

Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
21 January 2019

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the SOCIAL Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 21 January 2019 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors H.Bromley (Chairman)  
H.Bower (Vice-Chairman)

A.Chesterman, L.Chesterman, S.Elam, P.Hebden, R.Lass,  
P.Mabbott, L.Musk, A.Rohale, S.Thusu

ALSO PRESENT: B.Sarson (Executive Member, Regeneration, Economic,  
Development and Partnerships)

T.Perks, Chief Inspector, Hertfordshire Constabulary  
W.Nash, Inspector, Hertfordshire Constabulary  
R.Bristow, District Commander, Hertfordshire Fire and  
Rescue Service

CO-OPTED MEMBERS: Co-opted Members:-  
Tenants' Panel Representatives

R.Read and B.Rhodes

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Corporate Director (Housing and Community) (S.Russell)  
Head of Community and Housing Strategy (S.Chambers)  
Head of Housing Operations (S.Pearson)  
Neighbourhoods and Enforcement Manager (K.Clifford)  
Community Partnerships Manager (M.Rayner)  
Community Safety Partnership Co-ordinator (Z.Keyte)  
Governance Services Officer (M.Lowe)

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31. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32. ACTIONS UPDATE

The Committee noted the report of the Corporate Director (Public Protection, Planning and Governance) giving an update on actions from the meeting held on 26 November 2018, all of which had been completed.

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A tabled update informed the Committee that GLL were planning some upgrade work to the interior of the KGV pavilion over the next few months. Their budget year ran from January to December and money was now available to do this. They would be happy to show local Ward Members around when it was completed.

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

Councillor L.Chesterman declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Member of Hertfordshire County Council.

34. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY

The report of the Corporate Director (Housing and Communities) set out the draft Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and Action Plan and sought approval to consult more widely with key stakeholders and residents with regard to its suitability and implementation.

Members noted the Appendix C – ASB Strategy 2019-2022 List of Stakeholders for Consultation which had been tabled, and suggested that Hertfordshire County Councillors be included.

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council had a statutory duty to work with the Police and other agencies to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB).

The draft strategy detailed the following.

- How the Council would tackle crime and anti-social behaviour through a framework of prevention, early intervention, support and enforcement in partnership with other agencies (statutory, non-statutory and voluntary) to reduce both the number of incidents and the impact of ASB and to ensure that victims and perpetrators received support relevant to their needs and circumstances.
- The key priorities for the Council's ASB service during 2019-2022 and how they linked into and complemented the 'safer, stronger' action plan of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP).
- Incorporated the more targeted use of tools and powers available under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, more specifically the implementation of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in Hatfield Town Centre and the wider use of Closure Orders to tackle high impact ASB and crime relating to drugs and alcohol.

Referring to the Welwyn Hatfield Youth Provision: Gap Analysis report recently published by the YMCA contained in the tabled pack of papers, Members asked what was planned in relation to Diversionary Activities for young people in particular?

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Officers explained that as the Gap Analysis had only recently been published the findings had not been specified in the Action Plan. Further analysis would be required to evaluate the findings and recommendations and how these could, if feasible and realistic, be incorporated into the Action Plan.

Members noted that the work of the Community Safety Partnership would continue and that a Joint Action Group focusing on diversionary activity would be formed to identify the provision needed to inform the Action Plan. The Council, working with its partners would look at ASB, free access to youth clubs and sport activities and assess what provision would be needed. Other aspects of youth diversionary plans would be investigated together with how these linked into wider ranging issues of the CSP as a whole.

Members thanked Officers for the well balanced Strategy which placed the victim first, and dealt with domestic abuse and, in particular, controlling and coercive behaviour.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That consultation on the draft Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy and Action Plan with key stakeholders and residents of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council be agreed.
- (2) That feedback from the consultation and details of any changes to the Strategy be presented to Members before consideration of the Strategy at the Committee in June 2019.
- (3) That Appendix C – ASB Strategy 2019-2022 List of Stakeholders for Consultation, with the addition of Hertfordshire County Council be incorporated into the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2019-2022.

35. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The report of the Corporate Director (Housing and Communities) provided an update of the successful work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) over the last twelve months and requested that the Committee formally support the Partnership's ongoing commitment to reduce youth Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and to tackle emerging issues.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed to the meeting representatives from the Hertfordshire Constabulary and the Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, who worked very closely with the Council and other Partners through the community safety partnership.

