

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING)

TUESDAY, 13TH OCTOBER, 2015

PRESENT: Councillor J Procter in the Chair

Councillors J Bentley, A Gabriel,
P Grahame, M Iqbal, A Khan, M Lyons,
J Pryor, K Ritchie and G Wilkinson

30 Late Items

The Board received the following supplementary information that was subsequently made available on the Council's website:

- A breakdown of Council funded Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) per Ward. (Minute no. 36 refers)

The Board also received the following exempt supplementary information:

- Police Community Support Officers in Leeds – background relating to current city-wide allocation. (Minute no. 36 refers)

31 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during part of agenda item 8, 'Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in Leeds – background relating to current city-wide allocation', which has been designated as containing exempt information, as defined in 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. 36 refers)

32 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

33 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor D Collins.

34 Minutes - 15 September 2015

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2015 be approved as a correct record.

35 Tackling Domestic Violence and Abuse - Tracking of Scrutiny recommendations

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which outlined the progress made from the Scrutiny Inquiry aimed at tackling domestic violence and abuse.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Supt Sam Millar, Chief Officer (Community Safety)
- Gail Faulkner, Head of Social Work, Children's Social Work Services
- Louise Hackett, Domestic Violence Breakthrough Programme Lead, Safer Leeds.

The key areas of discussion were:

- An update on support for male and same sex victims of domestic violence.
- Ongoing initiatives to address adolescent to parent abuse, with particular reference to the PACT programme which had now received additional Family Valued funding to help increase capacity.
- The newly established Front Door Safeguarding Hub which aimed to provide an immediate pro-active response to all high risk cases.
- Advocacy and support to those victims which required school places for their children.
- The new perpetrator programme funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner which was expected to be available in Leeds from December 2015.

The status of recommendations were agreed as follows:

- Recommendation 1 – It was agreed by the Scrutiny Board in February 2015 that this recommendation had been agreed
- Recommendation 2 – Achieved
- Recommendation 3 – Achieved
- Recommendation 4 – Achieved
- Recommendation 5 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 6 – Achieved
- Recommendation 7 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 8 – Achieved
- Recommendation 9 – Achieved
- Recommendation 10 – It was agreed by the Scrutiny Board in February 2015 that this recommendation had been agreed
- Recommendation 11 – It was agreed by the Scrutiny Board in February 2015 that this recommendation had been agreed
- Recommendation 12 – Achieved

- Recommendation 13 – Achieved
- Recommendation 14 – Achieved
- Recommendation 15 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 16 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 17 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 18 – Achieved
- Recommendation 19 – Achieved
- Recommendation 20 – Achieved
- Recommendation 21 – It was agreed by the Scrutiny Board in February 2015 that this recommendation had been agreed
- Recommendation 22 – Achieved
- Recommendation 23 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 24 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 25 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- Recommendation 26 – Achieved
- Recommendation 27 – Achieved
- Recommendation 28 – Achieved
- Recommendation 29 – Achieved.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the above status of recommendations be approved.
- (b) That a further tracking report be brought back to the Board before the end of the municipal year.

36 Community Safety Related Matters

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which presented a series of summaries of community safety related issues identified by the Scrutiny Board.

The following were in attendance:

- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Housing
- Supt Sam Millar, Chief Officer (Community Safety)

The key areas of discussion were:

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)

- The role of West Yorkshire Trading Standards in tackling NPS.
- The need to review best practice of other local authorities in tackling this issue.

- Making best use of existing legislation to adopt a proactive response to tackling NPS. The Board requested to be kept informed of progress linked to the new Psychoactive Substances Bill, due to be law in early 2016, and the implications surrounding the new legislative powers.
- An update on the police response to NPS at local festivals.

Human Trafficking

- An update on human trafficking in Leeds. The Board noted that West Yorkshire Police had undertaken a major investigation over the last 18 months involving an organised operation.
- Initiatives in place to address the interconnected safeguarding issues.
- The important role of the UK Border Agency in terms of working more closely with partners in tackling human trafficking.

Prostitution

- A continuing decline of visible prostitution in terms of street sex work.
- The need for greater intelligence regarding the extent of indoor sex work and impacts on individuals, families, businesses and communities.
- An update on progress made in tackling prostitution in Holbeck and the effectiveness of a managed area approach.
- The need for more practical support to address issues in the Holbeck area. In particular, the need to invest more street cleansing resources and improve pathways to housing support for individuals wanting to exit prostitution. It was requested that the directorate formulates proposals aimed at addressing the additional support needs of the Holbeck area and reports this back to the Scrutiny Board by the next Community Safety themed meeting.
- Concern about the responsiveness of the 101 non-emergency service.
- Acknowledgement of the positive work undertaken by the Third Sector in engaging with sex workers, particularly in terms of improving relationships with the Police and increasing confidence to report a wide range of safeguarding concerns.

Leedswatch

- Confirmation that concerns had been expressed by Community Committees about the costs levied by BT for cameras in their areas. The Board was advised that the service was aiming to move towards a more cost effective solution in 2018 when the current contract came to an end.
- The Board requested to receive a scoping report outlining potential future options for delivery of this service. Linked to this, the Board also requested comparator information in terms of CCTV systems operated by other local authorities.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

- The current allocation and deployment of Council funded PCSOs across Leeds.
- That the original cohort of 294 budgeted PCSOs at the beginning of 2014/15 had continued to reduce as vacancies were not being filled (the current number of PCSOs across Leeds is now 230). However, it was noted that vacancies involving Council funded PCSOs were prioritised to be filled.
- That the negotiations regarding the number and deployment of PCSOs within Leeds from April 2016 were not finalised. However, the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had indicated that he will continue to support joint funded PCSOs but will require a higher contribution from local authorities or other sponsoring partners.
- Confirmation that initial discussions had taken place with the PCC regarding a proposal to increase the current contribution for Council funded PCSOs from 21% to 50%.
- The potential budget implications in maintaining the current level of Council funded PCSOs.
- The Board agreed to set up a working group in order to undertake further Scrutiny into this matter.

Following consideration of the supplementary document 'Police Community Support Officers in Leeds – background relating to current city-wide allocation', 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 be noted.
- (b) That a working group meeting of the Scrutiny Board be set up as soon as possible to undertake further Scrutiny into the provision of PCSOs in Leeds.

(Councillor A Khan left the meeting at 3.00pm and Councillor P Grahame at 4.15pm, during the consideration of this item.)

37 Work Schedule

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the 2015/16 municipal year.

The Board received a brief verbal update on migration following a discussion at the most recent meeting of Scrutiny Board (Citizens and Communities). It was highlighted that the minutes to the meeting would be shared with Board Members.

In relation to the Board's request to set up a working group meeting regarding the provision of PCSOs, the Chair advised that arrangements for this meeting would be made as soon as possible and communicated to Board Members in due course.

RESOLVED – That the work schedule, as amended, be approved.

(Councillor M Lyons left the meeting at 4.45pm during the consideration of this item.)

38 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 17 November 2015 at 1.30 p.m. (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 1.00 p.m.)

(The meeting concluded at 4.47pm)