



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
HELD ON 19th OCTOBER 2021**

PRESENT: Councillor R Claymore (Chair), Councillors D Maycock, P Brindley, M J Greatorex, J Harper, J Jones, S Peuple, R Rogers and J Wade

CABINET Councillor Stephen Doyle
Councillor Alex Farrell

The following officers were present: Tina Mustafa (Assistant Director Neighbourhoods), Sarah Finnegan (Head of Homelessness & Housing Solutions), Stephanie Ivey (Partnership Vulnerability Officer) and Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer)

31 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2021 were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor S Peuple and seconded by Councillor J Harper)

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

For the purposes of transparency, Councillor S Peuple declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Homelessness and Winter Relief Arrangements item on the Agenda as the Chair and a trustee of the Heart of Tamworth charity.

The Chair moved and the Committee agreed that the agenda order be amended such that item 8 (Homelessness and Winter Relief Arrangements) and 9 (Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Abuse Report) be considered prior to the remaining agenda items.

33 HOMELESSNESS AND WINTER RELIEF ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair welcomed Councillor Alex Farrell, the Portfolio Holder for Social Housing and Homeless Prevention, Tina Mustafa, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods and Sarah Finnegan, Head of Homelessness and Housing

Solutions to the meeting. Councillor Farrell introduced the presentation and handed over to the Officers to take the Committee through it.

The Assistant Director reported that the objective of the presentation was to provide the Committee with an understanding of homelessness, to share the progress made on the rough sleeping initiative and to provide an overview of the proposed Winter Relief Arrangements for the Committee's comments prior to consideration by Cabinet on 11 November 2021.

The Assistant Director provided an overview of the Government's strategy and the vision to half rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2025 and Tamworth borough Council's own strategy which was built around the three pillars of prevention, intervention and recovery. The Assistant Director reported that the Borough had no entrenched rough sleepers, however there were transient rough sleepers in the Borough and that the next annual rough sleeping count would take place on 20th October 2021 and the target the Council had set itself for 2021 was 0. The count would be submitted to Government.

The Head of Homelessness and Housing Solutions explained that someone could be considered homeless if they were rough sleeping, or they did not have a right to stay where they were or if their housing was unsuitable, this could include staying with family or friends, or in a hostel or night shelter, squatting or living in poor conditions that affect their health, as well as being at risk of violence or abuse in their home, or living apart from your family because there was no place to live together.

The Head of Homelessness provided an overview of the processes and steps followed under the legislation and the changes brought in from 2018 where additional prevention and relief duties were introduced and where additional decision points of the local authority could be reviewed.

The Assistant Director provided an overview of the application of the Rough Sleeping Initiative funding received following a successful bid and the creation of new officer posts to provide mental health support, outreach support and neighbourhood coaching which were aimed at preventing homelessness. It was reported that work continued to identify initiatives for the remainder of the funding including a proposal to launch a begging initiative as well as supporting targeted interventions to support rough sleepers' resettling.

The Assistant Director reported that the proposed Winter Relief Arrangements which would go forward to Cabinet included the proposal to continue to work with the Heart of Tamworth charity through the winter months to provide wrap around support and to work closely with the Housing Solutions team.

The Committee sought further clarification on:

- How the Council was notified of rough sleepers, where it was reported that there were a variety of ways that the Council would learn about this which included notifications from staff within Street Scene, from Community wardens, Police Community Safety Officers, from the CCTV service as well as reports from members of the public and partner organisations in the

community. The Neighbourhoods team also proactively looked for rough sleepers and undertook preventative activities to help minimise rough sleeping.

- How the Council managed to differentiate between rough sleepers and others who could appear as rough sleepers to facilitate begging, where it was reported that where appropriate the Council would have conversations with the individuals and if there was a community safety issue the Council would look at appropriate and proportionate measures in conjunction with partners to tackle that in conjunction with looking at initiatives to deter any begging by removing the financial incentives and some of the grant funding was being directed to find solutions to remove the financial incentives.
- How the Council supported rough sleepers with complex needs where it was reported that work continued to address these needs on an individual basis.

The Committee thanked the Officers for their work in this area, following which the Officers and portfolio Holder left the meeting.

34 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK OF ABUSE REPORT

The Chair welcomed Councillor Stephen Doyle, the Portfolio Holder for Regulatory and Community Safety and Steph Ivey, Partnership Vulnerability Officer to the meeting. The Report of the Portfolio Holder provided the first of two biannual safeguarding updates to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. The report provided an overview of the safeguarding processes and procedures in place to discharge the Council's legal duty to safeguard children and adults with care and support needs from abuse and neglect. Following an introduction from the Portfolio Holder, the Partnership Vulnerability Officer highlighted to the Committee:

- The safeguarding statistics for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021, where referrals were received from a wide range of council staff.
- That the Council's section 11 audit, which focussed on the Council's activities in supporting staff learning and development to recognise any abuse of children and in the priority areas, to the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board had been completed, and feedback was awaited
- That the Council had completed an audit for the Staffordshire and Stoke-On-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board, which whilst not a statutory requirement for the Council to complete was considered good practice, and the feedback on this audit was awaited.
- The training available for staff which now included two E-Learning modules as well as online virtual safeguarding training delivered by the Partnership Vulnerability Officer, as well as suicide prevention training which was delivered by Staffordshire MIND.
- That the safeguarding training for taxi drivers had recommenced online. This training helped taxi drivers to understand what safeguarding was, and what to do if they believed a child or an adult was at risk. Refresher

training had been completed by 37 drivers and 11 new drivers had completed the training.

