

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Community Protection Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 March 2008.**

### Present:

Councillor	Richard Chattaway (Chair)
"	David Booth
"	Gordon Collett
"	Chris Davis
"	Dave Shilton
"	Barry Longden (Vice Chair)
"	Mike Perry

Also Present: Councillor Richard Hobbs, Portfolio Holder for Community Protection.

### Officers:

Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Performance and Development Directorate.

Michelle McHugh, Scrutiny Officer, Performance and Development Directorate.

Glen Ranger, Deputy County Fire Officer, Community Protection Directorate.

Mark Ryder, Head of Trading Standards, Adult Health and Community Services Directorate.

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## **1. General**

### **(1) Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Appleton Bob Hicks, Katherine King, Heather Timms and John Vereker.

### **(2) Members' Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

None

## **2. Progress on Outcomes of Cabinet Recommendations on "Ensuring the Safety of Older People Who Live Independently".**

The Chair introduced and explained the background to the meeting, which was to monitor progress of the Cabinet's recommendations of 19 July 2007 relating to "Ensuring the Safety of Older People Who Live Independently" which had resulted from the Committee's investigative work on this issue. He invited Councillor Richard Hobbs and officers to comment on the progress of the recommendations relevant to their service.

Councillor Richard Hobbs expressed concern about the late notice of this meeting, which had clashed with an important meeting he had been scheduled to attend with the Chief Constable and the Chairman of the Police Authority and which he had had to cancel. He added that, had he been adequately consulted, he would have prepared a written report for the meeting.

With regard to Cabinet's recommendations he said he wished to raise a related issue and that was that Directorates, when checking the needs of older people, should consider this in the wider context and include all vulnerable people, for example, when testing for carbon monoxide poisoning (which would include older people, students and people living houses in multiple occupancy).

The Chair acknowledged Councillor Hobbs' comments and said that it might be possible to refine the recommendations in some areas. He was, however, concerned that some Directorates were not aware of the recommendations. He reminded Members of the purpose of the meeting which was to look at progress on the recommendations and decide whether anything else or any other issues needed to be taken to Cabinet

Councillor Gordon Collett suggested that Warwickshire needed a champion for older people and that currently service delivery was fragmented and needed a united front.

The Chair noted this comment and invited the officers to present their progress reports.

Glen Ranger circulated a briefing note on progress of the recommendations that came within the Fire and Rescue Service's responsibility, Mark Ryder did the same with regard to Trading Standards Services and responses from Stratford-on-Avon District Council were also circulated (briefing notes attached).

Members then considered and commented on the progress on each of the recommendations as follows -

(For the minutes the recommendations are listed in numerical order and not the order in which they were considered).

Recommendation. 1. - "Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service need to ensure that mechanisms are in place to enable an older person to regularly check the smoke detectors within their home."

Glen Ranger reported with regard to –

Action 1 - this was scheduled for completion by 19 July 2008.

Action 2 - there was no funding for the higher unit costs of Fire Angel detectors in preference to a standard 10-year detector.

Action 3 - to be completed from existing resources if required.

Action 4 - this objective and associated actions were included with the Community Protection medium term plans and were on target.

## **Action**

The Committee –

- (1) Agreed that this recommendation was progressing satisfactorily and was well on its way to being completed.
- (2) Asked the officers to investigate whether building regulations required that all new build houses were fitted with electric mains smoke detectors.

**Recommendation 2** - "Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service should ensure carbon monoxide indicator cards are made available to older people throughout Warwickshire. The Committee strongly feels that audio carbon monoxide alarms would be highly beneficial to older people, and recognises that such devices may also be beneficial to those living in student accommodation".

Glen Ranger reported that –

Actions 1 and 2 were on target to be completed by 15 June 2008.

Action 3 – was subject to a business case being established for actions 1 and 2 and participation of a suitable partner organisation for funding the fitting and supply of equipment.

Councillor Barry Longden advised that an application to the Area Committee would be welcomed to pump prime the funding for this work.

## **Action**

The Committee agreed to refer this issue back to Cabinet to seek advice as to whether it wishes to support the Fire and Rescue Service approaching partners/outside organisations about fitting detectors.

