

# Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Wednesday, 4th September, 2013.

**Present:** Cllr Robert Cook (Chair); Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson and Cllr Michael Smith.

**Officers:** J Danks, L King (R); R Poundford, C Straughan (DNS); S Willson, L Brown, S McLurg, S McEneaney, D McConnell, Ian Ramshaw, Jane King, Lynne Whiteman (CESC); D E Bond, P J Mennear, P K Bell (LD).

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Norma Wilburn and Cllr Terry Laing.

**Apologies:** Cllr David Rose.

## **CAB 55/13**      **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Mrs McCoy declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of agenda item 4 - EIT Review of Adult Mental Services as she was on the Council of Governors and Associate Hospital Manager of Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust.

## **CAB 56/13**      **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2013 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## **CAB 57/13**      **Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Review of Adult Mental Health Services**

The Adult Services and Health Select Committee had undertaken an EIT Review of Adult Mental Health Social Care Services. The report outlined the results of the review, and detailed a number of proposals for changes to services. The services under review (including day services, rehabilitation, respite, community support, user and carer involvement, care homes) were the responsibility of Stockton Council and were delivered as part of the Integrated Mental Health Service.

The Council had a statutory obligation to meet identified need for those clients assessed as being eligible for services in line with the Council's eligibility criteria for adult social care. Services provided must meet identified need, however the Council must also ensure that they were providing value for money.

The Committee's proposals were approved in principle by Cabinet on 7 February 2013 and had been subject to 12-weeks of public consultation. The results of the consultation were summarised in the Committee's report and the feedback was broadly supportive of the proposals. The Committee had finalised its proposals and made recommendations for change. There would be no changes to individual client circumstances without appropriate re-assessment and care planning.

The recommendations had been informed by the Equality Impact Assessment and this was included in the report at Appendix 4.

RESOLVED that:-

1. service users and carers should be involved in the design of the new services proposed in the report, and be supported throughout the transition period;
2. providers including the voluntary sector should be engaged and supported to develop services that meet the assessed needs of service users and attract personal budgets.
3. the provision of information, advice, and signposting services for service users be improved to enable them to identify appropriate services, and this should include working with existing advice and signposting services;
4. support to service users in taking personal budgets to access services that meet their assessed needs should be strengthened, and consideration be given to temporary additional resources in this area as part of the implementation plan;
5. the Council should support the development of alternative day time activities in the third sector / independent sector, invest in Community Bridge Building as a key intervention and support service for adult mental health service users subject to a successful outcome to the pilot, and cease providing the in-house day services at Norton Road and Ware Street (the Links Unit);
6. alternative options for rehabilitation, respite and short break services, be developed to enable a more flexible approach to service provision and achieve better value for money, and the in-house respite and rehabilitation beds at Ware Street be ceased;
7. a) the community support service specification and eligibility criteria be revised so that it becomes a short term intensive support service based on the recovery model (up to a maximum period of 12 weeks);  
b) the current in-house community support service be re-configured in order to meet the needs of the revised specification, and that any ongoing assessed needs beyond the 12-week period are met through commissioned services or personal budgets.
8. the Council should ensure that the service user and carer involvement functions are embedded into the wider adult social care arrangements for involvement and consultation, and cease provision of the dedicated service user and carer involvement posts.
9. Councillor Norma Stephenson be appointed as Mental Health Member Champion in order to raise awareness of mental health issues across the Local Authority and with partners.

**CAB  
58/13**

### **LA Nomination**

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school governors, approved as Minute 84 of the Cabinet (11th May 2000), Cabinet was requested

to approve the nomination to school Governing Body as detailed within the report.

RESOLVED that appointments be made to the vacant Governorship subject to successful List 99 check and Personal Disclosure, as follows:-

Bowesfield Primary School – Mr J Badenhorst

## **CAB 59/13 Children's Social Care Activity and Performance Report**

Consideration was given to a report on children's social care activity and performance.

In light of the Ofsted inspection of child protection in January 2013, it had been decided to review the content and format of future children's social care reports to Cabinet.

