

## **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 **Monday 19 December 2016 at 9.30 am**

#### **Present:**

**Councillor J Armstrong (Chairman)**

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

Councillors E Adam, R Bell, J Blakey, K Corrigan, R Crute, B Graham, P Lawton, J Lethbridge, T Nearney, M Nicholls, C Potts, L Pounder and J Turnbull

#### **Faith Community Representative:**

Mrs M Elliott

#### **Also Present:**

N Foster

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Batey, H Bennett, K Henig, A Hopgood and Paul Stradling.

### **2 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute members.

### **3 Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held on the 16 September 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Referring to points raised from the minutes of the meeting held on the 16 September 2016, the Head of Planning and Performance provided the following updates:-

- Item 7 paragraph 6 regarding the Kynren Programme and the effect the programme had on the local economy. It was reported that the Authority would produce an economy impact assessment of the wider visitor economy next year, in addition to Eleven Arches doing their own assessment of expected impact.
- Item 8 paragraph 2 - The Police and Crime Commissioner's press release on changes in recording crime had been circulated to Board members on 16 September 2016.
- Item 8 paragraph 7 - data on levels of drug treatments would be forwarded to Councillor S Wilson.

#### **4      Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **5      Update on the Delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan 6**

The Board considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships that provided an update on the progress made at the end of September 2016 on the delivery of the 2016/17 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP6) (for copy see file of minutes).

The Head of Planning and Performance reported that the MTFP6 was agreed by Council in February 2016 and for 2016/17 the savings target was just over £28million, which forms part of the overall savings target for the period from 2011/12 to 2019/20 of around £250million.

It was reported by the end of September 2016, over 83% of the savings target for MTFP6 had already been met with £23.5million of savings having been achieved. The total savings delivered since April 2011 was over £180million. Including public health savings, by the end of March 2017 total savings of £185.9million will have been achieved.

**Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report and the progress made in delivering the MTFP6 be noted.

#### **6      County Durham Partnership Update**

The Board considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships that provided an update on issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including the Board, the five thematic partnerships and all Area Action Partnerships (AAPs). The report also included updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the County (for copy see file of minutes).

The Principal Partnerships and Local Councils Officer highlighted priorities and key areas of focus carried out within the County Partnership in recent months.

**Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report be noted.

#### **7      Update on the Future Arrangements for the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) Collection**

The Board considered a report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Local Services that provided an update on the implementation of future arrangements for the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) collection (for copy of report and slides, see file of minutes).

A detailed presentation was given by the Strategic Manager, Culture and Sport that highlighted the following areas:-

- Delivery of MTFP Savings;
- Update on New Offer;
- Working Together;
- Collection Move;
- DLI Medal Collection;
- DLI Gallery, Research and Study Centre;
- Education and Learning Programme;
- WW1 Programme;
- Next Steps.

Councillor Foster, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration thanked members who had raised funds for the replica memorial bench located along the riverside in Durham. He advised that partnership working during this challenging time was key to the programme and would continue to work together. He emphasised the importance of gaining recognition for accomplishments already achieved by the Arts Council and Ogilby Trust.

Councillor Crute suggested the Council could still do more to address public concerns and publicise the positive stories through local and social media. The Chairman felt that the media had been very supportive and assured that members and officers would continue to work closely with the Communications Team regarding promotions.

In response to a question from Councillor R Bell regarding signposting for collection items located on other sites, the Strategic Manager, Culture and Sport advised that the matter would be taken into consideration.

Councillor Graham had visited the exhibitions at Palace Green and the Sevenhills site and was extremely impressed in what had been achieved. Members and their families would be invited to two open day sessions at Sevenhills in January and February 2017.

Councillor Nearney felt that the exhibitions so far had been outstanding and suggested that the DLI could be further strengthened through partnership working with Town and Parish Councils to develop a route into communities. The Strategic Manager, Culture and Sport confirmed that touring exhibitions had been well received and they would be doing more in communities.

