

Overview and Scrutiny Update



December - February 2018-19

Check, Challenge, Change

Our Work Programme 2018-19

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Introduction

Welcome to the third 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.

Of late the work programme has rightly had a strong emphasis on budgetary matters. The focus has also been on monitoring and ensuring progress on improvement plans and strategies, coupled with seeking assurance about future service sustainability through demand management and new approaches for social care. Responses to the recommendations from several scrutiny reviews are also due to be reported back before the year end.

Nevertheless, it is pleasing to report on a number of positive changes that have resulted, or are under way, as a result of the work undertaken by Scrutiny. A few such examples are:-

- ◆ The final Youth Transport Charter and promotional poster developed by young people with SYPTE, following a Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge, will be published shortly.
- ◆ Implementation of a single code of practice for officers in respect of enforcement activity and issuing penalties (by the Council or an external body on behalf of the Council) stemmed from a recommendation made at pre-decision scrutiny.
- ◆ Development of a new joint pathway for people with needs arising from both their mental health and substance misuse resulted from a spotlight review by HSC.
- ◆ IPSC asked RotherFed to consider including a young tenant on the RotherFed Board. The idea was welcomed, although it is recognised that intermediate steps to involve young people and build capacity will be needed first.
- ◆ Following a recommendation last year, improvements were made to the budget consultation process to ensure that public views could be taken into account by OSMB in their scrutiny of the budget proposals for 2019-21. This will evolve further over time.
- ◆ Input from ILSC continues to inform the annual Rotherham Voice of the Child Lifestyle survey. For example a new question in relation to provision of breakfast clubs in schools and more consideration of the findings in the round with information from sources such as Public Health.

The first section of this report covers pre-decision scrutiny by OSMB and IPSC, 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 December 2018 to February 2019.

Cllr Brian Steele, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

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Pre-decision Scrutiny

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

OSMB

◆ Community Energy Switching Scheme

Consideration was given to a report which detailed the proposed community energy switching scheme that would be open to all Rotherham residents and would reduce the number of households paying high tariffs for gas and electricity and reduce fuel poverty. The report requested approval to carry out an OJEU procurement process to identify a potential partner to develop a scheme. This followed scrutiny of an earlier report seeking approval for a feasibility study into developing such a scheme, which had been fully supported by the Board.

OSMB had previously requested that, subject to the outcome of the study, thought be given to the marketing and promotion of the scheme. This was reflected in the report which recommended engaging with community and voluntary sector groups, and a range of Council services, to inform the development of a marketing and communication strategy. Cabinet approved recommendations from OSMB regarding building customer support and service standards into the tender framework and for performance on these standards to be reported quarterly to the Cabinet Member.

◆ Riverside House Café

As part of the budget savings proposals, approval was sought to conduct an open tender process to identify a partner to deliver the Riverside House Café through a lease and profit share tenancy agreement. OSMB supported the proposal but recommended that if the tender process was unsuccessful preliminary work should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity on alternative options and that these future proposals be brought back to Scrutiny for review. These additional recommendations were agreed by Cabinet.

◆ Interim Update on Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2018-2021

The MTFS sets out the framework and principles upon which current and future financial projections, over the medium term, will be predicated. Members sought clarification in respect of contingency plans if the strategy for the management of the Council's finances could not be realised. They also sought assurances that the budgets proposed and the detail of the strategy was controllable and were reassured that every part of the budget was being challenged and correctly set. OSMB noted the report and recommended that the strategy be updated by the Strategic Director to take account of the funding announcements from central government and address the concerns expressed by Members, which was agreed by Cabinet.

◆ Rotherham Town Centre Masterplan - Forge Island Agreements

Forge Island is the flagship scheme in the Town Centre Masterplan and is central to plans for regenerating Rotherham town centre. Members requested the continuation of quarterly updates and also to have exception reports in the event of the scheme not progressing to plan. OSMB also requested further assurance that the insertion of a break clause was not feasible prior to entering the lease agreement and asked for a report on the feasibility of inserting break clauses for future major projects. Cabinet were happy to accept OSMB's recommendations and assured that the financial arrangements were feasible. Further information could be provided in taking break clauses forward.

