

## Corporate Review Committee – 22 November 2016

### Outcomes of Overview and Scrutiny Work April - October 2016

#### Recommendations

- a) That Corporate Review reflects on the outcomes and impact of overview and scrutiny from April – October 2016 and identifies areas of good practice, learning and opportunities for development that will continue to enhance the work and impact of scrutiny going forward.
- b) That following consideration by Corporate Review the report be presented to the next full Council meeting highlighting the work and impact of scrutiny over this period.

#### Report of the Chairman of Corporate Review

#### Background

1. This report provides an overview of scrutiny work that has been undertaken since April 2016, highlighting how the Select Committees have added value to the democratic process and addressed the priorities of the County Council and its partners. This report clearly illustrates how early involvement with Members improves outcomes and promotes good working relationships with external partners. The Select Committees have scrutinised some of the current issues that the County Council has identified as key priorities, such as the Better Care Fund.

#### Corporate Review

2. This six monthly period has seen a number of additional meetings being added to Corporate Review's work programme to deal with call-ins of Cabinet decisions.
3. Corporate Review met with the Leader and Chief Executive on 4 April to consider changes made to the Council's senior leadership team structure. The Leader gave an update on appointments to the Senior Leadership Team, in particular the **alignment of adult social care and public health**. Members questioned whether this alignment would have an impact on the Council's areas of weakness. The Committee requested CIPFA comparative data to **compare Staffordshire's performance with that of other local authorities**. Members referred to the announcement of **redundancies at Shugborough** and requested a letter be sent to the Director of Finance and Resources on this matter. The Director of Finance and Resources responded to the questions raised in the letter from the Chairman of Corporate Review Committee and gave detail on the financial impact of the redundancy payments.
4. In April Corporate Review was presented with a paper on **training, skilled workforce and employment**. Members queried the Cabinet Members' role as a Corporate Parent and asked for detail of the County Council's academic

achievements, compared with other local authorities. Concern was raised about the time it would take for **academisation** to have a positive impact on the standards of the County's schools and the need for this change to happen quickly as children have a limited time in school. The Committee agreed that some issues on their Work Programme should be carried forward by the relevant Select Committees for more detailed scrutiny. The issue of **Childhood Obesity** for example was referred to the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee, who received a briefing on the matter and subsequently formed a Working Group, which will commence work to explore the issue in more detail in November.

5. Corporate Review have undertaken pre-decision scrutiny on the **contract with Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust (SSOTP)** and, following in-depth discussions, made a number of recommendations to the Cabinet Member. It was agreed that the Committee would carry out further scrutiny before any decisions were made and that the views of the Members would be taken into consideration.
6. On 7 June, Members were presented with an update on the **Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP)** for the **Penda Property Partnership**. The Committee identified the need for greater involvement of Members in the process as their local knowledge and insight could be utilised to support it. The Committee requested that, along with another update report in September, the process for Local Member involvement for identified projects be revised and circulated to all Members and that a Member Event be arranged to update Members on outcomes of the Partnership. It was subsequently agreed that this information sharing would be taken forward through the established Local Member Priority Meetings. The Head of Property agreed to attend one meeting for each district to ensure that all Members were updated.
7. Corporate Review met on 4 July to consider the call-in of the Cabinet decision on **Staffordshire's Child Health and Wellbeing Programme**. The call-in reason put forward was that the amendment to the decision had been tabled at the Cabinet meeting and had therefore not been fully scrutinised when the item was presented to the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee. Corporate Review Members raised concerns that the amendment had not enabled the scrutiny process to consider the implications of the change. As the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee were due to discuss the item at their next meeting, they requested that the Cabinet Member delay the decision allowing the Committee to consider the issues and feed back to him. The Cabinet Member agreed to this further scrutiny and the matter went to Cabinet again for consideration in July.
8. Following discussion on the **Performance and Delivery Progress Report April - June 2016** on 30 August, Members made a number of recommendations to the Cabinet Member. Further information was requested on Gross Value Added, policy position papers on the economy and detail of initiatives delivered through schools quoted in paragraph 29 of the report. Opposition Members requested that they be involved in the induction of staff and refreshing managers' understanding of the political environment in which they work. Members also asked for details of the number of Trading Standards Officers employed by the Council. Finally Members asked that a check be made with the Audit and

Standards Committee that SSOTP had been included on the Council's Risk Register.

