

Overview and Scrutiny Update



September - November 2018-19

Check, Challenge, Change

Our Work Programme 2018-19

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

- ◆ Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy
- ◆ Council Plan Performance
- ◆ Commissioning and Contract Management
- ◆ Safer Rotherham Partnership
- ◆ Complaints
- ◆ Revenue Budget Monitoring
- ◆ Energy
- ◆ Poverty
- ◆ Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge
- ◆ Pre-decision Scrutiny

Health

- ◆ Adult Social Care
- ◆ Autism Strategy
- ◆ Public Health
- ◆ Rotherham Integrated Health and Social Care Place Plan
- ◆ Respiratory Services tbc
- ◆ Social and Emotional Mental Health
- ◆ Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- ◆ Carers Strategy Implementation
- ◆ South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Integrated Care System
- ◆ NHS Trust Quality Accounts

Improving Lives

- ◆ Early Help
- ◆ Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- ◆ Safeguarding - Children and Adults
- ◆ Domestic Abuse
- ◆ Lifestyle Survey
- ◆ Looked After Children - demand for placements
- ◆ Children & Young People's Service Performance
- ◆ Monitoring Ofsted inspection outcome action plan
- ◆ School Performance
- ◆ Child Sexual Exploitation - Post Abuse Support

Improving Places

- ◆ Thriving Neighbourhoods
- ◆ Time for Action
- ◆ Dignity - Bereavement Services
- ◆ Cultural Strategy
- ◆ Tenant Involvement
- ◆ Rotherham Town Centre
- ◆ Home to School Transport
- ◆ Modular Housing (Jointly with OSMB)
- ◆ Skills Agenda
- ◆ Asset Management

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Introduction

Welcome to the second Overview and Scrutiny update for 2018-19

The purpose of these updates is to give an overview of the work carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) and the Select Commissions - Health (HSC), Improving Lives (ILSC) and Improving Places (IPSC) during the last few months.

Page 2 provides a reminder of the broad work programme for 2018-19 previously included in the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report. Good progress is being made with the planned programme and as in other years additional items have already been scrutinised. These include multi-agency working in complex abuse investigations, homelessness prevention and Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Trust's (RDaSH) estate strategy. A review of Rothercard has recently been added to OSMB's work programme. Assurance has also been sought from Rotherham Hospital regarding hospital discharge processes.

It is pleasing to see that Scrutiny Members have again been out and about on visits to partners and service providers, either during reviews as part of their evidence gathering or to explore how things are working in practice following service changes.

As reported on page 7, the session at Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR) resulted in two members of Rotherham Parent Carers Forum contributing to scrutiny of social, emotional and mental health, bringing their perspective as parents and service users as well as being partners in co-production. We intend to build on this initial session with the voluntary and community sector to increase the sector's involvement in our future scrutiny work and will be returning to VAR in 2019.

The first section of this report covers the pre-decision scrutiny, followed by a section for each committee. Where relevant for this period the update will include details of:-

- Progress monitoring of strategies and plans following past scrutiny
- Recommendations made by the committees
- Outcomes resulting from scrutiny
- Reviews - underway or due to commence
- Sub-group/Task and Finish Group activity
- Member visits
- Public involvement in scrutiny
- Key future items
- Other activity undertaken by the Scrutiny Members

I hope this will be a useful and informative update of overview and scrutiny work undertaken from September to November 2018.

CLlr Brian Steele, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Pre-decision Scrutiny

The recommendations made in all the pre-decision reports considered by OSMB were supported. Details of additional recommendations made by Scrutiny, plus any requests for specific information and intentions for future monitoring, are outlined below.

◆ Archives Accreditation - Policy Approval

Rotherham Archives and Local Studies is required to submit an application under the Archives Accreditation Scheme, the UK national standard. OSMB fully supported the Heritage Service's Forward Plan (2018-2022) and key policies supporting the application for this accreditation.

◆ Modern Slavery Update and Transparency Statement

The Board considered a report that provided an overview of planned activity during 2018/19 in relation to modern slavery. A draft Transparency Statement for publication in line with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 was included in the paper. OSMB noted the report and supported the recommendations.

