

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 16th October 2017

Present: Councillor Lythgoe (Chair)
Councillors Bromley, Janet Eaton, Johnson, Kempson, Kenyon,
Morris, Robertson

In Attendance: Clare Law, HR Manager
Ray Kay, Policy & Performance Officer
Paul McHenry, Head of Operations
Carolyn Sharples, Committee & Member Services Manager
Jenni Cook, Committee & Member Services Officer
Naomi Burrows, Young Addaction
Fergus Johnston, 101 Service

Also Present: Councillors Ashworth, A. Barnes, Haworth, Oakes and Walmsley
1 member of the public
0 members of the press

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillor McMahon, Councillor Stansfield and Zieda Ali.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair agreed to deviate from the Procedure for Public Speaking and allow the members of the public to ask questions as the reports were discussed.

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

6.1 The Chair noted the following:-

- Following the September meeting a letter had been sent to the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). No response had been received as yet.
- The Fairness and Equality Strategy had been moved back to the November meeting.

7. YOUNG ADDACTION UPDATE

7.1 Naomi Burrows (Young Addaction) gave members an update on the work currently being carried out by the organisation as follows:-

- There was currently 1 worker to cover the Rossendale area; work took place within the community on a one-to-one basis for young people up to the age of 25 years old. Young Addaction provided a service 9am to 9pm, seven days per week. The service was a voluntary one and young people were informed of the referral and needed to be willing to engage with the service.
- Work took place around 3 main areas – early intervention and prevention, therapeutic and medical provision and participation and community engagement. Work was carried out within schools to educate and provide advice, alongside work with those referred to the service such as diversionary activities.
- Use was made of social media through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat and staff undertook regular training to keep up to date with changing trends in substances. Substance abuse often took place as a coping mechanism for mental health issues, stress, exams, etc.
- Within quarter 1 of 2017 24 referrals had been made to the service, with most of these coming from the Children's and Family Service. 84% of the referrals were for drug use with the lowest being at 16% for alcohol.
- During 2016 264 young people had been referred to the service with 83 successfully exiting treatment (either drug-free or reduction in usage).

7.2 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the update as follows:-

- The worker for Rossendale had a caseload of around 24 at the moment and the maximum capacity was around 25. However each case was different and could last from several days to months.
- There were 20 staff to cover Lancashire and these staff could work on a floating basis if required. Service users were not sent to places and work took place in the community on a one-to-one basis.
- Young Addaction was funded by Public Health England on an eight year contract. The contract would be reviewed after three years with a one year rolling contract thereafter.
- Work took place within schools; however the take-up in East Lancashire was not as high as other areas. This was due to the previous service charging and members with links to schools were asked to raise the profile of Young Addaction's services.
- The substances used by young people were discussed and spice was becoming a larger issue across Lancashire. Young people were made aware

of the dangers of substance abuse such as the increasing strength of substances.

Resolved:

That the update and presentation was noted.

8. 101 SERVICE PROGRESS UPDATE

8.1 Fergus Johnson (101 Service), gave members an update on the current status of the 101 service, following the 2016/17 Task and Finish Group work as follows:-

- The service received an average of 3,000 101 calls and 700 emergency 999 calls per day. Demand was on the rise and capacity was still an issue. Funding had been secured to provide an additional 50 staff. It would take 12 months to fully train these additional staff.
- Loss of mental health services and the complexity of demand and cases had had an effect on the services provided.
- The target for answering 999 calls was 10 seconds and these calls took priority over 101 calls.
- Changes made by the North West Ambulance Services (NWAS) to grading of their calls had also impacted on the service and work was ongoing to resolve this.

8.2 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the update as follows:-

- Analysis had suggested that closure of front-of-house counters in Police stations had not had a massive impact on the 101 service.
- Staff turnover was still having an impact and the 2 year tenure had prevented staff from leaving to join Lancashire Constabulary, however they were able to join other forces.
- Repeat calls were discussed and it was noted that staff should continue to be clear when callers could expect an officer or a follow-up call to reduce repeat calls.
- The process when a call was received was clarified.
- The mental health nurse and mental health triage nurse had provided a positive effect on the 101 service provision; however these nurses had now been transferred to another scheme following loss of funding.
- Online reporting was effective to some degree.
- 20% of calls were crime related with the remaining 80% classed as public safety and welfare calls. The 101 service reported its data to the Home Office.
- The quality of the service provided by 101 staff was considered excellent, however capacity remained an issue. The Chief Constable made regular representation to the Home Office and the issues had been accepted. £1.5m had been secured for the additional 50 staff.
- A further update would be given by the 101 Service in 12 months' time, and it was suggested that this could be at the same meeting as NWAS.

Resolved:

1. That the presentation was noted and the 101 Service would be invited back in 12 months' time.
2. A further visit to the 101 call centre would be arranged.

9. DOG FOULING TASK AND FINISH GROUP UPDATE

9.1 The Head of Operations presented a report to members which addressed progress made on tackling dog fouling since the 2015/16 Task and Finish Group work.

- An Enforcement Officer had been recruited and had been in post since September 2016. More joint working with other service areas was being looked into with the possible formation of a Public Protection Unit, to incorporate powers available via Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs).
- Should more signage be required, this could be facilitated via PSPOs.
- Stencilling and spray painting in hot spot areas had been successful and the Councillors were thanked for their assistance with this. Civic Pride were also providing assistance.
- The new website was up and running and there was a reporting function for dog fouling. The content of the site would continue to be refreshed and updated.
- The Enforcement Officer had not yet been able to work with professional dog walkers, however he intended to do.

