

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Safety Scrutiny Committee**
held on Thursday, 19th December, 2013 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)

Councillors A Barratt, M Grant, G Merry, M Parsons and J Saunders

Apologies

Councillors P Nurse and C Andrew

OTHERS PRESENT

Mark Cashin – Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service
Peter Hartwell – Head of Public Protection and Enforcement
Paul Reeves – Flood Risk Manager
Matt Tandy – Flood Risk Management Officer
James Morley – Scrutiny Officer

52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

53 WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations of party whip

54 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present who wished to speak

55 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2013 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

Mark Cashin, Deputy Chief Fire Officer for the Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service (CFRS) gave a presentation on CFRS's future plans and objectives for its services and locations in Cheshire.

During the presentation members asked questions and the following points were made:

- CFRS's vision was to have no deaths, injuries or damage caused by fire and other emergencies in Cheshire. To try to achieve this vision CFRS's emphasis was on prevention of incidents by proactively engaging with residents in safety education and installing safety equipment.
- 12% of households did not have smoke alarms and those properties accounted for 40% of fire deaths. CFRS was targeting these properties directly to install smoke alarms at a cost of £10 per alarm. This was considered a fraction of the cost in damaged property and dangers to life that a fire could cause.
- Sprinkler systems were more expensive than smoke alarms but were effective in vulnerable properties such as high rise flats and large business buildings. CFRS was targeting vulnerable properties that would benefit from sprinkler systems to help improve their fire safety.
- CFRS received a lot of false alarms from automated fire alarm systems in business or flats. CFRS wanted building owners to call them to confirm a fire as part of their procedures for dealing with an alarm to help reduce the effects of a false alarm.
- CFRS was considering the development of a Safety Centre for young people to attend and be educated about all aspects of safety.
- There were currently plans to build four, possibly five, new fire stations around the county.
- The number of incidents attended by CFRS crews had reduced by 41% over the previous ten years. In 2003 approximately 17,500 had been attended where as in 2013 there had been approximately 7900 incidents.
- 80 year olds were eight times more likely to die in a fire than 50 year olds due to factors such as health and being more likely to live alone. CFRS targeted over 80s and their carers to improve their fire safety.
- Many organisations were working to help individuals live independently in their own homes for longer however the coordination of effort between organisations could be improved. Some Local Authorities included a member of their local fire and rescue service on its Health and Wellbeing Board however Cheshire East currently did not. The Committee suggested that the inclusion of CFRS on the Health and Wellbeing Board should be considered.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted.
- (b) That Mark Cashin be thanked for attending.
- (c) That Mark Cashin be requested to return to a future meeting of the Committee to discuss youth safety support and road safety.

- (d) That the Health and Wellbeing Board be requested to consider allocating a place on the Board to Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.

57 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

Peter Reeves and Matt Tandy gave a presentation on Flood Risk Management.

During the presentation the members asked questions and the following points arose:

- The Pitt Review into flooding in 2007 contained 100 recommendations and led to legislation changes in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The legislation made lead local flood authorities such as unitary and county councils responsible for flood risk management.
- The Environment Agency was still responsible for flood risk relating to the sea and major rivers. The Canal and River Trust was responsible for canals. Lead Local Flood Risk Authorities (LLFAs) were responsible for all other flood risks.
- LLFAs had the power to make byelaws relating to flood risk to strengthen their regulatory positions. Cheshire East was currently developing byelaws.
- The Flood Risk Management Team worked closely with neighbouring authorities on cross boundary flood risks and where water flowed from one authority's land into another's.
- Flood Risk assessments and flood risk maps were all available online for the public to view when required. This was helpful for home buyers to understand flood risk in their area. It was the Council's responsibility to maintain and update its maps.
- The Council's Local Plan contained details about flood risk across the Borough which was used to inform development control and planning. Developers needed to obtain approval for their drainage plans the SuDS [Sustainable Drainage Systems] Approval Board (SAB) before they could make planning applications.
- Cheshire East Council, as a LLFA was a member of the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC). Cheshire East contributed £260,000 to a levy which was used to fund capital schemes for flood defence across the North West. The levy was calculated based on council tax base which meant Cheshire East contributed the third highest amount despite having the third lowest overall flood risk. The Council received £160,000 from the levy for capital projects: the Committee suggested the Council to do more by submitting more bids for funding to ensure it got value for money from its contribution to the levy.
- Legislation required each LLFA to have a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The Council's current strategy was in draft form with plans for it to be approved by June 2014. The Committee expressed a wish for it to be consulted on the strategy before it was submitted for approval by Cabinet.

- The Committee wanted to ensure that all Councillors were informed about any flooding issues or flood risk management capital projects in their wards to ensure Members were always aware of what was happening.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted.
- (b) That Ward Members be made aware of all flood risk management projects that are being considered or undertaken in their wards by the Flood Risk Management Team.
- (c) That the draft flood risk management strategy be presented to the Committee for consideration and comment once it is available by the Flood Risk Management Team.

58 CCTV CONTROL ROOM

Peter Hartwell attended the meeting to discuss with the Committee the latest position regarding the CCTV Control Room. At the previous meeting Jan Griffiths had attended to brief the Committee on the new staffing arrangements in the CCTV Control Room. In order to maintain a 24/7/365 monitoring service in the context of a budget reduction for CCTV the service's staff rota required reorganising. Having mapped the level of activity recorded throughout the week a new rota, based on demands at particularly times in the week had been developed by the staff themselves.

Despite changes to the rota there was still a budget shortfall which it was hoped would be met by Town and Parish Councils contributing funds to ensure the cameras in their area remained under observation by CCTV staff. It was suggested that the Police would be unwilling to fund any observation of cameras due to constraints on their budget. Some Parish Councils had chosen not to provide funding for monitoring and maintenance of the Cameras in their area due to the low volume of cameras and incidents recorded. These cameras would continue to operate until they failed but would not be monitored live by the CCTV staff.

It was suggested that it would be possible for Cheshire East to transfer monitoring of CCTV cameras to individual Town or Parish Councils should they wish to take over the monitoring themselves. A Town or Parish Council taking responsibility for the monitoring of the Cameras in its own area would need to bear the cost of monitoring and maintenance of the Cameras.

Having recently conducted a site visit to the CCTV Control Room in Macclesfield, Councillor Barrett raised concerns about the staffing levels during a 24 hour period. The control room was intended to operate with two members of staff monitoring at all times however this was not possible without members of staff remaining in the control room during their one hour breaks. Unless staff remained in the control room during their breaks then there was actually six hours in 24 that would only have a single member of staff monitoring the cameras (based on four one hour lunch breaks and four 30 minute shift changes). The Committee

expressed concerns for the staff who were choosing not to take appropriate breaks during their shifts.

RESOLVED – That the points raised during the discussion be noted.

59 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee gave consideration to the work programme.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Fire and Rescue Service be invited to return to the Committee for an item on road safety and youth education about being safe generally.
- (b) That the Flood Risk Management Strategy be added to the work programme.
- (c) That an update on the Probation Service be considered at a future meeting.
- (d) That an item on drugs and children be added to the work programme.

The meeting commenced at 10.31 am and concluded at 1.30 pm

Councillor H Murray (Chairman)