

SCRUTINY BOARD (SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES)

MONDAY, 28TH JULY, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Bentley, A Blackburn, J Dunn,
R Grahame, M Harland, P Harrand,
J Jarosz, K Renshaw, K Ritchie,
M Robinson and N Walshaw

12 Late Items

There were no late items.

13 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

14 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor B Urry, with Councillor K Renshaw in attendance as substitute.

15 Minutes - 30 June 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

16 Refreshed West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan and draft Safer Leeds Strategy 2014-2015

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the refreshed West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan 2013-2018, published in May 2014, and a draft of the Safer Leeds Strategy 2014/15 for the Board's consideration.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Mark Burns-Williamson, West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner
- Kelly Laycock, Partnership Manager, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire
- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing and Chair of Safer Leeds
- Chief Superintendent Sam Millar, Chief Officer Community Safety
- Councillor Mark Dobson, Executive Member for Cleaner, Stronger and Safer Communities

The Chair invited Mr Burns-Williamson to provide an overview of the key priorities set out in the refreshed Police and Crime Plan. In doing so, particular references were made to the introduction of two new priorities – understanding ‘cyber’ crime and improving road safety. In acknowledging the Scrutiny Board’s particular interests in the role of Police Community Support Officers, tackling prostitution, human trafficking and legal highs, the Commissioner reinforced his commitment and highlighted planned actions linked to such areas of work.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following key issues were raised:

- Road Safety – Members welcomed the introduction of road safety as a key priority area in the Police and Crime Plan. In acknowledging links with the anti-social behaviour agenda, the Commissioner highlighted his intention to work closely with Community Safety Partnerships to explore local solutions to improving road safety and reinforced the importance of partnership working in this regard.
- Human Trafficking – the Commissioner referred to a new multi-agency approach, working with an organisation called ‘Hope for Justice’ aimed at addressing human trafficking and welcomed further suggestions of which partners need to be engaged in this agenda. The Commissioner also highlighted the intention to work collaboratively with other Police and Crime Commissioners to consider wider actions to help tackle human trafficking nationally.
- Detection rates – Members noted that performance information set out in the Police and Crime Plan focused more on conviction rates. The Commissioner assured the Board that robust accountability processes are in place that also include detection rates and trends as well as comparisons with other Force areas. The Commissioner agreed to provide additional performance information to the Scrutiny Board as appropriate.
- Performance data – Members also requested details of actual performance figures linked to the indicators set out in the Police and Crime Plan and suggested that future Plans should include actual figures alongside the percentage rates.
- Frontline policing – the Commissioner reinforced his commitment towards frontline policing but also highlighted that as it stands, West Yorkshire Police will lose £157m from its budget by 2016/17, which is a 31% budget reduction over six years.
- Hate Crime – Members requested further information linked to the ongoing work surrounding the development of a measure for satisfaction of victims of hate crime.
- Domestic Violence – further to the inquiry recently undertaken by Scrutiny, Members reinforced the need for better integration of services in tackling domestic violence and abuse. This was echoed by the Commissioner who also reinforced his commitment to commission services that provide appropriate support to victims to make them feel safe and help them recover.

- Proceeds of Crime – the Commissioner highlighted that a proportion (50%) of the funding received through the Proceeds of Crime is being allocated to the Safer Communities Fund for community projects to bid for funding linked to the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan. The other 50% received back will be used for operational policing.
- Ensuring integrity and creating confidence – Members reiterated the importance of gaining public trust and confidence in policing and the wider criminal justice system and welcomed the Commissioner’s commitment in this regard as set out in the Police and Crime Plan.
- Draft Safer Leeds Strategy – Members welcomed the draft Strategy, recognising that the local community safety priorities and shared outcomes reflected many of the priorities within the wider Police and Crime Plan. Whilst acknowledging that the draft Strategy does not include Road Safety as a priority area at this stage, Members were informed that further work would be undertaken by the Safer Leeds Partnership, in liaison with the Commissioner, to establish how best to take forward this particular agenda.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report and the refreshed West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan be noted
- (b) That the Scrutiny Board’s observations on the Draft Safer Leeds Strategy are fed back to the Safer Leeds Executive at its meeting on 30 July 2014
- (c) That the requests for additional information as set out above are progressed via the Board’s Principal Scrutiny Adviser.

(Councillor A Blackburn arrived at 10.40 am during consideration of this item)

17 2013/14 Quarter 4 Performance Report

The report of the Director of Environment and Housing and Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) set out the performance position at Quarter 4 in relation to those areas relevant to the Board’s remit.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel

In consideration of the report, the following issues were raised by the Board:

- Street cleanliness – Members emphasised the importance of effective cleanliness of main artery roads but also acknowledged the additional health and safety measures required in undertaken such work i.e. the need for planned road closures. Reference was also made to pedestrian subways and the need for these to be incorporated into the core programme for street cleanliness.

- Environmental enforcement – Members discussed the need for robust enforcement of littering and fly-tipping across the city and the key role of Environmental Action Teams. Reference was made to the positive impact of relevant enforcement initiatives in the city centre.
- Garden waste – Members discussed the Council’s brown bin collection service and noted the intention to review this service following the implementation of alternate weekly collections across the city.
- Recycling performance data – Members requested more up-to-date performance information as well as comparative data with other core cities.
- Glass recycling – Members emphasised the need for the Council to investigate and encourage any supermarkets in Leeds that are not already providing glass bring banks to explore this option.
- Accessibility of refuse collections vehicles – Members discussed issues that impact the accessibility of refuse collection vehicles, such as overgrown hedging and parked cars, and were pleased to note that such factors are being considered by the service.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(There was a break during this item between 12 pm and 12.15 pm as the Chair brought forward the item on Community Committees to enable questioning of the relevant Executive Board Member)

18 Community Committees Update

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented an update in relation to the new Community Committees. A copy of the Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules for Community Committees were attached to this report for Members’ information.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel
- Rory Barke, Area Leader Corporate, Citizens and Communities

In discussing the role of Community Committees, the following key issues were raised:

- Reports to Community Committees – particular importance was placed on Community Committees receiving more succinct and locally focused reports that will also appeal to members of the community. Linked to this, Members also stressed the need for senior officers to respond positively to invitations of attendance by Community Committees.
- Area based delegations – Members acknowledged the intention to challenge and move decision-making closer to communities wherever possible and the Scrutiny Board’s intention to undertake a piece of work this year to look at options for area based delegations.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(Councillor N Walshaw left the meeting at 12.05 pm during consideration of this item)

(Councillor J Jarosz left the meeting at 12.10 pm during consideration of this item)

19 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the Board's current work schedule. The minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 25 June 2014 were also appended to this report for Members' information.

The Chair reminded Board Members of the following forthcoming working group meetings:

- Scoping the Board's review on the role of PCSOs and the wider integrated partnership models – Monday 4 August at 9 am.
- Scoping the Board's review on area based delegations to Community Committees – Monday 1 September 2014 at 11.30 am.

The Chair also informed the Board that the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Board is holding a working group meeting on 28 August to consider the draft Leeds Housing Standard prior to it being agreed by Executive Board in September. As such, invitations were being extended to the Sustainable Economy and Culture Scrutiny Board and the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board to nominate a representative to contribute to this working group meeting as a joint piece of Scrutiny work.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Board's work schedule and the Executive Board minutes be noted.
- (b) That Councillor Barry Anderson attends the Scrutiny working group meeting on 28 August 2014 to represent the Board in consideration of the draft Leeds Housing Standard.

20 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 15 September 2014 at 10.00 am. (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 am.)

(The meeting concluded at 12.40 pm)