

Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

Minutes - 5 February 2019

Attendance

Members of the Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Simon Bennett (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur
Cllr Sohail Khan
Cllr Linda Leach (Chair)
Cllr Asha Mattu
Cllr Barbara McGarrity
Cllr Anwen Muston
Cllr Susan Roberts MBE

Employees

Kathy Cole-Evans

Strategy Co-ordinator, Wolverhampton DV
Forum

Earl Piggott-Smith

Scrutiny Officer

Karen Samuels

Head of Community Safety

David Watts

Director of Adult Services

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

1 **Apologies**

There were no apologies received for the meeting.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3 **Minutes of previous meetings**

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

4 **Matters arising**

Minute 5 – The West Midlands Police and Crime Plan 2016-20

Scrutiny Officer advised that further to the panel discussion about the future of the Wednesfield Police Station. The APPC had confirmed that no decision had been made about whether the station would be closed. Further updates would be provided when available.

Minute 6 - Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2019-2020

David Watts, Director of Adult Services, advised that original request for a briefing paper had been actioned following a later meeting with Cabinet Member for Resources who provided the information. The Scrutiny Officer agreed to contact the Alison Shannon, Chief Accountant, to ask for the information to be provided.

5 **City of Wolverhampton Safeguarding Statement**

David Watts, Director of Adult Services, presented the report on behalf of the Head of Safeguarding. The Director of Adults outlined the background to the report and invited the panel to comment on the two draft samples for the safeguarding statement. A report with a recommendation for the final layout of the statement will be presented to Cabinet on 20 March 2019 for approval.

The panel welcomed the report and discussed the content of the different safeguarding statements. The panel suggested the list of priorities should be changed and grouped together in themed areas rather than being listed.

The panel discussed the cover arrangements during the period of absence by the Head of Safeguarding. The Head of Adult Services reassured the panel that the necessary interim changes had been made to ensure the Council continues to meet its safeguarding responsibilities.

The panel welcomed greater clarity about the responsibility to deliver the aims detailed in the draft safeguarding statement.

The panel discussed the safeguarding issues relating to the training of licensed taxi drivers. The panel requested details about what additional training is given to taxi drivers after they have been issued with a licence. The Head of Adult Services agreed to investigate and report back to the panel.

Resolved:

1. The panel comments on draft safeguarding statement to be considered as part of the consultation.
2. The Head of Adult Services to provide details on any follow up safeguarding training given to taxi drivers after they been issued with a licence.

6 **Healthy Ageing Portfolio Public Health**

Dr Ankush Mittal, Consultant in Public Health, gave briefing on the work being done to support the aims of the Healthy Ageing Portfolio, as part of the Public Health team. Dr Mittal outlined the structure of the Healthy Ageing team and discussed the workstreams and associated performance targets of the portfolio.

Dr Mittal outlined the local and wider context for the work of the team. The team work with members of the Adult Social Care team in responding to issues ranging from dementia and social isolation to work with partners to meet the needs of older people. The team also provides support to colleagues across the Council and also with outside organisations such as Age UK and care homes.

The panel thanked Dr Mittal for the presentation.

The panel discussed the extent to which care homes were equipped to provide the support needed and also give a welcoming environment to meet the needs of same sex couples.

Dr Mittal explained the role in Public Health function in reducing health and inequalities and there is a recognition about the need to improve the take up of services where certain groups are not represented or who need further support. The Director of Adult Services added that the Council has a Quality Assurance team who check on regulated services, which also inspects the quality of provision of care and support services and the extent to which they are meeting their assessed needs. During the assessment by the team a meeting will be held with the relatives and carers to get evidence about the quality of care given, which will include information about standards of inclusion. The team will make an assessment about how the provider is meeting the whole the needs of the person.

The panel discussed the provision of meals in care home and the importance of proper monitoring to ensure dietary needs of residents are being met.

Resolved:

1. The panel agreed to note the briefing paper.
2. The panel agreed to include the work of the healthy ageing portfolio in the future agendas.

7 **Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy - 2019 - 2022 - Consultation**
Karen Samuels, Head of Community Safety, introduced the report to the panel. The Head of Community Safety introduced Kathy Cole-Evans, Strategy Co-ordinator/Manager Domestic Violence Forum, to the panel to contribute to the discussion.

