



Minutes of a meeting of the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee held at
the Bourges/Viersen Room - Town Hall
on 9 November 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillors M Todd (Chairman), S Day (Vice Chairman), G Casey, C Burton, G Simons,
J R Fox and M Jamil
Parish Councillors

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies received

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

Agenda Item 8 - Establishment of the Citizens Power Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

Councillor Harper declared a personal interest in that he was part of the Civic Commons Group.

3. Minutes of Meeting Held on 14 September 2011

The minutes of the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 14 September 2011 were approved as an accurate record.

4. Call In of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Key Officer Decisions

There were no requests for Call-in to consider

5. Commercial Operations

The report provided the Committee with an overview of Commercial Operations and informed them of the work being done on a day to day basis in the City along with the strategic focus to enhance the City in the long term. The Head of Commercial Operations presented the report and highlighted the following key activities that fell within the remit of Commercial Operations.

- Redevelopment of Bridge Street and Cowgate.
- The Olympic Torch 2012 which was due to pass through Peterborough on 3 July 2012.
- The Embankment would host a Euro Football event in 2012

- The BBC One Show would be coming to the City Centre to provide live coverage of Matt Baker's cycle ride for Children in Need.
- Street Trading Activity which included a review of table and chairs licensing .
- The Enterprise Centre. The course content would be redesigned to offer more generic courses whilst seeking long term funding to ensure sustainability.

The Committee was asked to consider and comment on the work of each of the following areas:

- The Enterprise Centre
- Parking Services
- CCTV
- General Market
- City Centre Management and Tourism
- Resilience Services
- Passenger transport
- Concessionary Fares
- Public Transport
- School Transport
- Community Transport
- Park and Ride
- Awards
- Events
- 2010 Christmas Lights Switch on
- 2010 New Years Eve Party
- Halfords Cycle Tour
- Italian Festival
- Perkins Great Eastern Run

Observations and Questions were raised around the following areas:

- Some Members had received comments from regular overseas visitors to Peterborough on how Peterborough had changed over the past five years and that it had looked modern, clean and more continental. Members were pleased that the changes were being noticed.
- What work was being done with side streets such as Wentworth Street where shops were empty? *Members were advised that there was still a lot of work to be done throughout the City centre to attract businesses and a City wide marketing group was being set up to work on this to attract new businesses.*
- Members complimented the Operations Team on how nice the market stalls were in Cathedral Square.
- Members were concerned with the type of planters that were put on Cathedral Square and wanted to know why they were put out so late. *The Officer acknowledged Members comments and advised that next year the planters would be put out earlier and flowers would be cascading down the sides. The Cabinet Advisor informed the Committee that she had been advised by an Evening Telegraph reporter that there had also been many positive comments made to the Evening Telegraph with regard to the planters.*
- Members commented on how successful the Jazz music had been when it had played outside of St Johns Church.
- Were there any plans to give existing general market traders the opportunity to trade in Cathedral Square? *The Head of Commercial Operations advised that they had tried to work with the general market traders when they started the farmers market in Cathedral Square. General markets were on the decline and there was a need to look at the existing market and how to make it more sustainable and prosper to generate business.*

- Members raised concerns about the lack of public toilets in the City Centre. *The Head of Commercial Operations was in agreement and advised that officers were working with businesses in the area to allow members of the public to use their facilities.*
- Members commented on the lack of activity in Cathedral Square and wanted to know if there were any plans to have more weekend and evening entertainment? *Members were advised that officers were working with businesses to try and get them to support evening events in the Square.*
- A member of the Youth Council commented on the lack of consistency in the appearance of street furniture from Bridge Street to Cathedral Square. Was anything being done about it. *The Head of Commercial Operations advised that the idea was to have some consistency; however each business had its own style of outdoor seating.*
- Members asked why Peterborough was not being advertised on the television like other towns do such as Market Harborough and Hitchin. Could this be looked into? *The Head of Commercial Operations advised that they were working to try and formulate a marketing group in the city which would look at how this could be taken forward.*
- The Cabinet Advisor acknowledged the great work that the Head of Commercial Operations and her team had done in bringing the Olympic Torch and the One Show to Peterborough.

ACTION

The Committee requested that the Head of Operations keep them informed on how they go forward with television advertising.

CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

For items 6 and 7 only the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee acted as the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee

6. Dog Control Orders

The report had been requested by the Committee after receiving a request from, the Peterborough North Area Committee to consider dog control orders after having received many complaints about uncontrolled dogs and dog fouling in public places. The report informed the committee what would be involved in instigating a Dog Control Order including the legal process, evidence base, staffing requirements and potential costs.