The Committee received a combined presentation from the representatives of Hertfordshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Council's Community Partnerships Team.

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District Councils had a mandatory duty to act as a “responsible authority” on their local CSP, in order to plan and deliver measures to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, to reduce offending and promote assurances to the public whilst working together with other statutory and non-statutory organisations.

The Welwyn Hatfield CSP over the past twelve months had major successes in tackling youth ASB, delivering the Borough’s first Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) and the implementation of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) funded youth engagement project ‘Positive Pathways’.

The Partnership developed an area based approach this year, which had targeted activity on priority areas which had been identified as needing focussed attention in order to reduce crime and disorder. The CSP Action Plan had been shared publicly to increase visibility of the work of the Partnership within the communities it was set up to help. It also launched its first Three Year Plan in December 2018 (attached at Appendix Two).

Following the presentation Members, referring to the Welwyn Hatfield Youth Provision: Gap Analysis report recently published by the YMCA raised concerns regarding the limited number of hours available at youth clubs and queried whether an increase would reduce ASB committed by young people. Members stated that they would like to see the Council invest or fund extended hours.

Officers explained that this was an area that would require further analysis as any additional provision would need to be properly resourced. Funding applications had been made to the Police and Crime Commissioner which, if successful, could result in additional funding. Additional youth activities at YMCA Peartree would not necessarily be the solution to the issues as there were several different factors that had to be considered.

Members raised further concerns regarding domestic abuse, human trafficking and modern slavery and requested that a safeguarding report be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the successful work of the Community Safety Partnership over the past twelve months be noted.
- (2) That the risk of crime remaining low locally be noted.
- (3) That the Committee support the continued work of the Community Safety Partnership to reduce crime and the effect of crime on residents of the Borough.
- (4) That the Committee formally supports the ongoing commitment to the Partnership and the work being undertaken to reduce youth anti-

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social behaviour and to tackle emerging issues such as 'county lines' and serious violence.

- (5) That the next meeting of the Committee be themed around safeguarding, domestic abuse, human trafficking, modern slavery across county lines and community safety initiatives, for example, OWL.

36. HERTFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-2023 CONSULTATION

The report of the Corporate Director (Housing and Communities) set out a high level summary of the draft document (Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)) regarding the Fire and Rescue Service, published for consultation by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) on 12 December 2018.

The consultation closed on 6 March 2019 and Members of the Committee were asked to consider whether they wished to submit a collective response and if so, the nature of the response.

As part of the consultation process, a questionnaire had been published on the HCC website. The questions from the questionnaire were attached at Appendix A of the report.

The full consultation document could be found on Hertfordshire County Council's website via this link [Integrated Risk Management Plan consultation document](#).

Members noted that Hertfordshire Fire Authority was the publicly accountable body consisting of elected Councillors from across Hertfordshire. The Authority managed the Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of the communities of Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) was part of the Community Protection Directorate which was one of the six Directorates within HCC. HFRS was led by the Chief Fire Officer; assisted by the Strategic Leadership Group.

During the discussion which ensued the Committee considered the following proposals.

From the Chairman.

'That each Political Group and/or Member of the Council make an individual response to the consultation. This would ensure that all points of view were submitted and increase the number of responses to a very important proposal which would affect all residents and communities'.

Tabled by a Member.

'That the only responsible response to this consultation is to conclude that the IRMP in its current form must be abandoned, and a new evidence based draft

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plan be drawn up, with full consultation with the Union members and residents that it will affect’.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That each Political Group would submit a separate response to the Integrated Risk Management Plan consultation document as agreed.

37. COMMITTEE OVERVIEW WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

The pro-forma setting out the Committee’s overview work programme had been updated since the last meeting to enable the forward planning of items to take place. Items which the Committee agreed it would like to consider would be scheduled into the work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme, following the inclusion of an item to discuss the proposals on the Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service Integrated Risk Management Plan at the next meeting of the Committee, be noted.

38. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

It was proposed by Councillor A.Rohale and seconded by Councillor L.Chesterman that a scrutiny exercise take place of the balance of provision of free and/or cheaper youth activities available for residents between the towns of Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City and different areas of the towns in relation to current levels of anti-social behaviour and actions to reduce these.

A more detailed scope of the scrutiny exercise would be agreed at a first informal meeting of the Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

**(Note:** Under the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules the Administration and Opposition Groups each have the right within the Municipal Year to have one scrutiny topic referred to a Scrutiny Sub-Committee by each Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Meeting ended 9.04pm  
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