

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO COUNCIL

17 OCTOBER 2012

**REPORT OF THE
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

MEMBERS POLICY SEMINAR PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

This report provides Council with an overview of content from the Members Policy Seminar held in September 2012 which provided updates on Adults Social Care, School and Education Policy; The Local Authority responsibility and Local Landscape. School Emergency Planning arrangements were also covered in the presentation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Council are recommended to:

1. Receive this report and note its contents.

BACKGROUND

1. Members Policy Seminars are an important vehicle for both informing and consulting with Members on a variety of topics from Policy and Legislative changes, contributions to Government consultations, and providing an update on local service provision from partner organisations. They have been in place since January 2009 and are particularly useful for those issues which are of importance to the Council or partners but are in the early stages of development, or those which will be of interest to Members, out with the usual reporting arrangements.
2. A programme of seminars is set annually with events planned on a monthly basis. Topics are reviewed monthly by the Corporate Management Team to ensure issues are current and discussions and information provision is timely. Special, additional seminars are arranged as required.

SUMMARY OF THE SEMINAR HELD SINCE LAST COUNCIL IN JUNE 2012

3. There has been one Member Seminar since the last report to Full Council. The September seminar provided an opportunity for members to be briefed on the Adult Social Care Service and covered the current legislative framework, achievements over the past 12 months, the challenges facing the service and any known emerging issues.
4. Key data identified that we have provided a service to 7555 clients in 2011/12, 2125 of whom were new to the service. The service has seen a number of improvements and changes over the past 12 months notably a new structure has been implemented, improved choice and control for service users, improved community provision, case management systems have been reviewed and improved, and prevention services such as Care Call have delivered better outcomes for users. There have been changes to the eligibility criteria following the FACS review and Health and Wellbeing Improvements made.

5. The service still faces a number of challenges including significant demographic changes which will impact on services, completion and implementation of the Learning Disability and Mental Health EIT Review, Care Director, the new IT recording systems needs embedding, responding to sector lead improvement arrangements, Care Home Fees and contract negotiations continue to provide challenges, in addition to the significant changes going on within the NHS.
6. Emerging issues for the service include the focus on the Prevention and Early Intervention agenda, the Dilnot Report on long term funding, implementing the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the work being undertaken by the Adult Social Care Programme Board.
7. The second presentation provided an update on the recently enacted Education Act 2011, the detailed changes to Early Years Service with respect to provision of early year's education free to all 3 and 4 years olds and two year olds identified as disadvantaged. Details of the new Stop and Search powers were discussed changes to powers of Head Teachers with respect to exclusions and detentions. A summary of national organisations now abolished was provided and information on regulations around the creation of new schools and the inspection of schools was discussed. An update on the impact of arrangements around Academy Status was provided along with a list of the current priorities for Stockton Education provision over the coming months.
8. Members were reminded of the revised arrangements already in place for Emergency Planning situations in schools and the changes to the communication arrangements to support these.
9. All slides, agenda and supporting material from the seminars can be accessed at <http://kyit.stockton.gov.uk/members/policyupdatesessions>
10. A regular update report on members seminar events held will be provided to Council at each meeting going forward.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial

11. There are no financial implications arising as a direct result of this report.

Legal

12. There are no legal implications arising as a direct result from this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

13. This report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

14. This report is not subject to Equality Impact Assessment as it makes no proposals for service development or policy change.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

15. Members Policy Seminars help the Council achieve all its objectives as outlined in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

16. No external consultation has taken place on this report.

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Background Papers

Slides/ Presentation from the member seminar programmes.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Members Policy Seminars affect all wards in the Borough.

Property

This report has no implications for the Council's Capital Programme and Asset Management Plan.