

MEMBERS POLICY SEMINAR PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

This report provides Council with an overview of content from the Members Policy Seminar in January and February 2015 that included presentations of the Troubled Families programme, Town Centres update and phase two rollout of the council's new web site due for launch at the end of March 2015.

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 TOPIC COVERED IN JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2015

3. The Lead officer for the management of the Troubled Families programme provided details of phase 1 of the programme as it comes to its conclusion at the end of March 2015. The update included the number of families supported, details of the activity delivered by the two main providers, Thirteen Care and the VCS Synergy Consortium, including the additional support provided by many other organisations who delivered a supporting role in the delivery of the programme. By the end of the programme 100% achievement will be achieved in turning round the families identified to participate in this initiative.
4. Phase two of a troubled families programme has been announced and will run from March 2015 – 2020 with government funding confirmed for the first year of the programme. A broader criteria is in place for this second phase which will include children who need help and families affected by domestic violence. Arrangements with current providers have been rolled forward for a further year until future funding arrangements are known.
5. An update was provided on activity and prosperity of the Town Centres across our borough including some of the smaller retail outlets refurbished in locations such as Eaglescliffe.

The presentation provided detail of a very positive picture of high street and retail refurbishments, high levels of occupancy of shop unit in our high streets.

6. Details of plans of Housing refurbishments either completed or at the development stage were highlighted many of which are in close proximity to our town centres. Details of Libraries, parks and other key building refurbishments, such as the Swallow Hotel in Stockton High Street were shared, overall a very positive picture for the future of our Town Centres.
7. The final presentation provided a demonstration and images of phase two of the councils web site upgrade. The layout, content, style and arrangements of the launch were shared with details of the "Your Stockton Portal" which will form part of the new website from April 2015.
8. All slides and materials used in the presentations are available on the Members section of the Intranet. A regular update report on members seminar events held will be provided to Council at each meeting going forward.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial

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

Legal

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

RISK ASSESSMENT

11. 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

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

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

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

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

14. 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.