

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

16 JUNE 2010

Present: Councillors Todd (Chairman), Day, Simons, Peach and Goldspink

Co-Opted Member: Ansar Ali – Cambridgeshire Police Authority

Officers in Attendance:	Paul Phillipson	Executive Director - Operations
	Christine Graham	Safer Peterborough Partnership Manager
	Paulina Ford	Performance Scrutiny and Research Officer
	Amy Brown	Solicitor

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillors Fletcher, Collins, and JR Fox. Councillor Peach was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Collins.

2. Declarations

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March and 6 April 2010

The minutes of the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 18 March and 6 April 2010 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.

CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5. Designated Public Place Order (DPPO)

The Safer Peterborough Partnership Manager introduced a report which proposed the implementation of a Designated Public Places Order (DPPO) to tackle anti social drinking in the Fletton Ward. Members were advised that consultation on the proposed DPPO had taken place with the public, Police, owners of licensed premises in the area, ward councillors and residents groups and no negative responses had been received. Statistical information had been collected from the Police about the levels of anti social behaviour and alcohol related incidents in the area. The DPPO was a tool to help address issues around drinking and would be used alongside other measures to assist in tackling anti social behaviour. DPPO's were popular with local residents as it demonstrated that their concerns had been listened to. A DPPO meant that it would be an offence to continue to consume alcohol when asked to stop by a Police Officer but it was not an alcohol ban. The DPPO would go to full Council for approval in time for the summer period when anti social drinking would be at its worst.

Observations and Questions:

- How many DPPO's are there in the city and how effective are they? The officer responded that there was in the region of 6 or 7 in place which included the City Centre, Stanley Recreation ground, and three in the Orton's.
- Why has this area been chosen for a DPPO? Members were advised by the officer that complaints had been received from residents living in the area. As soon as there was a request to consider a DPPO officers looked at whether there were other tools already in place and if they were already aware of any other problems in the area. This area had historically been a problem during the summer months.
- Were there enough officers to police the various restrictions and bans? The officer advised that the police would patrol the area more in the summer months and that the DPPO gave the police another tool to help with anti social drinking.
- When had the consultation taken place as the Neighbourhood Council was not included on the list of consultees? The officer advised that it had taken place over a period of 28 days from the end of April to the end of May and unfortunately had not fitted in with the timetable for the Neighbourhood Council for this area.
- Could the relevant Neighbourhood Council be included in the consultation process in the future? The solicitor advised that this was being looked into. This particular DPPO did not include the Neighbourhood Council due to the timing of when the DPPO was required. The possibility of whether the decision making process could be delegated to Neighbourhood Councils rather than having to go to full Council was currently being examined.
- Would this be a permanent order? The officer advised that it was not a time limited order.
- Was there a danger that by putting a DPPO in one particular area that it would only push the problem into another area? The officer advised that from the knowledge that they had there was a possibility of displacement but the likelihood of the problem moving from a recreation area to a residential area was less likely but it would be monitored closely.
- Could DPPO signs be fixed to the side of bins so that they were obvious when people were sitting next to the bins? The officer said that would be looked into.
- Car crime seemed to be on the increase along with breaking into bookmakers. The officer advised that car crime had been on the increase but was now at its lowest level and crimes against bookmakers were actually very rare. Serious acquisitive crime was taken very seriously and was scrutinised on a monthly basis.
- Did we have enough special constables in place to support the Police? The Executive Director of Operations advised that there were never enough special constables but that there was currently a big recruitment drive to increase numbers.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee:

- (i) Endorsed the proposed Designated Public Places Order; and
- (ii) Recommended the adoption of the Designated Public Places Order to Full Council.

6. Review of 2009/10 and Future Work Programme

The report provided the Committee with a review of the work undertaken during 2009/10 and the draft work programme for 2010/11. The Committee were asked to consider their work from last year and to decide on any items they wished to continue to monitor this year. The Committee were also asked to develop their work programme for the coming year.

Review of the Last Year

During the last year, the Committee considered the following issues:

- Performance of the Local Area Agreement
- Cultural and Leisure Trust
- Portfolio Progress from Cabinet Members relevant to the Committee
- Sustainable Communities Act and Neighbourhood Management
- Neighbourhood Councils
- Homelessness Prevention Action Plan
- How has the economic downturn had an effect on the amount and type of crime in Peterborough?

As the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee the Committee considered the following issues:

- Crime and Disorder Committee – Protocol and Working Arrangements
- Serious Acquisitive Crime
- Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence
- Safer Peterborough Partnership – Young Offenders Initiatives
- Restorative Justice Approach to Youth Crime
- Section 75 Pooled funding arrangements for substance misuse services
- Road Safety
- Safer Peterborough Partnership Plan
- Policing Pledge

Work Programme for 2010/11

Suggestions for items for the work programme had been sought from Officers prior to the meeting and the Committee were advised of these:

- Cohesion Action Plan
- Neighbourhood Councils
- The 'Big Society' - a new Government initiative
- Citizen Power in Peterborough
- Family Recovery Programme
- Strategic housing function

Observations regarding recommendations made during last years work programme:

