

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE
BOURGES & VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH
ON
TUESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2014**

Present: Councillors Khan (Chairman), J.R Fox (Vice Chairman) Day, Peach, Forbes and Okonkowski

Also Present: Councillor Lucia Serluca Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism.

Officers in Attendance:

Lisa Roberts	Culture and Leisure Partnership Manager
Dominic Hudson	Strategic Partnerships Manager
Robin Sissons	Head of Safer, Stronger, Supportive Communities
Iain Easton	Head of Youth Offending Service and Leaving Care
Nicola Fenton	Police & Crime Commissioners Outreach Worker
Hayley Thornhill	Intelligence Manager
Annette Joyce	Assistant Director for Commercial Operations
Adrian Chapman	Assistant Director of Communities and Targeted Services
Dania Castagliuolo	Governance Officer

1. Apologies

No apologies were received.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

There were no declarations of interest.

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

There were no requests for Call-in to consider.

4. Portfolio Progress Report from Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism to provide Members with a progress report in relation to matters relevant to this Committee.

The Council's Constitution set out the responsibilities of the Cabinet Member, including:

- Commercial Operations, including city centre management and tourism
- Culture and Leisure
- Vivacity

These responsibilities fell under the remit of the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee, other responsibilities.

Key points highlighted within the report were as follows:

- Commercial Operations
- Tourism
- Markets
- City Centre Management
- Parking
- CCTV
- Culture and Leisure (Sports Strategy)
- Review of Libraries and Community Centres
- Culture Strategy
- Vivacity Contract
- Sports
- Arts
- Heritage, Libraries and Archives (HLA)

Members were asked to scrutinise the progress made on the aspects of the Cabinet Member's portfolio relevant to the Committee by providing challenge where necessary and to suggest ideas and initiatives to support the continued delivery of priorities within that portfolio.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Members requested information on the long term plans for the City Market. *The Assistant Director for Commercial Operations responded that there were no plans to relocate the market, just develop it.*
- Members were concerned that the rise in the city's car parking charges would discourage people from using the city centre. *Members were informed that the car parking charges had not been increased for a number of years, therefore, it needed to be balanced out.*
- Members queried whether bowls and tennis courts were within the remit of Vivacity, as there were plans to reduce their use. *The Culture and Leisure Partnership Manager responded that the Bowls club was not within the contract although, Vivacity were looking to put in a bid for it.*
- Members were concerned that the War Memorial event in Peterborough was not very well attended. *The Assistant Director for Commercial Operations responded that there had been a whole day dedicated to commemorate World War 1. The idea was to mark the occasion and not to attract thousands of people to the memorial.*
- Members commented that Vivacity had performed very well under the current economic climate although, they did not feel they were open and transparent enough. *The Culture and Leisure Partnership Manger responded that Vivacity had a standing item on the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee agenda. All of the advertisements for trustees were public. There was also an open email policy in place.*
- Members commented that CCTV was one of the greatest assets Peterborough had, they made people feel safer.
- Members expressed concern for the future of the City Market and queried what the plans were. *The Assistant Director for Commercial Operations responded that the new Market Development Manager was putting together a strategic plan for the City Market and suggested he was invited back to scrutiny once the plan had been drafted.*
- Members asked if there was going to be any investment in to the City Market. *Members were advised that this would be decided once there was understanding of the needs of the City Market. Some investment in painting and cleaning had already been carried out.*
- Members queried if there had been any market research in to what people would like to see happen to the City Market. *Members were informed that last Christmas, 2,500 people filled in a questionnaire and what they requested had already been actioned.*
- Members suggested that new fencing was put in place around the Market.

5. Review of the Consultation Results from Libraries and Community Centres

The Culture and Leisure Partnership Manager introduced the report for the Committee to review the responses to the public consultation on libraries and community centres and to review the proposed approach to supporting community centres in future, to secure a sustainable network of effective and efficient centres.

An eight week consultation was carried out between 4 August and 26 September 2014 to understand which libraries and community centres people used around Peterborough, when and how often they used them and what they used them for. In total 5,110 responses were received during the consultation period.