◆ Implementation of the Early Help Strategy 2016-2019: 'Phase Two & Phase Three'

A detailed report concerning the proposals for Phase Two & Phase Three of the Early Help Strategy was scrutinised at length. The paper provided a summary of consultation activity, feedback on the proposals and an overview of how responses had informed the final proposals. It also covered the approved savings considered by OSMB in December 2017. Members supported the recommendations set out in the report and made further recommendations, taking into account the input from ILSC who had also looked at this issue. These additional recommendations were all approved by Cabinet and in summary were for:-

- ILSC to keep a watching brief on the implementation of Phases 2 & 3.
- a progress update on establishing Service Level Agreements with schools for youth service provision and related transfer of assets.
- Cabinet to revisit the exit survey and number of assessments completed by partners as performance measures.
- an update showing how Early Help Services are capturing the child/young person's voice.
- Ward Members to be consulted on the transfer or disposal of assets.

◆ Consultation on the Adoption of Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 and a Rotherham Sex Establishment Licensing Policy

OSMB scrutinised proposals to approve initiating public consultation on the adoption of Schedule 3, which allows lap, pole and table dancing establishments; strip shows; peep shows and live sex shows to be classified as sex entertainment venues. Adopting this Schedule would give local communities a greater say about the presence of sex establishments, including sex cinemas, sex entertainment venues and sex shops in their area. It would also allow the Council to regulate such premises more effectively through having a formal Sex Establishment Licensing Policy. The report also sought approval for consultation on a proposed policy to run in parallel to that on Schedule 3.

The Board were concerned about visual displays in sex shop windows and proximity of sex establishments to places of worship and where young people go. Concerns were also raised for workers in the sector, the majority of whom are female, recognising the potential risks of modern slavery or exploitation. Details of the plans for consultation were explored more deeply.

OSMB fully supported these proposals and recommended wide reaching public consultation to engage as many people as possible in giving their views. They also recommended identifying ways to consult with workers in the industry, ensuring that this could be done safely and anonymously. Cabinet agreed these additional recommendations from Scrutiny.

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

◆ Scrutiny Workshop: Adult Residential and Nursing Care Homes

OSMB approved the report to go forward to Cabinet for a formal response to the recommendations made by HSC. These were in respect of Member briefings, liaison with CQC, and encouraging care homes to work with the Care Home Support Service and to participate in training.

◆ Adult Social Care Improvement Plan and Budget Monitoring

Following their two workshop sessions earlier in 2018, the Board discussed a paper summarising developments and progress in relation to the improvement plan and budget monitoring in Adult Social Care (ASC). Key areas of activity cutting across both the improvement plan and the project plans to deliver on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) were outlined.

Members noted the report and resolved to invite the Principal Social Worker for the next update to discuss the action plan. In light of the Care Homes workshop report OSMB also recommended that mitigations against risks associated with the cessation of training for care homes needed to be identified prior to any decision on training. A joint report from ASC and Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) on work to prepare young people for transition between the two services will be scheduled in the work programme.

◆ Refuse and Recycling Collections Service Changes

Earlier in the year IPSC had put forward suggestions for the communications and engagement strategy on the changes, including a seminar for all Members (which was held on 2 October). This report provided a further update to scrutiny, including more information on implementation. OSMB welcomed the successful project in flats as in pre-decision scrutiny they had recommended holding trials prior to implementation. The Board requested a report in February 2019 to provide an update on the first stage of the service change, to be followed by subsequent progress reports to IPSC.

◆ Briefing - Forge Island Development

This is the flagship scheme in the Town Centre Masterplan and is central to the Council's plans to regenerate Rotherham town centre. OSMB received an update on the appointment of Muse as the development partner for the Forge Island site. Further reports will be provided to Scrutiny as the scheme progresses. Subject to discussions between the Chair and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, a workshop would be arranged to explore the plans in more detail.

◆ Response to Scrutiny Recommendations - Use of Interims, Agency and Consultancy staff

This review sought assurance that the Council does measure performance and value for money in this area and takes appropriate action to maintain spend within acceptable limits. Cabinet formally accepted all the recommendations, acknowledging the contribution made to strengthening the arrangements for managing use of agency, interim and consultancy staff. Agreed definitions for all three categories have been adopted Council-wide, together with corresponding revised budget codes. Business case forms have also been updated. Workforce Management Board will undertake feasibility work with other councils and public sector partners with regard to developing an in-house 'bank' system or employment agency to reduce cost and reliance on external agencies.