- The multi-agency working undertaken which included work with the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Panel, Local Partnership Meetings, and other meetings with local partners to identify trends and share expertise on modern slavery, as well as the weekly Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership meetings to provide a joined up response to vulnerability within the community and early interventions.

The Committee sought and received clarifications on:

- The suicide prevention training provided by Staffordshire MIND and Mental Health First Aid training and the regularity of training, including training for members.
- A recent County Lines awareness campaign which was run Staffordshire wide with the Police, and the Partnership Vulnerability Officer reported that there was work ongoing to work with the local prevention team to run a local awareness campaign in Tamworth on County Lines.
- The impact if any the pandemic had on safeguarding, where it was recognised that when children were unable to attend schools, this could have impacted young people, as well as the pressure on families and young adults where the safeguarding officer worked closely with the housing team, and the importance of the support from the community and the organisations in Tamworth to provide varied support during the pandemic.
- Modern slavery, which could be seen in many forms, and the fact that this remained very much a hidden crime, and that without understanding the signs it could be very difficult to recognise, however, by increased awareness this could be addressed further.
- The existence of anti-social behaviour in some areas of the Borough where there were limited activities for young people and whether there were further steps which could be taken to provide diversionary activities, eg youth clubs, to prevent such behaviour.

RESOLVED that the Report be endorsed.

(Moved by Councillor Sheree Peale and seconded by Councillor John Harper)

The Committee thanked the Portfolio Holder and the Partnership Vulnerability Officer for their Report and attendance and they then left the meeting.

35 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reminded members that the Partnership Team had organised a Voluntary Sector Members Seminar for all Councillors on 20th October to which many of our partners and voluntary sectors had been invited.

The Chair provided a brief update on the mental wellbeing work plan item in respect of which this Committee had already received updates from Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust on the work they were doing across Staffordshire

and more specifically locally here in Tamworth. The Chair reported that she had had further discussions with Executive Directors and Assistant Directors and also with the Leader to discuss this work plan item and how to progress this through this municipal year and beyond. The Chair proposed that at this Committee's November meeting, following the Voluntary Sector Members Seminar there would be an agenda item included to discuss how to take this further forward and to set up any working groups and further sessions required.

36 RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF THE HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

None to report.

37 CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS REFERRED TO THE HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FROM CABINET OR COUNCIL

No further matters referred.

38 UPDATE ON HEALTH RELATED MATTERS CONSIDERED BY STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Chair reported that a written report of the County's meeting on 20th September was attached to the agenda.

39 FORWARD PLAN

No further items were items form the Forward Plan.

40 HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY WORK PLAN - 2021/22

The Committee updated its Work Plan as follows:

Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Work Plan

Work Plan 2021 – 2022		
Work Area Themes for the Year		
1. Mental Wellbeing		
Topics	Target Meeting	Additional information
Community mental health services transformation – pathways to care in Tamworth	Further date to be confirmed	Invitation extended to Assistant Director Partnership & representative of Midland Partnership Foundation Trust
Leisure Services & Open Spaces	30 th November 2021 & 25 th January 2022	Invitation to be extended to Assistant Director Operations & Leisure
Substance abuse / addiction		
Young people’s experiences in Tamworth		To capture the working groups learnings
Loneliness / isolation		
2. Homelessness		
Topics	Target Meeting	Additional information
Overview of services available to rough sleepers / homeless people in Tamworth		Suggested invitation to representatives of Heart of Tamworth and/ or other relevant voluntary organisations
Housing Allocations Policy – post implementation review		Suggested invitation to Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods
Homelessness Winter Relief Update	19 th October 2021	Invitation to Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods

Other suggested topics for Committee consideration		
Green and open spaces		
Attainment and Skills in Tamworth		
Safeguarding updates (2 per year)	19 th October 2021 & 29 th March 2022	Invitation to Portfolio Holder and Officers
Specific topics to feed in to Staffordshire County Council (separate from main Themes)		
Topic	Date of planned Staffs consideration	Additional information
Wider determinants of health in Tamworth, including diet / food vulnerability / healthy eating / social prescribing		Extend an invitation to voluntary sector to understand current initiatives eg Community Together CIC
Strategic Transformation Programme (STP)		To tie in with County consideration when dates for County consideration known
Possible Working Group topics		
Armed Forces Covenant		Understand the current Staffordshire wide and Tamworth position

Upcoming Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Meetings
30 th November 2021
25 th January 2022
29 th March 2022

Upcoming Relevant County Council Meetings

**Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Staffordshire
County Council**

- 29 November 2021
- 13 December 2021
- 31 January 2022
- 15 March 2022
- 19 April 2022

Chair