

PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1A, County Hall, Ruthin on Thursday, 14 February 2019 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Joan Butterfield, Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones (Chair), Gareth Davies, Pat Jones, Christine Marston, Melvyn Mile, Andrew Thomas, Rhys Thomas, David Williams and Emrys Wynne

Cabinet Lead Members - Councillor Tony Thomas attended for item 5.
Councillor Mark Young attended for item 6.
Councillor Huw Hilditch- Roberts attended for item 7.

Observers – Councillor Glenn Swingler and Martyn Holland.

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director: Communities (NS); Head of Planning and Public Protection (EJ); Built Environment Manager (GR); Business Manager (IM); Head of Education & Children Services (KE); Principal Manager (JW); Families First Programme Manager (J J-H); Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Committee Administrator (SJ).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hugh Irving

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Emrys Wynne declared a personal interest in item 5 due to his role as a Magistrate.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters were raised.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held on 20 December 2018 were submitted.

The Chair thanked officers and praised the high standard of minutes from the previous meeting

RESOLVED that, the minutes of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 December 2018 be received and approved as a correct record.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT PROVISION

The Lead Member for Housing, Regulation and the Environment introduced the Built Environment and Public Protection Manager's report (previously circulated) the purpose of which was to consult on the draft specification of the contract for the provision of environmental crime enforcement services for the county. Members were briefed by the Lead Member on the background and the reasons why the Council was seeking a new provider to deliver environmental crime services, following Kingdom Security Limited's decision to withdraw from their contract for providing the service to the Council in August 2018. Prior to Kingdom's decision to withdraw from its contract with the Council it had become apparent that some residents were not happy with the company's approach to environmental crime enforcement. Following Kingdom's departure elected members had made it clear that the focus of any future contract should be on enforcement activities relating to dog fouling, with a particular emphasis on educating offenders and residents on the dangers posed by dogs fouling and on the importance of abiding with Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) relating to the control of dogs. Whilst the draft contract specification presented to the Committee for consideration focussed on dog-related crime it did also make provision for the appointed contractor to enforce against other environmental crimes, such as littering, begging etc. The Lead Member stressed that environmental crime enforcement services had never been delivered by the Council in-house, therefore the cost of establishing an in-house service, estimated to be between £200K and £250K, would be prohibitive. He also advised that enquiries had been made with respect of the potential of collaborating regionally to deliver environmental crime enforcement services, however this would not be viable in the near future, although collaboration with Conwy County Borough Council in relation to procuring environmental crime enforcement services may be an option in the not too distant future. Denbighshire's draft contract specification had been shared with Conwy CBC with a view to exploring the viability of tendering for services jointly in the future.

Members were advised by the Head of Planning and Public Protection that proposed new approach for dealing with environmental crime was made up of three separate elements:

- communication with the public to raise awareness and instil a sense of personal responsibility, with a view to get community buy-in to the aims and objectives of the anti-fouling strategy and this type of anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- clean and tidy streets, the work of the Streetscene team and their proactive approach in notifying the Public Protection Service of problem areas with a view to the Service targeting the area with posters and leaflets
- enforcement action (including delivering educational sessions in schools and to community groups etc.)

The Built Environment and Public Protection Manager advised that Kingdom had delivered environmental crime enforcement services for Denbighshire for approximately 5 years. During that time the company's contract with the Council had been effectively managed and monitored by the Public Protection Officer: Community Safety.

Responding to members' questions the Lead Member, Head of Planning and Public Protection, and Built Environment and Public Protection Manager advised that:

- the decision to outsource the service and procure services from an external provider had already been taken by Cabinet at its meeting in September 2018, the purpose of the report to the Committee was to consult with members on the contract specification;
- the Council's Education Service was of the view that there was a gap in this type of education within the county's schools and that pupils would benefit from learning about environmental crime and understating there, and their family's responsibilities in this area;
- whilst Kingdom Security Limited were operating in Denbighshire the county rated highly on the street cleanliness index;
- whichever company was eventually successful in being awarded the contract, they would be managed and monitored by the Public Protection Officer: Community Safety in the same way as he had managed Kingdom Security Ltd;
- costings etc. for a number of potential options for delivering the service had been provided in the report presented to Cabinet in September 2018. Member requested that a copy of this report be circulated to them;
- due to the very nature of the service delivering it would never be easy, neither would it be a popular service to deliver. If the Council decided to deliver this service itself, its reputation with the public would suffer. However, there were private companies that did deliver these types of services. Some 'soft marketing' testing had already been done which had resulted in four or five companies showing an interest in tendering to deliver the service in due course;
- the draft contract specification did stipulate that generally officers delivering the service would wear "a distinctive non-black hi-visibility uniform of a description that present a clear and friendly appearance to all sections of society";
- once the contract was let officers and representatives from the successful company would visit all Member Area Groups (MAGs) with a view to introducing themselves and interacting with local members in relation to their wards;
- as part of the income generation aspect of the draft contract specification the Council had considered the proposed delivery model's fixed costs and potential penalty sharing. With a view to securing a deliverable service one potential option would be for the service provider to keep 95% of the Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) with the remaining 5% being paid to the Council. These were only indicative figures at present;
- residents may also in future be able to assist the Council to target dog fouling hotspots in the county by using a mobile phone app that would enable them to take a photograph of an incident and send it to the Council immediately with location details. Receipt of this type of 'live' information would enable the Council to deploy appropriate resources to those areas far quicker than was currently possible;
- that the Council could take action with regards to dog owners who did not comply with dog control orders in designated PSPO areas. In other areas

