

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Darent Room - Sessions House on Tuesday, 17 April 2018.

PRESENT: Mr P W A Lake (Chairman), Mr A M Ridgers (Vice-Chairman), Mr M A C Balfour (Substitute for Mr B J Sweetland), Mr R H Bird, Mr A Booth, Mr G Cooke, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr D Farrell, Mr R C Love and Mr J Wright

ALSO PRESENT: Mr E E C Hotson and Mr P M Hill, OBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms R Adby (Head of Business Partnerships and Relationships), Ms J Mookherjee (Consultant in Public Health), Mr S Peerbux (Head of Community Safety), Ms K Ripley (Head of Property Strategy and Commissioning), Mr G Singh (Barrister), Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer) and Mr B Watts (General Counsel)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

13. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2018

(Item A4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2018 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

14. Select Committee Update

(Item A5)

1. In response to a question Mr Watts explained that inevitably extending the timetable of the Pupil Premium Select Committee had delayed the start of Social Isolation but everything possible was being done with the available resources to progress the Social Isolation Select Committee topic.

RESOLVED that:

- the progress of the Select Committee on Pupil Premium be noted;
- work begins to establish the Select Committee on Social Isolation in May 2018 and;
- a timetable for the review be presented to the Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting for consideration and approval.

15. Kent Community Safety Agreement

(Item B1)

1. Mr Hill introduced this item, he had been the Chairman of the Kent Community Safety Partnership since its inception in 2007. Mr Hill explained that he had been very pleased with the progress of the Community Safety Partnership, it had run some excellent conferences, there had been some key achievements in Domestic Abuse and DHRs and the Community Safety Team had been integrated with Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue and was working out of one building.

2. Mr Peerbux, Head of Community Safety, KCC gave Members a presentation which is [available online here](#). Members also heard from:
 - Chief Superintendent Tom Richards, Kent Police,
 - Chief Inspector Tim Cook, Kent Police,
 - Ian Thomson, Assistant Director, Kent Fire and Rescue Service
 - Jess Mookherjee, Consultant in Public Health, Kent Public Health.
3. The Chairman then invited questions from Committee Members.
4. In response to a question Mr Richards explained that specialist tactical advice was available should a chemical incident occur.
5. Members discussed domestic abuse and the correlation between deprivation and domestic violence. There was no doubt that there was a link between the two, however it was not as simple as a direct correlation. Kent Police were working in partnership and there was a multi-agency team assisting people with drug dependence, housing issues and financial and benefit requirements.
6. A Member asked about Serious Organised Crime (SOC) and Gangs, Mr Richards explained that gangs were a significant priority for Kent Police and work was being done with families and schools. In response to a question about the use of housing association properties by criminal families Kent Police explained that they worked closely with housing associations and that the Community Safety Partnerships worked hard with housing providers and had effective relationships. Legislation provided local authorities with responsibilities to house people, particularly those with children. It was considered that CCTV was an effective tool, it was used a lot in the UK but it needed to be a balance. A Member explained that there would be a future briefing on Kent's Gang Strategy to which all Members would be invited.
7. In relation to road safety and lorries on Kent Roads, Mr Thomson explained that there was no evidence to show that the large numbers of lorries translated into accidents resulting in people being killed or seriously injured. However, Kent was disproportionately affected by freight lorries and work was underway to influence driver behaviour.
8. In response to a question Mrs Mookherjee explained that once drug users were identified they did have to give permission to be treated although if an individual was convicted they would have to have drug treatment. Agencies worked together to ensure that individuals had the best chance of recovery.
9. In response to a question about Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) there was good coverage across Kent with a robust strategy. This did not link to speeding enforcement, the technologies used were different and it was currently cost prohibitive to link the two issues. There was currently a huge recruitment drive within Kent Police with an uplift of 200 officers and 80 civilian staff.
10. A Member asked whether a risk map existed, showing the likelihood and impact of various forms of issues. The briefing on the gangs strategy was welcomed, particularly in members' role as a corporate parent. It was considered that

children in care and care leavers were particularly vulnerable to gangs and child sexual exploitation. Members also raised concerns around the effectiveness of youth services, it was important to understand how youth services and KCC preventative services were trying to prevent home grown gangs.

11. A Member asked where KCC was failing and where opportunities were being missed, and what Members could do to support the Community Safety Team. Ms Mookherjee suggested that, from the Public Health side, Members could continue to raise cross cutting issues and task partners to work together along with a focus on prevention which is helpful. From Kent Fire and Rescue ensuring that local authorities and partners worked together effectively was helpful. A frustrating area was staff turnover, which affected all partners.
12. In response to a question Mrs Mookherjee explained that with regards to alcohol and opiate withdrawal, alcohol was more poisonous, there were higher risks with alcohol withdrawal. With opiates the risk relates to overdosing.
13. Mr Thomson explained that the increase in killed and seriously injured figures from road traffic collisions was in part due to changes in the new national Police CRASH data recording system. It was anticipated that data analysis would improve once data recording settled down.
14. Mr Richards explained that there had been a reduction in anti-social behaviour, his judgement was that this was underreported and work had been done to encourage reporting. Regarding ANPR there were a wide range of civil liberty concerns, it was essential that data was managed appropriately.
15. The Chairman asked about statistical information and Mr Richards confirmed that there was a huge amount of data available. Mr Peerbux explained that had all the data been incorporated into the presentation, it would not have given the Committee any time to hear colleagues about what action had been taken. Mr Peerbux explained that the Community Safety Agreement had a performance monitoring framework underlying it and this was monitored by the working group and reported up to the Kent Community Safety Partnership on an exceptions basis. Mr Peerbux also stated that some information could be provided to Members at their next Crime and Disorder meeting.
16. Mr Hill concluded by thanking the Committee for their questions and their interest, he wondered whether when the Scrutiny met as the Crime and Disorder Committee next year (as this was an annual requirement) it might be worth setting aside a longer period for more in-depth discussion. The Chairman considered this to be a sensible suggestion.

RESOLVED that Committee thank speakers for their insightful and helpful presentation and note the Community Safety Agreement.

16. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FOR EXEMPT BUSINESS *(Item C1)*

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the

grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EXEMPT ITEM
(Open minute of exempt item)

17. Property Management Update

(Item C2)

RESOLVED that Members note the update provided by the Cabinet Member and Senior Officers on Property Income Management following the Governance and Audit Internal Audit Report.