

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Meeting held 20 July 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Peace (Chair), Ian Auckland, John Booker, Denise Fox, Douglas Johnson, George Lindars-Hammond, Pat Midgley, Josie Paszek, Ian Saunders and Cliff Woodcraft

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Penny Baker, Helen Mirfin-Boukouris, Mick Rooney and Steve Wilson.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where it was proposed to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 Councillor John Booker declared a personal interest in item 6 on the agenda for the meeting 'Annual Performance Update 2016-17', in particular the section relating to School Exclusions as he had been involved with exclusions in a professional capacity.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 The minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 15 February and 17 May 2017 were approved as correct records, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Ian Saunders in the list of those present for the meeting on 17 May.

4.2 Arising from the minutes, a Member of the Committee enquired about the availability of Equality Impact Assessments on the Council's website. It was agreed that the Policy and Improvement Officer would look into the issue and report back to the Committee.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no public questions or petitions.

6. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE UPDATE 2016-17

6.1 James Henderson (Director of Policy, Performance and Communications), Andi Walshaw (Performance and Research Manager) and Ben Arnold (Principal Performance and Research Analyst) introduced a presentation outlining the Annual Performance Update of the Council. The presentation provided the Committee with a general overview of performance and then focused on 7 key areas of interest arising from the performance for 2016-17. Key officers from each area attended the meeting to answer questions from Members.

6.2 In introducing the presentation, James Henderson commented that the Council continued to maintain a good level of performance. There had been a large degree of stability with some slight improvements. There were, however, some areas which did not have a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) rating. These areas tended to be in children's services due to changes at Government level.

6.3 James Henderson then highlighted to the Committee some areas of strong performance and areas of concern within each of the Council's priority areas – Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities, Better Health and Wellbeing, Strong Economy, Tackling Inequalities and In-Touch Organisation.

6.4 In response to a question from the Chair, Councillor Chris Peace, as to whether the Council was measuring the right areas and whether the RAG model worked well in highlighting performance, James Henderson commented that improvements could always be made, where appropriate. He had spoken to the Leader of the Council as to how this could be restructured. It was based around the priorities of the Corporate Plan which had been set three years ago. It was now the appropriate point to look to see whether the current model was properly aligned to broader priorities.

6.5 School Exclusions

6.5.1 James Henderson provided an overview of current performance in relation to School Exclusions. He commented that there had been a significant upturn in the rate of exclusions across the City. However, as a result of work being done across the City to address this, recent data had shown a slowdown in the rate of increase.

6.5.2 There had been differentials in rates of those excluded of Black, Minority and Ethnic (BME) origin and those of White British origin. Numbers of BME exclusions had halved whilst levels of White British had increased. However, numbers were very small at primary level. Permanent exclusions had increased at Secondary level. There were some areas of concern with a number of factors behind them and extensive work was being undertaken to address the issues.

6.5.3 Pam Smith (Head of Primary and Targeted Intervention) and Emma Beal (Service Manager, Alternative Provision) attended the meeting to answer questions from the Committee. Information was provided to the Committee in responses to the questions as outlined below:-

- In respect of levels of exclusions increasing, research had been undertaken with secondary schools. Increasing complexity within families was an issue and early intervention work was needed to try and prevent challenging behaviour further down the line. Changes in education policy and performance measures, as well as budget pressures, were all contributing to the increase also.
- When a child was excluded from school the City Council had to make provision for them and this was done through the Sheffield Inclusion Centre. The Council worked closely with schools to try and integrate the child back into the school

where possible.

- Sheffield mirrored the national trend in relation to increasing complexity within families. Although this had always been an issue, there had been a change in services across the City which may have impacted on this. Some of the exclusions may not have been included in the figures in the past which were now recorded due to more robust reporting mechanisms.
- In relation to Academies, the Council was aware of concerns raised by a Member of the Committee that he believed they excluded children far too quickly. Meetings had taken place with Multi-Academy Trusts where this issue had been raised. On at least two occasions Ofsted had called Academies to account for attendance and inclusion practices within their schools. The Council could work closely with Ofsted and the Department for Education (DfE) on this.
- In relation to a request from a Member that future reports include figures rather than percentages it was agreed that this request be given consideration and if possible figures would be used in future reports.
- Children tended to be excluded for a period of persistent disruption which was why the figures tended to show that exclusions were higher in summer terms.
- A new Chair, Board and Head had been secured for the Inclusion Centre with a strong remit of reintegration. There would be a different focus depending on the age group. Regarding reintegration, the policy approach had recently changed to early intervention to avoid the need to reintegrate the child in the future.

