



Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset,
DT1 1XJ on Tuesday, 13 March 2018

Present:

Pauline Batstone (Chairman)

Katharine Garcia, Kevin Brookes, Toni Coombs, Beryl Ezzard, Bill Pipe and Kate Wheller

Members Attending

Steve Butler, Cabinet Member for Safeguarding

Jill Haynes, Cabinet Member for Health and Care

Officer Attending: John Alexander (Senior Assurance Manager - Performance), Sarah Baker (Group Finance Manager), Nick Jarman (Interim Director for Children's Services), Cathy Lewis (Communications Officer (Internal)), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance), Sally Wernick (Strategic Lead for Safeguarding and Quality - Adults) and Helen Whitby (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, 5 July 2018

Apologies for Absence

14 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Derek Beer and Steven Lugg.

Code of Conduct

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

Minutes

16 The minutes from the meeting held on 30 January 2018 were agreed and signed.

Public Participation

17 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.

Early Intervention and Prevention

18 The Committee considered a report by the Interim Director for Children's Services on early intervention and prevention with a focus on children, young people and families in Dorset. The report had been requested by the Committee at the last meeting.

The purpose of early intervention and prevention (EiP) was to work together on a multi-agency basis in a preventative way in order to divert or reduce demand on expensive public services in the longer term. A reduction in demand on services and

greater social cohesion had been recorded in areas adopting EiP compared to greater spend, less cohesion and more crime and anti-social behaviour in authorities who had not adopted EiP. There were now clear principles on which EiP was based, and some councils had demonstrated that the return on every pound invested was £7.

Dorset's EiP work was based on Family Partnership Zones (FPZs), which were based around seven school pyramids. They had only recently been established and a return on investment was not expected for approximately 15 months. There were four tests to demonstrate whether the investment was successful - a reduction in the number of children coming into care, fewer children with child protection plans, less referrals and fewer school exclusions.

In discussion the following were highlighted:-

- the pressure put on Portland families by the lack of school transport, how this might lead to increased exclusions and the need for early intervention
- the report from young researchers as part of the review on isolation and loneliness being undertaken by the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The findings showed that 22% of responders did not feel supported by their parents or safe at home. The report would be distributed to members of the Committee when it was available.
- members' involvement in FPZs
- the need for better connection between FPZs and youth services, particularly in Purbeck

In response, the Interim Director explained that one of the aims of EiP was to try to reduce people's dependency on services by providing an earlier offer of help.

Members had a role in scrutinising the return on investment and testing out the principles being followed. The update report from the Interim Director confirmed that the Council should be in a position to have the outcomes of an early assessment of impact and return on investment by May 2018. This would assess the revised arrangements against the four key outcomes measures that had been agreed at the inception of the new arrangement. The Director agreed to provide this information to the members of the Committee as soon as they were available. It was also confirmed that figures about return on investment would be incorporated and reported through the Outcomes Focused Monitoring Report in future.

Members noted that an update report on Youth Services was scheduled to be provided for the meeting on 5 July 2018.

Resolved

That officers provide further evidence after May 2018 that the Council's investment in EiP is working and delivering results which can be expected.

Recruitment and Retention Work in Adult Social Care

19 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Director for Adult Care on recruitment and retention work in Adult Social Care.

Members noted that last year a work force plan had been developed for adult social care in order to identify priorities, meet challenges, improve resilience and capacity to deliver complex work. As a result, recruitment had been more successful and the overall situation had improved. More staff had been employed to meet increased demand as a result of Mental Health Capacity Act/Deprivation of Liberty cases in recognition of the Council's safeguarding role. The workforce was currently undergoing a two year major transformation programme and additional funding from the Better Care Fund had been provided for hospital teams in order to deliver

improved performance for transfers of care. This funding would be at risk if performance did not meet set targets. It was essential that there was sufficient capacity, and recruitment and retention initiatives, in order for the Council to meet its responsibilities.

Members were assured that any use of agency staff to cover vacancies/sickness had always been within budget, that vacancy rates had fallen from 15.5% in May 2017 to 8% more recently, the unqualified workforce had reduced from 5% to 3% and work by managers and HR colleagues had led to a reduction in sickness absence from 10.9 days to 7.8 days.

With regard to the future, the introduction of the MOSAIC ICT system for both children and adults would address new demands and improve workflow, the Council was looking to develop its own staff, develop a peripatetic scheme and carry out a recruitment and retention review to ensure salaries were competitive.