9. Corporate Review considered a Call In in October on the **Future Operating Model of Staffordshire's Arts Service**. With regard to the future of the Shire Hall, Members were reassured that there was no intention to sell the Shire Hall but rather to make better use of the facility following Wolverhampton University's indication that they intended to vacate space. Members were concerned about the loss of cultural and exhibition space in the town and debated the proposed future operating model of Staffordshire's Arts Service. Concerns were expressed about the viability and cost of the proposed pop up exhibitions, the need to retain the multi-sensory room in Stafford and the impact of closure of the facility on local businesses and economic regeneration. Following debate the Cabinet Member, although aware that £62,000 worth of savings would still have to be made if the Arts Service was to meet its MTFs savings this year, offered to take the matter back to Cabinet for further consideration. The Committee agreed and asked that detailed proposals be brought back to Corporate Review for further scrutiny.
10. Corporate Review has continued to scrutinise the Council's ongoing projects, including the **Troubled Families** programme, the **Penda Property Partnership** and the **Voluntary Sector**. On 4 October, following national media coverage regarding the cost and outcomes of the Programme, Members considered the financial aspects of the troubled families programme in Staffordshire and congratulated the Cabinet Member and officers on achievements to date. The Penda Property Partnership - Partnership Plan and Strategic Asset Management Plan was presented. As recommended at the previous meeting in June, the Head of Strategic Property had visited local Members to discuss the Plan. A more detailed report that included narrative on how local Members had been effectively involved in the Plan was requested and it was agreed that a report would be brought back to the Committee in February. Members received an update on the **Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Capacity Building programme** (now known as S3) and were informed of progress that had been made since August. It was agreed that a further report would be brought back to the Committee in January 2017 when performance information would be available.
11. At the end of October, Corporate Review considered a Call-In of a Cabinet Member Delegated Decision to **Review Household Waste Recycling Centre Provision** for non-household waste. Concerns were raised about fly-tipping, the financial impact that the implementation of charges to dispose of non-household waste would have on district and borough councils and the process for administering charges. Members questioned the cost of implementing and running the scheme and raised concerns that the decision had been implemented without consideration by the Joint Waste Management Board. The Chairman of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee informed Members that his Committee would carry out further scrutiny into the new arrangements in eighteen month's time. Following further discussion, the Chairman of Corporate Review Committee agreed to write to the Leader of the Council requesting that full consultation with elected Members should take place on policy changes and

that details of this consultation would be given in all future reports to the Committee.

12. Since April, Corporate Review Members have had the opportunity to scrutinise the **Better Care Fund Mitigation** decisions on three separate occasions. On 13 June a joint meeting of the Corporate Review and Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee had been arranged for pre-decision scrutiny of the Cabinet decision. Following the Cabinet meeting, on 4 July Corporate Review Committee considered a Call-In of the Cabinet decision. The Cabinet Member informed the Committee that the decision was not being taken lightly and would be made available for further scrutiny when the Cabinet Member Delegated Decision was taken through the system. Following the publication of the Delegated Decision, the Committee met on 2 September to consider the Call-In. The decisions in regard to Carers, Assistive Technology, Crisis Support, Loneliness and Isolation, Casserole Club, Direct Payment Support and Self Advocacy were considered and following discussion and debate were approved for implementation as set out in the original decision notice.
13. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) working group has met four times over this period to continue their scrutiny into the **annual budget** and the **MTFS planning processes**. Members scrutinised the **Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report** and met with the Director for Health and Care to scrutinise the budget and spend for Adult Social Care. Going forward, they will examine the finances of the Transformation Support Unit, Looked after Children and Entrust. The Working Group's report will be presented to the Corporate Review Committee on 26 January 2017.

### **Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee**

14. The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee met on 24 May and received an update on **Flood Risk Management**. Concerns were raised about the cost of a Staffordshire Flood Summit and it was considered that there should be clear outcomes and more consideration given to public involvement. The Committee also continued scrutiny of the **Countryside Estate Review** and received the results of the consultation on the four options put forward for the future delivery of the service. The Select Committee requested sight of the detailed SWOT analysis referred to in the report. The Committee supported the recommendations presented with the proviso that further consideration of the future of the larger countryside estate sites be brought back to the Select Committee for pre-decision scrutiny and that local members and local community groups be engaged in discussions regarding the future of smaller sites, for example, at Local Member Priority Meetings. The Committee also received an **executive response to the Infrastructure+ - Scrutiny of Governance and Reporting Arrangements**. The Cabinet Members had accepted eight recommendations contained in the Report of the Working Group and the Committee gave consideration to the action plan to implement these. Progress on this implementation will be monitored going forward by the Committee. An all Member event was held in the Council Chamber on 1 November at which details were given to all Members on progress with the implementation of the Committee's recommendations.

