

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO COUNCIL

11th DECEMBER 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 Seminars in October and November 2013 that provided an update on Education, Tees Achieve, Adults Safeguarding, mitigating Flood Risk and proposed Street Lighting plans. A special seminar was held to consider the planned consultation on Gypsy and Traveller site identification, providing members with progress to date.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Council are recommended to:

1. Receive this report and note its contents.
2. Note the pilot arrangement detailed at Paragraph 10.

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 TOPICS COVERED IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2013

3. The seminar on Education provided details of the many facets to the changing landscape across Education and the impact of such changes on both schools and the Local Authority. These included background and detail to the following areas :
 - Structural changes
 - Curriculum changes
 - New, more testing Inspection Framework
 - A greater focus on governance arrangements
 - Attainment results & outcome measures
 - New Relationships – DfE & Ofsted

- Reporting and Accountability
- Academies and the impact on the Local Authority
- Free Schools
- 6th Form colleges
- The Campus Stockton Alliance
- The Teaching Alliance

4. Tees Achieve provided an update on their current performance, setting out their Strategic Aims and achievement against these. The presentation identified partners, customers (including 'a way out', VIVA volunteers, Creative Support etc), detailed learner numbers, the various categories of programmes that Tees Achieve deliver and support. The apprenticeship training programme, funding arrangements and future challenges around inspection, funding, employer engagement, technology and awareness rising of the service, were all covered in discussions.
5. Arrangements in place for Adults Safeguarding were detailed at the November Seminar. The presentation covered both aspects of Adult Safeguarding: - Community initiatives designed to improve the safety and well being of all, especially the vulnerable; and Adult Protection: A response to allegations that specific individuals are harmed or at risk of harm from individuals or organisations with which they have a relationship.
6. A comprehensive account of the arrangements surrounding Adult Safeguarding were detailed including topics listed below:
 - Governance arrangements
 - Legal Framework
 - Activity, care categories and referral rates
 - Service user experiences and results from survey conducted
 - The personalisation agenda
 - Quality Standards Framework
 - Prevention and Early intervention work.
7. An update was also provided on Transport, Street Lighting and Flood Risk. The following areas were covered:
 - Tees Valley Major Bus Scheme; Progress & future funding arrangements
 - Government consultation on Devolved Major Funding Schemes
 - Future service pressures on transport
 - Rail Devolution & Tees Valley Rail update
 - Local sustainable Transport fund
 - Changes to Public Transport arrangements from April 2014.
 - Street lighting – Profile of existing columns, associated energy costs
 - Street Lighting Capital Investment Proposal
 - Arrangements for Flood Risk Management
 - Progress on flood managements since the floods of 2012
 - A demonstration of the new flood barriers
8. A special seminar was held in November to consider the planned consultation on Gypsy and Traveller site identification, providing members with details of the process adopted to identify potential sites. Further information will be shared once the identification process has been completed.

9. All slides, agenda and supporting material from the seminars can be accessed at <http://kyit.stockton.gov.uk/members/policyupdatesessions>
10. Following a recommendation from Executive Scrutiny Committee in October 2013, the December 2013 and January 2014 scheduled Member Policy Seminars have been moved to align with the full Council meetings scheduled for these months. This is a pilot arrangement and an evaluation will follow the January 2014 seminar, the results of which will inform programme arrangements for 2014/15.
11. The topics covered in the remainder of the 2013/14 programme include: an update from the Police and Crime Commissioner, Children's Safeguarding, A Welfare Reform update and results from the Individual Registration pilot.
12. 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.