

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE
BOURGES & VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH
ON
20 JULY 2011**

Present: Councillors Todd (Chairman), S Day, G Casey, C Burton, G Simons, JR Fox, and M Jamil

Also Present Maheub Ladha (MJ) Director, Peterborough Racial Equality Council

Officers in Attendance:	Paul Phillipson	Executive Director of Operations
	Adrian Chapman	Head of Neighbourhood Services
	DCI Gary Goose	Community Safety Strategic Manager
	Leonie McCarthy	Social Inclusion Manager
	Lisa Emmanuel	Neighbourhood Manager
	Julie Rivett	Neighbourhood Manager
	Paulina Ford	Senior Governance Officer, Scrutiny
	David O'Connor Long	Lawyer

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Ansar Ali – Cambridgeshire Police Authority.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

Declarations of interest were received from Councillor Fox who declared a personal interest in that he was a member of Peterborough Council of Voluntary Services.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2011

The minutes of the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 15 June 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. Single Delivery Plan

The report informed the Committee of the development of the Single Delivery Plan (SDP) and focused on areas within the SDP that fell within the remit of the Committee:

- Programme 5: Empowering People and Creating Cohesive Communities
 - Building voluntary and community sector capacity to deliver local services – Project Lead, Leonie McCarthy, Social Inclusion Manager
 - Delivering the localism agenda - Project Lead, Leonie McCarthy, Social Inclusion Manager
 - Tackling the causes of hate crime and community tension – Project Lead, MJ Ladha, Director, Peterborough Racial Equality Council
- Programme 6: Reducing Crime and Tackling Antisocial Behaviour – Programme Lead, Gary Goose, Community Safety Strategic Manager

and

- Programme 1, Project 4: Creating a Safe, Clean and Vibrant City Centre
- Programme 7, Project 27: Citizen Power Programme (this will be presented to the committee in September)

The development of the SDP was overseen and co-ordinated by the Greater Peterborough Partnership (GPP). The GPP were Peterborough's Local Strategic Partnership, and was the body that 'united representatives from the public, private, faith, community and voluntary sectors to work collectively together towards the vision and priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy'. The SDP enabled agencies responsible for developing and delivering services in Peterborough to work together more collaboratively, through 'whole systems thinking' approaches. Each programme had a programme lead and each project would be managed through the council's project reporting system Verto. Performance management of the SDP would focus on delivery and outcomes. Members were informed about a new system for collecting data called the Neighbourhood Window which was a visual piece of software capable of overlaying several sources of data. It would become a single place where intelligence and data would be held about the city to enable better decision making.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Most people still feared crime even though crime was being reduced. How can this perception be changed? *It was difficult to change people's perception. Fear was often based around anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods which suffered from graffiti, litter and damage. Cleaning up these areas would influence a change in perception.*
- Data shown in the Safer Peterborough Partnership Plan shows a figure of 4713 crimes recorded in the Central Ward. This data could alarm people and increase the fear of crime. Did this figure include the City Centre? Would it be possible to breakdown the figure to show a separation of Central Ward and the City Centre? *A breakdown between the Central Ward and the City Centre could be provided in future reporting to this Committee.*
- If you were looking to do things differently to make a change what would you not want to do again going forward? What lessons have been learnt? *A major lesson learnt would be to ensure that any positive changes made today would not impact negatively on work done in the future. There was a need for agencies to work together in a collaboratively way to ensure that any decisions made in one agency did not have a negative impact on work carried out by another agency. The SDP would ensure this collaborative working. To stop thinking that the council always knew best and to accept that people who received the services may have a better idea/solution on how to deliver them. It was about working differently.*
- Members were concerned that Cross Keys were the only social landlord engaging with the council. *Members were informed that a board called the Peterborough Homes Board which consisted of representatives of all the social landlords, housing officers, the Executive Director of Operations and the Head of Neighbourhood Services met on a monthly basis. All representatives worked collaboratively through this forum to tackle housing issues across the city. Social landlords would also be actively involved in the SDP. The Registered Social Landlords Forum also met regularly to share data and issues. There were lots of examples of all the social landlords across the city engaging with the council. The biggest challenge for the council was that of rogue private landlords. The Head of Neighbourhood Services informed Members that he would be requesting support from the Committee in the future for new innovative ways of working going forward to address these issues.*
- Can you explain how Programme 2 - Supporting the most vulnerable families and tackling the causes of poverty will be delivered? *This programme did not fall within the remit of the Committee however there were many cross cutting elements within the programme that did relate to the work being looked at by the Committee. The project lead for the Family Poverty Project was Sian Peer who was a Commissioning Officer in Children's*

Services. Sian had developed a draft Child Poverty Strategy identifying ten programmes of work to tackle family poverty.

- Within the 'Delivering the Localism Agenda' Programme one of the deliverables was to strengthen accountability to local people. One activity for this deliverable was to work with the Peterborough Association of Local Councils to explore the opportunities and potential to parish other communities across Peterborough. Can you explain what this means. *This was a suggestion in the draft Localism Bill that was being explored which would look at the potential to parish urban and rural areas. Peterborough Association of Local Councils were very enthusiastic to explore this further but Members were advised that it was very much a piece of exploratory work.*
- When we have groups of other nationalities coming into the City do we have a system where by we can see what skills they have and what ideas they have for the City to include them in the vision for the City? *New Link which was a City Council project did identify the skills of new arrivals and identify any vacancies within the City to match those skills. This now sat within the Neighbourhood Teams and has continued as a main stream piece of work.*
- Do you help the voluntary associations in advising them where they can draw funding from other sources? *A piece of work was being undertaken to help empower the people within these associations. Advice would be given to them on where to go for funding, how to complete applications for funding and help identify other associations wanting to run similar projects so that they can work together to maximise the funding and outcomes.*
- How does the Localities Board fit in with the SDP? *Delivering the SDP would be through locality working which was the common thread throughout the SDP.*

The Chair thanked officers for an informative and interesting presentation and looked forward to the Committee receiving reports on each of the individual programmes mentioned.

