

Minutes of the Performance Overview & Scrutiny Panel



Location: Council Chamber, The Symington Building, Adam and Eve Street, Market Harborough, LE16 7AG

Date: 28th February 2024 commencing at 6.30pm

Present:

Councillors: Asher, Dann, Elliott (Chair), Hallam (ex-officio), James, King, Knight (ex-officio), Rickman.

Officers: Liz Elliott – Deputy Chief Executive

Sarah Hamilton – Senior Democratic Services Officer

Rachael Felts – Head of Customer Services & Community Partnerships

Steve Nash – Housing Services Manager

Steve Taylor - Health and Wellbeing Manager

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Burrell sent her apologies, and she was substituted by Councillor James.

2. Declarations of Members' Interests

Councillor King declared an interest in both reports as a councillor for Leicestershire County Council.

3. Minutes of the Performance Overview & Scrutiny Panel 19.10.2023

The minutes were proposed by Councillor King and seconded by Councillor Rickman.

The panel agreed the minutes of the meeting on 7th December 2024 as an accurate record.

4. Portfolio Holder Update

Councillor Knight provided an update as Portfolio Holder for Wellbeing. His update provided updates on Housing, Homelessness Prevention Strategy, Empty Property Strategy, support to Parish Councils across the District, community support, and Environmental Health.

5. Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Wellbeing, Councillor Knight introduced the report and gave an overview of the contents of the report. The Head of Customer Services and Community Partnerships then gave some further information on the report, including the support to Parishes. She reiterated that this is the first version of the Strategy.

The Chair then invited the Panel to ask questions and give comments on the report.

Question	Answer
Is there a timeline for the Leisure Strategy at Parish level?	This is the first version of the strategy, and as this is developed, an action plan, including timescales, will be established.
How will the targets in Appendix A be achieved? E.g. 'Quality Homes for All'.	It was noted that Appendix A was the already adopted strategy from 2022. The Panel was asked to

	comment on the Action Plan in Appendices B and C.
Who is the Strategy targeting?	It is important that all aspects of Leisure within the District are included. The strategy aims not only to target sports, but also other aspects of Health and Leisure.
Where do the Voluntary Sports and Leisure clubs and societies fit into the Strategy?	These community organisations are included within the strategy. The council may provide further engagement and support to these organisations, and other leisure organisations.
How can the Harborough Lottery be better promoted?	The team note that further work is needed to promote this scheme more widely.
What is the Thinking Families Group?	This is a county wide meeting of organisations providing support to children under the age of 16.
How many requests have there been for Wellbeing at Work packages? And what have the outcomes been?	The Health and Wellbeing manager will share the figures to the Panel on how many workplaces have signed up to this scheme.
What does the Citizens Advice Bureau data mean when it says they provide the most advice on Council Tax?	The data received by the council from the Citizens Advice Bureau depicts that of the members of the public they have provided debt advice to, Council Tax was one of the main concerns. The Head of Customer Services and Community

	Partnerships will liaise with the Citizens Advice Bureau for further detail on this.
Are there any other organisations that could assist with the priority regarding the 'rapidly aging population'?	Whilst working on the Community Health and Wellbeing Plans, voluntary and community sector organisations are being engaged with to support this section of the population. Additional funding has been received to support commissioning regarding the aging population.
Is social media the most effective way to promote schemes included in the strategy?	Other ways to access and promote the schemes are being investigated by the team. Work elsewhere in the organisation also promotes these schemes.
Is there a need for a larger community engagement team to reach more rural locations?	There are Community Engagement Officers within the team that participate with Parishes and villages to identify any support they require to develop community activities.
What is the council's connection to the Broughton Astley Leisure Centre?	The centre does not fall under the council's umbrella, and they are a self-sustaining community asset, with support from the council where required.
What are the other partners that the council are working with on the	Work has been conducted with the seven districts and boroughs of

<p>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy?</p>	<p>Leicestershire to develop joint protocols. The voluntary sector organisation 'The Bridge' also assists with Rough Sleeping referrals.</p>
<p>What responsibility does the council have to advise on working conditions for workers working from home?</p>	<p>There is a duty of care for employers for their workers working from home. It is not the council's responsibility to monitor working environments and conditions across the district. However, it may be that the council can publicise information on healthy working conditions.</p>
<p>How are older people referred to leisure centres/gyms following discharge from hospital? And how is it ensured that they can be referred to the closest gym to their home, which may be in another District/Borough, rather than one in their District?</p>	<p>Older people referred through this pathway can access the leisure centre/gym closest to their home, even if this is outside their District. If older people living in Harborough encounter any issues, they are advised to contact the Active Together team who will liaise with their peers around the county to ensure that access is provided to the closest Leisure Centre/gym.</p>

The report was **noted**.

6. Strategy for Housing and the Prevention of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping 2024-2029

The Portfolio Holder for Wellbeing introduced the report and outlined the key matters of the report.

The Chair then opened the discussion to the Panel, asking for any questions or comments.

Question	Answer
What are the main reasons for homelessness within the district?	Main reasons for homelessness collected for the evidence base had been included within the report.
Out of the 92 cases of homelessness noted in January, how many of those are homeless due to relationship breakdowns and domestic abuse?	The majority of the cases dealt with are those cases where there have been relationship breakdowns, rather than those who are rough sleeping.
What external organisations are worked with?	The team works with all other districts and boroughs in Leicestershire, as well as Housing Associations, Leicestershire County Council Adult and Children Services, and other voluntary sector organisations.
Is there any scope for the Council to become a social landlord of 'Council Houses' which are more affordable, in rural areas?	It is not on the current agenda to do this, as this would require significant stock, and increased workforce to ensure that this would be a viable service. It would be more suitable to acquire properties to provide temporary accommodation, then move residents into long-term accommodation provided by

	Registered Providers, with secure tenancies.
Is there a more recent Indices of Deprivation than 2019?	The Housing Services Manager would investigate this.
Do figures in relation to refugees being housed in the district need to be added to the strategy?	The Housing Services Manager would investigate this.
How can Registered Providers be encouraged to acquire properties in smaller villages and rural areas?	This question would be taken into consideration for the next iteration of the strategy.
Where do the council house people that present as homeless?	The council's Property Portfolio (either owned or leased) consists of 8 properties, and there are currently 23 families in short term accommodation elsewhere.

Councillor Knight left the meeting at 19.41.

The report was **noted**.

7. Any urgent business

There was none.

The meeting ended at 20.43.