

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

13TH NOVEMBER 2019, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. Thompson (Chairman), J. Till (Vice-Chairman),
A. J. B. Beaumont, R. J. Deeming, S. P. Douglas, M. Glass, C.A. Hotham,
R. J. Hunter, A. D. Kriss and C. J. Spencer

Observers: Chief Inspector G. Smith, Councillor P. Thomas

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

50/19 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

51/19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

52/19 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 21ST
OCTOBER 2019**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on
21st October 2019 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and
Scrutiny Board held on 21st October 2019 be approved as a true record.

53/19 **SCRUTINY OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The Chairman welcomed the Community Safety Manager, the Head of
Community Services and Chief Inspector Gerry Smith to the meeting.
He also took the opportunity to remind Members that the Board had a
statutory duty to scrutinise the Partnership on an annual basis and that it
was the Partnership as a whole that the Board were scrutinising, and not
individual partner organisations.

The Community Safety Manager presented the report and in so doing
highlighted the following:

- Background information in respect of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) and the role of scrutiny at all levels.
- The current Partnership structure and the Partnership plan for 2017-20, which was coming to its conclusion.
- The Structure Assessment and the information and intelligence it gathered and how this was used.
- The focus and priorities of the Partnership.
- The work of the CSP Analyst team – and how it's work was funded.
- An update in respect of CCTV and the Monitoring Centre – it was noted that the Council had match funded an award from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to modernise the CCTV infrastructure which would also include the provision of a number of mobile cameras.
- The CCTV improvements would include enhanced digital capacity, improved image quality and greater capacity to expand the scheme and/or link to other digital systems across the region.
- Key projects including Nominated Neighbour Scheme, Bromsgrove and Redditch School Respect Programme.
- Hate Crime Awareness Week – the joint event held in 2018 and the more low key approach taken in 2019.
- New and emerging areas for the CSP including the prevention and tackling of serious violence. As part of the new duty the Government planned on amending the Crime and Disorder Act to ensure that serious violence was an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships. However, it was noted that there had been some delay in this being finalised, but Members would be updated in due course.

Following presentation of the report, Members discussed a number of areas with the officers present, in more detail, this included:

- Funding for the Street Pastors Project and the important work they carried out.
- Where the CCTV Monitoring Centre was based – it was noted that it was based at the Town Hall, Redditch but covered the Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forrest areas.
- Whether all schools were invited to take part in the Young Citizens' Challenge – it was confirmed that whilst all were invited it was difficult to establish whether all participated, often this was down to timetabling at particular schools, and feedback was based on evaluation forms being completed. However, where possible schools were targeted on a biannual basis.
- The funding for the CCTV improvements – these had come from capital funding and the £40k was specifically for Bromsgrove.
- The Nominate a Neighbour Scheme and how this worked – it was noted that currently 90 people had signed up to it over both Bromsgrove and Redditch. Currently it had only been promoted through the PCSOs and Lifeline, as it was particularly aimed at the more vulnerable residents.

- The night time economy and violence which had occurred around the pubs and bars (Worcester Road was referenced in particular) – it was questioned whether any of these incidents were reported back to the Licensing Committee. The work being carried out by the Town Centre Management Group, in conjunction with local licensees was highlighted and Members were advised that the Police closely monitored this and if necessary could report back the Licensing Committee, but preferred where possible to work directly with landlords and owners and put in preventative measures. This had included trying to stagger closing times in a particular area and changing the shift pattern of officers, particularly on a Friday and Saturday night.
- The Pub Watch group which operated successfully within the town centre and its relationship with the Partnership.
- The introduction of Smart Water and what evidence there was to show that this was successful in preventing theft. Chief Inspector Smith advised that whilst there was some scepticism around the use of this, he understood that in those areas where it was used a reduction in theft was recorded. He believed it was a valuable tactic if used correctly, for example in a specific geographical area where problems had been highlighted. This had been particularly relevant in some areas which were close to the borders with Birmingham and the motorway networks. The Community Safety Manager commented that they looked upon the use of this as a preventative tool as its use linked property to a specific address.
- Vehicle theft – again Chief Inspector Smith made reference to particular areas and how specific targeted work took place to address this issue. There were many things to take into account, particularly when there was a spate of thefts in one area.
- A number of Members took the opportunity to ask for their thanks to be passed on to the Bromsgrove Community Safety Project Officer, who had been most helpful. It was confirmed that this position had now been made permanent.
- PACT meetings were discussed and it was confirmed that whilst the Police were happy to attend these meetings, they were not such a regular occurrence in some areas, but were provided on an as required basis and were often held either in the town centre or supermarkets in order to reach a larger audience.
- The role of the Safer Bromsgrove Group and its make up.
- The changes to the CCTV cameras and the benefits from those changes. It was confirmed that the re-deployable cameras would not be linked to the Monitoring Centre but would have a SIM card which was regularly checked.

