

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL



**1 JUNE 2015 - 2:30PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Yeulett (Chairman), Councillor Hay (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Bligh, Bucknor, Buckton, Davis, Garratt, Miss Hoy, Mason and Pugh

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Oliver

**OBSERVING:** Councillors Clark and Sutton .

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Humphrey and Mason

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Jane Bailey (Member Services and Governance), Richard Cassidy (Corporate Director), Anna Goodall (Head of Legal and Governance), Dan Horn (Head of Housing and Community Support), Geoff Kent (Head of Customer Services) and Aarron Locks (Community Safety Manager)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Sgt Alan Boughen

As this was the first meeting of the municipal year with a new panel and many new members; members, officers and guests introduced themselves.

Geoff Kent was introduced to the panel as Anna Goodall's replacement while she is on maternity leave over the next few months.

## **OSC1/15 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Councillor Yeulett was appointed as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year.

## **OSC2/15 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Councillor Hay was appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year.

## **OSC3/15 PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of 9 February 2015 and 23 February 2015 were agreed and signed.

Matters Arising:

1. Councillor Yeulett stated that there are some comments in the previous minutes that refer to issues regarding anti-social behaviour that will be picked up later in the agenda;
2. Councillor Yeulett referred to the Whittlesey Allotments and asked if members had any further updates. Councillor Garratt stated that an agreement has been made subject to legal requirements being met by both parties and that solicitors were finalising the details.

**OSC4/15    FENLAND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

Councillor Oliver presented the Fenland Community Safety Partnership (FCSP) Report pointing out to the panel that the FCSP are in the early stages of setting out the new priorities for 2015/16. He also explained that priorities have changed slightly as previous priorities have not been overlooked but are now covered in day to day work.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

1. Councillor Yeulett stated that several times in the report 'Hidden Issues' are referred to and asked for clarification on what hidden issues are. Councillor Oliver stated that within the Wisbech area there has been multi-agency task force - Operation Pheasant, targeting exploitation and slavery, these issues are classed as hidden issues. Alan Boughen stated that hidden issues can also be problems that arise in other parts of the country that we are yet to come across in Fenland, issues to be aware of;
2. Councillor Yeulett asked if other towns and villages in fenland are included. Councillor Oliver confirmed that the majority of these issues are in Wisbech but that the work of the task force takes place across Fenland, he added that all agencies involved are aware that these issues take place in other towns and villages. Alan Boughen stated that the work of Operation Pheasant is expanding across the district and explained that Fenland Hate Incident Reporting Centres have been set up across the area too;
3. Councillor Yeulett asked for clarification of the data as the report refers to conflicting survey results and asked how Fenland is performing against other areas in the country. Councillor Oliver stated that we previously had an indication of where we were in a group but this data is no longer available. Aarron Locks confirmed that the FCSP are moving away from performance data and focussing on working against their own action plan based on the needs of Fenland. Alan Boughen stated that overall there has been a 9.5% increase in reported crime, this could be as a result of changing in the reporting structure and an increased confidence in this system. He informed members that the crime survey indicates that violent crime is down by 11% and hospital data is also recording a decrease in injuries as a result of violent crime;
4. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that it is her understanding that there is not enough joined up working with accident and emergency. Alan Boughen confirmed that sometimes there is inconsistency with regards to the information that comes through from hospitals, but there is an understanding from all parties that this needs to be improved to tackle issues like violent crime;
5. Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked how far will that data be broken down to and will it indicate figures for children and adults. Alan Boughen stated the detail has not yet been finalised, but that it is his understanding that it will be broken down this way;
6. Councillor Miss Hoy stated that although this Action Plan is in its early stages it is very vague and has no timescales, she asked how the partnership will know if they have achieved their targets. Aarron Locks confirmed that the early stages of the Action Plan is about building a profile and steering the group, as they will not have a clear understanding until they have identified the needs. He added that it is important to take a step back from statistics and data and really focus on what Fenland needs, the profile that will be built will be very real and focussed on this. Councillor Oliver agreed stating that as we go through the year we will develop a tailor-made action plan;
7. Councillor Yeulett asked if the partnership should have a clearer plan at this time. Aarron Locks stated that the partnership have changed the focus and are looking at different ways of using resources. Alan Boughen explained that from the point of view of the police, crime figures and data are not the most important thing and do not dictate the work that is carried out, the priority of safeguarding vulnerable people is the focus of their work;

8. Councillor Garratt stated that officers mentioned work around prevention of sexual exploitation in Wisbech and pointed out that this is not just a problem in Wisbech. Alan Boughen stated that he accepts that this is not just a problem in Wisbech but that the focus at the moment is in that area. Councillor Garratt stated that Whittlesey is very close to Peterborough and some individuals had been approached. He added that this could happen in any of our towns and villages as there are vulnerable young people with very little to do. Alan Boughen stated that Operation Shade, an investigation looking into issues of child sexual exploitation has been set up and the attention of this operation is across the whole of the Fenland District;
9. Councillor Miss Hoy stated that she feels there are missed opportunities in the Action Plan, with regards to children and young people there is nothing about cyber bullying and nothing about drugs, these are potentially both big issues and we need to be more proactive about them;
10. Councillor Garratt agreed stating that alcohol has always been a big focus; however the same issues can arise from drug abuse. The difference is that issues with regards to alcohol are often much more visible than that of drug taking, these are issues that affect and impact whole families and in his experience it is becoming a wider problem in this area, but there is no focus on this in the report or action plan. Councillor Oliver confirmed that the Drug and Alcohol Services are part of the partnership and we are aware of issues in the area. Aarron Locks confirmed that there is ongoing work around these issues with children and young people, during collapsed days in secondary schools we talked about online safety, sexual health and drug education and agreed that perhaps this could have been included in the report;
11. Councillor Garratt stated that this is good to hear, but that he feels there should be a crackdown on this issue as it destroys families. Councillor Miss Hoy agreed stating that this should be a priority. Councillor Yeulett stated that it also has a knock-on effect into other crimes and should be a priority. Alan Boughen stated that this issue is taken seriously; he informed members that there has been a 7.9% reduction in drug offences. Councillor Garratt stated that he is referring to more serious drugs, he reiterated that he feels it needs to be more focussed in the action plan;
12. Councillor Buckton stated that he is a little concerned that the Action Plan started on 1 April, 2 months ago, and yet it is still at the information gathering stage, he asked if there will be a plan that includes timescales. Aarron Locks stated that the plan is a living document and some of the work included is ongoing. Councillor Buckton stated that even as a living document the plan would benefit from start and end dates. Aarron Locks agreed, stating that the partnership will have a better understanding of the issues to be included and their timescales following the meeting in July;
13. Councillor Yeulett suggested that this should have been presented as an information document today and not as an action plan. Alan Boughen agreed but stated that the plan has to start somewhere, and this is a chance to identify the issues that will be included;
14. Councillor Pugh stated that the partnership only meet 4 times per year and asked how they communicate with each other in between meetings. Aarron Locks confirmed that there are regular meetings in between with project leads, some of these are as frequent as once a week, these then feedback quarterly into the partnership meetings. Councillor Pugh suggested that this should be communicated in the plan;
15. Richard Cassidy stated that from a FDC perspective the plan is still in a state of development and therefore there is still a good opportunity to feed into the process. He added that drug comments are relevant and as an action from this meeting he agreed to feed the comments back to the partnership to see if they think it should be added;
16. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that referring to the report one area that was red and therefore not progressing well was issues of domestic abuse, she asked how the partnership are moving forward with this. Aarron Locks stated that there has been more frontline officer training and the partners concerned have been challenged with regards to resilience during staff sickness leave within the team. The partnership are supporting them on delivery of their targets;

17. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that the report identifies that domestic abuse has increased and although she appreciates that County lead on this she asked how the partnership are going to push this issue. Aaron Locks stated that support has been increased in Fenland so there is an understanding that there is an increased need in the area. The partnership are looking at particular gaps within communities who would benefit from support;
18. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that the plan refers to empowering residents and asked how. Aaron Locks stated that a new priority within the Strategic Themes is Priority 4 - Empower residents to deliver safer communities. This is for the partnership not just to understand vulnerability in local communities but to look at what that particular area does well, so that there is not just a focus on what is missing but also looking at what they do well;
19. Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked when Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) would be in place on the plan, she added that although she appreciates that some are developing it would be good if the panel could see something measurable. Councillor Oliver confirmed that the partnership will start to firm up the document in July and details such as targets and dates will be added so that there is a clear way forward;
20. Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked for clarification with regards to Fenland Hate Reporting Centres, where will they be situated and how are they being rolled out. Alan Boughen stated that the Hate Reporting Centres were launched in March, leaflets were distributed which contained a list of third party locations where the reports can be made. Staff at these locations have been trained to assist people to report hate crime. Councillor Oliver confirmed that the leaflet was available in various languages;
21. Councillor Hay asked if there were any locations within Chatteris and asked where it had been advertised. Councillor Oliver confirmed that there are 2 reporting centres in Chatteris and that the launch was advertised in the local paper and on local radio;
22. Councillor Yeulett asked if the partnership made use of a social media page explaining that it will help to get the word out about things like the hate reporting launch. Councillor Oliver confirmed that the partnership have started to develop this;
23. Councillor Garratt asked about domestic abuse awareness training dates. Councillor Oliver confirmed that the partnership are waiting for the dates to come through. Councillor Garratt stated that we do not have to rely on the County Council for this training as there are other providers;
24. Councillor Miss Hoy asked if it might be possible for Councillors to attend this type of training as they are in touch with people every day in areas that they have a responsibility for;
25. Councillor Garratt stated that many towns and villages have festivals during the summer and suggested that leaflets could be available there. Councillor Oliver agreed that this was a good idea and that he would feed this back to the partnership;
26. Councillor Buckton asked for clarification around the discrepancy in the survey figures. Aaron Locks confirmed that the data refers to 2 different surveys. Alan Boughen also confirmed that the data was collected by 2 different bodies. Councillor Buckton stated that even if they have been conducted by 2 different bodies there is a huge difference in the figures, on one page of the report it says this is not a problem and on the next it is saying it is. Aaron Locks agreed that it is confusing; he explained that one of the surveys was for young people asking about how safe they felt out at night and this figure was the higher figure of 32.5%. Councillor Buckton stated that there is still cause for concern if 32.5% of young people feel unsafe. Alan Boughen confirmed that there was some work done on that back of those survey results;
27. Councillor Garratt stated that as we have a Youth District Council it would be good to get the Portfolio Holder responsible involved to find out what the problems are. Councillor Oliver agreed that this definitely something worth investigating further;
28. Councillor Buckton stated that with regards to delivery of road safety awareness the report says that there has been an increase in Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) numbers but the plan looking at KSI reduction or education is marked with a '?', and asked if anything has been done. Aaron Locks confirmed that education sessions with regards to road safety are delivered as part of the Safety Zone Days;

29. Councillor Garratt informed members that the YDC run a road safety awareness campaign each year too;
30. Councillor Yeulett asked if priorities for Fenland are influenced by national statistics. Alan Boughen confirmed that priorities are set at national levels and those will filter down and will have an influence on the work that we do in this area. Our priorities are not based on this but have an influence;
31. Councillor Yeulett asked how does the partnership make a difference. Aarron Locks stated that the CSP is about bringing partners together to protect vulnerable people in Fenland, the change in mind-set this year is to focus on those vulnerable people with less focus on targets and data;
32. Councillor Yeulett asked how the Overview and Scrutiny Panel can add value to this partnership; we have new members and fresh ideas. Councillor Oliver stated that he has found this Overview and Scrutiny Meeting a lot more productive than he has in the past. He added that as a partnership we have things that we will go back to work on as a result of comments made here today, we will take on board everything you have said and make sure our plan is robust and makes a difference to Fenland in the future;
33. Councillor Yeulett referring to the previous minutes asked about anti-social behaviour (ASB) issues relating to the passageways in Wisbech. Councillor Mrs Bucknor confirmed that there have been various issues reported along the passageways which are no longer used and that it would be good to get Roddons on board with these issues with a view to getting them closed. Richard Cassidy agreed that the issues with regards to the passageways can be added to the action plan. Councillor Mrs Bucknor agreed to forward a list of ongoing issues;
34. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that with regards to reporting incidents about drugs and drug dealing she sends details to a particular officer and hears nothing more from them, but presumes that the matter is being dealt with, she asked for clarification that this is the correct way to report these issues, or should she be directing these to a particular unit. Alan Boughen confirmed that these issues should be emailed to the generic area mailbox where they will be picked up and the intelligence will be submitted;
35. Councillor Garratt stated that with regards to the CCTV performance data, they do a great job, a price cannot be put on the work that they do. Councillor Oliver agreed stating that the operators put a lot of time into other types of work like missing people too.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel made the following recommendations with regards to the Fenland Safer Fenland Partnership;

