

MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE Thursday, 31 March 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor John Walker (Chair), Councillor Hasina Khan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Margaret France, Mark Jarnell, Margaret Lees, Matthew Lynch, June Molyneaux, Greg Morgan, Alistair Morwood and Debra Platt

OFFICERS: Lesley-Ann Fenton (Director of Customer and Advice Services) and Simon Clark (Head of Health, Environment and Neighbourhoods)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Aaron Beaver, Eric Bell, Paul Clark and Kim Snape

16.OS.36 Declarations of Any Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

16.OS.37 Overview and Scrutiny Committee

a Minutes of meeting Thursday, 28 January 2016 of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

AGREED - That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 28 January 2016 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

b Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 2 March 2016 of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

AGREED - That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2 March 2016 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

16.OS.38 Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel

AGREED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel held on 3 March 2016 be noted.

16.OS.39 Public Questions

There were no questions from any members of the public.

16.OS.40 Minutes of Executive Cabinet Meetings

AGREED – That the minutes of the Executive Cabinet held on 21 January and 18 February 2016 be noted.

16.OS.41 Notice of Executive Decisions

Due to technical problems, members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were unable to access the hyperlink to the Notice of Executive Decisions. It was agreed that the hyperlink be circulated again and if there was any issues of concern on the Notice, to contact the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

16.OS.42 PCSO deployment in the neighbourhood policing arena

The Chair welcomed Inspector Charlie Cox and Simon Clark, Head of Health Environment and Neighbourhoods, Public Protection, Streetscene and Community to the meeting.

Members of the Committee were reminded that this item was a continuation of the item first discussed at the Committee on 8 October 2015. Inspector Cox attended the meeting to answer questions on PCSOs deployment in the neighbourhood policing arena.

What information and data can be made available on PCSO activity, particularly in neighbourhoods?

Inspector Cox informed the Committee of the types of data which could be provided on PCSO activity -

- Intelligence reports – PCSOs were expected to seek out quality intelligence
- Number of Youth Referrals, in particular dealing with anti-social behaviour; the Early Action Team did a lot of work, the success of which could be gauged on the number of referrals being made
- Number and types of incidents attended
- Community engagement – the amount of contact made, particularly with harder to reach groups
- Problem solving initiatives; this would be difficult to measure depending on the vulnerability, as to how a person could be helped was difficult to quantify. It was suggested one measure could be tracked on the amount of calls made to emergency services, as a decrease in the amount of contact made would suggest that they were able to cope better
- Early Action Team initiatives; this would be difficult to measure as there was a series of long term interventions; it was a good opportunity to identify individuals and work with them and their families.

Given that there are 8 PCSOs employed on Early Action what impact is this likely to have on neighbourhood and high visibility policing?

It was acknowledged that there was presently 21 PCSOs in Chorley, following the restructure that figure was to be reduced to 19. It was expected that the reduction would be managed through natural movement.

The Committee were advised that following a restructure, eight PCSOs had been moved to early action intervention work. They were responsible for delivering the majority of the projects and initiatives including working with schools, working with vulnerable callers and the cadet system all of which was previously the responsibility of all the PCSOs. To have a dedicated team dealing with early intervention work allowed more consistency in approach while continuing to link in with neighbourhood officers. The change allowed the remaining PCSOs to concentrate on working in their neighbourhood and be more visible to the community.

In response to questions on how the number of PCSOs for each area was decided, Inspector Cox informed the Committee that each neighbourhood area was indexed on risk, threat, and vulnerability. Four PCSOs had been designated to the priority areas –

- Chorley East (1 PCSO)
- Chorley South East including the Town Centre (2 PCSOs)
- Chorley North West (1 PCSO)

The nine other areas, when indexed, shared PCSOs. However, it was noted that the Community Beat managers in those areas remained the same.

How are deployment decisions made with regard to PCSO's (what factors do you take in to account) and is there any flexibility regarding that deployment?