- social media etc. could be used as a mode of communicating with residents with regards to their duties and responsibilities as dog owners;
- when tendering for the contract the prospective providers would be expected to draw-up a robust and viable business plan that would ensure that they could deliver the service in line with the contract specification. How they met their overheads and liabilities and generated a profit would need to form part of their business plan;
 - to withdraw from delivering the contract at a date in the future the provider would be required to give the Council a month's notice to terminate its contract; and
 - they were confident that a number of interested companies would bid for the contract once it was advertised. However, if no interested bidder came forward the contract specification would be reviewed

Members suggested that interaction with pupils in the county's schools could also include arranging poster competitions as a method of consolidating their learning and communicating it to the wider community. It was also important to educate children, particularly secondary school pupils, on how to responsibly dispose of all types of litter, including fast-food packaging. The Committee also stressed that close working and liaison between environmental crime enforcement officers and local elected members was key in order to secure an effective environmental crime enforcement service.

At the conclusion of the discussion, having considered the report and its contents along with the answers given to the questions raised, the Committee by a majority of 7 votes to 3:

Resolved: - subject to the above observations –

- (i) to support the draft contract specification set out in Appendices A and B to the report to enable officers to proceed to the tender stage of procuring an external provider to deliver enforcement of environmental crime services in the County*

6 DENBIGHSHIRE CCTV PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The Lead Member for Corporate Standards introduced the Head of Planning and Public Protection's report (previously circulated) which provided members with an update on the CCTV Partnership, its governance arrangements, along with an assessment of its effectiveness in delivering the service, information on the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Cheshire West and Chester Council to deliver the service and work underway to develop a more sustainable future for the service. Attached to the report was a recent Internal Audit (IA) review of the service (Appendix 2) and a confidential operational update report on the service provided by Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaCC).

The Committee was briefed on the Partnership's establishment by the Head of Planning and Public Protection. Due to financial constraints the Council was unable to continue to provide a CCTV service, which was a non-statutory service. However, the service was valued by the communities it served and North Wales

Police (NWP) and as a result alternative arrangements were devised for its delivery, hence the establishment of the Partnership consisting of Prestatyn, Rhuddlan and Rhyl Town Councils, North Wales Police and Denbighshire County Council. The Partnership delivered a CCTV service which was not monitored on a 24/7 basis, however the partners were keen to explore potential options for developing a more sustainable and resilient future for the service. Following consideration of a number of options a decision was taken to enter into a 3 year Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Cheshire West and Chester Council which resulted in pictures being beamed from all cameras owned by the Partnership being beamed over to CWACC for 24/7 reactive monitoring. CWACC have immediate communication routes with NWP which enables them to alert them immediately they become aware of a developing situation. To facilitate broadcasting the pictures direct to CWACC investment was made in a new server. Going forward there are plans to contact other city and town councils to explore whether they would be interested in joining the Partnership in order to benefit from a reactive monitoring service. Each city and town council would need to make a judgement on the benefits to them of being able to access the service for an initial outlay costs and an annual contribution based on the number of cameras operated in their area. Members were advised that as the SLA with CWACC was a new arrangement officers had requested the Council's Internal Audit department to undertake a review of the arrangement with a view to providing assurances that the Council had robust governance and contract management procedures in place to manage risks, monitor performance etc. That review had given a medium assurance rating, it had identified minor weaknesses in the management of risks and/or controls but no risk to the achievement of objectives. All three risks identified under the review had since been addressed.

Responding to members' questions the Lead Member and Head of Planning and Public Protection:

- advised that the service provided under the SLA was very cost effective and well-governed;
- confirmed that each town council within the Partnership made a financial contribution towards the service based on the number of cameras operating in their area. Similarly Council services who had CCTV cameras also provided a financial contribution as did NWP who used footage as evidence for prosecution;
- advised that the Partnership operated approximately 80 cameras across the three towns. Following a rationalisation/prioritisation programme 32 cameras within the towns had been designated as priority cameras based on their crime and disorder and community importance. The remaining 48 cameras had been categorised as lower priority in the event of a breakdown etc.
- advised that newer, more modern cameras were particularly useful as they aided the Police with respect of facial recognition. These cameras were extremely expensive and required instant internet access;
- confirmed that work was about to commence on marketing the benefits of the Partnership to potential partners, which would include providing details them of the estimated costs to them of jointing the Partnership;
- advised that NWP provided the Partnership Board with a quarterly update on crime etc. in the area. This report highlighted crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots etc.;

- confirmed that a strong working relationship existed between the Partnership and CWACC;
- advised that there was no evidence at present of a need for 24 hour monitoring of the cameras, present reactive monitoring arrangements were proving to be effective;
- advised that NWP had a small number of mobile CCTV cameras which could be deployed in areas where there were concerns about crime levels etc. Town and community councils who had concern about crime levels in their areas should contact NWP to seek their assistance and discuss whether it would be appropriate to seek them to locate these cameras on a temporary basis in their area; and
- confirmed that whilst national trends indicated an increase in major crime levels on a UK wide basis, NWP only reported on minor crimes within the CCTV area. Methods for recording incidents of crime had also changed

Questions relating to the confidential Appendix 1 document were raised. At that juncture the Committee:

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: *that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the discussion on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act.*

The Lead Member and Head of Planning and Public Protection duly answered the Committee's questions.