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Pre-decision Scrutiny

IPSC

The Select Commission scrutinised the proposals at length, making recommendations for each that were endorsed by OSMB as part of pre-decision scrutiny.

◆ Submission of Clean Air Zone Outline Business Case to the Joint Air Quality Unit

Rotherham and Sheffield have been mandated by DEFRA to improve air quality by reducing NO₂ emissions. The two Councils were required to submit an Outline Business Case to Government by the end of 2018, demonstrating how they will reduce emissions in the shortest possible timescale. It was noted that the Parkway did cross over the border into Rotherham, which meant the Council were mandated to take action where it was identified in the report.

The Clean Air Zone would be kept on the scrutiny work programme and IPSC requested the outline consultation plan. Members were in support of the recommendations proposed, but requested that:

- the fleet of vehicles used by RMBC be reviewed to ensure that they meet the required regulations
- the final business case should be clear on the points included arising from the consultation
- the Cabinet Member notify OSMB when Government funding for the initiative had been received

Although there were no regulations specifically for Council vehicles, Cabinet took on board the need to look at air quality and contributions in terms of vehicles. Government funding had already been received for officer time and research, which would be subject to further funding for the mitigation measures.

◆ Immobilisation of Vehicles - Persistent Evaders and Untaxed Vehicles

Members discussed the adoption of a policy to facilitate the immobilisation (clamping) of untaxed vehicles and vehicles that are the subject of multiple unpaid parking penalty charges, to prevent them being driven away prior to removal.

Three additional recommendations resulted:

- that the viability of reducing the number of offences from 6 to 3 be explored
- that the introduction of the vehicle immobilisation (clamping) be widely publicised by the Council throughout the borough
- that an update report be submitted to Scrutiny six months after introduction of the immobilisation initiative

Cabinet were happy to accept the recommendations from Scrutiny but confirmed that the viability of reducing the number of offences was still being explored.

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Pre-decision Scrutiny

◆ Amendments to the Housing Allocation Policy - January 2019

Following earlier scrutiny by IPSC, OSMB considered the final proposals, welcoming the report and recommendations and approach to simplify the process. Questions focused on support for existing residents if there were problems in a neighbourhood arising from new tenants in Council housing. More tenancy support officers had been recruited and would, following induction and training, be able to do more work on prevention and tenancy periods, with Members and local communities. Members questioned the availability and quality of temporary accommodation and it was confirmed that there had been an increase in the number of crash pads from 29 to 50. Work was continuing to ensure the quality was to an acceptable standard. OSMB recommended a slight change to the wording of the recommendation regarding people having a local connection to Rotherham. The need to ensure that equality impact assessments (where required) are attached to reports for pre-decision scrutiny and to Cabinet was again reiterated.

◆ Budget and Council Tax 2019-20 and Medium Term Financial Strategy

In-depth scrutiny of the budget proposals from service areas for the period 2019-2021 was carried out in October. Further details on a number of the options, particularly those for CYPS, had also been explored at length in a subsequent workshop session, prior to the final pre-decision scrutiny.

Members asked questions in relation to treasury management; delivery of the large scale ICT and technology driven projects across the Council; funding for ICT licences; and initiatives for income generation. Final assurance was sought that measures introduced to reduce the number of Looked After Children were starting to make a difference and that adult residential and nursing care would continue to be monitored. The Board endorsed the Budget and Financial Strategy after taking into account the outcomes of public consultation (see page 8) and updated MTFs.

◆ Commissioning and Procurement of a New Delivery Model for Home Care & Support Services

A report provided Members with an overview of the current home care and support service in Rotherham, particularly the state of the local market in terms of ability to meet current demand for service and the pressures faced by providers. The paper outlined the case for change and the key principles and approaches underpinning a new delivery model. Following a positive co-production exercise with a range of stakeholders, a new service specification has been developed. Approval was sought to procure a new model of home care and support through a competitive tender process, with alternative service arrangements to be in place from November 2019.