The majority of incidents were attended by PCSOs for that area. However, if the PCSO for that area was unavailable or depending on the situation, if it was felt that a different PCSO would be more appropriate they would be deployed accordingly.

It was acknowledged that from time to time resources may need to be increased in an area based on risk and threat. Although this meant taking some PCSOs away from their beat, it would not be for more than a day at a time.

What influence can Chorley Council have on deployment decisions?

The Police worked closely with Chorley Council and provided reports each year which detailed the number of days lost due to redeployment. Priorities needed to be made based on risk and vulnerability and it was inevitable that redeployment of officers would occur.

Members of the Committee asked a variety of questions which included –

- The reduction in the number of PACT meetings and the need for PCSOs to provide a designated day and time when they were available to meet residents?

Inspector Cox felt that in some areas the PACT meetings were not as effective as in other areas. However, members of the Committee were advised that if the meetings were effective, they would continue. It was also expected that the PCSOs would be proactive and talk to residents 'in the know' to pick up on issues that were happening in the neighbourhood area. It was suggested that the PCSOs attended other community meetings such as parish/town council meetings. This would allow members of the public to report matters of concern which they may not feel able to report to the Police more formally.

- Was the money from the residents in Chorley, being spent in Chorley or elsewhere?

Inspector Cox confirmed that all money provided by the residents of Chorley was being spent in Chorley.

The Head of Health Environment and Neighbourhoods, Public Protection Streetscene and Community confirmed that in previous years the number of days lost due to vacancies or staff sickness, the Council had either received a refund or a reduction for the following year for the difference. However, in the last two years, there had been no overall loss.

- *How quickly are vacancies filled?*

Members of the Committee were advised that each year there were two windows of opportunity to recruit and train PCSOs. Once trained the PCSOs would be deployed to fill any vacancies. However, once all PCSOs had been deployed, any vacancies would remain until the next tranche of recruitments had been trained.

AGREED – That the officers of the Council continued to monitor the number of days lost due to vacancies or sickness, compared with any refund or reduction made by the Police.

16.OS.43 Final Monitoring Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group (CCTV Provision and Infrastructure)

The Committee considered the final report from the Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community informing on the progress made against the recommendations of the Task Group review on CCTV Provision and Infrastructure.

In late 2014 Executive Cabinet agreed a significant capital investment in the Council's CCTV public space infrastructure following the scrutiny review into the service.

A procurement exercise was undertaken in 2015, to identify a contractor who could deliver the necessary upgrade to the CCTV equipment in terms of a new monitoring suite and state of the art CCTV cameras to replace old and obsolete cameras at existing sites. Members noted that the upgrade was not concerned with new sites provision for CCTV cameras.

In July 2015, the first monitoring report presented to the Committee demonstrated good progress had been made in the procurement process. Following a competitive tendering process in October 2015, Technology Solutions was awarded the contract and were in year one of a three year delivery plan.

Recent progress had been focussed on the relocation and equipping of the monitoring suite at Chorley Police Station, and by the end of 2016 it was envisaged that the majority of CCTV camera heads would have been replaced with upgrade units. In addition the upgrade was seeking to utilise low cost wi-fi camera communication and this has been achieved where sight lines and connectivity allowed.

The Committee was informed that the delivery of the infrastructure upgrade was a corporate capital project, and as such was subject to regular monitoring reports and budget control. It was anticipated that the full upgrade would be delivered earlier than anticipated and within budget.

Members of the Committee considered the report, and in response to questions posed to Inspector Cox, he advised that the CCTV provision was extremely important and was an invaluable tool used by the Police in both real time (proactively seeking out potential situations) and reactive (in the investigation of a crime).

The Chair thanked Inspector Cox for attending and contributing to the meeting.

AGREED – That the report be noted.

16.OS.44 First Monitoring Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group (Neighbouring Working)

Members of the Committee received the first monitoring report from the Director of Public Protection, Streetscene and Community informing them on the progress made against the recommendations of the Task Group review in to Neighbourhood Working.