In addition to a range of measures to illustrate the pressures experienced by the service, a number of performance indicators would also be included so that Cabinet can more closely monitor the impact of these pressures on performance and outcomes for children.

As a way of achieving this, the use of a 'process model' was approved by Cabinet on 13 June 2013.

Given the importance and profile of these issues it had been agreed that the new activity and performance reports were brought to Cabinet on a bimonthly basis i.e. every alternate Cabinet.

This was the first children's social care activity and performance report in the new format based on the available data at the end of quarter 1 (30 June 2013).

This revised format for reporting to Cabinet showed the range of key factors that impact on the levels of activity, workload pressures and performance in children's social care.

The template data that was attached to the report was designed to illustrate the following key elements:

### **Inputs**

These measures recorded the flow of business into the social care system, the level/complexity of activity and the extent to which other agencies were impacting on this activity. The key measures were as follows:-

- Number of contacts made with children's social care
- Number of contacts that become referrals for assessment
- Number of referrals by agency/number that do not meet social care threshold
- Referral reasons eg domestic violence, substance misuse
- Number of Common Assessment Framework (CAF) 2s by agency
- Number/proportion of contacts with an active CAF
- Number/proportion of contacts which are closed and logged
- Number/proportion of referrals resulting in no further action (NFA)

## Processes

These measures related to the efficiency and effectiveness of services in managing the business i.e. the way in which business was conducted to assess needs, make decisions about support required and keep cases under review. The key measures were as follows:

- Number and timeliness of assessments
- Number and proportion of referrals that result in Section 47 (Child Protection) enquiries
- Number and timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPCs)
- Timeliness of Child Protection (CP) CP Reviews
- Attendance of children and young people at ICPCs and CP Reviews
- Attendance of children and young people at Looked After Children (LAC) Reviews
- Number/proportion of Care Applications to Court
- Number/proportion of LAC on Section 20 (voluntary accommodation) or Legal Orders
- Workforce composition

## Outputs

These indicators were proxies for how effective processes had been in delivering results, which in turn should lead to positive outcomes for the children and young people concerned. The key measures are as follows:

- Numbers of children in need (CiN)/CP/LAC
- Re-referral rates
- Second or subsequent CP Plans
- CP plans 2 years+
- Number/proportion of those stepping down from CP Plan to CAF
- LAC Placement stability (number of placement moves both short and long term)
- Care leavers in Education Employment and Training (EET)
- Care leavers in suitable accommodation
- Numbers/proportion of children adopted or made subject to Special Guardianship Order (SGO)/Residence Order or returned home

A summary of the available data at the end of quarter 1 (30 June 2013), along with a brief commentary highlighting the main issues raised from analysis of the information was attached to the report. Also attached to the report was the data which informed the report.

In summary, the overall picture reflected in the attached analysis was as follows:

- Inputs - continuing high levels of demand on services, but some potential indications of a slight levelling off in terms of contacts to social care, and numbers of child protection cases. It was too early to say whether this would amount to a sustained trend.
- Processes - continuing pressures on timeliness and adverse impact on performance levels.
- Outputs - overall sound results, suggesting that support provided for children requiring social care intervention continues to be largely effective, despite high caseloads.

- It was noted that as some of this data had not been collected on a regular basis previously, there were still some gaps in the template. These gaps would be populated for future reports as soon as this data was available.

Performance continued to be monitored very closely via the monthly Children's Social Care Performance Clinic chaired by the Corporate Director and attended by the Head of Service and all senior managers with responsibility for children's social care. This meeting analyses a range of performance and activity data and agrees and monitors actions in response to any identified issues. This was underpinned by a range of performance clinics with operational managers across the service.

In addition there was a fortnightly Workload Pressures meeting chaired by the Corporate Director and attended by the Head of Service and key senior managers in children's social care. This meeting closely monitors staffing and allocation issues and any associated pressures across the service.

Due to continuing concerns about inappropriate referrals to children's social care and the low take up of the common assessment framework (CAF) by partner agencies, a revised referral protocol would be considered by Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) on 19 September 2013. If agreed, this would mean that no referrals would be accepted by children's social care without prior evidence of CAF activity, unless there were immediate child protection concerns.