The Council also consulted with all parish councils and clerks, registered community and resident groups, voluntary sector partners such as the disability forum, Peterborough Citizens Advice Bureau and MP's.

In addition the Council met with the management committees of community centres to gather information about what the centres were used for, how they were managed, which sections of the community used them and when they had activities available. In total 91% of the community centres participated in the fact finding exercise.

The Committee was asked to note and comment on the report.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Members queried whether community centres were going to close. *The Culture and Leisure Partnership Manager responded that the Council was looking to retain the majority of sustainable community centres.*
- Members suggested that a forum was created where community centres shared best practice and that the Council offered businesses a plan for best practice.
- *The Culture and Leisure Partnership Manager advised Members that comprehensive details for each building were required before any decisions on the community centres were made. The key principal was to discover if the building was fit for purpose, this work would not be complete until 2015. Most community centres had been visited to gain ideas on how the Council could support them. Closure of the buildings was not the Council's main priority.*
- Members commented that they felt uncomfortable with the words 'fit for purpose'. *Members were reassured that the Council was keen to ensure that consultations and evaluations were carried out properly and sensitively. This was reflected by the amount of time allocated to these consultations. It was very important to be completely transparent with the community groups.*
- Members queried at what point was the Council going to engage with community centre representatives. *Members were informed that the community centre representatives had already been sent the consultation results and presentations had been delivered to them, including the options.*
- *The Cabinet member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism advised the committee to pass on her details to anyone who had any queries with reference to community centres.*
- Members queried whether the Central Library was going to be relocated. *The Strategic Partnerships Manager responded that there were currently no plans to relocate the Central Library.*
- Members queried how savings were going to be made. *The Culture and Leisure Partnership Manager responded that this had not yet been decided. The Council were going to work with Vivacity to look at a number of different models.*
- Members queried if there were any proposals to have further consultation. *Members were informed that any models would have to go out to a second consultation.*
- Members were concerned that there would be no time for the Committee to look at the final document, if it was going to be taken to Cabinet in January. *Members were advised that it would only be the proposals which would be presented to Cabinet in January, therefore, this would leave time for the Committee to scrutinise the final document.*
- Members queried whether the proposals would be part of the phase two budget proposals. *Members were informed that the consultation would sit slightly outside of the budget proposals.*

- Members referred to page 71 of the report and queried how small voluntary organisations could possibly manage to maintain the building costs. *Members were advised that organisations were already managing to achieve this by sustaining the insurances and maintenance of the buildings..*
- Members queried how many community centres out of 53 were running themselves. *Members were advised that the Council only paid leases for 5 out of 33 community centres.*
- Members queried how community centres ran themselves. *Members were informed that the majority of community centres were ran as a business to generate money from holding events and renting halls and rooms for meetings. The Assistant director added that community centres could be further supported by moving some statutory services in to them to provide a rental income, or by using the Trust model which was referred to on page 20, 6.4, of the report.*
- Members queried how many community centres had been transferred under the Community Asset Transfer Programme. *Members were advised that there had been a Cabinet Member Decision Notice for the transfer of play centres but not community centres.*
- Members requested reassurance that the process would be as simple as possible for voluntary organisations. *The Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Leisure responded that the Council could not put all the work on to the voluntary organisations, the Council needed to work in partnership with them.*

ACTION AGREED

The Committee agreed for the Strategic Client Manager to check the consultation timescale against January and March's meetings.

6. Safer Peterborough Partnership Plan – Priority 1 – Addressing Crime by Tackling Offending and Priority 3 – Building Stronger and Safer Communities

The report was introduced by the Head of Safer, Stronger, Supportive Communities to provide Members with an overview of performance and activity by the Safer Peterborough Partnership (SPP) and its constituent responsible and cooperating authorities in relation to Priority 1 and 3 of the 2014 – 2017 Safer Peterborough Partnership Plan.