Key lines of enquiry probed into the following areas:

- ways to encourage more younger people to pursue careers in social care and to develop a more highly qualified workforce
- ensuring consistency and high standards across all providers
- engagement of front-line staff and providers in developing new models/approaches
- performance indicators and monitoring
- ability to continue to respond quickly and appropriately in a case of a provider failure
- use and adequacy of 15 minute time slots

It was agreed HSC would monitor implementation of the new contract, with a report back in November 2020 once the contract had been in a place for a year.

◆ Housing Revenue Account – Business Plan 2019-20

No additional recommendations ensued.

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

◆ Quarterly Update Adult Social Care: the Budget Forecast and Continued Improvement Plan

In September the Board had requested that to supplement the update on the budget position and performance the Principal Social Worker should be invited to present the action plan to drive improvements in practice. Scrutiny of the plan enabled Members to have a good appreciation of the activity taking place with staff to embed the strengths based approach, improve quality and practice standards, and enhance legal literacy.

OSMB sought assurances that the overspend in the service would continue to fall and were advised that although still a challenge the level of overspend had decreased month on month since September 2017. They also asked whether the service was capturing positive outcomes from service transformation and it was confirmed that data was captured from the Wellbeing Forum, but more could be done to disseminate good news stories. Clarification was sought in respect of the difference between reviews and reassessments and the timescales for both. Responding to concerns around pace and meeting targets, a specific activity report would be produced to provide assurances to Members and also an overview of the requirements of the Care Act 2014 in respect of reviews and reassessments. Mental health, the Commissioning Strategy and promotion of Direct Payments were discussed and will all be covered in future updates. The Board requested the outcomes from the Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care annual review and recommended that the Continued Improvement Plan be updated with clear dates and milestones.

◆ Scrutiny Review: Modern Methods of Construction

This review looked at 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 considered the possibility of being able to move the buildings to where they are most needed.

After extensive evidence gathering and a number of site visits, Cllr Cowles presented the final report and recommendations to the Board from this joint review by members of OSMB and IPSC. A number of pertinent issues had emerged such as the general lack of affordable housing for young people and young families, with many local authorities struggling to meet demand for social housing in their area. Homelessness and the implications for individuals from recent welfare reform and the introduction of Universal Credit was also a factor. In addition traditional build houses take longer to complete than container or modular build homes.

The review formulated five recommendations as follows:

1. That consideration of any learning experiences identified as part of the Council's pilot projects using modern methods of construction be utilised as part of any future projects.
2. That Housing Services develop a pilot project of up to ten pods at various locations throughout the borough.
3. That a pilot project of five Modern Methods of Construction homes for families be developed.
4. That the option of various energy packages be developed, for example, solar power and cavity wall insulation for residents of the borough, whether in social or private rented accommodation.
5. That each property involved in the pilot schemes be allocated an individual finance code to allow for easier monitoring of associated costs.

OSMB approved the report for submission to Cabinet, with the response to the recommendations from the review expected by the end of March 2019.

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

◆ Budget Consultation Report 2019-20 and 2020-21

This report summarised the responses to the recent public consultation on the Council budget proposals, which took place from October 26th to November 30th 2018. 1,181 people participated in the consultation, through face-to-face sessions, online engagement, letters and emails (some of which were appended to the report). Also included was the reply to the interim response from OSMB following the Board's initial scrutiny of the budget proposals at the end of 2018.

Members probed into how the consultation process had been designed, costs in terms of time and money, and whether any difficulties had been encountered in collating information due to the range of methods used. Officers confirmed that feedback from OSMB on last year's budget consultation had informed the approach this year. Clarification was sought on how the Council had looked to consult with groups sharing a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and the Board recommended that future budget consultation should ensure these groups are targeted more effectively.

