

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee held at 10.30 am on
Wednesday, 13 June 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor T Khan T Khan (Chair)

Councillor A Andrews
Councillor K Caan
Councillor J Clifford
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor M Mutton
Councillor P Seaman
Councillor R Singh
Councillor R Singh

Other Members Present: Councillor G Duggins, Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership
Councillor R Ali, Deputy Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport
Councillor K Caan, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport
Councillor P Seaman, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Councillor T Skipper, Deputy Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Employees (by Directorate):

Place V Castree, A West

People L Gaulton, C Ryder

Apologies Councillor N Akhtar

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 April, 2018 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Reference was made to checking on lighting arrangements in the City Centre, particularly around the Skydome, as discussed at the meeting on 12th March 2018 and reassurance was sought that this had been investigated.

Members requested information as to whether the Homelessness Forum had progressed as discussed at the meeting on 24th January 2018

3. **Child Poverty**

The Scrutiny Board considered a Briefing Note, presentation and background information on Child Poverty which was introduced by Cllr Caan, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport and Liz Gaulton, Director of Public Health and Wellbeing. Cllrs Duggins, Seaman and Skipper were also present for the item.

The information provided highlighted that Poverty is a significant issue for the City. The implications of poverty are considerable and have a huge impact on the life chances of young people. In-work poverty is now a big issue too, as although employment is rising in the City, our gross disposal income is lower in Coventry than the national average.

The presentation highlighted that there are a number of key strategies the Council is using to tackle poverty, including the Marmot Strategy, Council Plan, Health & Wellbeing Strategy, Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy, the Parenting Strategy and the Coventry Children and Young People Plan 2016. These documents will be used to address the various drivers of child poverty, which include long-term worklessness and low earnings, family instability, family size, housing, debt and educational attainment.

Members raised a number of issues following the presentation and responses were provided, matters raised included;

- The definition of child poverty and associated calculations
- Whether we should focus on poverty, as it effects families and individuals too, rather than just child poverty
- That there are some positive trends – that fewer children are in workless households and that disposable income is increasing
- The reasons why the rate of growth of disposable income is slower than in other areas
- That the Marmot Strategy is due to be refreshed next year and will likely focus on good growth for the City and building the resilience and aspirations of young people
- The opportunities being the City of Sport 2019, as well as the Year of Wellbeing will bring for reducing poverty
- The impact of Zero Hour contracts and opportunities to introduce rent caps
- Whether the City Council or their sub-contractors use Zero hours contracts
- What can be done to stop the revolving door of poverty
- The need to strengthen a woman's position financially to address child poverty
- The challenge of making sure work pays and people are growing their disposable incomes
- The need to have measureable objectives around the reduction of poverty - there are rigorous performance measures on this through Marmot and that these can be brought to a future meeting.
- The importance of focussing on mental health and resilience to reduce poverty
- Whether enough focus is given to priority neighbourhoods to address the differences in levels of poverty across the City

- The opportunities for Family Hubs to play a role in this agenda

Members of the Committee were asked whether they supported using the 5 themes from the Birmingham Commission, of health, housing, in-work poverty, economy & worklessness and Education and lifelong learning to further develop this work. Members agreed to this approach.

Members were also asked to consider a recommendation that this work is led by the Marmot Steering Group, the membership of which is due to be refreshed next year. Members agreed this. Members also suggested that an MP be invited to sit on the group, as many of the drivers of poverty are influenced by national policy.

The Director of Public Health and Wellbeing informed the Committee that there is a piece of mapping work taking place to look at the various strands of work under the aforementioned strategies to see what we and partners are doing to tackle poverty. The Committee noted that they will receive a report back on this mapping exercise once it has been completed.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee:-

- 1) Note the background information contained in Appendix 1
- 2) Consider the content of the presentation to be provided at the meeting on 13th June 2018
- 3) Identify the following recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Members:-
- 4) **That the Committee support a Cross-council information gathering exercise mapping existing work in Coventry against Birmingham report, including resource implications**
- 5) **Recommend that this work is led by Public Health, through the Marmot Steering Group, who will agree on the scope this work which will also include a review of membership of the Group**
- 6) **Acknowledge that University College London have confirmed their commitment to continue working with Coventry as a Marmot City, with a focus on issues of poverty within health inequalities**
- 7) **Acknowledge that University College London have confirmed their commitment to continue working with Coventry as a Marmot City, with a focus on issues of poverty within health inequalities**
- 8) **Support the consideration of the impact on poverty within the context of all major delivery opportunities in Coventry e.g. Local Plan, UK City of Culture 2021**
- 9) **Recommend that the focus should be changed to encompass Poverty as a whole**
- 10) **Recommend that work on Poverty must reflect the role of women in supporting families financially**

11) Recommend that a Poverty Summit be held in the City

12) Agree to take an update report on Marmot City at an appropriate time this municipal year, to include a focus on Poverty

4. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2018/2019

The Committee considered their Work Programme for the new municipal year, which included information on the remit of the Board.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted.

5. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no other items of urgent public business

(Meeting closed at 12.30pm)