

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee**
held on Thursday, 15th July, 2010 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)
Councillor W Livesley (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors E Alcock, A Barratt, J Crockatt, M Davies, P Edwards, D Hough,
J Jones, S Wilkinson and J Wray

In Attendance

E Lam – Expert Advisor
T Potts – Community Safety Manager
A Webb – Community Safety Development Manager
J Blackburn – Partnerships Manager
P Sharland - Head of Service on the Youth Offending Service
A Waller - Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service
P Bradshaw – Head of Human resources and organisational Development
P Mason – Enforcement Officer
R Pointon – Enforcement Officer

Apologies

Councillors D Flude, S Furlong and M Hardy

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

None

22 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN

None

23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to E Lamb being included in the list of those present.

24 YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM

The Committee gave consideration to a presentation by P Sharland, Head of Service, Youth Offending Service (YOS). She informed the Committee that:

The principal aim of the youth justice system was to prevent offending and reoffending by young people (Crime and Disorder Act 1998). Cheshire YOS's vision was to have the lowest possible level of offending and anti social behaviour by young people in Cheshire.

The Chief Executives of local authorities were required to plan how youth justice services would be funded and provided, together with how the youth offending service was to be composed, organised and how it would operate. In Cheshire the Youth Offending Service covers two authorities – East and West.

In 2008/09 YOS worked with 445 convicted young people in the West and 425 convicted young people in the East. The service also worked with around 80 of those who were identified as being most at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

Last year first time entrants into the criminal justice system was down by 30% and youth offending by 18%. In 2009, YOS was inspected by HMI Probation and was found to be good overall and ranked third in the NW region. Partnership working was excellent in the East and the YOS was commissioned through the Children's Trust.

P Sharland reported that the East was in urgent need of specialised accommodation for serious offenders as they currently had nowhere to be placed and could often end up in hotels or at friends.

Members discussed restorative justice, which gives victims the chance to tell offenders the real impact of their crime, to get answers to their questions and to receive an apology. It gives the offenders the chance to understand the real impact of what they've done and to do something to repair the harm. Members agreed that they would like to receive further information on this.

RESOLVED

1. That the presentation be noted
2. That Members receive further information on restorative justice

25 **SAFER CHESHIRE EAST PARTNERSHIP RESPONSE TO NI47 - ROAD SAFETY**

Further to the meeting held on 25 March 2010, Alex Waller, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, attended the meeting to update Members on National Indicator 47 – Road Safety. He informed the Committee that since the last meeting the Department for Transport had announced that there would be significant budget cuts and that Cheshire East Council had also not committed to any funding. Therefore it would not be possible to deliver the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan beyond October 2011.

It was noted that both the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy refer to road safety as an issue to be addressed and that the Road Traffic Act states that the local highway authority has a statutory responsibility for road safety.

It was also noted that the Cheshire East Casualty Profile Report highlighted that although there has been a reduction in those killed or seriously injured on the roads the Highway Agency was responsible for; there had not been a reduction on the roads Cheshire East Council was responsible for and that rural roads were a particular issue.

The Committee agreed that this was a serious issue for the authority and that the Portfolio Holders for Environment and Safer and Stronger Communities should be requested to meet with Alex Waller as a matter of urgency, to discuss how to address the issues highlighted above. Alex Waller would then report back to the Committee on the outcome of that meeting.

Emily Lam requested that she be informed if there was anything the Police Authority could do better to assist with this issue.

RESOLVED

1. That the Portfolio Holders for Environment and Safer and Stronger Communities be requested to meet with Alex Waller as a matter of urgency, to discuss how to address the issues highlighted above.
2. Alex Waller report back to the Committee on the outcome of that meeting.
3. That Emily Lam be informed if there was anything the Police Authority could do better to assist with this issue.

26 AIR QUALITY

The Committee received a report outlining the air quality work within the Borough under the Local Air Quality Management Regime allowing Members to evaluate the performance of the service. Following detailed consideration of the report Members felt that in order to evaluate performance, the Committee required more detailed information relating to the statutory powers of the service and a route map outlining what the service can do and what it was actually doing and intending to do.

RESOLVED

That a further report be brought back to the Committee on 2 September 2010.

27 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Committee considered a report enclosing for comment the draft Sustainable Community Strategy, which was due to be considered by Cabinet on 19 July prior to making a recommendation to Council regarding its formal adoption on 22 July 2010. Members made the following comments and recommendations:

- The document was well written and clear.
- A clear definition of a town was needed – the Strategy should refer to the fact that the LDF process will address this.

- Members questioned whether or not producing such a strategy represented value for money.
- Members noted that the strategy was aspirational and not compulsory.
- Members were disappointed that, the contribution of agriculture, rural economy and productiveness of land, had not been given sufficient emphasis or greater reference, throughout the strategy.
- That any reference to the PCT should be replaced with health services.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet be informed of the above comments and recommendations.

28 SAFER CHESHIRE EAST PARTNERSHIP PLAN

The Committee agreed that due to the importance of this issue and limited time constraints this report should be deferred and considered at a special meeting of the Committee.

29 CORPORATE PLAN

The Committee considered a report enclosing for comment the draft Corporate Plan which was due to be considered by Cabinet on 19 July prior to making a recommendation to Council regarding its formal adoption on 22 July 2010. Members made the following comments and recommendations:

1. Crime and Disorder is a major issue for the community, however it is not mentioned within the corporate objectives.
2. With regard to Corporate Objective 4, Members felt that due to the current economic climate, the bullet point relating to achieving and increasing the existing level of Green Flags in our Greenspace sites should be replaced with 'improving parks across the Borough'.
3. That in future, Scrutiny Committees should be consulted on the Corporate Plan at an earlier date.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet be informed of the comments and recommendations highlighted above

30 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the work programme. It was agreed that an additional meeting be arranged for 5 August 2010 to give consideration to the Safer Cheshire East Partnership Plan and the Service Level Agreement for the PCSO's. It was also agreed that a further report on Air Quality be brought back to the Committee scheduled to be held on 2 September 2010.

Councillor P Edwards reported on the Community Safety Warden Task and Finish Group. He highlighted that the review had been scoped, the group had met with the Portfolio Holder and Community Safety Manager and was due to visit a neighbouring authority. The findings of the review would be reported back to the Committee on 2 September 2010.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be amended to reflect the issues highlighted above.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 2.10 pm

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)