B R O M S G R O V E D I S T R I C T C O U N C I L

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

18TH JUNE 2018, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), S. A. Webb (Vice-Chairman), C. Allen-Jones, C. J. Bloore, R. J. Deeming, M. Glass, C.A. Hotham, R. J. Laight, P.L. Thomas and M. Thompson

Observers: Councillor P. J. Whittaker

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms J. Willis, Ms. B. Houghton, Ms. A. Scarce and Mrs L. Morris

15/18 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Apologies were received from Councillor S.R. Colella.

It was noted that Councillor M. Thompson had replaced Councillor P. McDonald on the Board.

16/18 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

Councillor L.C.R Mallett (Chairman) and Councillor C.A. Hotham declared an interest in the Hospital Carparking Task and Finish Group Update item.

17/18 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 24 MAY 2018.**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on the 24 May 2018 be approved as an accurate record.

18/18 **SCRUTINY OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER PARTNERSHIP**

Bev Houghton, Community Safety Manager, provided an update on the progress of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) during 2017/18. A number of key points were highlighted including that;

- Local authorities had a statutory duty to scrutinise the work of the local Community Safety Partnership (CSP) under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.
- The NWCSP had a statutory duty to produce a Partnership Plan outlining how it would address key crime and community safety priorities.

- The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had a duty to co-operate with the CSP to reduce crime and disorder and there was a reciprocal duty on the CSP to collaborate with the PCC.
- Grant funding was available from the PCC. Money had been allocated to a number of projects across the 3 district areas.
- A new Community Guardians project had been proposed which would create a team of officers to patrol areas of concern in terms of anti-social behaviour.
- There had been a separate allocation of just under £200,000 to improve CCTV in North Worcestershire. A consultant review had been funded.
- Some of the Safer Bromsgrove reserves had been invested in retaining a dedicated Community Safety Officer. The Officer had worked in for example the Lowes Hills Ward to address anti-social behaviour alongside the Police and the local school.
- There had been work in Tardebigge to address anti-social behaviour including open water swimming in the summer holidays.
- There was a Town Centres Management Group which was working to identify community safety issues, particularly around the Night Time Economy.
- A Nominated Neighbours Scheme had been introduced to deter rogue traders. This directed callers to a nominated neighbour so that vulnerable people did not need to open the door until their identification had been checked. This scheme would be reviewed in six to nine months' time but initial feedback had been positive and there had been a drop in rogue callers being reported. There was work being carried out to ensure that Lifeline customers had access to this scheme.
- The Respect Programme continued to be delivered in schools.
- A Youth and Community Hub was being set up in the basement of the Baptist Church in New Road and a project manager appointed. The official launch of the Hub would be on the 18 July 2018.
- The Youth Citizens Challenge continued to deliver personal safety messages and information to Year 6 pupils.
- During Hate Crime Awareness Week there had been a number of community engagement events funded by the PCC. A Street Theatre Company engaged with residents through performances, information bags had been handed out and there had been promotion on Twitter and Facebook.
- There was work with the Policy Team to consider the information gathered through the District Community Panel Survey to identify community safety target areas.

Members' queried if the CCTV Task and Finish Group's work would feed into the CCTV work being undertaken by the partnership and the Community Safety Manager confirmed that the findings of the Group would be shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Board and decision making would be with Cabinet accordingly.

Members referred to the possible impact of development choices and planning decisions on crime and the night time economy and the Community Safety Manager responded that Town Centre crime was considered during the day and at night time. There had been an issue with young people climbing roofs and running across them for example. These types of issues could be addressed by better planning and design.

It was queried by Members' if there were as many anti-social behaviour issues in relation to restaurants, as well as pubs and clubs and the Community Safety Manager referred to a well-established Pub Watch scheme in Bromsgrove with individuals taking on various responsibilities for certain aspects of the running of the group, such as managing the information sharing system etc. A taxi marshalling scheme had been funded via the PCC grant and had proved to be very successful in moving people out of the area quickly. The Partnership was looking to repeat this. There were fewer issues outside restaurants than pubs and clubs.

Regarding the work at the Baptist Church Members queried the support of other faith denominations and if there was work with other denominations. The Community Safety Manager explained that there was a thriving mosque in Bromsgrove and there were good relationships with local communities The youth hub had been set up by partners which included a number of denominations and there were links made with other communities through the various partnership projects.

In response to questions from Members' it was clarified by the Community Safety Manager that Lifeline customers had already nominated family and friend contacts. The Police and Fire service could also report people to the scheme. The Nominated Neighbour sticker could discourage rogue traders. If the nominated neighbour was not in then genuine traders would leave a note but rogue traders would be put off.

In relation to inconsiderate parking the Community Safety Manager explained that traffic regulation matters were the responsibility of the County Council. Inconsiderate parking was more of a social issue. A variety of services needed to come together to have an impact

Members' raised the issue of derelict insecure buildings and asked if there was the potential for the local authority to place a clean-up order on derelict buildings where the landlord appeared reluctant to secure the site. Concerns about drug selling and usage centred around a derelict building on Blackmore Lane were raised and the work underway to have trees cut back, street lighting improved and graffiti cleared up was referred to. The Police's input was not however clear to local residents. Potential opportunities to put in place Anti-Social Behaviour Notices and for the community to trigger a response from agencies were discussed.

