

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 13 September 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Ben Curran (Chair), Sue Auckland, Michelle Cook, Dawn Dale, Mark Jones, George Lindars-Hammond, Karen McGowan, Anne Murphy, Zahira Naz, Joe Otten and Kaltum Rivers

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Penny Baker (with Councillor Colin Ross attending as Councillor Baker's substitute), and Councillors Keith Davis, Terry Fox and Richard Shaw.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 Councillor Michelle Cook declared a personal interest in Item 7 (Fire Safety in Tower Blocks) as the Hanover Flats are located within her Ward.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 RESOLVED: That the revised minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12th July, 2018, now circulated, containing factual enhancements provided by the Director Housing and Neighbourhoods Services, be approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no public questions raised or petitions submitted by members of the public.

6. GUN AND KNIFE CRIME

6.1 The Committee received an update from the Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership with regard to Gun and Knife Crime. Maxine Stavrianakos briefly outlined the aims of the partnership.

6.2 The Committee also received a presentation on Gun and Knife Crime in Sheffield, which was given by Detective Superintendent Una Jennings, South Yorkshire Police. DS Jennings stated that the Police were in the process of starting a conversation in homes, hospitals and schools within the city about the prevention of violent crime and that the Police and Councillors, as public servants had a responsibility to continue to keep Sheffield as a safe city. She referred to the national statistics which showed an increase in high end crime since 2014 and

stated that some of the factors for this were changes in crime recording, a decrease in stop and search, a social acceptance, particularly amongst young people, to carry knives, an increase in gang culture and that knives were more readily available in the home and more able to be purchased via the internet. DS Jennings went on to add that due to sharing information with regard to reported knife related injuries between the Police and the Northern General Hospital, during April and June this year, knife crime had decreased by 2% and she hoped the general public felt confident that something was being done to tackle knife crime. DS Jennings referred to gun crime data and stated that there had been a significant reduction in gun crime for the same period last year.

6.3 DS Jennings stated that the Police were committed to the early identification of crime by stopping violence before it began. She said that there was a public health approach to the matter and identified four main principles behind this. Firstly to define and monitor, by the setting up of a fully co-ordinated team. Secondly, research was being carried out by Sheffield Hallam University identifying risk and protective factors. The third principal was to test and develop prevention strategies and part of this was the holding of Crime Prevention Workshops for Year 7s in all Sheffield secondary schools to outline the dangers of becoming involved in violent crime and working with Police and Crime Officers. Lastly, the fourth principal was to assure the public of the widespread adoption of a clear strategy and plan for tackling violent crime.

6.4 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- Crime tends to be clustered around deprived areas and it was hoped that the investment in the Neighbourhood Police Teams in such areas would tackle the issues at source. Sheffield as a whole was not a violent city but there were high levels of deprivation in certain areas.
- With regard to Intervention Workers, more would be known in six months' time when hopefully there would be a clear sense of what was needed to be done to support young people.
- There was a strong overlap between murder and knife crime and people had more understanding of this and there was a need to change attitudes, starting in the home. Parents were now talking to their children more, asking them questions before they walked out of the door.
- The statistics for knife crime are that people from their early 20s up to 35 years of age, are involved in some way. It was felt that to engage children at the age of 10 or 11, or even younger, would go a long way in the prevention of it.
- South Yorkshire Police had spoken to 30,000 Year 7 children across the city in hour long assemblies, followed up two weeks later by a 30 minute presentation in classrooms. It was felt that if this had an impact on this age group, it would be trialled on younger groups.

- The long-term strategy was for “Hope not Harm”. Through early intervention, identify those young people who were heading into crime and help to focus through health and well-being and education to help young people realise their self-worth and reach their full potential.
- The city had some of the highest exclusion figures in primary schools in the country. There was a responsibility to keep children in school and keep them educated. The Head of the Inclusion Unit was part of the multi-agency team.
- South Yorkshire Police had not seen any trend in acid attacks in the city, but should these happen, they are ready to deal with them.
- A study had been carried out on how other cities worldwide identify possible solutions and interventions and it had been established that that Glasgow had the best approach towards dealing with gun and knife crime.

6.5 Chief Superintendent Stuart Barton, District Commander for Sheffield, gave his thanks to The Star newspaper for its campaign against gun and knife crime, to Councillor Jim Steinke, (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety) and Maxine Stavrianakos for driving the campaign forward, to DS Una Jennings for her tireless work and presentation to the Committee and assured Members that South Yorkshire Police do have a plan and that the city was in safe hands and are ahead of the game. He invited Members to visit Shepcote Lane to see first-hand what the Force have put in place.

6.6 The Committee then considered a Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer setting out Scrutiny Project Mandate - full review, for a scrutiny topic of gun and knife crime.

6.7 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Detective Superintendent Una Jennings and Maxine Stavrianakos for their presentation and contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the presentation and the responses to questions;
- (c) agrees the scope of the gun and knife crime review as set out in the Mandate document attached to the report; and
- (d) agrees that a small Steering Group be set up to establish what the focus ought to be on dealing with the issue and report back to the Committee with its findings.

7. FIRE SAFETY ON COUNCIL RESIDENTIAL TOWER BLOCKS - UPDATE ON CLADDING

7.1 The Committee received a presentation on Fire Safety on Tower Blocks, which was given by Janet Sharpe, Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods Services, which provided an update on the Hanover Tower Block Cladding Project and a

Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety.

7.2 Janet Sharpe took the Committee through the presentation and stated that since the cladding and insulation had been removed during the summer of 2017, the position now was that the specification of the replacement cladding had been agreed, the designs had been shared with TARAs and discussions were ongoing, an external Fire Expert had been consulted with and he was comfortable with the proposal and a bid had been submitted to Government to cover the cost of the removal and replacement of the cladding. It was proposed that the works would start in November 2018 and be finished by August 2019. Janet Sharpe said that a detailed review and investigation into the original cladding replacement material installed in 2010 was underway and a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee confirming the outcome, lessons learnt and action plan. She informed Members that 150 recommendations had come out of the findings of Dame Judith Hackitt's Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the City Council had established a Fire Board to consider the recommendations.

7.3 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- Initially, funding for the works would come out of the HRA fund, but the Director was confident that the Government would reimburse the Council.
- The Government would not fund the installation of sprinklers in tower blocks.
- Each tower block has an Estate Services Officer who carries out checks every few weeks to ensure that residents have not left hazardous waste in communal areas.
- The length of time it will take to complete the works at Hanover was due to the fact that there are two blocks closely together, making it the largest tower block in the city.
- Robust fire doors were installed and inspections were carried out every six weeks. The greatest risk with regard to these was human behaviour and it was important to get the message across to people not to wedge doors open.
- Although Council-owned tower blocks were inspected on a regular basis, it was difficult to get private landlords to inspect private blocks.
- An offer had been made through the Project Group supporting those tenants suffering hardship as a result of the cladding and insulation being removed for such a long period of time. A comparison has been made of heating bills before and now, and those affected will be recompensed.

7.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- (a) thanks Janet Sharpe for her contribution to the meeting; and

(b) notes the contents of the presentation and responses to questions.

8. WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

8.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer, to which was attached the Committee's Work Programme for 2018/19 for Members' consideration.

8.2 RESOLVED: That approval be given to the Committee's draft work programme for 2018/19.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 11th October, 2018, at 5.00 p.m. in the Town Hall.