The Head of Community Safety outlined the reasons for wanting to align workstreams as part of the strategy document and the expected outcomes. The Head of Community Safety commented on the issue of trafficking of vulnerable people outside the Wolverhampton areas and the work being done to identify and support people, who were at risk of becoming a victim of other crimes.

The Head of Community Safety advised the panel that the strategy has adopted a public health approach towards reducing the number of young people getting involved with serious violence and exploitation, with a focus on early intervention and prevention work.

The Head of Community Safety outlined the strengthened governance arrangements to support the strategy. The Head of Community Safety commented on the training given to employees and frontline workers across the wider West Midlands. The Head of Community Safety briefed the panel on the public consultation which will end on 12 March 2019.

The panel were invited to comment on the strategy and respond to the list of questions in the report. The Head of Community Safety commented on the themes from the early feedback to the consultation and explained how the information would be considered at the next stage of the consultation.

The panel welcomed the strategy and supported the stated aims. The panel discussed the effectiveness of cross board working and the impact that the strategy would have on getting different agencies to work together. The Head of Community Safety commented on work done across the boundaries with different agencies and the strategy was intended to build on improving existing working arrangements by developing new approaches.

The panel commented on the level of support for shared priorities detailed in the strategy among the different agencies. The panel queried whether the strategy was Wolverhampton specific and focused on the issues affecting the area. The Head of Community Safety confirmed that the strategy will be focused on the issues affecting Wolverhampton but would also consider cross border issues by strengthening partnership working arrangements.

The panel discussed the important role of schools in the strategy and their response to the priorities and the extent to which they are supportive of them given their other competing priorities. The Head of Community Safety commented that schools were supportive of the strategy as it supports them in managing issues they are dealing with currently. The Head of Community Safety commented on good working relationship with Pupil Referral Units and the support from Headteachers who have been receptive to aims of the strategy.

The panel discussed the work done to engage members of the South Asian community in Wolverhampton to contribute to the development of the strategy. The Head of Community Safety commented on the work done to engage members of the community and the additional support provided by Public Health who have agreed to host a series of facilitated workshop sessions. The Head of Community Safety agreed to provide details of when the events will be held.

The panel were advised that both maintained schools and academies have been encouraged to get involved and contribute to the development of the strategy. In addition, information has been sent to all schools about the strategy and the approach is to be inclusive. The panel were advised that there will be an action plan that will deliver the strategy. The action plan will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

The panel commented on the important work of Pupil Referral Units in reducing the number of young people becoming involved in violence and queried the support given to them. The Head of Community Safety commented that following two deaths of young people a review was done and extra funding was given to improve the current offer by supporting groups such as Catch 22. The feedback has been really positive to the initiatives and there is work being done to extend the funding for a further year and build on the progress made.

The panel discussed the extent to which organisations listed in the strategy are committed to delivering it and how it would be monitored. The Head of Community Safety advised that there is commitment from partner agencies to work together and avoid silo working. The Head of Community Safety added that an expected outcome of the strategy will be improved information sharing and more targeted interventions as a result of smarter working between the different agencies.

The Head of Community Safety commented on the review of operational governance structures which should lead to a reduction in the number of meetings and improved working arrangements.

The panel discussed the need for ongoing training for employees and frontline workers. The Head of Community Safety commented on the work done to inform people of the support available and the referral process.

The panel welcomed the report and supported the aims of the strategy.

The panel were encouraged to complete the online consultation if they had any further comments they would like to make about the draft strategy.

Resolved:

1. The panel comments on the draft Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy consultation document to be considered in included in the draft report that will be presented to Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board meeting for approval.
2. The panel to be sent a final draft of the strategy document after it has been presented to Cabinet meeting on 10 April 2019.
3. Panel members are encouraged to make any further comments on the proposal by completing the online consultation form.

8 **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2020-2022 - Consultation**

Karen Samuels, Head of Community Safety, introduced the report to the panel. The Head of Community Safety introduced Kathy Cole-Evans, Strategy Co-ordinator/Manager Domestic Violence Forum, to the panel to contribute to the discussion.

The Head of Community Safety introduced the report to the panel and outlined the aims of the strategy, which builds on the progress of the previous strategy which ended in 2019. The Head of Community Safety commented on work done to align services to reduce the risk of violence against girls and women.

