

Agenda Supplement

Dorset County Council



Meeting: County Council

Time: 10.00 am

Date: 19 July 2018

Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester DT1 1XJ, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Debbie Ward
Chief Executive

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Date of Publication:
Wednesday, 11 July 2018

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People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ on Wednesday, 4 July 2018.

Present:

David Walsh (Chairman)

Mary Penfold (Vice-Chairman)

Derek Beer, Graham Carr-Jones, Katharine Garcia, Mary Penfold, Byron Quayle, Mark Roberts, Clare Sutton and William Trite.

Members Attending

Cherry Brooks, Vice-Chairman, Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Jill Haynes, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.

Officer Attending: John Alexander (Senior Assurance Manager - Performance), Diana Balsom (Commissioning Manager, Housing and Prevention), Harry Capron (Head of Service Learning Disability/Mental Health), Martin Elliott (Assistant Director - Adult Care Operations), William Haydock (Senior Health Programme Advisor), Steve Hedges (Group Finance Manager), Rick Perry (Senior Manager for Change Management and Planning), Matthew Piles (Service Director - Economy, Natural and Built Environment), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance) and Helen Whitby (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

(Notes: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on **Wednesday, 10 October 2018.**)

Apologies for Absence

25 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Shane Bartlett.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Mark Roberts to his first meeting.

Appointment of Vice-Chairman

26 At the County Council meeting on 27 April 2018 nominations from Group Leaders had been received for the position of Vice-Chairman for both Shane Bartlett and Mary Penfold, It was agreed that the Committee would decide the appointment at the next meeting.

On putting this to a vote, it was

Resolved

That Councillor Mary Penfold be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the year 2018/19.

Terms of Reference

27 The Committee's terms of reference were unchanged.

Noted

Code of Conduct

- 28 There were no declarations by members of disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

Councillor Mark Roberts stated that his company had a small adult care contract with the County Council so he would not take part in discussions about contracting arrangements.

Minutes

- 29 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2018 were confirmed and signed.

Progress on Matters Raised at Previous Meetings

- 30 The Committee considered a report by the Transformation Programme Lead for Adult and Community Forward Together Programme which set out outstanding actions from previous meetings and an update on identified reviews.

Members noted that the Brexit Group would not continue to meet as this work could be dealt with more efficiently elsewhere.

Noted

Public Participation

- 31 Public Speaking

There were no public questions, statements or petitions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders.

Outcomes Focused Monitoring Report: July 2018

- 32 The Committee considered a report by the Transformation Programme Lead for Adult and Community Forward Together Programme which set out performance against the 2017-19 Corporate Plan and population indicators for the Healthy and Independent outcomes. The report also included performance measures which showed the Council's Services contribution and impact on outcomes, and risk management information relating to outcomes and population indicators.

Attention was drawn to performance relating to LiveWell Dorset services to tackle alcohol and substance abuse and promote healthy weight, which appeared to have declined. It was reported that these services had recently been brought in-house, and monitoring procedures had become more rigorous. Figures for the next quarter would give a better idea if there was a genuine decline in performance. A new population indicator for mental health was based on the percentage of people on GP registers suffering from depression, which was a more accurate and timely indicator for trends in mental health..

In discussion members highlighted that changes to the way mental health was understood measured made comparisons over time difficult; sleep deprivation and social media might be causes of depression; social isolation and loneliness were more significant in deprived neighbourhoods rather than rural areas; schools' role in promoting emotional health and wellbeing, particularly given current concerns for education in Weymouth and Portland; the dip in the number of children being adequately prepared to go to school; and the increase in young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS).

Members were concerned about the sharp increase in the proportion of care leavers who were NEET and suggested a further explanation be sought about what was being done to address this. They thought a short review might be needed.

Noted

People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Annual Report 2017-18

33 The Committee considered its draft Annual Report 2017-18.

Whilst the Annual Report was welcomed by members, one member pointed out that it seemed to suggest that the committee's reviews were capturing outputs rather than outcomes and the impact they had. Members were reminded that the purpose of the Corporate Plan was to focus on outcomes for residents. Other Committees had similar outputs but reviews later on the agenda would give an indication of whether improvements were being achieved.

