

Council – 14 February 2019

Outcomes of Overview and Scrutiny Work July to December 2018

Report of the Chairman of Corporate Review

Background

This report provides an overview of scrutiny work that has been undertaken since the beginning of July to the end of December 2018, highlighting how the Select Committees have added value to the democratic process and addressed the priorities of the County Council and its partners.

The Chairmanship and individual Membership of the Select Committees was agreed at the Annual General meeting of the County Council on 24 May 2018.

Corporate Review Committee



Councillor David Brookes
Chairman of Corporate Review Committee

The Committee met on six occasions during the July to December period. On the 11 July the Committee considered a call-in of the exempt **Cabinet Decision - Mental Health Social Care Assessment and Case Management**. Following questions and debate, the Committee resolved that the decision be implemented as set out in the original Decision Notice.

On the 7 August the Committee met and looked at the **Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 1 2018/19**. At the end of Quarter 1, the overall assessment on the council's performance and financial position was Amber. The latest revenue forecast outturn showed an overspend of £3.2m (0.6%), compared to the balanced position at the time of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The pressures related to an increase in medical assessment costs (£0.1m), increase in costs of new Care Home placements (£2.2m) and pressures due to additional Looked After Children (LAC) (£2.3m).

The Committee debated the use of £2.160 million of contingency funds to support Children's services; the risk of further overspends and how this can be managed and the work undertaken to stabilise and reduce the LAC figures.

In relation to the estimated 17,000 new jobs to be created by 2024, a question was asked on how many would be filled by Staffordshire people, and were we sure the education programme was fit to ensure that Staffordshire people have the best chance of getting these jobs. In response, it was thought that over the last 5 years the County had been very successful at securing and developing investment in

higher education to ensure the right skills were available for local need. The report was noted.

At the same meeting the **Staffordshire County Council's Lobbying Strategy** was considered. The Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Connected Staffordshire, outlined the County's vision. The Committee noted both the lobbying and influencing activity undertaken by elected members and the progress that is being made by the Council as part of the wider delivery of the Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022: Connected Staffordshire.

The Corporate Review Committee Meeting met on **3 September 2018** and considered the **All Party Member Group (APMG) report on Innovation**. The Cabinet Support Member for the APMG, presented the final report which had been set up to look at "How do we promote children's emotional and mental wellbeing to reduce referrals to specialist services at Staffordshire County Council and other partners by intervening earlier to ensure better long-term outcomes?" The key parts which the APMG had focused on included: improving access to information, training and awareness resources; improving community networks; strengthening members role within communities; building resilience of children and young people and the place-based approach; development of outcomes across the partnership to monitor children's emotional wellbeing. The Committee were informed that the purpose of the report was to reduce the demand on services like CAMHS through for example, better use of early intervention in Children's Centres.

At the same meeting the Committee gave consideration to the **Outcomes of Overview and Scrutiny Work January - June 2018 report** and the report was approved for submission to County Council.

At the meeting held on the 4 October, the Committee considered the **Call In of the Cabinet Decision - Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2019 – 2024**. The decision had been called in as the Lead Member felt that many of the county's residents benefited from the services of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) and it was important to express his and that of the other members who had called the decision in, views and concerns. Following questions and debate, the Committee resolved that the decision should be implemented as set out in the original Decision Notice.

On the 2 November the Committee considered the **Integrated Performance Report Quarter 2** report. At the end of Quarter 2, the overall assessment on the council's performance and financial position was reported as being Amber. Areas of risk were in Adult Social Care and support for Staffordshire's most vulnerable children, together with organisational challenges in terms of the capacity to deliver both in 2018/19 and future years. The latest revenue forecast outturn showed a forecast underspend of £1.578m (0.3%). At Quarter 1, it was agreed that £2.160m of contingency would be used to support Children's Services, reducing their forecast overspend. This reduced the centrally held contingency from £3.5m to £1.340m.

The Leader of the Council reminded Members that the Council had received a share of the additional £240m (£3.5m for Staffordshire) for Adult Social Care to help to relieve pressures on the NHS such as supporting people in their homes. The report

was published before the government budget. The longer term funding of social care still needed to be addressed.

Members questioned the Economic Growth Programme; pressures on some social care facilities; long term debt; the number of looked after children; prisoner related care activities; and the European skills programme.

Also, at the meeting, Members considered the **Customer Feedback and Complaints Service – Annual Report 2017-2018** which showed that there had been a sharp rise in the number of complaints in the last year. Officers informed the Committee that there had been a 28% increase in social care complaints which was specific to the couple's financial reassessment and the change in home care service provider.

At its meeting held on 6 December the Committee considered a Call-in of the Cabinet Decision, Pan Staffordshire Approach to Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health. The decision had been called in as it was felt that i) there was Insufficiently focussed on the voices of children and young people, ii) Lack of evidence of any robust engagement or collaboration with Staffordshire schools to develop school based programmes to support early intervention with pupils and parents, and iii) The main recommendations and conclusions of the All Party Member Group (APMG) Innovation Report into the mental health and wellbeing of young people had been disregarded. Following a debate, the Committee resolved to agree with the original decision as set out in the original Decision Notice.

The **MTFS Working Group** had met eight times with Cabinet portfolio holders and was due to produce a final report in January 2019.

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee



Councillor Ian Parry
Chairman Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

The Committee met on four occasions during the July to December period. The Committee met on the 19 July 2018 and discussed the **Economic Growth Capital and Development Programme and Growth Hub**. Members discussed the progress of specific projects, employment change over time and the calculation of employment outcomes. New statistics showed that just 1.3 per cent of Staffordshire's population was claiming out of work benefits. The Staffordshire claimant count figure was lower than both regional (2.8 per cent) and national (2.1 per cent) averages. For every £1 directly invested by the county council in the £204 million of projects currently 'live', the county council had been at the heart of leveraging in £13.60 of private sector and other investment. The Committee agreed that the work and progress of the Staffordshire County Council Economic Growth

Programme and the Growth Hub be noted; and that a breakdown of jobs by district and employment sector be provided to all members of the Council.