The Head of Community Safety while highlighting the success of the previous strategy added there was acceptance that there was still more work to be done. The Head of Community Safety commented that the strategy had been updated to include stalking and harassment as a new area focus.

The Head of Community Safety commented on the work of the Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum (WDVF) which had led to the inclusion of stalking and harassment as part of the refresh of the strategy. The Head of Community Safety commented that while 83% of reported victims are women, there is a recognition that local and nationally, that there are both female and male victims and perpetrators. This aspect is reflected in the refreshed strategy. The Head of Community Safety outlined the six themes covered by the strategy.

The members of the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership will be responsible for the governance and delivery of the strategy. The Strategy Co-ordinator advised that the WDVF had representatives from all the key organisations and the necessary building blocks are in place to respond to the needs of victims. The Strategy Co-ordinator

commented on the range of training given to 3,500 frontline staff and community groups to both raise awareness of the issues and to recognise the signs of people at risk, so that cases can be referred to the appropriate agency. The Strategy Co-ordinator welcomed suggestions from the panel about local groups that could be visited to talk about the issue of violence against girls and women. The closing date for the public consultation is 12 March 2019 and panel members were encouraged to contribute.

The Head of Community Safety gave a brief summary of the responses received and the key themes. The issue of 'breast ironing' was highlighted as an emerging concern, there was no evidence of any local cases.

The panel were invited to comment on the strategy. The panel suggested that the strategy should be revised to include a reference to the impact and use of social media which contribute to issues such as harassment and stalking. The Head of Community Safety agreed to include a reference to social media in the strategy. The panel queried the work done to raise awareness of the issue of FGM among different communities and also to involve representatives of the LGBT community in the consultation.

The Head of Community panel reassured the panel that representatives of LGBT community while not listed in the draft have been consulted about the strategy and would welcome any suggestions of groups that should be contacted. The Strategy Co-ordinator commented on the work being done with hospitals and local GPs to offer training and advice on how to raise the issue and their responsibilities to report safeguarding concerns.

In addition, work is being done with Refugee Migrant Centre (RMC). The work is being funded by a grant from NHS England and is intended to develop community champions. The community champions would include professionals and also members of the community who would be given safeguarding training and awareness to highlight the fact that the practice is illegal, and the long-term damage caused. The Head of Community advised the panel that 6 February 2019 is International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation and the work done to promote awareness as part of multi-agency work with the police and others. The Head of Community commented on the domestic violence training given to the police to help them deal sensitively with victims. This work is supported by specialist training given to police officers with responsibility for this area of work.

The Strategy Coordinator advised that a revised domestic violence strategy will be published by West Midlands Police. The panel discussed the impact on the work of organisations such as Haven of migrants and their dependent families people who due to their immigration status have no recourse to public funds and therefore not entitled to certain welfare benefits,

The Strategy Coordinator invited panel members to consider becoming community champions to support people and give advice on domestic violence and proposed making the training mandatory for all employees. The Strategy Coordinator commented on local people recruited as part of community champions initiative. The panel were encouraged to become community champions and if interested to contact the Strategy Coordinator for further details.

The panel discussed the issue of vulnerable groups and the level of representatives from groups such as LGBT Alliance and the extent to which they have been encouraged to be involved in the consultation. The Head of Community Safety confirmed that since the report was published contact has been made with representatives of LGBT Alliance and would welcome any suggestions of other groups that the panel think would be willing to get involved in the consultation.

The panel discussed the opportunities to work with representative of local faith communities to raise awareness of the campaign. The panel agreed to receive information about the work of the community safety team.

The panel welcomed the report and the progress made.

Resolved:

1. The panel comments of the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2019 -2020 to considered as part of the public consultation.
2. Panel members interested in becoming a community champion to contact the Head of Community Safety.

9 **Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel - Draft Work Programme**

Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, presented the draft work programme for information about the agenda for the next pane meeting. The Scrutiny Officer suggested that the workstreams detailed in the Health Ageing could be included in the work programme for 2019/20. The Scrutiny Officer agreed to discuss further with Dr Mittal and agree a timetable about when reports could be presented to the panel.

The panel agreed to look at the issue of loneliness among older people as future work programme topic

Resolved:

The panel agreed to the update to the work programme and add the issue of loneliness and the themes in the Health Ageing programme.

The meeting closed at 8pm.