Noted

Integrated Transport Review

34 The Committee considered a report by the Service Director, Economy, Natural and Built Environment which presented the findings of the inquiry day into Integrated Transport held on 26 February 2018.

The inquiry day had been attended by 86 people representing community transport groups, commercial bus operators and members of district and borough councils. Sessions were led by guest speakers with a focus on different ways of looking at transport and what could be done to help communities develop local transport schemes which was not based on bus provision. Information was readily available to help communities develop their own schemes but better signposting was needed.

A brief summary of the development of integrated transport since 2013 was given, including the development of a community transport toolkit, available grants, support available to help communities develop schemes, and links to health and skills. 89 schemes had been established with 97% coverage across Dorset. Officers were working with the NHS as part of the Sustainability Transformation Plan on sustainable transport for the future.

The Lead Member for the review drew attention to the need to promote progress made, show communities that support to develop their own schemes was available and for transport officers to have more time to invest in this. He also thought officers should liaise more with rail operators.

The Committee noted that the previous day a meeting had been held with the Heart of Wessex (rail operators) and that the outcomes would be reported to a later meeting. The Lead Member welcomed this.

Members noted that officers were working towards a one stop shop for transport solutions and that the inquiry day had increased awareness of available services and the need to connect services to provide joint community schemes.

Some members remained sceptical about transport arrangements within their electoral divisions.

Resolved

That the approach taken by Dorset Travel to continue to support the Passenger Transport Strategy be supported.

Homelessness in Dorset: Review of Evidence

35 The Committee considered a report by the Senior Assurance Manager which provided evidence about homelessness in Dorset. Supporting the report, the Committee also received a joint presentation by the Senior Assurance Manager and Councillor Clare Sutton, Lead Member for the review.

The evidence showed that homelessness was on the increase in Dorset but this was

not an even trend, with some district areas having a peak in 2012/13, and a more steady increase in the Weymouth and Portland area. The District and Borough Councils' Dorset Homelessness Strategy provided a vigorous approach to try to prevent homelessness.

In 2017 there were 18 rough sleepers in Dorset at the time of the annual count, a rate of 0.62 per 1000 households - the 17th highest rate in the Country. Nationally, 70 rough sleepers died on the streets in 2017, a number that had more than doubled in 5 years, three of whom were living in Weymouth. Rough sleepers were much more likely to have substance abuse issues, be the victims of violence or traffic accidents, more prone to suicide and to infections or hypothermia, all of which had an effect on the wider community. These figures did not show how many more people were on the edge of homelessness, for example through sofa surfing or sleeping with strangers.

Members were provided with a brief outline of the District and Borough Councils' duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 (HRA) - to get involved at an earlier stage, and to provide meaningful personalised support in order to prevent homelessness, regardless of their priority need. The new duty to refer would result in an increased workload for housing officers. These duties would be inherited by the new unitary Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Councils following Local Government Reorganisation in April 2019.

Funding of £72.2m over three years was to be provided for local authorities. This would mean an additional £90k for the district and borough councils in Dorset. Housing officers welcomed the Act's introduction as it strengthened councils' duties to intervene and provided more solutions for those at risk of homelessness.

There was some exploration of the possible reasons for homelessness and its causes. An explanation of current interventions was given, including the Weymouth bus which could accommodate up to seventeen people and its positive effect in Weymouth.

Members then discussed the information shared in some detail including: the fact that Universal Credit could not be paid direct to landlords so they were less likely to take tenants on benefits; that some local authorities provided grants for rent in advance and deposits in certain circumstances; some local authorities were looking at effectively acting as letting agents for private sector landlords, taking on all the associated risks; the shortage of appropriate housing with registered providers building 2, 3, or 4 bedroom properties when more single accommodation was needed; members' individual experience of people becoming homeless; that support was largely only provided on a Monday to Friday basis; that HM Services support organisations did not always maintain contact with ex-service personnel; the needs of gypsy and traveller communities when they were no longer transient; that rough sleepers could be depressed or had mental health issues or complex needs and, if not local, were unable to use the Weymouth bus; the need for the new Dorset Council to continue with the current initiatives; the potential for modular housing to provide flexible solutions; that housing was currently a District and Borough Council responsibility so it was important for County Council officers to continue to engage with them to reduce duplication of effort and not create obstacles; the only way to stop homelessness was to build more council houses with affordable and controlled rents; and the need for housing and planning to work together under the new Shadow Authority.