The Committee was asked to note the content of the report and apply the appropriate scrutiny to its content.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Members Queried why the figures for hate crime had risen. *The Head of Safer, Stronger, and Supportive Communities responded that this could be due to the victims of hate crime having more confidence to report it than before.*
- Members commented that more work was required in order to gain trust from people with learning difficulties. *The Police and Crime Commissioners Outreach Worker advised the Committee that she had been going in to schools to deliver sessions on hate crime.*
- Members were concerned that there had been various incidents which had occurred which had led people from ethnic minorities to have no confidence in the police. *The Head of Safer, Stronger and Supportive Communities responded that there was a voluntary scheme in place which fed back the community voice to the police.*
- Members queried how the police were going to interact with young people now that all of the budget cuts had been made. *The Head of Youth Offending Service and leaving care responded that there were a number of projects supported by the police which were run for young people of mixed ethnicity, including activities such as boxing and football. The Police and Crime Commissioner's Outreach Worker commented that they were in to the third week of the volunteer police cadets. Twenty five percent of the police cadets were made up of vulnerable young people. This project was being fully supported by the constabulary and aimed to break down barriers with young people.*
- Members queried what the selection criteria was for the police cadets. *Members were informed that there was no specific selection criteria in place at present. It worked on a first come, first served basis.*

- Members commented that it would be useful for Peterborough to introduce voluntary community wardens.
- Members commented that it would be good for Councillors to work alongside the Police as they were often unaware of issues within their wards. *The Head of Safer, Stronger, Supportive Communities informed Members that there was a new model commencing where daily briefs with partners would occur and the objective was to identify priorities and feed back to the Community.*
- Members queried whether support was offered to both the victim and perpetrators families following a case of Child Sexual Exploitation. *The Head of Youth Offending Service and Leaving Care responded that support was offered to the families of both.*

ACTON AGREED

The Committee agreed for the Head of Community and Safety Services to circulate examples of where the Youth Offending Service has successfully brought young offenders back in to the community.

7. The Connecting Families Programme

The Intelligence Manager introduced the report to update the Committee on the current phase of the Connecting Families Programme and proposals for the expanded programme, planned for implementation in 2015.

The Connecting Families Programme was the name given in Peterborough to the national Troubled Families Programme. Troubled families were those that had problems and often caused problems to the community around them, putting high costs on the public sector. In December 2011, the Prime Minister launched a new programme to turn around the lives of 120,000 troubled families in England by 2015.

Members were asked to scrutinise the progress made on the Connecting Families Programme by providing challenge where necessary and to suggest ideas and initiatives to support the continued delivery of priorities within the programme.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Members queried what happened in the event that a family could not be turned around. *The Intelligence Manager responded that they would always try to turn families around, some were very challenging and they would be signposted to other services which could offer them more support.*
- Members queried what was meant by 'turn around'. *Members were advised that this referred to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as getting parents back in to work and children back in to school.*
- Members commented that the work achieved by the Connecting Families Programme in Peterborough was tremendous and long overdue.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee noted the report.

8. Scrutiny in a Day – One Year on

The Assistant Director for Communities and Targeted Services introduced the report to update the Committee on proposals for reviewing the joint Scrutiny in a Day event on the impacts of welfare reform.

The Committee was asked to agree to hold a further joint scrutiny event on 9 January 2015 to review the progress made against the lines of enquiry developed at the Scrutiny in a Day event.

ACTION AGREED

The Commission noted the report and agreed to the proposal of a further joint scrutiny event.

9. Forward Plan of Executive Decisions

The Committee received the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan of Executive Decisions, containing key decisions that the Leader of the Council anticipated the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would make during the course of the forthcoming month. 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 of Executive Decisions and agreed to receive a briefing note on the following key decision:

- Fit to Rent Scheme

10 Work Programme

Members considered the Commission's Work Programme for 2014/15 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

AGREED ACTION

Members noted the work programme for 2014/2015

11. Date of the Next Meeting

The Chairman advised that the next date of the Meeting for Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee was due to be held on Wednesday, 14 January 2014.

The meeting began at 7.00pm and ended at 9.02pm

CHAIRMAN