Restorative Practices in Peterborough

The Committee had recommended at its meeting on 25 November 2009 that the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Executive Directors for Children's Services and Operations support the development of restorative justice practices in Peterborough by undertaking a number of actions, including:

- Identifying resources and funding in the amount of £60,000 to secure a full time Restorative Justice Development Officer;
- Identifying a training budget to enable officers to be trained to deliver restorative justice practices across Peterborough. These officers would then train other officers in restorative justice practices;
- Working with the Restorative Justice Steering Group and Team to support the ongoing development of restorative justice practices which would ensure that Peterborough became a restorative justice authority; and
- Ensuring that the awareness and profile of restorative justice practices were embedded across the authority

The Cabinet Member had supported the recommendations and had said that she was committed to doing all that she could to achieve successful outcomes for youth offenders and to undertake whatever approaches were possible to prevent re offending. Officers had also supported the approach but did not have the resources to take it forward on a formal basis.

The Chair advised that she had noted the responses to the recommendations and was disappointed that the resources had not been available to take the work forward. The Executive Director of Operations advised that due to work that was being done with the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) he had met with Dr Hilary Cremin, Senior Lecturer at Cambridge University who specialised in restorative justice and had invited her to do some study work with the schools in the city. Dr Cremin had agreed to come and scope a piece of work that would be at no cost to the Council, to look at how Peterborough approached restorative justice. Dr Cremin's findings would be presented to a future meeting of the committee. The Chair advised that she was encouraged by this response and the Committee agreed to continue to monitor the recommendations made.

The Committee were happy with the responses received on the other recommendations made under last years work programme and agreed not to monitor these further.

The draft work programme for 2010/2011 was considered along with suggestions submitted by officers and other suggestions were sought from the Committee for inclusion.

The Executive Director gave some background information on the Big Society and Citizen's power. The Big Society was the government's proposals around the localism agenda and dealt with some of the issues following the ending of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). The focus was very much on greater improvement and empowerment of local communities and was about putting power back in to local peoples hands. Citizen's Power was a RSA programme which Peterborough was heavily engaged in. There were seven separate strands around civic engagement and working with communities to increase and support their engagement. He felt that this would be an excellent programme to scrutinise.

Members wished to include an item on the work programme around the community cohesion agenda and the cohesion action plan for later in the year. It was agreed that all other items on the draft work programme would remain and along with any other suggestions would be discussed at the next meeting of the Group Representatives to decide on how to take them forward.

Members requested that an invitation be sent out to the Cabinet Members with portfolios relevant to the remit of Committee to attend a future meeting to advise on the progress of their portfolios. They also requested that a progress report on the Cultural and Leisure Trust be brought to the Committee in January 2010.

ACTIONS:

- i. The Safer Peterborough Partnership Manager to confirm how many Special Constables there are in Peterborough and report back to the Committee through the Scrutiny Officer.
- ii. The Scrutiny Officer to provide all Committee members with a copy of the Citizen's Power in Peterborough scoping document.
- iii. The Scrutiny Officer to invite the following Cabinet Members to a future meeting to give an update on their portfolios.
 - Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Strategic Commissioning
 - Cabinet Member for Business Engagement
 - Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning
 - Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion, Safety and Women's Enterprise

- iv. That the work programme be finalised at the next meeting of the Group Representatives.
- v. That the Committee continues to monitor the recommendations around restorative justice and
- vi That the Executive Director of Operations brings to a future meeting the report on the findings from the study undertaken by Dr Cremin regarding Peterborough's approach to restorative justice in schools.

7. Cessation of the Comprehensive Area Assessment

The report provided the Committee with information regarding the Government's announcement to abolish the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). As a result of the announcement the Audit Commission had now advised that all work on updating the area assessment and organisational assessment would cease with immediate effect. Members were advised that the Corporate Management Team were considering the most appropriate method of continuing to manage performance reporting and would update Scrutiny when a decision had been made and therefore there would be no performance monitoring reports presented to the Committee in the interim.

Observations and Questions:

- Members advised that they were pleased that the CAA had ceased as they had felt that the process had taken up a great deal of officer time. Members wanted to know how the abolition of the CAA would affect the Council's staffing structure. Members were advised that this information was not available at this time as monitoring of performance would still need to be continued but the way in which it would be completed had not yet been agreed. Whilst the CAA had ceased there would still be requirements to monitor performance by other bodies such as Ofsted. The Corporate Management Team was considering the best and most appropriate method of taking this forward.

ACTIONS AGREED

- i. The Committee noted the report and requested that they be advised of how performance monitoring would take place when details became available.

8. 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.

Councillor Goldspink requested further information on the Sale of Land at Dickens Street Car Park. The Scrutiny Officer advised that this item did not fall within the remit of this Committee and that it came under the remit of the Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee noted the Forward Plan and agreed that there were no items to bring to the Committee. The Scrutiny Officer to refer Councillor Goldspink's request for further information on the Sale of Land at Dickens Street Car Park to the Scrutiny Officer supporting Sustainable Growth Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting began at 7.00 and ended at 8.05pm

CHAIRMAN

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