

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 12 February 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Weldon (Chair), Steve Ayris (Deputy Chair), David Barker, Simon Clement-Jones, Richard Crowther, George Lindars-Hammond, Roy Munn, Sioned-Mair Richards, Lynn Rooney, Richard Shaw and Sarah Jane Smalley

Also in attendance: Councillor Pat Midgley

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sheila Constance and Josie Paszek. An apology was also received from Jules Jones, who had been invited to attend as a representative of the Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee for Agenda Item 7 (Responding to Domestic and Sexual Abuse in Sheffield).

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 Councillors Steve Ayris and Sioned-Mair Richards each declared a Personal Interest in relation to Agenda Item 8 (Community Safety Update 2015) in that they were both members of the Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership Board.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27th November 2014, were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Responses to written public questions were provided as follows:-

- The Committee agreed that a written response would be provided to the question from Mr Martin Brighton regarding the removal of the item 'Questions from Members of the Public' from the agenda of Area Housing meetings.
- In response to a question from Mr Alan Kewley relating to the review of Local Area Partnerships, the Chair, Councillor Chris Weldon, indicated that the Lead Council Officer was Martin Hughes and confirmed that when the review had been completed the Cabinet Member and Lead Officer would be invited to the Committee to present a report on the outcome. The Policy and

Improvement Officer added that the Briefing Note placed before the last meeting of the Committee had indicated that the review would be presented to Cabinet this financial year, but he would check on progress and report back.

6. RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL ABUSE IN SHEFFIELD

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Commissioning, Communities Portfolio, which described what was known of the prevalence of domestic and sexual abuse in Sheffield, set out the City's current response in relation to domestic and sexual abuse for adults and outlined recent developments and issues. The report was presented by Alison Higgins, Domestic Abuse Strategic Manager. Also present were Jo Daykin-Goodall, Director of Substance Misuse Strategy/Head of Drug and Alcohol/Domestic Abuse Co-ordination Team, and Councillor Pat Midgley, who had been invited for this item as a representative of the Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee.

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

- There were lessons to be learnt from a recent case of domestic abuse which had included an element of coercive control. It had been noted that victims sometimes didn't choose the right agency to approach for help and there was a need to skill-up other agencies, so that victims could be appropriately directed.
- Every Domestic Homicide Review had an independent chair and received evidence from the affected family. The Review Board supervised its recommendations and the affected family were visited and asked about the review report. In relation to this most recent case, it appeared that attitudes had been changed within that particular community.
- Claire's Law was a disclosure scheme whereby people could find out about the previous record of any new partners. Information was available about this on the South Yorkshire Police website and there was a link from the Drug and Alcohol/Domestic Abuse Co-ordination Team (DACT) website. In addition the Police had given briefings to appropriate agencies in this regard.
- Domestic Violence Prevention Orders were now being implemented.
- The Claire's Law process took a few days to complete and information would be circulated to Committee Members on this.
- Officers were aware of situations in local communities whereby women were afraid to speak out about domestic abuse because of a fear of having their children taken into care.
- The recent Domestic Homicide Review had recommended actions to raise awareness and up-skilling in the voluntary sector, but the lack of resources

was a limiting factor.

- In relation to prevention, a helpline was available which led people to the right service and work had been undertaken to cut down the length of time that this would take. There was, however, more investment needed in early intervention and advice.
- There were ongoing discussions as to what success would look like with regard to intervention and consideration was being given to involving the Public Health Team in this.
- The Domestic Abuse Helpline was open from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm and it was intended that this would become a 24 hour service.
- In relation to support for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender relationships, officers had worked with the Broken Rainbow organisation and there had been a presence at Pride events. Specific references were also included on the DACT website. It was felt that there were still some barriers in coming forward, but that the situation was improving.

6.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Jo Daykin-Goodall and Alison Higgins for their contribution to the meeting; and
- (b) notes the contents of the report and responses to questions.

7. COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE 2015

7.1 Maxine Stavrianakos, Head of Neighbourhood Intervention and Tenancy Support, gave a presentation which updated the Committee on community safety issues. This included information on the Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Police and Crime Panels, the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment (JSIA), Partnership Plan Priorities 2014/15, performance, achievements, challenges, the budget, and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Police Act 2014. In addition, the Committee received a report of the Interim Director of Council Housing, which provided a progress report on the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM).