With regard to recommendations, members agreed unanimously that the evidence clearly showed the benefit of the Emergency Local Assistance Funding and that they wanted this to be renewed. The Cabinet Member for Health and Care, and as a member of the Shadow Executive, agreed to champion this.

Looking at private rentals and underwriting the risk, the Cabinet member for Health and Care explained that this did not fall within the County Council's remit. However, funding of £1.5m had been identified for modular housing on County Council land for those with mental health issues. This needed to be completed before any extension was considered. County Councillors who were on the new Shadow Executive would be able to take this forward as a priority

Members were unsure as to whether the rent deposit scheme was also operated by East Dorset and Christchurch Borough Councils but paid tribute to the dedication of Dorset Council Partnership staff who operated the scheme.

There was some discussion about the low Local Housing Allowance which made it difficult for people to access private accommodation, that any increase might lead to rent rises and the need to increase the buy to let market for small private landlords. It was agreed that Central Government should be lobbied on both accounts and that this should involve local MPs. The wording for this recommendation would be drawn up outside of the meeting and circulated to the Committee for agreement. It was noted that the Local Housing Allowance was not necessarily based on rent in a local area.

Recommended

That the County Council's Cabinet and Dorset Shadow Executive consider the Committee's recommendation that the Emergency Local Assistance Funding be renewed.

Resolved

1. that Central Government be lobbied as set out in the minute above with the involvement of local MPs.
2. the wording of the letter to MPs be drawn up outside of the meeting and sent to members by email for agreement.
3. that Councillors David Walsh and Graham Carr-Jones, as members of the Shadow Dorset Executive, take forward recommendations and priorities as set out above.

Update on Special Educational Needs and Disability Improvement Plan and Working with Schools

- 36 The Committee considered a report by the Director for Children's Services which provided an update on the significant progress which had been made with the improvement plan so far in enabling a three year improvement drive within the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Services for children and young people. It also included an update on the consultation with schools around the future relationship with the local authority and the support being provided to schools in the Weymouth and Portland area.

Members were reminded that the Ofsted inspection in January 2017 had identified four significant areas of weakness (strategic planning, low conversation rates, parental feedback and quality assurance) which had resulted in a statement of action to improvement performance. Since then significant progress had been made in all four areas and a brief summary was provided. Members were directed to look at the local offer for their electoral divisions.

Particular attention was drawn to transfers of children on statements to Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) where conversion rates were completed by the end of March 2018 with additional funding provided by Cabinet. Concentration was now on achieving targets for the three stages for the new EHCPs - at s6, 16 and 20 weeks.

With regard to the consultation with schools about their relationship with the authority,

this would not proceed until two key appointments had been made - one was now in place, the other to be in place shortly. The consultation would be carried out by way of workshops facilitated by the Staff College.

A number of senior schools in Weymouth and Portland had been deemed "inadequate" by recent Ofsted inspections. Although some of these were academies with greater autonomy, the local authority was offering support to these schools to ensure that agreed actions plans were followed through as a means of improving standards and life chances for children,

In response to questions officers were confident that the local authority would fare well if another Ofsted inspection took place; would report the suggestion that school improvement services should help the Weymouth and Portland Schools at no cost; that Children's Services were working with Governing Bodies on solutions and identifying good practice and experience which could be shared; that every means available was being used to help these schools; that printed material was available for families with no access to the webpages; that the Dorset Parent Council were members of the SEND Delivery Group and were able to identify families with no internet access and facilitate their engagement; and that the advisory service focused on maintained schools with a view to early support being provided. Members were reminded that it was the academies' decision as to whether they took advantage of support offered.

Attention was drawn to the fact that although there were some schools where improvements were needed, other Dorset schools had dedicated teachers who provided a good education for their pupils enabling them to achieve grades and secure university placements.

Members were keen to hear more about the outcomes of the consultation workshop being held on 9 July 2018 and officers agreed to provide an update to be provided for the meeting on 10 October 2018.

With regard to the continued drive to raise standards in Dorset schools, members were asked to let officers know if they heard of any issues relating to schools in their electoral divisions in order to address these.

