

**MINUTES OF THE ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT 7PM ON
MONDAY, 1 JULY 2019
BOURGES / VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillors N Simons (Chairman), R. Bisby, S Bond, R. Brown (Vice-Chairman), L Coles, John Fox, J Howard, J Howell, H Skibsted, I Yasin. Co-opted Member: Parish Councillor Neil Boyce

Officers Present: Adrian Chapman - Service Director, Communities and Safety
Sarah Ferguson – Asst. Director, Housing Communities and Youth
Cate Harding – Community Capacity Manager
Dave Anderson – Interim Development Director
Sean Evans – Head of Housing Needs
Rob Hill – Assistant Director, Public Protection
David Beauchamp – Democratic Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Jamil and K. Aitken. Councillors H. Skibsted and L. Coles were in attendance as substitutes.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

**3. MINUTES OF THE ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON 12 MARCH 2019**

The minutes of the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 12 March 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. CALL IN OF ANY CABINET, CABINET MEMBER OR KEY OFFICER DECISIONS

There were no requests for call in to consider.

5. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which recommended that the Committee appoint Parish Council Neil Boyce as a non-voting co-opted member to represent the rural areas for the municipal year 2019/20.

The appointment of Parish Councillor Neil Boyce was proposed by Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Bisby and agreed **UNANIMOUSLY**.

ACTIONS AGREED:

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to appoint Parish Councillor Neil Boyce as a non-voting co-opted member to represent the rural areas for the municipal year 2019/20. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.

6. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN NEIGHBOURHOOD ISSUES

The report was introduced by the Assistant Director – Housing, Communities and Youth, accompanied by the Community Capacity Manager. The report invited members to approve the recommendations of the Task and Finish group which has reviewed Community Involvement in Neighbourhood Issues during 2017 - 2018, in the context of significant programmes of work which have emerged since June 2017.

The report provided an opportunity for the Committee to be updated on progress against these wider programmes of work and agree to specific recommendations arising from them.

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members referred to item 4.12.2 on page 21 of the reports pack and expressed a view that Young People had been neglected. Members asked if the 'programmes of positive' events would help to help to create Youth Clubs via assistance with buildings, equipment etc. Members felt it was important to help youth groups become established in order to provide young people with an alternative to anti-social behaviour and asked if this was part of the Integrated Communities work and if funding was available.
- Officers responded that the Council's collaboration with the Peterborough Council for Voluntary Services via the Youth Investment fund had helped to provide youth services, including Youth Clubs. The City Council no longer provided direct support to these services. The focus was on helping youth community groups to operate independently and there were examples of this successfully taking place. Officers would pursue these collaborations with the voluntary sector and communities to work with young people whenever possible.
- There had been an overwhelmingly positive response with communities coming forward to seek assistance in setting up voluntary youth clubs and support, recognising the fact that the Council could no longer provide a universal service in this area. Many successful youth clubs were being developed across the City and the Council would continue to support these efforts.
- The focus of the Think Communities Forward Plan was to develop a focused place-based approach to use assets across the city, engage with community leaders and conduct social action.
- Members requested further information about work to 'Sign up Work 60 employers in Peterborough to Disability Confident' on page 39 of the reports pack. Members felt it was important to encourage employers to feel that they could meet the needs of people with disabilities and asked if officers had liaised with the Disability Forum or Westcombe Industries. Officers responded that they believed that they had had liaised with the Disability Forum and would discuss Westcombe Engineering's work with JobCentre Plus who were leading in this area.