ACTION AGREED

1. The Committee noted the report and requested that detailed reports be brought to the Committee on the programmes within the Single Delivery Plan that fall within the remit of the Committee:
 - a. Building voluntary and community sector capacity to deliver local services
 - b. Delivering the localism agenda
 - c. Tackling the causes of hate crime and community tension
 - d. Reducing Crime and Tackling Antisocial Behaviour and
 - e. Creating a Safe, Clean and Vibrant City Centre
 - f. Citizen Power Programme
2. The Head of Neighbourhood Services to provide the Committee with details of the Family Poverty Project.

6. Update on Recommendations Relating to Neighbourhood Committees

The report informed the Committee on the progress made in respect of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Group in relation to Neighbourhood Councils following Cabinet decisions in February and March 2011, and decisions at Annual Council in May 2011. In attendance were two Neighbourhood Managers who gave their perspective of how the delivery of Neighbourhood Committees had changed since the recommendations had been approved. Both reported a positive change for urban and rural Neighbourhood Committees and advised that the recommendations were starting to be embedded. There had also been a notable improvement in buy in to the concept of Neighbourhood Committees from all parties involved. Numbers of people in attendance at meetings were slowly starting to increase and positive feedback was being received. There was a lot more work to do but the changes were starting to make a difference.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Can you update the Committee on progress with regard to the recommendation on the disaggregation of budgets? *The principle of delegating mainstream revenue budgets had been agreed corporately. There would be a pilot using part of the highways budget disaggregated down to Neighbourhood Committees level later this year. There was also work being done on the Enterprise Contract to see which parts of the budget could be disaggregated down to Neighbourhood Committees.*
- What progress has been made with regard to creating a single, seamless approach to neighbourhood engagement? *Agreement had been obtained from the police to pilot a session where the Neighbourhood Police Panel and Neighbourhood Committee would meet at the same venue on the same evening*
- What progress had been made on organising a Neighbourhood Committee locality tour? *Ward tours were scheduled to commence in the autumn following the development of the Community Action Plans.*
- What progress had been made regarding the creation of a lead officer role within the Neighbourhoods division? *The job description was being evaluated and there had also been ongoing discussions regarding additional support around this role. Any developments with regard to this would be brought before the Committee at a later date when further detail had been finalised.*
- Had members of the Corporate Management Team (CMT) been identified to champion each Neighbourhood Committee? *CMT members had been identified for each committee and a Head of Service would also be allocated to each committee.*
- Councillor Burton informed Members that the Neighbourhood Council Review Group would reconvene in September to determine new terms of reference for the group going forward. Councillor Casey was invited to join the group.
- Some members were concerned that the Neighbourhood Committee meetings might become too lengthy if holding the Ward Forums, Neighbourhood Police Panels and Neighbourhood Committee on the same evening. *People would be able to attend which part of the meeting they were interested in and would not have to attend the whole evening. The ward forum would be an informal meeting place to come and talk to ward councillors and officers about issues and concerns in their neighbourhood. The Neighbourhood Panel would focus on low level street issues and the Neighbourhood Committee would concentrate on the strategic issues that would transform the neighbourhood. With good leadership and focused agenda's the meeting need not be lengthy. The meetings would be piloted and the outcomes would be brought back to the Committee for further discussion.*
- Members voiced concern as to why the Chairs for each Committee were chosen as some of them were not ward members in the area for the Neighbourhood Committee they chaired. *Members were advised that Chairs were appointed by Council each year and this had been discussed by the review group. The review group would continue to look at this concern going forward.*
- There had appeared to be a difference in the success of Neighbourhood Committees in the North and South of the City, can you explain why. *The North had struggled in the early days without a permanent Neighbourhood Manager which had impacted on the development of the Neighbourhood Committees. The debate between the relationship of Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Committees had also hindered progress. The strongest Committees had also had strong community development work in place. There was a strong team of Neighbourhood Managers now in place and progress was being made across all of the Neighbourhood Committees but it should also be noted that each Committee would naturally be very different.*
- What was happening regarding the offer of free transport to the Neighbourhood Committee meetings? *Free transport was being advertised on posters but so far no one had requested it.*

ACTION AGREED

The Committee requested a monthly email update on the progress of implementing the recommendations from the review of Neighbourhood Councils. If the Committee identify any issues then a full report would be brought to the Committee at the next available meeting.

7. 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 agreed that there were no items for further consideration.

8. Work Programme

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

The Senior Governance Officer advised the Committee that items listed on the work programme covering Grass Verge Parking and Dog Control Orders would fall within the remit of the Environment Capital Committee as they were enforcement issues.

ACTION AGREED

To confirm the work programme for 2011/12.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 14 September 2011

The meeting began at 7.00 and ended at 9.08pm

CHAIRMAN

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