

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM - TOWN HALL
ON 21 JANUARY 2010**

Present: Councillors Todd (Chairman), Collins, Fletcher, Kreling and Harrington

Co-Opted Member: Ansar Ali – Cambridgeshire Police Authority

Also present: Cllr Sandford Representing the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
Mark Bennett-Tighe Cambridgeshire Fire Service
Nick Bennett
Tony Barrios, Casualty Reduction Officer, Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Officers in Attendance: Paul Phillipson Executive Director - Operations
Kevin Tighe Head of Cultural Services
Christine Graham Safer Peterborough Partnership Manager
Clair George Road Safety Officer
Peter Tebb Traffic Manager
Emma Black Head of Legal Litigation
Paulina Ford Performance Scrutiny and Research Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Councillors S Day, John Fox and Goldspink. Councillor Harrington was in attendance as substitute for Councillor JR Fox.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 25 November 2009

The minutes of the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 November 2009 were approved as an accurate record.

Restorative Practices in Peterborough

Cllr Collins requested that it be noted that he felt the word “support” used within the first bullet point of the observations and questions in the minutes had not reflected the very strong and unconditional support that the Committee had given to the development of the Restorative Approaches in Peterborough. The Committee supported this view.

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

There were no requests for Call-in to consider.

5. Road Safety

The Road Safety Officer accompanied by a member of the Fire Service, a Victim of a Road Traffic Accident, a Casualty Reduction Officer and the Safer Peterborough Partnership Manager gave a presentation to the Committee on road safety.

The impact of road traffic collisions were:

- Casualties – injuries to parties, potentially life changing, loss of function and ability
- Cost to emergency services, hospital treatment
- Grief and suffering of family and friends
- Traffic Congestion – particularly if fatalities had occurred
- Increased fear in society particularly for child safety

Casualty reduction measures that were carried out included:

- Engineering solutions e.g. traffic calming
- Enforcement
- Publicity
- Training
- Education

The partners who were involved in helping to reduce traffic collisions were:

- Police
- Fire and Rescue Service
- Schools/Businesses/Retailers/Pubs and Clubs
- NHS
- Highways Agency
- Neighbouring Authorities/Department for Transport
- Voluntary/Community Groups
- And many more.....

Nick Bennet who had been a victim of a road traffic accident spoke to the Committee about his experience which had happened when he was 19 years old. The cause of Nick's accident was that he took a risk and over took two lorries whilst rushing to work because he was late one morning and had crashed into a three tonne lorry. Nick had spent 14 months in hospital and was now disabled and in a wheel chair. Nick explained that he now visited schools and colleges to warn youngsters of what could happen through careless driving. An officer from the Fire Service, who supported Nick's educational campaign in schools, explained the importance of the message that he was delivering to young people and that the Fire Service was firmly behind education in schools.

Observations and Questions:

- The Committee were very impressed with the work that Nick was doing and thanked him for attending the meeting. Members were interested in how Nick was helping to get the message across to young people about the dangers of careless driving and the possible long term effects on people's lives if they were involved in a traffic collision. Members felt that education of all drivers would ensure long term changes rather than enforcement. There was also a need for more police cars to be visible to catch people who were breaking the law whilst driving; however it was appreciated that the police could not be everywhere. Councillor Todd promised that the Committee would support the education of road safety in schools.

