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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday 3rd September 2018

Present: Councillor Julie Stewart-Turner (Chair)
Councillor Gulfam Asif
Councillor Cahal Burke
Councillor Elizabeth Smaje
Councillor Rob Walker

In attendance: Saf Bhuta, Head of Safeguarding and Quality
Alexia Gray, Service Manager, Domestic Abuse and
Safeguarding Partnerships

18 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

19 Interests

No interests were declared.

20 Admission of the Public

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

21 Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder - Domestic Abuse

The Committee considered a presentation and report on the incidence of domestic abuse in the Kirklees District and the partnership approach to addressing the issues. Saf Bhuta, Head of Safeguarding and Quality and Alexia Gray, Service Manager Domestic and Safeguarding Partnerships attended the Committee for the discussion. The report considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee incorporated the following areas;

- The strategy and background information
- National picture and current position
- Prevalence
- Governance arrangements
- Budget and staffing
- Risk assessment and partnership response
- Key achievements
- Key challenges and risks

A copy of the Kirklees Domestic Abuse Strategy 'Taking Up The Challenge Towards Freedom 2015-18' was appended for information. It was noted that since its approval in 2015, the Government had strengthened legislation and statutory guidance so the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership was undertaking a review of the strategy based on the principles of Outcome Based Accountability.

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In his presentation, Mr Bhuta indicated that nationally 26% of women and 15% of men aged 16-59 had experienced some form of domestic abuse since the age of 16. This was the equivalent of an estimated 4.3m female and 2.4m male victims. For the year ending March 2017 this indicated a 20% rise in the reporting of domestic abuse related offenses compared to the previous year. It was suggested that this was in part attributable to better identification of victims by Police and improvements in reporting practice.

In Kirklees for 2017/18 there were:

- 9649 Police incidents and crimes reported, an increase of 18.7% on the previous year
- Victim repeat rate of 45.5%
- Suspect repeat rate of 32.7%
- Child present at 26.5% of all Police call outs

Mr Bhuta continued to explain the partnership response, setting out information of the different teams and agencies involved in supporting victims and children as well as prevention work. He also outlined the similar interventions for perpetrators.

It was recognised that there was more work to do in preventative interventions which was a focus for the partnership moving forward.

Mr Bhuta outlined some of the key achievements of the Domestic Abuse Partnership which included:

- Award winning awareness raising campaigns such as 'It's Never OK'
- Expansion of the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates contract which had improved support for victims and created partnerships in areas that had previously struggled, for example Accident and Emergency. IDVA's were also attending Police callouts on Friday and Saturday evenings as part of the Police Transformation Fund
- Operation Encompass was being rolled out and schools were being notified of domestic abuse incidents/crimes from the day before where children were involved
- White Ribbon Accreditation had been awarded in 2018

The Management Committee welcomed these achievements highlighting in particular the joint working with the Police and Operation Encompass. The Committee was also pleased to note that the Home Office had been complimentary on the quality of reports and learning arising from domestic homicide reviews within the Kirklees District.

Mr Bhuta continued his presentation by outlining some of the key risks and challenges faced by the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership. The following were highlighted:

- The volume and breadth of the agenda. With the remit of domestic abuse being wider and prevalence and reporting rates continuing to rise there was a significant challenge in responding to the levels of demand.
- Because of resource pressures and high demand volumes it was a challenge to direct resources towards increasing preventative work

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- There continued to be a gap in the supply of perpetrator programmes until anything else is commissioned at a regional level
- Welfare reform, in particular Universal Credit had led to changes in advice concerning immigration status, impacting on benefits and the homeless and housing agendas. This particularly affected victims who had no recourse to public funds.

The Management Committee welcomed the comprehensive report and asked with the budget resource pressures in 2018 what impact this would have on the work. In response Mr Bhuta indicated that opportunities to access new funding with a focus on supporting children and accommodation for domestic abuse victims had been identified and staff were working on applications. Mr Bhuta explained that current commitments would be financed and the service would continue to investigate opportunities for short term funding.

Councillor Walker suggested that councillors would be interested in understanding in more detail the procedures around reporting domestic abuse and the different agencies operating within local areas. It was suggested that this should be provided to councillors in the form of a briefing note. It was further suggested that attendance at political group meetings would be an effective way of updating councillors.

