

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

15 SEPTEMBER 2010

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Present: | Councillors Todd (Chairman), S Day, Collins, Fletcher, Simons and JR Fox | |
| Also Present: | Councillor Walsh | Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion, Safety and Women's Enterprise |
| | Brian Gascoyne | Chairman of Millfield and New England Regeneration Partnership and Cohesion Board Member |
| | Bryan Tyler | Disability Forum Manager and Cohesion Board Member |
| | Maheeb Ladha | Director of Peterborough Racial Equality Council and Cohesion Board Member |
| | Jean Hunt | Chairman of Senior Citizens Forum and Governor at City College Peterborough |
| | Emma Norris | Royal Society of Arts – Lead for Civic Commons |
| Officers in Attendance: | Christine Graham | Safer Peterborough Partnership Manager |
| | Jawaid Khan | Community Cohesion Manager |
| | Sue Rampal | Assistant Cohesion Manager |
| | Julie Rivett | Neighbourhoods and Community Engagement Strategic Manager |
| | Karen Kibblewhite | Community Safety & Substance Misuse Manager |
| | Graeme Clark | Project Lead for Citizens Power: Peterborough |
| | Paulina Ford | Performance Scrutiny and Research Officer |
| | David O'Connor-Long | Solicitor |
| | Amy Brown | Solicitor |

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillor Goldspink. Apologies were also received from Ansar Ali, co-opted member representing the Cambridgeshire Police Authority.

2. Declarations

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2010

The minutes of the Strong and Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 21 July 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.

5. Community Cohesion Strategy 2010

The Community Cohesion Manager presented the report and informed the Committee of how the Strategy had been developed and the objectives and key messages that the Strategy contained. The Strategy was about how cohesion shared values would be promoted all over Peterborough. The language used in the strategy was bespoke and the photographs used in the draft strategy were temporary but the final document would contain pictures that reflected all of the diverse communities across Peterborough. A number of cohesion partners who had helped to produce the strategy were also in attendance to explain their work and their involvement in pulling the strategy together.

Community Cohesion had been embedded across Peterborough for some time through various documents but this strategy was a new document which provided a definition of cohesion and the aims, values, vision and priorities of the Cohesion Partnership. Action plans would underpin the document.

Brian Gascoyne, Chairman of the Millfield and New England Regeneration Partnership, informed the committee that the title "Home in the Meadows" was derived from the word Medehamstede which later became Peterborough. The city had always been a place where different people from different backgrounds had come together and was built on migration from both within the United Kingdom and from outside. Cohesion was a key part of the city and needed to be recognised. Peterborough was a city of culture and an example of this was the fact that there was 109 different languages spoken in Millfield.

Bryan Tyler, Disability Forum Manager, spoke about the work that had been achieved through partnership working to bring a Changing Places toilet to Peterborough which would be built next to the toilets in the Car Haven car park. A logo had been designed that would reflect disabled facilities and the changing places toilets and the Department of Transport had picked up on the logo and wanted to use it country wide.

Jean Hunt, Chairman of the Senior Citizens Forum and a Governor at City College Peterborough, spoke about how young and old people were working together. She had attended a recent project at the Green Backyard to talk to students with special needs from the City College about the war and digging for victory, which the young people had found very interesting. She had also helped to set up the first committee for male senior citizens in the central ward, along with a committee for women.

Mahebur Ladha, Director of Peterborough Racial Equality Council, stated that cohesion was about giving everyone the same life chances and outcomes and not about communities leading parallel lives. The strategy had been designed to be a living and readable document which was updated regularly. The priorities of the Cohesion Board were updated annually and this year's priorities were:

- Young People and NEETS – 15% of young people today were NEETS. One group of young people that had not made much progress was poor white people and there was a need to understand why this was happening.
- Poverty issues – vulnerable localities and families – Councillor Walsh was leading on this issue.
- Hate Crime – there were 429 hate crimes committed last year
- Gypsy and Travellers

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Members felt overall that the strategy was a very good document, however they felt that the wording 'Giving everybody similar life opportunities' which was under the vision

statement might be difficult to achieve and suggested that it be reworded to reflect that the aim was to get everyone to achieve their potential.

- Regarding bullet point 2 under the 'Our Values' list - Respectfulness towards age, gender, race, religion or beliefs, disability, sexual orientations and cultural differences, Members felt that there was a need to widen the definition to reflect that there was a desire for a society that respected all people no matter what their differences might be.
- Councillor Fletcher made a statement about illegal encampments in the South Bretton area. The Chair advised Councillor Fletcher that this was not the appropriate forum to discuss these issues and suggested that he contact the relevant officers outside of the meeting. Councillor Fletcher advised that he was not satisfied with that response.
- On page 10 under the section 'Preventing Extremism' it mentioned 'Targeting all kinds of extremism including Al-Qaida inspired ideology and far-right wing extremism', Members asked why Al-Qaida had been mentioned specifically as they felt that one area of extremism should not be mentioned above others. The Community Cohesion Manager advised that Al-Qaida had been specifically mentioned because the Government had advised that they were currently the main threat, however members of the public who had been consulted on the document had also made similar comments.
- Members felt that the title of the document 'Home in the Meadows' did not reflect cohesion and that people would not understand its relevance. Members were advised that by using the word 'Home' people would feel that Peterborough was a place they could settle and the word 'Meadows' went back to the historical name of Medehamstede.
- Members felt that the vision should be called The City of Peterborough's vision and not just Peterborough's vision. The Community Cohesion Manager advised that if the vision title were to change in that way the rural communities may not feel included.
- Members wanted to know how many of the general public had been consulted on the strategy. Members were advised that consultation had taken place through websites, newsletters, newspapers, the radio and at the Cohesion Board Away Day where 30 people from various community groups attended. There was a youth group called ABC who would be asking 70 young people for their views on the strategy. There had also been an equality impact assessment which was due to be completed soon.
- One of the priorities listed was - working closely with young to promote cross-community, how did the Board intend to achieve this? Members were advised that the contribution of young people was very important and there was a need to recognise the wider contribution of young people. The older and younger generations could learn from each other and examples of this were already happening across the city.
- Brian Gascoyne pointed out that during the discussion different communities had been mentioned and he wanted people to feel that Peterborough was one community. Councillor Todd felt that the heading needed to reflect that and Members suggested that the title of the Strategy could be 'One City, One Community' or something similar.