Neighbourhood working in Chorley had continued to be successful focussing activity on three agreed and defined projects within each neighbourhood area for delivery each financial year. Consequently 24 projects had recently been agreed by Executive Cabinet for delivery in 2016/17 and the good attendance and engagement at all neighbourhood meetings had been recorded.

The monitoring report detailed the Task Groups recommendation and the progress made. Most of the recommendations had either been implemented or were in the process of being implemented. However, the recommendation that the Council explore with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) as to how the VCFS could use resources provided by the Council to improve networking needed to be progressed.

It had been noted that during the scrutiny review, members of the Task Group had been impressed with South Ribble Borough Council's approach to neighbourhood working and in particular the forums. Members of the Committee were informed that this approach was very resource intensive and would not necessarily be the best option for all the neighbourhoods. It was proposed that the matter be discussed at the next round of Neighbourhood Area meetings in June/July 2016.

Members of the Committee discussed various aspects of neighbourhood working, including encouraging parish/town to financially contribute towards the preferred projects in future.

AGREED – That the report be noted.

16.OS.45 Health Scrutiny

Members of the Committee received Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee 2015/16 Work Plan which detailed the work undertaken by the Committee and the progress made.

Councillor France expressed her disappointment about the Urgent Care Unit at Chorley Hospital not being occupied, and wanted an update on what was happening. The Director of Customer and Advice Services advised that the matter could be

broached through the Public Services Reform Board by the Executive Leader of the Council.

AGREED –

- 1. that the report be noted**
- 2. the Performance Panel consider Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Work Plan at its meetings**
- 3. that the Executive Leader of the Council be asked to seek an update on the progress of the occupation of the Urgent Care Unit through the Public Service Reform Board.**

16.OS.46 Final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group (Staff Sickness Absence)

Members of the Committee considered the final report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Staff Sickness Absence. Councillor John Walker presented the groups findings and drew members' attention to the recommendations to be considered by the Executive Cabinet.

The Task Group felt that the recent increase in the level of sickness absence for 2015/16 did not suggest any underlying cause for concern. They also felt that the Council's current Sickness Absence Policy and approach to short and long term staff sickness absence was fair and proportionate to manage staff sickness effectively. They were pleased with the range of health and wellbeing initiatives and interventions available to employees to help maintain a healthy workforce.

It was acknowledged that a lot of work had taken place to reassure employees that the Sickness Absence Policy was to help and support employees suffering from short or long term sickness, and were also encouraged that those employees who have been through the processes generally felt supported.

The Task Group had felt it was important to have a consistent approach throughout the Council and agreed it was essential that managers receive refresher training on applying the policy and in particular how to support staff through the sickness absence procedures which would improve staff confidence in the Council being a caring and supportive employee.

AGREED – That the finale report of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group – Staff Sickness Absence be submitted to the next meeting Executive Cabinet for consideration on 23 June 2016.

16.OS.47 Work Programme

Members of the Committee noted the work programme which detailed the activities undertaken by members of the Committee over the last year.

As the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for 7 July and to avoid potential delays to the work programme, the Chair proposed a short scrutiny review on the Counter Terrorism Act to take place following confirmation of the Committee's membership at the Annual Council meeting in May.

AGREED – That the topic of the next Task Group be the Counter Terrorism Act. Members of the Committee will be contacted following their appointment to the Committee regarding membership.

16.OS.48 Any urgent business previously agreed with the Chair

The Chair informed members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that this was the last meeting to take place before Lesley-Ann Fenton, Director of Customer and Advice Services, retired from the Council in April.

On behalf of members of the Committee, the Chair thanked Lesley-Ann for all her hard work and the commitment she had shown while supporting the Committee over the last two year and wished her well for her retirement.

The Chair also thanked members of the Committee for their contribution to the scrutiny process over the last municipal year.

Chair

Date