◆ Children and Young People's Services Budget Monitoring - High Needs Finance Update and Budget Sustainability Options

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. Members scrutinised a paper summarising the increased number of Education, Health and Care Plans; the growth in demand for specialist provision; and the current financial position of the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The High Needs Block Recovery Plan would aim to bring in-year expenditure in line with the annual budget allocation and to focus on a longer term plan which would contribute to reducing the cumulative deficit. The option to implement a recovery plan to enable future budget sustainability was supported. As part of the monitoring cycle an update report was requested in six months.

◆ Scrutiny review: Rothercard Scheme

A sub-group of OSMB is 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. After considering the information provided, including initiatives in other local authorities, officers have been charged with developing a business case for a new sustainable scheme. This should include a range of options linked in with the digital agenda, plus clear eligibility criteria. Members will consider the business case and potential options before making recommendations about the future operation of the scheme.

◆ Evaluation of Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for the Town Centre

As requested by OSMB, a 12 month review post implementation of the PSPO was undertaken to assess its impact and consider any variations, adjustments or new orders. The recommendation for a single code of practice had been taken forward and training rolled out. The Cabinet Member had also previously agreed to review the potential inclusion of a condition relating to nuisance vehicles. However as this further review showed only limited incidents the previous year, it had been agreed that no further action was needed at that stage, although incident monitoring would continue. There were no plans to propose any adjustment of the order at this time.

Members discussed the detailed monthly statistical analysis at length, which covered the number and type of incident and hot spot areas. Enforcement data incorporated offence type, issuing agency and number of fixed penalty notices. The encouraging reduction in the number of incidents was noted, as were the challenges with regard to resource allocation. Officers highlighted where use of the licensing framework was the best means of addressing some of the issues around alcohol. It was agreed to have another update in 12 months.

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

◆ Proposed Public Space Protection Order - Fitzwilliam Road, Rotherham

In conjunction with the previous report, OSMB were asked to consider and comment on the conditions and geographical area covered by the proposed PSPO. Member questions focused on resourcing, ensuring appropriate consultation took place that targeted the right people and avoiding displacement to other areas as a result of an order. Commencing public consultation on the proposed order was supported and OSMB may revisit this at the pre-decision stage.

◆ Universal Credit Rollout in Rotherham

Universal Credit is an integrated working-age benefit providing a basic allowance with additional elements for children, disability, housing and caring. It is being introduced nationally and following a number of delays was fully rolled out in Rotherham on 11 July 2018. People move onto the Universal Credit system when they are a new claimants or following a change in their personal circumstances which would trigger the changeover from legacy benefits.

The Board received an initial report as a starting point for scrutiny of this issue. What became clear was the balance needed between the Council's function as a landlord, where risk of rent arrears impacts financially on the Housing Revenue Account, and its role in supporting residents. OSMB were assured that the Housing Income Team had been restructured to help support tenants with financial advice in the context of Universal Credit. Members expressed some surprise in relation to the cited absence of difficulties being experienced by partners in providing support following the roll out. In response, it was confirmed that it was still relatively early in the transition and a further report would break down the issues relating to impact on housing tenants and the broader impact on residents in the borough. Assurance was given that staff training on assisting tenants with making claims for housing benefit had taken place corporately not only in the Housing Service. Further concerns were expressed that communication with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) was creating issues that had an impact on residents and it was confirmed senior officers were meeting with the DWP to ensure services were more joined up and effective. It was agreed to have a further report on the impact of the roll out, with a clear scope determined in advance.

◆ Council Tax Support and the Impact of Universal Credit

It was reported that Universal Credit included Housing Benefit, but not local Council Tax Support (CTS), for which residents were required to apply directly to the Council. There was concern about a potential decline in CTS applications as this was now an additional, separate process to the Universal Credit application to the DWP. The service had not seen a significant increase in debt recovery as a result of Universal Credit, but it was speculated that it may start to become an issue in twelve months. Members sought assurances in respect of the work undertaken to communicate the changes to residents and inquired about actions taken to encourage people potentially entitled to Council Tax Support to apply. The report was noted and Members agreed the information would inform their future work in respect of the impact of Universal Credit.