At the same meeting, the Committee considered a report on the **Elective Home Education Review (EHE)**. The review had been carried out by a joint review group of members from Prosperous Staffordshire and Safe and Strong Communities, as a result of the significant increase in EHE numbers, changes to many of the reasons for pupils becoming EHE, concern over safeguarding issues and changes to the EHE Policy. Mr Paul Snape, the EHE Review Group Chairman, introduced the report. Members noted that the Review Group had been impressed by the time, resource, level of commitment and dedication shown by the parents they met who had elected to home educate their children. However, they noted that those choosing to home educate for lifestyle/cultural/philosophical reasons, such as the parents that attended the inquiry, had reduced over the last three years. At the same time the number home educating to avoid risk of prosecution as a result of poor attendance had increased significantly, seeing a 27.4% rise over the last five years. There had also been a rise in the number home educating as a result of near exclusion (1.2% increase) and from emotional or behavioural difficulties (1.6%). The Review Group also considered the issue of unregistered schools.

Members noted the support given by EHE parents in helping produce the parent handbook for potential EHE parents and in training events for LA staff and the proposed development of an annual event to celebrate the achievements of the EHE community. The Select Committee congratulated the Review Group on their report and endorsed the recommendations for submitting to the appropriate Cabinet Member. The recommendations covered: the centred around the Cabinet Member supporting representation being made to Ofsted with regard to the mechanism in place to take account of the reasons for deregistration and, where there is a disproportionately high number de-registering for EHE, consider more closely the reasons behind this; Consideration of how staffing can be increased in recognition of the significant increase in the numbers of EHE and the consequent implications to work load and resources; and, supporting the introduction of a registration scheme for all children of statutory school age who are, or become, electively home educated and the Cabinet Member make representations and lobby in support of the current Private Members Bill introduced by Lord Soley on Home Education.

Councillors also received a report on **HS2 Construction Routes and Road Safety**.

Members were informed that the role of the County Council was to be the “voice” of Staffordshire and to secure, through petitioning and its place at the Planning Forum, the best possible mitigation for the County.

The Phase One Hybrid Bill had completed the Parliamentary process in both Houses and received Royal Assent in February 2017, making it an Act. This granted planning permission for the construction, operation and maintenance of HS2 Phase One. On 17 July 2017, the Phase 2a Hybrid Bill was deposited in Parliament. The Bill seeks powers to build the route from the West Midlands through Staffordshire to Crewe. This was at Committee Stage in the House of Commons, during which petitioners present their cases to Select Committee.

Through petitioning Phase One, the County Council had secured a lowering of 8km of the route in Lichfield and construction of the Handsacre link, connecting HS2 to

the West Coast Mainline. Through petitioning Phase 2a, the County Council had secured a suite of highways improvements totalling approximately £10m, a range of mitigations for the Stone railhead, and a range of environmental improvements including protection for veteran trees and hedgerows.

Members were informed that the County Council had been in discussion with HS2 Ltd. and other highway authorities along the line of the route to discuss matters of common interest such as getting the construction traffic routing correct was vital to ensure road safety matters were appropriately managed and the environmental impact was controlled. Members were advised that all complaints or queries from members of the public should be directed to: HS2enquiries@hs2.org.co.uk or Freephone: 08081 434 434.

The Committee noted the work undertaken to date on efforts to influence HS2 construction routes; the limited powers (as outlined in the phase 1 and phase 2a Hybrid Bill) available to the highway authority in respect of approving HS2 construction routes; and asked that all Members assist in raising awareness of the HS2 Helpline and email for all queries and complaints regarding construction.

Also, at the meeting, the Committee considered an exempt report on **Update on Section 53 Applications**. The Committee noted the extent and implications of the Section 53 application backlog and the directions from the Secretary of State for non-determination of applications and agreed to support the approach being proposed to tackle the backlog and directions; and asked for a brief update in six months' time outlining the numbers of applications which had been dealt with via delegation and by the Countryside and Rights of Way Panel.

The Committee met on the 19 September and considered a report updating them on the progress of the previously agreed **Infrastructure+ Action Plan** and on the progress of the extra £5m in-year (2018/19) investment in highway maintenance. Members were informed that previous recommendations of the Select Committee formed part of the Action Plan for the Customer and Communication Outcome Group that sat within the governance structure of the Infrastructure+ Contract. This group was now chaired by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, and wider membership was currently being reviewed. Feedback would be integrated into the design and ongoing development of the Portal, which addressed a number of the Select Committee's recommendations.

In relation to the recommendation that Community Highways Infrastructure Managers share details of meetings arranged with Parish Councils with the local County Member, concern was raised that this was not happening consistently, which was a cause of frustration for members. Similarly, although a request had been made to Staffordshire Borough and District Council planning officers that they publish highways (planning) responses that could pertain to housing developments as part of their Planning Committee minutes concern was expressed that this was not being done. It was agreed that it would be helpful to provide continuous reminders around these recommendations.

A member informed the Select Committee that they sat on the Outcomes Group, and welcomed representation from every district/borough. They felt that there would be a benefit to an Inspector attending the meetings to provide a holistic view from a

frontline staff member, and it was agreed that consideration would be given to this proposal.

The extra £5m investment strategy for 2018/19 was discussed and the programme for pothole repairs. The £2m additional investment for preventative surface treatments had supplemented the standard annual programme and would result in an additional 100 km of road network being protected against deterioration and the formation of potholes. Sample survey customer contact had started to show improvement in satisfaction with speed of response, scale of repair and quality of the work done.

The Committee also considered a report on **Delivering Housing in Staffordshire** and the proposed progression of two connected pieces of work to contribute towards the delivery of the Strategic Plan. These were a) The preparation of a Strategic Infrastructure Plan (SIP) to support the construction of homes and creating new jobs and b) A detailed feasibility study to understand the most appropriate way to develop appropriate housing, to enable the County Council to actively engage in the housing market, providing a leadership approach that would expedite the delivery of appropriate new homes across the County in a planned and sustainable fashion.