There followed further discussions on the work in schools it was noted that Encompass was a first step and the Council was working with Leeds Council to look at extending Encompass to all education establishments.

The Committee looked in more details at the Kirklees statistical information compared with the national statistics. Mr Bhuta confirmed that there had been an increase in reporting due to the information campaigns that had been undertaken. The repeat rate remained quite high but was consistent with the national average. He acknowledged there was further development required in accessing key data and intelligence to underpin the targeting of resources in the future. It was agreed that information from health partners would be appropriate.

It was acknowledged that the work of the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates in A&E in both Dewsbury and Huddersfield Hospitals, had been very positive. It has allowed trained people to have a conversation with possible victims at the earliest opportunity. It was suggested that there was also a possible pilot for working in GP surgeries. Councillor Smaje raised the linkage to mental health issues and how a cohesive support approach was put in place. Ms Gray indicated there had been a recent conference with over 150 general practitioners in attendance to look at these issues and how through a partnership approach they might be addressed.

There followed a discussion on reporting rates and the cultural sensitivities that led to underreporting of incidents. The Committee noted that the Safer Kirklees Strategic Intelligence Assessment had provided useful geographical information, indicating that in areas of deprivation incidents rates were higher. The Management Committee continued to explore the issue of hidden victims and the groups that were particularly hard to engage. Specialist workers were required to work within certain communities to help to get a true idea of prevalence. In respect of

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preventative work it was suggested that there was a model which sought to upskill people within communities who came into regular contact with potential victims. Officers advised that a service mapping exercise would help to get an overview of the offer within Kirklees Council and look at how targeted investment might increase the balance between prevention and a reactive approach to domestic abuse incidents.

It was noted that there was an updated version of the action plan available and it was agreed that this would be circulated to members of the committee. It had been reformatted and now had a red, amber, green rating system which was reviewed regularly. Councillor Smaje asked how officers were sharing best practice and learning with other local authorities and agencies. In response it was indicated that there was a Crown Prosecution Service Panel and a Police and Crime Commissioner Panel where information was shared and fed back into organisations for clarity. The Police and Crime Commissioner Panel meetings tended to be themed with the last one being stalking and harassment. In addition the Local Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership also undertook a robust challenge on progress and achieving targets.

The Committee was concerned about an insufficiency of perpetrator programmes and how conviction rates were being improved in courts. In response to the discussion on the work of the courts it was noted that victims had an opportunity to be supported by one of the IDVAs who could help them throughout the process in providing intensive support.

In concluding the discussion the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee thanked Saf Bhuta and Alexia Gray for a very informative presentation and discussion of the issues and requested that the Management Committee had the opportunity to consider the revised draft strategy when it was available later in the year.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That Saf Bhuta and Alexia Gray be thanked for attending the Scrutiny Committee meeting.
- (2) That an updated version of the Domestic Abuse Strategy Action Plan be circulated to committee members.
- (3) That the draft of the revised Domestic Abuse Strategy be considered by the committee in November 2018

22 Approval of Scrutiny Work Programme

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee considered the final version of the proposed work programme of the Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel for 2018/19 municipal year. In considering the report Councillors Smaje and Burke welcomed the proposal to consider air quality and asked that the progress of proposals for air quality management areas be explored as part of the work of the Scrutiny Panel. In respect of the Hackitt review arising from the Grenfell Tower fire, Councillor Stewart-Turner asked that consideration be given to inviting partners to

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attend a Scrutiny meeting to look at the recommendations arising from the Hackitt review and how they were being addressed within the Kirklees district.

RESOLVED - That the proposed work programme for the Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel be approved.

23 **Appointment of Interim Co-optee**

Following the resignation of a former voluntary scrutiny co-optee on the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, it had been agreed that an interim co-optee be sought to complete the remainder of the municipal year, pending the recruitment of more voluntary co-optees in the autumn.

It was noted that suggestions had been sought from Healthwatch concerning individuals with appropriate experience and Lynne Keady had come forward as a proposed voluntary co-optee. Ms Keady had met with the Governance Support Officer to the Scrutiny Panel Lead Member to discuss the role and had also observed a Panel meeting.