Other activity

◆ Petitions

Two petitions were discussed at the OSMB meeting on 13 February and the outcome of their recommendations will be reported in the next update to Council.

Coming up

- Response to Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge: Work Experience
- Council Plan Quarter 3 Performance
- Financial Monitoring
- Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge 2019

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Health Select Commission

◆ Update on Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery Services

One of the recommendations from the spotlight review was for Public Health and CGL to present an overview of how the new service was developing, including a summary of progress on the key performance indicators. Linked to this, another recommendation had emphasised the need for robust performance management of the new contract from the outset.

Members scrutinised a comprehensive performance scorecard for treatment and recovery services, including exception reports and analysis of trends and were reassured regarding performance and contract management arrangements. They welcomed the draft pathway and guidance for staff in RDaSH and CGL encompassing mental health needs combined with drug or alcohol related issues to facilitate holistic care and support. CGL articulated their approach to increase opiate use service exits, including using different clinical approaches with service users, with safety paramount. Other areas explored by the Commission included waiting times; service user voice; use of new psycho-active substances; mental capacity; and if risk assessments would identify any issues regarding domestic abuse. It was agreed to have a monitoring report in June 2019.

◆ Rotherham Integrated Care Partnership and Implementation of the Rotherham Integrated Health and Social Care Place Plan

Scrutiny of greater integrated working between health and social care is central to the Health Select Commission's work programme. A short presentation outlined the priorities in the plan, key achievements, new ways of working in localities, governance and next steps. Discussion then ensued on the performance report for quarter one, with Members probing into a range of issues and verifying the rigour of the performance data.

A particular focus was on mental health crisis services and suicide prevention work, with additional information requested. Workforce challenges and maternity services were also explored. Access to GPs emerged in the discussions and this led to Members identifying certain lines of inquiry for the meeting in February, around data sets and how appointments in the three GP hubs are communicated to patients.

HSC agreed to continue monitoring progress with the plan and recommended that once the scorecard for quarter two became available it should be submitted for further scrutiny (see below).

◆ Rotherham Integrated Health and Social Care Place Plan - Quarter 2 Performance

Positive progress was noted on a number of the indicators since quarter one. All milestones had now been included and only four Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) remained to be confirmed. After discussing the report in a workshop session Members agreed to receive the future quarterly performance reports for information. To avoid duplication scrutiny would be light touch given the reporting arrangements established via the ICP Place Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. In addition, as a number of key workstreams within the plan were already included within HSC's work programme, this would provide an opportunity to explore any concerns arising from performance data then. Other areas within the plan, particularly within the Children and Young People Transformation Group priorities, coincided with the work programme for ILSC and will be scrutinised there, benefitting from the Vice Chair, Cllr Short and Cllr Jarvis being on both Select Commissions.

Members identified points for clarification or questions in relation to a small number of the milestones and KPIs. These centred on children and young people, mental health and learning disability and were forwarded to officers for a response.

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Health Select Commission

◆ Consultation on Joint Strategic Needs Analysis Refresh (JSNA)

The refresh provides an opportunity to consider rationalising the content to align more with current priorities and to ensure it is more meaningful for commissioners, providers and partners. An interactive presentation allowed Members to express their views on the proposal, followed by six questions asking HSC to vote and give a steer on their preferences as part of the consultation. It was clarified that the refresh would take account of the ward boundary changes in due course. The Commission supported the proposals for the refresh and requested an update on progress on the refresh and updated website in the summer.

Other activity

◆ Quality Sub-group - RDaSH

Discussion at the half year update covered progress on actions since the CQC inspection. Eight of the 11 “must do’s” had been completed and the remaining three were amber rated. The Quality Dashboard for Patient Safety, with 12 months rolling data to September 2018, was explored in depth. Members asked about service provision for CSE and trauma and for people with autism. They were also updated on the latest developments with the Estate Strategy in Rotherham.