Resolved

1. That the significant progress that has been made in improving the service provided to children and young people and their carers with SEND post the Ofsted inspection be noted.
2. That the work that has taken place around the consultation on the future relationship with schools be noted.
3. That the continued drive to raise standards in Dorset schools be supported.
4. That an update report on the consultation workshop being held on 9 July 2018 be provided for the meeting on 10 October 2018.

Mental Health Review - Responses

37 The Committee considered a report by the Senior Democratic Services Officer which provided an update on the Delivery Plan arising from the Mental Health inquiry day held on 13 December 2017 and the response received from relevant organisations.

Members noted that two responses had been received from partner organisations; that the local authority now had representation on the Mental Health Integration Board; Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust were expanding psychotherapies, increasing investment in psychiatric liaison services and out of area placements; the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group were working to provide better local support for those in crisis, develop a crisis intervention service and retreats;

there was a commitment to follow up on people with serious illnesses; increased opportunities for employment by joint working across health and social care; a review of dementia services was planned; the suicide prevention plan was overseen jointly by partners; the local authority was to review the out of hours service and consult on plans to extend mental health services to evenings and night-times; communications between partner organisations had improved; more integrated pathways for mental health and disability services were being developed; practical changes for service users and staff were to be considered; work was to be undertaken to look at pathways to homelessness, and a review of supported lodgings scheme was to be undertaken. In summary there was a need to build on existing meetings and priorities identified in the workshop to integrate these into programmes of work.

Officers agreed to established whether there was an equivalent to the Disability Partnership Board for those with mental health issues as this was seen as a good example of service user inclusion.

The Lead Member for the review drew attention to the key message that came out of the inquiry day that another day with service users and carers should be held so that they could be made aware of action taken as a direct result of the inquiry day. It was explained that each of the work programmes would include engagement. Officers agreed to ask the Partnership Board whether they wished to carry out engagement overall or whether this should be done on a project by project basis.

In summary, the inquiry day was seen as a great success, with meaningful outcomes which had been shared with stakeholders for them to consider. Stakeholders would be contacted again later in the year to establish progress on the implementation of the Delivery Plan which would be reported to the January 2019 meeting.

Resolved

That stakeholders be contacted again later in the year to establish progress on the implementation of the Delivery Plan which would be reported to the January 2019 meeting.

Social Isolation: Final Report of the Member Working Group

38 The Committee considered the final report of the Member Working Group on Social Isolation.

The Lead Member of the Group explained that as social isolation was a big topic Beaminster and Blandford had been selected as areas to investigate what problems they experienced and how they were being tackled.

The review discovered that there were a number of common issues which were raised consistently - the lack of transport, lack of knowledge about available transport, and people not being aware of what was available. It also showed that isolation and loneliness could be experienced not only in rural areas but also in towns and communities. Information gained through the Young Researchers' Survey was highlighted as this had given a picture young people's lives and their issues.

The Group had made recommendations which would they thought would address the issues and they hoped this this work could progress and not be lost through the forthcoming local government reorganisation.

Members recognised that the County Council could not solve loneliness and isolation, but by creating caring communities and looking after neighbours isolation and loneliness could be reduced.

Recommended

1. That the Committee agreed that the key issues identified in the report and addressing them at a strategic level across council activities and expenditure will combat social isolation and was recommended to the Cabinet (as set out in Appendix 1, paragraph 4.3 of the report).
2. That the Cabinet's attention be drawn to the potential benefit of further action being taken on a corporate basis informed by the toolkit of the Campaign to end Loneliness (as set out in Appendix 1, paragraph 6.1b of the report)
3. That the Cabinet consider the recommendations with a view to drawing these findings and associated action to the attention of the Shadow Executive for the new Dorset Council and to the Health and Wellbeing Board (as set out in Appendix 1, paragraph 6.2 of the report).

Delayed Discharges Performance

39 The Committee considered a report by the Transformation Programme Lead for Adult and Community Forward Together Programme which provided an update of delayed discharge performance within the Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board area. The report included some cases studies which members had requested at the last meeting.