The Institute of Local Governance (ILG) had been commissioned to undertake a research study in an effort to obtain a deeper understanding of some of the underlying demographic reasons behind the increase in children's social care workload in recent years. The ILG had requested bids from researchers by 12 September 2013. Updates on the progress of this research would be included in a future reports to Cabinet.

Alongside this, Cordis Bright consultants had been commissioned to undertake a review of referral and assessment activity. This was completed and the resulting report was expected shortly. This would then be considered by Children and Young People's Management Team (CYPMT) and SLSCB. A summary of the findings, recommendations and any agreed actions would be included in a future report to Cabinet.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The continued workload pressures and associated activity in the children's social care system and the consequent impact this is having on both performance and budget be noted.
2. Further update reports on a bi monthly basis in order to continue to monitor children's social care activity and performance be received.

**CAB  
60/13**

### **School Performance Report 2012 - 2013**

Consideration was given to a report on an analysis of school performance in the

academic year 2012 - 2013.

The report detailed the performance, headline outcomes and the key areas for development in the following stages:

Primary Phase - Early Years and Foundation Stage

Primary Phase – Key Stage 1

Primary Phase – Key Stage 2

Secondary Phase – Key Stage 3

Secondary Phase – Key Stage 4

Post 16 Education

Attendance and Exclusion

Members noted performance had generally been positive and that the funding that had been given to the some academy schools had been vindicated as the performance had improved.

RESOLVED that the standards and achievement across the Borough be noted.

**CAB 61/13 Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan: Local Development Scheme (LDS).**

Consideration was given to a report on the Stockton on Tees Local Plan: Local Development Scheme (LDS).

The Council was required to prepare and maintain an up-to-date LDS, a document which identified and provided details of the planning policy documents (Local Development Documents or LDDs) it intended to produce as part of its local plan (formerly Local Development Framework or LDF) either individually or jointly with other local planning authorities (LPAs), together with the timetables for their production or review. The LDS accompanying the report contained the details of and timetables for the production or completion of the remaining LDDs the Council intended to produce to complete its local plan; the Regeneration & Environment LDD and the Gypsy Traveller and Travelling Show-people Site Allocations LDD, as well as a timetable for the production of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**CAB 62/13 Economic Climate Update**

Cabinet considered a monthly update report providing members with an overview of the current economic climate, outlining the effects that this was having on Stockton Borough, and the mitigations already in place and those being developed.

Members noted some of the positive and negative developments since the last report. Details of the support on offer to people and businesses was also provided.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the work undertaken to date supported.

**CAB  
63/13**

### **'Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform'**

Members were reminded of the Government's plans set out in January this year for radical change to Probation Services in England and Wales via their publication 'Transforming Rehabilitation: A Strategy for Reform'. In summary, these plans proposed the abolition of the current Probation Trusts and their replacement by a new National Probation Service (NPS), which would carry out initial assessments and pre-sentence work with offenders, and would manage those offenders assessed as representing high risk, and a series of new companies would manage medium and low risk offenders. The original estimate was that 30% of the current workload would go to the NPS and the other 70% to the new companies. This Council had responded to the consultation process via the Safer Stockton Partnership.

Despite receiving many adverse responses to consultation, the Government had now decided to press on with its plans. One minor change, but a significant one for Stockton, was an increase in the number of the proposed new companies from the original proposal of 16, (which would probably have seen a single company covering the whole of the North East region), to 21, which allowed for 2 companies, one of which would cover the current Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust area.

It was noted that many of the most important details about the competition process remained unclear at present. It was however known that competition would be for ownership of a shareholding in one of the new companies, and that the Government would retain a share in each company. It was also known that the payments system would be based, in part, on results achieved in relation to reducing reoffending. It was believed that tenders would be evaluated on a basis of 50% quality, 50% price.

The current Trusts were to be abolished by April 2014 and the staff sorted into two groups, ie those who would transfer to the NPS and those who would transfer to the new companies. Trusts were required to put in place so called 'ethical walls' to start to separate these two groups in advance of April.