**Recommendation 3** - "The Chief Fire Officer to explore the possible options for an alternative service provider for the Help on Call Service, to ensure the transition between Control Centres is managed with no adverse impact upon service users"

Glen Ranger reported that, with regard to Actions 1 and 2, an appraisal was currently being carried out about the call handling element of the Help on Call service, due to this transferring to the new regional fire centre.

In reply to a question Glen Ranger confirmed that the "Help on Call" service would continue but that different options were being investigated.

## **Action**

The Committee agreed to refer this to Cabinet for further consideration.

**Recommendation 4** – "Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service to carry out a Pilot Community Advocates Schemes, with older people being the priority population for the pilot".

Glen Ranger reported that there was no funding currently identified in the budget to enable this recommendation to be progressed.

In reply to a question Glen Ranger said that evidence was available to support the benefits of an advocate scheme.

## **Action**

The Committee agreed to refer this to Cabinet with a request that consideration be given to identifying funding to enable the work to be progressed.

Recommendation 5 - "Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service investigate how carers and those visiting older people in their homes can be trained in fire safety through existing mechanisms."

Glen Ranger reported that this recommendation was on target to be completed by 19 July 2008, and from existing resources.

Recommendation 6 – "Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Schools' Education Programme should establish a clear link with the Home Fire Risk Assessment Scheme and consideration should be given to offering incentives to young people who successfully get their older relatives referred to the Scheme".

Glen Ranger reported that all actions were on target.

Recommendation 7 - "District and Borough Councils should be encouraged to investigate how information on Housing Benefits databases can be shared with partner agencies such as Warwickshire Fire and Rescue and Warwickshire Police to enable more targeted preventative work with vulnerable people. The work undertaken by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service in this area should be fully utilised as an example of good practice."

The Committee noted –

(1) a response from Stratford-on-Avon District Council that the District Council had been using information from the benefits database to inform the targeting of goods and services to older people for the past nine years and has willingly shared this information with partner organisations.

(2) that there had been no responses received from the other Warwickshire district and borough councils.

Recommendation 8 – "The Adult and Community Services (A&CS) O&S Committee should review the progress and impact of the PHILLIS service after 12 months".

The Committee noted that the A&CS O&S Committee was undertaking this review.

Recommendation 9 – "Warwickshire Police, Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service and Trading Standards consider using the Housebound Library Service to communicate safety messages to older people."

Glen Ranger said that investigations into how this service could be utilised for Home Fire Safety Check referrals and wider community safety messages were being carried out.

Mark Ryder added that a home safety pack had been developed for distribution by carers and would be made available via mobile libraries and the housebound service during 2008-09.

Recommendations 10 & 11 - "10. Warwickshire's Older People's Partnership Board should respond to the Community Protection O&S Committee regarding how the issues raised by this review will be addressed in the Older People's Strategy", and "11. Warwickshire's Older People's Partnership Board gives consideration to establishing a family of local performance indicators, to be

attached to the Older Peoples Strategy, to provide a universal picture to enable progress and performance to be tracked and measured.”

Mark Ryder referred to the confusion reported by officers in Adult Social Care in connection with Rec. 10, as explained in the briefing note. The Older People’s Partnership Board at its meeting on 4 April 2007 would, therefore, be asked that a “refresh” is undertaken of the Quality of Life for an Ageing Population Strategy. The refreshed document would focus on what mattered to older people in their local communities and would link very well with the recommendations from the Older Peoples Safety Review.

During discussion Members sought clarification about the appropriateness of the Quality of Life in an Aging Population Strategy and the current Review of Older Peoples Safety.

### **Action**

The Committee –

- (1) noted the position with regard to recommendations 10 & 11 as set out in the briefing note.
- (2) Asked for an emailed explanatory note to be circulated to Members of the Committee about the appropriateness of the Quality of Life in an Ageing Population Strategy being the strategy which the Scrutiny Review of Older Peoples Safety should be linked to.

Recommendation 12 - “Warwickshire Police should fully utilise PACT meetings and other mechanisms such as Safer Neighbourhood Policing Teams to communicate safety information about distraction burglary to older people.”

The Chair reported that a response was awaited from the Police on this issue.

Councillor Richard Hobbs confirmed that communication was the core work of PACTS .

