

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD  
21st March, 2014**

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beck and Read.

**112.       DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this meeting.

**113.       QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

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

**114.       ROTHERHAM VULNERABLE PERSONS UNIT**

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board received a presentation from Carol Adamson (RMBC Community Engagement Team) and Detective Sergeant Nigel Taaffe (South Yorkshire Police) concerning the Rotherham Vulnerable Persons' Unit.

The presentation included the following salient issues:-

: the role of the Vulnerable Persons Unit, which is now based in the Council's Riverside House office building (including community tensions monitoring; hate crime; support for vulnerable people; anti-social behaviour);

: the staff establishment of the Unit, the majority of whom are Police Officers;

: the work of the Unit is reported to the Safer Rotherham Partnership Joint Action Group;

: planning support for vulnerable adults who fall below safeguarding thresholds; effective information sharing to prevent silo working; monitoring and reducing risk; reducing demand on partner agency resources (including health care services);

: examples of the co-ordination of multi-agency Vulnerable Adult Risk Management (VARM) meetings, with regard to specific cases being dealt with by the Vulnerable Persons Unit;

: co-operative working with the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit;

: community tension assessments;

- : efforts to reduce hate crime (eg: harassment involving race, religion, disability, gender identity and sexuality); research project by students of Sheffield Hallam University on disability and related harassment; encouraging the early reporting of incidents; the role of the South Yorkshire Police Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel (which includes community members);
- : statistics of hate crime incident reporting (in the past, there has been under-reporting of such incidents);
- : the organisation 'Tell MAMA' – a national service for the reporting of any form of anti-Muslim abuse;
- : community engagement and the role of the 'Silver Prevent Group' – engagement after major incidents and reassurance to vulnerable groups;
- : Together for Wellbeing project – emotional and practical support for young people (aged 18-24 years) at risk of offending and experiencing mental distress or mental ill health; funding from the Barrow Cadbury Trust (Transition to Adulthood programme), the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner and from the Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group;
- : proposed introduction of the Vulnerable Adults Panel – to be chaired by this Council's Adult Safeguarding Manager; responding to new legislation relating to anti-social behaviour; the process and framework for the Vulnerable Adults Panel is currently being developed.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- : within the Council, the Vulnerable Persons Unit reports regularly to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Cohesion;
- : a further report, specifically about mental health services, is shortly to be submitted to this Council's Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care;
- : the Unit works closely with the Council's Adult Social Care services;
- : awareness raising of the Unit's work, with Area Assemblies and with Parish Councils;
- : the overall capacity of the Vulnerable Persons Unit (initial calls/reports are usually made to the Police; some cases are referrals from the statutory agencies);
- : community engagement and the role of the Independent Advisory Group – whether there is a role for Elected Members;
- : issues concerning domestic violence (dealt with by specialist officers within the Council and by the South Yorkshire Police Public Protection

Unit);

: Elected Members asked for contact details, to enable them to refer issues to the Vulnerable Persons Unit; use should also be made of the South Yorkshire Police '101' telephone number, as well as making referrals to the Safeguarding Unit;

: care of young adults in care homes and at homes such as Rush House;

: details of the part-time and full-time Police roles;

: the Unit is currently monitoring 21 cases (including full VARM assessments); numbers are expected to increase as more referrals are received; the case work is undertaken by the relevant professionals (eg: social workers and mental health workers);

: the assessment of an individual's 'vulnerability' by the appropriate agencies.

Mrs. Adamson and DS Taaffe were thanked for their informative presentation.

Resolved:- (1) That the role and work of the Rotherham Vulnerable Persons Unit be noted.

(2) That progress reports about the Vulnerable Persons Unit be submitted to meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at intervals of six months.

#### **115. AREA ASSEMBLY AND AREA ASSEMBLY CO-ORDINATING GROUP MEETINGS**

Further to Minute No. 26 of the meeting of the Area Assembly Chairs held on 2014, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Housing and Communities Manager, concerning the review of the Area Assembly and Area Assembly Coordinating Groups' Terms of Reference and Article 12 of the Council's Constitution. The proposed changes, included in the submitted report, reflected the feedback from the Area Coordinating Groups and the Area Chairs meetings held in September and November 2013 and at the meeting held on 20th January 2014.

Specific reference was made to:-

: role of the Area Assemblies;

: frequency of meetings;

: membership of Area Assembly Co-ordinating Groups (including co-opted members, based on the local issues under consideration);

: devolved budget procedure;

: voting rights at co-ordinating group meetings.

Discussion took place on the establishment of strong links between the scrutiny process and the Area Assemblies.