Cabinet noted that the current Durham Tees Valley Trust was one of the top three nationally in terms of reducing reoffending and had some of the lowest unit costs. On five key measures of unit costs compared to the other 34 Trusts, its ranking positions are 35th (ie best), 34th, 31st, 21st and 16th.

A series of discussions had taken place to establish the level of interest in establishing a public and third sector consortium to bid for the work, in order to try to ensure that the levels of public service currently provided were maintained. Representatives of the Council had indicated its interest in participating in such a consortium, and four other potential partners had also been identified, ie another Local Authority, a local NHS Trust, a major local housing provider, and a sub-regional voluntary organisation. The most probable way forward would be the establishment of a Community Interest

Company or similar vehicle, with shareholding and governance arrangements to be designed to reflect shares of any risk. Two directors from the current Probation Trust had volunteered to work on this project.

The timetable was not yet fully clear but it was anticipated that the Pre Quality Questionnaire process for getting onto a tender list would begin shortly, with full tendering to take place in 2014 and contracts to now start from April 2015 (rather than Autumn 2014, as originally suggested by the Ministry of Justice).

RESOLVED that:-

1. The action taken to date be endorsed.
2. Council continues to support the proposed consortium bid.
3. Up to £6,000 be utilised from existing budget provision to support the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) process.
4. Further reports be presented to Cabinet as more detail becomes available.

**CAB 64/13 Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Committee Report**

Consideration was given to a report that provided an account of the activity of the Stockton Adult Safeguarding Team and of the issues considered by the Stockton Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Committee (SVAC) in 2012/13. Due to the development work in relation to Adult Safeguarding Boards across Tees, in line with the Care Bill, there would be no Tees-wide Adult Safeguarding Update published for 2012-13. The Annual Report of the Stockton Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Committee was attached to the report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**CAB 65/13 Minutes of Various Bodies**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of various bodies.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings be received/approved, as appropriate:-

Safer Stockton Partnership – 7th May 2013  
Local Safeguarding Children Board – 20th June 2013

**CAB 66/13 Big Ticket Programme Board Update**

Consideration was given to a report that updated Members on the progress of the Big Ticket Programme Boards.



The report detailed the progress of the following Big Ticket Programme Boards:-

Adult Programme Board  
Children's Programme Board  
Energy & Waste Programme Board

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**CAB  
67/13**      **Medium Term Financial Plan Update - June 2013**

Consideration was given to a report on the current financial position of the Council as at 30 June 2013. The report provided details of the Spending Round in June and associated technical consultation documents issued in July 2013.

The report contained a table that detailed the MTFP position of each service. Members were aware of the savings proposals presented by Cabinet to Council in June 2013 and in advance of these proposals officers had been continuing to monitor closely expenditure in all areas.

Members were reminded that in setting the budget for 2013/14 all budgets were frozen and a growth provision of £1.8m per year was earmarked to deal with growth items within the 'Big Ticket' areas. The report outlined the potential call on that resource as well as the position of each Service. Further information in respect of progress of the 'Big Ticket' reviews would be provided to Cabinet as part of a separate report.

The report then detailed the MTFP of each of the service areas.

The report in June outlined that general fund balances had improved at the end of the financial year to £9.7m, which was £1.3m above the 3% recommended level. The surplus stood at £1.7m. The change was in the main due to the final collection fund position for 2012/13 being £300,000 higher than anticipated.

Members were also aware of the savings programme approved by Council in June 2013. This identified that savings of £1.95m would be generated in 2013/14, of which £1.275m was approved as utilisation of one off resources. These meant that there was still £675,000 unallocated from this saving and available as one off resources.

Paragraph 8 identified that the projected call on the growth provision for the financial year was £500,000 and if this were the case then there would be an additional £1.3m of one off resource available. Members noted from paragraph 3 however that the pressures in Looked After Children continued to grow and this could impact on the position.

The position with regard to balances would continue to be monitored closely and considered as part of the 2014/15 budget process.

The Capital budget for 2012/18 was shown as an appendix to the report and was summarised in a table within the report.