Members were informed that the objectives of this work were to deliver a robust strategy and “ask” of developers and funders to support infrastructure delivery. It was also to facilitate, enable and deliver planned housing growth in the numbers and tenure of new homes, so that the County had a range of accommodation that people could afford to buy or rent. A further objective was to generate a potential revenue income stream to support essential County Council services into the future, in the face of significant financial challenges. This would require an acceptance of financial and procedural parameters to established ways of working which some may find challenging. Members requested that they be involved in consultation on the strategy going forward and asked for a further update in six months’ time.

On the 15 November 2018 the Committee met to look at the **Staffordshire Freight Strategy 2018** prior to approval. The Committee had invited the Staffordshire Parish Council’s Association and a number of parish Councils to the meeting to take part in the debate. The Committee made the following suggestions, observations and comments on the strategy:

1. The Document needs to contain a Strategic Vision and stronger links to other Strategies such as the West Midlands Freight Strategy and other neighbouring authorities such as Derbyshire, Shropshire and Cheshire.
2. We need stronger links to the Local Planning Authorities (LPA) and the development of housing and its impact on the road network and demand for goods delivered by HCV’s.
3. The diversion of freight from villages and town centres, should this be central to the strategy?
4. M5/M6 link road and the movement of traffic from the M6 onto the County network was an issue when for example, traffic is diverted off the M6 due to its closure.
5. Rural network roads are not sufficient to handle the HGVs
6. Overnight parking of HCVs and the provision of lorry parks needs to be addressed.

7. Freight Sector use large vehicles to deliver locally, these are often too big for the roads. There are few local/ smaller distribution centres now.
8. We need to work with the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner on Police and Fire routes.
9. There is no specific link to M6 Toll in the strategy and how this impacts on adjoining roads and a long term view.
10. Links to LPAs as industrial units (sheds) are built in inappropriate locations without due consideration of the size of vehicles using them or hours of opening and the impact on local communities.
11. Local MPs' role in lobbying, particularly to promote some of the national/legislative changes required to implement this strategy for example enforcement of weight restrictions and the use of smart technology.
12. The use of domestic 'Sat Navs' by large freight carriers which don't highlight bridge heights or weight restrictions, and could there be a nation grid for Freight operators to use?
13. Stoke-on-Trent links need to be recognised in the report.
14. There needs to be a move to get as much freight as possible onto rail e.g. could large industrial parks which are built on old train paths (Stoke and Lichfield) have the lines reopened as part of the planning requirements?
15. Weight restriction enforcement - can we use Automatic Number Plate Recognition (AMPR) or Community Enforcement like Speed Watch to enforce?
16. The action plan mentions Community Infrastructure Officers delivering some of the actions and there was concern that these officers would not have adequate capacity.
17. Need to consider the cost of HCVs on smaller roads such as collapsed drains and grass verges.
18. The Committee welcomed the Staffordshire Freight and Community Forum and the work it did and asked to see the terms of reference.

The Committee met on the 14 December and considered the **Education and Skills Strategy: A Partnership Framework for Staffordshire**. Members were informed that, whilst Ofsted had judged that 84% of schools in Staffordshire were "Good" or "Outstanding", overall outcomes for Staffordshire's young people remained below average, particularly at Key Stage four and five. There was also too much variation between schools.

The draft Strategy was a "partnership framework" developed by a reference group of education and skills providers and partners from across Staffordshire. It proposed a shared leadership approach that was evidence based, outcomes-focused and underpinned by peer support and challenge. It required the support of the Council and from across the education and skills sector. The consultation would run until 21 December 2018, after which the reference group would review the responses and it was anticipated that the final strategy would launch by April 2019.

A member commented that it was important to give sufficient consideration to the impact of children's mental health and wellbeing on school performance. The Cabinet Member responded that this strategy was overlaid with the SEND strategy and gave a commitment to put more funding into the High Needs Block should this become available. A member also commented that it would be important for the

strategy to be more strident in stating the expectation of commitment from partners. It was essential that the Partnership Board had representatives from the appropriate level within the organisations that they were representing in order that they had the authority to make decisions. It was also suggested that the Board should draw on examples of best practice from schools in similar settings, and that greater emphasis should be put on the role of parents in the education system.

In order to enable better monitoring of variations members requested that the data on performance indicators contain a further breakdown by localities in Staffordshire. They also asked that details of the number of students who leave education and go on to employment be included, as well as details of the type of employment. Members recognised that there was a need to upskill the workforce in the County and that it was important to work with employers on this, so that more children left school “work ready” with a broader skills base. It was acknowledged that levels of aspiration were low in Staffordshire, and that the link between aspirations at primary school and the transition to secondary school should be investigated in more depth. A member commented that they would like to see an aspirational culture reflected throughout the education system and requested that within the principles included in the strategy the third principle be amended to say that every child and young person be “motivated” or “encouraged” to achieve. Members also commented that the phrase “equal opportunity” in this principle was questionable, given that there was competition for places in high performing schools. A Parent Governor representative queried whether the strategy only related to mainstream schools but was assured that it also aimed to raise attainment in special schools. Parent Governor representatives asked for the opportunity for a more creative conversation between parents and the local authority on education matters.

At the same meeting the Committee considered a report on a **Review of Elective Home Education - Executive Response Action Plan**. The Review Group had held an inquiry session where it had met with a range of Staffordshire parents who had elected to home educate their children, as well as head teachers and officers, to help establish the level of EHE in Staffordshire and the reasons for becoming EHE, specifically why the numbers of these had risen so significantly. The most significant rise in numbers was around poor school attendance and avoiding prosecution/exclusion. The Review Group had concerns over the reasons for this rise, which was mirrored nationally, and hoped that their recommendations would help to mitigate these concerns. Of the four recommendations which they had made, the Cabinet Member agreed three, namely:

- i. That the Cabinet Member support representations being made to Ofsted about the mechanism in place to take account of the reasons for de-registration and, where there is a disproportionately high number de-registering for EHE, consider more closely the reasons behind this.
- ii. That the Cabinet Member consider how the annual event to celebrate the achievements of the EHE community can be supported and facilitated.
- iii. That the introduction of a national registration scheme for all children of statutory school age who are, or become, electively home educated be supported and that the Cabinet Member be asked to make representations and lobby in support of the current Private Members’ Bill introduced by Lord Soley on Home Education. Members requested a copy of this letter of support.

