

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
24th May, 2013

Present:- Councillor Steele (in the Chair); Councillors Currie, Dalton, Falvey, Gilding, G. A. Russell and Sims.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beck, Read and Whelbourn.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

2. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

3. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S RESIDENTIAL HOMES

Further to Minute No. 78 of the meeting of the Health Select Commission held on 18th April, 2013, consideration was given to a report presented by Councillor B. Steele and by the Scrutiny Manager containing the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of the two residential homes in Rotherham operated by the Council. The review had also included visits to two independent homes, for benchmarking purposes

The overall aim of the review was to achieve an understanding of value for money, outcomes and quality of service provision and, in particular, the potential impact of budgets cuts on these matters. As well as making recommendations to be considered alongside the process of setting and reviewing the 2013/14 budget, the review aimed to support the achievement of the Council priorities i.e. ensuring that care and protection were available for those people most in need and helping to create safe and healthy communities.

The review had comprised two distinct pieces of work:-

- to understand the workings of the residential homes set in the context of Adult Social Care delivery, funding and regulations.
- to receive a summary of the work completed by Price, Waterhouse Cooper and the main recommendations regarding the future of the residential homes.

Significant issues from the scrutiny review were as follows:-

- the two Council-owned residential homes would have difficulty being competitive in terms of costs with the independent sector, in part because of the terms and conditions of the staff employed by the Council;

- the majority of the costs of the residential homes concerned staffing;
- for several reasons, including vacancy rates and annual leave, staff would regularly find themselves working longer than their contracted hours and sometimes resulted in staff shortages;
- the high quality of care provided in the residential homes was largely attributable to the staff who were proud to work for the Council and extremely committed to improving the quality standards for the residents;
- the managers of the two residential homes demonstrated an inclusive management style and strong leadership;
- the entertainment and activities programme provided for residents were of a high quality;
- the costs associated with the maintenance contract and the involvement of staff in this process.

The Management Board noted the current position concerning the management of staff vacancy rates, as well as the costs of building maintenance at the residential homes.

Members placed on record their thanks to everyone who had participated in this scrutiny review, including the staff of the two residential homes.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review of this Council's residential homes, as detailed in the report now submitted, be endorsed.

(3) That the scrutiny review report be forwarded to the Cabinet for further consideration.

(4) That the Cabinet's response to this scrutiny review's recommendations be reported to a future meeting of the Health Select Commission.

4. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2013/2014

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Scrutiny Manager, concerning the suggested scrutiny work programme for the 2013/14 municipal year, with a focus on all of the Select Commissions, as well as this Management Board. A list of the currently suggested areas of work for scrutiny in 2013/14 was appended to the submitted report (nb: additional matters to be included in the list were (i) food banks and (ii) customer services provided at Council premises, including libraries; and (iii) fostering services – invest to save scheme). It was noted that not all areas

of work would have to be the subject of full scrutiny reviews and that use could also be made of the shorter 'spotlight' reviews.

In considering issues to be included in the 2013/14 work programme, the Management Board concentrated upon the need to ensure added value from the scrutiny process and to focus upon outcomes, any public perception and opinion, budget pressures and implications and any key changes to existing Council policy. It was acknowledged that duplication must be avoided, as services and issues may be subject to scrutiny by other bodies (both within and external to the Borough Council) and by processes such as performance clinics.

The Management Board divided into two groups for detailed discussion of all the suggested items within the draft work programme.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the following draft scrutiny work programme for 2013/14 be the subject of further consideration by this Management Board:-

(a) Scrutiny Reviews

Review of the Scrutiny function and Elected Member structures (Overview and Scrutiny Management Board)

City Deal – jobs and apprenticeships, together with Disadvantaged Areas and the impact of recruitment policies (e.g. qualifications required) on deprived communities (Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – Vice-Chairs of Select Commissions to lead the scrutiny review)

Families for Change (Improving Lives Select Commission)

Council budget setting process and the impact of budget cuts on equalities (Self Regulation Select Commission)

(b) Spotlight Reviews

Council Housing finance and the impact of Welfare Reform (Self Regulation Select Commission)

Commissioning, together with local procurement policies (Self Regulation Select Commission and other Scrutiny members to be invited to participate)

Customer Services Centres and Community Libraries (Improving Places Select Commission)

Performance monitoring and review of Corporate Plan outcomes (Self Regulation Select Commission)

Safeguarding of Children and Young People and the transition from Children's Services to Adult Services (Improving Lives Select Commission)

Child Poverty and Benefits take-up, together with pensioner poverty (Improving Lives Select Commission)

Access to GPs (Health Select Commission)

Medication – financial savings achievable by reducing the issue of unnecessary prescription medicines (Health Select Commission)

Incontinence – Services in the Community (Health Select Commission)

(c) Agenda items and reports

Budget monitoring (Self Regulation Select Commission)

Annual report of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board and the impact of alcohol and drug misuse in child protection and safeguarding processes (Improving Lives Select Commission)

Child Sexual Exploitation (Improving Lives Select Commission and other Scrutiny members to be invited to participate)

Support for improving pupil outcomes at Key Stage 2, together with the impact of the Pupil Premium (Improving Lives Select Commission)

Continuing Health Care for Children and Young People (Health Select Commission)

Private Finance Initiative (Self Regulation Select Commission)

(3) That the remaining issues listed on the draft schedule, now submitted, be noted and the scrutiny work programme 2013/14 be kept under review.

5. YOUTH CABINET/YOUNG PEOPLE'S ISSUES

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board noted that:-

(a) the Improving Lives Select Commission will be considering the review of anti-bullying policies in schools (an issue raised by the Youth Cabinet); and

(b) members of the Youth Cabinet had attended the Young People's Transport Day in Sheffield on Saturday 27th April 2013, as part of the Eleven Million take-over day.

6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19TH APRIL, 2013

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, held on 19th April, 2013, be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

7. WORK IN PROGRESS

Health Select Commission:-

The Chair reported on the recent activities of the Health Select Commission:-

: a spotlight review into childhood obesity has begun, with a focus on healthy eating and physical education in primary schools.

Improving Lives Select Commission:-

The Chair reported on the recent activities of the Improving Lives Select Commission:-

: two reviews were currently taking place (i) anti-bullying policies in schools; and (ii) domestic violence.

Self Regulation Select Commission:-

The Chair reported on the recent activities of the Self Regulation Select Commission:-

: had recently considered monitoring reports concerning the budget and also about complaints made in respect of Council functions and services.

Improving Places Select Commission:-

The Chair reported on the recent activities of the Improving Places Select Commission:-

: at the next meeting, to consider a report about homelessness.

8. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal requests for call-in to report.