

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Safety Scrutiny Committee**
held on Thursday, 24th October, 2013 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)

Councillors A Barratt, M Grant, M Parsons, F Keegan and R West

In Attendance

Councillors L Brown and A Moran

Officers

P Evans - Programme & Commercial Manager

J Griffiths - Community Safety Operations Manager

34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Andrew and J Saunders.

35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of Interest

36 WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

There were no whipping declarations

37 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2013

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting. In relation to minute 31, the Chairman informed the Committee that he had contacted the Police and Crime Commissioner with regard to specialist domestic abuse funding and was awaiting a written response. He was also awaiting a written response from Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group regarding the lack of funding in the North of the borough for a specialist domestic abuse worker. The Committee agreed that the Chairman should write to both parties requesting a response to the Committees queries.

RESOLVED

1. That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.
2. That the Chairman writes to the Police and Crime Commissioner and Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group requesting a response to the Committees queries relating to funding.

38 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

Councillor A Moran spoke in respect of minute 40 – Carbon Reduction Programme, Street Lighting. He requested that Town and Parish Councils be consulted on the next phase of works as this had not previously happened.

39 CHESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - OUR VISION FOR MAKING CHESHIRE SAFER

It was agreed that due to the Assistant Chief Fire Officer being unable to attend this meeting, the item be deferred until the next meeting, scheduled to be held on 21 November 2013.

40 CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAMME - STREET LIGHTING

Further to the meeting held on 19 September 2013, the Committee scrutinised whether or not:

- There had been any safety issues as a result of the switch off,
- The decision had reduced the Council's carbon footprint,
- The decision had reduced costs.

With regard to the next phase of work to introduce Part Night lighting into residential areas across the borough, Members highlighted the importance of a full consultation exercise taking place as this had previously been a weakness. It was agreed that the consultation should take place in the following order:

- Police – crime and highways
- CCTV
- Fire Authority
- Specialist groups
- Ward Councillors
- Town and Parish Councillors
- General public

Members agreed that the energy bills needed to reflect the changes made by the Council and that as the exact financial savings were currently unclear this issue should be scrutinised by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

It was noted that there was no requirement to provide street lighting, however there was a requirement to maintain it. It was therefore proposed that any redundant equipment would be removed.

Members raised concern that street lighting may be required again in the future and suggested that any cabling and conduit should remain in place. New builds also needed to be considered, strategic planning should be minded to consider the impact of street lighting on new developments and surrounding infrastructure when giving consideration to planning applications.

Members noted that the number and type of complaints were currently being collated, however they broadly related to cycle and walkways and the A523 being considered to be unsafe.

RESOLVED

1. That the officer be thanked for his attendance
2. That the Corporate Scrutiny Committee be recommended to scrutinise the suggested financial savings.

That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to approve that:

3. With regard to the next phase of works, a full consultation exercise takes place in the following order:
 - Police – crime and highways
 - CCTV
 - Fire Authority
 - Specialist groups
 - Ward Councillors
 - Town and Parish Councillors
 - General public
4. Strategic Planning take note of the potential impact of street lighting on new developments and surrounding infrastructure.

41 CCTV CONTROL ROOM STAFFING

Further to the meeting held on 19 September 2013, the Chairman commenced the debate by suggesting that CCTV was one of the Councils most important assets; however it was not being fully optimised. There were concerns regarding staffing difficulties, therefore questioning the ability to deal with a major incident and provide coverage during sickness and holidays.

The Community Safety Operations Manager circulated an example of the staffing rota and informed the Committee that there were 10 Members of staff; four, two man teams and two 'floaters' to cover busy periods, holidays and sickness. There was a minimum of two members of staff on duty, however, Members noted that there was only one member of staff on duty during breaks and lunch breaks. The rota was implemented following a full consultation exercise and vote on the preferred option. The preferred option was suggested by a member of staff.

Members agreed that cutting the staffing budget may be false economy if it resulted in the cameras not being manned properly. Members also agreed that the Council had a duty of care towards the staff as they worked under pressure and may suffer trauma and stress as a result of witnessing some incidents.

It was unclear how many CCTV cameras were in operation within the borough, Members agreed that the exact number would be reported back to the Committee.

Following consideration of the evidence received, Members were of the opinion that 10 members of staff was the bare minimum and that the structure did not allow for major incidents, holidays or sickness, it was therefore agreed that Councillor Barratt would meet with the operators to ascertain their views on the suitability of the rota and staffing levels.

RESOLVED

1. That the officer be thanked for his attendance.
2. That Councillor A Barratt meets with the CCTV Operators and report his findings back to the Committee.
3. The exact number of CCTV cameras be reported back to the Committee.
4. That the Portfolio Holder give consideration to increasing the budget as there appeared to be no resilience within the system with regard to staffing.

42 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the work programme.

RESOLVED

1. That the deferred presentation by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service be received on 21 November 2013.
2. That a response to the following questions be considered at a future meeting:

What steps does the Council take to ensure that none of its facilities are used for online gambling and what websites have been banned?

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.55 pm

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)