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

- There were links between the community remedy process and restorative justice, but there had only been one case in Sheffield regarding community remedy and this had not gone through the process yet. As such, it was difficult to comment on the effectiveness of the process.
- There had been some training of staff in relation to Community Protection Notices and there was a growing awareness of their use.

- Consideration was being given to the setting up of a combined Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety Unit, which would have a multi-tenure approach and would look at how people were supported through diversionary activities. There were, however, resource issues.
- It was hoped to balance the support given to individuals, in relation to anti-social behaviour issues, who were in Council housing with that given to those in private accommodation. The Housing Revenue Account funded tenant support, whilst general funding financed support in the private sector. It was always possible to take actions against Council tenants as against the private sector, but this needed to be equalised.
- The proposed combined Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety Unit would include two Police Officers.
- All information on the use of drugs would be fed into the appropriate unit, so that the causes of such use could be analysed.
- Funding had been made available for the Dark Nights operation in Darnall and there had also been previous prevention work.
- Procedures in relation to the Community Trigger process were now in place.
- Maxine Stavrianakos would check on the scope of the Community Protection Notice and Civil Injunction procedures and report back.

7.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Maxine Stavrianakos for her contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the presentation and the report on the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting and the responses to questions; and
- (c) requests that:-
 - (i) consideration be given to the holding of a training session for Councillors on community safety, which could take the form of a surgery approach;
 - (ii) the presentation be reproduced in the form of a briefing paper to be circulated to all Councillors and included in the New Councillors' Induction Pack; and
 - (iii) the updates on progress on the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting be continued to run alongside the annual presentation to the Committee.

8. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

8.1 Councillor Roy Munn, who was a member of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel, circulated a briefing paper on the Local Policing Model, together with an accompanying letter, and reported on the Police and Crime Panel meeting which was held on 30th January 2015. At that meeting, Councillor Alex Sangster was appointed as Vice-Chair and an increase of 1.9% in the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Council Tax Precept for 2015/16 was approved. There had also been some discussion on the Local Policing Model and how the financial pressures in relation to this would be managed. Councillor Munn went on to explain that the Response Policing teams and the Safer Neighbourhood Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers would now all combine under the new model to provide local policing teams. He also emphasised the commitment to Police and Community Support Officers, which was outlined in the circulated letter, whilst the circulated briefing paper described how policing worked in South Yorkshire. The next meeting of the Panel would be held on 19th March 2015.

8.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Councillor Roy Munn for his contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the briefing paper on the Local Policing Model, together with the accompanying letter, and the information reported; and
- (c) requests that the briefing paper on the Local Policing Model be circulated to all Councillors.

9. WRITTEN RESPONSES TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

9.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the Written Responses to Previous Public Questions report.

10. WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

10.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer which provided details of the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of the 2014/15 Municipal Year.

10.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) approves the Work Programme 2014/15 as detailed in the report subject to:-
 - (i) the Housing+ Walkabout taking place during the Summer; and
 - (ii) the inclusion of an item on the Private Housing Sector, with particular reference to selective licensing, as an agenda item for the Committee's March meeting; and
- (b) requests that any tenants wishing to raise any general issues regarding the

Social Housing Repairs and Maintenance Contract (Kier Contract), at the Committee's March meeting, should notify the Policy and Improvement Officer of these prior to the meeting.

11. RIGHT TO BUY UPDATE REPORT

11.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes:-

- (a) the contents of the Right to Buy Update report; and
- (b) that, in the event of a trend of rapid increases in Right to Buy sales being identified, an appropriate Council officer would be invited to attend a Committee meeting to provide an explanation.

12. WELFARE REFORM - JANUARY 2015 UPDATE

12.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the Welfare Reform January 2015 Update report; and
- (b) requests that the table contained in the report be circulated to all Councillors.

13. LAND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

13.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the Land Management Arrangements Within the Housing Revenue Account report; and
- (b) requests the Policy and Improvement Officer to check as to whether any further information was available on the progress of the project, with particular reference to a completion date.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 26th March 2015, at 2.00 pm, in the Town Hall.