

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
13th December, 2013

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

Apologies for absence had been received from:- Councillors Currie and Gilding.

80. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were made.

81. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no members of the public or the press in attendance.

82. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE ROTHERHAM BOROUGH AREA

Councillor G. Whelbourn, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, welcomed the Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Manager (Housing and Neighbourhood Services, Neighbourhood and Adult Services Directorate) to the meeting to give an overview on the occurrence and incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour across the Rotherham Borough area.

The submitted presentation included the following issues: -

- South Yorkshire wide 'Total Anti-Social Behaviour' rates, showing current performance and the direction of travel: -
 - The most recent figure for Rotherham was a 5.2% reduction since 2013. Barnsley had seen a 7.7% reduction.
- Rotherham Borough area 'Total Anti-Social Behaviour' rates by each area, showing current performance and the direction of travel: -
 - North Rotherham – reduction in 10.5% (Green rated performance);
 - South Rotherham – reduction in 10.7% (Green rated performance);
 - Central Rotherham – reduction in 4.8% (Red rated performance).
- 'Total Anti-Social Behaviour' in each of Rotherham's seven Area Assemblies;
- 'Total Anti-Social Behaviour' rate per 1000 of population in each of Rotherham's seven Area Assemblies;
- A Borough-wide breakdown of the incidences of distinct type of anti-social behaviour, including twelve categories and the three overall categories of: -
 - Nuisance;
 - Personal;
 - Environmental.

- A breakdown of the twelve anti-social behaviour categories in each of the North, Central and South Safer Neighbourhood Areas (SNAs);
 - Including the crimes that had been identified as having recent increases in their incidence.
- Monthly trends over 2013 to date across South Yorkshire;
- Monthly trends over 2013 to date across the Rotherham Borough area;
- The structure of the legislation affecting anti-social behaviour encompassed in the Crime and Policing Bill;
- The role and purpose of the Vulnerable Persons' Unit was outlined. The Unit was relatively newly established in Rotherham and was unique across the country. The Unit was involved in the: -
 - Development, co-ordination and delivery of an effective operational response to tackle hate crime, anti-social behaviour and support for vulnerable persons;
 - Effective deployment of resources and a reduction in demand on all Services;
 - Provision of better outcomes by working together;
 - Early identification of vulnerable people involving necessary organisations;
 - Address the under-reporting of hate crime and increase the identification of hate crime victims;
 - Draw information and referrals from the Police and other Partner Organisations to identify the level of vulnerability using a Risk and Threat Assessment;
 - Identify the single point of contact at each Agency who could identify the most appropriate person to work on each individual case;
 - Collate and share information between Agencies on people identified as vulnerable;
 - Formulate an agreed Action Plan for each high and medium risk assessed case;
 - Monitor progress against each Action Plan and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions;
 - Identify and report on any community tension issues;
 - Co-ordinate the work of the Police Young Peoples' Partnership Officers to assist the Safer Rotherham Partnership and Partner Agencies to deliver a common agreed-framework to schools and young people.

Discussion ensued on the information presented and the following issues were raised: -

- **Barnsley's Anti-Social Behaviour reduction over 2013 was greater than Rotherham's – what were Barnsley doing differently/better?** – There was no difference in the approaches taken by each local authority. There could be a myriad of reasons leading to the marked reduction, including a higher benchmark figure from a previous year of high crime.

- **Could a breakdown of activity in the areas of the Barnsley Borough be obtained and applied to Rotherham?** – The South Yorkshire Forces met weekly at their 'Gold' meeting and benchmarking was provided to the Rotherham Safer Rotherham Partnership and the Crime and Community Tasking Units.
- **Some areas with relatively low rates of crime were seeing 'abstractions' of their Police and Police and Community Support Officers to other areas of Rotherham with higher crime levels. This was concerning and could be counter-productive in the longer-term** – The Police Force had finite levels of resources and had to deploy them where there was most need. A Force review on Neighbourhood Policing had been scheduled for the New Year.
- **There appeared to be an annual spike of crime in December and January** – This was seen on an annual basis. All Partners contributed to and maintained a crime and anti-social behaviour calendar in order that they would be prepared for annual increases.
- **What criterion was used to identify an individual as a Vulnerable Person?** – Different Agencies used different criteria. The issue of needing increased support for vulnerable people became apparent following the tragic death of Fiona Pilkington, when it was identified nationally that there was no attempt made by agencies to create an overview of reports of anti-social behaviour and hate crimes, or to identify a theme.
- **Where there any links between the Vulnerable Persons' Unit and the Child Sexual Exploitation Unit?** – The two Units were separate but they did work closely together and undertook cross-matching of intelligence.
- **How could people be referred to the Vulnerable Persons' Unit?** – By a communication with the local Safer Neighbourhood Team. The Unit undertook a formal risk assessment against all referrals, cross-matched intelligence from victims and other emerging information and planned and monitored interventions.
- **It would be a useful exercise for Elected Members to be invited to visit the Vulnerable Persons' Unit and the Child Sexual Exploitation Unit to learn more about the role of each.**
- **In communities the causes of anti-social behaviour could be very complex in that victims could also be perpetrators.**

The Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Manager shared the most recent (un-audited) statistics relating to crime in the Rotherham Borough. Reductions in crime was up overall by 4.8%. Reductions in criminal damage and arson (down 4.9%), violent crime (down 8.2%) and anti-social behaviour (down 5.2%) had been recorded. Increases in other crimes had been identified: burglary dwelling (increased by 24.9%), other burglaries (increased 11.9%), vehicle crime (increased 9.1%) and shoplifting (increased by 24.8%). The South Yorkshire Police Force's current focus was on acquisitive crime.

- Resolved: - (1) That the presentation be received and its content noted.
- (2) That the Directorate give further consideration to the allocation of resources across the Rotherham Borough and the wider South Yorkshire region to determine lessons learned in terms of improved outcomes.
- (3) That the issue of resource allocation across the Rotherham Borough be raised with the Chief Superintendent and at a future meeting of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner.
- (4) That a presentation on the Vulnerable Persons' Unit be given at a future meeting.
- (5) That it be noted that the January 2014 meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission will accept a presentation in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation.
- (6) That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board receive twice-yearly updates in relation to anti-social behaviour in the Rotherham Borough area, including regional comparison and benchmarking data.

83. CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER'S TAKE-OVER DAY 2014

Councillor G. Whelbourn welcomed the Public Health Specialist for Mental Health (Public Health, Neighbourhood and Adult Services Directorate), the Clinical Lead, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber), and the Voice and Influence Officer (Integrated Youth Support Service, Schools and Lifelong Learning, Children and Young People's Services Directorate). The Officers had attended the meeting to give a presentation relating to self-harm. This issue had been agreed in conjunction with the Youth Cabinet as the theme for the 2014 'Children's Commissioner Take-over Day'.

Self-harm was defined by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (2004) as: -

An expression of personal distress, usually made in private, by an individual who hurts him or herself. The nature and meaning of self-harm, however, vary greatly from person to person. In addition, the reason a person harms him or herself may be different on each occasion, and should not be presumed to be the same.

The UK had one of the highest rates of self-harm in Europe at 400 per 100,000 of the population. ChildLine had reported a 59% increase in the number of self-harm related counselling interactions in 2010/2011 compared to the previous year. Locally, self-harm tended to be more prevalent amongst girls with the use of pencil sharpener blades and paracetamol overdose being the main methods of self-harm.

The ways that young people self-harm included: -

- Cutting – 72%;
- Burning – 35%;
- Self-hitting or head banging – 30%;
- Interference with wound healing – 22%;
- Hair pulling – 20%;
- Bone breaking – 8%;
- Multiple methods of the above – 78%.

The reasons why young people self-harm included: -

- To release tension caused by anxiety, grief or anger;
- As a means of communication to tell themselves and others they needed help;
- To feel as though they had control over something in their lives;
- To make 'real' emotional pain they were unable to express.

There were annual increases in the rates of self-harming around the times of exams. It was believed that the economic climate was also responsible for increases, including issues relating to unemployment.

Reports from young people suggested that the top ten reasons/ problems included: -

1. Schoolwork;
2. Fights with parents;
3. Friend's deliberate self-harm;
4. Boyfriend/girlfriend problems;
5. Fights with friends;
6. Parents fighting (including domestic abuse issues);
7. Family deliberate self-harm;
8. Family illness;
9. Death of someone close;
10. Making friends.

Young people were not categorised to just one group but research showed that the main groups identified to be at risk included: -

- Young men in prison;
- Some ethnic groups;
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender young people;
- Young people in rural communities;
- Young people in local authority care;
- Young people with a mental health problem.

Adults and older people could also self-harm.

The presentation included information about: -

- What can help young people to reduce self-harming;
- Who can help, including universal services and Tier 2 and 3 services;
- Current and future work in Rotherham: -
 - Training for universal workers;
 - Self-harm guidance and pathway for frontline workers;
 - Information for parents on warning signs to look out for, advice and guidance on how to talk to their children. Directory of Services to be available for all stakeholders in early 2014 detailing support services for young people with emotional/mental health problems;
 - Self-referrals for 14-18 year olds currently undertaken between CAMHS and Youth Start.