In relation to the fourth recommendation about staffing being increased in recognition of the significant increase in the numbers of EHE and the consequent implications to workload and resources the Cabinet Member responded that this would not be possible, given the significant financial challenges which the Council was facing. He informed members that he was exploring the possibility of recruiting teachers to analyse the EHE teaching curriculums which home educators were following. Members reiterated their concerns regarding the numbers of children taken out of schools, the possibility of parents being coerced into EHE, and potential safeguarding issues. They agreed that it would be important to continue to monitor this area in the future.

There had also been a **Joint Prosperous Select Committee and Safe and Strong Select Committee** meeting held on 18 December to consider the **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy**. The Strategy set out the vision in Staffordshire for children and young people aged 0-25 years with SEND. It had been jointly developed with partners across Education, Social Care and Health, with the opinions of children and young people with SEND and their families having been taken into account.

Members were informed that the total SEND population in Staffordshire had increased by 33% over the last five years, with the number of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) having risen year on year, currently at over 4,700. Staffordshire had more children with special educational needs (SEN) attending special schools and fewer attending mainstream schools than the rest of the Country. Over 50% of Staffordshire pupils with EHCPs were being educated in special schools, in and outside of the County, with almost 30% being educated in mainstream schools. The remaining 20% were being taught at colleges and in other education provision.

The SEND Strategy hoped to improve outcomes and set out the Councils priorities. The Committee queried the increase in Staffordshire's SEND population and whether this was an issue unique to Staffordshire. The criteria for a EHCP differed from those for the previous statements of special education need which also impacted on numbers. Behavioural issues, which had previously been outside of SEN, were now included in SEND and the top age for SEND had been extended to 25 years (rather than 18 years), both of which effected the SEND figures. Better awareness around SEND also contributed to the increase, as did earlier and better identification. Concerns were shared over the cost implications of a continued rise in SEND numbers, with the current cost being £75m, whilst the grant received from central government was £70m.

Members were aware that Staffordshire had a large number of school exclusions compared with other LAs, and that pupils with SEND faced higher rates of exclusion than their peers.

Members were informed that a Local Area Review had been undertaken recently by the CQC and Ofsted. The Review Outcome was expected early in the New Year and this would help inform work going forward. Members were concerned over the labelling of a pupil with SEND and the negative impact this could have. There was also concern over Government statistics for SEN and comparative levels. They

requested comparative data to enable accurate benchmarking and a clear assessment of progress made once the Strategy was implemented. Concerns were shared over the cost implications of a continued rise in SEND numbers,

Members questioned how the success of the Strategy would be measured. The Cabinet Member detailed how the success would be evidenced through a number of outcomes including: earlier identification of special needs across the spectrum and support in mainstream schools at an earlier; special schools being more specialised; a reduction in out of county school placements; a reduction in SEND travel to and from school; improvement measured differently; a reduction in the rates of school exclusions for children with special needs; more productive working between schools, families and the Partnership; and a reduction in the number of SEN cases going to tribunal.

Consultation on the new Strategy would run until 21 December 2018, with the consultation analysis and feedback influencing the final Strategy. The Joint Committee resolved that the comments and concerns raised by Select Committee Members be taken on board and influence the Consultation outcome; that comparative data be made available to enable accurate benchmarking and a clear assessment of progress made; and that Members actively encourage wider participation in the consultation.

Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee



Councillor John Francis
Chairman Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee

The Committee met on four occasions during the July to December period. The Committee met on the 10 July 2018 and considered a report on the **Provision of Places of Safety (PoS) under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act**. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had previously raised concerns over individuals being detained under Section 136 (S136) of the Mental Health Act (MHA) being taken to Police Stations and retained in police cells rather than a health-based Place of Safety. The Police and Crime Act 2017 made the use of Police Stations as Places of Safety a “never event”. Prior to this there had been a reliance on police stations to “hold” citizens awaiting a MHA assessment.

Staffordshire currently had two health based PoS, one in Newcastle and one in Stafford, with a number of routes for individuals detained under S136. The main course of action would be for a Police Constable or Street Triage staff to bring the individual into the PoS. The County Council has representation at S136 operational meetings. Since December 2017, there has been no detentions under S136 in Police Custody Suites. There had been a reduction in the use of S136 over the last year, although there had been a slight increase in S136 for under 18s. Members also heard that on 14 May 2018 there had been a Police And Crime Act (PACA) review, at which point there had been no adults or children detained under S136 at a Police Station since the commencement of PACA.

The Select Committee agreed that the Chairman write to the Staffordshire PCC advising him of their reassurance in the work undertaken to ensure those detained under S136 of the MHA are taken to health based PoS and never routinely retained in police custody.

At the same meeting, the Committee considered a report on **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Staffordshire, which included progress against the CSAF Action Plan**. The Select Committee has regularly received updates on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) since 2014. CSE continues to be a priority for Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) and its partners under their Child Sexual Abuse strategic priority. Members were updated on the work of the Child Sexual Abuse Forum (CSAF), its CSE Action Plan and the CSE Outcomes Framework and Risk Factor Matrix. Policies and protocols for Staffordshire licensing authorities in terms of issuing taxi licenses had been agreed. This had included level 1 safeguarding training and enhanced DBS checks for all taxi drivers seeking a license within Staffordshire. A recent Staffordshire inter authority audit showed that all authorities were adhering to these policies and protocols. Some Councils were also requiring drivers to sign up to the CRB updating service, enabling information to be current rather than updated every three years. The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Responsible Bodies Group (SSRGB) were considering recommending that all Staffordshire licensing authorities make this a requirement.

