

Minutes of the meeting of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 19 July 2005.

Present:

Councillor	John Haynes (Chair)
"	John Wells (Vice Chair)
"	John Appleton
"	David Booth
"	Michael Doody
"	Bernard Kirton
"	Anita Macaulay
"	Mike Perry
"	Dave Shilton
"	Kam Singh
"	Heather Timms

Also Present: Richard Hobbs, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety.

Officers:

Trevor Brice, Deputy County Fire Officer
Elaine Bettgner, Group Assistant, Chief Executive's Dept.
Victoria Cook, Group Assistant, Chief Executive's Dept.
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Dept.
Diane Johnson, Head of Youth Offending Team.
Andrew Lawrence, Head of Community Support, Chief Executive's Dept.
Adrian Levett, Head of Trading Standards, LHTS.
Greta Needham, Deputy County Solicitor, Chief Executive's Dept.
Nicole North, Group Assistant, Chief Executive's Dept.
Andrew Savage, Highways Network Manager, PTES
Julie Sullivan, Corporate Community Safety Manager, Chief Executive's Dept.
Gereint Stoneman, Corporate Review Team, Chief Executive's Dept.

1. General

(1) Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Bryan Levy.

(2) Members' Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None

(3) Minutes of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 7 June 2005 and Matters Arising

Resolved –

That the minutes of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting held on 7 June 2005 be approved and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

None

2. Public Question Time

None.

3. Fire Services Act 2004: The Core Functions of Warwickshire County Council in its Role as a Fire and Rescue Authority

DCFO Trevor Brice presented the report of the County Fire Officer, which provided an assessment of how Warwickshire County Council in its role as a Fire and Rescue Authority discharged its core functions under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2005. The report also outlined a vision for future development of the Integrated Risk Management Plan that would reflect the contribution to reducing the community safety risk profile made by all WCC Departments on behalf of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

Resolved that Members of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents of the report and approve the approach outlined to developing the Integrated Risk Management Plan by the County Fire Officer.

4. Report of Departmental Contributions to WCC Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy

Andrew Lawrence presented the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive which provided an overview of the service objectives currently being implemented through each Departmental Business Plan of the County Council in order to contribute to the County Council's Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy and which also related to the Corporate Objective of: 'To reduce crime and improve the safety of the community'.

Discussion followed on anti-social behaviour (ASB) during which Members highlighted a variety of concerns, which included the time taken for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) to be processed, the cost, effectiveness, and numbers made and asked for a comparison with other authorities.

Councillor Richard Hobbs proposed that a Seminar be held to brief Members on anti-social behaviour. The Seminar could also include measures taken by the County Council to avoid an increase in the number of ASBOs.

A Member expressed concern about the public perception of "the fear of crime" not reflecting crime statistics, which were showing a reduction in the

number of incidents of crime. In reply Andrew Lawrence explained that several initiatives had been adopted to address this issue. These included publicity, communications, practical measures (locks and bolts) and a rapid response unit to address “the fear of crime”.

Resolved that the Committee –

- (1) endorses the current departmental contributions towards the WCC Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy and recommends that future departmental Business Plans consider further improvements to these contributions for 2006/7;
- (2) ask the officers to arrange a Member Briefing on all aspects of anti-social behaviour.

5. Warwickshire Youth Offending Service

The Committee considered the joint report of the Head of Youth Offending Service, Chief Executive, and County Treasurer.

Diane Johnson, Head of Youth Offending Service introduced the objectives of the annual Youth Justice Plan. The Committee was asked to scrutinise the Youth Justice Plan and ensure that it met the needs of young people, victims and communities in Warwickshire and to support the recommendation for Cabinet to endorse Warwickshire’s Youth Justice Plan.

Following discussion and questions Members commended the work of the Youth Justice Team.

Councillor Richard Hobbs also complimented the Youth Justice Team on its work, and on Warwickshire being the leading authority in partnership working. In particular, he highlighted the successful working of the Nuneaton Criminal Justice Centre, which would soon to be extended into Leamington.

Resolved that the Committee recommends Cabinet that the content of the Youth Justice Plan meets the County Council’s objectives of reducing youth offending and meeting its responsibilities to young people, families, victims, communities and criminal justice partners.

