

Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee
16 January 2020

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the SOCIAL Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 16 January 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors B.Fitzsimon (Chairman)
H.Bower (Vice-Chairman)

J.Caliskan, A.Chesterman, L.Chesterman, J.Cragg,
S.Elam, R.Lass, D.Richardson and A Rohale

ALSO Councillor T.Mitchinson
PRESENT:
Z.Crossan, Community Safety Partnerships Officer, Herts Fire and
Rescue
Chief Inspector S.Mason, Hertfordshire Constabulary
Inspector W.Nash, Hertfordshire Constabulary
District Commander R.Bristow, Herts Fire and Rescue

OFFICIALS S.Chambers, Head of Community and Housing Strategy
PRESENT: P.Underwood, Head of Policy and Culture
M Rayner, Community Partnerships Manager
K.Clifford, Neighbourhoods and Enforcement Manager
L.Jackson, Youth Partnerships Coordinator
Z.Keyte, Community Partnerships Coordinator
Milan Johnson, Sports Partnerships Officer

46. SUBSTITUTION OF MEMBERS

There were none.

47. APOLOGIES

There were none.

48. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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49. ACTIONS UPDATE

The Committee noted the report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) which gave an update on actions from the meeting held on 13 November 2019.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

Councillor L.Chesterman declared a non-pecuniary interest in items on the Agenda as appropriate by virtue of being a Member of Hertfordshire County Council.

51. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Report of the Corporate Director (Housing and Communities) provided an update on the successful work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) over the last 12 months.

Areas of success during 2019 included:

- Knife and Drug Awareness Days – In July 2019 the CSP coordinated and delivered knife and drug awareness days in all secondary schools to educate and raise awareness of the serious implications of youth violence, gangs and county lines. Pupils were searched with knife wands by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) staff and Hertfordshire Police Officers when entering the school to raise awareness. Pupils then heard presentations from Reach Every Generation and The Josh Hanson Trust.
- Community Engagement – Welwyn Hatfield Safety Week took place in September aimed at engaging with as many residents as possible via events and social media. Events included bike marking, domestic abuse coffee morning, crime prevention stalls and community information days. CSP attended events in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield Town Centres including Christmas Lights Switch On, Health Fest, Halloween Fest and Have a Go Day.
- Tri-District Domestic Abuse Conference – Every year the Welwyn Hatfield Domestic Abuse (AB) Forum delivered a conference about domestic abuse jointly with St Albans and Hertsmere DA Forum. The title of last year's conference was 'Young People – We are victims too'. The conference allowed delegates to increase their local knowledge and awareness of the impact of DA on young people and opened discussions around what support was available locally for young people who were affected.

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- Countrywide SOS Project – In September the CSP launched the SOS Project. This was an intervention project aimed at supporting young people aged 11-25 who were involved with or at risk of gang association, county lines and violence. The project was funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and partners across the county. Welwyn Hatfield shared its dedicated SOS worker with East Herts. The project so far had over seven referrals and the SOS worker was currently working with five of these. The project complimented the CSPs pre-existing referral pathways for young people such as MAGPYE (Multi-Agency Group for the Prevention of Young People at Risk of Exclusion), Positive Pathways and Herts Police CYP Schools and Gangs Unit.

Youth Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

The early intervention project, Positive Pathways, continued into its second year. This was aimed at young people who were at risk of or who were already involved with ASB. The project has had over 60 referrals since it started in September 2018.

Multi-agency groups had been set up to respond to ASB issues at local hotspots such as Woodhall, King George V Playing Field and Gosling Sports Park.

The monitoring and information sharing of young people (who were vulnerable or committing ASB) between local agencies such as police, schools and YC Herts, continued every six weeks at MAGPYE.

Youth Action Panels, sub groups of MAGPYE, have been set up to discuss cases of a high level concern.

The ASB team had delivered their first Youth Injunction.

A young person's working group had been set up, consisting of Council Officers, Youth Workers and young people to create diversionary activities in the area, which resulted in a new basketball session.

The CSP received funding from Herts Community Foundation to deliver parent/guardian awareness sessions around youth violence, gangs and drugs. The first session was planned for 25 February at Onslow School.

CSP Action Plan Successes

- Community Youth Champions Event took place in October 2019 with over 16 young people taking part. The theme was Mental Health.
- Sunflower Drop-In in collaboration with Safer Places continued to be delivered.
- Year 6 Crucial Crew saw over 1,300 young people at the University of Hertfordshire in June 2019.
- The CSP funded and supported the delivery of a project at Peartree Primary School which aimed to raise the aspirations of year 5 & 6 students who came from deprived backgrounds.
- Two Heads Up Youth Magazines were designed and distributed across the borough.