- The Committee requested that officers confirm that engagement had taken place with the Peterborough Disability Forum. Officers to also confirm with Jobcentre Plus that they were engaging with Westcombe Engineering.
- Members referred to the '20 community guides' to be trained, mentioned on page 39 of the reports pack, and asked how they would be selected and if they would be based in specific areas. Officers responded that two community development workers had been recruited who would employ an asset/place-based approach to identify community leaders. These workers would undertake initial 'mapping' to identify existing activities and current community leaders. They would be supported by an external service to provide training, support and guidance to identify those who wished to work as guides to address issues in a particular neighbourhood. It was not possible to pre-empt who would be recruited. Mapping and proactive community engagement needed to take place first to encourage people to come forward and identify the strengths, assets and skills available in a particular area.
- Community guides would be recruited imminently and the community development workers had already been recruited.
- Members expressed concern over the criteria for the selection of Community Guides and suggested that Councillors should be considered because of their knowledge of individual wards. Officers responded that this process had just begun and would share additional information with members.
- The Committee requested more information on the Criteria used to select Community Guides
- Members asked how officers saw the role of Councillors. Officers responded that they were engaging with ward councillors as they were most familiar with particular areas of the City. Councillors should be ambassadors for the scheme and understand the contest in which the Council were working and be aware of the limitations. It was important to emphasise the shift from thinking the Council had all the answers to working with Communities for them to generate their own ideas instead.
- The Community Connectors would start work in August.
- It was acknowledged that parking provision was inadequate in Development Corporation areas and beyond, with particular difficulties faced on the Ortons. There were more cars per house than had been designed for.
- Officers stated that it was important to have a conversation about what it would cost to address these problems. Officers expressed support for developing creative solutions to parking issues and members expressed support for this taking place soon.
- Officers emphasised that this community work would only work with the involvement of Councillors due to their local knowledge. The Think Communities Work was inspired by a 2018 meeting of All Party Policy where a member discussed work underway in their ward to tackle drug paraphernalia. This encouraged officers and members to realise that Councillors were a group of 60 people who represented 200,000 and that this asset could be better utilised by officers than had been done in the past. This Committee would have a fundamental role in holding officers to account.
- Members referred to section 4.12.1 on page 20 of the reports pack and asked for further information on how the £300,000 communities fund would be spent. Officers responded that £220,000 had already been allocated with the rest to be distributed in September 2019. Additional information could be found on the Council's website.
- Members requested detailed information how the £300,000 Communities Fund had been spent as a briefing note.

- Members referred to the 'Consultation' section (section 5, page 21 of the reports pack) and asked if venues had been agreed for 'Community Conversations' and asked if these would include rural areas, noting that they had not received any publicity about them.
- Officers responded that they were planning a series of focus group conversations in Peterborough asking people how they felt about integration and living in the areas they do. This work was related to the Integrated Communities Strategy work and would be planned and delivered by University College Peterborough (UCP). Think Communities was a piece of work being delivered across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and would include activities such as online and street surveys and events across the city. A list of locations would be provided and officers would aim to ensure these were not purely urban in nature. Officers recognised the importance of capturing a diverse range of voices in both urban and rural areas.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to

1. Consider key recommendations from the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group - Community Involvement in Neighbourhood Issues as set out in section 4.6 of this report.
2. Note the update on the development of Think Communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and consider progress on key contributory programmes and initiatives in Peterborough, including Peterborough's Interim Integrated Communities Strategy 'Belonging Together'.
3. Note and agree to the proposal to explore bringing together a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough VCS infrastructure support contract from August 2020
4. Agree the new direction for how the original Task & Finish Group's objectives and recommendations can be fulfilled via Think Communities
5. Requested more information on the Criteria used to select Community Guides
6. Requested detailed information how the £300,000 Communities Fund had been spent
7. Requested that officers confirm that engagement had taken place with the Peterborough Disability Forum. Officers to also confirm with Jobcentre Plus that they were engaging with Westcombe Engineering.
8. Request that officers provide a list of locations for 'Community Conversations' to members to ensure there was sufficient representation of rural areas.

7. REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION STRATEGY 2018-2020 AND SAFER OFF THE STREETS

The Assistant Director of Housing, Communities Youth, the Interim Development Director and the Head of Housing Needs presented the report which provided the committee with an update of progress in delivering the City Council's Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018 - 2020 and sought comments and agreements from members to the proposed process for 113 review of the review of the strategy and development of a new strategy for 2020 - 2025.

