



MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2006
10.00 AM

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Yvonne Gibbins
Councillor Stephen Hewerdine
Councillor Albert Victor Kerr

Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Mary Wheat

OFFICERS

(none)

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

(none)

29. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None received.

30. MEMBERSHIP

The Panel were notified that Councillor Kerr was substituting for Councillor Mrs Gaffigan for this meeting.

31. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bisnauthsing and Councillor Sandall.

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

33. ACTION NOTES

The action notes from the meeting held on 27th July 2006 were confirmed as a correct record.

34. UPDATES FROM LAST MEETING

None.

35. FEEDBACK FROM THE EXECUTIVE

None.

36. COMMUNITY OUTTURNS 2005/2006

Conclusions:

- (1) That the possibility of a levy being put on businesses who supply alcohol at night time be investigated to help cover the costs of extra staff.**
- (2) That the Chief Executive be asked what the current position is with regard to the siting of a camera at St Wulfram's church.**
- (3) That the Resources Portfolio Holder be asked to look again at the staffing of the Community Safety Team with the view to making the seconded posts permanent.**
- (4) That the Cabinet be asked to look at the possibility of renting one of the units in either of the shopping centres for the Community Safety Team to use as a drop-in centre due to the success of the last drop-in centre.**
- (5) That member and staff training be carried out with regard to Section 17 training under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.**
- (6) That a letter be sent in support of the CDRP letter to public service authorities asking for their full commitment to the CDRP partnership.**

The Chairman informed the Panel that the item had been placed on the agenda following an e-mail he had received from the Chairman of Resources who had asked that the Community DSP scrutinize the overspend.

The Corporate Head of Finance and Resources gave a run down on the issue of the General Fund and the over spend of £552,000. It was not all bad, as the supplementary estimates in May had not allowed £60,000 for the Housing Improvement Programme and a redistribution of the General Fund (GF) to reflect the separation of Tenancy Services and Housing Solutions had not been taken into account. Also £198,000 had been charged to the GF for the work done pre ballot in connection with the LSVT. She outlined other funding streams under the Community DSP and said that a full breakdown was available through the Constitution and Accounts Committee agenda and reports which had been held on 29th June 2006. She then referred to the Gateway Reviews and the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group meeting that she would be attending the following Monday to discuss the involvement of the DSPs in the Gateway Reviews. Members needed to look at the Service Managers plans in terms of outcomes, where they still fit for purpose, are they still in line with the Council's aims and objectives. What level of resources they had, what Gershon savings were being achieved and planned etc. A question was asked about savings and overspends to which the Corporate Head of Finance and Resources replied that with the help of the new computer system installed, a better budget control would be in place and a phased time recording scheme for staff was being introduced which would allow staff's time to be correctly allocated to the current budget head giving a better base on which to work.

The Service Manager for Building Control then gave a presentation to the Panel. He began with an over view of the service which was unique, fee earning and had an impact on everyone's daily life. He highlighted the core functions of the service that included keeping an up to date competent persons

scheme register. In 2005 the section retained 94% of all Building Control work within South Kesteven which was above the national average. South Kesteven District Council had 13 private sector partners which generated an additional income of approximately £15,000. The section had carried out plan examination work in most major cities including Belfast. Income for the section in 2005 amounted to £566,000 of which the total cost of the building control function was £473,000 making a surplus of £93,000 which was placed in a building control reserve, the money only being able to be used to reduce the cost of the building control service or improve it. To date this year's income amounted to £331,500, which was up on last year, however, new regulations came in to force in April this year which had meant there had been a sudden rush of applications in before the deadline and this amount would probably even out during the year. The Service Manager Building Control then listed some facts about the section which included the number of site inspections carried out (10,428), the number of miles travelled (62,042) and that since 1991 building control had been the lead Authority for Fire Precaution work in new buildings and was at the forefront of the governments commitment to reduce global warming.

A question was asked about customer's comments/views on the service and the Building Control Service Manager replied that they had two forms of customer survey which they carried out. One annually to the architects and builders that gave a good response and one to the customers which had a 30% response rate, the only gripe that customers had seemed to be with the price they were charged. On the whole the feedback was exceptionally good.

