

HEALTH AND PUBLIC SERVICES SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 21st October 2013 at Retford Town Hall

Present: Councillor D G Pidwell (Chair)
Councillors B Barker, D Challinor, S Fielding, J Potts, J C Shephard, K Sutton and T Taylor.

Officers: G Blenkinsop, C Crossland and E Whittles

Also present: G Connor – Bassetlaw District Council Community Safety Co-ordinator
K Dennis – Chief Executive Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
R Theakstone – Director of Corporate Services and Chair of the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership

(Meeting opened at 6.30pm.)

(The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and read out the Fire Alarm/Evacuation Procedure.)

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H M Brand, M Gregory, D R Pressley and A Simpson.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

Councillor D Pidwell declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item No. 6 (b), as a trustee of REMEDI. He remained in the meeting.

(b) Officers

There were no declarations of interest by officers.

22. CHANGE OF AGENDA ORDER

The Chairman advised of a change of agenda order so that Agenda Items 6(b) and 6(c) would be taken first.

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

23. REPORT(S) OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

(a) Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner Update

K Dennis gave Members an overview of his background and of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) first year of office.

The PCC is scrutinised by the Police and Crime Panel:

- The Panel is made up of local authority and independent members.
- The role of the Panel is to review, scrutinise, challenge and support the Commissioner.
- The Panel meets every two months and receives an update report from the Commissioner.
- The Panel is carrying out its role well.

The PCC can make a decision at any point; he is the sole executive with decision making powers. The Commissioner cannot interfere with operational activity or the work of the Chief Constable. The public are aware who the Commissioner is but struggle to understand that he has no sanction over the Chief Constable and operational matters.

The Commissioner has quarterly meetings with the chairs of partnership organisations to explore common issues among partners.

Many services will be delivered at a regional level such as back office services as the finances for policing are reduced.

He advised of the current priorities:

- Restorative justice – The PCC is working with the Local Criminal Justice Board and REMEDI to develop a local strategy and standards to ensure practices are delivered consistently.
- Alcohol Strategy – The PCC is in the process of finalising an Alcohol Strategy. As a result of consultation he will be launching his views on the priorities and ways forward on 25th October. The public would like to see more education and work in schools and to see alcohol less readily available.
- Community Safety Partnership Fund – Funding has been passported to district councils for work in Priority Plus neighbourhoods on alcohol misuse, hate crime and domestic violence. £3 million has been allocated to the Safer Notts Board and Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership to support local activity to reduce crime, around half of this is spent on substance misuse. The PCC has just commissioned a piece of work to see how the spend has worked and what impacts have been made.
- Base budget review – The review has been completed and report will be presented to the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel in October. The PCC is committed to keep the amount of funding available to local Community Safety Partnerships; however it may be spent differently.
- Domestic Violence – A lot of work has been done with survivors of domestic violence and those that are classed as high risk. Local Women's Aid workers have been commissioned to work with women classed as medium risk as recent evidence has identified this as a gap in provision.
- Worksop Custody Suite - The PCC has completed a review but no final decision has been made on the options. The estimated refurbishment costs are £700k to bring the Worksop Custody Suite up to the Safe Detention Standard and £1.9 million over four years to run. There is uncertainty around the Worksop Magistrates Court future and all options need to be explored. Lincolnshire Police use G4S to operate a mobile custody suite to maintain availability of officers in rural areas. There is a possible option for a mobile unit to be used in Worksop for a trial period. Discussions will be needed with the PCC and Police Constable.
- Monitoring Crime - During the last six months crime has been increasing. 17 forces out of 42 nationally have seen an increase in crime. Currently The Police and Crime Plan is achieving all its targets including Domestic Violence but may not meet the all crime target in 2013/14.
- Risk - The main risk to crime levels are theft and handling, violent crime and burglary. Shop theft in Worksop town centre is as high as Mansfield town centre. We are currently in times of austerity and with changes to the benefit system has this had an effect? There is still a link between shop theft and drug misuse and organised shop theft is a challenge.

- Budget Challenge - In terms of the budget it will balance this year and next year. The gap in funding for 2015/16 is still unknown but could be £12.3m and Nottinghamshire Police have the biggest funding gap in the region. It is however one of a few forces recruiting Police Officers. The PCC has made a commitment to local policing; savings and efficiencies need to be made elsewhere. He is looking at how better use can be made of the Police estate and is interested in co-location.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions:

The PCC has the authority to make decisions without consultation. What do you think is the biggest contribution he has made to Bassetlaw so far?

The PCC supports the Community Safety Partnership and is recruiting more Police Officers to support local Neighbourhood Policing. He has provided leadership in restorative justice work and alcohol. Using partnership agencies he has ensured there is a common focus across partners.

It was agreed that K Dennis would provide the figures for Bassetlaw on the number of additional Police resources allocated to the District. He reported that currently there were only 2 vacancies for the Bassetlaw area.

How does the PCC work with Chief Constable, particularly when targets are not met?

The PCC meets with the Chief Constable weekly. He ensures there is a clear understanding of the emerging problems and the plans in place. They look at if sufficient resources are available and if resources need to be relocated.

There is a potential gap of £12 million in funding in 2015/16. Is there still some savings to be found?

There are efficiencies to be made in the back office. Shared and integrated services with other authorities will be looked at.

Do you expect the PCC priorities to change in 2014/15?

K Dennis advised that he doesn't anticipate that the seven priorities will change but the focus may change. There is good work at local level but there are some gaps. The practical support service provided to victims is not there across the board. To reduce crime offenders have to be managed and re-offending reduced. Previous funding streams for community safety have dried up and people look to the PCC to fill the gaps. Largely the Police budget is spent on reacting to crime.

