

18 JUNE 2013

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Tuesday, 18 June 2013.

p Cllr Mrs P Jackman (Chairman)
p Cllr S P Davies (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

p J E Binns
p D A Britton
p Mrs P J Lovelace
p B D Lucas

Councillors:

p A D O'Sullivan
N S Penman
ap D J Russell
p M S Wade

In Attendance:

Councillor:

Mrs D M Brooks (Portfolio Holder, Health & Leisure)
Mrs J L Cleary (Portfolio Holder, Housing & Communities)
G C Beck

Also in Attendance:

Chief Inspector Rowlinson – Hampshire Constabulary

Officers Attending:

Mrs S Bennett, D Brown, B Byrne, J Knight, Ms A Righton and Ms M Stephens.

3. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 19 March and 13 May 2013 be signed by the Chairman as correct records.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

No declarations of interest were made by members in connection with an agenda item.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

6. SAFER NEW FOREST (REPORT A).

The Chairman welcomed Chief Inspector Rowlinson to the meeting. She also congratulated him on recently receiving a commendation from the Chief Constable. This award had been given as the New Forest had been the only District in Hampshire to meet all its performance targets.

The Panel considered the Safer New Forest's Strategic Assessment for 2013/14.

Safer New Forest was the statutory Community Safety Partnership for the New Forest District. The Partnership consisted of a number of key agencies, including New Forest District Council and was concerned with tackling and reducing crime and antisocial behaviour in the New Forest.

The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 established the statutory requirement for community safety partnerships to be set up. The Community Safety Partnership undertake an annual audit (strategic assessment) of crime, disorder and the misuse of drugs within their areas, and then publish a 3 year community safety partnership plan. The 2007 regulations required community safety partnerships to refresh their strategic assessment and plan annually.

The strategic assessment considered the range of detailed information that existed about crime, disorder, substance abuse and other community safety matters affecting the District. In the light of this information, the assessment made recommendations about how best to keep the partnership plan on track and identified emerging priorities of all the statutory partners for inclusion in future partnership plans.

Chief Inspector Rowlinson gave an update to members on the overall performance improvements from the previous year's strategic assessment. The most notable achievements included: -

- Reduction of total crime across the District by 11%
- Reduction in antisocial behaviour by 7%
- Reduction in violence against persons with an injury by 17%
- Increase in the levels of satisfaction amongst victims of crime from 71% last year to 84% this year
- Reduction of serious acquisitive crime by 14.5%
- Reduction in criminal damage (11%) and theft (19%).

Chief Inspector Rowlinson said that the improvements in performance were largely attributable to the successful delivery model of the Safer New Forest teams and the effective arrangements within the Strategic Partnership. The sharing of crime data amongst partnership members meant that resources were targeted in the areas that needed tackling the most and this had facilitated reductions in crime overall across the District.

Members asked questions on the performance indicators to which answers were given.

Members congratulated the Safer New Forest in its achievements to date in reducing crime and disorder and antisocial behaviour levels across the District. Members felt that these achievements should be highlighted in a press release. In terms of the emerging priorities of the Partnership for next year and forthcoming years, members noted that changes to the probation trust service, the troubled

families agenda and reoffending rates would all impact on the day to day work of the Partnership. Members agreed that they would keep a watching brief on these issues. They also requested that an item be placed on their work programme to examine how the Community Safety Partnership worked to tackle anti-social behaviour.

One of the Partnership's priorities for the year included the need to investigate the benefits of local multi-agency work to deliver reductions in killed and serious injuries due to road traffic accidents. The Panel suggested that a Task and Finish Group be established to examine this issue. It was suggested that this group should be a cross panel Task and Finish Group to include the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel, the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel as well as representatives from the New Forest Health and Well-being Board. Members agreed that the appropriate Heads of Service and Chairmen of the respective Panels scope out the aims of the Group, before members were appointed at September's Panel meeting.

The Panel congratulated Chief Inspector Rowlinson, the Head of Service, Portfolio Holder and the Council's Community Safety team for all their hard work and efforts in seeking to reduce crime levels within the District.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That members' views as set out above be passed to the Safer New Forest and that the Strategic Assessment for 2013-14 be recommended for adoption; and
- (b) That a cross panel Task and Finish Group to include members of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel, the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel as well as representatives from the New Forest Health and Well-being Board be established to examine the killed and serious injury road casualty statistics and the multi-agency work that was focused on reducing the numbers; and that the appropriate Heads of Service and Chairmen of Panels scope out the aims of the Group before members are appointed to serve on the Group.

Action: Annie Righton

7. POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Panel received an update from Cllr Beck, the Council's representative on the Hampshire Police and Crime Panel on the various aspects of the Panel and the work of the Police & Crime Commissioner. This included: -

- Background information on Simon Hayes, Hampshire's Police and Crime Commissioner.
- The membership of the Panel and its roles and responsibilities.
- The democratic arrangements of the Police and Crime Panel and the frequency of meetings.
- The Commissioner's progress in meeting the priorities set out in the Police Plan for Hampshire.
- The funding of the Community Safety Partnership.

The Panel noted the information presented and thanked Cllr Beck for his report.

8. METAL THEFT AND VEHICLE CRIME (REPORT B)

The Panel considered a report outlining measures undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership in tackling metal theft and vehicle crime together with data on the number of incidents reported to the Police within the District.

Using the analysis of intelligence and statistical information provided by partner agencies, the New Forest Operational Joint Action Group had commissioned a number of activities to prevent the incidence of metal theft and vehicle crime in the District. These included: -

- Providing members of the public with free laminated cards stating that 'No Valuables' have been left in the vehicle.
- Providing buildings that are considered to be at high risk of metal theft (such as churches) with free downloadable posters on the Safer New Forest website.
- Providing businesses within the Forest with catalytic converter marking kits.
- Making available DNA grease packs to buildings affected by metal theft.
- Making available DNA spray to Parish Councils at cost price in order to mark war memorials.

Methods of enforcement and intelligence activities were also highlighted within the report.

The Panel congratulated the Community Safety Team and the Portfolio Holder for developing and managing a comprehensive programme of activities to combat metal theft and vehicle crime. Some members suggested that the Community Safety Team should promote their work and their successes. Members would make suggestions via the Head of Service on how to do this.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the Community Safety team be thanked for their hard work; and
- (c) That members consider ways in which to promote the valuable work of the Community Safety Team and forward ideas to the Head of Service.

Action: All to note

9. COMMUNITY ALARMS AND OUT OF HOURS TASK AND FINISH GROUP (REPORT C)

The Panel considered a report of the Community Alarms and Out of Hours Task & Finish Group which set out proposals for the amalgamation of the CCTV, Community Alarms and Out of Hours services into a single internal structure.

The proposal would require some changes to employee structures and terms and conditions, changes to accommodation and equipment, and bringing parts of the third-party arrangements in-house. The Panel considered the projected investment costs and other financial details and were pleased to note that there was a long term opportunity for increased income from monitoring services.

The Panel supported the proposals and were pleased to note that the initial consultation with employees had been positive. The Panel also noted that the final proposal included a full risk assessment.

The Panel congratulated officers involved in developing the proposals and welcomed the opportunity for the Council to add value to its services as well as the future business opportunities that the proposals would bring.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the following be recommended to the Cabinet for approval: -
 - i. That the CCTV and Community Alarms services be integrated;
 - ii. That a consultation process with staff within the CCTV and Community Alarms services commences;
 - iii. That NFDC reaches an agreement with Tunstall for an extension to the current contract past September 2013 to include a cross-over period;
 - iv. That the revised pricing structure (as set out in Appendix 1 to Report C to the Panel) for services and equipment to customers be implemented upon commencement of the combined service;
 - v. That senior NFDC officers meet with Tunstall representatives to discuss costing moving forward, including the bulk purchase of their lifeline equipment; and
 - vi. That the necessary alterations be made within the control room to facilitate the housing of the merged service.
- (b) That officers and members be congratulated on their hard work in developing these proposals.

Action: Annie Righton/Dave Brown

10. ARMED FORCES AND COMMUNITY COVENANT TASK AND FINISH GROUP (REPORT D)

The Panel considered the report of the Armed Forces and Community Covenant Task & Finish Group.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted; and

- (b) That the Panel review the progress of the measures contained in the Covenant at its meeting in June 2014.

