

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**23 JANUARY 2013**

**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 November 2012 which provided updates on a further Boundary Commission consultation, the Councils 'Tell us Once' programme and progress towards the NHS Reforms, including the commissioning of the Health Watch Service. Members have also received information and an annual update from the Children's Local Safeguarding Board. Due to changes to the programme the December seminar was cancelled.

**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 NOVEMBER 2012**

3. The 'Tell us Once' programme was operational in Stockton from October 2011. This was introduced as part of the DWP Programme which allows information supplied once, to be shared with many Central and Local Government departments. The information is uploaded onto a Tell Us Once, IT system and then can be shared with 27 public sector organisations in relation to a death and 9 organisations in relation to birth information. Usage of the service in Stockton has increased over time and now has a 77%(births) and 75% ( death) take up. Customer satisfaction levels with the service are very high.
4. Details of progress with the NHS reforms were presented by Peter Kelly Director of Public Health. The priorities, Structures, Public Health responsibilities and information on the new landscape were shared with members. An update and background to the commissioning arrangements and service provision of both Health Watch and the NHS Complaints

Advocacy Service were also discussed. Further progress reports are scheduled to come to the member's seminars as part of the 2013 programme, as all these changes become effective from April 2013.

5. A special seminar was delivered by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board on their programme, with progress to date and an opportunity for discussion.
6. All slides, agenda and supporting material from the seminars can be accessed at <http://kyit.stockton.gov.uk/members/policyupdatesessions>
7. 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.