◆ Scrutiny review: Rothercard Scheme

A sub-group of OSMB is in the early stages of undertaking a review of the current Rothercard scheme to determine if it is still fit for purpose as it has been running for a number of years. The review will explore alternatives to the current scheme, including initiatives in other local authorities, before making recommendations about the future operation of the scheme.

◆ Outcomes from the ILSC Workshop Session - Complex Abuse Investigation

OSMB approved the report to go forward to Council for information and to Cabinet for a response to the recommendations made. (See page 9 for more information.)

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

◆ Financial Monitoring Reports July and September 2018-19

A report was considered by the Board which set out the financial position at the end of July 2018, based on actual costs and income for the first four months of the financial year with forecasts for the remaining eight months.

As OSMB scrutinises quarterly updates on the in-year budget position for both ASC and CYPS, questions centred on the budget position in the remaining directorates. Members probed the budget pressures on Legal Services through child care cases and more robust regime in Licensing; and asked about staffing arrangements for the service. They inquired into pressures reported in Regeneration and Environment Services to deliver their agreed savings and sought clarification on alternative strategies should income targets not be achieved. Issues with regard to vacancy management were explored in terms of any potential impact on service delivery and on other employees of not filling vacant posts to achieve savings.

A second report in September with revised figures for the year end was discussed at length. This showed that the Council now needed to identify a further £3.1m of cost reduction actions in year to achieve a balanced financial outturn for the General Fund. The main area of overspending continued to be in CYPS (£15.7m forecast) as a result of demand for services outstripping budget capacity, which also impacted on the budget for Legal Services, as seen in the previous report.

◆ Council Plan Quarter 1 Performance Report

The report and Performance Scorecard provided an analysis of the Council's current performance and direction of travel against 14 key delivery outcomes and 70 measures. Reference was made to areas that were performing well or improving and those that were off target for the five priorities.

Members' questions focused on a number of key areas including how workforce capacity and skills could be developed; performance data for the call centre; fixed penalty notices and enforcement across all wards; and figures for hate crime and anti-social behaviour. They also inquired how the creation of a rich and diverse cultural offer and thriving town centre would be measured and were provided with some specific examples.

◆ Children's Services Financial Monitoring and Review 2018-19

Given the budget challenges in the service, OSMB receives comprehensive quarterly updates on the current budget position and pressures; in-year mitigations; future plans and progress on the sustainability plan and initiatives to manage demand. The Board asked a number of questions and sought assurances around achieving the savings and reducing the overspend without this having a negative impact on the quality of services provided for children and young people. The new Strategic Director stressed that the big savings were linked to reducing demand and that signs of the expected improvements from the initiatives put in place were appearing.

It was agreed that the Chair, Vice Chair and Chair of ILSC would meet with the Cabinet Member and Strategic Director to discuss the format of future quarterly reports. Members resolved that greater clarity was required on timescales and milestones for addressing the in-year budget pressures. Follow up information was also requested on certain points raised.

◆ Budget Options 2019-20 and 2020-21

Over two days OSMB undertook in-depth scrutiny of the budget proposals from service areas for the next two financial years. Further explanatory detail was requested on a number of the options, particularly those for CYPS. More information was provided by CYPS and explored at length by the Members in a subsequent workshop session. The Board will make final recommendations after taking account of the outcomes of public consultation and following consideration of the MTFs.

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

◆ Annual Compliments and Complaints Report

Members discussed a report and presentation that outlined the complaints and compliments received by the Council in 2017-18 and indicated key trends over the last five years. Each directorate also summarised the numbers of complaints and compliments received compared to the year before and key themes that emerged in their such as service quality, timeliness of response, staff or communication with complainants. Members asked how complaints made under the Whistleblowing Policy were handled, about distinguishing between a request for service and a complaint and the means for dealing with complaints about commissioned services with providers.

The annual report also included recommendations for how complaints handling and reporting could be improved in the current year, which were supported by the Board. OSMB made suggestions last year about improvements to the report and were pleased to see these had contributed to the new improved format.

