

scrutiny

focus on performance

REPORT OF: The children and health overview and scrutiny committee.

REPORT TO: Annual review.

ON: 30th May 2013.

TITLE: End of year report.

1. Purpose of the Report

This report presents to the Annual Review an overview of the work of the children and health and overview and scrutiny committee work programme for the municipal year 2012-13.

2. Introduction

In June 2012 the committee met and received priorities from the executive member for health and adults, and the executive member for children's services. Using this as a guide (the committee having their own considerations too) the following headlines were agreed to be scoped as work programmes for 2012-13:

- In the children's service's portfolio: safeguarding children and young people and strengthening the voice of the child and increasing its impact.
- In the adult social care portfolio: safeguarding across the wider community and integrated commissioning and delivery.

Notwithstanding that we still made way for hot topics to be considered; and at the July meeting of the committee we received a presentation from the East Lancashire Hospitals on the consultation regarding their application Foundation Trust status.

By mid July we finalised our work programme agreeing that an adults task group and a children's task group be formed to undertake studies in the individual topic areas. Subsequent meetings of the adults task group

reviewed the vision for adults safeguarding, safeguarding standards, policies and multi agency arrangements. The children's task group covered the outcome of recent inspections, action for improvement, review of best practice and how best to prepare for future inspection.

It was also agreed that at future meetings the committee would cover the budget position, the ongoing Lancashire dementia wide consultation and receive an update from the executive member for education, (priorities and responsibilities): On 12th September councillor Humphrys as executive member for schools and education did exactly that, coming to the committee to advise on his new portfolios priorities and risks during the municipal year. It was also agreed that because the remit of the committee was so far reaching a further two meeting would be needed to complete these reviews effectively.

At the December meeting the committee received concluding reports and recommendations from both its children and adult sub groups, both having successfully completed the two separate work programmes they set out to deliver in the first half of the municipal year. The executive member for adult services attended the meeting and gave a formal response to recommendations made last year. As part of the dialogue members raised questions on Telecare, centre for independent living and a new "Preventative" agenda involving 10 to 12 integrated public health services.

In order to progress the work programme for the second half of the year, the children's sub group met on 7th January and provisionally scoped their topic: wishing to conduct a piece of research and engagement work that would explore early intervention service provision for children & young people with mental health issues. This arose as a result of the executive member for children's services advising the committee that she had identified challenges for children & young people around accessing appropriate services that would support their mental wellbeing after traumatic and negative experiences. Therefore the aim of this research & engagement project was to explore whether this would prove to be the case and if so, to use the findings to scrutinise services and partner organisations that have a responsibility for supporting the mental wellbeing of children & young people. This research & engagement project was set in the context of the authorities' independent strategic needs assessment around children & young peoples' mental health and we think provides a valuable body of evidence from which the policy department will continue this work.

Again at the December meeting members were asked to reconsider the two topics in the second half of the year (December to March 2013) and - importantly - to establish with the executive members that these topics still remained relevant: Specifically "adults safeguarding: integrated commissioning and delivery" which had been partially reviewed as part of the scrutiny of adults social care in the first half of the year. Members agreed to reconsider the choice of topic and to request the director of public health to give them an update in January on challenges faced by the Council from April 2013 once Public Health returned as a Council function, the details of which will be scoped following an earlier agenda item at the meeting on the 16th

January 2013. However the committee was clear, and have been particularly mindful, to ensure that the review that was to be undertaken did not in any way duplicate the remit of the shadow health and wellbeing board.

At the meeting on the 13th March members were given a thorough explanation of the 2012 school tests and assessments by the executive member for schools and education team, whilst the executive member for children's services chose to respond to recommendations made earlier in January by the safeguarding children and young people task group. The committee were also made aware of the formal response made by the chair and vice chair to the Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust consultation "working together to improve specialist dementia care services in Lancashire". Members will be aware that the response after a 12 week dementia public consultation by NHS Lancashire, a decision was announced in favour of the first of two options proposed in the consultation; a single specialist site, in a location to be identified, that would invest in the provision of 30 dementia inpatient beds and greater investment in community services, allowing for improved integration in local community services for dementia.

Having reached the end of the municipal cycle it was agreed some time ago, that in the absence of an election, all the scrutiny committees would continue to deliver their work programmes through to the end of the municipal year. This agreement worked well and enabled us to extend our work programme project: A focus group with children and young people was rescheduled for after half term in order to conclude what we are certain will be an excellent piece of work from the safeguarding children task group. Similarly the adult health task group on loneliness would not have been in a position to have considered the strategy commitment and action plan of the joint strategic needs assessment on the 24th April.

Recommendations and process

Several recommendations have been made so far and forwarded to the executive members for children and adult safeguarding work programmes. Recommendations from the second half of the municipal year on are in the process of being agreed subject to the previously agreed extended deadlines and will be ratified at the first meeting in the new municipal year, with an expectation that responses from the respective executive members are forthcoming in the following six months.

Councillor Ron O'Keeffe
Chair

Councillor Phil Riley
Vice Chair