The Management Committee agreed that Ms Keady would be a welcome scrutiny co-optee and agreed to appoint her to the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel for the remainder of the municipal year.

RESOLVED - That Lynne Keady be appointed as a voluntary scrutiny co-optee to the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, subject to review at the end of the municipal year.

24 **Scrutiny Lead Member Update Reports**

The Scrutiny Committee considered updates from the Chair of Scrutiny and the 4 Scrutiny Panel Lead Members on work that had been undertaken in Scrutiny since the beginning of the new municipal year.

Councillor Stewart-Turner highlighted the early start made by panels in the new municipal year. It was also noted that the former Leader of the Council had asked that Scrutiny look at Safety Camera Partnership. Councillor Stewart-Turner felt that it was not appropriate at this time but that consideration might be given to how a restructuring of the CCTV in Kirklees might align to the long term goals for West Yorkshire.

Councillor Stewart-Turner reported on a meeting with the Head of Intelligence and Performance to begin to understand the proposed approach to corporate performance within the Council. Councillor Stewart-Turner welcomed what she had been heard and advised that the Director for Resources and the Head of Intelligence and Performance would be attending a future meeting of the management committee to set out the proposed framework.

Councillor Cahal Burke outlined the work of the Children's Scrutiny Panel which had started looking at the draft Sufficiency Strategy for meeting local demand for family settings and residential care placements within the Kirklees District.

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Councillor Burke also advised that the Elective Home Education Scrutiny Panel work was ongoing and meetings had been set up with parents and carers to gather their experiences of home educating in Kirklees.

The Children's Scrutiny Panel had received a request to assist with gathering evidence from parents with special educational needs and disabilities and meetings had been set up between the panel and parents and carers.

Councillor Burke highlighted that with the active involvement of the Cabinet Member, the Scrutiny Panel was pleased to be receiving good attendance from officers and access to information in a timely manner.

Councillor Smaje continued to outline the recent work of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel, highlighting in particular the feedback to Adult Services on the consultation on the Adult Care Offer. Councillor Smaje also highlighted the planned engagement activity to support the development of mental health rehabilitation and recovery services in Kirklees. This led the Panel to recommend that more work was done to ensure that engagement could be carried out with people across the whole of Kirklees and from different communities.

The Committee noted that in September the panel would be looking at diabetes in Kirklees and an update on the Kirklees Integrated Wellness Model. In September the Panel would also hold an informal workshop to look at the outcomes of the Adult Social Care Offer Consultation.

Councillor Asif updated on the work of the Corporate Scrutiny Panel which had included some excellent finance training from the section 151 officer, Eamonn Croston. Councillor Asif suggested that the training could be included as part of new councillor induction. The Scrutiny Panel had also given initial consideration to the Library Review Consultation report.

The Scrutiny Panel was scheduled to receive a progress report on the procurement project strand of the Transformation Programme. There followed a brief discussion on how social value aspects were being picked up as part of procurement and the need to ensure linkage across scrutiny panels.

Councillor Walker advised that the panel meeting in July had looked at the draft Housing Policy and the Housing Allocations Policy to ensure that policies were robust and meeting the needs of the residents of Kirklees. Members of the panel had agreed to participate in the Council group that would be undertaking a review of the Open Age Policy and the Local Lettings Framework. In addition the panel had agreed to look at and monitor the implications for the Council of the findings of the Hackitt Review into building regulations and fire safety.

RESOLVED - That the Panel Lead Members and Chair of Scrutiny update reports on the progress of scrutiny work, be received and noted.

25 Forward Agenda Plan / Date of next meeting Committee meeting dates 2018/19
The Management Committee noted the forward agenda plan including issues identified during the course of the meeting to be incorporated. It was also noted that

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the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 1 October 2018 at 10.00am.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the OSMC consider the first draft of the refreshed Domestic Abuse Strategy in November 2018.
- (2) That the Committee consider a draft of the Cohesion Strategy at its meeting on March 2019.
- (3) That a copy of the CCTV feasibility report be circulated to members of the Committee
- (4) That as part of the January update on crime and disorder, the approach to CCTV be considered.