Members noted that performance continued to improve and this was important as Better Care Funding depended on the Local Authority and partners meeting delayed discharge targets. The need for health and social care teams to work closely together to enable patients to be provided with the resources to enable their return home was highlighted.

The case studies illustrated the pathway followed by some patients in order to be able to return home with appropriate support.

One member referred to a case within his own electoral division whereby a patient wanted to leave hospital yet was not medically fit to return home. The Assistant Director would discuss this further outside of the meeting.

Members recognised that the majority of patients wished to return home but that in some cases the cost of this to the local authority could be high. They also recognised that support needed to be provided to enable patients to return home, that care providers could be given short to put care in place, and that there was no way of predicting this which made planning difficult.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Care highlighted that the Government were challenging local authorities to ensure patients were discharged quickly from hospital and that if this was not done funding would be reduced. The Local Authority's performance had improved considerably but other authorities had also improved their performance which meant that Dorset remained in the bottom quartile. There was a reablement service and domiciliary care was also provided if required on discharge, but shortage of supply could sometimes lead to short delays. This was thoroughly monitored and the Brokerage Service sourced a service as soon as it was available. The Local Authority needed to work closely with health colleagues to further improve performance and she thought more emphasis should be put on keeping people out of hospital in the first place. She reminded members that the Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board received regular reports on delayed discharge performance and suggested that the Committee receive an update in six months' time to see whether performance continued to improve.

With regard to whether the system would be able to cope with the closure of beds at the Portland Community Hospital, it was explained that a lack of nurses had led to the closure and that nurses working there currently would be moved to Weymouth. Discharges from Dorset County Hospital would not be affected by this change. The

local MP was to answer questions on this at a local church the following evening.

Resolved

That an update report on delayed discharge performance be provided for the Committee's meeting in January 2019.

Work Programme

40 The Committee considered its work programme.

The Chairman reminded members that due to the transition to the new Shadow Dorset Council, there were limited opportunities to undertake scrutiny reviews. Any new scrutiny work would need to be of a short duration rather than in depth.

Items added to the work programme were:-

10 October 2018 meeting Update on the schools workshop
Education Health Care Plan performance

January 2019 meeting Update on mental health review and implementation of
recommendations
Integrated Transport - actions and outcomes and next
stage for delivery
Delayed Transfers of Care performance

Resolved

That the above items be added to the Committee's work programme.

Questions from County Councillors

41 No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20(2).

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 12.55 pm

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Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset,
DT1 1XJ on Thursday, 5 July 2018

Present:

Pauline Batstone (Chairman)
Katharine Garcia (Vice-Chairman), Derek Beer, Kevin Brookes, Toni Coombs and Bill Pipe

Officer Attending: Claire Shiels (Assistant Director for Commissioning and Partnerships), David Alderson (Senior Adviser, Learning and Inclusion), John Alexander (Senior Assurance Manager - Performance), Sarah Baker (Group Finance Manager), Melissa Craven (Communications Lead - Children's Services), Andy Frost (Community Safety and Drug Action Manager), Ian Grant (Programme Co-ordinator), Sylvia Lord (Adviser, School and Learning Service), Karen Maher (DSAB Business Manager), Michael Potter (Project Engineer), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance), David Webb (Service Manager - Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

(Note: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on: **Thursday, 11 October 2018**)

Apologies for Absence

24 Apologies for absence were received from Lesley Dedman, Steven Lugg and Kate Wheller.

Appointment of Vice-Chairman

25 **Resolved**
That Katharine Garcia be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of 2018-19.

Code of Conduct

26 There were no declarations by members of disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

Terms of Reference

27 Members noted the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

Noted

Minutes

28 The minutes from the meeting held on 13 March 2018 were agreed and signed.

Public Participation

29 Public Speaking
There were no public questions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(1).

There were no public statements received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(2).

Petitions

There were no petitions received at the meeting in accordance with the County

Council's Petition Scheme.

Personal Independence Payments (PIP)

30 The Advice Services Manager from the Citizen's Advice Bureau attended and updated members on their clients' experiences of Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Unfortunately since attending a previous meeting of this committee, the Citizen's Advice Bureau had not seen any real improvement in the quality of assessments nor the mandatory reconsiderations of decisions and clients were waiting about twelve months for a tribunal hearing to be held. In respect of mental health assessments clients had reported that their experience at their assessments was not always reflected in the final report and that poor assessments were still continuing. However, there had been a slight improvement in the amount of travelling clients had to make for their assessments and tribunals.