6. Departmental Performance Reports 2004/05

(a) Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service

DCFO Trevor Brice presented the report of the County Fire Officer outlining the performance of the Service during 2004/05, in accordance with the Corporate Performance Management Framework. The report summarised the performance of the Service against its Corporate Health and Best Value

performance indicators, identified progress made against key projects in the 2004/05 Service Plan and included customer results in the context of the customer care standards and a financial outturn position for the year end.

Discussion followed and, in reply to questions, DCFO Trevor Brice said that –

- Two days of consultancy time had been programmed to address process mapping and was expected to show a “green” traffic light indicator in the next performance report;
- The target for deaths as a result of fire was zero and this would remain the Fire Service’s aspiration.
- The number of fire officers riding on appliances attending calls fell below national standards, however, 16 fire fighters had been recruited for training before September 2005. This national performance indicator was being withdrawn and would be monitored in future by a local indicator.
- The IRMP Policy Panel would be considering targets relating to response to Automatic Fire Alarms and false alarm calls challenge.
- All new houses were required to be fitted with a smoke alarm.

Resolved that the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee support the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service’s performance at the year-end stage and endorses any proposed remedial action.

(b) Libraries, Heritage and Trading Standards

Adrian Levett presented the report of the Director of Libraries, Heritage and Trading Standards which set out the Department’s achievements of actions and targets within the 2004/05 Service Plan and highlighted the areas that related to the remit of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This was a full year analysis to meet the requirements of the County Council’s Performance Management framework.

In reply to a question Adrian Levett said that –

- the failure to check motor fuel samples was as a result of staff vacancies. The samples had been taken but the samples not checked when the report was compiled. This work had now been completed and the results available.
- A risk assessment of staffing of libraries had been very carefully carried out and staffing levels pitched according to risk.

Resolved that the Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee support the Libraries, Heritage and Trading Standards performance for the full year 2004/05 and endorses any proposed remedial actions.

(c) Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy Department.

Members considered the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy which set out the full-year performance report with respect

to community safety, alongside a summary of the consultation activity, which had taken place during 2004/05.

During discussion and in reply to questions Andrew Savage –

- explained that complaints received regarding replacement and repairing of streetlights occurred in the main when the contractor had initially taken over the new contract and these had now been resolved;
- confirmed that the £6,000 donation given to provide white lighting in Leamington had been spent;
- explained the reasons why white lighting could not be substituted for conventional lighting in many areas due to the reduced light output. Where CCTV was installed detailed consideration was required on the spacing of the columns to ensure effective images on CCTV systems.
- said that the delay in connecting electricity to new lighting columns was being addressed with the electricity providers.

Resolved that Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy (PTES) Department's performance for the full year 2004/05 and endorses any proposed remedial action.

(d) Chief Executive's Department Performance Report

Members considered the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive which provided an annual update of the achievements of the Chief Executive's Department and partners in meeting the objectives and performance targets set for 2004/05 which related to the Corporate Objective of: 'To reduce crime and improve the safety of the community'.

Andrew Lawrence, in response to concern expressed, explained in greater detail about the reasons for the high number of incidents of crime in the Nuneaton area and explained that additional resources were being directed to that area to address the problem.

Resolved that the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the Chief Executive Department's performance for the full year 2004/05 and endorses any proposed remedial actions.

7. Minutes of the Regional Management Board (RMB) Meeting 10th June 2005.

Resolved, having considered the report of the County Fire Officer, to note the report and the contents of the minutes of the Regional Management Board (RMB) Meeting held on 10th June 2005.

8. Provisional Items for Future Meetings and Forward Plan Items Relevant to this Committee

(a) Provisional Items for Future Meetings

Members considered the future workload of the Committee and provisional items and, following discussion, it was resolved, that –

- (1) The Drugs Action Team be included in the future work programme as an item for scrutiny;
- (2) A Seminar/Member briefing be arranged on anti-social behaviour to include crime trends and statistics.
- (3) A copy of the report recently presented to Cabinet on the implications of the new Licensing Legislation and its impact on the County Council to be forwarded to all Members of the Committee.

(b) Forward Plan – Items Relevant to this Committee

Members noted the Forward Plan item relevant to the work of this Committee as follows -

Cabinet – 8 September 2005

Fire and Rescue Services Action 2004

9. Any Other Items

None.

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 4:10 p.m.