opportunity to identify any alternative topic areas. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer added that dates of future Wise Drive and Safety Carousel events would be communicated to Members of the Committee once identified. The Vice-Chairman, Councillor T Nearney noted he had suggested the topic of Novel Psychoactive Substances, or "legal highs", prior to the presentation received by the Committee today and there was a need for data to build a picture of the issue and any Working Group would need to look at what outcomes and impact could be achieved. The Chairman noted his suggestion was to look at the "stronger" aspect of "Safer and Stronger Communities", namely on the role and impact volunteering work though added that there were other issues Members may wish to consider, such as fly-tipping and community safety. Councillor J Armstrong noted the deployment of covert surveillance in respect of fly-tipping and highlighted that there would need to be a period of time to be able to evaluate the impact of such activities. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer noted Members may also wish to consider any further activity based upon the report received in respect of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy. Councillor J Armstrong suggested activity linked to alcohol and sexual exploitation.

The Chairman asked Members to decide upon a review topic and the Committee noted their preference was to look at further issues from the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy, with the Overview and Scrutiny Officer to liaise with the Alcohol Harm Reduction Coordinator and scope the review accordingly.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Committee agree the Work Programme as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.
- (ii) That the Committee look at further issues leading from the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy as a review topic.
- (iii) That the Committee note future Wise Drive and Safety Carousel sessions with dates, once identified, to be communicated to Members.

12 Overview and Scrutiny Review Report - Organised Crime

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to a draft report Working Group looking at the topic of Organised Crime and noted main points raised within the report included: excellent and proactive partnership working with the Safer Durham Partnership (SDP); the strong position of Durham in terms of developing "Local Profiles", with updates to be provided to the Committee; positive case-studies in the tackling of illegal waste; the effective work of the Disruption and Intervention Panel; and the potential financial risk to the Authority from Organised Crime Groups (OCGs), with Durham being in a strong position following a Home Office pilot scheme.

It was noted that the topic had raised awareness with the Members of the Working Group and that there would be Members' Seminars on the issues in due course.

Councillor J Armstrong noted the report was excellent and highlighted the effectiveness of the partnership arrangements within the County. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer noted that if the Committee agreed the draft report, it would then be submitted to Cabinet for consideration at its July meeting. Members also noted the report would be tabled for the September meeting of the Safe Durham Partnership.

Councillors noted that there would be updates reports in terms of the review and also on the establishing of Local Profiles in due course.

Resolved:

That the report be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

13 Overview and Scrutiny Reviews Update

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer updated Members as regards the 20mph Working Group and the Drug Treatment Centres Working Group.

It was noted that the 20mph Working Group had met on 3 occasions looking at: an overview of the project; the 33 schemes as agreed by Cabinet, in particular "Phase 1" schemes; and engaging with the relevant Local Members as regards Phase 1 areas. Members learned that the Working Group had noted the positive feedback from Local Members and noted the possibility to expand the number of schemes in the future. It was added that future meetings would look at the implementation of the initial 33 schemes and give contributions to future policy.

Members noted the Drug Treatment Centres Working Group had paused during the procurement process for a new service provider however, as previously mentioned, Members would now have the opportunity to attend a Centre to see first-hand the new service provision.

Resolved:

That the verbal update be noted.

14 Police and Crime Panel

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer noted that the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel had not yet taken place and that issues to be discussed would include: the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) report; an interactive report on Anti-Social Behaviour, a link to which could be provided to Members of the Committee; and the outcome of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) inspections. The Chairman noted a recent Local Government Association publication that highlighted the approach taken in Durham to communicate information between the Panel and Overview and Scrutiny as best practice.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions. There were no questions raised.

Resolved:

That the verbal update be noted.

15 Safe Durham Partnership Update

The Chairman asked the Community Safety Manager, Caroline Duckworth to speak to Members as regards an update from the Safer Durham Partnership (SDP).

Members noted the information as regards the Contest Silver Group, in particular the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, noting the general duty for "Specified Authorities" in respect of acting to prevent violent extremism. Councillors learned that those Specified Authorities would need to identify specific expectations, and responses to those expectations, and the SDP meeting in September would receive information on this from those Specified Authorities. It was added that the "Prevent Self-Assessment", usually in March each year, was delayed until after the SDP had received the information back from Specified Authorities and that work was ongoing in respect of helping to prepare schools for their responsibilities under the Prevent duty. Councillors noted the Corporate Director and Head of Education had held briefings with Head Teachers and other activities were ongoing including the development of an e-learning product to be made available for use by all schools. Members learned of "Channel" arrangements, a multi-agency panel for referral and support, and noted that the Strategic Manager, Youth Offending Service would chair the group when required.

The Community Safety Manager explained as regards an update received at the SDP on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, noting that a new thematic group had been established to manage and coordinate both issues, with the group being co-chaired by the Head of Children's Services and the Portfolio Holder for Children's and Young People Services. Members learned of the Offender Checkpoint project: with support from the PCC; "Navigators", staff provided from different sources through funding or help in kind; and built in evaluation of the project, provided by Cambridge University.

Councillors noted the SDP Board Development Day, to be held 30 June 2015 focussing on: the effect of the new Conservative Government on strategic priorities moving forward; cybercrime; and issues in respect of tackling Child Sexual Exploitation, and the implications for the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and SDP. It was explained that the SDP had received an update in respect of the Domestic Abuse Referral Pathways, noting the details being available via www.sorryisnotenough.co.uk.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.