15. On the 26 July, the Committee received an update on the lease agreements that the Council had entered into with the **National Trust for the Walled Garden and County Museum at Shugborough** and the **granting of a lease for the Outdoor Education Centre**. Members sought clarification regarding the liability for the redundancy costs, which had been built into the business case, that had been agreed with the National Trust and clarification regarding the restoration costs of the walled garden which would take place over the next three years (with an option to extend the lease by a further year if necessary). It was agreed that officers would come back to the Committee with more detailed costs in due course. Further details were shared regarding the audit of the collection in the County Museum and the Large Object Store, prior to the removal of some items to a new collection store. It was agreed to brief the local Member for Stafford Trent Valley outside the meeting. The Committee also scrutinised the impact of the **SEND reforms** and, whilst noting the good progress made, acknowledged the Cabinet Member's concerns regarding the pace of transfers to the Education Health and Care Plan. Members asked questions regarding the tribunal process and the learning from this process and also what had been learned from parents and carers. Following this, the Cabinet Member was asked to come back to the Committee in late autumn for further scrutiny and to discuss the tribunal process, transfers, inspection results and feedback from discussions that are to take place with parents and carers in September 2016. As new areas of scrutiny were being presented, Members asked that a flexible approach be adopted to their Work Programme to enable consideration of the European Growth Deal changes and how they might affect Staffordshire at the appropriate time, following the decision by the UK to exit the European Union.
16. In September, the Committee considered the Executive Response to the final report and recommendations of the Working Group on **Working Together to address the impact of Heavy Goods Vehicles/HCVs on roads in Staffordshire**. The Cabinet Member discussed the eleven recommendations which would be completed by the end of 2016 and a further seven that would be carried out as ongoing 'business as usual'. There were six recommendations that had resource implications that would be placed on hold this year and considered alongside other priorities next year. The Cabinet Member announced that, in response to the work of the Committee's working group, he would be setting up a Freight Forum to discuss the matters raised in the report. At the meeting Members also considered a briefing paper on **on-street parking enforcement** and residents' parking zones, with a view to this being considered as a main item for scrutiny. It was agreed that on-street parking enforcement and residents' parking zones would be placed as a main item for scrutiny at the November meeting and that the Police and Crime Commissioner and officers from Stoke-on-Trent City Council would be invited to attend and participate.
17. The Committee continued its pre-decision scrutiny of the Council's high priority projects and received a report on **the Future Operating Model for Staffordshire's Arts Service**. Members raised concerns regarding the cost of the proposed 'pop up events', the staffing level to support this event and the dependence on borough and district councils providing space, when they too faced difficult financial circumstances. There was general concern regarding the

loss of this facility in Stafford town centre and the impact that this would have on other local businesses. Reassurances were sought that there had been consideration of other planned developments in Stafford town centre and the impact that they may have on the future of this building. Members were made aware that a feasibility study on the future use of the building was being developed with Entrust and asked to see the outcome of this work. It was agreed that the comments of the Select Committee would be fed back to the Cabinet Member for Communities and the Environment to report to Cabinet at its meeting on 21 September 2016 and the developments around the future use of the Shire Hall be monitored through the Work Programme for further scrutiny.

### **Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee**

18. Over the last six months the Committee has engaged with the County Council's partners, including the Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Organisations (SCVYS) and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to ensure adequate safeguarding measures are in place to protect the most vulnerable residents in the County.
19. A presentation was received from the County Commissioner - Regulatory Services & Community Safety (Staffordshire County Council) and representatives from Staffordshire Police on the 6 April on **Modern Day Slavery (MDS)**. MDS includes child trafficking both nationally and internationally, forced labour with debt bondage, forced labour, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation. Members had raised concerns in relation to the potential exploitation of vulnerable adults and unaccompanied asylum seeking children who went missing. They were informed that MDS poses a significant risk as it is not yet fully understood and the hidden nature of MDS makes its prevalence difficult to establish. Challenges posed were similar to that of child sexual exploitation – to prepare; prevent; protect and pursue. Members supported the recommendation that a paper was taken to the Safer Staffordshire Board proposing a multi-agency approach to tackling this matter. Members asked to receive a further update on progress in six months' time.
20. On the 9 May the Director of Prevent and Protect, **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service** advised on the work that the Service was doing to protect vulnerable people. Having described the challenges that the Service faced going forward in regard to increasing demand and budget reduction, ways in which the Service would be responding to this challenge by targeting those most at risk were discussed. Members raised concerns about proposals to target the home safety visits offer to those most at risk and that the data used to identify those at risk might become outdated, citing for example if people moved house. Members heard about the development of the Life Skills Centre at Stafford Fire Station (fire safety education facility).

