

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
Wednesday 14 December 2022

Present:- Councillor Clark (in the Chair); Councillors T. Collingham, Baker-Rogers, Baum-Dixon, A Carter, Cooksey, Wyatt, Yasseen and Tinsley.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Elliott and Pitchley.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

123. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Collingham declared a personal interest as Clerk to Thurcroft Parish Council in relation to Item 8 (Council Plan 2022-2025 and Year Ahead Delivery Plan Progress Update). He remained present in the meeting and participated in the Board's consideration of the issue and decision.

124. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the press or public.

125. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no exempt items on the agenda.

126. SAFER ROTHERHAM PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

The Board considered the Safer Rotherham Partnership's Annual Report in its role as the Council's Statutory Crime and Disorder Committee. This was in line with Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009, which stated that annual scrutiny was required of decisions made and actions taken by responsible authorities in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions.

The partnership assessed local crime priorities annually, consulting with partners and the local community and monitor progress in achieving them. The Probation Service, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board and South Yorkshire Police were the five responsible authorities who made up the partnership. In addition, Voluntary Action Rotherham, Victim Support and the Police and Crime Commissioner were represented on SRP Board meetings.

The overarching priorities referred to in the annual report were agreed by the SRP Board in 2018, following an enhanced assessment and consultation process to develop 3-year priorities from 2018 to 2021.

Annual “light touch” reviews had taken place since, focussing on high-risk threats and areas presenting an increasing or changing risk level. A comprehensive and enhanced priority review process was carried out from May 2021 to March 2022 to inform new priorities and a new SRP Plan from 2022 to 2025. This included a comprehensive review of Police and partner data and information, wide ranging consultation, use of the Management of Risk in Law Enforcement (MoRiLE) tool to assess risks and workshops with strategic leads and professionals with relevant expertise.

The Chair welcomed the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Community Safety and Finance, the Assistant Director for Community Safety and Streetscene, the Interim Head of Safety and Streetscene and Chief Superintendent Kosckiewicz, South Yorkshire Police to the meeting.

The Cabinet Member introduced the report and outlined that the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) was the Borough's Community Safety Partnership, set up under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Responsible authorities had a duty to work together to protect their local communities and help people feel safer, dealing with crime and local issues such as anti-social behaviour, drug or alcohol misuse and reoffending.

The Assistant Director outlined that the report provided a high-level overview of partnership activities over the previous 12 months. The Assistant Director referred to the priority areas which were detailed in the report. These included:

- child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation;
- prevention of online offending;
- prevention of re-offending;
- protecting vulnerable people being drawn into extremism;
- managing community tensions;
- reducing repeat victims of crime;
- tackling domestic abuse and violence against women and girls;
- and
- preventing serious and organised crime.

The report detailed action in respect of each of these issues in turn, highlighting successes and acknowledging areas of challenge.

The Chair invited the Chief Superintendent to comment on the report. She highlighted that the partnership worked well together, citing the example of the externally validated work on Child and Criminal Exploitation of this positive approach.

The Chair invited questions from the Board. A discussion on the following issues ensued:

- In reference to measures to address serious and organised crime, the success of ‘Operation Grow’ to disrupt cannabis production and distribution was noted. It was noted that organised crime also

affected the rural areas of the Borough, the Chief Superintendent detailed some of the actions taken to tackle crime in these areas including rural crime officers and off-road biking teams.

- In respect of the impact of community payback on rates of re-offending, it was outlined that data was not gathered on reoffending rates. It was observed that no young people who had attended the scheme had re-offended. It was noted that community payback had a positive impact in communities, building trust and confidence. It was outlined that the scheme was offered by the Police and Crime Commissioner across South Yorkshire, with Rotherham adding additional resources to enhance provision.
- Clarification was sought of the process of accessing community payback within wards to complete projects. It was advised that changes to the Probation Service were being made and that staff involved in the CAP process should be contacted. It was noted that that a newsletter was being issued which would clarify the work of the partnership more widely to ward members and local communities.
- Details was sought about levels of participation of licenced premises in initiatives to address drink spiking.
- An example was given regarding public perception and informing affected communities of actions taken when crimes had been committed. Assurance was given that police were actively investigating the crimes outlined.
- Clarification was given about the new approach to tackling violence against women and girls which addressed prevention and improvements to women's safety.
- Attendance of senior officers neighbourhood meetings was discussed. It was outlined that PSCOs had good local knowledge and understanding of issues.
- In reference to protecting vulnerable adults, the Chair mentioned the recent spotlight review into modern slavery and thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their contributions.

Resolved:

1. That the progress of the Safer Rotherham Partnership in tackling crime and disorder in 2021-22 against its key priorities be noted.
2. That consideration be given by the Safer Rotherham Partnership to improving public perceptions of its activity and actions related to this activity be reported to this Board in the 2022-23 Annual Report and progress updates.

127. SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS - COVID-19 CARE HOME SAFETY

The Senior Governance Adviser introduced the report and outlined the outcomes of the spotlight review undertaken by Members of Health Select Commission. The review sought assurances around the safety of care home workers and residents during the pandemic and onward. It was noted that this work ran parallel to work undertaken on a national and regional level.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the following recommendations from the review be submitted to Cabinet for consideration and response:
 - a. That the learning from the pandemic and ongoing needs in respect of care home safety be noted.
 - b. That the service consider how the Council may help support recruitment and retention within the care sector.
 - c. That consideration be given to how best to retain, where possible, the benefits of supportive models such as regular engagement, access to training/guidance and Interdisciplinary Management Team (IMT) approach, which were adopted during the pandemic.
 - d. That outcomes of forthcoming reviews by the Health and Wellbeing Board on learning from the Pandemic be considered for scrutiny.

128. ESTABLISHMENT OF A FINANCIAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION SERVICE FOR ROTHERHAM

This report set out proposals for a new service to help prevent the financial abuse and exploitation of Rotherham residents. The proposed service would include the recruitment of a specialist investigator dedicated to Rotherham to investigate cases where crime was suspected, the review of historic exploitation cases and the delivery of financial exploitation and abuse awareness training for key staff and partners. The service would add to the existing safeguarding offer within the Council's Adults Safeguarding Service and the Council's Trading Standards Service to provide a more comprehensive response.

Discussions had been held with West Yorkshire Joint Services Trading Standards Team to support the development of options for a service offer for Rotherham. This illustrated the key aspects of work to supplement and enhance a procured Rotherham service offer. The activity would be supported by existing resources within Council services such as Adults Safeguarding, Trading Standards and key partners. The new service offer would include the appointment of a specialist investigator to deal with

Rotherham casework; a review of historical cases; delivery of awareness raising; and development of processes and procedures.

The Leader introduced the report and outlined that this initiative was cross-cutting but would sit in the Adult Care Service. An overview of what was meant by financial exploitation was given and it was noted that this was one of the most frequent concerns raised with adult safeguarding. It was outlined in respect of this type of criminal exploitation, older people were often victims, however, it was not limited to this group.

The Chair invited questions from the Board and a discussion on the following issues ensued:

- Further details were sought of the options considered. It was outlined that there were benefits to not commissioning the service from 'scratch'. The West Yorkshire team had developed considerable expertise and a local investigator would add to this.
- The recommended hybrid option was welcomed. It was noted that it was likely that a number of investigations would focus on financial abuse of people with care packages. A concern was expressed that the narrative around successful investigations or convictions should be managed carefully so as not to deter carers. In response, it was noted that there was a challenge about the where the new service was positioned, although as the concerns were reported as safeguarding issues, it was felt that it was located appropriately. Assurance was given that the messages about convictions and progress would be managed sensitively.
- It was noted that an evaluation would be carried out after the first year. The Chair requested that a briefing be circulated to the Board on progress.
- It was noted that vulnerable children and young people in receipt of care packages or payments could also be victims of financial exploitation. It was outlined that there was no intent in the design to limit the service to one section of the community.

In conclusion, the Chair welcomed this initiative as part of the Council's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet be advised that the following recommendation be supported.
 - 1) Approve the establishment of a Financial Exploitation and Abuse Service for Rotherham as detailed at Section 3 – Option 2.
2. That a briefing is circulated to update OSMB on the outcomes of the first year of delivery following appointment of a specialist service provider.

129. COUNCIL PLAN 2022-2025 AND YEAR AHEAD DELIVERY PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

The Chair welcomed the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive and members of the wider Senior Leadership Team to the meeting.

The Leader of the Council introduced a report which set out the Council's vision for the Borough and priorities for residents and communities. The Plan provided the medium-term basis for targeting resources, informing the budget-setting process and planning cycles, and ensuring that residents can hold the Council to account for delivery.

Formal progress reports were considered by Cabinet every three months, with the first report presented in June 2022. This third report focussed on activities in the Year Ahead Delivery Plan for Quarter 2. It was noted that of the 92 priorities, 88% were achieved or on target with eight being delayed.