Members fully supported having a qualified workforce and asked about incentives. They were assured that there were regular reviews to ensure that jobs were competitive, training as a means of future development was offered, and everything was done to show that working for Dorset was a positive experience. Recruitment of permanent staff was a priority in order to increase capacity and agency staff were only employed as a last resort,

The Cabinet Member for Safeguarding asked whether the Council was doing anything to help providers with their recruitment difficulties. In response it was explained that commissioners were looking at the sector wide workforce and an update would be provided to the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Cabinet Member for Health and Care added that workforce was a key work stream within the Sustainability and Transformation Plan and that hospitals and health trusts were also experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties. She acknowledged the difficulty in some rural areas of finding domiciliary care workers to enable patients to be discharged from hospital and reported that she was to meet with Somerset colleagues to find out about their use of micro businesses to grow the workforce.

Noted

Traffic Collisions Update

20 The Committee received a verbal update from the Chairman of the Task and Finish Group (the Group) on Road Traffic Collisions. The Committee were also provided with a written update.

The current Road Casualty Reduction Plan was to be refreshed in order to maintain the focus on activity and understand the Council's role in improving outcomes. This would set a baseline from which performance could be judged. It would not include unrealistic targets which the Council would have no control over, but ones which, if not achieved, the Council could progress towards. The Plan would be provided for the Committee to consider in due course. The Group had discussed the need for a driver education campaign and the identification of rural routes for hard standings for speed cameras which, it was hoped, would impact on driving patterns across the county.

With regard to whether it would be easy for the public to report drivers for use of drink, drugs or badly maintained vehicles, it was explained that there would need to be an education and learning campaign to increase awareness. The Council might also be able to learn from other local authorities' experience.

It was suggested that 20mph zones be introduced around schools at specific times of the day. Although the Group had not considered this, it would be raised with officers.

Any suggestions which would contribute towards road safety would be welcomed by the Group.

Members noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner hoped to digitalise speed cameras and introduce an average speed check, and that the Group had previously discussed average speed

A more detailed report would be provided for the next meeting.

Resolved

That a more detailed report, giving clear recommendations of those priority areas for initial focus, be provided for the next meeting.

Outcomes Focused Monitoring Report, March 2018

21 The Committee considered a report by the Interim Director for Children's Services which set out progress against the 2017-18 Corporate Plan, the population indicators for the Safe outcome, and the associated performance measures which showed the County impact on outcomes.

Particular attention was drawn to areas where there were negative trends in performance and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of aspects relating to these. It was hoped that early intervention strategies discussed earlier in the meeting would have a positive impact on the number of children coming into care and the number of children having a child protection plan.

One member explained that, in the long term, early intervention should reduce the number of children in care, an early indication of its success should be its impact on children in need. She was also disappointed in the increase in first time entrants to the criminal justice system.

Although the Interim Director for Children's Services had indicated earlier in the meeting that there were four performance indicators relating to early intervention and prevention, only three were currently reported on. There was no indicator relating to the number of children excluded from school as this was not seen as a particular issue in Dorset. However, officers would consider how to report on exclusion figures and incorporate these into future reports.

With regard to anti-social behaviour and crime reduction, members noted that the Criminal Justice Board, partners and agencies had clear roles in seeking to address these issues, alongside the Community Safety Partnership. One member referred to an initiative currently being discussed by the Dorset Police and Crime Panel who will be seeking opportunities for closer integration and discussions between the various agencies and forums to achieve better outcomes.

Resolved

That officers consider how to report on school exclusion figures in future.

Work Programme

22 The Committee considered its work programme.

Members were reminded that items on Youth Service Provision, Whole Family Approach (focused on the elderly), an update on domestic abuse and elective home education were to be considered on 5 July 2018. An update on Road Traffic Collisions had been added to that agenda, alongside the outcomes of the assessment of return from investment on Family Partnership Zones, which had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

One member raised the concern about possible policy changes being considered and introduced prior to forthcoming Local Government Reform and asked where these arrangements would be scrutinised. It was agreed that this would be brought to the attention of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 25 April 2018. Members were reminded that they also had the ability to undertake scrutiny exercises outside of formal Committee meetings.

The Chairman suggested a Task and Finish Group be established to look at corporate parenting and Cllr Toni Coombs agreed to be involved.

Resolved

That items on Youth Service Provision, Whole Family Approach (focused on the elderly), a domestic abuse update, elective home education, return on investment from Family Partnership Zones and an update on Road Traffic Collisions be provided for the meeting on 5 July 2018.

Questions from County Councillors

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

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 11.26 am