◆ 28 November

The following items were scrutinised by OSMB and details will follow in the next update to Council:-

- Universal Credit Rollout in Rotherham
- Community Energy Switching Scheme

Other activity

◆ “An Audience with Scrutiny” at Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR)

Cllrs Sansome and Steele met with representatives from various voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to discuss what scrutiny is, how it works in Rotherham and how the VCS could become more directly involved in scrutiny work. It was a positive session with plenty of questions and led directly to representatives from the Rotherham Parent Carers Forum being invited to the next HSC meeting to talk about peer support and transition from children’s services. Health, social care and housing in particular were issues that the VCS representatives were interested in.

◆ Budget Sub-group

Prior to commencing scrutiny of the budget proposals for 2019-21 a small sub-group considered progress in delivering savings agreed in previous years across all directorates.

◆ Petitions

- Installation of a CCTV Camera at the Memorial Garden, Clifton Park

The petition requested the Council to consider installing a CCTV camera to prevent further vandalism in the memorial garden and to make visitors feel safer. Cllr Allen confirmed that a site visit had been undertaken with regard to installing a CCTV camera. As this would require time for the necessary construction work, additional ranger and police patrols could take place until it was installed. OSMB supported the petition and asked for the work to be completed in three months.

- Request for Review of Petition Response - Return of Publication

OSMB resolved that no further review of the response would be undertaken.

◆ Government Consultation - Planning Process and Shale Gas

The Board considered the responses prepared on behalf of the authority to the two consultation papers. The responses had been endorsed by the Planning Board on 4 October 2018 and were submitted for review by OSMB prior to formal submission to Government.

Coming up

Scrutiny Review: Modular Housing - Adult Social Care - Medium Term Financial Strategy

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Health Select Commission

◆ Integrated Working and Implementation of the Integrated Locality Model

A central element of HSC's work programme is scrutiny of health and social care transformation, with integrated locality working being a priority workstream. Two presentations provided Members with an overview of progress overall and more specific detail about the emerging model for locality working. Capacity and recruitment challenges emerged as key concerns in being able to deliver the new models. Members again emphasised the need for qualitative information to supplement the metrics and asked for clarification on the timescales for implementation of the locality model. It was agreed that the information provided and the Performance Outcomes Framework would be considered in developing the work programme for the HSC Performance sub-group.

◆ Rotherham Care Group, RDaSH - Estates Strategy

RDaSH presented the emerging proposals to rationalise their estate from six buildings to four after consultation with stakeholders on two preferred options. This is linked into the wider place based plans and aims to improve access, including having a town centre facility in Rotherham, and to have integrated mental health and learning disability services for all age adults. Members explored issues around staffing and capacity for mental health services and the financial challenges.

◆ Response to Scrutiny Review - Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery Services

The spotlight review sought to ensure that the drug and alcohol service, which is operating within a reduced budget, would provide a quality, safe service under the new contract from April 2018. Eight recommendations had resulted with a focus on performance management, care pathways, being proactive on safety and risk minimisation. All had been accepted by Cabinet and HSC discussed the actions being implemented under each and the progress made. Members inquired about clinical treatment under the new service provider and funding for suicide prevention work.

◆ Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Strategy

In October 2017 HSC considered information presented by Rotherham schools regarding their response to children and young people with SEMH needs and requested a further report in 2018. A new strategy is under development which will underpin a multi-agency approach to ensure that children's needs are met effectively and as early as possible. Members were assured that this would be based on a thorough understanding of the levels of need experienced across the system matched with agreed pathways that were clear, well communicated and properly resourced.

HSC explored a number of issues including capacity across the system, especially in Pupil Referral Units, therapeutic responses and partnership working. They recommended that consideration should be given to the provision and support for young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) people, as young people had reported difficulties in accessing services. Members also recommended having a lead case worker for families as a dedicated single point of contact, after communication with families had been raised as an issue in some cases.

◆ Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

HSC discussed an update on the delivery of specialist CAMHS within Rotherham and the ongoing review of the Local CAMHS Transformation Plan. They also considered information regarding key themes identified from previous scrutiny work including workforce development, waiting times, the impact of locality working, closer integration with Early Help and transition from CAMHS.

As with SEMH, Members asked questions about support for LGB&T young people, given the long waiting times for specialist clinics such as Tavistock. Attention was also drawn to differences between mental health and neuro-developmental conditions, although both come under CAMHS. Further work is underway in relation to the autism spectrum (ASD) pathway as this is still a concern and HSC will scrutinise the outcomes of that work once the review is completed.