Discussion ensued and the following items were raised: -

- **How had the statistics and information around this information been gathered? Some of the information has been gathered at a national level.** The information had been gathered between partner agencies who sat on the Rotherham Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm Group.
- **Could useful information around support and prevention be provided on the internet when someone searched for this subject?** – Yes, this has been raised and is being looked into using the same approach that had been taken with regards to pay day loans.
- **Had self-harm always taken place, or was it a more recent occurrence?** – The full extent of this was unknown, however, the changing nature of childhood was a likely cause of the increased prevalence. Some evidence suggested that some young people were self-harming in more superficial ways to fit-in with friends who self-harmed. It may have been prevalent in the past but was hidden and stigmatised.
- **What role could school buddies/mentors take to support their peers, and what other information sharing/joint working could take place?** – Support networks did exist, however, sometimes information sharing and possible support networks were not always appropriate.
- **What information was available via social media?**
- **The role and importance of schools;**
- **The Healthy School Conference in Rotherham;**
- **Prevention and early intervention work through the youth service and voluntary services;**
- **Partnership working with Families for Change;**
- **How was it made sure that no-one fell through the gaps?**
- **A one page directory of services that could help would be useful for Councillors.**

An update was provided by the Voice and Influence Youth Worker in relation to the discussions that had been undertaken at Youth Cabinet relating to the 2014 theme. A working-group of the Youth Cabinet had requested that case studies be sought in relation to the range of experiences relating to self-harm. The Youth Cabinet had highlighted that there was a wide-range of reported experiences. Some of the individuals in Rotherham's rural areas were not aware of the support networks available, the range of support and recognition available from schools varied. Access to and awareness of school nurses differed too, as did after care support.

Consideration of the case studies by the Youth Cabinet and a working-group of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board would take place on either 16th or 30th January, 2014. All agencies would be represented to discuss the theme. It was agreed that Councillors Falvey, Steele and Currie (Beck as substitute) would represent the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

Resolved: - (1) That the presentation be accepted and the information shared be noted.

(2) That the theme of self-harm be accepted as the 2014 joint review topic between the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Youth Cabinet.

(3) That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board receive and consider the recommendations of the Youth Cabinet and working-group of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (Councillors Falvey, Steele and Currie (substitute = Beck) relating to the case studies considered in January, and the recommendations also be forwarded to all Councillors for their information.

(4) That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board escalate to a national level their feelings relating to the omission of important support relating to self-harm in Ofsted's Inspection Framework.

(5) That consideration be given to the involvement of the voluntary and community sector, parent representatives and Families for Change representatives in the scoping discussion stage of the scrutiny review.

(6) That work be undertaken to create a concise directory of services and support networks for the reference of Councillors and stakeholders.

(7) That the issue of self-harm be referred to the Health Select Commission.

84. YOUTH CABINET/YOUNG PEOPLE'S ISSUES

This issue was addressed in Item 83.

85. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 15TH NOVEMBER, 2013

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, held on 15th November, 2013, be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

86. WORK IN PROGRESS

An update was provided by representatives from each of the Select Commissions.

Self-Regulation Select Commission: -

Councillor D. Beck, Vice-Chair of the Self-Regulation Select Commission, reported on the Scrutiny Reviews that the Commission were undertaking:

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- Procurement;
- Budget
- Corporate Priorities

A recent meeting of the Commission had considered the initial budget proposals, and the January meeting of the Commission would consider the final budget proposals. An additional meeting would take place on 19th December, 2013, to consider the items relating to revenue budget monitoring and performance.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board would be invited to attend the January meeting of the Commission.

Improving Places Select Commission: -

Councillor J. Falvey, Chair of the Improving Places Select Commission, reported on the previous meeting of the Commission. Update reports had been received on the community infrastructure levy, housing repairs (including voids) and grounds maintenance. Improving Places had requested regular updates on these areas. The meeting had also considered local planning and tourism areas. The Scrutiny Review report relating to the homelessness review would be drafted during January.

Improving Lives Select Commission: -

Councillor G. A. Russell, Chair of the Improving Lives Select Commission, reported on the forthcoming meeting of the Commission. In addition, the report into the Scrutiny Review of bullying was being written up.

Health Select Commission: - Friday 24 January 2014 at 9.00 am

Councillor B. Steele, Chair of the Health Select Commission, reported on the continuing work of the Commission. The current work programme included healthy lifestyles, long-term conditions and poverty. This would be monitored over the year. Other issues included the air ambulance, and parking facilities at the Rotherham District General Hospital. An update on the Autism Spectrum Condition review had been requested, including barriers being faced. The Scrutiny Review into carers was under completion.

Resolved: - That the information shared be noted.

87. CALL-IN ISSUES - TO CONSIDER ANY ISSUES REFERRED FOR CALL-IN.

There had been no requests for any decisions to be Called In.

88. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: -

Resolved: - That the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board take place on Friday 24th January, 2014, to start at 9.00 a.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.