

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 30 October 2018 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Mrs Falp (Chairman); Councillors Ashford, Boad, Bromley, Mrs Cain, Davison, Gill, H Grainger, Naimo, Parkins and Mrs Redford.

Also Present: Councillors Rhead and Thompson who were present from the start of the meeting, and Councillor Butler who arrived at minute 54.

50. **Apologies and Substitutes**

- (a) There were no apologies for absence made.
- (b) Councillor Ashford substituted for Councillor Shilton and Councillor Gill substituted for Councillor D'Arcy.

51. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

52. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2018 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

53. **Summary of the role, responsibilities and performance of the South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership (SWCSP)**

The Committee considered a report from Health & Community Protection which set out the role, responsibilities and performance of the South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership (SWCSP). The SWCSP was the statutory body for reducing crime, disorder, substance misuse and reoffending in South Warwickshire.

Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships were created as part of the Crime & Disorder Act (1998). They were the responsible bodies for reducing crime, disorder, substance misuse and reoffending. The two Crime & Disorder Partnerships for Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick Districts were formally merged in September 2008 and became the South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership (SWCSP) or Safer South Warwickshire.

Following the Police and Justice Act 2006, Local Authorities were required to undertake annual scrutiny of the local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).

The duties on the SWCSP were to:

- produce and annual picture of crime and disorder (Strategic Assessment);
- agree annual priorities and realistic and challenging targets;
- produce a three year partnership plan updated annually;
- review performance six monthly;

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- hold an annual public meeting; and
- carry out a review of any domestic homicides.

The Responsible Authorities for South Warwickshire were:

- South Warwickshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- Stratford-upon-Avon District Council
- Warwick District Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Warwickshire Fire Authority
- Warwickshire Police
- Warwickshire Probation

Crime statistics 2017/18 for South Warwickshire were detailed by type and number in Appendix 1 to the report, with comparisons between levels in 2016/17 against 2017/18 so that comparisons could be made on whether levels had changed. Charts also showed levels of crime and type within individual council's catchment areas for April 2018 to September 2018.

In response to questions from Members, the Safer Communities Manager explained that:

- The duty to reduce crime was also the Council's responsibility, so the Council could influence changes in priorities. However, the burden was mostly on the Police because of budget cuts elsewhere within the makeup of the SWCSP.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for Mercia had made a statement following the split between Warwickshire and Mercia, stating that the back-office functions would continue to be shared; subsequent to the initial reactions, Mercia had also included HR, training and IT to some extent within this shared approach.
- The last two years had been bad for Warwickshire and Stratford and this reflected the national picture with drug related crimes. However, there were some improvements with levels of violence with injury falling. Levels for this were no worse than three years ago, but it had to be noted that the recording standards had changed and the types of crimes being recorded were subject to amendment.
- Discussions had taken place with the Police to better utilise the evidence produced by CCTV.
- Budget cuts had reduced the amount of crime prevention work. Crime prevention was now mostly a matter for individual residents to focus upon in their own homes because break-ins were being reported where very little was stolen.
- Abbey Fields was a notable crime hotspot, with crimes being mostly children on children, or vulnerable people being deliberately targeted.
- The way in which crime statistics were being recorded and the changes to what was recorded was Home Office led.

The Chairman thanked the Safer Communities Manager for answering Members' questions.

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54. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 31 October 2018

The Committee considered the following non-confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 31 October 2018.

Item 4 – Code of Procurement Practice

The Committee noted the report.

Item 5 – Adoption of a Plastics Policy

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

The Committee discussed what could be done to reduce the use of plastic at events held in the District, and requested an update in 12 months' time to review progress with the Policy and the difference it had made.

Suggestions were made for some amendments to the wording in the Policy and Councillor Thompson asked Councillor Davison to liaise with him over the changes.¹

(Councillor Thompson left the meeting.)

Item 9 – Discretionary Business Rates Relief as a Tool for Business Growth and Inward Investment

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

(Councillor Butler left the meeting.)

55. Local Plan Policy H6 (Task and Finish Group Recommendation 2.4)

The Committee considered an update note from Development Services, in liaison with Councillor Naimo which gave an update on recommendation 2.4 from the HMO Task and Finish Group. At the September 2018 meeting of Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Naimo had been asked to liaise with Development Services staff over what was required in this update report.

Recommendation 2.4 sought to ensure that the H6 Planning Policy was consistently and fully applied. It then spelt out six specific provisions and the update report went through each provision, giving details on what had been done about each one. Appendix 1 gave examples of HMO concentration calculations, with corresponding maps of the sites referred to in the calculations. Appendix 2 gave examples of instances when offices had applied the H6 Policy against planning development submissions.

¹ Councillor Davison liaised with Councillor Thompson the following day, prior to the meeting of the Executive.

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In response to questions from Members, the Head of Development Services and Councillor Rhead, Portfolio Holder – Development Services, explained that:

- Maps and mapping were progressing but there were some issues to sort with respect of being able to show HMO properties by the use of a single colour; this was expected to be resolved in two to three weeks.
- They would check if there was an issue with the map in example 1, which appeared to have more than 35 purple dots, and get this resolved.
- A report would be going to the January Executive on how to apply the policy surrounding concentrations of purpose built student accommodation.
- When planning permission was given for buildings that later transpired to be HMOs, there was nothing that could be done about them.
- All larger letting agencies should be aware of their H6 figures. The Head of Development Services would consider if specific promotion work to make all letting agencies aware of their obligations could be done.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Development Services and Councillor Rhead for answering Members' Questions.

(Councillor Rhead left the meeting.)

56. Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Executive

The Committee considered its work programme for 2018 and the Forward Plan and the responses the Executive gave to the comments the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made regarding the reports submitted to the Executive in late September 2018.

Councillor Ashford gave an update on progress with the Task & Finish Group – Role of the Council's Chairman.

Consultation had been undertaken with all current Warwick District Councillors for their thoughts on the role of the Chairman. In addition to these, some specific questions had been posed to the current and past Chairmen of the Council who were currently Councillors as well as former Councillors Pratt and Mrs Sawdon.

The Group had met with the Chairman's PA and with the Chairman of the Council.

21 responses had been received out of the 48 questionnaires sent out.

The Group would now work on its report recommendations before meeting again and it was intended to report to the Committee no later than February 2019.

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The Committee then reviewed its Work Programme because it was anticipated that the meeting in November would be very busy with scrutinising reports going to the Executive that month. It was therefore suggested that the Committee's own Work Programme should be reviewed to make as much time as was possible.

Resolved that

- (1) the following reports be pushed back to a later meeting:
 - (a) to provide an update report on progress on the recycling contract be moved back from November to February;
 - (b) increased litter bin provision to be moved back from November to February;
 - (c) catering and events concessions to be moved back from November to February; and
- (2) the shared environment enforcement report scheduled in January should be a written summary and not a verbal report.

(Councillor H Grainger left the meeting during consideration of this item.)

(The meeting ended at 7.53 pm)

CHAIRMAN
27 November 2018