Advisers were now having to tell clients that it was unlikely that any changes would be made to their assessments prior to an appeal. Locally most appeals were being overturned and the figure nationally was about two thirds that were being overturned.

One member reflected that not all disabilities were obvious and asked if clients could take someone with them to their assessment. The Advice Services Manager confirmed this was acceptable and that the Citizen's Advice Bureau recommended that people were accompanied.

The Chairman noted that she had been impressed with those persons involved with the tribunals that she had attended.

The Group Manager for Governance and Assurance noted that the statistics were concerning and that it would be interesting to see the national picture to help ground the outcomes required. The Advice Services Manager undertook to supply some national information for members and officers. She highlighted the need to be careful to not passport people between the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the County Council.

In respect of the previous letters that had been sent to the Minister and copied to the Dorset Members of Parliament (MPs), the Advice Services Manager felt that the response received was rather meaningless. The Group Manager for Governance and Assurance suggested to send another letter from the Committee, advising of the update members had received and to also include some national statistics.

Resolved

That the Chairman draft a letter to the Minister on receipt of the statistics from the Advice Services Manager and that it be copied to all Dorset MPs, including Bournemouth and Poole.

Outcomes Focused Monitoring Report - July 2018

31 The Committee considered a report by the Director for Children's Services which included the most up to date available data on the population indicators within the 'safe' outcome and also included information on performance measures, risk management information.

The Senior Assurance Manager highlighted that the biggest issues for this period were around child protection. Work was ongoing to safely reduce the number of children in care and the number of children subject to a child protection plan. The Senior Assurance Manager highlighted to members two graphs in the report that showed that both of these figures had reduced as at the end of 2017. However, the rate of re-referrals to children's social care had risen slightly, as had the rate of children becoming subject to a plan for a second or subsequent time. The children in

need rate had also risen and a sharp increase in persistent absence in secondary schools was also highlighted.

Road accident data was also included in the report and members noted the continuation of a gradual drop in people killed and seriously injured on Dorset roads.

One member expressed concern regarding the increase of number of children coming back into care. The Assistant Director for Commissioning and Partnerships explained that the figure was not about children coming back into care, but about referrals back into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and that there was a lot of work being done to ensure that the work of the MASH, social care teams and Family Partnership Zones were working better.

Following a question from a member regarding the impact on the budget of the number of children actually in care along with more expensive packages of care in place, the Assistant Director explained that a lot of had been done to reduce the numbers and that the more 'difficult' packages were reviewed regularly. There was a small area of younger children now in high cost placements, where in the past this was predominantly teenagers. The intention was to ensure that when high cost therapeutic placements were used that these were intended to try to improve outcomes for children to avoid issues continuing long term.

Members also considered the Annual Report for the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2017-18. The report summarised and communicated the key elements of the work of the committee, it's purpose, the work it had been directly involved in along with the outcomes that had been achieved to strengthening the Council's operating framework as a direct result of its involvement.

Noted

Early Intervention and Prevention

32 The Committee received a presentation from the Assistant Director for Commissioning and Partnerships which informed members about how well the Council's investment in early intervention and prevention was working and delivering the results that were expected.

The Assistant Director for Commissioning and Partnerships advised members that they were now 3 years into a 5 year transformation programme and that early intervention and prevention was a way of working and not a single service. The County Council's role was one of influence and working together as it had very few dedicated resources. It could not be underestimated the need for cultural change and a critical factor was to ensure there were professionals in place across the whole organisation who would be lead professionals for families. The evidence for return on investment in early intervention and prevention was strong but there was more need to ensure that the county council saw a reduction in demand as a result of this investment.

The next steps would be to keep the vision alive and to ensure that all partners remained on board. Work was ongoing to strengthen the governance and accountability to evidence the impact of collective efforts. Although real progress had been made it was critical that this continued to deliver and a real impact began to be seen on outcomes.

The Assistant Director highlighted persistent absence, and noted that work had been taking place to ensure that better conversations were taking place around this. This was predominantly a secondary school issue with a reduction being seen in primary schools. She highlighted the good community work that was happening in

Christchurch.