◆ Quality Sub-group - Rotherham Hospital

Progress made on the nine quality priorities for 2018-19 during quarters one and two was reported. Some had carried on from work undertaken the year before and may continue in 2019-20. The quality priorities for 2019-20 were highlighted and these had been revised from the initial long list following a review of quality and risk. Members were informed about “Safe & Sound”, the new Governance and Patient Safety Framework and how the Quality Strategy will be based around this framework.

◆ Return visit to Carnson House - Drug and Alcohol Services

Five Members returned to Carnson House to see the new treatment facilities and to discuss the services offered to help people recover from substance misuse. They met the service manager and asked questions about service user involvement and were provided with “you said, we did” examples. Recognising the challenges of long term methadone use, Members explored how service users were responding to new approaches. Assurance was provided on how the service was involved in partnership safeguarding arrangements and linked in with local pharmacies.

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

Following its earlier scrutiny of the provisional ASCOF year end performance report, the sub-group met on 19 February to consider the final report. This included benchmarking data with other local authorities in Yorkshire and Humber and nationally, enabling Rotherham to see progress from the previous year, including any changes in relation to Rotherham’s ranking compared to the year before. Outcomes and recommendations will be covered in the next update from Scrutiny due to publishing deadlines.

Coming up

- 28 February

- Rotherham Community Health Centre Services

- Primary Care Update and Implementation of GP Forward View

- Update from Rotherham Hospital following CQC Inspection

- Transition from Children’s to Adult Services (Joint with ILSC)

- Suicide Prevention

- Home First

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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 have closely scrutinised this issue and considered the most recent data on open, closed and active cases and how that compared with the last quarter. Evidence suggested recurrence was largely due to families being transient and then returning to Rotherham intermittently rather than concerns about vulnerability and/or safeguarding issues. Outcome data was now also captured. Assertive outreach and work was taking place to educate families with regard to the detrimental impact of removing their children from school. The service was also confident that agencies were soon notified if any new families had moved into the area, through the work carried out in the community.

Members asked questions with regard to Elective Home Education, including local authority powers and checks undertaken when an application was made. They were informed that a multi-agency governance group is in place and an escalation process had been established if children had not been seen. IPSC noted the report and made a recommendation for future six monthly reports to include the Strategic Missing Group and the wider context of CME, plus detail on persistent absence, Fixed Term Exclusions and Elective Home Education. A further recommendation was for discussion on the possibility of including CME in the weekly tracker.

◆ Rotherham Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2017-18

Joint working with Children's and the Safer Rotherham Partnership through the monthly meetings was reported as working well, together with the Partner Self Assessment and Challenge meetings. Last year IPSC had recommended that the report for 2017-18 should show how the customer voice is heard. Customer involvement within the Safeguarding Board and ensuring the customer voice is heard at all levels was still a concern. This would be addressed by developing a customer focus group to sit under the board and encouraging regular contributions to board meetings.

Under the Care Act people undergoing inquiries as a result of safeguarding concerns, have a right to an advocate. It was a current piece of work for the board to establish the baseline of who had been offered that support and then assurance with regard to the quality of the offer. Other themes explored by Members included mental capacity; vulnerable adults, including in cases of domestic abuse; the Learning Disability Mortality Review; and human trafficking and modern day slavery.

The Commission noted the report and recommended that the board prioritised ensuring that people with learning disabilities were adequately safeguarded under the new arrangements. Members also recommended that the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan for 2019-21 should be submitted with the 2018-19 Annual Report.

◆ Update on Ofsted Inspection Recommendations

An overview of the status of the 34 actions across the eight recommendations was provided for Members. Actions for two of the eight had been completed in full and 23 actions were in progress. The implementation of Signs of Safety within Liquid Logic was having an impact on developing key documents within the system but work had started on documents for use in the existing pathway. Further work included planning for the implementation of the Rotherham Family Approach in Liquid Logic, which will support staff in recording and evidencing their work with families.