The committee was asked to debate the subject and make any recommendations.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- How should constituents deal with a situation when out walking their dog and are confronted with a person walking 12 unleashed dogs finding themselves in a terrifying situation. Dog fouling was also an issue. How do we educate people to take responsibility for their dogs? *The Senior Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer informed the Committee that the complaints made by their constituents were not finding their way to the correct officers in order for them to deal with the issues. There had only been three reports of uncontrolled dogs in the whole year. If Dog Control Orders were to be put in place then it would need to be evidenced statistically that they were required and at present there was not sufficient evidence. A method would need to be put in place to ensure complaints reached the correct department and were recorded. The Officer advised the Committee that the following the recent press release stating that the council was considering dog control orders he had received two letters from the biggest charities relating to dogs in the country. They had stated that they would oppose the decision and they had offered suggestions on other ways of working.*
- How would we crack down on the minority of irresponsible and antisocial dog owners? *The Officer advised that running educational programmes in schools would need to be*

considered before dog control orders were put in place. The council had adhered to its statutory obligation which was to deal with stray dogs only. If a Dog Control Order were to be installed then an additional member of staff would be needed to effectively police it and at the moment the resource level is low. The department that would be affected the most should the Dog Control Orders be put in place would be the Neighbourhood Officers who also dealt with fly tipping, abandoned vehicles and all things that were in the public eye. They did deal with dog fouling but it was hard to catch people. The officer felt it would be necessary to employ a full time person should the council go ahead with the Dog Control Orders.

- Was it an offence for dog owners to allow their dogs to roam around freely in a fenced off children's play area while the children were playing. Could anything be done about it. *Some local councils have Dog Control Orders on specific areas like a children's play area.*
- The Head of Neighbourhoods commented that the solution to the problem was more than would be provided by a dog control order. The issue seemed to be one of criminality and anti social behaviour amongst the minority of irresponsible dog owners. He did not believe that Dog Control Orders were the right way forward at the moment but suggested the following:
 - To look at the consultation on new antisocial behaviour which was part of the government's decentralisation agenda.
 - To look at the powers that the council already had available to them within their own organisation and Cambridgeshire Constabulary focusing on antisocial behaviour elements of dog ownership and how this could be dealt with.

Members agreed to the Head of Neighbourhoods suggestion.

- Is there any way we could talk to veterinary surgeries so they could distribute literature on legislation to new dog owners. Are dog walking businesses educated on the guidelines and are they insured. *The Head of Neighbourhood Services informed Members that there had not been the environment to try these things before due to government regulations. There was now more freedom to try other things. The Head of Neighbourhoods commented that at the moment work was being done with twenty large employers across the city like Thomas Cook, Diligenta, BGL who had a lot of employees many of which may be dog owners. The Council now had a relationship with the Corporate Social Responsibility leads of those businesses. This would provide an opportunity to go in to the companies and give talks or provide them with literature to give out to their staff at induction sessions or during training sessions. This opened up a market for people to become more aware and to take on responsibility in society by looking out for things that were going wrong in their own community and to challenge people behaving irresponsibly with their dogs. This would be picked up as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility programme that was being working on.*
- Scott Westaway and Mark Smith advised the committee that they had provided the city with a dog warden service, out of hours kennelling and pest control services since September 2011. The company took a pro active approach and would take on board any requests made. The dog warden service needed to be asked for in order to maintain a level of service. There had been issues in that the council had not been instructing them on using the dog warden. Mark Smith informed the committee that they were aware of the issues that Peterborough had and offered to come and resolve them. He advised that the council needed to enforce the existing legislation they had in place and if there were issues with uncontrolled dogs then they needed to be advised in order to provide a successful service for the council. If the council wished to target areas such as strays or fouling then the officers needed to be advised of this in order for them to come up with a proposal which may require additional time. He believed that existing legislation needed to be used before looking at dog control orders as they were difficult to initiate. It was the actual enforcement of a dog control order that was particularly difficult. Dog control orders were a very difficult route to go down when there was existing legislation and service providers in place.
- Could the service providers concentrate on the dog fouling issues in Hodgson Avenue? *The Enforcement Officer advised that Hodgson Avenue was an area that had been*

proactively patrolled with other areas they had received complaints about. However when the officers were present people tended to behave. The Head of Neighbourhoods asked Members to agree to work with the Officers as a pilot for testing some ideas they had to combat this problem. Scott Westaway advised that a coordinated campaign was needed to be cohesive and coherent. The issues seemed to be an internal and external communication problem. Scott Westaway informed the committee that they could help the officers come up with a coherent plan.

- Members suggested that dog walking businesses should be educated in current legislation as this would be the key to resolving the issue.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee recommends that the Head of Neighbourhood Services work with the Safer Peterborough Partnership and Cambridgeshire Constabulary to look at an operation focusing on antisocial behaviour elements of dog ownership and how this can be dealt with. A report to be presented back to the Committee in six months time.