Members also scrutinised the Prevent Strategy which detailed work undertaken locally to **tackle terrorism**. It was agreed that all Members should receive training on the Prevent agenda.

21. In June the Committee received an update on work to **address child sexual exploitation (CSE)**. Members received an update on work that had taken place to ensure that robust safeguarding procedures were in place in regard to school transport. Following scrutiny the Committee requested a copy of the CSE Action Plan and an opportunity to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan to address the recommended areas in need of further development at future meetings, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People agreed to discuss with the Police and Crime Commissioner opportunities to fund Chelsea's Choice and the Escape drama in schools and that more insight into local activity in schools to address CSE would be shared with the Committee following the completion of the Section 175/157 Safeguarding in Education Audit and that the learning from the Care Leaver/Young Person CSE Panel would be shared with the Committee at a future meeting. The Committee will receive an update on CSE in December 2016.
22. Following a presentation to the Committee in October 2015, the Committee received a report in June detailing the **Children, Young People and Families Transformation Programme**. A multi-agency approach was being taken by the County Council with statutory partners and the third sector as it was important to work together to maximise the use of available resources. A fundamental principle was identifying issues through early help to prevent things escalating. It was agreed that more information about the Pilots within the eight Districts would be presented and in July Members considered how the Pilots would be monitored and which schools were involved. It was agreed that a further update would be brought to the Committee in December 2016.
23. In June the Committee's **Low Level Neglect** Working Group presented its report and recommendations. Seventeen recommendations were put forward. It was considered that there were ways of working that prevented low level neglect happening in the first place, prevented children suffering and could lead to savings in the future. Recommendations incorporated schools and partners and also training needs. Use of the Early Help Assessment was encouraged. The identification of neglect at the earliest stage and the extent to which this could happen by building community capacity was one of the areas that had come out strongly from the work and was a key area for the Children and Families Transformation Programme. The Working Group had stressed that people needed to be prepared for parenthood and highlighted opportunities to identify issues and address problems straightaway. The Committee endorsed the recommendations within the report and submitted it to Cabinet for a response. In July the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People reported that the recommendations of the Low Level Neglect Working Group's report had been considered and full response would be presented at its January 2017 meeting.
24. On the 8 July an update on the **Youth and Community Service** was provided. The County Council commissions SCVYS to offer support to voluntary sector organisations that have a focus on youth provision. Since April 2014 membership of SCVYS had risen by 38 to 144 independent organisations and Members welcomed the increase and the number of new entrants on the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. The Committee queried the funding available locally and the Cabinet Member suggested that this information could be provided at

Member meetings. Members considered the position of the New Bremen exchange scheme and also highlighted the importance of the availability of Information, Advice and Guidance and that safeguarding principles were built into provision.

25. The Committee met with the **Police and Crime Commissioner** on the 5 September. This was an opportunity for the Committee to scrutinise the Commissioner on his safeguarding role. Members had a range of key areas of inquiry, including:
- Visible policing;
  - Rises in violent crime including hate crime since Brexit;
  - Protection of the most vulnerable within the community;
  - Investigative policing hubs;
  - The use of police cells as places of safety;
  - Potential risks around sex offenders released from Stafford Prison;
  - The current and future relationship between the Fire and Police Services; and
  - Access to local crime statistics.

It was agreed that the following documents would be provided; a briefing report on re-settlement service for sex offenders at Stafford Prison, the CSE comprehensive framework and a link to the dashboard to enable Members to access local crime figures, this was sent to Members in October.

