

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

Tuesday 20 April 2010 at 6.00pm

**Panel Members Present** Councillor L. Harrison (Chair)  
Councillor C. Creaney (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor P. Bott  
Councillor D. Pitt  
Councillor I. Robertson

**Co-opted Member Present** Councillor E. Hughes

**Officers Present** Jamie Morris – Executive Director, Neighbourhoods  
Lorraine Boothman – Deputy Manager – Trading  
Standards and Licensing  
Narinder Chumber – Neighbourhood Crime and  
Justice Co-ordinator  
Craig Goodall – Acting Principal Scrutiny Officer

**External Witnesses Present** Lynne Barlow – Deputy Manager – Walsall Community  
Payback Unit  
John Wyer – Walsall Community Payback Unit

### **84/09 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Z. Ali, K. Aftab, M. Pitt and I. Shires.

### **85/09 SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were no substitutions for the duration of the meeting.

### **86/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

Councillor Ian Robertson declared a personal interest in item 6 'Final Report of the Alcohol Working Group'.

### **87/09 MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2010, copies having been previously circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.**

### **88/09 COMMUNITY PAYBACK SCHEME**

The Panel heard from West Midlands Probation (WMP) about the Community Payback (CP) scheme the work it does in Walsall, how the scheme contributes to the 'Confidence Agenda' and now to nominate Community Payback Projects.

The Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Co-ordinator explained that CP was the formal name given to community sentences issued by the courts whereby offenders would be expected to complete projects that were of benefit to the local community. Community sentences could be up to 300 hours in length. Offenders would wear fluorescent orange jackets when completing their sentences. A CP Newsletter was circulated to Members (tabled). CP had delivered 65 schemes across Walsall.

The Walsall CP Unit Deputy Manager explained that WMP wanted local people to be involved in suggesting schemes for completion through CP. WMP had prepared a leaflet for circulation across the local area looking for suggestions for schemes. Currently a lot of referrals came from the Police. The WMP had an office in Walsall.

A number of CP schemes that had taken place across Walsall were highlighted. It was noted that the offenders completing community orders often had skills which could be utilised.

The following are the principal points from the ensuing discussion:

- Restorative justice was not apart of the criteria for selecting CP schemes.
- Not taking paid work away from others was apart of the criteria for selecting CP schemes. Therefore only work which there was no existing contractor for was selected.
- There was an 80% completion rate for community orders.
- No offenders had been sent home due to lack of available schemes.
- There was no waiting list of suggested schemes.
- In order to qualify for CP assistance it was necessary to provide toilet and wash facilities for offenders.
- Accreditation of skills learnt whilst completing CP schemes was being investigated by WMP. It was suggested that WMP consider partnership opportunities with Walsall Adult and Community College.
- WMP was not able to access household waste and recycling centres as they did not possess vehicles with tipping facilities. Therefore projects could sometimes be delayed whilst skips were sourced. Currently Safer Walsall Partnership had allocated a small amount of money to pay for skips. Members asked that the policy on CP vehicles visiting household waste and recycling centres be reviewed.
- It was noted that sometimes community orders could be inappropriate as individuals may have problems that restrict the level and type of tasks that can complete.
- CP currently completed a lot of work for Walsall Housing Group. Members felt that the Council should increase its use of CP resources.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the existing policy preventing community payback vehicles from using household waste and recycling centres be reviewed.**

## **89/09 FINAL REPORT OF THE ALCOHOL WORKING GROUP**

The Panel considered the final report and recommendations of the Alcohol Working group for approval and forwarding on to Cabinet.

Councillor Ian Robertson, Lead Member of the Working Group explained that the working group had been asked to investigate alcohol related anti-social behaviour (AASB) in Walsall. This was a large topic but due to time constraints the working group focussed their investigations on night time disorder. Therefore there was scope to complete a further review in the next municipal year to consider other elements of AASB.

The Lead Member took the Panel through the working groups report highlighting the principal findings and recommendations.

The following are the principal points from the ensuing discussion:

- The strain on the emergency services caused by night time disorder was noted along with an idea to develop focussed services in the town centre at times of high need to help prevent the need for people requiring the assistance of the emergency services.
- Alcohol was a serious cause of health problems in the borough.
- Irresponsible drinks offers had been banned from 6 April 2010.
- The need to use existing infrastructure, such as ward notice boards, to deliver important messages was noted.

The Panel were happy with the working groups report and recommendations and emphasised the importance of following up progress with their recommendations.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That:**

**1. the final report and recommendations of the Alcohol Working Group be approved and submitted to Cabinet;**

**and;**

**2. the Panel review the outcome of Cabinets response and review progress with the implementation of the working group's recommendations after six months.**

## **90/09 WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10 & FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel considered their work programme and the latest edition of the Cabinet forward plan of key decisions.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the following items be considered for the Panels work programme in 2010/11:**

- a. Bryntysilio;**
- b. First Stop Express;**
- c. Community Gardens;**
- d. Neighbourhood Management;**
- e. Enforcement on private property pilots;**
- f. National Indicator 4 'percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality';**
- g. National Indicator 8 'adult participation in sport';**
- h. Grounds Maintenance Standards in Parks;**
- i. Leisure Centre Strategy, and;**
- j. Alcohol Related Anti-Social Behaviour**

**91/09 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the date of the next meeting would be set at Annual Council.

*The meeting terminated at 7.05 p.m.*

Signed:

Date: