

## Community Safety and Public Protection Scrutiny Sub Committee

(via MS Teams)

**Members Present:**

**1 October 2021**

**Chairperson:** Councillor S.K.Hunt

**Vice Chairperson:** Councillor R.L.Taylor

**Councillors:** D.Cawsey, C.J.Jones, S.Pursey, N.T.Hunt and S.M.Penry

**Officers In Attendance** C.Millis, C.Jones, C.Morris, M.Thomas, H.Jones and C.Davies

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillor L.Jones

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1. **Welcome and Roll Call**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Chairs Announcements**

The Chair briefly outlined the two items that would be scrutinised at this meeting.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record.

5. **Officers Announcements**

There were no announcements from officers.

## 6. **Impact of Covid on Food Hygiene Service and Inspections**

Officers provided Members with a detailed presentation. A copy of the presentation would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

The Food and Health Protection Team were the team that have been called upon to support the Test, Trace & Protect (TTP) Service. Officers went through the other functions of the team, which include food safety and communicable disease control. The effects of the COVID response on the teams work was outlined, including the suspension of proactive inspections.

Members were provided with information in relation to the outturn on food hygiene inspections for 2019-2020, before lockdown. Following lockdown the FSA devised new guidance to prioritise the COVID response and also serious Food Hygiene risks of public health significance. Most of the team were also involved with supporting care homes. In addition, the team also contributed to providing guidance to businesses in relation to the restrictions announced by Welsh Government.

New teams were required to be established following the initial response to assist with the TTP response. The regional team dealt with the more complex cases.

The Care Homes project was prioritised along with food hygiene advice to new businesses. Various complaints were received concerning the regulations and restrictions in place.

When the winter wave of cases arrived, responses were based on a triage principle. Members were advised of the Regional Response Team's 7 day service that was and is currently being provided on a good will basis by officers.

Following Christmas 2020 and the progress of the vaccination programme, the team began to consider recovery. The premises inspection for the year 2020/21 was 14%.

The latest recovery guidelines were issued by the FSA in June 2021. Officers also referred to the importance of the recovery of staff, with many now being encouraged to ensure they take their annual leave.

Officers set out the time frame for recovery, in terms of premises inspections. Most dates are set out by the FSA as soon as full resources permit. As well as proactive, there is also reactive work which needs to be undertaken.

Members were advised that Welsh Government continue to provide funding on a six month basis and as a consequence it is difficult to plan, recruit and deploy resources. This makes it difficult to achieve continuity across the service.

Members queried if the expectations set by the FSA are achievable. Officers advised that they are fairly confident they can be met however there are caveats to this, including the Welsh Government TTP response and the incoming winter season.

Members commended the staff of the team for their hard work during this difficult and stressful period.

## 7. **Community Safety and Public Protection Performance Report - Quarter 1 2021/2022**

A copy of the report from officers had been circulated with the agenda.

Members queried figures in relation to the under performance of the Community Drug and Alcohol Team. Members sought clarification on the scale of the waiting list and the timescale for the review due to be undertaken by the Health Board. Officers advised that traditionally there was no waiting list in Neath Port Talbot for this service. However, as a result of pressures on the service, including vacancies and sickness there had been an increase in the waiting list. The Health Board have confirmed that all the vacancies for the team are going to be advertised, and if filled should assist with reducing the waiting list. The impact of sickness absence on the service has also been flagged up.

With regards to the review due to be undertaken, this was scheduled to be done by the Health Board, with a timescale of completion by the

end of September. However NPT officers have no further information on this item and are awaiting the outcome from the review.

Members queried why the repeat victims significantly declined during the pandemic. Officers noted the large increase in new referrals but at a higher level of violence not previously seen before. Officers agreed that they needed to understand why repeat victims did not come to the service during the pandemic period and this would require some work. Further, why people feel the need to present again. What can be done differently or better to improve this? There could be practical elements around the lockdown which reduced the number of repeat victims. It was noted that a repeat victim is not always the victim of the same perpetrator.

8. **Forward Work Programme 2021/22**

Members agreed to note the forward work programme.

9. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIRPERSON**