

Contact Officer: Penny Bunker

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday 5th September 2016

Present: Councillor Julie Stewart-Turner (Chair)
Councillor Cahal Burke
Councillor Ken Sims
Fatima Khan-Shah (Co-optee)

Apologies: Councillor Gulfam Asif
Reverend Richard Burge (Co-Optee)

In Attendance: Councillor Rob Walker (Observer)

22 Membership of Committee

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Gulfam Asif and Rev Richard Burge, Statutory Co-optee.

23 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 July 2016 be approved as a correct record.

24 Interests

No Interests were declared.

25 Admission of the Public

It was agreed that all items be considered in public session.

26 Update on the Work of the CSE Panel and Corporate Parenting Board

Councillor Erin Hill, Cabinet Portfolio Holder, attended the meeting to provide an update on the work of the Child Sexual Exploitation and Safeguarding Member Panel and the Corporate Parenting Board. Copies of the Terms of Reference for both Panels were attached together with the Minutes of recent meetings.

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Councillor Hill summarised the areas of work that the CSE Panel had recently been considering which included an update from the Police on operational work in respect of historic CSE cases. A more formal update on recent Police operations was expected at the Panel in October 2016.

The Panel had met with representatives of the Children's Society to hear about work being undertaken in secondary schools. The intention was to roll out the Children's Society's work to the primary sector aimed at age 7 to 8 as the starting point. There was some challenge from providers about the appropriateness of the subject matter to younger children. The CSE Panel was also maintaining an overview of the progress in addressing practice issues within Children's Services. It was recognised that the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel was considering the detail of the work of the Development Board which was leading the refresh work within Children's Services. Councillor Hill indicated that the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and the CSE case management elements were also being considered and would be looked at on a partnership basis.

Councillor Hill continued to update on the work of the Corporate Parenting Board which was entering its second year. The intention was to hold more frequent meetings.

Councillor Hill reported on proposals for the regionalisation of adoption and the Board would maintain an overview of the practical implementation that would have to be put in place to move to a regional approach. Councillor Hill felt that it would be a positive step and a way of addressing the ongoing placement sufficiency issues as well as potential budget concerns.

The Board had considered a Looked After Children Strategy and approved a first version although it was recognised that the Strategy was an ongoing piece of work and would be further developed.

Councillor Hill advised the Committee on the Wood Review which was a national review of safeguarding governance within Local Authorities. The Review highlighted issues including social care reviews and the role of the Safeguarding Children Board. The review indicated that there should be a greater role for the Police. In respect of serious case reviews the need to change the emphasis of the reviews to ensure it was a lesson learned experience rather than a mechanism for blame, had been highlighted.

Councillor Hill also reported on a national consultation regarding mandatory reporting which proposed that professionals including teachers social workers, nurses, etc. would have a mandatory duty to report immediately if they had any concerns about a child's welfare. She had concerns about the significant resource implications for the Council if mandatory reporting was introduced.

In considering the information presented by Councillor Hill, there followed a discussion on the role of Ward Councillors in respect of understanding what was going on within their Ward and being able to support partners. Whilst it was recognised that individual cases would usually be highly confidential, it was felt that more statistical information about hotspots for particular issues, may be useful to

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Ward Councillors who could feed in local knowledge. It was acknowledged that previously available data had been insufficient to identify specific problem areas but that this had been addressed. Councillor Hill indicated that if Members were aware of specific cases, she was always available to discuss their concerns.

Councillor Burke had been informed that an outreach worker was being appointed to work with boys and young men where referrals were increasing but it was still an area of under reporting. Councillor Burke asked for an update on the position regarding the recruitment of the worker.

The Committee identified that young people with learning disabilities were a particular at risk area and asked about specific work that was being undertaken to protect such vulnerable groups. It was suggested that the Assistant Director for that area of work could provide an update to the Committee.

Fatima Khan-Shah, a Statutory Co-optee, raised the issue that safeguarding training was not mandatory for Governing Bodies. She felt that it was important that governors understood the issues so that they could challenge constructively. In response Councillor Hill indicated that it was up to individual schools to buy in the training. Councillor Walker, who attended the Committee meetings as an observer, indicated that the governing bodies he was a member of had commissioned such training and he agreed that it would be beneficial to all governing bodies.

Councillor Sims welcomed the improvements in taxi licensing and asked Councillor Hill for a current update. Councillor Hill commended the work of the staff in Licensing areas and the more consistent regulatory decisions. There remained a challenge regarding licensing outside of the West Yorkshire area and cross border working.

