

**Meeting of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee – 25th January, 2023**

**Report of the Chair**

**Feedback from the Joint Meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Working Group, the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee Working Group and the Children’s Corporate Parenting Board Working Group**

**Purpose of report**

1. To provide feedback from the joint meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Working Group, the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee Working Group and the Children’s Corporate Parenting Board Working Group held on 15th December, 2022.

**Recommendations**

2. That the Scrutiny Committee note and endorse the recommendations formulated at the joint meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Working Group, the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee Working Group and the Children’s Corporate Parenting Board Working Group, as set out in paragraphs 7, 10 and 13 of the report.

**Background**

3. The joint meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Working Group, the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee Working Group and the Children’s Corporate Parenting Board Working Group held on 15th December, 2022, considered three separate reports in relation to Child Poverty, Childhood Obesity in Dudley and an overview of the Mental Health needs and support available in Dudley for children and young people.

4. Members considered each report in detail and made comments, asked questions and responses were provided accordingly. Action notes from the meeting will be circulated to Members of the Working Group in due course.

### Child Poverty

5. Members considered a report in relation to Child Poverty, nationally and locally within the Dudley Borough, and received information on the support services available to families living in poverty.
6. The short and long-term impacts from living in poverty were presented, together with the work being undertaken by the Council, in conjunction with partner organisations, to address the impact to the child/young person, as well as the family as a whole approach.
7. Following discussions and deliberations at the meeting, the recommendations below were formulated:-
  - i. That the short-term crisis interventions that the Council provide be noted, and that Public Health be tasked to research into good and innovative practises in other parts of the country, in respect of the long-term strategy to tackle the cycle of poverty embedded in parts of Dudley's Communities to assist with the development of the Dudley Strategy, and to report back to a future meeting of the joint working group.
  - ii. That the Head of Service – Children and Young Peoples Public Health provide a detailed Ward by Ward breakdown of the percentage of children living in poverty within the Dudley Borough.
  - iii. That a clear set of Key Performance Indicators and robust monitoring of the council's activities on poverty reduction be agreed as part of the Dudley strategy.
  - iv. That the Head of Service – Children and Young Peoples Public Health provide a list of the Schools in the Borough taking part in the National Breakfast Club Scheme and the companies schools work with to provide breakfast club supplies.
  - v. That the Leadership of the Council be recommended to write to Central Government, as a matter of urgency, to request additional funding during the current cost of living crisis to assist families. It is acknowledged that the Government have to date made money available to assist families with fuel and food however as the crisis deepens, more families who would traditionally not have found themselves in relative poverty were now struggling. Demand on the voluntary sector was growing and resources were not keeping pace.

- vi. That the Housing and Communities Directorate be reminded of their Corporate Parenting role and responsibilities and be a named and active key partner within the Dudley Strategy.
- vii. That a report on the role and responsibilities of the Private Sector Housing Team; what powers of enforcement they have at their disposal and an understanding of how they put the child at the centre of the work they undertake, be submitted to a future meeting of the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee Working Group.
- viii. That the Head of Service – Children and Young Peoples Public Health, to pursue the arrangements of a meeting with the Department for Works and Pensions, to raise concerns of the impact of the change in benefit eligibility and to consider the possibility of sharing data and to notify a school when a child was eligible for free school meals.

### Childhood Obesity in Dudley

8. Members considered a report on the current rates of childhood obesity in the borough, and the actions taken by the Local Authority to try to prevent and reduce overweight and obesity in children and young people.
9. The significant efforts and investments dedicated to address and prevent child obesity, together with the universal pathways and packages available were outlined.
10. Following discussions and deliberations at the meeting, the recommendations below were formulated:-
  - i. That a further report on ideas and initiatives Dudley could utilise to develop healthy High Streets and provide advice on whether fast-food delivery organisations require a special license to deliver food, be submitted to a future meeting of the joint Working Group.
  - ii. That the Head of Service – Children and Young Peoples Public Health, provide the joint Working Group Members with a copy of the delivery plan in relation to the Family Hub Funding.
  - iii. That the Head of Service – Children and Young Peoples Public Health, provide an update on the number of schools enrolled on the Apprenticeship Levy.
  - iv. That Public Health undertake research and benchmark with other Authorities in relation to the Car Free Streets Scheme and provide a report outlining the advantages and disadvantages to a future meeting of the Working Group.

## An overview of the Mental Health needs and support available in Dudley for children and young people.

11. Members were provided with an overview of the current picture of Mental Health Needs and support available in Dudley for Children and Young People.
12. An overview of the demographics in Dudley were outlined, together with the high demand for services.
13. Following discussions and deliberations at the meeting, the recommendations below were formulated:-
  - i. That a further report to review the data and progress made in relation to Mental Health needs and support for children and young people, be submitted to the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee in 12 months and included in the Annual Scrutiny Programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.
  - ii. That the Acting Director of Public Health and Wellbeing provide a briefing note on the services commissioned and provided by Cranstoun.
14. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to endorse the recommendations referred to above.

## **Finance**

15. The costs of operating the scrutiny arrangements will be contained within existing budgetary allocations.

## **Law**

16. Scrutiny Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and the requirements of the Council's Constitution, which was adopted under the Local Government Act 2000, subsequent legislation and associated Regulations and Guidance.
17. Working Groups are not Committees as defined by Section 101 of the Local Government Act, 1972 and can only make recommendations.

## **Risk Management**

18. The Council is committed to adopting best practice in its management of risk. It aims to ensure risk is maintained at an acceptable level to maximise opportunities and demonstrate that it has given full

consideration of the implications of risk to the delivery and achievement of its outcomes, strategic aims and priorities.

### **Equality Impact**

19. Provision exists within the Council's scrutiny arrangements for overview and scrutiny to be undertaken of the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

### **Human Resources/Organisational Development**

20. The issues referred to in this report are administered within existing staffing resources.

### **Commercial/Procurement**

21. This report has no impact on the Council's potential to commercially trade.

### **Environment/Climate Change**

22. This report has no direct implications on the environment or the Council's work in addressing Climate Change and achieving Net Zero target by 2041.

### **Council Priorities and Projects**

23. In order to deliver the aims and objectives of the Council Plan and contribute to the wider borough vision it is imperative the authority has a sound and robust process in place to consult with its key stakeholders on activity across the authority.



**Councillor M Rogers**  
**Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee**

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## **List of Background Documents**

Action notes of the Joint Meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Working Group, the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee Working Group and the Children's Corporate Parenting Board Working Group - 15th December, 2022