Concerns were shared over Wolverhampton City Council taxi license charges. On average a license charge was between £190 to £220, however Wolverhampton were now charging £69. This had resulted in a significant increase in license applications to Wolverhampton, from 859 licenses last year to 9000 this year already. Concerns were raised as to whether the safeguarding standards and accountability were as stringent as those agreed within Staffordshire. There was an understanding that licenses were being awarded to drivers who may have a virtual base in Wolverhampton but who worked elsewhere. Representatives from Wolverhampton City Council were to be invited to the October meeting of the SSRBG to explain their licensing process and management. The Select Committee requested that they be informed of the outcome of the SSRBG meeting and that following the update, the Select Committee write to the LGA outlining their concerns over inconsistency of licensing authority practices and protocols and suggesting there is a need for best practice guidance, specifically with regard to safeguarding.

Members also discussed the potential difficulties and anxieties for parents of vulnerable young people who use the school taxi service. It was suggested that, where a parent felt uncomfortable, they should contact the school and they would be able to check/challenge the driver on arrival. Members were also concerned that taxi drivers could be exploited and receiving below the national minimum wage. The County Commissioner for Community Safety, Children and Families agreed to explore this.

Members heard about the work of the CSE Coordinator, whose post was funded through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and worked across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. Examples of how this post was working well were shared with the Select Committee, including the "Loud Mouth" event and the follow-on work undertaken by Stafford College.

A gap had been identified in the local coordination of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) and Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in schools. The OPCC hoped for a more consistent approach to the delivery of areas of PSHE, including CSE. They had provided some funding and were piloting an approach to PSHE in two Districts with a view to the learning from this being rolled out across the County.

At the same meeting, the Committee received an exempt briefing note on **Child Sexual Exploitation Learning from Reviews**.

On the 3 September 2018, the Committee considered the second quarters **Quarterly Performance Update against Safeguarding Indicators**. The Select Committee had requested Key Performance Indicator data on adult safeguarding to help inform areas for future work. The Cabinet Support Member for Adult Safeguarding introduced the report, highlighting the increase of 18% in the number of concerns referred around abuse or neglect and that 45.1% of these converted to a Section 42 enquiry. Whilst Staffordshire had seen a significant increase in referral rates it had seen a decrease in conversion, leading to Staffordshire's conversion rate being more in line with national data. The possible reasons for the increase were discussed. The committee resolved to receive details of developments in improving consistency of data recording, including the work undertaken both locally and regionally and the results of the audit on the underlying reasons for repeat referrals; and, that the three year comparative data on the safeguarding indicators be circulated to Members after the meeting.

The **Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Adult's Social Services Annual Report 2017/18** was also considered at the July meeting. From April 2017 the Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust co-ordinated all statutory complaints relating to adult social care services. In line with the previous year there had been a 28% increase in complaints received, due to an increase in complaints regarding financial re-assessments for non-residential care. The number of complaints going to independent investigation had increased by 60%, with two complaints concerning the care provided by a home care agency and three complaints around residential care. The number of complaints investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman had risen by 58% from the previous year, with complaints around couple's financial re-assessment for non-residential care. The main theme for Stage 1 complaints had been changes in domiciliary care contracts.

The Committee also considered the **Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Children's Social Services Annual Report 2017/18**. There had been 54 Stage 1 complaints during this period, 5 considered to Stage 2 and 3 considered to Stage 3. Members also received a breakdown of 130 Corporate Complaints considered at Stage 1. Members noted that of the 5 Stage 2 Independent Investigation findings 11% of complaints made were partially upheld. In most instances each individual complaint had a number of complaints within it. Within the 5 Stage 2 complaints investigated there were 55 individual complaint elements made. The investigation may feel that some elements of the complaint should be upheld whilst others are not and may therefore return a finding of "partially upheld". The report was received.

At the same meeting a report was considered on the **Edge of Care Inquiry**. The inquiry had been set up to understand why there had been a rise in the number of

children becoming looked after in Staffordshire, the preventative measures in place and whether further initiatives could be developed to prevent children from coming into the care system. The Chairman of the Inquiry Group, Mr Conor Wileman, presented the report and recommendations. He outlined some of the challenges the Inquiry Group had faced and noted that some of the data identifying the reasons for children becoming looked after had been 2015/16, before the rise in number in 2016/17, making it difficult for the Group to establish the reasons for the rise in numbers. Whilst current data was always available, this was not validated until the end of each year and therefore there was some anxiety about publishing non validated data. The Committee agreed both the report and recommendations for submission to the Cabinet Member for his executive response and that the Inquiry Group Chairman attend the Corporate Parenting Panel to present his report.

The Committee considered an exempt report **Child Sexual Exploitation - Learning From Reviews**.

On the 8 November the Committee considered a report on the **Children and Young People who go Missing from Home and Care in Staffordshire**. 'Catch 22' had completed between 70-80% of missing person interviews whilst the national average was 38%. Interviews for missing episodes were given to all children suffering an episode who were resident in Staffordshire, including those who were placed by other local authorities (LAs) in Staffordshire care homes. Examples of successful work was shared with the Select Committee. Members heard that whilst every effort was made to interview a child within 72 hours of an episode, this was not always possible. The Select Committee asked for an update on the Catch 22 contract in six month's time.

At the same meeting the Committee received a presentation on the **Trading Standards, Rogue Traders & Doorstep Crime**. The work of Trading Standards from a safeguarding perspective was intelligence led with a budget of £1.9m and included:

- protecting vulnerable adults from scams and rogue traders;
- prosecuting fraudsters and doorstep criminals;
- protecting children from age restricted products;
- safety from dangerous goods, e.g. electrical, cosmetics and toys;
- animal health and welfare, supporting farmers to sustain safe and traceable food. This included work on bovine tuberculosis and foot and mouth disease;
- ensuring food is described correctly and with safe ingredients, in particular the issues around allergens;
- removing dangerous counterfeit products from sale; and
- supporting business and policing a fair and competitive trade environment.