### **Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee**

26. Over the last six months the Select Committee has considered a range of County Council and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commissioning intentions and proposed changes to NHS Trust services. In addition the Committee has held four Joint Health Scrutiny Accountability Sessions with individual NHS Trust's holding the Chief Executives of the Trust's to account with colleagues from the District and Borough Council Health Scrutiny Committees.
27. On the 10 May 2016 the local response to the national Transforming Care Programme to change how services are delivered to children, young people and adults with learning disabilities was considered. The **Transforming Care Partnership** was established in January 2016 and brought together the County Council, City Council and six local CCGs. A Transformation Plan had been developed to set out the vision and plans for delivery. Members supported the development of the Partnership to deliver improvements in the lives and services for residents with a learning disability, endorsed the plan and noted the progress made so far.
28. The re-commissioning of **Healthwatch Staffordshire and Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service** was considered at the May meeting. Members provided views to inform the development of a draft service specification as part of the Healthwatch Staffordshire recommissioning process. It was agreed that the Healthwatch public stakeholder initial findings and legislative requirements be noted, that the answers to the consultation questions set out in the report be agreed as the Committee's formal response and action and that Healthwatch Staffordshire be invited to attend the Joint Health Scrutiny Accountability



Sessions held with NHS Trusts. Following the meeting Healthwatch Staffordshire have contributed written evidence to every Accountability Session held to date. In July the Committee received a report on Healthwatch Staffordshire. Details were shared of, the work undertaken by Healthwatch Staffordshire with various groups, the operation of their advocacy services, the budget, the numbers of enter and view visits undertaken, public engagement, strategic relationships and Healthwatch priorities. Members raised questions in respect of a number of issues, the variation in services county wide, cross border responsibilities, the budget and value for money, duplication of services and influence on controversial issues concerning the provision of hearing aids in North Staffordshire and A&E waiting times. The Committee asked if they could undertake shadowing during Enter and View visits and the Chief Executive agreed to consider this. It was also agreed that Healthwatch would submit quarterly reports to the Committee in future and the Healthwatch contract with the County Council be reviewed by the Committee.

29. On the 6 June the Committee considered **Staffordshire's Child Health and Wellbeing Programme** (0-5 years) and were informed of the potential plans to integrate commissioning for children from April 2017. This work was in accord with the County Councils responsibilities for the national Healthy Child Programme and Children's Centres, and supported the priorities of both the County Council and the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board to provide children with the best start in life. Members scrutinised a number of issues including, impact on services overall, procurement of current and future commissioned services, variation in the level of service across the County, value for money, measurement of performance and children's centres. The initial consultation/engagement would close in June 2016 and it was agreed that following analysis of the consultation, the subsequent formed outcomes framework for delivery service would be brought back to the Committee for consideration. In July the Committee the Programme was again considered. Since the previous report had been presented the scope for the tender had been expanded to include the provision of services for 5-19 year olds. Members questioned the rationale of the decision, funding, school nurses, children centres, health visiting and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. The Cabinet Member acknowledged the views of the Committee and agreed to take them before Cabinet.
30. Members considered the **All Age Disability-Independent Futures** on the 8 August and were advised of a proposed reconfiguration of services necessary to meet a change in legislation that separated children and adult social care roles. The Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing would be responsible for adult care and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People would be responsible for children. It was explained that the report would be considered by Cabinet on the 17 August. Members scrutinised the impact of changes in leadership, effectiveness of the strategy to date, finances, commissioning of services, role of social workers, assessment/review of care packages and the provision of care during transition from child to adulthood. A member suggested comparing performance with similar authorities. It was agreed that a fact finding visit to another authority be arranged and that the Cabinet Members note the comments of the Committee ahead of Cabinet.

31. The Committee received a report on **Home Care** services on the 19 September, prior to a decision on the commissioning approach and route to market for home care services going to Cabinet. Members discussed current issues and the advantages of a recommissioned home care service which was outcome focused as opposed to 'time and task'. The Committee approved the recommendations within the report.
32. In September the Committee considered the plans improvement within the **Learning Disabilities Community Inclusion** programme and received an update on progress. Members raised the issue of quality assurance and gaps in the market. It was agreed that progress would be shared with the Committee in six months time and the item is included on the Work Programme.
33. The Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee considered the **Better Care Fund (BCF) mitigation proposals** in October in relation to;
- Reablement, rehabilitation and intermediate care services
  - Debt, benefit and consumer advice
  - Special school nursing the south of the county
  - The Living Independent Service
  - The Drug and Alcohol Strategy
  - The Sustain+ Service.
34. Members discussed their views and concerns regarding the proposals and the Cabinet Member emphasised the need to make savings to compensate for the shortfall of £15 million through the Better Care Fund from the NHS for adult social care in 2016/17. Following the delegated decisions being made, the Debt, benefit and consumer advice item was Called In by Members and will be considered by the Corporate Review Select Committee on the 22 November 2016.
35. Representatives from Virgin Care and East Staffordshire CCG provided an update at the September meeting on the **Improving Lives Programme** and discussed the plans for the location change of **the GP Out of Hours Services in East Staffordshire**. The Committee's approval and suggestions for the engagement plan as outlined in the Committee papers was sought. The effectiveness of the partnership working with Virgin Care was queried and how outcomes were being measured. The recommendations within the report were agreed by the Committee.
36. At the 5 September meeting, Members scrutinised the decision to **temporary suspend the Children's Emergency Centre at County Hospital**. Clarification was sought on why the service had been deemed unsafe and how long it had taken the Trust to respond. The Committee was informed that the intention was to reinstate a safe and sustainable service as soon as possible at the County Hospital site. It was resolved that the Trust would keep the Committee informed of progress. There would also be the opportunity for Members to review progress at the Joint Health Scrutiny Accountability Session with the Trust on the 28 November 2016.