- The Casualty Reduction Officer explained that a lot of work had already been done with Peterborough City Council and Neighbourhood Panels to identify the main issues around road safety to enable them to target specific areas.
- A member of a rural ward explained that he was often asked what could be done about road safety on rural roads. There should be signs informing people that a road was dangerous and that accidents happened at certain speeds. There had been requests for speed limits to be put on particular parts of some roads but these had not been accepted.
- The Casualty Reduction Officer advised the Committee that a speed limit review was being undertaken. There needed to be realistic speed limits on roads to ensure that they could be effectively policed.
- Members suggested that 20 mph speed limit signs could be put up in areas where roads were particularly dangerous. The Traffic Manager advised that the Partnership Board had looked at 20mph speed limits.
- The Committee were encouraged to hear that the Partnership Board was looking into road safety. Members were also concerned about data especially about people who did not speak English and might therefore be less aware of road safety. The Road Safety Officer advised the Committee that data was always being checked and that a Basics Campaign for newcomers had been launched. This had been a visual campaign to help people who did not speak English understand. The 2010 Task and Finish Group Action Plan included expanding the Basics Campaign and officers had worked closely with New Link to develop the Campaign. Drop in sessions had been provided and there had also been door to door leaflet drops, visits to recruitment agencies, clubs and pubs to deliver the message.
- Members wanted to know how often Young Driver Education Days were held. Officers advised that they were offered to any school who wanted them but some schools either could not accommodate it or did not want it.
- Members asked officers what their views were of road safety cameras as opposed to vehicle activated signs (VAS). Officers responded that VAS were a gentle reminder to the conscious driver who would slow down but after a period would revert to normal speed. There were some trial signs that actually showed what the drivers speed was but safety cameras were a lot more effective as drivers did not want to risk getting points on their licence.
- Councillor Collins who was also a member of the Scrutiny Rural Commission advised that the Commission had recently recommended that a mandatory 20 MPH speed limit should be put in front of all schools. This speed limit would be linked to term times and school hours of 8.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.
- Members wanted to know what the cost of one road traffic accident was. Officers advised that the Department of Transport had said that one fatal accident cost the economy £1.8M. One serious accident cost £215K and one slight accident cost £22K.
- Members commented that engineering solutions were the responsibility of Peterborough City Council. When road safety issues in areas were raised by councillors they were told that there was only a limited amount of money and action would only be taken if a fatal accident had occurred. Street lighting out of action was also a problem which contributed to road safety.
- The Executive Director of Operations advised the Committee that 95% of all accidents were a result of drivers being at fault, therefore the biggest emphasis should be on the education of drivers. The current street lights were put in by the Development Corporation and if the roads were being built today then there would be no street lights on parkways. Regarding 20MPH speed limits outside schools, every new traffic sign would need to be consulted on and this cost money and did not guarantee that drivers would slow down. Statistics were low for the number of people killed and other accidents outside schools. This could be looked at but proportionally and the outcome of the rural study would be interesting. Nick's presentation was a tremendous message and the focus should be more around education in schools.
- Members supported 20MPH speed limits outside schools and wanted to see more information around this. The Traffic Manager advised the Committee that 20MPH speed

limit signs outside of primary schools in rural areas was being considered. The cost of implementing this would be approximately £15,000. Some schools would be easy to implement whilst others would be logistically more difficult. A consultation would take place under one traffic regulation order but every Parish would have to be consulted. Most schools did have a warning triangle and if the 20MPH sign was to be placed above the triangle it would be out of the motorists' eye line so the sign would need to be placed somewhere effective.

- Neighbourhoods could take responsibility for their own areas by using the Community Speed Watch. Officers advised that there were speed watch kits at Hampton and two other police stations. Communities had contacted the police to use them and there was some analysis being done to see if they had been effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University, the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Community Development and the Executive Director of Operations introduce an educational awareness programme for road safety in all schools to influence the behaviour of young people when they become drivers.
- (ii) That the Executive Director of Operations undertakes a feasibility study of a 20MPH speed limit outside all schools and reports back to the Committee with the findings at a future meeting.

6. Cultural and Leisure Trust

The Head of Cultural Services gave a presentation to the Committee outlining the proposal for the Culture and Leisure Trust. The presentation provided the following information:

- Why have a Cultural and Leisure Trust?
 - It would attract more customers
 - Give a higher quality of service
 - Produce Pride in Peterborough
 - Would be more efficient: Money, Agility
- Two rounds of consultations had already taken place with staff, trade unions and stakeholders. A Frequently Asked Question page had been produced on Insite.
- A Shadow Board had been appointed which consisted of six members who had been recruited through a public advert and were known as Trustees.
- The purpose of the Cultural Trust was “to deliver inspiring culture and leisure services which enrich the lives of residents and visitors to Peterborough”.
- The aims of the Trust would be:
 - Delivery of innovative, financially sustainable and excellent cultural and leisure services
 - Becoming the cultural and leisure partner of choice for organisations locally, regionally and beyond
 - Increasing the number and range of people that took part in cultural and leisure opportunities-enriching people's lives and enhancing the local cultural offer
 - Contributing to the wider social agenda of: improving people's health, developing individuals and pride in the community.
- Services that would be included in the Trust were libraries, sports, arts and heritage but not bereavement services.
- There would be 4 National Indicators and 23 Key Local Indicators that would measure the performance of the Trust.

- The competitive procurement process in accordance with EU requirements had commenced and there had been three tenders.
- There were some pension issues still to be resolved.
- Development going forward would include:
 - Supporting people to begin a career in the cultural and leisure section through creative apprenticeships; volunteer opportunities; work placements; Future Jobs Fund
 - A new and bigger range of holiday activities aimed particularly at children and young people such as Museum school holiday experiences including trails, walks and workshops
 - Delivering a creative 'edge' to the Peterborough Festival through a new programme of 'fringe performances'
 - Bringing the Peterborough Art Gallery to life by delivering a programme of at least 6 Artist in Residence events
 - Books on prescription
 - Improved gym provision at the Regional Pool

A paper was due to go to Cabinet in February to make a decision on whether to go forward with the proposal of a Cultural and Leisure Trust.

Observations and Questions:

- Members commented that the Cultural and Leisure Trust business plan was incomplete and therefore felt unable to scrutinise or comment fully on the proposal. The Committee requested that the completed business plan be brought back to a meeting prior to it being presented to Cabinet.
- Members asked if Gladstone Park would be included in the Trust. The Head of Cultural Services advised that it would not be included as it was already a strong community service.
- If the Cultural and Leisure Trust was a registered Charity would it be able to attract funding. The Head of Cultural Services advised that it would have a good chance of attracting funding.
- Who would the Trust be accountable to? The Head of Cultural Services advised Members that the Trust would be accountable to the Charities Commission. The Council would be paying money to the Trust and therefore the Trust would also be accountable to the Council.
- Who would be accountable for fees and charges? Members were advised that fees and charges were the responsibility of the Executive Director of Operations and those fees and charges were set by the market place. There was a moral responsibility to set fees responsibly otherwise people would stop using the services. Accountability would lie with the Trustees.
- Members asked how the Trust would ensure that the Key Theatre did not just put on shows to get people to fill seats and ensure that there was a wide range of entertainment on offer. The Head of Cultural Services advised Members that the Trustees were passionate about the Arts and would ensure quality control over the provision of entertainment.
- How were the Trustees chosen? Members were advised that the Trustees were appointed through a public advert. There would be 12 Trustees in total but there were currently only 6. The people appointed would be passionate about the arts, heritage and sports. The strength of the 6 current members was with arts and heritage. Trustees would not sit on the Board continuously and a third of the Trustees would come off every year. Two of the Trustees would be City Councillors nominated by the Board.
- With the permission of the Chairman, the Chair of the Peterborough Museum Society presented the views of the Society to the Committee as:
 - The Society was concerned that the Museum was going to be placed under the proposed Cultural and Leisure Trust.

- They were concerned that sports, arts and heritage were going to be in one group and felt that it would be better if sports was a separate Trust.
- There had been very little consultation with the Museum.
- Peterborough people had a right to know what was happening.
- In principle the Society had no objection to the Trust.
- Funding for the Trust would be for five years. What would happen at the end of that period? Historically problems occurred at the end of funding.
- The Society was very concerned that the Trust would not be set up in the right way.
- Members agreed that sport and culture were very different and wanted to know if there could be two sub committees within the Trust. The Head of Cultural Services advised that governance did create two wings one for sport and one for the rest.

ACTIONS AGREED

That the Executive Director of Operations and Head of Cultural Services bring the Business Plan for the Cultural and Leisure Trust before this Committee prior to taking it to Cabinet so that it may be scrutinised in full.

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 to bring to the Committee.

8. Work Programme

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2009/2010 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

ACTION AGREED

To confirm the work programme 2009/10.

9. Date of Next Meeting

18 March 2010

CHAIRMAN
7.00 - 9.30 pm