During 2017/18 Staffordshire Trading Standards received details of 61 scam victims in Staffordshire identified by partners, and undertook 46 interventions. The Committee asked for an updated report in twelve month's time.

The Committee considered a report on **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)**. These provide protection for the most vulnerable people living in residential homes, nursing homes or hospital environments. As a response to the nationwide surge in DoLS referrals the Department of Health provided a grant in 2015/16, which in Staffordshire amounted to £377,000. This enabled the Council to commission

assessments through a social work agency and the backlog of outstanding assessments was kept to a minimum. However, this grant had not continued into 2016/17. Having sought legal advice it has been confirmed that the Council is responsible for funding this assessment. A commissioning process is currently being identified to support this for 2019/2020. The cost of these assessments is not clear but is anticipated to be in the region of £130,000 per annum. This has been built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as a cost pressure. Members suggested that the Cabinet should reconsider whether the resource allocation for DoLS was appropriate.

On the 11 December the Committee met to consider the exempt report on **Care Home Quality Assurance Data (Including the role of Healthwatch in the Quality Assurance Process)**. The Select Committee received details of the actions taken to improve services and the introduction of the Quality Improvement Process (QIP), which was a multi-agency approach focusing on proactive intervention at an earlier stage.

The Committee also considered the **Edge of Care Inquiry - Executive Response** setting out the 10 recommendations (eight of the 10 recommendations were agreed), the proposed action, lead officer and deadlines; and the **Review of Elective Home Education - Executive Response Action Plan** (three of the four recommendations were agreed).

There had also been a Joint Prosperous Select Committee and Safe and Strong Select Committee meeting held on 18 December to consider the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy (see previous Committee).

Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee



Cllr Johnny McMahon
Chairman Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee

The Committee met on five occasions during the July to December period and had two Accountability sessions and two workshops/briefing sessions.

At its meeting on 9 July 2018, the Committee considered a report on **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) - Mental Health and Child Care** programme work stream. The programmes scope covered:

- Children and Young People
- Integrated Physical and Mental Health
- Suicide Prevention
- Out of Area Placement
- Mental Health Crisis/Urgent Care

Recruitment and workforce planning is the biggest challenge for the Trusts after finance. The Committee heard that nationally there is a Mental Health 5 year

forward plan which ideally would see a growth of 309 workers across Staffordshire. This could be done given the finance but currently, the growth was hoped to be 85 posts over both organisations. A number of questions were asked on:

- How the Trust would be working with employers to help get people with mental health issues into employment. There was a specialist employment service team which was seeing progress. This was a 10 year strategy and the third sector where also an important partner.
- The transition between Child and Adult Mental Health Services and what the trust was doing to ensure a seamless handover of services. The Trust was making it a priority to get it right.
- The difference in mortality rates for patients with mental health conditions in the North and South of the County. A Public Health Consultant had been appointed to analyse this information to ensure that issues aren't missed.
- Children with eating disorders and when they became urgent cases. It was felt that any eating disorder should be treated as urgent and that within four weeks a child's health could be seriously affected.
- Adolescent mental health and the effect of social media and how this was being addressed. There was currently a pilot programme taking place in the North of the County which involved a digital solution or aid which may work particularly well for those people who never access the service or who wouldn't necessarily meet the service access requirements.
- Dementia and End of Life services were equally important to CAMHS and that there was a lot of joint working in these areas.

At the same meeting the Committee also considered the **STP Prevention Programme work stream**. The six population groupings which are defined by age and other key characteristics are:

- Children
- Teenagers
- Maternity
- Working Age
- Adults with Multiple Complexities
- Older Age

The plans for each group will be tailored to respond to the specific circumstances in each area which have been based on the 8 District and Borough geographies. One of the main risks associated with the prevention programme was that it relied on others changing the way they work and historically there hadn't been much success of working with the communities to change culture. The Committee had a wide ranging debate on how this would work in the community and how preventative health initiatives would be communicated.

That the Committee recommend that the STP; monitor the improvement of healthy life expectancy; talk to the District and Borough Councils to establish what information they hold which may be useful to the prevention programme; and that diet and food be included in the prevention programme

The Committee also considered an exempt report on the **Adult Learning Disability Community Offer 2022 Programme** which enabled pre-decision scrutiny of the Adult Learning Disability Community Offer 2022 Programme.

On the 13 August 2018 the Committee considered a further **Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) work stream on the Workforce**. The workforce strategy was described as being made up of three parts which were the largest areas of challenge. These were:

- The sustainability pillar which covered: recruitment; retention; improving temporary staff utilisation; and reducing agency usage.
- The future workforce pillar focused on widening participation and developing new roles at all levels to improve supply of staff, including apprenticeships, Rotational apprenticeships, current bands 1-4 development, supply improvement, train the trainer and work experience for students.
- Transformation of the workforce pillar covered the planning of Clinical work streams, integration of Health and Social Care and transforming Primary Care.

A number of questions were asked covering:

- Staff redundancy and reemployment
- Future demand for staff
- Advertising vacant posts nationally and how Staffordshire was marketed.
- Of the schemes that had been outlined, which were the musts and how would they be measured so that you know which have been successful?
- Apprenticeship schemes advertised in schools and what academic year this was aimed at?
- The impact of Brexit?

The Committee made the following recommendations; the East of the County and Stoke on Trent had unique challenges and services need to be tailored to their specific needs; the work stream needs to ensure that the work force is future proof and can cater for the demands of changing populations; the Committee would like to see evidence of the individual organisations being able to adapt to their individual and differing demands and issues; and, the Committee would like to see evidence of redundancy numbers being reduced.