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Health Select Commission

◆ South Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Wakefield Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)

The JHOSC met in October and considered updates on the South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Integrated Care System (SY&B ICS) overall, which has 15 areas of focus and the Hospital Services Programme, one of its workstreams. Following the Hospital Services Review (HSR) a strategic outline business case has been published outlining how the system will respond to the HSR recommendations. The focus will be on more formalised co-operation between hospitals through hosted networks and on transformation, both in terms of the workforce such as changing job roles, and by moving activity from hospitals to primary/community care where appropriate. Options will be explored for maternity, paediatrics and gastroenterology.

Members emphasised the importance of public engagement and improving communications and will receive the Communication and Engagement Plan for their consideration. Assurance was sought on addressing health inequalities and variations in performance and that the plans would be delivered within timescales and resources. Further reports were requested on the Children's and Maternity Services workstream and on the workforce issues identified in the HSR.

◆ The Rotherham Foundation Trust Quality Priorities for 2019-20

The Commission provided feed back on the long list of 15 priorities, five under each of the three domains of patient safety, patient experience and clinical effectiveness, after seeking additional information on the rationale behind each one. Members prioritised all the areas under clinical effectiveness, in particular implementing the outcomes of the national dementia audit. The Quality Sub-group will ask further questions on the final set of priorities at its half year update meeting.

◆ 29 November

In addition to an update on the work programme and discussion on potential issues for spotlight reviews early in 2019, the following were the two main items scrutinised by HSC and details will follow in the next update:

- Refreshed Rotherham Integrated Health and Social Care Place Plan
- Update on Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery Services

Other activity

◆ HSC Performance Sub-group - Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)

The group scrutinised provisional year end performance including a RAG-based thematic review under the headings of prevention and delay; independence; personalisation; and perception and experience, linking in relevant ASCOF measures. The key area that emerged for a more in-depth piece of work was reablement and this will be looked at in 2019. Several recommendations were made regarding future performance reports to which a positive response has been received.

◆ Visits to ASC Single Point of Access, Care Coordination Centre and Health Village

Seven HSC Members undertook a tour of service access points and met with managers and staff at all three sites who were enthusiastic about the benefits of working more closely with colleagues from other partners and teams. Clearer understanding of other roles, better communications and information sharing were cited as positive benefits, contributing to delivery of more holistic care.

Coming up

- Quality Sub-groups for Rotherham Hospital and RDaSH
- Implementation of Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Sexual Health Strategy
- Performance Sub-group

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Improving Lives Select Commission

◆ Children Missing from Education (CME)

This refers to children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, and who are not receiving a suitable alternative education. ILSC scrutinised this issue last year and had requested a follow up session, to focus on an in-depth analysis of the data about CME. The quarter 1 score card for 2018-19, which also incorporated partial data for the two previous years, was discussed at length. The score card records new, active and resolved/closed cases; breakdown by year group; main presenting need or issue, plus some demographic and locality information.

Members probed into links with other workstreams such as safeguarding, Selective Licensing and work under the auspices of the Controlling Migration Fund. They were informed that although there was no statutory responsibility for CME below school age, the service did track nursery schools and playgroups as much as possible. Reassurance was provided that the whole family was looked at and not just the child missing from education. ILSC resolved to receive a further report detailing progress; additional analysis of the data, trends and reasons why children were not on the school roll; the budget; and the work of the Strategic Missing Group. A further recommendation was for consideration to be given to the appropriate arena for evaluation of the Controlling Migration Fund.

◆ Outcomes from the Workshop Session - Complex Abuse Investigation

Cllr Clark presented a briefing on the outcomes and recommendations from a workshop session held by ILSC in April 2018. The purpose had been to seek assurance and further understanding of the extent to which agencies were working together effectively to address complex abuse.

The following key issues were explored:-

- circumstances when complex abuse procedures were used
- which agencies were involved and at what level
- how other agencies/parts of the Council without direct safeguarding powers contributed to investigations
- impact of the investigations on referrals to social care
- engagement with Early Help services
- any impact of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) on information sharing
- how the voice of the child is captured in the investigations
- how this work was viewed in the recent Ofsted inspection

After questioning officers and partners, Members were assured that the Council and its partners were working effectively within the prescribed policy for complex abuse investigations. A small number of recommendations were made to go forward for consideration by Cabinet and partners.