Councillor Turnbull commented that youth community projects grants were available and congratulated the individual groups that helped design memorial benches in various communities.

Councillor Foster thanked members for their contributions and believed that partnership working would continue to be successful. He informed the Board that a letter had been received from Colonel The Hon. James D.A. Ramsbotham, Chairman of the Trustees for the Former DLI in recognition of the work that had been achieved recently and the support they had received from Durham County Council over the last fifty years. The ongoing work with the media would continue to get the message out regarding the facilities and he encouraged all to visit. The Chairman also thanked officers for their hard work and dedication to the programme.

**Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report and presentation be noted.

## **8      Quarter 2 2016/17 Performance Management Report**

The Board considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships that provided progress against the council's corporate performance framework by Altogether priority theme for the second quarter of the 2016/17 financial year, covering the period July to September 2016. A presentation was given by the Head of Planning and Performance (for copy of report and slides, see file of minutes).

Councillor R Bell commented on the increase in the looked after children figures. He referred to budget pressures and the demand issues the Council faces with increased number of children being taken into care. The Head of Planning and Performance responded that it would be significant in budgetary terms and would provide further information.

Councillor Adam added that there were many positives, however he was disappointed with the employment rate and issues surrounding looked after children despite the investments in attracting apprenticeship opportunities in the region. He also felt that targets had been set after achieving good results.

The Chairman responded to a question regarding the reasons for the increase in looked after children and if it was due to reduced funding or poor employment rates. He advised that there was special focus on children's care and the matter would be referred to the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee.

In response to a query, Councillor Nearney advised that Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee were looking at issues regarding the changes in the way crime was recorded and reported within County Durham. He also informed the Board that a Safer and Stronger Communities working group took place in November 2016 to review the re-procurement for drug and alcohol services within County Durham in partnership with Public Health and the Community Safety team, with further meetings arranged for the new year.

Mrs Elliott referred to the increased costs relating to looking after the elderly and care provision which Councils were expected to fund with reduced assistance from Central Government. The Head of Planning and Performance advised that the Head of Corporate Finance would be providing an update on the impact on the budget at a joint meeting of Corporate Issues and Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on the 26 January 2017 where members would have the opportunity to debate government announcements.

Councillor Graham referred to the successful use of CCTV cameras in the role of prosecuting fly tipping offenders and although the issue would never be eradicated, the measures in place have had an impact.

Councillor Turnbull referred to the number of females taking Early Retirement/Voluntary Redundancy/Compulsory Redundancy (ER/VR/CR) and were unable to find alternative employment, which would have an impact on unemployment figures. He asked for a profile on both ER/VR/CR and unemployment figures for women in general in County Durham.

### **Resolved:**

- i)      That the Council's performance at quarter two be noted;
- ii)     That the changes to the Council Plan outlined in the report be noted.

## **9      Update in relation to Petitions**

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services that provided an update on the current situation regarding various petitions received by the Authority (for copy see file of minutes).

The Senior Committee Services Officer reported that since the last update, 3 new paper petitions had been received and had completed the process. 3 new e-petitions had been submitted and currently there was 1 live e-petition on the council's website collecting signatures relating to Introduction of a weight limit on Lowes Barnes Bank in Durham that would run until 23 December with the final numbers being passed to the service as part of a consultation.

**Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report be noted.

## **10     Notice of Key Decisions**

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

The Senior Committee Services Officer reported that since the last update there had been the following movement in items being considered at Cabinet:-

- i) County Durham Plan Preferred Options – deferred from consideration at Cabinet in December. Progress with the Plan had paused due to the Housing White Paper;
- ii) Durham City Sustainable Transport Strategy – new to the plan for March 2017.

**Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report be noted.

## **11     Information update from the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

The Board considered a report of the Director of Transformation and Partnerships that provided an update of overview and scrutiny activity from the September to December 2016 (for copy see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the information contained in the report be noted.