Action: Mel Stephens

11. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' UPDATES

The Portfolio Holder for Health & Leisure updated the Panel as follows:-

- The Health and Leisure Centres were ahead of their income and attendance targets.
- The Health and Well-being Board had recently reduced their meetings to 2 per annum. However working groups would be held when necessary throughout the year. Various initiatives were continuing to take place on the Health and Well-being agenda, including raising awareness of falls, healthy weights for children and dementia, with Lyndhurst becoming the first dementia friendly high street.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Communities updated the Panel as follows: -

- The North Milton Estate new build project was progressing well. The main project consisted of the construction of 27 dwellings, the creation of a public park and improvements to the urban design within the existing estate. To date liaison with tenants and residents had been positive.
- The Council had purchased 10 properties on the open market so far this year.
- Reports on both these issues would be submitted to the Panel for consideration at the end of the year.

12. WORK PROGRAMME (REPORT E)

The Panel considered their future work programme and made some amendments, as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel at its recent meeting had indicated its wish to establish a joint Task & Finish group with the Panel to examine the delivery of social housing in times of austerity. It was agreed that the relevant Heads of Service and Chairmen of both Panels discuss the terms of reference of the group before invitations for membership were circulated.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel's work programme set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes be agreed.

CHAIRMAN

Attachment: Minute 12 – Appendix 1

Work Programme 2013/14

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	TIMING/UPDATE ON PROGRESS
Housing and Older People			
Impact of the new Housing Strategy on the Housing Service	Consider how the housing service is responding to changes as a result of the implementation of the new Housing Strategy	Progress report to Panel	2013/14
As above for older people	Consider how we can best work with partner organisations to ensure support and service provision for older people in the Forest is provided to a high level and that meets resident's aspirations	Awaiting outcome of discussions with Executive Director	2013/14
Empty Homes	To review the number of empty homes within the District and the progress of Housing Officers in bringing them back into use	Report	September 2013
Delivery of Social Housing in times of Austerity		Report to Panel	September 2013
Changes to the benefits system/spare room subsidy and universal credit	To examine how the changes to the benefits system/spare room subsidy has impacted on low income families and housing tenants. Same for universal credit.	Possible joint meeting with the Corporate Overview Panel. Initial officer report to Panel then detailed report in 18 months examining universal credit	March 2014 (initial investigation) September 2014 (to examine universal credit)
Tenancy and Allocation Strategies	Consider whether strategy still fit for purpose	Report to Panel	November 2014
Crime and Disorder			
Drug & Alcohol and its relation to Crime and Disorder	To investigate drug & alcohol misuse in the District and the impact on crime & disorder levels in the New Forest	Presentation from the Drugs Officer. Open meeting to all members of the Council	November 2013
Reoffending Rates in the District	To examine strategies to reduce reoffending rates in the District	Report	March 2014

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	TIMING/UPDATE ON PROGRESS
Public Health			
Legislative changes to the NHS and the formation of the County and District Health and Wellbeing Panels		Consider once legislative changes known.	September 2013
Emergency Planning/Safety Advisory Group	To examine the Council's statutory duties in relation to emergency planning and the remit of Safety Advisory Groups	Joint meeting with the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel	TBC
Children and Young People			
Child poverty and the provision for children and young people	To examine child poverty and deprivation in the New Forest and the services available for young people in the District	Report with discussions with specialists	January 2014
Leisure			
Dibden Golf Centre	Monitor/review the progress of Mytime Active a year on from taking over operations	Task & Finish Working Group	September 2013
Interim Review of Health & Leisure Centres	Examine how well the centres are contributing to the wellbeing of the District	Interim report (with detailed report to follow in January 2014)	September 2013/January 2014
Health			
Sexual Health Services in the New Forest	To investigate sexual health in the New Forest including prevalence rates, treatments and access to services	Panel report to include views of Health and Wellbeing Board and discussion with Public Health Officer	November 2013

Task & Finish Groups new and on-going: -

- Cross panel Task and Finish Group to include the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Panel, the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel as well as representatives from the New Forest Health and Well-being Board to examine the killed and serious injury road casualty statistics
- Dibden Golf Centre