

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 12 MARCH 2018 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.15 PM**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Shahid Younis (Chairman), Bill Soane (Vice-Chairman), Pauline Jorgensen, Abdul Loyes, Philip Mirfin, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey and David Sleight

**Other Councillors Present**

Councillors: Keith Baker, Clive Jones and Malcolm Richards

**Officers Present**

Neil Carr (Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist), Clare Lawrence (Assistant Director, Place) and Julia Mlambo (Interim Community Safety Manager)

**Others Present**

Superintendent Shaun Virtue (Thames Valley Police)

**39. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Abdul Loyes.

**40. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 January 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**41. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**42. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

**43. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no Member questions.

**44. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 11 to 24, which provided an update on the work and achievements of the Community Safety Partnership during 2017/18.

The report gave details of the key aims of the partnership which were to reduce crime, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour. In addition to the Council, the partnership's statutory bodies included the police, probation and health services. The report was presented by Julia Mlambo (Interim Community Safety Partnership Manager) supported by Superintendent Shaun Virtue (Local Police Commander, Bracknell and Wokingham) and Aletta Pretorius (Integrated Early Help and Youth Justice Manager).

The report gave details of performance against the current partnership priorities. These were:

Priority 1 – increasing the effectiveness of multi professional arrangements to encourage the reporting of domestic abuse and responding appropriately. The partnership's approach

was to increase the number of reports of domestic violence as it was a hidden crime, but also to reduce the number of repeat incidents.

Priority 2 – work with the integrated Offender Management Cohort to reduce the likelihood of repeat offending. The aim was to reduce overall crime levels by reducing the activities of the most prolific offenders. The most serious and/or violent offenders were case managed by the Probation Service through other arrangements.

Priority 3 – understand the needs associated with hidden crime and work in partnership to expose hidden crime, reduce offending and support victims. The aim was to increase the number of reports of hidden crime such as hate crime e.g. racial or religiously aggravated crime.

Priority 4 – identify and understand the issues affecting residents of all ages and communicate the work of the partnership effectively to make them feel safer. The aim was to understand key local issues such as the recent increase in residential burglary and to target resources at local priorities.

The report stated that the Community Safety Partnership was in the process of developing new priorities for 2018/21 which were aligned with emerging needs. These were:

Priority 1 – addressing violence against women and girls.

Priority 2 – impacting on organised crime including reducing the effects of county line dealing (i.e. gangs using young people to carry and sell drugs across county boundaries).

Priority 3 – reducing and preventing exploitation and addressing the needs of vulnerable victims and offenders.

Priority 4 – championing the resilience of local communities.

Members focussed on each of the current community safety priorities sought information on emerging local and national trends. During the ensuing discussion Members raised the following points and questions.

Were existing mechanisms for notifying ward Members about local issues effective? An example was given relating to anti-social behaviour and the lack of communication with Members. It was confirmed that steps could be taken to re-establish regular briefings involving Members and the police with a view to sharing information and joining up services more effectively. This would include more targeted briefings on emerging issues and closer working with Town and Parish Councils.

What had been the impact on community safety in the Borough following the reductions in police resources? It was confirmed that Thames Valley Police had seen significant reductions in manpower over the past five years. However, changes in policing (better use of IT) and types of crime made a direct correlation difficult. It was clear however, that the Borough remained a safe place to live. It was also noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner was considering an increase in the precept as a way of finding resources to support local policing.

What had been the impact of the growth in mental health issues on local policing? It was confirmed that the police were now delivering more joint patrols with health colleagues and that more informed decisions were being made about risk and community safety.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) Julia Mlambo, Aletta Pretorius and Superintendent Shaun Virtue be thanked for attending the meeting;
- 2) progress relating to the current priorities in the Community Safety Strategy be noted;
- 3) the focus on emerging issues and development of new Community Safety priorities for 2018/21, as outlined in the report, be supported;
- 4) Members support the proposal to re-establish more joined up working, intelligence sharing and communication between ward Members, the police and other community safety partners.

#### **45. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 25 to 31, which provided an update on the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) across the Borough from October 2017.

Keith Baker, Executive Member for Highways and Transport attended the meeting to answer Member questions along with Clare Lawrence (Assistant Director, Place) and Geoff Hislop (Interim Parking Manager).

The report gave details of the background to the implementation of CPE and the way in which the Council's contractor, NSL, had performed in the first five months of the contract. It reminded Members that CPE could address vehicles that did not respect signing and lining but could not address issues such as parking on verges or parking where no lines and signs were in place under a traffic regulation order. Thames valley Police retained enforcement responsibility for high speed roads, obstructions to the highway, clamping and removal of vehicles.

The report outlined the range of activities carried out by NSL. These included patrolling between 7.30am to 10pm, car park fault reporting and issuing various permits and dispensations. The contract also allowed for additional hours to be purchased by stakeholders such as Town and Parish Councils and schools. Over the first five months of operation NSL had issued over 4,000 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) across the Borough.

The report confirmed that a revised Parking Strategy for the Borough would be submitted to the Council's Executive in May 2018. If agreed the strategy would be the subject of public consultation before final adoption.

In the ensuing discussions Members raised the following points:

If CPE delivered additional income would it be possible to employ extra patrol officers? It was confirmed that CPE aimed to break even. Feedback from other Councils indicated

that, over time, the number of parking offences reduced which removed the opportunity for increased income.

On what basis were patrols around schools allocated? It was confirmed that analysis of the location of PCNs would provide data which would help to prioritise the future locations for patrols. With over 60 schools in the Borough and only six officers carrying out patrols, it was important to manage expectations relating to CPE. It was also noted that enforcement in one location may have the effect of displacing problem parking into neighbouring locations.

There were ongoing reports of problems with the Council's parking ticket machines due to age and wear and tear. What was being done about this issue? Members received a demonstration of a new ticketing machine which would provide increased efficiency and flexibility and improved customer service which was a key part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council model. A range of machines and parking systems were being evaluated which would culminate in a Capital bid. In the meantime, the closure of the Paddocks car park would enable the relocation of ticketing machines to other car parks, potentially Crockhamwell Road in Woodley.

Would the new style ticketing machines generate information on available car park spaces for communication to drivers? It was confirmed that this issue was under consideration but would be a separate project from the introduction of new ticketing machines.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) Keith Baker, Clare Lawrence and Geoff Hislop be thanked for attending the meeting;
- 2) the update report on the implementation of CPE be noted;
- 3) the introduction of improved car park ticketing machines be supported in principle, subject to a rigorous option appraisal and submission of an appropriate Capital bid;
- 4) Members receive further information in due course on the operation of CPE and the prioritisation of CPE patrols across the Borough.

#### **46. WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 33 to 34, which gave details of its proposed work programme for 2018/19. The Chairman asked Members to notify him of additional items for inclusion in the work programme.

Pauline Jorgensen suggested a Scrutiny item relating to the highways maintenance, seeking clarity on the process for deciding which roads were identified for maintenance work.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the draft work programme for 2018/19 be noted;
- 2) Members notify the Chairman of any further potential Scrutiny items for inclusion in the work programme;

- 3) the update item on Wokingham Town Centre regeneration be considered at the November 2018 meeting of the Committee;
- 4) a Scrutiny item on the prioritisation of roads for maintenance be added to the work programme for 2018/19.