PART I - Upon completion of the above business the meeting resumed in open session.

Members representing the Rhyl area advised that they were of the view that the Partnership provided an effective, value for money service in their area.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee:

Resolved: -

- (i) subject to the above observations to continue to support the development of the CCTV Partnership; and***
- (ii) encouraged officers and members to actively promote the benefit of Partnership's services to interested stakeholders/organisations***

At this juncture (11.30 a.m.), there was a 10 minute break.

The meeting reconvened at 11.40 a.m.

7 SUPPORT FOR YOUNG CARERS IN DENBIGHSHIRE

The Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People introduced the Early Help Programme Manager's report (previously circulated) which outlined work being undertaken corporately to support young carers across the county. The report focussed specifically on the offer of Leisure cards to young carers and work being undertaken by Education and Children's Services in support of the Council's aspirations and vision for young carers as laid out in the Corporate Plan and its Carers Strategy. During his introduction the Lead Member emphasised that the information contained in the current report was additional information to that presented to the Committee in an 'Information Report' circulated to members in December 2018.

The Lead Member advised that every young carer in Denbighshire referred to Wrexham, Conwy and Denbighshire (WCD) Young Carers were offered a complimentary Leisure Card. Whilst there were in the region of 350 known young carers in Denbighshire, all of whom had been offered the Leisure Card, none of them had accepted the offer. They had declined the offer as it was not what they wanted.

Responding to members' questions the Lead Member, Corporate Director: Communities, Head of Education and Children's Services and the Early Help Programme Manager:

- advised that having spoken to Young Carer Groups it had become apparent that, whilst the concept of providing complimentary Leisure Cards was well intended, individuals did not feel that it was suitable for them. Some already attended Leisure facilities as part of their school activities, others did not want to attend Leisure facilities by themselves, whilst some viewed having a discounted card would make them stand out amongst their friends and branded as being 'different' – they felt that it had a 'stigma' attached to it ;
- advised that the card on offer to young carers offered a discount rather than free admission to Leisure Service facilities, the decision on whether it should offer free admission rather than discounted admission was a commercial one for Leisure Services;
- advised that Wrexham County Borough Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) provided financial contributions to support the work of WCD Young Carers. If young carers wanted to take up the offer of the discounted Leisure card the WCD organisation would fund their provision. However, parents would need to apply for them on the young carer's behalf. A number of these families, including the carers, faced challenges and complexities on a daily basis, therefore applying for a card and then making provision for another carer to stand-in for an hour or two for them to use leisure facilities may not be practical;
- advised that young carers were young people and similar to their peers they were interested in technology etc., it was therefore important for the Council to listen to them and to provide them with respite activities that met their needs, not what adults presumed would be of interest to them; and

- emphasised that the young carers did actively engage in activities that interested them i.e. trips, breaks etc. Leisure based activities was only one of a suite of activities on offer to young carers.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee:

Resolved: - ***subject to the above observations to receive the report and support the work undertaken to support Young Carers.***

8 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator introduced the report (previously circulated) seeking Members' review of the Committee's work programme and providing an update on relevant issues.

A copy of the "Member's proposal form" had been included in Appendix 2. The Scrutiny Co-ordinator requested that any proposals be submitted to herself. The Cabinet Forward Work Programme had been included as Appendix 3, the table summarising recent Committee resolutions, advising on progress with their implementation, had been attached as Appendix 4.

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator confirmed following the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs meeting three reports had been proposed for the Partnerships Scrutiny Community to consider. The three reports had been included on the Forward Work Programme. The report titles were:

- CAMHS (April 2019)
- Cold Calling Zones (May 2019)
- Single access route to housing (July 2019, following Council briefing)

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator informed members she had been attendance at the Public Service board Joint Scrutiny Committee introduction meeting, the Chair and Councillor Melvyn Mile had also been in attendance. A joint scrutiny committee had been established and a meeting was to be scheduled in the future.

RESOLVED that *subject to the above, the Forward Work Programme be approved.*

9 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator, reported upon the training provided for the Public Service Board Joint Scrutiny Committee. It was confirmed the Chair and Councillor Melvyn Mile had been in attendance. Councillor Melvyn Mile confirmed the training had been very informative and provided members with the expectations and ambitions for the joint board.

A copy of the notes from recent Service Challenge meetings had been circulated to members as part of the 'Information Brief' document.

RESOLVED that *the verbal reports be received and noted.*

The meeting concluded at 12:20 p.m.