It was noted that the proposals will be considered by the Cabinet, prior submission for approval by full Council on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2014.

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

(2) That the role of the Area Assemblies shall be the subject of continuing review.

#### **116. HOSPITAL DISCHARGES - CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REVIEW**

Further to Minute No. 190 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2014, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Director of Health and Wellbeing, concerning the spotlight scrutiny review of hospital discharges in Rotherham, which had been undertaken during the Summer, 2013. Included with the report were the recommendations of the scrutiny review, the action plan and the response of the Cabinet to each of the eight recommendations.

The report stated that the scrutiny review had been undertaken because:-

a) patients are admitted into acute hospital beds who do not necessarily require that acute level of care;

b) the number of emergency admissions continues to rise year on year, and this year there is to date a 7.6% increase in emergency admissions compared to last year; there is also a significant increase in the number of frail elderly people being admitted to hospital; and

c) of concerns based on anecdotal evidence, that there was a problem with out-of-hours discharges (late at night, or weekend) and patients being discharged without adequate support arrangements in place.

It was noted that the progress of the action plan is to be monitored by the Council's Health Select Commission, including receipt of reports from hospital staff.

Reference was made to (i) the Rotherham hospital's 'perfect week' consultation process about patient care, currently taking place; and (ii) the introduction of the Better Care Fund.

Members discussed the journey taken by patients, from hospital treatment to the care received after discharge from hospital.

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

(2) That the leaflet which is to be published by the Rotherham Foundation

Trust, providing information about the hospital discharge process, shall be provided for Elected Members.

(3) That the appropriate officers ensure that discussions take place with the Council's partner agencies to facilitate implementation of the revised hospital discharge arrangements arising from the scrutiny review.

#### **117. YOUTH CABINET/YOUNG PEOPLE'S ISSUES**

Discussion took place on the successful meeting about the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Day, held on 27th February 2014, reviewing the subject of young people and self-harming. The meeting had included Cabinet Members, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Rotherham's Youth Cabinet. It was agreed that the scrutiny review report on this issue be submitted to the Council's Cabinet as soon as possible and that the Chair of the Youth Cabinet be invited to attend that meeting and present the report.

#### **118. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 21ST FEBRUARY, 2014 AND ON 27TH FEBRUARY, 2014**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, held on (i) 21st February, 2014 (with the inclusion of Councillor Falvey's apologies for absence) and (ii) 27th February, 2014 (the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Day), be approved as correct records for signature by the Chairman.

#### **119. WORK IN PROGRESS**

##### **Health Select Commission:-**

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

: monitoring the progress of the action plan resulting from the scrutiny review of hospital discharges;

: study of the work to reduce pharmaceutical and medical waste;

: review of the school nursing service, including the service provided for special schools;

: consideration of the introduction of the Better Care Fund;

: discussions with representatives of Healthwatch Rotherham and of the Health and Wellbeing Board, concerning the scrutiny of health services;

: consideration of the public expenditure reductions affecting the Rotherham Foundation Trust and hospital;

: consideration of the priorities of NHS England.

**Improving Places Select Commission:-**

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

: review of the scrutiny work programme;

: review of progress of scrutiny reviews concerning (i) homelessness; and (ii) improving the local economy.

**Improving Lives Select Commission:-**

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

: scrutiny of outcomes for Looked After Children, including an assessment of the role of Children and Young People's Services;

: study of the results of the 2013 Lifestyle Survey of Rotherham school pupils.

**Overview and Scrutiny Management Board:-**

The Chair and the Scrutiny Manager reported on the recent activities of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board:-

: scoping the terms of reference, both by Members and by the Chief Executive, for the forthcoming scrutiny review of Elected Member structures within the Council;

: Centre for Public Scrutiny – annual meeting to be held during June 2014; possible attendance by an Elected Member;

: Centre for Public Scrutiny – annual questionnaire; Members were invited to assist in completing this questionnaire;

: Regional Joint Health and Overview Committee – scrutiny review of the national consultation about the review of hospital cardiac services (for both adults and children); it was noted that this matter is being considered by the Health Select Commission and by the Cabinet;

: a meeting of Parliament's cross-party Public Administration Select Committee, held at the University of Sheffield in February, 2014 – a number of learning points, about the scrutiny process, had been gained from attendance at this meeting, which will be considered further as part of the Elected Members' training and development process; it was agreed that arrangements be made for attendance at future meetings of the Parliamentary Select Committees;

: Children's Commissioner Takeover Day meeting with the Youth Cabinet, which had taken place on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2014.

**120. CALL-IN ISSUES**

There were no formal call-in requests.