In response to a question from the Chairman about the possibility of transition time between schools being a danger time, the Assistant Director advised that schools themselves had good transition programmes in place but for particular groups there was additional support in place from Family Partnership Zone family workers.

Following a discussion on school exclusions, it was noted that these were greater in secondary school age children. However, members were advised that there had been a shift upwards in the number of exclusions in the early primary years and there was now more provision in place for these children when they were excluded. The Senior Adviser and Virtual School Head advised members that there was a lot of work ongoing with school improvement and SEN. Some of the younger excluded children already with a vulnerability were given practical suggestions whilst others were referred to psychologists and offered therapy interventions. Some of the most common reasons for exclusion in primary age children were behaviours e.g. persistent, aggressive and violent behaviours. With older children exclusions were less likely to be for persistent poor behaviour but increasingly for more drug related offences. The aim was for schools to be as inclusive as they could and assess every case on its merits but some schools had a 'zero tolerance' for drugs in their policies which could be a challenge.

Members asked that a report on school exclusions be presented at their next meeting to include the number of 11-18 year olds permanently excluded from school for drug related issues, the number of pupils who had their exclusions lifted and the number of pupils excluded for behaviour issues.

In response to a question about targeted youth work, the Virtual School Head advised this took place in schools as well as outside of school with the younger person and their family where a range of support was offered. Family Partnership Leads for specific areas were the appropriate contact for any queries.

One member queried how families knew about self-referral and was advised that posters were available within communities as well as information posted on the Dorset For You website. It was acknowledged that more could be done. Concern was also expressed that after a number of years the council was still not serving the most vulnerable children in the County.

Resolved

That further information on permanent exclusions, including the number of 11-18 year olds excluded for drug issues, the number of exclusions for poor behaviour and the number of students that had their exclusions lifted be presented to members at their meeting on 11 October 2018.

Elective Home Education Update

33 The Committee considered a joint report by the Senior Adviser and Virtual Head and the Alternative Provision, Exclusions and Elective Home Education Adviser which updated members on the Dorset Elective Home Education process and numbers and the impact of the work of the Dorset Elective Home Education Team.

Officers drew members attention to the legislative framework for this work, stressing the role the local authorities had in this area and that while local authorities had general duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, this did not bestow on local authorities the ability to see and question children subject to Elective Home Education (EHE) to establish if they were receiving suitable education. Officers had found that the best way to support these families was to engage with them and this was the model of service delivery.

A map showing home educated pupils mapped by Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) and Family Partnership Zones was circulated to members.

Following a question about why parents chose elective home education, the Senior Adviser advised that the national figures for children moving into elective home education had gone up by 200% nationally over the past couple of years. Reasons were numerous and national research had identified that these included lifestyle choices as well as the pressure on some headteachers to achieve results; SEN support issues; parental disagreement with the school, particularly in primary schools; or perhaps to avoid permanent exclusion in secondary schools. There was a national consultation out at present on EHE, to which officers had responded, to reinforce the need for home visits.

Members expressed an interest in seeing the Dorset profile of why parents chose home education and the Virtual School Head said officers would be able to provide some anecdotal based evidence. To try to ensure that children did not fall through the gap members were advised of the properly structured way that schools had to ensure formal notification of home education and that there was a very clear 'children missing education' process.

One member expressed concern that home educated children were not able to sit their GCSEs in local schools. Officers advised that they thought the nearest examination centre at present was at Southampton. The Chairman felt it would be helpful to learn of the numbers of students affected by this.

To try to ensure that children were receiving a satisfactory education officers were looking at the Family Partnership Zones to try and engage with some of the families. A lot of time was spent talking with parents, carers etc for those families considering home education to ensure they fully understood the implications. The Assistant Director noted the need for members to remember that for many families this was a positive choice.

In respect of children with SEN being home educated, officers advised there were around 12. If a child had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) the local authority had a duty to keep this in place, the funding for which ended when the child left the school.

The Chairman asked for officers to provide an analysis of the reasons for EHE including any gypsy and traveller families data, if available, at a later stage.