The Community Safety Manager explained that in the past a Section 29 Order had been used to encourage a landowner to take action to address a derelict building. Section 215 Orders had to be undertaken by Planning. There were regular conversations with Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Legal and Planning Officers regarding derelict buildings and this was a priority in relation to addressing and preventing matters such as ASB, fire setting and potentially Child Sexual Exploitation.

Councillor Whittaker, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Leisure and Cultural Services confirmed that he was aware of the issues at Blackmore Lane and had raised the matter with the Police and colleagues at the Community Safety Partnership meeting. It was anticipated that the matter would now be resolved.

In response to concerns raised by Members' about cannabis use, the Community Safety Manager clarified that data was taken from the number of reports to the Police so it was important to report concerns as matters would be prioritised based on these reports. The Community Panel survey had identified fears regarding drug dealing. The distribution and supply of illegal substances was a key focus for the police and partners. In terms of individual use of cannabis it would be hard to identify and take action against people just from the smell alone.

The Community Safety Manager confirmed that the Community Guardian scheme was not linked to any possible merger of the Police and Fire service. The scheme was developed in response to a lack of trained detached youth workers in the District. Fire Officers were being considered as potential deliverers of the project as part of their expansion into other types of work in the community. There had been a role modelling project where by Fire Officers had engaged with young people and the Community Guardians Project built upon this.

Members' expressed their appreciation and endorsed the work of the Community Safety Project Officer. A number of points were raised and in response it was confirmed by the Community Safety Manager that;

- The Community Safety Project Officer role had been funded from external grant reserves. There was partnership funding available for this role until 2020.
- Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership had had healthy reserves when it merged into the North Worcestershire partnership. North Worcestershire had the most Community Safety Officers in the county. There would need to be a corporate budget bid or an increase in grant funding to increase the number of Officers in the future.
- The PCC would not fund the Community Safety Project Officer post as the Police provided Community Support Officers who would be considered the equivalent to the Community Safety Project Officer role.

- Budget Bids would be put forward by Heads of Service and then considered by the Budget Working Group, the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Cabinet and Council.
- Grants were applied for as and when they were made available and Officers found out about them.
- There was qualitative information about the impact of the role of the Community Safety Project Officer. There could be consideration of the number of recorded anti-social behaviour incidents before and after intervention by the Project Officer however this may not provide a true picture as it was the Project Officer's role to get partners together to address the problem rather than to do it themselves.

Members queried the status of the Smart Water scheme and it was confirmed that this was a police project.

In response to Members' questions the Senior Democratic Services Officer clarified that the numbers of people on the Community Panel had reduced and new people were being encouraged to join. She advised that the Panel could be a useful resource when undertaking overview and scrutiny work. Leaflets were available about the Panel and there was also information online. Members of the Panel had been approached to provide consent to receive information as part of the General Data Protection Regulations but a number had not responded which had led to a depleted Panel

RESOLVED that the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership update be noted.

19/18 **RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER**

The Senior Democratic Service Officer highlighted a number of recommendations that had been completed and suggested that these could now be removed from the Recommendation Tracker.

There were a number of financial recommendations which had also been completed and any outstanding actions would be addressed by the Executive Director for Finance and Resources.

RESOLVED that the recommendation tracker be updated as discussed above.

20/18 **FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE**

This group had not met since the previous Board meeting but was due to meet on 26th June..

21/18 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP - UPDATE**

This Working Group would be meeting in the next week and an update would be provided at the next Board meeting.

22/18 **TASK GROUP UPDATES**

The CCTV Short Sharp Review Group met on the 30 May 2018 and had considered the interim report reviewing the CCTV systems. The Group would meet again in September to consider the final findings of the review and any recommendations for the Board's consideration.

Councillor C. Bloore reported that the Hospital Car parking Board Investigation group would be meeting again in July and reporting back to the Board in September.

Councillor C. Bloore explained that Members' of the Road Safety Around Schools Task and Finish Group had visited outside a school with an Enforcement Officer and would be meeting again shortly to discuss their findings and to take up matters with representatives from the Police. It was anticipated that there report would be presented to the September meeting of the Board.

23/18 **WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

Councillor C. Bloore confirmed that the Committee had not met since the previous Board meeting. He understood that currently there were concerns being raised about service changes at Kidderminster and the use of the Alex Hospital in Redditch for A&E services.

24/18 **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

It was reported that Officers were still awaiting a response from Worcestershire County Council regarding the Transport Planning Report.

It was suggested by the Chairman that the item on the Council Tax Support Scheme be added to the Board's Work Programme for pre-scrutiny.

RESOLVED:

a) that the Board send a letter to the County Council expressing disappointment that a response had not yet been received.

that Councillor C. Bloore take up the matter with County Councillor K. Pollock, Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure.

25/18 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Senior Democratic Services Officer confirmed that the CCTV Short Sharp Review Group would report back their findings to the Board in October. Anti-Social Behaviour would be discussed in more detail at the September Board meeting.

RESOLVED that the Board Work Programme be amended in line with discussions.

26/18 **TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE HEAD OF LEGAL, EQUALITIES AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.**

The meeting closed at 7.05 p.m.

Chairman