The Committee noted –

- (1) that the recommendations had been taken on board, and
- (2) and noted the work and publicity from TSS in this area and the road shows undertaken by the voluntary sector. (*To check with Michelle*)

Recommendation 13 (& 18) – “13. Trading Standards Service (TSS) should pilot No Cold Calling Zones in two areas with high proportions of older people to evaluate their effectiveness and impact.” and “18. Southern Area Policing should work in partnership with Trading Standards in relation to Recommendation 13. to ensure the Rogue Trader Aware Area is fully utilised.”

Mark Ryder reported that he had only recently received long awaited guidance on the legality of establishing zones. This activity could now be progressed and planned for 08-09, however, certain considerations were required to be taken into account before zones could be established. The main consideration was for a zone was that it should be community led and evidence available to support its introduction.

Recommendation 14 – “TSS should give consideration to how their services and the use of Consumer Direct can be better publicised and promoted to older people.”

Mary Ryder listed the increase in promotional activities that had taken place since July 2007 by TSS, in conjunction with Adult Health and Community Services, which including promoting TSS and Consumer Direct West Midlands, production of 5000 safety packs, press related campaigns on older peoples' issues and working in partnership with older people's organisations.

Additionally, currently being developed for the TSS website was an Older People's themed area drawing in appropriate information and advice.

Recommendation 15 – "The Housing Departments of the District and Borough Councils and Housing Associations should review how the entry points into older people's properties can be made safer and signs of vulnerability removed."

The Committee noted –

(1) the response from Stratford-on Avon-District Council that its housing stock had been transferred to South Warwickshire Housing Association in 1996.

(2) that no responses had been received from the remaining district/borough councils.

Recommendations 16 and 17 – Warwickshire Police to consider –

- (16) How the views of older people, who cannot or do not want to attend evening meetings, can be incorporated into Safer Neighbourhood PACT meetings.
- (17) Using the existing mechanisms such as Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) and Safer Neighbourhood Policing to develop a targeted preventative strategy for older people.

Councillor Richard Hobbs said the views of older people were being obtained through CVS but how this information was communicated was an issue that would be raised at the Police Authority meeting in May.

A member commented that parish councils provided the best mechanisms for making contact with older people and that stronger links should be forged between them and the County Council.

The Committee noted the progress on this issue.

Recommendation 18 – (and see 13 above)

Recommendation 19 – ( relevant to all organisations) "The Nominate a Neighbour Scheme developed by the Northern Area Policing Team should be expanded across the County and supported and promoted by all organisations".

The Committee noted –

- 1) The response from Stratford-on-Avon District Council that the Nominate a Neighbour Scheme had been introduced countywide with Nick Stephens leading from the south.

2) The progress of this recommendation.

Recommendation 20 – “The County Youth Panel and the Warwickshire’s Older Peoples Forum should be asked to consider the issue of intergenerational work jointly.”

**Action**

The Committee referred this recommendation to Adult and Community Services O&S Committee.

Recommendation 21 - “Safer Neighbourhood Policing Teams ensure information is disseminated in a timely fashion to Neighbourhood Watch Schemes in their area and actively encourage the setting up of these schemes.

Councillor Richard Hobbs reported that Stratford Community Safety Team was working well with the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

The Committee noted progress on this recommendation.

Recommendation 22 – “A co-ordinating Group of relevant services should be established to ensure that support is given to the District and Boroughs to enable these events to continued to be held throughout the county.

The Committee noted the response from Stratford-on-Avon District Council regarding the work of the Health Improvement Co-ordinator for South West Opportunities for Older People (SWOOP) and other “Swoop type work” in association with older people’s organisations such as Senior Citizens Action Network (Scan).

Recommendation 23 - “The Communications Division be requested to work with local media to launch a campaign to promote services and raise awareness.”

**Action**

The Committee agreed to refer this recommendation to Resources, Performance and Development O&S Committee for further consideration together with that Committee’s review of “Customer Service and Focus”.

In conclusion the Chair -

- (1) highlighted that 3 recommendations would be referred back to Cabinet for further consideration.
- (2) said he hoped that the remainder of the recommendations had made a difference and, although there was no way to measure their success or otherwise, he was encouraged by the progress achieved in some areas.
- (3) thanked Glen Ranger and Mark Ryder for their presentations.

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 3:35 p.m.