Another question was asked about the competent persons register and the £93,000 surplus to which the Building Control Service Manager replied. The Chairman thanked the Building Control Service Manager for attending the meeting and his presentation.

The next presentation to the Panel was from the CCTV Service Manager. CCTV was a 24/7 operation 365 days a year which meant if someone was off sick, you couldn't leave the desk empty. There were 12 team members with most people having at least five years service. The 84 cameras covered Grantham, Stamford, Bourne, the Deepings and Sleaford. A mobile unit was managed by South Kesteven but funded in part by North Kesteven and the Police and this patrolled both South Kesteven and North Kesteven. All members of the CCTV team had a Public Space Surveillance CCTV Operators Licence which was issued by the Security Industry Authority and was a recognised national scheme. He then referred to the Automatic Number Plate Reading cameras which were situated on the outskirts of the town and enabled the tracking of vehicles. Although the police owned the cameras the CCTV room was hooked into them and helped the police when tracking vehicles which was a winning situation for those involved in stopping crime. He then spoke of the partnerships both internal and external which included the Community Safety Team, the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, the urban rangers, PCSO's and the local authority police. Capital received came from North Kesteven £31,000 per year, Grantham Hospital £18,000 per year and £128,000 from the Section 106 Agreements for the installation of CCTV in relevant areas which included the running costs for the next 10 years.

Although there had been some long-term sickness in the section this year which had made the salaries budget slightly over due to the payment of overtime, the section worked well together with high staff retention and good staff morale. Incidents resulting from proactive monitoring were up by an average of 30% compared with last year which enabled the police to be more proactive. Currently there was a £38,000 overspend part of this was due to sickness and overtime payments and part to the payment in advance of costs associated with BT lines/camera hook ups. It was hoped that money obtained from the Section 106 Agreements could be used to renew some of the equipment as currently there was no budget available. The CCTV Service Manager then spoke of the work that the section undertakes and the future plans for the section which included the possibility of a full time supervisor post. Talks were being undertaken with another council with the possibility of taking on board their CCTV monitoring. He concluded the presentation with some footage of an incident in Grantham which showed members how the CCTV operators were able to track people using the cameras and an invitation to members to view the control room.

Following the showing of the incident in Grantham a member referred to charges that were applied in Nottingham to public houses as a levy to help towards the costs of having extra police, ambulances on standby and CCTV for late night revelry and would this help in South Kesteven. The Service Manager replied that it would but it was part of the licensing agreement and whether or not it could be incorporated he did not know. The Panel agreed to put the recommendation forward. Specific areas were then referred to including problems experienced at Barrowby and the sighting of cameras near to St Wulfram's church. The Services Manager for CCTV said that he had carried out some work with regard to the sighting of a camera near to the church but had not heard any outcomes. It was agreed that the Chief Executive be asked what the current position was with regard to the sighting of a camera at St Wulfram's church. Further comments/questions were asked about the implementation of the proposed street drinking order, the use of the number plate cameras for catching drug deals, the CCTV coverage at Bourne and the use of radios by taxi drivers and bus operators which were linked to the CCTV control room. The Chairman thanked the CCTV Service Manager for an interesting presentation.

The next short presentation came from the Community Safety Officer. He began with the definition of anti-social behaviour which was the formula his section used. This was a wide definition and included fly tipping, graffiti, noise nuisance to name but a few. South Kesteven had adopted a partnership model in April 2005 and three police officers were seconded to the section. Of the 560 anti social behaviour reports 79% were resolved on a monthly basis. The number of residents who perceived anti social behaviour as a threat was down by 2.5%, exceeding the government's target of 1.5%, which indicated that, the proactive methods used were working. Since April the Community Safety Officer had lost two of the three-seconded police officers as well as the Community Safety Manager. In the last week two new officers from the council had been seconded to the Section, Yvonne Ford who was an ex metropolitan police officer worked three days a week and Jason Hall worked two days a

week as an antisocial behaviour officer. A new freephone number was due to be launched and a press release would be in the Grantham Journal the following week. The team continued to work closely with the police and it was hoped that they would be able to exceed the targets achieved last year. The big hurdle was getting people to report anti-social behaviour and it was hoped that with the introduction of the 0800 number this would help gain peoples trust. A market stall on Grantham market was proposed in the near future. The panel was glad to see that their request for more staff seemed to have been heard although they agreed that the secondments should be permanent posts. The use of empty units in the shopping centres was then discussed and it was agreed that a recommendation be made to Cabinet to ask for funds to rent a unit in one of the shopping centres due to the success of the previous drop-in centre.