At the same meeting the **Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) - Enhanced Primary and Community Care (EPCCP)** was considered. The EPCCP is responsible for the delivery of:

- Integrated Care Teams
- Sustainable General Practice
- Reduced variation in the use of community hospital beds
- End of life care

The programme will deliver Integrated Care Teams (ICT) in 23 localities each serving a population of between 30,000 and 70,000. The ICT's will deliver GP services, Nurses, Health Care support workers, Pharmacist, Social Care, Voluntary sector, District Nursing, Community Matrons, and Community Mental Health in one locality designed around individual local demand/need.

These 23 ICTs will form 8 Specialist Team Hubs covering the Stoke North, Stoke South, Newcastle, Moorlands, Stafford, Cannock, Lichfield and Tamworth and East Staffordshire areas, which will provide a range of specialist services aligned to the

local population e.g. Dementia services, Cardiac rehab, Specialist nursing Home first etc.

The patient engagement/consultation activities were outlined. The Committee also discussed, public consultation and the best methods of communicating and getting information into people's homes so that they understand the new structures, plans to address this year's winter pressures and a County wide flu vaccination initiative.

The Committee request the following; evidence that the STP is letting go of control to the Integrated Care Team localities to deliver services to meet their local need; that at a future meeting when this item is being considered, a practising GP be invited to attend, to offer their views on the programme; and, Information on the public awareness campaign and how that will be delivered.

At the 17 September Committee meeting the **STP work stream on Planned Care** was considered. Planned or elective care was defined as healthcare services which are provided on a non-urgent basis. These services may be provided by primary care, including those services provided by GP's and other primary care contractors, community services (Tier 3) and services that are provided by hospitals (Tier 4). The vision for planned care was "To deliver efficient, high quality and effective services safely in the right setting, at the right time and with the right professional". The plan for implementing the vision was split into four areas; 7 day elective centres; Local outpatient and day case provision; Efficiency-specialty focus; and Consolidate diagnostics.

The Committee questioned the following areas: teaching hospital status; the number of providers in a local area or making people travel to services; Cancer Care and End of life services were operating given recent changes in provider; how community care would work when certain areas were struggling to recruit GPs; the timescales for the voluntary sector commissioning changes; and, where the eye clinic had moved to in Stafford.

The Committee asked the STP to provide information on a breakdown of the Cancer treatment targets for the whole of Staffordshire; The Voluntary Sector Commissioning Contract time line and how this would be measured in terms of outcomes; the results of the Collaboration piece and evidence to substantiate it; a workforce update which would be looked at through the STP work streams and sight of the Integrated Care and Technology Strategy.

At the same meeting, the Committee considered a report on **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) Estates**. The programme was aimed at rationalising the estate through looking at community need rather than short term location of services. It should also enable self-sufficiency and resilience to grow within communities.

The approach was one of prevention and wellness, building on communities, developing resilience and reducing the future costs of care with a focus on housing. This is based on the principles of the Northfields Health Village in Stafford. Five further schemes had been proposed throughout Staffordshire, each scheme would be bespoke to the needs and geographical circumstances of the area and population.

The Committee asked how the outcomes for each project were set and did they include ones to develop outreach into the community. Members felt that they were unclear as to what the priorities of the programme were, so struggled to see if they had been delivered.

The Committee asked the STP to provide information on: the savings to the Extra Care budget; the transport analysis for the Codsall site requested by the local member be sent directly; and the timescales for the next proposed 20 estates projects.

At its meeting held on 29 October 2018, Members considered a report on the **29. Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (SSTSTP)** - Update on issues that have arisen from Scrutiny. The report summarised the work that had been conducted by the Committee whilst scrutinising the Strategic Transformation Plan (STP) workstreams. The workstreams included: Urgent and Emergency Care; Mental Health; Prevention; Workforce; Enhanced Primary and Community Care, Planned Care and Estates. Childcare and Maternity was scheduled for the December meeting.

The Committee was informed that the SSTSTP valued the process as it had helped to focus the plan on the challenges ahead in implementing the programmes. As they progress forward into the STP pre-engagement in 2019, Officers would come back to the Committee for advice on how to deal with the consultation.

The Committee discussed: the urgent and emergency care programme and how teams worked together; the STP finances and if officers were confident that the changes and workstreams would reduce the overall deficit as originally intended; the split between primary and secondary care and the working relationship with other areas such as Derbyshire and Cheshire.

The future scrutiny of the STP and workstreams would be discussed with the Committee and partners informed.

At the same meeting a report on the **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Approach to Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (CAMH) 2018 – 2023** was considered. The document pledged to deliver POSITIVE change in supporting children and young people to thrive. The previous strategy recognised that the current service that was commissioned to meet the mental health and emotional wellbeing needs of children and young people was not as cohesive as it could be, and provision was variable across the County and City. There was less support available to intervene early to meet low to moderate needs and to prevent these escalating, which inevitably put pressure on the more specialist services in meeting higher or critical needs.

The CAMHs strategy started in pregnancy with the mental health of the mother and included all 4 tiers of support available. The Strategy was an Integrated approach designed to make best use of the resources available. The changes would start with the new Commissioning of low to moderate needs with one lead provider in place of the current five.

The Committee expressed the opinion that the document talked about the principles and themes/objectives, but were there any sub strategies that support the delivery or

that provided the detail that would enable change? Also, the strategy was for a five year period but it seemed unclear on the destination or the outcomes that were envisaged.

The Committee resolved that the Strategy and direction of travel as outlined in the report be agreed in principle subject to more work taking place on the prevention agenda. The Committee also noted the challenges faced in delivering the plan with partners.

On the 3 December the Committee considered the **Adult Learning Disability Community Offer 2022 – Day Opportunities for Adults with a Learning Disability and/or Autism**. The report and presentation specifically focused on the provision of Day Opportunities including Complex Needs Services provided by the Council; Day Opportunities provided by the independent sector; and, services provided by Personal Assistants. Members suggested that there was a need for a whole life plan that considered transport needs, carers, aspirations, language need etc, but was also flexible. The Committee made the following main points which should feed into the consultation prior to Cabinet in January 2019:

- There was concern that people in some geographical areas had to travel great distance to access services. It was suggested that consideration is given to including geographical location in the assessment with extra payments for people in those areas with the need to travel longer distances to access services.
- Direct Payments encouraged people to access their own provision from the private sector and should be supported.
- The Independent Sector were often not monitored for quality, this was a concern and needs to be addressed.
- The possibility of providing guidance to service users about providers was discussed and should be explored.
- It was felt that the need to consult and deal with issues in public, to ensure transparent decision making was important.
- The number of individuals who are working and in receipt of care was requested.