Councillor Fletcher requested that it be minuted that he felt that he had not been able to represent the views of his constituents and left the meeting.

The Committee supported the strategy and requested that the document be brought back to the Committee when the consultation had finished.

ACTIONS AGREED

That the Community Cohesion Manager considers the comments made by the Committee and brings back to the Committee at a future meeting the final Community Cohesion Strategy after the consultation process had been completed and all comments had been considered.

6. Citizens Power: Peterborough

The report informed the Committee of the new Citizen Power Programme in Peterborough and specifically the following two strands:

- Civic Commons
- Building Recovery Capital

Graeme Clark, Project Manager presented the report accompanied by Julie Rivett, lead officer for Civic Commons and Karen Kibblewhite, lead officer for Building Recovery Capital. Also in attendance was Emma Norris who was the Royal Society of Arts lead for Civic Commons. A short presentation was given on each of the strands explaining what the purpose of each was and the aims and outcomes behind them.

Civic Commons was about:

- passionate citizens, leading local figures, well known thinkers and politicians for discussion, debate and action on topical local and national issues (e.g. immigration)
- capacity building – advocacy skills, confidence, knowledge about a range of issues
- seeding ground for ideas and local innovation

The Civic Commons would:

- provide space for dialogue and deliberation
- provide spaces for citizens to engage in bigger-picture political and social issues
- help citizens gear up for a new, more involved role in civic life
- build national reputation of Peterborough
- address some social problems

The Recovery Capital Project was about:

- How communities could support people with problems associated with drug & alcohol use
- Understanding the capacity of specific communities to deliver
- Peterborough as a leading example of Recovery Community
- User defined recovery services

Its aims and outcomes were:

- Ability to define & measure Recovery Capital
- Foundations of a Recovery Community
- Peer led Recovery Community Networks
- Shared understanding of recovery & Recovery Capital
- Reduction in the stigma surrounding substance misuse
- Increased collaborative working in the city
- Work alongside existing services

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Members wanted to know why Citizens Power was being developed as there were already lots of opportunities for residents to get involved in decision making. They also felt that there was a danger that Civic Commons could attract the same people who usually got involved. Emma Norris advised Members that this was a way of trying to engage differently with people and about getting local people to set the agenda. It was about engaging with local people who were quietly doing good work in the community but who did not necessarily get involved in committees and meetings. Civic Commons was not another committee and it was about bringing the right people together and harnessing the good work that they did.
- When was Citizen's Power launched? It was launched on 19 July 2010.

- What action plans, objectives and measures had been put in place? Members were advised that work plans were currently being developed and would include outputs and targets. Members of the public would set the agenda and outcomes for each strand.
- Would there be any additional funding apart from what had already been committed. No additional funding was available.
- How would you measure the impact and success of the project? Members were advised that there would be targets set in the actions plans that would be measured and would also be given an independent evaluation.
- Would the Neighbourhood Councils be linked to Civic Commons? Members were advised that there would be a link.
- Members suggested that when meetings were held that they should not be in the usual council buildings.
- How would you identify the right people to engage with? Members were advised that people would be identified through the Neighbourhood Management Team and Community Development Workers.
- Members were advised that the Recovery Capital Project was about developing networks for drug and alcohol users and using expertise of recovering drug and alcohol users. It would also help to remove the stigma around substance misuse. There was an active service user group who had become more vocal about what support there was for people after their recovery. Having the support of local communities was important.
- Members were advised that the Citizens Power Programme was on the Green Shoots Agenda and the Recovery Capital Strand would help inform and develop services for the Top 100 users' families.

The Committee supported the work being developed around the Civic Commons and Recovery Capital Project strands of the Citizen's Power Programme.

ACTION AGREED

That a progress report on the Civic Commons and Recovery Capital Project be brought back to the Committee in six months time.

7. Scrutiny Big Debate – Issues Report

The report provided the Committee with information regarding the issues raised at the Scrutiny Big Debate held on 16 February at the Key Theatre and information in response to those issues as to how the Council were addressing them. Members were satisfied with the responses and requested that a report come back to the Committee in six months time to check on the progress being made on each of the issues. Members paid particular attention to the response on Restorative Justice and requested that they be kept informed on how this progressed.

ACTION AGREED

That a progress report on the Big Debate Issues be brought back to the Committee in six months time paying particular attention to Restorative Justice.

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.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee noted the Forward Plan and requested that the item on Section 75 Pooled funding arrangements for substance misuse services be brought to the Committee in March 2011 for scrutiny.

9. Work Programme

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2010/11 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

ACTION AGREED

To confirm the work programme for 2010/11 and the Scrutiny Officer to make any amendments as discussed during the meeting.

The meeting began at 7.00 and ended at 9.00pm

CHAIRMAN