37. On the 28 September representatives attended the Committee to share the early discussions to consider if **Burton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Derby Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust could develop collaborative working** to improve service delivery for the residents in the area. Members asked questions in relation to where services would be delivered, transport concerns and the future potential for the two Trusts to merge. It was agreed that the business case once agreed would come back to the committee for further consideration and an update to the Committee will be provided on 2 December 2016.

### **Joint Health Scrutiny Accountability Sessions**

38. The Chief Executive of **North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust** presented the Trust's Self Assessment Report to the Committee on the 5 September. Members of the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee and representatives from Newcastle Borough Council asked a number of questions and sought reassurances regarding access to CAMHS and places of safety, the Trust's financial position, the response to complaints, the process used to investigate serious incidents, the engagement with staff, service users and carers and the response to issues identified by the Care Quality Commission. It was agreed that a copy of the findings of the Healthwatch peer review into the Trust's complaints and complaints handling would be provided to the Committee when completed, that the Committee would consider undertaking further scrutiny into the impact of the funding withdrawal for the Sustain+ Service and that more information about the Young Person's Council, including the aims, objectives and outcomes and information about the CAMHS Strategy be provided by the Trust. Details of the number of people who have stayed in police cell as a place of safety were also requested. In October the BCF Mitigation Proposals in relation to the Sustain+ Service were considered by the Committee in more detail.

39. The Committee had the opportunity to discuss the performance and quality of the care provided by **South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Trust** on the 28 September. The Trust reported that it had achieved a good Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating and Committee Members scrutinised a number of issues including, the provision of the Sustain+ service, the arrangements for the section 136 suite going forward, access to crisis support, waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the Trust's vacancy rates. It was agreed that the Trust would inform the Committee of any proposed future changes to services.

40. Members of the public and representatives from District and Borough Councils joined the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee Members for the Joint Health Scrutiny Accountability Session with **Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust** on the 24 October. Members of the public presented a petition on Bradwell Hospital. It was explained that the inpatient beds referred to were provided by University Hospitals North Midlands NHS Trust and were commissioned by the Clinical Commissioning Groups. It was suggested by petitioners and Members that the matter be referred to the Secretary of State however it was confirmed that the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee would

be considering this issue in more detail at the 7 November Select Committee meeting. A member of the public sought reassurances about the proportion of staff that had received falls awareness training and the Director of Nursing explained that falls were of key priority for the Trust. Members queried staff recruitment and retention, work with the universities to recruit and support newly qualified nurses and the improvement in the staff survey results.

41. On the 31 October the Chief Executive of **West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust** and the General Manager for Arden & Staffordshire attended an Accountability Session. The Trust's positive performance, particularly in light of the growth in demand and the financial pressures was highlighted. Members sought reassurances regarding hospital handovers and also about the use of Rapid Response Vehicles. It was confirmed that hospital handover times had improved. The importance of transferring people promptly to the hospital which could provide the specialist treatment and result in the best clinical outcomes for the patient treatment required was emphasised. This could result in patients being driven past or flown over other hospitals. Members referred to the national Paramedic vacancy rate and it was confirmed that the Trust had no vacancies and had been training its own Paramedics for some time. The safeguards in place to protect information recorded electronically by Paramedics and passed onto hospitals were queried and reassurances were provided by Trust representatives.

### **Joint Corporate Review and Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee**

42. In June Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing discussed a report on the **Public Health Ring Fenced Grant** outlining the reductions to the grant and the proposals to make savings in this area. Members raised concerns in relation to the level of local member involvement within the process and the impact the savings may have within the health economy.
43. The Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing submitted a report to the joint committee in June in relation to the **Better Care Fund**. The shortfall in funding was detailed and the proposals to make savings within health and care services. Members expressed their disappointment but acknowledged the council's position. Concerns were highlighted about the impact that some of the proposals could have and that the proposals would affect some of the most vulnerable groups of residents.
44. The Committee met again on 19 September to consider the contract renegotiations with **SSOTP**. The Cabinet Member agreed to take on board the views of the Committee in taking this matter forward.

### **Corporate Parenting Panel**

45. Corporate Parenting Panel is the means by which the County Council fulfils its responsibilities as a corporate parent and brings together councillors, senior officers in children's social care and partner agencies. Key issues that the Panel has recently considered include, the education of Looked After Children and Young People and care leavers, the health and wellbeing of Looked After

Children, and Staffordshire's response to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and Syrian refugees. The Panel considers the views of young people on a regular basis. The Staffordshire Pledge reflects what matters to young people in care and all Corporate Parenting Panel Members have signed up to commit to uphold the Pledge and support young people to improve outcomes for them. A review will be undertaken by young people of how well Members had supported the pledge and this will be reported to the Panel in November 2016.

46. In April the meeting was prepared, delivered and chaired by the **Children in Care Council**. The young people described what they enjoyed, what they did not and their hopes for the future. Their presentations focussed on a Sport and Leisure offer to looked after young people; Preparation for Adulthood; and, Support to do well at school. These focus areas had been identified as priorities by young people responding to a questionnaire facilitated by the Children Voice Project.
47. In May Members received a progress report on the **Children's Advocacy Service** which had been launched in October 2015 following a pilot and an extensive consultation exercise. The Manager of the **Children's Voice Project** acknowledged that young people had been involved in the consultation which had informed the shape of the contract. In October the Panel received a **Voice Project** brief which evidenced where the voice of children and families had contributed to shaping service delivery, planning and evaluation across Families First.
48. At the May meeting information on the **Families First Workforce Profile** which explored Recruitment, Training and Retention was presented. Families First had one of the lowest percentage of agency social workers in the region and worked hard to develop their workforce to meet the needs of Staffordshire's children. Members also received a presentation on **Adoption Regionalisation**. The Government had issued a document – Adoption: A Vision for Change, in March 2016 in which they set out the intention that all local authorities should be part of a Regional Adoption Agency by 2020.
49. The Payment for Skills programme which was being introduced into the **Fostering Service** was also discussed in May. Consultation with Foster Carers had revealed that they largely agreed the current policy was unfair and that carers should be recognised for their experience, skill, motivation and the outcomes they are achieving.
50. In June Members noted a continued downward trend in the numbers of children coming into care. Foster placements continued to be the largest accommodation type and nearly three quarters of foster placements were in Staffordshire. There was an in depth debate around how and when the decision was made to return a child to their family and members learned that this was a very complex and challenging area.
51. In July the Panel received an update from the Children in Care Council who had been consulting young people on their experience around health assessments.

Their thoughts had been fed through to the County Manager who provided an update to Panel on the **Health of Looked After Children** in September.

52. The **Education of Looked After Children** was a focus on the meeting in July and the Head teacher of the Virtual School delivered a presentation on raising aspiration and attainment. The Virtual School was working closely with the Children in Care Council to better understand young people's views on education and continued to conduct regular audits and action planning around Personal Education Plans (PEPs) to ensure they are relevant and reviewed regularly. The roll out of the electronic PEP was a key development and would make comprehensive information readily available enabling the Virtual School to be more flexible and proactive in its approach. Members received the Performance Card in September and expressed concern about the numbers of looked after young people and care leavers who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) and in October more details were shared with the Panel.
53. Following information provided to the Panel in May, in August a presentation was provided on Staffordshire's response to **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and Syrian refugees**. There were four areas where the County Council were involved: the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme; UASC; National Transfer Scheme and the agreement to take UASC from Europe (Lord Dubs' amendment). As the arrival of UASC was geographically uneven (900+ in Kent), the Government had introduced a National Transfer Scheme to spread the load which was initially voluntary. The West Midlands Regional Strategic partnership was developing a regional response. At age 17 years, UASC sit an interview with the Home Office to determine whether they receive 'leave to remain'. Where this had not occurred by age 18 years, the local authority had to meet the housing and benefit costs. The Association of Directors of Children's Services and Regional Groups were actively lobbying for increased resources.
54. A presentation on **Partnership Working within Families First** was made to the Panel in August. Targeted Services aimed to prevent children coming into care by working with families, with their consent, through Local Support teams. There were 19 LSTs supporting families, working closely with schools, voluntary and community groups, agencies, Police, health professionals and housing providers. The service worked to prevent placement/family breakdown and enable children to remain with their families and in their communities. The service acted as a facilitator and worked closely with LSTs to support the development of community based capacity to support families.
55. In October the Panel considered the **DfE Statistical First Release** on children looked after in England at 31 March 2016 after collating figures from the SSDA 903 Looked After Children statistical return received from local authorities. Staffordshire's rate of looked after children per 10,000 children had risen slightly but remained one of the lowest LAC rates in the West Midlands. The proportion of children adopted during the year rose to 22% and is higher than the national, regional and statistical neighbour rates.

The Panel also received presentations on **Keeping Children and Young People Safe** in October which described the process around the management of children who go missing from care and on the Edge of Care Service. They received the annual report from the Adoptions Service and the Statements of Purpose for the registered children's homes and the Adoptions Service.

### **Audit and Standards Committee**

56. The Audit and Standards Committee provides independent assurances of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performances to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and oversees the financial reporting process. The Committee is also responsible for matters relating to standards of Member conduct, including dealing with any complaints.
57. On 27 June, Members of the Committee were updated on progress towards implementing the **Corporate Governance Action Plan 2015-16** and in particular revising the **Code of Conduct**. The revised framework contained a number of key changes to the principles which determine the County Councils governance arrangements. The County Councils External Auditors gave a progress report on **the External Audit Plan for 2015-16** and Members had a frank discussion about the role of external audit in helping the County Council to ensure it obtains Value for Money. It was agreed that the Committee would receive papers at future meetings on the measurement of **Value for Money** for specific projects and the resource implications arising from the Highways Network Asset new measurement requirements. The **Internal Audit Outturn report for 2015-16** which included the internal audit opinion for 2015-16 and the **Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for 2016-17** were received. The committee also received a report recommending a change to the list of politically restricted posts and consequently a change to the Constitution of the County Council. Members subsequently recommended that these changes be recommended to Full Council for approval. In the closed part of the meeting, Members heard from managers accountable for services deemed to have limited assurance and received an update on managing risk around the **Better Care Fund**.
58. At their meeting on 26 September, the Committee approved the **Annual Governance Statement** and the Chairman of the Committee undertook to write to the Leader of the Council regarding the delegation of decisions to one Cabinet Member. Following discussion the Committee approved the 2015/2016 **Statement of Accounts** and the letters of representation from the Director of Finance and Resources. The Committee considered **the report to those Charged with Governance** and noted the contents of the **Staffordshire County Council Audit Results Report – ISA (UK and Ireland) 260** for the year ended 31 March 2016 and the **Staffordshire Pension Fund Audit Results Report – ISA (UK and Ireland) 260** for the year ended 31 March 2016. The Committee also noted the updated **Code of Corporate Governance**, the revised **Single Sheet Local Framework** and the progress in developing the **Corporate Governance Action Plan 2016/17**. Regarding future audit procurement the Committee recommended that Full Council 'opt-in' to the **Local**

**Government Association Sector Led Body approach via Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd** for the procurement of the External Audit contract for the financial year commencing April 2018.

## **Looking Ahead**

59. It is clear that each of the Select Committees have continued a full work programme of activity with positive, effective outcomes, aided by the ongoing engagement with the Cabinet Members on service reviews and developments.

60. Committee Work Programmes focus on the Council's Commissioning Plans and there are opportunities to support the Council to achieve these plans through robust and proactive pre-decision scrutiny.

61. To be effective Select Committees need to continue to be:

- Rigorous in identifying issues in a timely way for which it has a genuine opportunity to feed in new insight into the development of services for the communities of Staffordshire and for which it has the time and capacity to have an impact. Members are reminded of the existence of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions as a useful tool in identifying forthcoming decisions for which the Select Committees may have an interest in investigating further.
- Consider wide ranging evidence, where appropriate, not solely relying on information presented by Directors but also evidence from the wider engagement of frontline staff, service users and the public to help inform the evidence base of scrutiny investigations. The Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee continues to seek the views of commissioners, the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch Staffordshire in advance of Joint Health Accountability Sessions. This ensures that Members and the public are well equipped to scrutinise the performance of services with the supporting evidence to challenge the Trusts.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

The Select Committee work programmes have produced recommendations that have directly contributed to the Council's strategic priorities.

## **Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

This is a summary of the work programmes of all of the Select Committees from April - October 2016. Full details of the work of the Select Committees' work including their work programmes and previous Outcomes of Overview and Scrutiny Work are published on the County Council's website.

## **Contact Officers**

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