PC Mike Jones who was the Local Authority Liaison Officer then gave a brief talk. His talk was mainly based on Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and local authorities obligation to comply with that section of the Act. Section 17 makes it a statutory obligation for public sector services, such as local authorities, the fire service, the police, PCT's to work together. Section 115 of the Act concerns the exchange of information between these services. Currently the CDRP was in upheaval in Lincolnshire as proposals were underway to merge with South Holland, this was primarily a government drive and the merge would happen towards the end of October/November this year. Funding for the CDRP in the past had gone to the District Council however, this had now changed and it now went to the County Council who had top sliced the funding for the SKDC CDRP. He listed where the money had gone to projects such as the Community Drug Response Team, drug educators and OASIS. £35,000 had gone to the Prolific and Priority Officer scheme. This again was a government initiative scheme and currently the PPO scheme was better run here then elsewhere in the country. The scheme consisted of a matrix, which was completed when people offended, when a certain number of points was reached this was flagged up to various bodies and a combined attempt was made to deal with the offender. The government was trying to establish an infrastructure to help set up a bank of resources, access to which would be via the voluntary service community bank which contained 12 themed groups and was countrywide.

The CDRP would meet quarterly at SKDC and look at a number of projects, however due the cut in funding allocation only one project would be considered. Pc Mike Jones then spoke about Section 17 and Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act and how some of the partners of the CDRP were not fully subscribing to the partnership. He had sent a letter out asking for confirmation of the partners genuine commitment to the work of the CDRP and the sharing of information under Section 17 & 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act. He said that partners held a lot of information which would be of use to the Police if only they would share it and gave examples. He spoke of making training available within the partnerships so that people were aware of of Section 17 & 115 and the obligation it placed on the partners.

Panel members thanked him for his presentation and agreed to send a letter in support of the CDRP's letter asking for the commitment from partners. They

also thought that training for both members and staff on the implications of Section 17 & 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act was a good idea and agreed to make it a conclusion of the panel.

37. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

The Housing Solutions Manager updated members on the Strategic Housing Inspection.

The Scrutiny Officer informed the Panel that the issue of deciding which areas would be designated to restrict the consumption of alcohol would be decided in January 2007. Reference was once again made to the inclusion of the Green, Dysart and Wyndham Park and the Paddock.

38. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Corporate Head Finance and Resources referred to BVPI 78a and highlighted two main issues, which impacted on the indicator, and contributed to its continually being shown red. One was the down time by the computers when council tax bills were sent out and she was hoping to address this issue for this year and the other was information required from the Department of Work and Pensions. She referred to the council's position nationally on dealing with claims which compared favourably with the rest of the country. This raised the question as to whether or not the indicators actually showed a true picture of performance. The Housing Solutions Manager spoke about SK81 and the reasons for this BVPI being red. Also BVPI 212 was highlighted and reference was made to the number of days at this time last year which was 53, currently the BVPI was 32 which showed a marked improvement. A question was then asked about the use of B & B to which the Housing Solutions Manager replied.

39. WORK PROGRAMME

Conclusion

The next meeting of the Community DSP will be held at Bourne on Wednesday 25th October at 10.30am.

The Scrutiny Officer referred to the Work Programme which he informed the Panel was subject to change as a new Forward Plan would be published shortly. It was decided that the next meeting should be held in Bourne at 10.30am, possible issues to be discussed were travellers and an update on Care Services.

40. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

None received.

41. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, DECIDES IS URGENT.

None.

42. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 12.40pm