In conclusion Members discussed how they could help support the Partnership and how best they could best deal with any concerns or queries and where to signpost residents if necessary.

RESOLVED that the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership 2018/19 update be noted.

54/19

FINANCE AND BUDGET WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

The Chairman advised that the Working Group had met once since the last meeting and considered the Budget Framework report which had been received by Cabinet. It had also received an update in respect of the Section 24 Notice served on Redditch Borough Council and any impact on this Council. The next meeting of the Working Group was planned for 27th November when it would consider the Fees and Charges report going to Cabinet on 4th December. All Heads of Service had been invited to attend that meeting and if there were any significant recommendations from the Working Group, these would be brought to the main Board's meeting on 2nd December, prior to Cabinet on 4th December.

55/19

WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE

Councillor J. Till the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) confirmed that there had not been a meeting of HOSC since her last report. A meeting was planned for 25th November and a meeting which had originally been planned for 4th December in respect of an update on the work of the CAMS Team had been postponed until 27th January 2020.

56/19

CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

Officers advised Members that there were again a number of items which had been put back to the January Cabinet meeting, which impacted on the Board's work programme as they were items which the Board had asked to pre-scrutinise. These would be discussed under the next item on the agenda.

It was noted that the Finance items would be considered by the Finance and Budget Working Group in the first instance and should it have any concerns about the content of those reports, it would report back to the next available main Board meeting.

Members showed an interest in respect of Housing Strategy and Homelessness Grant and Flexible Homelessness Support Grant Awards reports which would be considered by Cabinet on 15th January and it was agreed that these would be added to the Board's work programme.

RESOLVED that subject to the pre-amble above the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme 1st December 2019 to 31st March 2020 be noted.

57/19

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

Officers advised that there were a number of changes to the planned work programme for the meeting on 2nd December due to the items being put back on the Cabinet Leader's Work Programme. This included the following:

- North Worcestershire Economic Growth Strategy – this would now be considered at the Cabinet meeting o 15th January 2020.
- Review of Customer Access and Financial Support Services and Estate Management and Facilities Management Structure Proposals – the Executive Director, Finance and Resources explained that as the financial impact of the proposals was within the delegation guidelines then the Chief Executive was able to authorise the changes and they did not need to go to Cabinet as there would be no net additional cost to the Council arising from the reports.

Members were reminded that the item on substantive item on the agenda for the next meeting was the Overview and Scrutiny – Select Committee Findings and Government Guidance. This had first been considered by the Board at the first meeting of this municipal year when Members had agreed that as there were a number of new Members to the Board they would like to understand the workings of the Board itself in more detail, before formally considering this report.

Officers further advised that the recruitment process for a replacement Democratic Services Officer had been completed and a new member would be joining the team in early December. It was therefore anticipated that for January 2020 there would be capacity for the Board to set up at least one new task group if it so wished. It was suggested that Members may wish to think about any areas of particular interest that would warrant such a group being set up and for them to contact the Senior Democratic Services Officer to discuss this and complete a scoping document for consideration by the Board.

RESOLVED that subject to the pre-ambule above the Overview and Scrutiny Board’s Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.50 p.m.

Chairman