

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES)**

**MONDAY, 10TH MARCH, 2014**

**PRESENT:** Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Bentley, D Coupar,  
R Grahame, M Harland, P Harrand,  
G Hyde, J Jarosz, J Lewis, M Robinson  
and N Walshaw

### **80 Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair made reference to the Council's new protocol relating to third party recording of Committees, Boards and Panels, including both video and audio recording. Copies of this protocol were made available at the meeting.

### **81 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Members were advised that in relation to Agenda item 12 'Overview of the Crime and Disorder Joint Strategic Assessment', Appendix 1 of the agenda report included information which warranted the exclusion of the press and public under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (7), 'Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime' (Minute No. 91 refers).

**RESOLVED** – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of Appendix 1 in accordance with Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (7), 'Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime'.

### **82 Late Items**

In accordance with his powers under Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair agreed to accept the following supplementary information:

- Report of the Director of Environment and Housing on the Leeds Hate Crime Strategy 2014-2019 (Minute no. 89 refers)

The above document was not available at the time of agenda despatch, but was subsequently made available on the Council's website.

### **83 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

#### **84 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Blackburn and also Councillor P Davey, with Councillor J Lewis in attendance as substitute.

#### **85 Minutes - 10 February 2014**

Further to Minute no. 74 'Scrutiny review of the role, number and allocation of PCSOs in Leeds' the Chair confirmed that the Scrutiny Board's final report was subsequently published and formally considered by the Executive Board at its meeting on 4th March 2014. A formal written response to the recommendations will be brought back to the Scrutiny Board in due course.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

#### **86 Work Schedule**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the Board's latest work schedule.

The Chair confirmed that two additional working group sessions were being scheduled in March and April as part of the Board's inquiry into tackling domestic violence in Leeds.

The Chair also reported that Board Members had been invited to attend the Leeds BME Women's Conference at the Hamara Healthy Living Centre on Wednesday 12th March 2014, which would also be addressing issues around domestic violence. It was noted that Councillor Debra Coupar and Councillor Mary Harland would be attending this event on behalf of the Scrutiny Board.

The Chair reminded the Board that its final meeting of the municipal year was scheduled for Monday 14th April 2014. However, the Chair proposed that this meeting be deferred in view of the need to undertake two additional sessions linked to its inquiry into tackling domestic violence. Board Members agreed to defer its final meeting until after the forthcoming Elections and proposed that it takes place on the day of the Council's Annual General Meeting (Monday 9th June 2014). The Principal Scrutiny Adviser was requested to explore this as an option and to send out confirmation of the meeting details as soon as possible.

**RESOLVED** –

- (a) That the Board's meeting on Monday 14th April 2014 be cancelled.
- (b) That the Principal Scrutiny Adviser explores the option of holding the Board's final meeting on Monday 9th June 2014 and sends out confirmation details as soon as possible.

## **87 Improving communications aimed at tackling illegal money lending - response to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the response of the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Board's recent review which explored opportunities for improving communications aimed at tackling illegal money lending.

Representatives from other relevant directorates and the Illegal Money Lending Team were also invited to discuss their role in taking forward the Board's recommendations.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Dave Roberts, Financial Inclusion Strategy Manager
- Mike McAughtrie, LIASE Officer, Yorkshire and Humberside, Illegal Money Lending Team
- Simon Swift, Area Manager, Environment and Housing
- Michele Tynan, Chief Officer, Access & Care, Adult Social Care
- Gail Webb, Head of Learning Improvement, Children's Services
- Hilary Farmery, Communications Manager, Corporate Communications
- Tim Taylor, Health and Wellbeing Improvement Manager
- Chief Superintendent Sam Millar, Chief Officer Community Safety

The key areas of discussion were as follows:

