

Health Scrutiny Committee - Wednesday 23 October 2013

Infant mortality remains on the committee's agenda, despite there being an improvement, as the figures are still considered unacceptably high. Members questioned whether there was a link with deprived areas, although with a small number of deaths, there is a reluctance to produce postcode deaths due to identifying individual cases. County Public Health has identified it as a major issue on their yearly plan. It was also proposed Public Health would organise a conference on the issue in January and should feedback to the committee afterwards.

There was a discussion on the alcohol strategy in the borough with presentations by Trevor Smith, Community Safety Officer (alcohol lead) and Tony Bullock, Commissioning Lead, Alcohol and Drugs (Staffordshire CC). There was concern about the impact alcohol abuse was having on A&E departments. It was stated that the strategy was moving to early intervention and prevention and the committee was informed of a number initiatives. There were 2 recommendations at the end of the discussion: 1) The Community Safety Officer to circulate the results of the Insight Team School Alcohol County Report and 2) Entrust be contacted to request information regarding the problems engaging schools for the education project for alcohol.

Members were given a verbal update on cardiac rehabilitation at Jubilee2 by Dave Adams. Whilst it was agreed the centre was providing a valuable service, which had been neglected in the past, it was unclear how many more untapped referrals could be expected. It was recommended a series of questions raised by the committee be forwarded to the commissioner of the cardiac rehabilitation service.

A verbal update from Dave Adams was given on the borough's draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This is being taken to Cabinet in December to begin the second phase of consultation. The committees asked for any responses received from outside agencies to be circulated to members. The strategy will return to the committee in six months time.

Under urgent business, the members were shown the formal response by Newcastle Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent to the draft recommendations by Trust Special Administrators for the Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust. It was minuted the document was not representative of the views of the committee. The committee were asked to consider the proposal to have a joint committee established between the Borough Council and Stoke City Council. With insufficient information being presented to the committee it was decided not to make a recommendation. Members requested further information regarding the remit, governance and practicalities for a joint committee be reported to the next committee meeting on 20 November.