◆ 2018 Education Performance Outcomes - year ending summer 2018

A report provided ILSC with an overview of the provisional un-validated educational outcomes of children and young people in primary, special, secondary schools and academies in Rotherham. Members probed into various issues including plans to address under-attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils; plans for other disadvantaged cohorts; partnership working with Multi-Academy Trusts (MAT); how University Campus Rotherham (UCR) would link to the Skills Plan and the education sector as a whole; and actions to boost performance of more able students.

The Commission requested a further report to cover actions taken to "Close the Gap", more detail on action plans around next steps and how these will be monitored; and actions to boost progress of more able pupils. The Regional Schools Commissioner, who has statutory powers in relation to MAT, will be invited to a future meeting. Members also plan to visit UCR.

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Improving Lives Select Commission

◆ Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) - Update

After setting the context for Rotherham, a detailed presentation and report provided a broad overview of the key themes in the SEND strategy, what is working well and areas for development. Current actions and timescales were also included. The Commission noted the progress made with the SEND and Inclusion agenda and agreed to receive periodic updates over the next three years to ensure the continuation of the direction of travel and pace of developments given the change in two key leadership posts. Further information was requested regarding the High Needs budget monitoring group once established and on the regional evaluation when available.

◆ Demand Management and Placement Sufficiency - Looked After Children

Numbers of looked after children have increased significantly and ILSC scrutinised a report setting out current strategies to manage demand and financial pressure, including some assessment of their impact, and also future plans. Members sought clarification on various processes in relation to children entering and leaving care. They inquired about the marketing strategy for foster carers, especially for respite foster carers and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic foster carers and heard about the positive work to develop the Muslim foster care project. They also explored issues around foster carer resignations and the support available for them. Although improvements were being seen there were still issues to probe into and a further update was requested for March 2019 to reference the Ofsted eight points for Looked After Children's Services improvement, as well as the refreshed Sufficiency Strategy.

◆ 4 December

The following items were scrutinised by ILSC and details will follow in the next update to Council:-

- Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report
- Adult Safeguarding Board Annual Report
- Children Missing from Education Update

Other Activity

◆ Meeting with Young Inspectors

11 Young Inspectors shared information about their work programme and how they undertake their inspections. Members were impressed with the work and commitment of the Young Inspectors and offered to assist with recruitment by sharing information about the programme. They suggested that it would be helpful if copies of each summary report, including outline recommendations and the response from the service, could be shared with ILSC. This would assist them to understand where improvements had been made and if there were any areas of concern still outstanding. It was agreed that the summary reports from Exclusions and Contact Centres would be circulated and that ILSC will maintain links with the Young Inspectors.

◆ CYPS Performance Sub-group - Safeguarding and Early Help Services

Following preliminary work last March the sub-group requested more information on a number of issues for their meeting in September. In relation to safeguarding, Members explored contacts progressing to referrals, numbers in care and leaving care, family contact, concerns about health and dental assessments and about care leavers in employment, education or training. For Early Help, questions centred on sources of referrals, the quality of assessments, step-up/step-down provision, differentials in team performance, and pathways for children missing from home. Future reports were requested on dental assessments and on apprenticeships for looked after children. This work will continue with scrutiny of the performance data for quarter two.

Coming Up

Rotherham "Voice of the Child" Lifestyle Survey Report - Post Abuse Support - Domestic Abuse

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Improving Places Select Commission

◆ Rother Valley Country Park Caravan Site Progress

The Commission noted that the construction of a new camping and caravan site at the park is on track and scheduled for completion and handover in March 2019, in line with the original project programme. Members explored a number of issues and asked for more details regarding provision to charge up electric vehicles at the caravan park. Follow up reports were requested to cover the procurement of the booking system and then the first six months of being operational, including any impact on residents in the area. Several IPSC members also undertook a site visit in November.