- Members acknowledged that a major publicity campaign aimed at tackling high cost lending and also illegal money lending was expected to be launched on 19th March 2014.
- In relation to recommendation 3, it was suggested that the wording of this recommendation be amended to also acknowledge the need to work closely with the Director of Children's Services in training relevant frontline staff within this directorate.
- In relation to recommendation 4, Members reiterated the importance of targeting young people to help them understand the importance of keeping money safe and managing it right. It was noted that the education pack produced by the England Illegal Money Lending Team for schools had now been launched nationally.
- In relation to recommendation 5, it was noted that this would be discussed by the Member Development Working Group at its next scheduled meeting.
- Reference was made to 'Operation Champion' and the commitment of West Yorkshire Police in tackling illegal money lending. Linked to this, it was noted that efforts are now being made to ensure that frontline operation staff, including PCSOs, receive weekly briefings on issues affecting their particular communities.
- Members emphasised the importance of making alternative options to high cost lending and illegal lending easier to access and understand. Members were therefore pleased to note that the Money Information

Centre, a new web based resource, would be launched on 19th March 2014 and is designed to meet this objective.

- It was noted that the Money Information Centre would also help frontline staff signpost people to correct advice and agencies. Such staff would also receive briefing packs and additional training to equip them with the relevant knowledge and capacity to detect and support individuals in financial difficulties.
- In acknowledging that a Leeds Education Hub is being set up, it was noted that this could provide a link to the Money Information Centre too. In addition, School Improvement Advisers would also receive training to help support their Head teachers and Chairs of Governors.
- Whilst acknowledging that the full extent of the problem relating to illegal money lending activity is difficult to measure, reference was made to the trends being observed with high cost lending, acknowledging that individuals engaging in illegal lending would have generally exhausted any legal lending options first.
- It was highlighted that the Step Change debt charity had helped 36,000 individuals in debt with pay day lenders in 2012. In 2013, this figure had risen to 67,000 individuals.
- Members emphasised the importance of identifying and supporting vulnerable individuals whom may have had benefits reduced or removed.
- Particular emphasis was placed upon expanding the capacity of the Credit Union. It was noted that the Council has undertaken a lot of work with the Credit Union, including a pre-Christmas marketing campaign which proved to be very successful. Members were pleased to learn that the Leeds Credit Union now has 27,000 members, which is its highest level.
- In acknowledging the value of raising greater awareness of the Credit Union amongst young people within secondary schools, the Board agreed to make a formal recommendation in this regard.
- Members noted the role and work being undertaken by Public Health around the wider determinants of health, including financial inclusion. Particular reference was made to its links with GPs and third sector organisations and also particular schemes such as 'Opportunity Knocks' and 'Money Buddies', which are being promoted as good practice models.
- As well as providing support to individuals, particular importance was also placed around effective enforcement measures and the need to publicise successful prosecutions to help deter individuals from becoming loan sharks.

## **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the Scrutiny Board notes the response to its recommendations.
- (b) That the wording of recommendation 3 be amended to acknowledge the need to work closely with the Director of Children's Services in training relevant frontline staff within this directorate too.
- (c) That the following Scrutiny Board recommendation is also implemented and monitored accordingly:

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2014

### **Recommendation 6**

That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) works closely with the Financial Inclusion Team and the Director of Children's Services in promoting greater awareness in local secondary schools of the services provided by the Credit Union.

(Councillor M Robinson arrived at 10.50 am during consideration of this item)

## **88 Strategic Partnership Boards - Update**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented an update in relation to the actions taken as a consequence of the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board last year following its review of the relevant Strategic Partnership Boards.

Anne McMaster, Executive Officer, Citizens and Communities, was in attendance for this item.

The key points raised during the Board's discussion were as follows:

- The terms of reference for the new Communities Board were attached to the report for Members' information. Members noted that this Board had only met for the first time on 28th January 2014. At this meeting it was agreed that the main focus of the Board's work would be to tackle poverty and deprivation and underpin the emerging Citizens@Leeds agenda.
- Members noted that the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma Strategy Group no longer meet as a partnership. Acknowledging that the issues previously addressed by this Group are now being picked up by the Environment and Housing directorate and the Migration Partnership, Members sought clarification of Elected Member representation on the Migration Partnership.

### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (b) That clarification of Elected Member representation on the Migration Partnership is provided to Board Members.