9.2 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the update as follows:-

- Members gave examples of areas where dog fouling had been an issue.
- The powers that the Enforcement Officer had and the evidence required to prosecute was clarified.
- Several funding bids had been submitted to improve CCTV and surveillance equipment and these were outlined.
- Introduction of PSPOs could assist with dog fouling prosecutions as action could be taken over failure to carry a receptacle.
- It was noted that education not prosecution was preferable, particularly with regards to minors.
- The Leader of the Council noted that it was not appropriate to ask questions regarding items which were not on the agenda of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved:

1. That the further response was noted.
2. That a further update was provided in 12 months' time.

10. COUNCIL FEEDBACK REVIEW AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL LETTER

10.1 The Committee and Member Services Manager introduced the report which outlined the feedback received by the Council in the form of compliments, formal complaints and Local Government Ombudsman complaints 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017. Complaint information had already been provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committee via the quarterly performance reports; however this report provided the final figures for the year along with more details. The main points of the report were highlighted as follows:-

- There had been 107 compliments, the majority of which were in relation to a member of staff or a team, with a reduction of compliments noted, which was thought to be as a result of the loss of the STAN service. The highest number of compliments had been received by the Legal and Democratic Team and the Operations Team, with 19 each.
- During 2016/17 there were 109 formal complaints, the majority of which were in relation to quality of service, action response or communication and customer service. The average response time to a customer complaint was 12 working days which was above the target of 10 working days. The delays were mainly down to changes in staffing and having to wait for new members of staff to get up to speed before a response could be sent. A new reporting system had been put in place and issues had been raised with Management Team to rectify these issues.
- 90 of the 109 complaints were resolved at stage 1 with 19 stage 2 reviews. The officer noted that the report stated 88, however this was due to the status of 2 complaints changing after the report was written.

10.2 In respect of the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter the following was highlighted:-

- The Ombudsman had received 22 complaints about the Council and 20 decisions had been made. In relation to these 20 decisions:
 - 4 closed after initial enquiries
 - 3 closed as incomplete or invalid
 - 10 referred back to the Council as a formal complaint had not been made.
 - 3 were investigated and of these 3, one was upheld and two were not upheld.
- In relation to the complaint which had been upheld by the Ombudsman, this related to a delay in responding to the complainant and no fault had been found regarding the actual planning matter.
- The number of detailed investigations carried out by the Ombudsman had reduced compared with 5 investigations last year.

10.3 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the report as follows:-

- Learning points could be captured for future reports. This would be dependent on service areas recording this information and providing feedback to Committee and Member Services.
- The process undertaken when a complaint is upheld by the Ombudsman was clarified. The complainant usually received an apology and on occasion compensation could be awarded.
- The reason for the 2 complaints that did not progress to stage 2 not being included in the original written report was clarified.
- Customers could complain using the online form and this was clearly stated on the website.
- The response times would be included in the new quarterly reporting process.
- The Council received over 500,000 customer contacts each year which was comparable favourably with 109 complaints.

Resolved

1. That the report was noted.

11. ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT

11.1 The Policy and Performance Officer introduced the report which was an annual report outlining the Council's work with regards to equalities and ensuring that the council complies with the Equality Act 2010.

11.2 The report covered the main areas of equality data being community population profile, workforce and job applicants profile, Councillor profile and disabled facilities grants data. The following information was noted:-

- In terms of the community profile 94% of the workforce identified as white or white British. 3% of the population did not speak English as their first language and 49% of the population was male. The average age in Rossendale was 39.6.
- The workforce of the council data stated that 97.5% of the workforce had identified as white British and men were over-represented at all grades up to scale 6. However the female average wage was higher.
- It was optional for applicants to provide equality data, however 61% of applicants had identified as white British with 6% from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.
- Councillor data showed that 60% of councillors were aged 60 and over and 58% of councillors were female.
- In terms of disabled facilities grants recipients, $\frac{3}{4}$ of recipients were aged 60 and over and the majority of were female.

11.3 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the report as follows:-

- Discussion took place regarding pay and gender and public sector workforce issues.
- There was still some work to do to ensure that the workforce was representative and it was noted that the refreshed Fairness and Equality Strategy was scheduled for the November meeting.

- Councillors aged 30-39 were under-represented.

Resolved

1. That the report is noted.
2. That Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to monitor equality data.

12. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE EQUALITIES TASK AND FINISH GROUP

12.1 The Leader of the Council presented the Cabinet's response to the recommendations made by the Equalities Task and Finish Group report.

12.2 The response noted that the Fairness and Equality Strategy was in the process of being refreshed and that work would be undertaken to review the format of the Neighbourhood Forums.

12.3 Members and members of the public asked questions and discussed the item as follows:-

- It was noted that a timeframe would be useful for future responses and it was noted that the work to review the Neighbourhood Forums was underway.

Resolved:

1. The report was noted.

13. THE FORWARD PLAN

13.1 The Committee and Member Services Officer advised members of items on the Forward Plan which were expected to come to the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny.

Resolved:

The Forward Plan was noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 8.25pm

Signed:_____

Date:_____