

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING

Monday, 30 January 2017

PRESENT: Councillor P Dillon (Chair)

Councillor(s): L Caffrey, D Davidson, K Dodds, D Duggan, J Graham, M Hood, H Haran, K McCartney, J McClurey, J Simpson, J Turnbull and A Wheeler

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): T Graham, P Craig, S Dickie and C McHugh

CPL19 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2016 were approved as a correct record.

CPL20 OSC REVIEW - IMPACT OF GAMBLING ON THE BOROUGH - EVIDENCE GATHERING

The Committee undertook its fourth evidence gathering session on the review into the impact of gambling on the Borough. This session focused on recent research into the way that local authorities can protect vulnerable people from gambling related harm by improving the understanding of local area risk. It focussed on some work commissioned by Westminster and Manchester City Councils which was published in 2016.

The first aim of the study was to consider the types of people who may be at greater risk of harm from gambling and where they might be located. Based on review of existing evidence, it was conclude that the following groups are potentially more vulnerable to harm from gambling:-

- Youths
- People affected by substance abuse/misuse/excessive alcohol consumption
- Poor mental health
- People living in deprived areas
- Certain ethnic groups
- People with low IQs
- People with personality/cognitive impairments
- People seeking treatment for gambling problems
- People who are unemployed

Having identified these groups, the next stage was to bring this information together to create local risk indices, showing areas with greater concentrations of people who

are more likely to be vulnerable to harm.

For each characteristic of vulnerability identified, using Westminster and Manchester as case study areas, the availability of local level data was reviewed. For some characteristics, there were good data available (for example, unemployment rates) but for others there were no data available (such as low IQ).

Therefore, the final characteristics of vulnerability included in the models were those where there was a strong theoretical and empirical basis for inclusion and good local level data available.

Information from all different characteristics was brought together and visually displayed. Data were grouped into two different indices based on whether they related to:

- The characteristics of people who live in a local area (the resident profile) and/or
- The location of local services which are likely to attract potentially vulnerable people to a specific place.

Data from the two indices were then combined to produce an overall gambling risk index for each area. These results were displayed visually on maps for Westminster and Manchester to highlight the locations which had relatively higher risk profiles.

In Westminster, four broad areas of greater risk were identified. The heightened risk in each area is driven by a range of different factors. For example, in Pimlico risk is higher because a greater number of homelessness shelters and substance treatment providers in this area. In the North West area, risk is driven by rates of unemployment, ethnic make-up and large numbers of resident young people. In Manchester, many different areas of risk were identified which include areas around the city centre and the south of the city; risk in the city centre is driven primarily by the concentration of pay-day loans shops, education establishments, younger residents and support centres for problem gamblers. Relatively high levels of unemployment as well as ethnic mix are major driving factors in the other locations.

The study made the following recommendations:

The Gambling Commission's introduction of Local Area Risk profiles represents a new opportunity for local authorities and industry alike to think more deeply about the protection of vulnerable people from gambling-related harm. This means extending understanding of local area risk beyond mapping deprivation and considering a more nuanced range of factors.

Local authorities interested in pursuing this approach should start to consider the different types of data they have available and how these can be used in local area profiles.

Local authorities should also start to consider what data and/or evidence is missing

and how they could fill these gaps, working with different departments within the authority to capture relevant information.

The models developed are based on the best information currently available. An acknowledged limitation of gambling research is the paucity of evidence available. The study recommends that the models are periodically reviewed and update to take into account growing knowledge, better data and changes in local areas.

The Committee also received a presentation from Trevor David from Gamcare London who outlined the work his organisation is doing with supporting addicts.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the information be noted.
 - ii) That the link to the research company be circulated after the meeting to the committee

CPL21 REVIEW OF ANNUAL PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report seeking the Committee's views on the current position with regard to the annual work programme.

In advance of the OSC agreeing its review topic for 2017-18, members of the OSC were invited to identify any issues which might potentially be appropriate for a detailed review by 14 December 2016. Any issues put forward by members have been added to the list of potential review topics for consideration by the OSC at the start of the municipal year, unless the issue is already being, or would more appropriately be, dealt with through other processes within the Council. Members have been notified if this has been the case and advised as to how their issue is being dealt with.

This Committee has already received a monitoring report on the outcomes generated by its Review of Opportunities to Promote Rural Gateshead on 12 September 2016 and will receive a further monitoring report on 24 April 2017.

Case studies have been included within OSC work programmes to provide an additional means of examining specific issues of concern/carrying out more detailed work on a particular topic/measure the impact of a particular OSC's review recommendations over a specific period of time.

The case study for 2016/17 is:-

Street Cleanliness – Enforcement, Education and Community Involvement
(31 October 2016 meeting)

Each OSC has identified specific issues to be considered through the case study method and it was agreed that in view of the timing of the case studies within the 2015-16 work programmes that feedback on their effectiveness be sought during its work programme review in 2016/17.

During 2015/16 the OSC considered the following case study:-

Estates Management – 14 September 2015 meeting

The OSC focused on:-

- How services have been reconfigured, public expectations managed and new ways of working developed;
- The scale of the financial reductions for waste service and grounds maintenance;
- The impacts of reduced funding and resources on service provision;
- Plans for the future

Having examined the issues the OSC:-

- Raised concerns regarding the impact on services in light of budget cuts and the notable visible impact on some areas.
- The OSC queried if the Council was promoting gardening services to target those households who might be interested in buying into services. The OSC received information that although there the scope to do this there had to be a balance between the cost of service provision and the sustainability of such a service. The Council and the Gateshead Housing Company were looking to create a package of services that could be considered for “buy in” by developers.
- The OSC also suggested that where there is active talent involvement/community groups around the borough there may be an opportunity for Grounds Maintenance to pass on skills and have links to events such as Community pride. The OSC was advised that Gateshead Housing Company does have a tenant engagement programme but it could be beneficial to hear from tenant groups which are successful.
- The OSC requested that all councillors be kept informed of any changes in relation to Universal Credit and implications this may have on service delivery.

In light of the above the OSC requested that its comments be noted and that updates on Road Safety Responsibilities and Street Cleansing and Estate Management will be added into the work programme.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the information be noted.
 - ii) The Committee noted that any issues identified by members of the OSC as potential review topics by 14 December 2016 have been included in the list of review topics to be considered by the OSC at the start of the municipal year unless such issues are being or would appropriately be dealt with via other Council processes.

Chair.....