## **89 Leeds Hate Crime Strategy 2014 - 2019**

The report of the Director of Environment and Housing presented details of the new Leeds Hate Crime Strategy 2014-2019 for the Board's consideration. A copy of the full Strategy was also appended to the report.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Harvinder Saimbhi, Head of Anti-Social Behaviour
- Chief Superintendent Sam Millar, Chief Officer Community Safety

In consideration of this report, the following issues were discussed:

- Current status of the Strategy – following consultation with stakeholders on the draft Strategy, Board Members acknowledged that the Strategy would now be formally launched on 24th April 2014.
- Definition of Hate Crime – Members were pleased to note that the Strategy clearly sets out what is meant by Hate Crime and felt that greater awareness of this crime, particularly amongst young people, is needed.
- Types of Hate Crime– Members discussed different types of hate crime and intelligence surrounding perpetrators. Members noted that Appendix D of the Strategy sets out a hate crime problem matrix, introducing a new language to track types of hate incidents.
- Measures of success – Members held a discussion around measures of success linked to this Strategy. Acknowledging that many hate incidents (non-crimes) will go unreported, it was noted that a key aim of the Strategy is to increase confidence in reporting, thereby increasing the number of reports recorded.
- Desired outcomes – it was noted that another measure of success is linked to customer satisfaction with the investigation undertaken and also the outcome. In responding to hate crime, emphasis was placed around adopting a victim-led approach. Where the victim is willing, Hate Crime Coordinators will support them to access justice through the Criminal Justice System (CJS). However, the Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team can also offer alternatives to CJS outcomes, with an emphasis on preventing incidents from reoccurring.
- Commitment of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner – it was highlighted that the PCC is also committed in driving forward this agenda, as set out in his Police and Crime Plan.

**RESOLVED** – That the Scrutiny Board notes the content of the report and is fully supportive of the Leeds Hate Crime Strategy 2014-2019.

## **90 2013/14 Quarter 3 Performance Report**

The report of the Director of Environment and Housing reflected the performance framework previously agreed by the Scrutiny Board. This report set out the performance position at quarter 3 in relation to the relevant areas that fall within the Director of Environment and Housing responsibilities.

Linked to this, the Board was reminded that as part of the performance framework, it would receive alternate quarterly reports covering the Safer and Stronger aspects of the Board's remit. It was agreed that this particular quarter would focus on the 'Safer' element of the Board's portfolio. This had been reflected at item 12 of the meeting agenda (Minute no. 91 refers).

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing

- Chief Superintendent Sam Millar, Chief Officer Community Safety

In consideration of this report, the following issues were discussed:

- Domestic burglary figures – Members welcomed the continuing reduction in domestic burglary figures citywide. Linked to this, emphasis was placed upon continuing to scrutinise trends within localities to target resources accordingly.
- Tetrapak recycling – Members discussed the potential for Tetrapak recycling and the need to evaluate the market value of this material again to determine whether it would be economically viable to do so.
- Disposal of discarded needles – whilst acknowledging that the number of reports regarding discarded needles across the city has reduced, a Member of the Board referred to recent incidences within a particular hotspot area close to a school and therefore reiterated the importance of effective detection and reporting processes in this regard.
- Reporting of anti-social behaviour – particular reference was made to reports of anti-social behaviour encountered by residents within properties managed by other Registered Social Landlords. It was recognised that as good practice, such landlords should be encouraged to promote the services of the Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team amongst tenants.

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted.

(Councillor M Harland left the meeting at 11.55 am during consideration of this item)

## **91 Overview of the Crime and Disorder Joint Strategic Assessment**

Linked to the Board's performance framework, the report of the Director of Environment and Housing focused around the 'Safer' element of the Board's remit.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Chief Superintendent Sam Millar, Chief Officer Community Safety

Members noted the report which provided an overview of the annual Crime and Disorder Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA); a summary of the Safer Leeds strategic priorities for 2014/15 and an indication of key challenges. A copy of the complete JSA was also provided as Appendix 1 to the report.

Following consideration of Appendix 1 to the submitted report, designated as exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (7), which was considered in private during the meeting, it was

**RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the contents of the report and the Joint Strategic Assessment document be noted.
- (b) That Board Members receive a copy of the consultation paper cited in the JSA document in relation to out of court disposals (OOCs).

**92 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

To be confirmed.

(The meeting concluded at 12.15 pm).