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- A Hatfield Public Space Protection Order continued to be enforced in Hatfield Town Centre
- University of Hertfordshire and Change Grow Live were working together to deliver a monthly drop-in at the university campus for those struggling with substance misuse issues as well as an annual social media campaign.
- Self-harm and suicide prevention training was delivered to professionals by OLLIE foundation
- Positive Youthful Minds conference about young people's mental health took place in October for professionals, teachers and young people. Over 130 people attended.
- The CSP was working together to try and identify private/unregulated care homes in the borough
- Lives not Knives was an anti-knife crime initiative and the events aim to educate young people on the risks of carrying a knife. Three events took place last year.
- The CSP delivered an annual youth survey for Year 9 and 11 pupils to analyse their needs as well as help to inform our local youth provision. The results would be circulated when available.

Hertfordshire Constabulary gave an update on current challenges within the borough. County Lines was a problem in Hertfordshire. County lines is where urban drug gangs from London crossed county boundaries into rural areas. There had been a progression of this over the last five years. Cuckooing was also a problem. This was where drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable young person to use as a base for drug dealing. ASB incidents were down in the borough but had increased in Welwyn Garden City.

Hertfordshire Constabulary was always looking for new opportunities to work with partners across the board and wanted to deal with root causes rather than isolated incidents.

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue gave an update on statistics of primary and secondary fires that had taken place in different wards around the borough last year. Hatfield Central ward had the most primary fires reported and the Hollybush area had the most secondary fires reported. Members asked about the statistics for Brookmans Park and Little Heath. Officers would find out and report back.

The Fire Service carried out prevention work and delivered 'Safe and Well' visits where vulnerable people could have their house checked for fire prevention. Last year nearly 1100 of these visits were carried out, free of charge. All fire officers were trained in safeguarding.

Members asked for a copy of the slides to be emailed to them.

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Members requested safeguarding training with particular emphasis on Cuckooing and Modern Slavery.

The Chairman thanked Council Officers and Community Safety Partners for a comprehensive report and for all their hard work.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee note the report of the Community Safety Partnership's successful work over the past 12 months.
- (2) That the Committee note that the risk of crime locally remains low, however the Partnership still works to continue to both reduce crime and the impact crime has on residents of the borough.
- (3) That the Committee formally supports the partnership's ongoing commitment and work to reduce youth ASB and to tackle emerging issues such as 'county lines', knife crime and serious violence.

52. YOUTH PARTNERSHIPS ANNUAL REPORT

Report of the Corporate Director (Housing and Communities) on the Youth Partnerships Annual Report.

Between April and December 2019, the delivery of partnerships work around young people was undertaken by the Youth Partnerships Co-coordinator. The aim of the partnership was to coordinate a range of youth focused projects and initiatives to promote the social, physical and emotional wellbeing of young people within the borough.

Big Summer 2019 ran three weeks of activities and put on over 400 individual sessions held at various locations across the borough. There were more free activities than ever before and was supported by a comprehensive marketing campaign.

The Community Partnerships team worked with partners across the borough and Council to populate the first Youth Strategy for Welwyn Hatfield. The strategy highlighted the issues, potential barriers and challenges faced by young people aged 11-19 living in the borough and sets out what the Council can do, both independently and in cooperation/partnership with local statutory and voluntary groups to ensure that young people living in Welwyn Hatfield have the opportunity to maximize their full potential and thrive. Alongside this strategy was an Action Plan which would be reviewed and updated by the Welwyn Hatfield 11-19 Partnership every few months.

The Council delivered the borough's first youth focused mental health conference called Positive Youthful Minds. There were more than 130 attendees

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which included professionals, teaching staff, parents, carers and young people. There were targeted, streamed workshops on a variety of subjects including self-harm, suicide prevention, managing stress and anxiety and county lines.

In the current year, the team would continue to deliver regular campaigns such as Big Summer, Challenge 12, Facts and Futures and This Girl Can. The Youth Council have been continuing to work on their priorities for this year which will be supporting our growing LGBTQ community and supporting the environment.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee notes the content of the Youth Partnerships annual report.
- (2) That the Committee endorses the Youth Strategy and supports the implementation of the associated Action Plan.

53. SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY

In 2018, the Council commissioned 4global Consulting and Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) to prepare a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and a Built Facilities Strategy (BFS). The strategy had been reviewed and approved using the Sport England methodology by the national governing bodies of sport who have all had an opportunity to engage and provide feedback.

The overall strategy was designed to provide strategic direction to the Council, sports facility operators, national governing bodies of sport and community organisations and clubs on where there was a need for future growth and development.

The associated Action Plan had been agreed in partnership with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) and a range of stakeholders, including Sport England and several sports' national governing bodies as well as other key stakeholders.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee notes the contents of all the documents associated to the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and the Built Facilities Strategy (BFS) and recommends to the Cabinet that these as well as the overarching Executive Summary plus its Associated Action Plan are formally adopted by the Council.
- (2) That the Council works with partners, leisure operators, governing bodies, sports bodies and others to implement the strategies and their actions. The methods of implementation will include set up of the Sports Strategy Operations Group, Local Plan policies, planning applications and Section 106 planning contributions, community

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infrastructure levy, investment by the Council, investment by third parties and other sources of funding.

54. COMMITTEE OVERVIEW WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

The pro-forma setting out the Committee's scrutiny work programme which had been updated since the last meeting to enable the forward planning of items to take place was submitted.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.55 pm