6.6 Educational Attainment

6.6.1 James Henderson provided the overview of current performance in relation to educational attainment. Significant progress had been made in respect of this with Sheffield ranking higher than in the past on a number of measures. At key stage 2 level the evidence suggested that reading was the area where pupils performed less well.

6.6.2 Pam Smith and Emma Beal then answered questions from Members of the Committee as follows:-

- A lot of work had been done with schools with the aim of improving performance in relation to reading. The reading comprehension test was a very challenging test and was the first time that pupils had taken this type of test. This year's test had been much fairer. Sheffield also had a large number of newly arrived children and skills such as reading could prove very difficult when it was an additional language. Schools which had developed a focus on vocabulary had seen some very good results.

6.7 Take-Up of Apprenticeships

6.7.1 James Henderson outlined to the Committee that the percentage of 16-17 year

olds taking up apprenticeships had increased in the 2014/15 academic year and the higher rate had been maintained last year. Sheffield had a higher proportion of 16-17 year olds taking up apprenticeships than the national average and the Core Cities, as at June 2016, with the exception of Nottingham.

6.7.2 In response to a question from a Member of the Committee, James Henderson stated that the increase in the take up of apprenticeships was partly as a result of national legislation but also the result of the policy direction of the Council such as the 100 apprentices' scheme which was promoted through the City Region. The national statistics showed the impact of the policy direction of the Council. He would try to confirm provision of apprenticeships offered by the private sector in the City and report back to Members of the Committee.

6.8 Adult Social Care

6.8.1 Phil Holmes, Director of Adult Services, presented the latest performance measures in respect of Adult Social Care. It was acknowledged that 'Delayed transfers of care' continued to be a significant challenge. Savings could not be delivered as a result of budget pressures and more work was being done to try and achieve the savings needed this year.

6.8.2 Phil Holmes then responded to questions from Members of the Committee as follows:-

- Regarding 'Delayed Transfers of Care' it was often assumed that people were less able to cope than they actually were. The City needed to get better at sending people home if this was shown to more meet their needs. If a focus was placed on this it would be better for the Council and better for the citizen. Intermediate care beds were available but checks needed to be made that they were being used in the right way.
- In terms of the budget position, information could be circulated to Members on how the overall budget figure had changed. The cash limit had not gone down but inflationary figures had gone up. The key was whether the Council could keep up with demographic pressures.
- It was difficult to quantify the exact number of people supported in social care because those supported to live at home was previously a national indicator and those people supported in social care was more than people supported by the City Council. A new structure was being established where social workers were moving towards more of a locality focus and it was expected that the qualitative side of performance would improve.
- One of the major pressures on the system was people living longer. However, ways of working which could often be very bureaucratic was adding to the pressures and this needed to be addressed.
- There was a need for a more localised approach. The City Council was trying to establish local relationships with local people and organisations. Adult Social Care should be more community based.

6.9 Housing Growth

6.9.1 James Henderson outlined the latest performance in relation to Housing Growth. Growth had increased substantially within the last couple of years following a dip in the years before that. The number of Sheffield Housing Company completions had met its target but the number of affordable homes built or acquired had fallen short of its target and remained an issue.

