

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Tuesday 6 September in a Conference Room at the Council House

Panel members present: Councillor L. Harrison (Chair)
Councillor C. Creaney (Vice-Chair)
Councillor I. Azam
Councillor L. Rattigan
Councillor E. Russell
Councillor D. Barker
Councillor S. Fitzpatrick

Officers present: Keith Stone, Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)
Lynne Hughes, Area Manager (Community Safety)
Tracey Evans, Lead Accountant (Neighbourhood Services and Resources (Finance))
Matthew Underhill – Scrutiny Officer

88/11 Apologies

Apologies were received for the duration of the meeting from Councillor K. Sears, Councillor I. Shires, Councillor F. Westley, Councillor A. Young, Councillor S. Coughlan, Councillor Z. Ali and Jamie Morris.

89/11 Substitutions

The following members substituted for the duration of the meeting:

Councillor D. Barker for Councillor I. Shires
Councillor E. Russell for A. Young
Councillor S. Fitzpatrick for Councillor F. Westley

90/11 Declarations of interest and party whip

There were no declarations of interest or party whip identified at this meeting.

91/11 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were noted.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2011, copies having previously been circulated be approved as a true and accurate record.

92/11 **Community Safety Plan**

The Area Manager (Community Safety) introduced the report. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- There were six strategic priorities within the Community Safety Plan. The report was aimed at helping the Panel identify potential areas for further consideration;
- The changes proposed by the introduction of police and crime commissioners in May 2012 are likely prompt significant changes to community safety partnerships, particularly in terms of funding;
- In relation to Priority 1 a number of projects were currently underway to tackle domestic abuse. This included establishing a commissioning model which is being developed by the Joint Commissioning Unit. In addition, good work had been undertaken in developing a DVD which addressed the impact of domestic abuse on young people. In relation to Town Centre Violence work included a triage project had operated on key week nights and weekends. A multi-agency working group has also been established to respond to the findings of a recent town centre survey which indicated that crime and anti-social behaviour is a concern to visitors;
- In relation to Priority 2, a key project to tackle anti-social behaviour involved better identification of the needs of victims and perpetrators by improved coordination between the ASB Unit, Integrated Young People's Support Services and other partners. Following a Member query, officers agreed to confirm the date for the previously requested training on anti-social behaviour for all Members;
- In relation to Priority 3, two pilot Community Alcohol Partnerships are being established to address the harm caused by drugs and alcohol misuse. Following a Member query it was explained that information provided via area partnerships and organisations including hi's and low's were fed to police analysts who were then able to map areas of drug use, including hot spots. This supported a targeted approach to tackling this issue within local communities;

Resolved

1. That the date of Member training on anti-social behaviour would be confirmed;
and;
2. the report be noted.

93/11 **2010/11 Final budgetary position pre-audit**

The Lead Accountant (Finance) introduced the report. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- In relation to the revenue outturn 2010/11 position an underspend of £1.008m was noted. This was a consequence of the combination of a number of reasons including rate rebates, increase in income from school meals and vacant posts;

- In relation to the capital outturn 2010/11 position an underspend of £0.025m was noted. Capital slippage shown in the report has been approved to form part of the budget for 2011/12.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

94/11 Quarter 1 Financial Monitoring Position 2011/12

The Lead Accountant (Finance) introduced the report. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The revenue forecast position was an overspend of £4.5k. This related to possible legal costs for trading standards. Further possible financial risks that may impact on the budget during the financial year were discussed. However, the Panel will be advised should this prove to be the case. Following a Member query, it was explained that the rising cost of electricity had the potential to impact on the running costs of the air conditioning unit at the local history centre. Officers agreed to provide further information regarding the purchase of PCs, including the specifications of the machines, in the First Stop Shop which were stated as costing £500.00 each;
- At present the capital forecast position was breakeven. It was anticipated that this position would be refined during the financial year.

Resolved

That:

1. information be provided to the Panel regarding the purchase of PCs for the First Stop Shop;

and;

2. the report be noted.

95/11 West Midlands Police Authority Co-opted Member

The Panel considered appointing a co-opted Member from West Midlands Police Authority,

The Scrutiny Officer introduced an update. He explained that the co-opted member on the Panel would now be Mr Philip Holmes JP rather than Mr Zahid Nawaz as explained in the report to the Panel. Mr Holmes JP, together with Councillor M. Arif, were now Walsall's representatives on the Police Authority. The appointment of Mr Zahid Nawaz to the Police Authority was undertaken on temporary basis to ensure that Walsall continued to be represented.

The Panel welcomed the appointment of Mr Holmes JP, praising his contribution to the work of the Panel.

Resolved

That:

1. in accordance with Part 4.5 paragraph 3 of the Walsall Council Constitution, Mr. Phillips Holmes JP be recommended to Council for appointment to the Community Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel as a non-voting co-opted member.

and;

2. the report be noted.

96/11 Greenspaces working group terms of reference

The Chair introduced the draft terms of reference. The main points of the briefing and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- A number of productive meetings had been held involving many Panel Members. It was anticipated that a further of the working group would be held during September.

Resolved

That:

1. the Greenspaces Working Group terms of reference be approved;

and;

2. Councillor Louise Harrison be appointed Lead Member of the Greenspaces Working Group.

97/11 Work programme 2011/12 and Forward Plan

The Panel considered the work programme and Cabinet's Forward Plan

Resolved

That the work programme and Forward Plan be noted.

98/11 Date of next meeting

The Chair informed Members that the date of the next meeting would be 18 October at 6:00pm.

The meeting terminated at 6:20 pm

Signed:

Date: