

**AREA ASSEMBLY CHAIRS  
MONDAY, 19TH JANUARY, 2015**

Present:- Councillor Godfrey (in the Chair); Councillors Buckley, Dalton, Ellis, Johnston, Sansome, Sims and Wallis.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors McNeely, N. Hamilton, Havenhand and Swift.

**15. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Consideration was to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2014.

Resolved:- That the minutes be received and the contents noted.

Arising from Minute No. 13 (SNT meetings), it was noted that this would be discussed further under agenda item No. 17).

**16. FEEDBACK FROM AREA PARTNERSHIP MANAGERS**

**Wentworth Valley**

It was hoped to launch a credit union in Maltby very soon. The need had been identified through the Disadvantaged Communities work and work had taken place with the faith community, particularly a group of people through St. Bartholomew's who had provided the major part of the volunteers. They were currently training and had visited St. John's Green.

**Rother Valley West**

Work was taking place on a domestic abuse project at the moment particularly in the Aston Disadvantaged Community, with all stakeholders including Social Workers, Police and Housing Champions, taking a community approach to domestic abuse and awareness raising. There was project work with Open Minds Theatre where they would go out with Social Workers and stakeholders and perform and ensuring there was the support there to answer questions etc. It was a pilot and would be evaluated and then rolled out in Rother Valley South and West. The project had received funding through the JAG. The primary schools, Academy and community groups in the area were very keen to take up the offer.

**Rother Valley South**

There had been a very successful health inequality event held recently with approximately 40 stakeholders and partners, GP practices, Health Visiting Service in attendance. Statistics had been provided about the deprived areas of Dinnington. Extremely useful intelligence had been gathered from those who worked and lived in the area about what the causes of ill health were and the effects thereof. Mental Health had come out as 1 of the biggest health issues in the area with 1 of the main

causes being poor living conditions. The intelligence would be analysed and the partners brought back to a further event to consider what could be done to improve some of the health inequalities.

### **Community First**

It was the 4<sup>th</sup> and final year of the funding. Discussions had been taking place about what support could be provided to groups who had benefitted from the funding when it came to an end. An event was to be held at the New York Stadium on 28<sup>th</sup> January to which all partners and a number of stakeholders had been invited, to showcase the success of Community First in Rotherham. It would also be used to signpost the groups to other financial and non-financial support.

### **Wentworth South**

There had been a lot of work focussed around the Dalton/Thrybergh/East Herringthorpe areas, which was 1 of the Disadvantaged Communities, particularly around community capacity building and engagement.

There had been 2 very successful events over Christmas – Thryberghians had 120 people attend their event and almost 300 at East Herringthorpe.

### **Wentworth North**

Work had taken place with a community group in Nether Haugh regarding the traffic issues and concerns. A vehicle activated sign had been secured together with some resurfacing. Although there had still been some accidents the number had reduced significantly but was being monitored closely.

Work was taking place with the SNT with regard to Manor Farm and revitalising the TARA. Funding had been secured to carry out consultation with the area.

Work was taking place in Wath Town Centre and the skatepark.

## **17. NEW LOCAL POLICING MODEL UPDATE**

Steve Parry, Neighbourhood Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour Manager, reported that the District Commander had requested that this item be deferred for the present time due to discussions that were still ongoing within South Yorkshire Police.

The District Commander wished to personally brief Elected Members on the issue and possible implications for Rotherham. It was not known as yet what form the briefing would take.

With regard to attendance at SNT meetings by Elected Members (Minute No. 15 refers), clarity had been sought in relation to Members attendance and to what level of responsibility/accountability they had in that situation. Steve had looked at the practice across South Yorkshire but it had been very similar to the scenario in Rotherham in that there had been no

consistent approach. There was no set rules/regulations/guidance on what a Member should do.

Steve's personal view was that if something was raised at a Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) meeting where a Member felt there were issues, they should escalate it with the senior person of the organisation that raised the issue i.e. the Police or Council. If there was no satisfactory response then their concerns should be put in writing.

Discussion ensued with the following points raised:-

- There had to be an absolute understanding of an Elected Member's role in the meetings – why they were there, what their participation was, who was responsible for the issues raised etc.
- The SNT's Terms of Reference set out the core attendance and who Chaired the meeting however these were likely to change in the future due to the introduction of the Local Policing Teams. There was no specific area of responsibility for a Member attending a SNT meeting but it was a good opportunity for scrutiny of the process
- There was a view from some that they should not attend any further SNT meetings until it was clear what a Member's role was. They were a useful arena for sharing information but Elected Members were not professionals or Child Protection Officers so could not scrutinise officers
- Elected Members had been a valuable asset to SNT meetings because of their local knowledge and the meetings would be weaker if they did not attend
- Confusion as to whether Elected Members were part of the meeting. When reviewed it had been decided to leave it for the individual Member to decide if they wished to attend or not. There was inconsistency across the Area Assembly areas with some areas only inviting the Chair and Vice-Chair and others inviting all 9 Elected Members
- It was a very useful meeting for Elected Members to find out which issues were hotspots in the different Wards and able to feed in any information

It was evident from the discussion that it was not clear what the role and responsibility of Elected Members attending SNT's was which exposed Elected Members and the wider Council to unnecessary risk. Therefore, given that there was an ongoing review of the Local Policing structure including SNT's, clarity should be sought from the Safer Rotherham Partnership Executive and South Yorkshire Police on this matter, and the issue be returned to the next meeting for further discussion preferably with a Police Officer present.

This also linked into the Area Assembly review and Local Police review.

It was agreed that this issue need to be escalated to the JAG and SRP.

Resolved:- (1) That the issues raised above be considered at the next meeting of the SRP Executive in particular:-

Clarity of the Terms of Reference including the process for attendance by Elected Members; the role of an Elected Member and what their responsibilities were and who led the meeting should the Police not be in attendance.

(2) That the current Terms of Reference be circulated to members of the SNT and the SRP Executive.

(3) That a report be submitted to the next Area Assembly Chairs meeting.

## **18. CSE PROGRESS**

Phil Morris, Business Manager, Safeguarding Children and Families, gave the following powerpoint presentation:-

### Reviews

- Alexis Jay Review – August, 2014
- CSE Thematic Inspection by Ofsted
- Royal College – CSE Review
- Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services

### Governance

- Local Safeguarding Children Board
- CSE Sub-Group (Gold Group) – Strategy
- CSE Silver Group – Tactical/Action
- Annual CSE report and reporting to Cabinet, Council, Police and Crime Commissioner, Improving Lives Select Commission and the Health and Wellbeing Board

### CSE Team (in place since 2012)

- 1 Social Work Manager
- 3 Social Workers
- 1 Barnados Social Worker
- 1 Parenting Worker
- 1 Voluntary Sector Family Support Worker
- 1 Youth Worker
- 1 Sexual Health Nurse
- 1 Detective Sergeant
- 5 Police Constables
- 1 Police Analyst

### CSE Strategy

- Prevent – Education and Resilience
- Protect – Keeping Children Safe
- Pursue – Disruption and Prosecution

### Alexis Jay Recommendations

- Risk Assessment and Quality Assurance
- Looked After Children
- Access to Services and Outreach
- Work with victims and post abuse support
- Engagement with Minority Ethnic Communities
- Serious Case Reviews

### Risk Assessment and Quality Assurance

- Risk assessment tool
- Quality checking of Partnership approach

### Looked After Children

- Placements outside the Borough
- Commissioning activity

### Engagement with BME Communities

- Engagement with Mosques and community leaders
- Includes the Roma community through REMA and other groups
- Liaison with Apna Haq and other voluntary sector organisations

### Wok with Victims and Post-Abuse Support

- Dedicated confidential helpline (NSPCC supported)
- GROW Project (16 years plus)
- Sexual Abuse Referral Group (forensic and advocacy)
- Rotherham Women's Counselling Services (including PitStop for Men)
- Victim Support (witness support)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CaMHS)
- Rotherham MIND (schools)
- Apna Haq and Choices and Options
- Integrated Youth Support Service (Youth Start – 11-25 years)
- Needs Assessment and future commissioning with Health and Wellbeing Board

### Current Operational Activity

- Operation Stovewood – National Crime Agency
- Operation Clover – South Yorkshire Police and Local Authority
- 60+ individual children and young people receiving services from CSE Team
- Example of impact – Hotels (Say Something if You See Something)

### Operational Activity

- Truancy patrols – quarterly

- Intelligence from community linked into SNT activity
- Disruption and criminal justice action (Pursue)
- April – December, 2014
  - 29 arrests
  - 50 interviews under caution
  - 20 victim/witness interviews
  - 7 charged with offence
  - 5 prosecutions
  - 27 Abduction Notices service

Discussion ensued on the presentation with the following issues raised/clarified:-

- Recognition that there had been no direct link with the community so a mechanism had been created whereby the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children's Board and Director of Children's Services would meet a cross section of the community. It would be wider than the BME community and linked to attempts to gather intelligence around the issue from all Rotherham's diverse communities.
- Abduction Notice – was used where there were concerns regarding a child/young person under the age of 16 years and an adult. With the parent's consent, a Notice would be issued to the adult concerned telling them they should not be in the company of the said young person. There was no penalty if it was breached but would put a clear marker down to alleged perpetrators
- There had been 27 Abduction Notices the majority of which would have been served by the Police
- The National Working Group was sponsoring an event in Sheffield in February on "Say Something if You See Something". There was campaigning to get Charter status for the initiative.
- The process for criminal convictions can be protracted in some cases. It could be many months before a case reached the Court room if at all. It was acknowledged that currently there had only been 5 prosecutions but it may be that there were more in the system
- Some young people did not want to sit in a room on video and tell a Police Officer what had happened to them even though it was carried out sensitively by a non-uniformed officer. However, it may be with support they came back in the future and make a disclosure and it had to be accepted that the number of prosecutions would not be as high as would have wished
- Disappointment at the number of prosecutions and arrests

- At the end of December, 2014, the reported number of sexual offences had increased by over 10% compared to the previous 12 months. The majority of the increase was down to historical reporting of victims that had come forward post-Jay report to make complaints of sexual abuse, rape and sexual assault
- Figures for previous years were required to enable comparison to be made with present day figures
- The Jay report had stated the need for continuous robust quality assurance to ensure that the work was being done and that the CSE Team was fit for purpose and working together effectively as a partnership getting the best outcomes it could for the young people of Rotherham
- Although there was a risk that Area Assembly Chairs repeated work that was already taking place by other bodies, Area Assemblies were tasked by the Council to communicate with the communities and that was their part of the jigsaw. They should form part of the revised Strategy with a clear line of responsibility, method of delivery and work with the Cabinet Member
- Area Assemblies should/could be used to get messages out to the communities that prosecutions had been taken with more in the system, explanation of the length of time it took for a case to get to Court, the level of evidence required and give the reassurance that action was being taken

Resolved:- (1) That the presentation be noted.

(2) That the role of Area Assemblies/Chairs in CSE be included in the Area Assembly review.

(3) That a further report be submitted to the next meeting.

## **19. AREA ASSEMBLY REVIEW**

It was felt that a review of how Area Assemblies operated was required particularly in terms of the way they worked, linkages to the community, meetings and how they could be more effective. Attendance was mixed with 1 having a very regular healthy attendance but others being very poor.

Resolved:- (1) That an "away day" be held on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2015, to which Chairs and Vice-Chairs would be invited.

(2) That the Local Policing model and the CGI report be also included for discussion.

## **20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Sansome reported that he had asked his Area Partnership Manager to arrange for a presentation at the Assembly meeting on the new Licensing Policy for taxi drivers.

It was acknowledged that taking information to all of the Area Assemblies could be time consuming and that, in view of the ongoing consultation process around the proposed changes to Taxi Licensing, this needed to be considered as part of the overall communication plan.

Resolved:- That this issue be discussed in the Away Day.

*(The following information as received after the meeting - Given the huge demands on the Licensing service in developing the Policy, dealing with the outcome of the formal consultation which concluded on 28<sup>th</sup> December, preparing reports for various boards and meetings, and progressing a wide range of other licensing related policies and service improvements, the Team would struggle to also present details at Area Assemblies at this point, but would be happy to present an overview both of the various Policy changes and other areas of improvement to the next Area Assembly Chairs meeting.)*

## **21. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING -**

Resolved:- (1) That an "away day" be held on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2015, 10.00 a.m. – 3.00 p.m., in the Garden Room, Rotherham Town Hall.

(2) That a further meeting of the Area Assembly Chairs be held on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2015.