6.9.2 Janet Sharpe (Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods) attended the meeting to answer questions from the Committee. Information was provided to the Committee in responses to the questions as outlined below:-

- There were many reasons for there being a large amount of affordable homes built or acquired in 2014/15. The Council had undertaken a new build programme and there had also been a significant level of private investments. There was still a significant shortfall in the number of affordable homes in the City and all options were being looked at to address this. A five year affordable homes strategy and programme would be submitted to Cabinet in the Autumn.
- 3,000 houses needed to be built each year to comply with the target of the number of deliverable homes as a percentage of the five year housing supply. There was a need to improve choice and quality for all. The City Council was working more closely with developers to ensure “bricks on the ground” as granting planning permission did not necessarily mean something would get built.
- It was often difficult to secure affordable housing as a result of the economic situation. There was a need to secure different types of housing to suit all needs. If the Council was challenged on affordable housing it was sent to the District Valuer for an independent valuation.
- Every year, the Council lost 300 homes as a result of the Right to Buy legislation. This was why the new build programme was crucial. A stock increase strategy was introduced in 2014/15 and there may be a need to reintroduce this programme. The Council had first refusal if a right to buy property was reselling within five years of purchase.
- When a planning application was submitted there was a need to ensure the appropriate infrastructure was in place. A piecemeal solution would not work. This would all be taken into consideration within the Local Plan. There was a number of funding streams available from the Government to support the development of local infrastructure, which needed to be utilised.

6.10 Transport

6.10.1 In commenting on performance in respect of transport, James Henderson stated that user satisfaction had stayed relatively constant which was in line with other Core Cities.

6.10 Edward Highfield (Director of City Growth) and Dick Proctor, (Transport Planning Manager) attended the meeting to answer questions from Members of the Committee and responses were provided as outlined below:-

- Hills were not the primary reason why people did not cycle in the City. The main barriers were perceptions of safety and fear. The current corporate target, agreed by the City Region, was 10% of journeys by cycling, which required significant investment.
- Bus patronage had been dropping but had stabilised in recent times. Bus operators equated data to footfall in the City Centre and it was therefore important to have robust data in relation to footfall. A new Transport Strategy for Sheffield would be published in the Autumn which would outline growth over a twenty year period. The Transport Strategy for the City Region would also be published in September.
- The Streets Ahead programme having an amber rating was a fair reflection. There had been good progress in carriageway resurfacing and any disruption was being managed well. The amber rating reflected ongoing issues and the scale of the project.
- In respect of air quality, the figures accounted for the last two or three years and performance was relatively good. There was a need to consider the impact of growth on air quality. Council policy on vehicle idling was just related to around schools at the present time, but national conversation may need to widen the scale of this.

6.11 Sport, Culture and Tourism

6.11.1 Presenting the performance measures for Sports, Culture and Tourism, James Henderson commented that the number of visits to sports venues and activities per 1,000 population to sporting venues and activities had increased compared to last year and was the highest rate since 2013/14. The majority of the improvement seen was due to the addition of Graves and Thorncliffe Leisure Centres. There had been a slight decrease in visits to cultural venues.

6.11.2 Richard Eyre, Head of City Centre Management and Events, attended the meeting to answer questions, and responses were provided as outlined below:-

- Footfall figures in the City Centre only covered Fargate, Division Street and The Moor so it was difficult to get an actual figure. This would be expanded in November so a more accurate figure could be given. These figures could be shared with the Committee and included in future reports. Vacancy rates for buildings were collated so the Council had that information.
- The Outdoor Economic Strategy had been approved by Cabinet and officers were now looking at the delivery of this. Future performance would be included in future RAG reports.
- Officers would confirm why the Library Theatre was no longer included in the

performance measures.

- The Council was negotiating with retailers to open later on occasion as part of the 'Live After 5' campaign and many had been open during the recent Sheffield Grand Prix Cycling event.

6.12 **Resolved:** That:-

- (i) the information now presented be noted; and
- (ii) Officers be thanked for their attendance and responses to the questions.

7. DRAFT COMBINED SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18 AND UPDATE FROM CHAIRS

7.1 The Policy and Improvement Officer submitted the Draft Combined Scrutiny Work Programme for 2017-18.

7.2 **Resolved:** The Committee noted the Programme for 2017/18.

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18

8.1 The Policy and Improvement Officer submitted a report outlining the draft Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Work programme for 2017/18.

8.2 **Resolved:** That:-

- (i) the Committee approves the work programme for 2017/18; and
- (ii) the Chair be requested to liaise with the Chair of the Working Group considering a review of Council meetings in respect of public engagement at Council meetings.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 19 October 2017.