There has been a huge increase in demand for Response Officers and Nottinghamshire has one of the highest numbers of 999 calls in the country. The demand is around ASB such as noise nuisance. The government set up the 101 number to deal with non-priority calls.

What would be the extra staffing needed to reopen the Custody Suite in Worksop?

Some forces use civilians in roles or have gone down the contractor route.

How does the PCC influence the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board?

The PCC is not a statutory member of the Board. He has done a lot of work with Public Health with regard to alcohol and gaps in services. The PCC has an amount of money for commissioning and can work with others to provide short interventions. The role of Police is enforcement but Public Health has an education and prevention role.

Currently Bassetlaw has a GP based drugs treatment service. There are plans to put the service out for tender; there is a concern that access to services may be reduced. What are the PCC's views?

The PCC is aware of the concerns and has put funding into the service (£600,000 which also funds Offender Management for Probation Services). Funding has been put into these services to provide treatment pathways and signposting to the appropriate levels of service. There needs to be a single system with a clear route and pathway.

There has been an increase in the number of 999 calls. How are the calls analysed?

Analysis is currently being done. Sometimes the calls are non-traditional crime issues and more towards public safety.

Councillor D Challinor, Bassetlaw District Council's representative on the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Panel, gave an overview of the Panel:

- The Panel has good cross party representation.
- He reports to the Leader, Bassetlaw District Council, G Connor and R Theakstone after the meetings.
- There is good partnership working and the Panel is working well.
- He raised concerns that representatives from Nottingham City are not attending the meetings or sending a substitute.

The Chairman thanked K Dennis for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED that:

1. The update be received.
2. The number of Police recruited be circulated to Members.

(b) Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership Update

Members were given an overview of the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership. Members were advised in relation to its structure; achievements; priorities; and challenges.

R Theakstone, Chair of the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership, advised that:

- The Partnership is about accountability
- As Chair she meets with partners on a quarterly basis
- As Chair of the Partnership she is accountable to the PCC
- She represents the Partnership on the Safer Nottinghamshire Board

G Connor, Bassetlaw District Council's Community Safety Co-ordinator, stated that he is aware of the local problems and issues. There is a problem solving approach and he attends a lot of meetings on a weekly and daily basis with partners that are not on the formal structure. The Council is looking at shoplifting and is using ASBOs to keep known offenders out of the town centre. There is a typical demographic of shoplifters; however there has been a change in age recently. He advised what is being done to tackle antisocial behaviour:

- There has been a reduction in anti-social behaviour
- Operation Faldage was set up in response to the death of a man in Worksop. The aim was to address the behaviour of those on the periphery of the incident. A multi-agency model is being used.

- Operation Kinetic aims to manage known offenders who are based locally and having greatest impact on our community in terms of crime and anti-social behaviour. Agencies are working together to identify and tackle issues and the offenders.
- There is a conflict between demand and resources in terms of our Partnership Plus areas - 25% of the funding is used for the SAFE scheme and there have been 285 target hardenings in Bassetlaw to August 2013.

Challenges:

- Financial pressures – collaboration helps
- Creative Solutions
- Responding to the recent spike in performance – led to changes in plans

Members were advised of the four emerging priorities as a result of spike in performance:

- Burglary dwelling
- Vehicle crime
- Violence
- Theft of pedal cycles

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions:

Does the CSP have a view on the closure of Worksop Custody Suite?

R Theakstone advised that a Custody Suite may act as a deterrent. The public's perception of the law and the Police has changed.

G Connor commented that behaviours have changed in terms of the offender, public and policing. The closure of the Custody Suite is a contributing factor to crime but there are a lot of other issues.

How confident are you that we have the right measures and partnership working in place?

R Theakstone explained that the same issues are emerging across Nottinghamshire. There are professional analysts who monitor and analyse the data so areas that are consistently looking problematic are escalated to the Safer Nottinghamshire Board's Performance Group to determine if the right plans are in place and what else can be done. It is about looking at real issues and reacting to the emerging issues.

G Connor advised that at the last Joint Strategic Group they looked at the Partnership Plus plans. Everyone was happy with the plans and that they are fit for purpose. What came out of the meeting was that we are not challenging the local community to take responsibility for example locking windows and doors, not leaving keys on display etc. The Bassetlaw District Council Communications Team and Nottinghamshire Police PR are looking at a campaign to encourage personal responsibility and this can be rolled out with our partners. We need to reduce the opportunities for crime.

The Chairman thanked G Connor and R Theakstone for their attendance.

RESOLVED that:

1. The update be received.
2. Thanks be recorded to the Community Safety Team for their work.

24. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH SEPTEMBER 2013

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2013 be approved

25. MINUTES FOR ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

RESOLVED that the Minutes for Action be received.

26. OUTSTANDING MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Outstanding Minutes be received.

27. REPORT(S) OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

(a) Health and Public Services Sub-Committee Programme 2013/14

Members were presented with an overview of the Committee's meeting programme for 2013/14. Members were provided with the proposed scope for renal transport for review at the January meeting.

RESOLVED that:

1. The 2013/14 Work Programme be noted.
2. The Renal Transport Scope be approved and any comments be passed onto G Blenkinsop.
3. Members note that the Work programme could be subject to change throughout the year.

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

None.

28. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

(a) Resignation of Chairman

Councillor D Pidwell advised Members that he was resigning as Chairman of the Sub-Committee. He advised that he works for the Probation Service which is undergoing significant changes and he would not have the time required to Chair the Sub-Committee. He advised that he will remain a Member of the Sub-Committee.

He thanked officers for their work and Members for their interest.

RESOLVED that Councillor D Pidwell's resignation as Chairman of the Sub-Committee be noted.

As there was no other urgent business to consider the Chairman closed the meeting.

(Meeting closed at 8.20pm.)