The Ofsted outcome letter from the Annual Conversation was requested for information and IPSC recommended that the outcome of the Peer Review for Looked After Children should be submitted to the Select Commission as well as the Corporate Parenting Panel.

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Improving Lives Select Commission

◆ Update on development of the South Yorkshire Regional Adoption Agency

Following the rejection of the original business case developed by Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST), an additional sum of money has been allocated to DCST by the Department for Education to underwrite the further project development costs of rewriting the business case. RMBC will remain fully engaged in the process and development of the model to ensure it meets the essential criteria desired for Rotherham. Members noted the expectation that the revised business case will be completed by April 2019 and then undergo the necessary ratification.

◆ Rotherham "Voice of the Child" Lifestyle Survey Report 2018

IPSC discussed the findings of the latest survey and how these are used to inform and shape services and communications with young people. Questions were asked about schools who had chosen not to participate, use of the data by Public Health and other partners, and about the design of the survey. Members noted the report and were in support of partners receiving a copy of the report. They also recommended that consideration could be given to streamlining the survey for the future and to the inclusion of information relating to demographic and equality monitoring.

◆ Domestic Abuse Update

As a key element of their work programme, Members scrutinised a report that provided a detailed overview of service user engagement, the current Domestic Abuse Service review, and progress on the Domestic Abuse Strategy. Information in relation to audit activity to support continuous improvement within Domestic Abuse services was also presented, as previously requested.

Members had also asked for details of work taking place on stalking and harassment and probed into this theme. It was acknowledged that there were gaps in Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) and how it effectively supported victims of stalking and harassment, which was being looked at. Currently the figures did not distinguish in terms of stalking and harassment data and whether it was linked to domestic abuse or stranger related.

ILSC commented on the good progress made in the last 18 months and agreed to consider a further report in respect of the principles for the Domestic Abuse Service, prior to submission to Cabinet. An additional recommendation was for a follow up report regarding the gap in service related to stalking and harassment as this remained a concern.

◆ Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report

A number of themes were explored including the forthcoming arrangements for the new board and ensuring safe placements for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability, particularly out of borough. Clarification was sought on thresholds and whether there were any barriers that impeded issues being stepped up from Early Help to Social Care.

ILSC requested that the anonymised audit from the Domestic Abuse Partnership Review be circulated for information. The LSCB Chair will be invited to the July meeting to update the Commission on the new Safeguarding Multi-Agency Partnership arrangements.

Coming Up

- Post Abuse Support
- Barnardo's ReachOut
- Looked After Children Sufficiency
- Early Help
- Transition from Children's to Adult services (Joint with HSC)

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Improving Places Select Commission

◆ Housing Strategy Refresh 2019-2022

Following their discussion of a presentation outlining achievements under the present strategy and the proposed vision, key priorities and pipeline projects for the refresh, it had been agreed that the draft revised strategy would come back to IPSC prior to going to Cabinet.

Members discussed the draft strategy and supporting paper summarising the outcomes of consultation. A varied range of issues were explored including the annual target for new build properties; impact of right to buy; distribution of new Council stock across the borough; potential increase in housing needs as the university develops; and the need to promote town centre living to link in with wider regeneration strategy. Members also queried if an element of sustainable transport was included within the strategy.

Clarification was sought on how officers were working with developers to increase the number of properties built and the need to provide specialist properties for people with specific needs, which should be located so as to encourage mixed communities. Questions were also asked regarding the options for military veterans in the area and how the strategy would impact on them. Linking back to the recent scrutiny review, modern methods of construction were also discussed as an alternative to traditional build properties.

IPSC recommended that a detailed action plan is produced to enable monitoring of progress on the strategy. They also requested a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment for the Housing Strategy and asked to see the six monthly progress reports presented to the Strategic Housing Forum, which has responsibility for holding the service to account.