Also, at the meeting Members received a report and presentation on the **49. Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) - Childrens and Maternity Care**. It was suggested that the workstream had be linked to other STP streams such as prevention and work had to take place with parents pre birth in order to achieve the best outcomes. The Committee made the following recommendations to the STP:

- Young Carers to be considered in the review
- Early help and prevention are key in most areas but particularly in self harm and mental health
- Information on the trail blazer bid was requested (if successful this could generate between £3m or £4m)
- Information needs to be shared between the partners.
- Ward and District profiles should be sent to all Councillors for information.
- Partners developing a local PSHE programme which will be informed by schools

- The County wide STP consultation was due to start soon. It was felt that as the Children's workstream had been late in joining the programme, it may be beneficial to have a separate consultation just on Children's services, thus giving the service more time to develop proposals and get the service right.
- That a progress report detailing the priority areas come back to this Committee in April 2019.

The Committee also held two **Accountability sessions** during the six month period. One held on 16 July 2018 with **Burton and Derby Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust** and one on the 23 July 2018 with the **West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust**.

The Committee also held two **workshops** during the same period, one on the 14 November and one on the 29 November 2018. These workshops were both confidential and were held to discuss the **financial position of CCGs** and a workshop on developing the **Modernising Adult Social Care blueprint** and business case.

The Committee have set up a Joint Health Scrutiny Committee with Stoke on Trent City Council to consider the consultation on the future of **Local Health Services in Northern Staffordshire**. Two joint meetings were planned in early 2019.

Corporate Parenting Panel



Cllr Mark Sutton
Chairman Corporate Parenting Panel

The Committee met on five occasions during the July to December period. Although Corporate Parenting Panel is not an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it is the means by which the County Council fulfils its responsibilities as a corporate parent. The Panel brings together councillors, senior officers in children's social care and partner agencies to consider key issues which affect looked after children and on occasion refers matters to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further scrutiny.

The panel met on the 17 July and considered the **Looked After Children Transformation Work**. Evidence confirmed that resilient families will enjoy a better lifestyle and will reduce demand on council's services. In terms of looked after children, the objectives were:

- to impact the numbers of children and young people entering the system.
- to reduce, where appropriate, the length of time children and young people spend in the system.
- to influence efficiencies in placement costs, which align need to resource.

On the same day, there was a **workshop session** which informed members that a series of Government initiatives had placed duties on local authorities in respect of their responsibility towards young people who had left their care.

The panel on the 20 August 2018 considered the **Care Leaver Offer - Vision and Themes**. The Vice Chairman presented feedback from the informal workshop session held on 17 July 2018.

A report on **Fostering Recruitment** was also considered. Members were informed of the various initiatives that were used to recruit and retain foster carers.

The **Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)** report addressed how the local authority and the Independent Chairpersons (IC) service fulfil its statutory obligations for Looked after Children.

A report on **Performance Data** was shared with the Panel.

The panel met on the 18 September, where it considered the **Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-19 - Performance Assessment**. The report explored how the service and Corporate Parents had performed against the commitments set out in the Strategy. That the presentation be noted.

At its meeting on the 16 October 2018 the Panel considered the **Adoption Service Annual Report**. It is a statutory requirement for Adoption Agencies to prepare an annual performance report to the Executive. The focus on timeliness reflects research and current evidence-base about best outcomes for children: the sooner a child achieves permanence, the better their life outcomes. The Panel agreed to receive the Adoption Service Annual Report and asked for a presentation on Adoption Regionalisation at a future panel meeting.

The panel also considered a report on performance data and one on **Quality Assurance (QA)**. The QA presentation gave an overview of the measures in place to ensure that all internal and external placements have robust mechanisms in place to reassure the local authority that the provision is of good quality and represents value for money.

The **Care Leaver Offer** was introduced. Local authorities were now required to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers. The Offer should provide information about all services available and should show regard to: Health and Wellbeing; Education, Employment and Training; Accommodation; Relationships; Finances; Participation in society. It was agreed by the Panel that the Members feedback on the draft Staffordshire Local Offer for Care Leavers be added before its submission to Families First Management Team for sign off.

On the 23 November 2018 the Panel received a presentation from the **Children in Care Council on the following topics:**

- The Big Vote 2017-18 – 6-11 years
- The Big Vote 2017-18 – 12-16 years
- The Big Vote – Care Leavers
- Children in Care Council Regional Conference 2018
- North West Midlands Social Work Teaching Partnership
- Make your Mark report
- Local Offer
- Plans for 2019

Looking Ahead

1. It is clear that each of the Select Committees have continued a full work programme of activity with positive, effective outcomes, aided by the ongoing engagement with the Cabinet Members on service reviews and developments.

To be effective Select Committees need to continue to be:

- Rigorous in identifying issues in a timely way for which it has a genuine opportunity to feed in new insight into the development of services for the communities of Staffordshire and for which it has the time and capacity to have an impact. Members are reminded of the existence of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions as a useful tool in identifying forthcoming decisions for which the Select Committees may have an interest in investigating further.
- Consider wide ranging evidence, where appropriate, not solely relying on information presented by Directors but also evidence from the wider engagement of frontline staff, service users and the public to help inform the evidence base of scrutiny investigations.

Link to Strategic Plan

2. The Select Committee work programmes have produced recommendations that have directly contributed to the Council's strategic priorities.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

3. This is a summary of the work programmes of all of the Select Committees from July to December 2018. Full details of the work of the Select Committees' work including their work programmes and previous Outcomes of Overview and Scrutiny Work are published on the County Council's website.

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