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members referred to section 6.1 on page 43 of the reports pack, noting that there had been more referrals from the Department of Work and Pensions, Prisons and Probation Services and stating that it was important to break the cycle of reoffending by helping to provide a person with somewhere to live and a job. Members asked officers if they were finding this difficult and for information about work with these other agencies.
- Officers responded that they had indeed seen an increase in referrals from the agencies mentioned, leading to an increased in people's expectations. The Homelessness Reduction Act gave the Council the ability to set realistic expectations and set targets for individuals. In the past a rigid five stage process had to be followed. The process was now much more flexible. The focus was on supporting people's transitions from Place A (e.g. a prison) to Point B (securing accommodation) and ensuring sufficient support was in place to support this. A personalised plan was developed for each person containing actions to be completed by both the individual and relevant agencies. If the action plan was followed, a person would have permanent sustainable accommodation found for them.
- The Council had an officer who visited prisons to enhance collaboration. There was also a homelessness forum which included representatives from the Prison, Police and Probation services, providing an opportunity to identify key issues and discuss different ways of working together. Peterborough City Council was part of a Cambridgeshire and Peterborough 'Homelessness Trailblazer' which looked at new offender pathways. More work needed to be done but the Council were moving in the right direction and improvements had been made.
- The Council should be informed 56 days before a prisoner was be released although this did not occur in reality. People moving between prisons caused difficulties in this area. The Council had a good relationship with prisons and it was rare that the Council were informed of a prisoner's release on the day it happened.
- Members praised the work of the Head of Housing Needs and the Garden House scheme.
- Members noted that there were currently six veterans sleeping rough and that other local authorities had introduced housing for Veterans because of the complex problems they often faced, noting that there was no such provision in Peterborough although this had been attempted in the past. Members felt that Peterborough City Council should take a lead to secure at least four houses as emergency accommodation for homeless veterans. Members emphasised that there was a veteran's liaison officer in the prison who liaised with the Armed Forces Partnership Board.
- Some members felt that it was sometimes difficult for people to understand that housing could not be provided by the Council if there was a lack of supply.
- Officers responded that an underspend by the service in 2018/19 had been used to support homeless veterans. Some of this funding had been given to the Garden House to support veterans in Peterborough. A dedicated part time Project Officer had also been appointed across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to work on helping homeless veterans with housing. A great deal of work was underway to support veterans and it was hoped that a report on progress made would be provided in 2020/2021.
- Members raised a specific example of a rough sleeper who had been found in a Community Centre who had been moved on without finding out their circumstances. Members therefore asked who such organisations should contact if they experienced this in the future. Officers responded that it was

important for information on homelessness and how to report specific instances to be widely published, including case studies. Extra information would be provided on the website and work on communications was a major focus in 2019. Streetlink.org was the nationally recognised route for rough sleeper referrals and the Peterborough City Council website also contained a reporting form. Officers also felt it was important to liaise with those running community facilities so that targeted interventions could be made at the right time. It was important the Community Centres had all the relevant information and this might not have been done fully in the past.

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ACTIONS AGREED

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the progress of Peterborough City Council and partners in the delivery of the Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2018 - 2020
2. Note the progress made in tackling rough sleeping in the City since the last update of Safer Off the Streets
3. Consider, comment on and agree to the details of the process and timescales for reviewing the new Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleepers Strategy 2020 - 2025

8. PREVENT STRATEGY REFRESH – 2019/2021 (CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ITEM 8 ONLY)

The report was presented by the Assistant Director – Public Protection which outlined the newly combined Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Prevent Strategy.

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members referred to section 2.3 on page 73 of the reports pack and queried why the response to 'How this does this report link to the Children in Care' pledge was listed as 'N/A' when it had been demonstrated that people with adverse childhood experiences were more vulnerable. Officers agreed that there was a link to the Children in Care Pledge and that this should not have been listed as 'N/A'.
- Members emphasised the importance of liaison between Cllr Kevin Cuffley from Cambridgeshire County Council and Cllr. Irene Walsh from Peterborough City Council as the issues raised in the report crossed local authority borders. Members expressed confidence that they would do this successfully. Officers added that both Councillors would be invited to be standing members of the County Board and would be able to provide regular input. Members felt that these members should also attend Community Safety Partnerships. This was noted by officers.

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RECOMMENDATION:

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to endorse the strategy for approval by Cabinet and supported its relaunch via an internal and external engagement plan.

ACTIONS AGREED:

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to scrutinise and comment on the proposed refreshed Prevent Strategy for 2019/2021.

9. REVIEW OF 2018/19 AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2019/2020

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which considered the 2018/19 year in review and looked at the work programme for the new municipal year 2019/20 to determine the Committee's priorities. The report asked the committee to consider if further monitoring of recommendations made during 2018/19 was required.

There were no further comments made.

ACTIONS AGREED:

The Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to

1. Consider items presented to the Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee during 2018/19 and makes recommendations on the future monitoring of these items where necessary.
2. Determine its priorities, and approve the draft work programme for 2019/2020 attached at Appendix 1.
3. Note the Recommendations Monitoring Report attached at Appendix 2 and considers if further monitoring of the recommendations made during the 2018/2019 municipal year is required.
4. Note the Terms of Reference for this Committee as set out in Part 3, Section 4, Overview and Scrutiny Functions and in particular paragraph 2.1 item 2 Adults and Communities Scrutiny Committee and paragraph 3.4 Crime and Disorder as attached at Appendix 3.

10. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Democratic Services officer introduced the report which invited Members to consider the most recent version of the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and identify any relevant items for inclusion within the Committee's work programme or to request further information.

There were no further comments made.

ACTIONS AGREED:

The Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to consider the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10 September 2019.

Chairman
7pm – 8.07pm