The main changes to the programme were as follows:-

- Additional funding had been secured from schools delegated budgets to support the Schools Maintenance Programme (£273,000)
- Following flooding of the Bishopton Centre, a scheme to re-model the City Learning Centre on the Marsh House Avenue Site would be delivered and would provide a new permanent site for the Pupil Referral Unit at an estimated cost of £118,000. This was approved as part of the report to Cabinet on 16th May 2013, together as part of the development of a vocational training provision on that site. This would be funded from delegated schools budget and unallocated planned maintenance funds.
- A new scheme had been added to the programme for the installation of photovoltaic panels on Ian Ramsey School (£100,000). This would be funded by school contributions over a number of years, from the feed in tariffs generated.
- Additional funding from Sustrans and the Community Participation budget had been secured to support the Integrated Transport programme (£104,000).
- One off revenue funding had been set aside to fund the extension of Durham Road Cemetery and essential repairs to churchyard walls (£265,000)
- The programme had been increased to include the re-development of King Edwin School and associated property acquisitions, as per Cabinet Report approved in March, which estimated the costs at £2,000,000. Funding previously set aside to demolish the school (£300,000) would not be required and these funding streams will now be combined to support this initiative.
- The Council was successful in its bid to Department of Health for funding to improve facilities for people suffering with dementia. A scheme had been designed for improvement works at the Halcyon Centre, which would commence in October (£577,000)
- As approved by Cabinet in May, £175,000 had been included to support the implementation of super-fast broadband
- A scheme to demolish the Blakeston School Site (part of Northshore Academy) has been included in the programme (£608,000). This was approved by Cabinet in May and would be funded from future capital receipt generated from areas agreed for development.
- The server virtualisation scheme, delivered by Xentrall was completed within budget and this had been reflected in the programme.

The Comprehensive Spending Round in June indicated a National reduction of 10% in LG Spend (real terms) but in cash terms 8.3%. This was a combination of retained business rates and revenue support grant.

Consultation documents issued on 31 July indicated that the reduction in Local Government spending was higher overall by £1bn so the overall cash reduction was actually 13.1%. There was no indication that this would be forthcoming and the indications were that this was being used to fund an additional contribution to the National New Homes Bonus as well as using £800m to fund what had been outlined in the Spending Round as additional funding for social care new burdens (Dilnott), Independent Living Fund, Collaboration and Efficiency fund and monies for troubled families.

The Government had published indicative allocations for each Authority for 2014/15 and 2015/16 and the reduction for Stockton was actually 14.8%. The reason why this was higher than the National average will be due to distributional effects and this was still being examined.

This meant that the overall reduction between 2014/15 and 2015/16 was £11.5m. This was £6m more than was assumed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan in February 2013.

In addition to the reference above, the Comprehensive Spending Round outlined that £400m per year would be utilised from New Homes Bonus to contribute to the Local Growth Fund's to be operated through the Local Enterprise Partnerships.

The consultation documents outline that the mechanisms for this. New Homes Bonus would continue to be paid to Local Authorities. Local Authorities would then pay proportion to LEP's (35%) to contribute to the Growth Fund. Based on the current New Homes Bonus received, this would be £1.2m per year.

Funding to support Council Tax Freeze (1% Grant allocated) in 2014/15 and 2015/16 (only confirmed as available to end of spending review period).

Referendum level for Council Tax increases set at 2% for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

There was a reduction in Education Services Grant of 25% which would be an impact of £900,000. This was also paid direct to Academies and the actual payment to Stockton would be dependent upon Academy conversions.

There would be £3.8bn nationally available to support aspects of Social Care. The majority of this funding appeared to be top sliced from Health budgets and whilst it was unclear how this would be allocated, planned expenditure needed to be approved by Health and Wellbeing Board.

There would be a National pay cap in the public sector at 1% for 2015/16. It should be noted however that Local Government pay was subject to separate negotiation.

The funding cuts associated with the spending round and the associated consultation document would result in an additional reduction of Government funding of £13.6m in 2015/16. This was significantly higher (£8m) than was anticipated at the time of setting the budget.

The Council would be submitting a response to the consultation and contributing to the response from ANEC.