- That the plan for the forthcoming year contains measurable actions and specific delivery timescales to enable success to be identified/ scrutinised;
- That the plan makes specific reference to the use of illicit drugs rather than just focussing on alcohol, therefore raising awareness of the associated issues;
- That young people are engaged in the plan in particular the objectives in relation to road safety via the use of the Youth District Council and Social Media;
- That the training in relation to Domestic abuse/ violence is offered to locally elected members to enable them to fulfil their community advocacy role;
- That the plan for the forthcoming year reflects issues raised by local members, ensuring local members have the opportunity to feed into the plan for example the sale of non-prescribed medication;
- Ensure the plan is reflective of national and local issues;
- The work of the partnership is promoted more widely via social media, Golden Age fairs to maximise community engagement.

## OSC5/15    POLICE UPDATE

Alan Boughen stated that much of his presentation had been discussed already in the previous item but outlined that:

- 5000 crimes are reported each year in Fenland; however we operate no boundaries when it comes to protecting vulnerable people and we pool resources from other areas. In these cases there are no boundaries we will all support each other;
- Performance figures, crime data and statistics may influence our focus but do not dictate the work that we carry out or the priorities, we base our work upon assessment of threat, risk and harm;
- There has been a drop in recorded crime in Cambridgeshire, but there is a problem with perception;
- There has been a downward trend in reported violent crime and hospital data for these type of incidents is falling too;
- In his opinion Cambridgeshire is a safe place to live.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

1. Councillor Yeulett stated that Alan Boughen had referred during the presentation to the fact that reported violent crime had dropped, and asked for clarification about the rise in reported domestic abuse. Alan Boughen confirmed that there is a totally different approach to recording processes and this may have contributed to the rise, he added that domestic abuse is not necessarily violent crime, may fall under a different category;
2. Councillor Miss Hoy asked if domestic abuse is not violent crime what it is. Alan Boughen stated that can be a multitude of various crimes depending on the nature of the abuse;
3. Councillor Yeulett asked if the police have better relationships and are gaining trust from Eastern European communities with regards to domestic abuse. Alan Boughen stated that the police are making in-roads and slowly gaining trust from these communities. He explained that other countries have different relationships with authority. Domestic abuse is an emotive subject with all nationalities but a lot has been done to educate people in the UK, and people that come to this country will in time get the message about relationship issues and domestic abuse;
4. Councillor Buckton asked for clarification on the details of the Operational Considerations on the presentation, he pointed out that there is nothing about the community work on the list. Alan Boughen confirmed that all those on the list are a steer for priorities, community work is part of everyday duties;
5. Councillor Garratt stated that data from the Health and Wellbeing Board says that very few people from Eastern European communities use the hospitals in the area. Richard Cassidy stated that this was discussed and it seems to be more about proximity to hospitals, the fact that there are none close by;
6. Councillor Miss Hoy stated that incidents have been reported to her about people buying prescription medication, the police need to be on top of this issue. Alan Boughen stated that in the past there has been some intelligence work around this and prosecutions have been made. He added that police rely on these issues being reported, intelligence is gathered, but your piece of information could be the final piece that the police need to move forward.

Councillor Yeulett thanked Sgt Alan Boughen, Councillor Oliver and Officers for attending the meeting today.

**OSC6/15    FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered the Future Work Programme 2015/16 for the Overview and Scrutiny Panel;

1. Panel members agreed that they are happy for the Progress of Corporate Priority - Environment, and the Tourism Board Update items to be moved from the 15 July 2015 to the meeting scheduled for 7 September 2015;
2. Panel members agreed that they are happy to move the Progress of Corporate Priority - Economy to the meeting scheduled to take place on 15 July 2015.

**Members agreed the Future Work Programme 2015/16 for the Overview and Scrutiny Panel subject to the amendments above.**

4.30pm

Chairman