◆ Draft Skills and Employment Plan

With the increasing importance of skills in attracting investment and growing local businesses, as well as ensuring local residents can access employment opportunities, it was agreed by Rotherham Together Partnership that Rotherham required a stand alone Employment and Skills Plan. The plan will build on the existing Rotherham Economic Growth Plan (2015-25) and also seek to link to and complement the Sheffield City Region's Strategic Economic Plan and its Thematic Priority on Skills, Employment and Education. The two main objectives of the plan are "A workforce with the skills and experience to support Rotherham's economic growth and secure investment" and "Supporting people back into sustainable employment". A delivery plan sets out actions needed to deliver the priorities, with each action having an outcome and timescale, which it would be monitored against.

Key lines of enquiry probed into the following areas:

- Preparing young people for the world of work including performance on the Gatsby Benchmarks
- Transport accessibility and connectivity across the region and the "Wheels to Work" scheme
- Funding allocations across the City Region and expected benefits for the local economy
- Qualifications of both older workers and young people
- Absence of some of the targets within the plan
- Reductions in the workforce in some sectors and plans to help affected employees
- Opportunities to achieve Level Four qualifications and the advantages of a university campus
- Apprentices securing permanent employment with the same employer
- Ill health and social exclusion
- Gulliver's Valley and Rother Valley Country Park Caravan Park were two separate entities

It was agreed that the comments made on the draft plan by IPSC would be considered for inclusion in the final version to Cabinet. Members requested further information on a range of issues to be provided by officers. A progress update was requested in six to nine months.

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

Improving Places Select Commission

◆ Asset Management Progress Update

The Corporate Asset Management Plan 2017-2025, which incorporates the Council's Asset Management Policy and Strategy, is the guiding document for Asset Management activities and priorities. Progress against the plan is monitored by the Asset Management Board and the position as at November 2018 was reported to Members, who queried the "green" rating status attributed to measures classed as on hold. It was agreed changes would be made to these for future reporting. The Commission had previously requested more information about property reviews and a draft flowchart outlining the Surplus Property process was discussed and supported by IPSC.

A number of issues were explored with more detail and/or clarification provided, including:

- Consistency in the management of former school caretaker's bungalows as isolated properties
- Management and acquisition of commercial real estate
- Development of cost effective energy services
- Review of efficiency on Worksmart
- Decision making of the Asset Management Board and how this worked in practice
- Strategic acquisitions of spare unused land
- Redevelopment of other town centres

IPSC noted the progress on the plan and the ongoing work on the records storage and reporting of statutory compliance. A future update on Worksmart was requested later in 2019, after this has been relaunched.

◆ Update on the Agreement between Dignity Funerals Ltd. and RMBC

As part of its continuing scrutiny of bereavement services, Members considered an update on the report presented in July 2018, which included an overview of performance on the KPIs and service improvement targets. IPSC had previously recommended that future performance reports, including the annual report, should employ the red-amber-green (RAG) reporting system where possible and this had been taken on board. Additionally each indicator or target was now rated high, medium or low according to priority. 75% of service improvement targets and 89% of KPIs were rated green and IPSC welcomed the on-site improvements and wider liaison.

The Commission discussed the extended hours pilot at length and explored issues including closer working with the Coroner's Office; local interest in environmentally friendly burials; service user feedback, complaints and compliments; secure storage; and plans to improve pathways.

IPSC requested that the outcomes of the pilot on extended hours be reported back and asked for copies of the liaison group minutes and anonymised complaints data. Points raised in connection with the extended hours pilot should be fed in - monitoring the impact on local traffic and ensuring effective communication with all parishes and parts of the borough. The annual performance report for 2018-2019 will be scrutinised in June 2019.

- ◆ Immobilisation of Vehicles - Persistent Evaders and Untaxed Vehicles and
- ◆ Improving Air Quality in Rotherham - See pre-decision scrutiny on page 5
- ◆ Scrutiny Review: Modern Methods of Construction (see OSMB)

Coming Up

- Emergency Planning
- Section 106 Agreements/Community Infrastructure Levy
- Time For Action Enforcement Contract
- Adult Community Learning

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