◆ Thriving Neighbourhoods

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the production of a new neighbourhood strategy, with wards as the building blocks to enable partners and communities to work together to improve local outcomes. The Annual Report 2017-18 summarised the first year of delivery of the new model of neighbourhood working and lessons learned, in addition to making recommendations for future delivery of the model. The new draft Thriving Neighbourhoods: The Rotherham Neighbourhood Strategy 2018-2025 was noted. IPSC recommended that the required training for Members and officers in relation to the working of Thriving Neighbourhoods should be undertaken as soon as possible. Members requested a report in six months regarding devolved budgets and the governance framework (including monitoring progress on Ward Plans and evaluation of them).

◆ Scrutiny Review of Modular Housing (joint with OSMB)

The review is looking into the viability of providing low cost housing for young single individuals and young families in one and two bedroom modular accommodation, incorporating suitable technology wherever possible to reduce running costs. In addition the review is considering the possibility of being able to move the buildings to where they are most needed.

Two more site visits took place during September and October to look at various types of modular housing and container homes currently available. Following pre-decision scrutiny of the House Project, where OSMB recommended encouraging young people to be involved in the review, a small group of Looked After Children participated in both visits and fed in their views. Evidence gathering has concluded and the review report and recommendations are currently being finalised to be presented in December at OSMB.

◆ Home to School Transport Policy

IPSC noted the progress made on implementing the new Home to School Transport Policy, which had been approved in April. Copies of the policy, the Parent and Carers Brochure and the new Assessment Matrix: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities for home to school transport were provided for the Commission.

Clarity was sought on information used in the assessment matrix and about the appeals process. Questions also focused on progress with independent travel training and Members were informed that work is under way with schools to determine levels of need and capacity to deliver. Special Schools were keen to train their staff to deliver the training for their students.

A further update on implementation was requested in six months and two recommendations resulted from the discussions:

- to consider looking into the use of contactless cards on buses to support independent travel by young people who might have less visible support needs, such as autism
- to reconsider the appeals process for the renewal of a home to school bus pass in cases where a family's circumstances had not changed from the previous year

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e

Improving Places Select Commission

◆ Housing Strategy Refresh - 2019-2022

Members discussed a presentation outlining the achievements made under the present strategy and the proposed vision, key priorities and pipeline projects for the refresh. They explored various issues including specialist housing, tenant voice, measures to reduce fuel costs, maintenance and gas servicing. A future report was requested to consider progress on Section 106 Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy. It was agreed that pre-decision scrutiny on the revised strategy would be undertaken by IPSC prior to it going to Cabinet for approval.

◆ Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-22

Officers gave a detailed presentation covering the legislative changes and duties for the Council underpinning the new strategy, which is currently under development. A summary of achievements from the current strategy was provided, together with an overview of the seven proposed priorities for the new strategy:

- Supporting People with Complex Needs
- Rapid Housing - getting everyone housed quicker
- Preventing and supporting young people from becoming homeless
- Ending rough sleeping
- Preventing homelessness to reduce the impact on health
- Reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation
- Sustaining Tenancies

IPSC inquired about funding streams and support for people who had experienced domestic abuse and those with mental health needs. The work of the Rough Sleeper Team and Tenancy Support Team, including joint working with other partners and outreach was explored in detail.

◆ Housing Allocation Policy – Amendments

RMBC's Housing Allocation Policy outlines who can seek rehousing through the local authority, the properties they can apply for and how people are prioritised for available homes. Five proposed amendments address current issues and will also help to prevent homelessness earlier; reduce waiting time for households with a medical need; and apply consistent approaches within the policy for people who wish to move to a smaller home. IPSC discussed each of the recommendations and the accompanying rationale behind them fully.

The officers' recommendations were supported and Members suggested a further addition to the one regarding people having a local connection if direct family members lived in Rotherham and had done for three years. The new proposal added grandparents to the present list (if people were in contact with them) and IPSC suggested further expansion to include extended family members.

Other activity

◆ Dignity Funerals Ltd.

As part of its continuing scrutiny of bereavement services, members of IPSC visited Rotherham Crematorium to see the recent improvement works undertaken to improve the facilities. This was part of a series of planned visits.

◆ Cultural Strategy Development

Three Members from IPSC are keeping a watching brief and acting as a critical friend to officers as the strategy is developed.

Coming Up

Asset Management - Emergency Planning - Draft Skills and Employment Plan - Housing Strategy

C h e c k , C h a l l e n g e , C h a n g e