Following a discussion about 17 year olds that 'drop out' of education the Assistant Director advised there were a range of services available and made reference to the 'Ansbury' information, advice and tracking service which identified and followed up young people to support them back into education, employment or training as appropriate.

Members were concerned about safeguarding issues that affected these young people if they refused home visits and the Virtual School Head and the Assistant Director outlined that when notifications were made a range of data was provided and where there were concerns referrals were made to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Resolved

That officers circulate information regarding availability of examination centres. To also provide an analysis of reasons for EHE, including gypsy and traveller families data where available.

Update on the Whole Family Approach

- 34 The Committee considered a report by the Business Manager for the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board which set out a number of objectives including the proposal to hold a 'listening' event in order to develop a map of current arrangements to inform the next steps/plans in adopting a 'whole family' approach across Dorset.

The Business Manger advised members there was a whole systems approach aimed at achieving positive, long term and sustainable outcomes for individuals and families by working effectively with partners and agencies across Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole.

Following a question from the Vice-Chairman regarding the event on 3 October 2018, the Business Manager advised that invitations had not yet been sent and would request that members be included.

Noted

Domestic Abuse – Update

- 35 The Committee considered a report by the Transformation Lead for Adult and Community Services Forward Together Programme which summarised the findings from the Domestic Abuse Inquiry Day held in October 2017 in order for members to scrutinise community safety work, particularly in relation to domestic abuse.

The Programme Co-ordinator updated members on the progress that had been made since the Inquiry Day and shared this with members. Reviews that had been undertaken showed that information sharing now worked quite well.

The Chairman felt that any further Inquiry Days on other specific areas of community safety could be something which the new Council could focus on. She felt it would be useful in perhaps a year's time to gather information from victims to gauge if things had improved. The Community Safety and Drug Action Manager felt this could be helpful as they were trying to ensure that a coherent system was in place.

The Vice-Chairman highlighted to member a 'Safe Space' event in Poole on 12 July 2018.

Noted

Causes and Forces of Road Traffic Collisions - Road Safety Plan

- 36 The Committee considered a report by the Collision Reduction Team Leader which summarised the outcome of investigations and presented members with a new document which outlined the work undertaken regarding road safety and future challenges.

One member commented on the number of older people who tended to disregard road safety rules and noted that it was not only young people who were sometimes guilty of poor driving. He felt this occurred regularly, especially in rural communities.

The Chairman made reference to hard standing areas for road safety cameras especially on narrow rural roads/lanes, but was not sure what could be done, apart from promoting community speed watch. The Collision Reduction Team Leader agreed that this presented a number of potential hazards and was discussed with members within the working group.

Resolved

That the Committee supported the updated Road Safety Plan 2018.

Reason for Decision

To continue the development of an Outcomes Based Accountability approach in better understanding of what the County Council can do to influence performance.

Approval of the Youth Justice Plan for 2018/19

37 The Committee considered a report which included the draft Youth Justice Plan for 2018-19. The Plan provided a summary of the performance, structure, governance, resources and future priorities for the Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service.

The Service Manager for the Dorset Combined Youth Offending Service advised members of the approval process. As a pan Dorset Poole and Bournemouth would also need to approve the Plan. He had been advised to update the Plan next week following the Joint Target Review inspection, but he did not expect there to be too much change.

Members thanked the Service Manager for a very comprehensive, easy to read report.

Recommended

That Cabinet be asked to approve the Youth Justice Plan for 2018-19.

Reason for Recommendation

The draft Youth Justice Plan meets statutory requirements. The Plan reviews achievements in the previous year, details the structure, governance and resources of the Youth Offending Service, and sets out the priorities for 2018-19.

Work Programme

38 The Committee considered its work programme and added a report and presentation on school exclusions as agreed earlier in the meeting.

Following a comment from a member regarding the possibility of making arrangements with local schools to enable children to take exams, the Assistant Director for Commissioning and Partnerships advised that she would need to clarify the legislation and the County Council's position on this in readiness for the October meeting.

The Chairman made reference to moving to the new Council and that there would be just two more meetings of this committee in its present format.

The Senior Assurance Manager felt it would be helpful for members to be aware of what the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee were working on in readiness for the new Council.

Noted**Questions from County Councillors**

39 No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20(2).

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 12.45 pm

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