RESOLVED -

(1) That Cllr Erin Hill be thanked for attending the meeting and providing an update on the work of the CSE Safeguarding Member Panel and the Corporate Parenting Board.

(2) That Cllr Hill provide the Committee with a copy of the Looked After Children Strategy and the position regarding the Outreach Worker appointment.

27 Crime & Disorder Update - Partnership Plan theme - Protecting People from Serious Harm

In its statutory role as Crime and Disorder Committee, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee received an update on the Kirklees Community Safety Plan, focusing particularly on the Protecting People from Serious Harm theme.

The Committee noted that the priorities within the Community Safety Plan 2015-18 were:

- Increasing confidence and satisfaction
- Reducing crime

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- Tackling anti-social behaviour
- Protecting people from serious harm

As previously identified by the Management Committee the discussion continued to focus on protecting people from serious harm which included a broad range of areas such as child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, human trafficking and preventing violent extremism. Councillor Masood Ahmed, Cabinet Portfolio Holder, Chris Walsh, Safer Kirklees Manager and Rebecca Strutt, Senior Safer Kirklees Partnership Officer attended the Management Committee for the discussion.

In introducing the item Chris Walsh explained that the Community Safety Partnership had developed good links with the Safeguarding Boards and was also using District Committees as part of consultation mechanisms in developing the Partnership Plan. The Plan recognised that within each theme preventing criminal activity occurring in the first place was the primary ambition. If that was not possible then identifying issues as soon as possible and stopping further activity was the next step.

Mr Walsh continued to outline the tiered Safer Kirklees approach which included how partners can problem solve using intelligence, tools and powers. The fourth tier focused on tackling the underlying issues, such as drugs and alcohol and mental health, through working with specialist services. Built into processes was an evaluation mechanism to ensure that measures achieve the intended outcomes.

The Committee continued to discuss the role of education in the Prevent and hate crime areas of work. It was suggested that schools played an important role in opening conversations with young people on current and contentious issues. It was accepted that some parents may be uncomfortable with such approach but it was felt that schools should be taking a positive and proactive role in this aspect of young people's education.

In response the Cabinet Member indicated that there was an engagement team within the community cohesion function and one of their roles was to work with schools, both primary and secondary to support them in having those conversations. They also helped teachers to understand signs of underlying issues and enable them to refer appropriately. The Management Committee agreed that it would be appropriate to receive an up date briefing on the PSHE curriculum within schools and understand how the discussions on current and difficult areas around Crime and Disorder, such as radicalisation and violent extremism were being addressed in schools.

The Committee continued to discuss the human trafficking area of work and had received a copy of the Kirklees Human Trafficking Strategy. Rebecca Strutt outlined recent work in the Kirklees District which included being part of the national referral mechanism pilot until March 2017. The Committee noted that between July 2015 and July 2016 79% of referrals had been within West Yorkshire. This had included 27 referrals from the Kirklees District. The 5 Local Authorities within West Yorkshire were working together to try to share good practice and build effective partnerships.

Key achievements to date had included:

- Improvement in soft intelligence procedures
- Stronger families worker
- Delivery of awareness raising training particularly with frontline staff including midwives, housing workers and head teachers
- Safeguarding training to faith groups and community organisations
- Delivery of E-safety training

The next steps included the development of an intelligence profile and further progress in respect of the national referral mechanism. The intention was also to publicise successful investigations and prosecutions as a means of better promoting the consequences of criminal behaviour.

There followed a discussion on the impact of the reduction in community policing. In response the Cabinet Member indicated that there had been discussions at the Police and Crime Panel and most recently there had been a recruitment drive to appoint approximately 600 new officers including special constables. A Ward Manager approach was being put in place. Chris Walsh indicated that there were discussions across Council Departments about how the Council made better use of the frontline workers who spent time in communities.

RESOLVED -

(1) That Cllr Masood Ahmed, Chris Walsh and Rebecca Strutt be thanked for attending the meeting.

(2) That the update on the Protecting People from Serious Harm Partnership Plan theme, including work on human trafficking be noted.

(3) That officers co-ordinate a response to the issues identified at the meeting.

28 Date of Next Meeting/ OSMC Work Programme

The Management Committee considered arrangements for future meetings and its agenda plan. It was agreed that a discussion on PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) curriculum would be added to the agenda plan for the meeting on 6 January 2017.

RESOLVED -

(1) That the next meeting of the Committee be held on 26 September 2016.

(2) That a decision on PSHE be included on the agenda for the meeting on 6 January 2017.