There were still significant uncertainties around potential Health monies which could benefit the Council. Also, this financial year was the first year where the Council would retain an element of business rates growth. This was being monitored and would be reported as part of the budget setting process. The funding for 2016/17 and 2017/18 would be dependent upon a further spending review following national elections.

RESOLVED that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the level of general fund balances be noted.

**CAB 68/13 Localism Act 2011 – The New Standards Regime – Review of the Council's Local Standards Arrangements**

Consideration was given to a report that provided details of a review of the Council's Standards regime.

At the meeting on 9 February 2012 Cabinet considered and recommended to Council new standards arrangements, as required by the Localism Act 2011 ("the Act"). Cabinet's recommendations were agreed by Council on 7 March 2012. Subsequently, Council approved a new code of conduct for Stockton's members under the Act on 18 July 2012. Council agreed that the new local standards arrangements and the new code should be reviewed by the Monitoring Officer after 12 months of operation.

A review had been undertaken, and a copy of the report from the Monitoring Officer was considered. Cabinet was asked to consider the report and to recommend it to Council, along with the recommendations specified within the covering report.

With regard to recommendation 4, if it was considered appropriate to review and update the descriptions of the principles of conduct in the Council's Code of Conduct in light of the revisions to the descriptions of the Nolan principles, initial discussions would take place with Members about any suggested changes, prior to a report back to Cabinet and to Council for further consideration. The Audit Committee had considered a similar report regarding the review of the Council's Standards Arrangements at its meeting on 24 June. The Committee approved the recommendations which were outlined in the report to Cabinet.

**RECOMMENDED to council that:-**

- 1. The review report be considered and agreed.**
- 2. No changes be made to the Council's code of conduct for members.**
- 3. Appropriate advice, guidance and training continues to be provided in connection with the code.**
- 4. Proposals to update the descriptions of the principles of conduct in the preamble to the code, in light of the revisions to the descriptions of the Nolan principles, be the subject of further reports to Cabinet and**

**Council.**

- 5. The arrangements for dealing with member misconduct complaints remain as originally approved by Council.**
- 6. The position of Norman Rollo, as Independent Person, and Mike Hill and Jeff Bell as reserve Independent Persons, be considered, taking into account the recommendations of the Standards (Independent Persons) Appointment Panel.**
- 7. Regular reminders, advice and guidance continued to be provided to Stockton's members and to the members of Town/Parish Councils in Stockton's area regarding the need to submit and keep up to date their registrable interests.**
- 8. The procedures relating to the disclosure of interests and withdrawal from meetings; sensitive interests and dispensations, be reaffirmed.**
- 9. Further training regarding the code of conduct, disclosable pecuniary interests and the arrangements for dealing with allegations of member misconduct be provided as and when required or considered appropriate.**
- 10. The Monitoring Officer reviews the Council's standards arrangements again after a further 12 months of operation, and that the outcome with any recommendation for change be reported back to the Audit Committee, Cabinet and Council for consideration.**

**CAB  
69/13**

#### **Armed Forces Annual Report**

Consideration was given to a report that presented the first Annual Armed Forces Report to Council. It summarised the work with the Armed Forces and the progress so far on the implementation of Stockton's Armed Forces Community Covenant. It also outlined proposed projects for the coming year and included a statement from the Commanding Officer of 102 Battalion REME.

On 18th January 2012 the following motion was submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.1. Moved by Councillor Cook, seconded by Councillor Beall:-

"The Council recognises the contribution the Armed Forces community makes in defence of the realm, often sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. The Council also recognises the vital role the families of Armed Forces personnel have in supporting their operational effectiveness."

The motion requested Council support the signing of a local community covenant in partnership with the Armed Forces community. To agree to work and act together to honour the national Armed Forces Covenant. To work with the Armed Forces community locally, recognising and remembering the sacrifices made and in the provision of help and advice to support integration

into civilian life.”

The motion was carried with full Council support.