The Leader outlined some areas of successful delivery including the re-opening of Keppel's Column, the programme of events supporting the Women's Euro football tournament and development of day services for learning disabled people in Canklow.

Of the areas behind schedule, the following issues were outlined:

- Community Protection Notices – progress was being made and capacity of the team had been increased.
- Thurcroft Library – issues beyond the control of the Council had delayed progress but this was being resolved.
- Delays to Town Centre housing schemes – there had been slight delays but this was reflective of the national picture.
- Flood defences – the land ownership issues which had delayed progress had been resolved.

It was noted that 32% of performance measures were on target, with a corresponding 32% off target. It was explained that a number of these were annual measures and the annual survey results were lower than the previous year.

The Leader referred to call answer times and customer service targets which had been raised previously by Board Members. It was outlined that recruitment to vacant post was now on track and it was anticipated that average call time would be below six minutes.

The Chair invited questions and a discussion on the following issues ensued:

Clarification was sought on what actions were being taken in response to complaints about street cleaning. It was explained that staffing pressures particularly in respect of driver shortages for waste collections, were being addressed. It was anticipated that this would ease overall pressures for

services.

It was noted that planning permission had been granted to expand Meadowhall. Considering this, comments were invited on the potential impact on the Forge Island development. In response, it was noted that there was confidence that there was a market for this provision at Forge Island.

Clarification was sought if the most recent Resident's Satisfaction Survey had been added to the website. It was confirmed that this had been actioned.

In respect of consultation and engagement, a view was expressed that there were improvements to be made, particularly in respect of engagement with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. It was outlined that a new consultation and engagement framework had been developed. It was acknowledged that the Council was engaging with more people than before, however tailored engagement with specific communities was an area for development. The Chair suggested that this could be added to the Board's work programme for 2023/24.

With regards to contact wait times, clarification was sought of what other mechanisms were available to communicate with the Council. It was outlined that most contact could be made through the website. However, alternatives were available for those who did not have online access to contact services by phone and there were options for face-to-face appointments to assist as necessary.

Further details were sought about performance in respect of housing repairs. It was outlined that if the repair was not fixed on the first visit (for example if replacement parts were required), it counted against performance. A further question was asked regarding incidents of mould and damp. It was outlined that there was a process in place to address requests. Alongside this was a prevention programme publicised through tenant's publications such as "Home Matters".

Details was requested of what action had been taken to address environmental crime and fly-tipping. It was noted that Improving Places Select Commission had undertaken scrutiny activity in this area. In response, it was noted that there were ambitious enforcement targets outlined in the report, with the authority performing well against its comparators. Assurance was given that alongside enforcement, the authority undertook education and awareness raising of how materials could be disposed of safely and legally. Recent work to address the illegal waste site in Kiveton was referenced, including work with South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Environment Agency.

Clarification was sought on the number of children in need. It was outlined that the number of children in care was reducing, however, in doing this it was anticipated that there may be an increase in the number of children in

need as staff were working with families differently.

In respect of engagement with domestic abuse services. There had been a structural transformation in commissioned services and in-house delivery. Officers were working with delivery partners and it was anticipated that performance would improve.

Adult Care, Housing and Public Health challenges were outlined in respect of discharge from hospital and meeting support needs.

The challenge of meeting call-handling targets and customer waiting times was referenced. It was noted that it there was an ongoing programme to ensure that resources were in place, manage turnover and vacant posts recruited to.

Resolved:

1. That Cabinet be advised that the following recommendations be supported.

That:

- 1) The overall position in relation to the Year Ahead Delivery Plan activities.
 - 2) The Quarter 2 2022-23 data for the Council Plan performance measures.
 - 3) The performance reporting timetable for the remainder of the 2022-2023 year.
2. That Cabinet notes the intention of OSMB to undertake a spotlight review of the effectiveness of the Consultation and Engagement Framework as part of its 2023/24 work programme.

130. WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered its Work Programme.

The Chair agreed to expedite the scrutiny activity relating to bye-laws and life saving equipment following the motion to Council considered on 30 November 2022.

Resolved: - That the Work Programme be approved.

131. WORK IN PROGRESS - SELECT COMMISSIONS

This item was deferred.

132. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS - 1 DECEMBER 2022 TO 28 FEBRUARY 2023

The Board considered the Forward Plan of Key Decisions 1 December 2022 to 28 February 2023.

Resolved: - That the Forward Plan be noted.

133. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no call-in issues.

134. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no urgent items.

135. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved: - That the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held at 10.00am on Thursday 19 January 2023 at Rotherham Town Hall.