

Brief for Scrutiny – Infant Mortality

Topic to be scrutinised

The incidences of infant mortality in the Borough, including the data produced on the subject; the causes behind infant mortality and the work being done to tackle the issue and bring the number of incidences down.

Questions to be addressed

1. What is the latest position in terms of the level of infant mortality in the Borough? What are the trends in terms of levels of infant mortality in Newcastle Borough?
2. What are the identified causes behind infant mortality, and what is the situation in Newcastle in terms of the reasons for the levels of infant mortality at the present time?
3. What work is being done by different agencies to combat infant mortality?
4. What barriers are there to this work? Are any opportunities being missed?
5. What are the long-term goals of agencies? Are there any targets in place for reducing levels of infant mortality?
6. Can agencies work together more effectively in tackling this issue?
7. What support is offered to families who have suffered infant deaths? Can more be done?
8. What work is being done elsewhere and what benchmarking work can be done to understand this work and apply lessons from elsewhere in Newcastle

Outcomes

1. A clear picture of the issue in terms of levels of infant mortality and also those geographical areas most affected.
2. An understanding of the issue, including its causes and also its effects
3. An understanding of the work being done to deal with it by agencies in the public sector and elsewhere
4. An analysis of service provision and any gaps which exist in terms of education/prevention and support for families
5. Construction of an action plan – in conjunction with key partners – aimed at dealing with the issue and its aftermath
6. Consideration of the implementation issues connected to the development of an action plan, including the main issues of resources and prioritisation
7. Consideration of work done elsewhere and how lessons learnt could be applied to Newcastle in dealing with this issue
8. Establishment of a clear vision for the way forward and a set of clear targets for reducing the levels of infant mortality in the Borough over a specified time period.

Background materials

1. NHS Data/Area Profiles (monthly)
2. Reducing Health Inequalities in Infant Mortality: A Good Practice Guide (2007)
3. ONS Child Mortality Statistics
4. *Our Future Health Secured?* (King's Fund, 2007)

Evidence and witnesses

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Portfolio Holder for Safer & Stronger Communities 2. Executive Director (Operational Services) 3. Head of Service Business Partnerships & Improvement 4. Director of Public Health 5. Representatives from National Health Service/Staffs County Council (public health teams) 6. Business Improvement & Partnerships – Research/Partnerships Manager
<p>Method of scrutiny</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Task & Finish Group – to oversee any review and change process and consisting of Chair of Health Scrutiny Committee, as well as Chair of Cleaner, Greener, Safer Scrutiny Committee (plus Vice-Chairs) 2 Consideration of partner evidence and views 3 Consideration of LAPs/community views 4 Consideration of elected Member views and evidence
<p>Timetable</p> <p>Start date January 2012 Dates of meetings TBA Draft report TBA Final report TBA Report to Council TBA</p>
<p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner buy-in to the processes and capacity of all bodies to take part in the scrutiny process • Availability of relevant data
<p>Members to undertake the scrutiny</p> <p>Cllr Becket Cllr Cooper Cllr Loades Cllr Johnson Cllr Taylor Cllr S. Hambleton Others as identified</p>
<p>Support</p> <p>Executive Director (Operational Services) Head of Business Improvement & Partnerships Partnerships Manager Business Improvement Officer (Research & Equalities) Elections & Licensing Manager</p>
<p>Newcastle Borough Council Corporate Plan Priority area (s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creating a cleaner, safer and sustainable Borough ○ Creating a Borough of opportunity ○ Creating a healthy and active community ○ Transforming our Council to achieve excellence
<p>CfPS Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides and critical friend challenge to executive policy makers and decision makers • Enables the voice and concerns of the public to be heard

- Is carried out by independent governors who lead and own the scrutiny role
- Drives improvement in public services

Brief approved by Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

Signed

Date