Following the motion to Council Stockton Council and partners signed the Stockton Armed Forces Community Covenant on March 7th 2012. The Covenant was intended to encourage support for the Armed Forces working and residing in the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of the community. The Covenant commits the Council and Renaissance partners to:-

- support employees who volunteer for reserve duties;
- ensure that the voice of serving and ex-service personnel is heard through the Council's engagement mechanisms;
- report annually to Council on the impact of the Covenant;
- identify key officer and Member champions, and implement the other recommendations of the Regional Scrutiny Review of the Health Needs of the Ex-Service Community.

The Armed Forces had in return committed to deliver annual updates to both Members and updates on operational experiences and policy changes, and to be involved in community activities and events. A Members Policy seminar was delivered in October as part of this commitment. A further seminar would be requested once the Armed Forces were in a position to inform the Council how changes to the services and local Armed Forces bases/ units would impact on the Borough, probably early 2014.

As part of their commitment to the covenant an annual statement had been prepared by the Commanding Officer for 102 Battalion REME and this was attached to the report.

The Armed Forces Community Covenant identified 4 Member Champions Cllr Steve Nelson, Housing and Community Safety, Cllr Mike Smith – Transport and Regeneration, Cllr David Coleman – Access and Communities with Cllr Jim Beall – Adult Services and Health and Deputy Leader being the lead Member Champion.

The actions from the Regional Healthy Scrutiny Committee on the Health Needs of the Service Community were incorporated into Stockton's Community Covenant which recognised the contribution made by the Armed Forces as a whole. The final report of the Regional Health Scrutiny Committee following its review of the health needs of ex-service personnel was considered by Cabinet in February 2011. The review was an innovative and wide ranging piece of work covering physical, mental and socio-economic needs. The project received contributions from all 12 of the region's local authorities, the Ministry of Health, Department of Health, NHS bodies, and ex-service charities and personnel themselves, amongst others.

The review's 47 recommendations sought to ensure that ex-service personnel and their families were not disadvantaged due to their service in the Armed

Forces. An action plan was developed and monitored by the regional committee until 31st March 2013. Stockton's actions were incorporated into the delivery of the Community Covenant.

Many of the recommendations were for external organisations (eg. NHS), or for local authorities but could be undertaken on a regional basis. For example, ANEC had agreed to take forward work in relation to improving the quality of the data flow between the armed forces and local authorities. Once all local authorities signed their individual Community Covenants a Regional Charter was signed on 9th October 2012 on behalf of the following partners:-

- The Armed Forces Community in the North East
- The Association of North East Councils (on behalf of all of the 12 Councils in the North East Region)
- The NHS in the North East
- The Royal British Legion
- JobCentrePlus
- Northumbria Probation Trust
- Durham Tees Valley Probation Trust
- North East Chamber of Commerce
- The Prison Service
- Voluntary Organisations North East (VONNE)
- Northumbria Police
- Durham Police
- Cleveland Police

The report provided an overview of all measures taken to date to support the armed forces community through the Community Covenant in Stockton-on-Tees.

2014 would be a significant year for commemoration as it would be 100 years since the start of the First World War and 70 years since the D-Day landings. Tees Valley had been successful in an Arts Council funding bid which would see a year-long programme of events commemorating the First World War. The events were primarily educational and all children across the Borough would be engaged in activities in schools, libraries and museums.

There had been achievements across each of the pillars of the Community Covenant but there was some way to go. In the coming year work would be undertaken on the following priorities:-

- Protocols for Information and Intelligence sharing
- Updating of the JSNA
- Expansion of the Youth Programme across the Tees Valley (currently piloted in Redcar and Cleveland)
- Expansion of the TEWV Veterans Mental Health Awareness Programme
- Improved links to employers and employment opportunities
- Investigation of the need for specialist Ex-Service personnel housing units
- Submission of a bid for a sustainable model of cross-sector support for Armed Forces Community to the Community Covenant Grant Scheme.
- Commemoration of the First World War and the 70th Anniversary of the D-Day landings.
- Establish an Armed Forces Community of Interest group as part of the LSP

refresh.

**RECOMMENDED to Council that:-**

- 1. The progress report and support on-going work to implement the actions be noted.**
- 2. The report be endorsed.**