

DEPUTY LEADER
Friday, 23rd January, 2015

Present:- Councillor Hoddinott (in the Chair); Councillors Sims.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Tweed.

D33. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13th January, 2015.

Reference was made to Minute No. D30 – Page 4, Fifth Paragraph (Review of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner Bi-Election) and suggested that the word “before” on the third line be removed.

In terms of the briefing note being prepared at Minute No. D31(2) (Individual Electoral Registration) this was to be circulated to all Elected Members before National Registration Day.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

D34. WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS FOR POST ABUSE CSE SUPPORT COMMISSIONED PROVISION AND FURTHER COMMISSIONS FOR VOICE AND INFLUENCE WORK

Consideration was given to the report presented by David McWilliams, Director of Commissioning and Performance Management, which, following the findings of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997-2003) by Professor Alexis Jay, published August 2014, detailed the Council and partners’ response to ensure there was the right kind of support in place to meet the needs of victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation by increasing the capacity of voluntary and community sector services and organisations.

A fund of £120,000 was announced by the Leader of the Council in September, 2014 for an immediate response to support victims and survivors of Child Sexual Exploitation through the Council’s commissioned services.

The services already commissioned to date would cease at the end of March 2015, and it was proposed that this be extended until the end of June, 2015 and pro rata payments made accordingly to assist with the commissioning of longer term support for the next three to five years which would be informed by a Needs Analysis being led by Public Health. To ensure the Needs Analysis included learning from the immediate commissioned services it was proposed that the longer term three to five

years' services commence from the 1st July, 2015 and include the comments from existing service users on how this provision should be tailored in the future, as referred to by the Chairman.

The voice and influence of victims and survivors was critical in ensuring that the right services were commissioned for the future, hence the requirement to extend the existing contracts to prevent any gap in provision.

Councillor C. Vines expressed his concern about the description of the provision extension and his confusion around whether the funds allocated in September, 2014 were grants or contracts and what service the Council were expecting or tendering.

The Director of Commissioning and Performance Management gave his assurance that the organisations in receipt of the funds had been commissioned against an agreed service specification apart from South Yorkshire Community Foundation, who were allocated funding to distribute through the voluntary and community sector.

In addition, a contingency fund of £11,319 was to be pooled with an additional £20,000 to be utilised for a specific commission to undertake consultation with victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation from a range of backgrounds, including BME, Roma and Asian communities to gain a better understanding of their experiences and how child sexual exploitation affected their communities. This work was scoped up and ready to be commissioned.

As the service provision was only provided up the end of March, 2015, an exemption from Contract Standing Orders was required to extend the current service provision to the end of June, 2015 to ensure the needs analysis was fully informed by learning from current commissioned services and the voice of victims and survivors and to ensure continued support whilst further provision was commissioned or existing services strengthened.

Councillor C. Vines found the terminology misleading, but was reassured contract management was in place with clear service specifications as to what the funds could be used for and regular contract management monitoring in place.

Councillor Parker sought clarification as to what the voice and influence work would entail with victims and survivors and whether this was information gathering

The Director of Commissioning and Performance Management explained that there was a need to engage directly with victims and survivors who have been affected by child sexual exploitation and which would inform the provision of service moving forward from 1st July, 2015.

Councillor Parker pointed out that many victims were still not coming forward because of their mistrust of the organisations involved and whilst provision was being made now via various organisations, what information was to hand to indicate how this money would be spent.

The Chairman explained that the scope of the work had been developed and organisations would be invited to bid for the funding. A panel would assess any bids received, which was a critical piece of work that fitted into the jigsaw.

The Director of Commissioning and Performance Management reiterated his assurance that this bespoke piece of work would attempt to fill the gaps in provision going forward and every effort should be made to make contact with those hard to reach communities that were yet to come forward.

In response to the concerns about this being a service specific piece of work, the details of the scope would be shared with Members of the Opposition, which would be informed by expert input.

The Chairman also pointed out that there had been a specific recommendation from the scrutiny focus groups that the voices of survivors must be listened to and the scope of this work was to address the gap.

Councillor C. Vines expressed his concern that four months after the publication of the Jay Report nothing appeared to be happening. There had been no arrests and despite the funds being made available to support tackling child sexual exploitation in Rotherham, children were still being abused. The needs analysis and its aims referred to in the report were not going far enough and there were still victims who were not being helped.

The Chairman asked whether Cllr C. Vines' concerns had been raised with the Police and was informed they had been.

Councillor Parker referred to a previous question he had asked at the Council Meeting relating to under age marriages within the Roma Community and the lack of information coming forward. He was informed the information was in the White Book and that whilst the bespoke work with the hard to reach communities would not specifically consider these elements, this would form part of the questioning and consultation with these hard to reach communities.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposal to waive Standing Order 47 (contracts valued at less than £50,000 should be tendered) in accordance with Standing Order 38 (exemptions from contract standing orders) be approved and the current child sexual exploitation commissioned service be extended to June, 2015 to ensure that the needs analysis continued to be informed by the learning from current commissioned services and the

voice of victims and survivors.

(2) That the Contingency Fund be allocated to undertake further voice and influence work with survivors and victims of child sexual exploitation to shape the current Needs Analysis and longer term provision.

(3) That £20,000 be pooled with the £11,319 Contingency Fund to commission further voice and influence work with victims, survivors and families, and incorporate a specific commission to gain further understanding of the effects of child sexual exploitation on minority ethnic groups and communities including Asian and Roma communities in Rotherham.

(4) That details of the Needs Analysis be circulated to Elected Members, but its outcome submitted back to a future meeting of the Deputy Leader and Advisers for consideration.

(5) That the scope of the specific consultation with the hard to reach communities be shared with Elected Members.

D35. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SUPPORT SERVICES STRATEGY

David McWilliams, Director of Commissioning and Performance Management, gave an update on the progress of the Child Sexual Exploitation Support Services Strategy and the post abuse support.

The Strategy was broken down into four specific areas:-

- Marketing and Communication.
- Needs Analysis.
- Voice and Influence Work.
- Commissioning.

Jo Smith, Post Abuse Co-ordinator, who had been in post two weeks, gave a brief summary of her activity to date, which included visits to the post abuse support organisations as an initial evaluation of progress.

Contact had also been made with key organisations which would assist in the formation of the needs analysis, reporting directly to the CSE Sub-Group of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The work would develop the voice and influence plan and feed into forward and future service planning.

An event was also being planned with both statutory and commissioned services to discuss where each fitted into the jigsaw of provision for tackling and dealing with child sexual exploitation.

It was also noted that two meetings had already been arranged to develop a new management system, which would give clearly definition to identify numbers and process allocations and would enhance transparency and

information flows.

The Chairman also advised of Ministry of Justice funding which was a pot of £7 million that could be accessed to enhance existing services dealing with child sexual exploitation. A consortium led bid was, therefore, being developed.

Councillor Parker pointed out that it was now four months since the publication of the Jay Report and was informed that the transformation of service delivery took time.

Sue Greig from Public Health highlighted the provision of front line post abuse support services to victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation and the additional funds which had been used to provide additional capacity, especially at G.R.O.W. and the Rotherham Women's Counselling Service.

The needs analysis was intended to draw together the various funding provisions of different organisations and to understand where the unmet need was. Despite the perception by the public and the media Rotherham was undertaking some very good work and every effort was being made to structure the spectrum of support available.

All partner agencies were to work together to understand the problem and to respond collectively. The voluntary and community sector had a very important role to play in this to ensure that the funds allocated to dealing with this issue were given a better chance to make a bigger difference.

The Chairman also confirmed the C.C.G. had contributed £20,000 to the Rotherham Women's Counselling Service and discussions needed to take place with partner agencies to ensure funds were allocated accordingly to need.

As well as the voluntary sector additional monies had been put into Youth Start as they had a record of reaching difficulties groups up to the ages of twenty-five and which involved some work with Roma girls.

There was also a programme of work with schools as part of the Healthy Schools initiative, which worked alongside some mobile phone apps, e-learning and pastoral support. How well this was targeted needed further evaluation. An example of a community awareness programme at Fleming Gardens was provided.

The Chairman suggested that it had been recognised by Scrutiny that there needed to be improved engagement with schools and this needed to be picked up as part of the Strategy.

The Director of Commissioning and Performance Management pointed out that the Strategy needed to include Police enforcement and this information needed to be collated and shared within schools.

One further gap in the Strategy was the Council's strategic post for Child Sexual Exploitation. A recruitment exercise was currently taking place and once an appointment had been made this would be beneficial.

Resolved:- (1) That officers be thanked for their respective updates.

(2) That the information be shared with Elected Members.

D36. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Deputy Leader and Advisers take place on Tuesday, 3rd February, 2015 at the slightly later time of 6.00 p.m. with a briefing at 5.30 p.m.