

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 6th July 2020

Present: Cllr Johnson (Chair)
Cllrs Cheetham, Janet Eaton, Gill, Kempson, Kenyon, Morris,
Procter and Z. Ali (Co-opted Member)

In attendance: Adam Allen, Director of Communities
Clare Law, HR Manager
Mick Coogan, Strategic Housing Manager
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager
Jenni Cook, Committee and Member Services Officer
Robert Ruston, Victims and Vulnerable People Lead - PCC

Also Present: Cllrs Aldred, A. Barnes, Bromley, Lythgoe, Neal, Pendlebury
and Haworth
0 press
2 public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTIONS

- 1.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr L. Barnes (Councillor Cheetham substituting) and Cllr Brennan.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2020 be approved as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

- 4.1 The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent items of business.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- 5.1 The Chair noted that she would allow questions to be asked on each item as it was discussed.

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

- 6.1 The Chair noted that there was no update.

7. DOMESTIC ABUSE – PARTNER AND COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE

7.1 The Victims and Vulnerable People Lead provided members with an overview of his role and the services provided, followed by the Council's Strategic Housing Manager, who outlined the council's services and position:-

- Community based support services, advice, advocacy, available to all victims regardless of gender, sexuality, ethnicity and age. Referrals from all agencies and self-referrals accepted. Services were free and confidential.
- Rossendale data for 2019-20 was noted, with 861 cases referred to the service. It was noted that a further 207 cases could not be followed up as consent had not been given or there was insufficient information for safe contact. Numbers of cases where contact for support had been attempted were at 587.
- Measures of outcomes were clarified and there were 6 key points measured at an early stage and then later on into the process. These outcomes were consolidated into information fed back to the MOJ.
- Council services were outlined – Rossendale did not have a refuge and the services available to residents were noted. It was noted that people often chose to flee to another area and the council had good links and access.
- The council used its funding to pay for two members of staff, who job shared and provided assistance with complex cases. The Outreach Support Worker had dealt with 135 cases during 2019-20 and was funded to September 2021.
- The potential impact of the Domestic Abuse Act/Commissioner was noted.

7.2 Members and members of the public commented as follows:-

- Diversity and ethnicity of victims – work was required, there was a shortage of advocates with language skills, and there were language and engagement issues to overcome. Pathways needed to be built with small, grass roots groups.
- The self-referral process was clarified and the helpline was staffed 24/7. This number would be circulated.
- Insufficient information was an issue and training was provided/continued for police officers when attending incidents and recording information.
- Work with offenders was noted.
- Members were concerned regarding the lack of a refuge in Rossendale. Safe-houses and disbursed accommodation were available.
- Funding streams from the PCC were discussed and noted.

Resolved:

The update was noted and the PCC agreed to send a representative when the Council commenced its Covid-19 Task and Finish work.

8. THE FORWARD PLAN

8.1 The Forward Plan had been published with the agenda and tabled upcoming Cabinet decisions that the committee could consider for the O&S Committee. Members were reminded to look at the plan and consider what could be brought to the committee.

Resolved:

The update was noted.

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 7.30pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____