

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP SCRUTINY PANEL

Held in the Sports Pavilion and Community Centre, Recreation Ground,

Coventry Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire

7th March 2013

commencing at 6.30p.m.

Present:

Councillor Beesley-Reynolds in the Chair.

Councillors: Beaty, Graves, Hallam, King, Mrs. Robinson, Mrs. Simpson and Tomlin (until 8.55pm).

Councillor Golding, Portfolio Holder: Regulatory and Safety.

Officers: A. Ball, T. Day, A.M. Hawkins, E. O'Neill and S. Pointer.

Guests: R. Wakefield (Leicestershire County Council), Inspector P. Mc Kinder (Leicestershire Constabulary) and P. Weston (Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brodrick (substitute provided) and Mrs. Burrell.

499 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTION

Councillor Mrs. Robinson substituted for Councillor Brodrick.

500 MINUTES

RESOLVED that: the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Panel held on 6th December 2012 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

501 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Beesley-Reynolds disclosed a non-prejudicial interest in the item titled 'Supporting Leicestershire Families: Harbrough Proposal'. The nature of the interest was stated to be that she is the Council's Champion for Vulnerable Families.

Councillor Tomlin disclosed a non-prejudicial interest in the item titled 'Revised Allocations Policy'. The nature of the interest was stated to be that he is a member of the Seven Locks Housing Board.

502 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REVIEW

Councillor Golding, Portfolio Holder for Regulatory and Safety matters, presented the Panel with a report of the work and progress of the Community Safety Partnership over the last year. The Panel was joined by: Inspector P. Mc Kinder (Leicestershire Constabulary) and P. Weston (Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service).

At the Meeting the Panel received additional, up-to-date information on incidents of crime from the Leicestershire Constabulary. This information is attached at Appendix A to these Minutes.

The Panel NOTED that:

- (i) the Police and Justice Act 2006 introduced a requirement for local authorities to have a crime and disorder committee with the power to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken by Responsible Authorities in relation to the discharge of their crime and disorder functions. In July 2008 the Council resolved that Scrutiny have oversight of the 'Crime and Disorder Committee'.
- (ii) a Three-year Community Safety Partnership Plan is required by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and describes how the Community Safety Partnership will fulfil its statutory obligation to reduce crime, antisocial behaviour, substance misuse and reduce re-offending. The Council is a responsible authority under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act.
- (iii) the role of Harborough District Council in scrutinising the community safety partnership and the partnership itself is likely to change as a result of the introduction of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). From April 2013 the PCC will take control of Home Office Funding currently devolved to the County and District Community Safety Partnerships (Harborough £23,966 in 2012/13). Scrutiny of the PCC and his spending plans will be carried out by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel made up of City, County and District Councillors. Councillor Golding is the Harborough representative on this Panel.
- (iv) two fewer domestic burglaries had occurred, compared to the same period last year.
- (v) commercial burglaries had reduced by 5% compared to the same period last year.
- (vi) 32 fewer domestic assaults had occurred compared to the same period last year.
- (vii) 13 more Hate incidents (racism etc.) were recorded compared to the same period last year.
- (viii) reporting methods for Hate crime and public signposting towards these methods was improved during the last year. This may account for the increase in reported Hate incidents.
- (ix) there had been a steady decline in substance abuse over the last three years.
- (x) there had been a 40% reduction in the deliberate starting of fires compared to the same period last year.
- (xi) April to May 2012 had the greatest number of deliberately-started agricultural fires, compared to any other two-month period in recorded history, for this area.
- (xii) At the time of the meeting there had been no road fatalities in the 2012/13 year. In the 2011/12 year there were 16.

The Panel RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) in future years the Meeting to examine the Annual Review of the Community Safety Partnership by Scrutiny be held after the end of the municipal year (for example at the end of May or beginning of June) so that a complete set of data for the year will be available.
- (ii) in future reports information on trends for neighbourhood crime 'hotspots' be presented.
- (iii) In future reports detailed information on Road Traffic Accidents (RTAs) should be presented. If possible, the data presented should show a three-year history in order that possible trends can be identified.⁴

503 SECTION 100A(4) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

The following matter (Supporting Leicestershire Families: Harborough Proposal) was suggested for consideration in the absence of the press and public.

It proposed by Councillor Beaty, seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that: except for those Members present not being Members of this Panel, the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting on the grounds that the matters yet to be discussed involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

504 SUPPORTING LEICESTERSHIRE FAMILIES: HARBOROUGH PROPOSAL (SLF)

The Panel received an introduction to this subject from A. M. Hawkins, Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships, T. Day, Service Manager for Community Partnerships, and R. Wakefield from Leicestershire County Council.

Leicestershire's Supporting Families Programme was established in 2011 as one of the Coalition Government's 16 Community Budgets under the name "Families with Complex Needs", with the two following aims:

- Improving outcomes for England's most complex families.
- Reducing the public service costs resulting from addressing the needs of these families.

Approximately 1,300 families in Leicestershire meet the agreed criteria for complex needs, as well as a further 2,000 families identified as having some of the risk factors that could result in families becoming complex. These families are those to be supported by the SLF programme.

The Panel RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) the Executive endorses the proposed model for delivery of the Supporting Leicestershire Families (SLF) Service in Harborough.
- (ii) This Scrutiny Panel receive six-monthly updates on the progress of the SLF Service.

505 REVISED ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Panel considered a revised policy housing allocations policy. Following this meeting the revised document would be sent to the Executive for implementation. The Panel was asked to comment and make recommendations.

The Panel NOTED that:

- (i) the Leicestershire choice-based lettings (CBL) scheme comprises the seven district authorities in Leicestershire. The scheme was implemented in the 2010/11 year. The operation of the scheme is based upon the Leicestershire shared statement of policy. This policy ensures that the assessment of housing need and allocation of social housing is operated consistently throughout the scheme. Each district currently embeds this shared policy in its own Allocations Policy.
- (ii) in April 2010 the district authorities completed a six-month operational review of the Leicestershire CBL scheme with partner Registered Providers and statutory and voluntary agencies, to identify positive aspects of the scheme as well as areas for improvement (the authorities worked together to address the areas identified for improvement).
- (iii) the Localism Act 2011 came into effect in June 2012 and included amendments made to Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996. This new legislation empowers local authorities and provides the freedom to make changes to their allocations policies to manage their waiting lists better, and promote mobility for existing social tenants.
- (iv) the Department for Communities and Local Government published the Allocation of accommodation guidance for local housing authorities in England in June 2012. The guidance makes clear that social homes are expected to be allocated to people who genuinely need them.

The Panel RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) that the Policy be subject to annual review by Scrutiny (Portfolio Holder for Housing to be invited to attend this review meeting).
- (ii) if additional resources are required to administer the policy these should be allocated as appropriate.

The Meeting ended at 9.10pm

 M. Beesley Reynolds Chair

25/7/13 Date