7. Integrated Offender Management

The report was presented by Detective Chief Inspector Mark Alexander, the Integrated Offender Management Project Manager for Cambridgeshire and Annette Powell, Director of One Service. The report provided the committee with an update on developing an Integrated Offender Management (IOM) approach to offender management and its effect on reoffending within the city. The report explained how the IOM scheme was developed in accordance with joint Home Office Ministry of Justice Guidance published in the IOM Government Policy Statement June 2009. 'The IOM approach complemented Peterborough's preventative agenda by looking to change behaviour and prevent reoffending'.

The Committee was asked to endorse and support the continued development of an Integrated Offender Management scheme within the city and to suggest additions or further opportunities to the approach that will further enhance it.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Members noted the good work being done through the IOM scheme but also wanted to know what support was being given to the victims of crimes. *The DCI informed the Committee that the victims were equally as important. There were two parts to his responsibility one being the IOM programme and the other being the Multi Agency Referral unit which consisted of police officers, staff from Children's Services and Social Services all working within one team. The victims would be referred to the unit then they would decide which service would be most appropriate to help those individuals. This scheme was very much in its pilot stage at present.*
- Members queried as to whether the officers had any contact with the members of the Citizen Power Project. *The Director of One Service advised the Committee that in the early days of developing the One Service they did meet with people from the Citizens Power Project and held some workshops. She had also spoken at some of their events to share some of the learning and compare notes. The discussions were ongoing. The Head of Neighbourhood Services informed Members that a product of the Citizens Power strand had led to a fully re-commissioned drugs treatment system.*
- Members referred to page 30 section 4.4 of the report and asked for clarification on the statement 'The scheme now manages regularly around 100 offenders. At any one time about half are in custody and half are in the community'. *This point was clarified by explaining that the type of people the IOM Scheme was managing had received short custodial sentences. The problems they faced were that they returned to live with their families or friends or they slept on people's sofas or were possibly homeless. IOM and One service try to ensure that when they come out of prison they go into stable*

accommodation and remove them from the friends and family who encouraged their criminal activity.

- Members commented that they fully supported the scheme and felt that it helped to break the chain of criminality in families and helped them to get the support they needed to not reoffend. *The DCI added that what Peterborough had just launched was the Family Recovery Project that would hopefully start to address the issue of offender's children who were most likely to grow up to be offenders. The scheme would work with those families and try and prevent their children progressing into the IOM scheme of the future.*
- The Cambridgeshire Police Authority Representative asked whether there were any partnership working arrangements with colleagues across the boarder where there were some reciprocal arrangements to look after people on the IOM scheme from Peterborough. Sometimes the peer pressure locally was often too great for them to stop offending. *The Director of One Service advised that they work with the offenders wherever they are in the country. A local partner had been contracted to provide volunteering and they work with Supporting Others Through Volunteer Action (SOVA) who were a national organisation to provide community volunteers for support those offenders who move to other areas. Members were informed that people had gone as far as Edinburgh and Liverpool and they had a community volunteer working with them.*
- The Youth Council Representative informed the Committee that he also fully supported the IOM scheme. Was there a scheme similar to the IOM for youth offenders? *The DCI advised that they had very strong links into the youth offending service. The Youth Offending service took the lead in working with young offenders although some individuals were identified as progressing in to adult offenders and these would be adopted into the IOM scheme. The Director of One Service advised that one of the other services she had commissioned was Ormiston Children and Families Trust who worked with key families of prisoners to help them to develop the skills they needed within their family setting to provide a stable environment for the offender and the family.*
- People with drug related problems need support and to be taken away from their usual surroundings. Peterborough churches offer a lot of rehabilitation centres. Do you use these? *Members were informed that there were currently several projects working with the churches.*

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee endorse and support the continued development of the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Programme.

8. Establishment of the Citizens Power Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

The purpose of this report was for the Committee to consider and agree the Terms of Reference and membership of the Task and Finish Group which was formed at the request of the Committee on 14 September 2011 to oversee and monitor the actions and recommendations of the Citizens Power Programme Review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommended that:

1. The Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group are accepted and;
2. The membership of the Task and Finish Group are agreed

9. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Committee received the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan, containing key decisions that the Leader of the Council anticipated the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would make during the course of the following four months. Members were invited to comment on the Plan and, where appropriate, identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's work programme.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee noted the Forward Plan and requested further information on the following key decision:

- ***War Memorial - KEY/02NOV/11***

10. Work Programme

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2011/12 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

ACTION AGREED

To confirm the work programme for 2011/12 and the Scrutiny Officer to include any additional items as requested during the meeting.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 18 January 2012

CHAIRMAN
Times Not Specified