

Minutes of the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY AND REGENERATION) COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday, 19 April 2017 at 6.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor L A Keen

Councillors: T A Bond
P I Carter
N Dixon
P J Hawkins
M J Ovenden
G Rapley

Officers: Head of Community Services
Community Safety and CCTV Manager
Team Leader – Democratic Support
Democratic Support Officer

90 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P M Brivio, G Cowan and R J Frost.

91 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members appointed.

92 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by members.

93 MINUTES

The Team Leader – Democratic Support advised that the minutes of the previous meeting would be deferred to a future meeting.

94 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Team Leader – Democratic Support advised that no members of the public had registered to speak on items on the agenda to which the public speaking protocol applied.

95

ISSUES REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY COUNCIL, CABINET, SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE

The Team Leader – Democratic Support advised that the Cabinet at its meeting held on 3 April 2017 had deferred making a decision on the recommendation relating to Southern Water pending further clarification as to the purpose and implications of the recommendation.

The recommendation in question had originated at the meeting of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee held on 15 March 2017 (Minute No. 89) at which Southern Water had been scrutinised and the following recommendation had been made to Cabinet:

“That it be recommended to the Cabinet that the officer report for any housing development of over 20 houses considered by the Planning Committee includes a capacity check in respect of the impact on the flood risk in the area.”

Councillor T A Bond, who had moved the original recommendation proposed the following amendment for clarification:

“That it be recommended to the Cabinet that the officer report for any housing development of over 20 houses considered by the Planning Committee includes a ~~capacity~~ check in respect of ~~the impact~~ a *change* on the flood risk in the area.”

It was moved and duly seconded that the recommendation of 15 March 2017 be amended as above.

RESOLVED: That the following amended recommendation be submitted to Cabinet:

“That it be recommended to the Cabinet that the officer report for any housing development of over 20 houses considered by the Planning Committee includes a check in respect of a change on the flood risk in the area.”

96

ITEMS CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY OR PLACED ON THE AGENDA BY A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE, ANY INDIVIDUAL NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OR PUBLIC PETITION

There were no items of business for consideration.

97

NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

The Team Leader – Democratic Support presented the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decision to the Committee for its consideration.

RESOLVED: That the Notice of Forthcoming Key Decision be noted.

98 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Team Leader – Democratic Support presented the Scrutiny Work Programme to the Committee for its consideration.

Members were advised that letters/emails had been sent to the major Registered Providers of Social Housing in the district inviting them to attend a meeting of the committee. If Members had any key questions they should provide these in writing to the Team Leader – Democratic Support.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted.

99 CRIME AND DISORDER UPDATE - COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Head of Community Services and the Community Safety and CCTV Manager were present to provide an update on the work of the community safety team and to answer members' questions.

The Head of Community Services advised that following a redesign of the service, the Council had brought the following services together:

- Community Safety
- Community Development
- CCTV
- Communications
- Funding

There had also been changes to create a better use of space to facilitate a multi-agency hub. The hub currently involved Pie Factory, Porchlight (family support worker), Kent County Council (troubled families partnership manager) and the Department for Work and Pensions.

The Community Safety Unit was responsible for dealing with the following matters:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Safeguarding
- Vulnerable Victims (Adult and Young People)
- Community Safety concerns affecting large areas
- High Hedges
- Licensing issues
- Assist other agencies / departments (within DDC) with issues eg. EH, Property Services, Parks and Open Spaces and RSL and Social Services (vulnerable victims)
- Gathering evidence for cases (i.e. Closure Order, Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO))

There was a morning briefing to review the previous 24 hour activity and fortnightly ASB meetings to discuss cases, vulnerable victims, hot spot areas and persons of interest. The Community Safety Unit was composed of officers from Dover District Council, Kent County Council and Kent Police.

The Community Safety Unit also provided support to local community groups in terms of equipment to assist in clearing graffiti.

Q1. How do you assess the effectiveness of the Community Safety Unit – qualitatively and quantitatively?

The number of cases that were received was recorded and there was currently a performance indicator that measured the number of cases closed within 30 days. As part of the assessment processes for cases the impact of the anti-social behaviour was an important consideration.

Once a case was closed a survey form was sent out for completion although when required the unit would try to meet with someone in person to obtain feedback.

The service was also trying to raise its profile to encourage people to use it where there was a need and to that end it was attending community events to promote the service. There would also be an open day for councillors to visit the unit and gain a better understanding of its work.

Q2. What are your current priorities, and how are these selected?

The priorities were selected based on data provided through local intelligence, the Community Safety Partnership and national priorities.

Q3. What sort of information will you be providing about Anti-Social Behaviour incidence on a ward basis – the previous statistics were rather confusing in relation to what was included and what was not.

The Head of Community Services advised that the service was trying to be more open and transparent in providing information to councillors while still respecting the privacy needs of partner organisations. Acknowledging concerns that the previous monthly Community Safety Unit ward reports for councillors were not as clear as should have been, a new format for monthly ward statistics had been developed. Members welcomed the new format as an improvement.

In response to a question, it was stated that neighbourhood watch coordinators regularly provided information to the Community Safety Unit and this information included within the ward report although the specifics of neighbour disputes would not be disclosed.

Q4. Once Cllrs have alerted the CSU to a problem, what sort of procedures do you have in place to ensure that councillors are kept informed at all stages about any attempts at resolution?

The Head of Community Services advised that Members should all be clear as to the activities of the Community Safety Unit in their wards.

Q5. How many mobile CCTV cameras are at the disposal of the CSU?

There were 4 overt cameras (3 with the community safety unit and 1 with property services) and 10 covert cameras.

Q6. Where are these cameras currently deployed?

Members should be aware of overt camera deployment but would not be aware of the covert camera deployment for operational reasons.

The deployment of cameras was reviewed on a fortnightly basis.

Q7. Are they effective in reducing antisocial behaviour?

The Community Safety and CCTV Manager cited an example of where the deployment of a camera had been effective in reducing anti-social behaviour.

The Community Safety Unit had deployed a camera in conjunction with a local PCSO to observe a suspected anti-social behaviour case. While the camera had revealed no anti-social behaviour was taking place, they had worked with the young people concerned to divert them into other activities and there had been no further reports of anti-social behaviour from the unit.

A camera had also caught an incident of fly-tipping leading to a prosecution and had led to arrests following the riots in Dover in 2016.

Q8. Are they monitored at distance or do they record and then have to be accessed?

The fixed pan, tilt and zoom cameras in the district were monitored from a central control room in Dover. The cameras recorded 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Members of the public could request for a fee that recordings be reviewed if they felt that a camera had recorded an incident such as a vehicle break-in. In addition to providing evidence for incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour, the CCTV system had played a key role in monitoring the tidal surge in Sandwich.

Supplementary Questions

In response to a question on the noise nuisance caused by off-road motorbikes, the Head of Community Services emphasised the importance of district councillors, parish councils and members of the public providing the community safety unit with information when incidents occur so that action could be taken.

Members were reminded the Community Safety Unit was a 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday intelligence gathering body and not an emergency service. In cases of emergency, the police should be contacted.

RESOLVED: That the Head of Community Services and the Community Safety and CCTV Manager be thanked for attending and the presentation and answers to key questions be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.39 pm.