

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 15 December 2016.

PRESENT: Mr R J Parry (Chairman), Mr J E Scholes (Vice-Chairman), Mr H Birkby, Mr D L Brazier, Mr G Cowan, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr E E C Hotson, Mr A J King, MBE, Mr R A Latchford, OBE, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mr D Smyth (Substitute for Mr R Truelove)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M C Dance, Mr P B Carter, CBE, Mr R H Bird and Mr M E Whybrow

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Smith (Director of Economic Development), Ms J Ward (Regional Growth Fund Programme Manager), Mrs K Stewart (Director of Environment Planning and Enforcement), Mr S Peerbux (Head of Community Safety), T/Supt T Cook (Partnerships and Command), Mr M Adams (Deputy Manager - Operations), Ms J Mookherjee (Consultant in Public Health), Mr J Lynch (Head of Democratic Services) and Mr J Cook (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

116. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2016

(Item A4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

117. Meeting dates 2017/18

(Item A5)

RESOLVED that the future Scrutiny Committee dates be noted.

118. Motion to exclude the press and public

(Item A6)

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

119. RGF Schemes

(Item B1)

1. The Chairman welcomed the Leader, Mr Dance, David Smith and Jacqui Ward and thanked them for attending to provide information relating to the Regional Growth Funds.

2. Mr Smith, Director for Economic Development, explained the application, assessment and monitoring processes for the RGF and responded to questions from Members.
3. Members recognised the positive benefits of the RGF schemes, noting how relevant risks had been managed in the past.

RESOLVED that the Committee recommend

- (1) That the recycled RGF fund scheme, due for launch in 2017, take into account all lessons learned and that these be reflected in guidance to applicants.
- (2) That a report be developed, detailing the lessons learned and outlining what action had been taken to respond to them and that this report be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee for noting.

UNRESTRICTED ITEM

120. Community Safety Agreement 2015-18

(Item C1)

Scrutiny Committee meeting as the Crime and Disorder Committee

1. Katie Stewart, Director of Environment, Planning and Enforcement, introduced the Community Safety Agreement update, explaining that representatives from the KCC Community Safety and Public Protection team, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and KCC's Public Health team all had a key role in supporting the continued partnership approach to facilitating the effective delivery of community safety.
2. Shafick Peerbux, Head of KCC Community Safety, provided an overview of the ongoing partnership approach between KCC, Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue. It was noted that unifying separate organisations that each have different operational priorities was challenging but the shared commitment to community safety allowed scope for beneficial joint working. Mr Peerbux cited the initial work of the joint Community Safety Team (CST) in developing the Annual Community Safety Conference as a good example of effective partnership working. In 2015, the conference focused on older and more vulnerable people with particular reference to the impact of dementia. The conference was a great success, bringing together a wide range of partner agencies who have committed to becoming Dementia Friends. The good work of the CST on this project and the useful work-streams that came out of it earned them a nomination and finalist place for the Partnership Project Award managed by the Kent Dementia Awards.
3. Mr Peerbux explained the recent review of the Community Safety Agreement (CSA), noting that there had been significant developments, including the addition of two new priorities (Serious & Organised Crime and Safeguarding). The CST had been working with partners on refining the focus within the priorities to ensure the most effective use of resources. A joint work-stream had been set up with

partners and regional colleagues on a national pilot to review the methodology for developing the Community Safety Agreements.

4. Mr Peerbux provided an update on the Anti-Social Behaviour priority, as this had historically been a key issue for local Community Safety Partnerships. He advised the Committee that ASB figures had dropped and that this had been supported by considerable investment by the Kent Community Safety Partnership into the development of a case management system. The CST had also organised a partnership workshop to share best practice and improve information sharing.
5. In terms of Domestic Abuse, another key priority, the figures had increased but this was viewed as positive in that it suggested more victims were coming forward to report abuse rather than suffering in silence (Domestic Abuse has been widely accepted to be significantly under-reported). Mr Peerbux highlighted the positive work undertaken in developing a purpose built website on domestic abuse which provides key information for victims, offenders and professionals in addition to signposting to relevant support services. While the growing demand for services, due to the increase in reporting, was a concern from a resourcing perspective, it was hoped the new Integrated Domestic Abuse Service would assist in management this in the future.
6. Mr Peerbux explained that due the significant legislative and policy activity at a national level in relation to safeguarding, it had been added to the Community Safety Agreement as a new priority. He explained that elements of safeguarding run through all work strands of the CSA as these issues may often be linked to other priorities; however the additional areas of key focus were Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking.
7. T/Supt Tim Cook provided an overview of Serious and Organised Crime. He explained that the Government had released a new strategy for managing SOC in 2013 which used the framework initially developed for counter-terrorism work; the '4Ps' approach – Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare. Guidance from the LGA in 2015 suggested that Community Safety Partnerships had a stronger role to play in tackling serious crime given their positive contribution in managing good partnership relationships and supporting joint working.
8. T/Supt Cook advised the Committee that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) had given Kent Police a good report on its management of high level criminality. However, it was hoped that additional joint working with key partners would enable the good practice to be shared, allowing for even more effective management of Serious and Organised Crime. Supporting this joint working approach, a workshop was organised in Maidstone that highlighted the following priority work-streams:
 - Impact of Retail Crime
 - Working with schools to support vulnerable people
 - Information sharing between partners
 - Community Safety Managers best placed to co-ordinate effective sharing of information
9. T/Supt Cook outlined the Home Office Guidance from 2014 relating to the Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) which identified the need for local profiles that

support multi-agency partnership work focused on disrupting OCGs. The local profiles provide key points for different crime types and the relevant organised crime groups. The profiles highlight intelligence gaps to facilitate support from partner agencies where possible. Work was ongoing to develop indicators for use in measuring the impact of partnership working in this area. To further support partnership working, Kent Police had developed a toolkit that provides integrated tactical guidance for tackling local issues as well as signposting to support services and reporting mechanisms.

10. Martin Adams, Assistant Director of Community Engagement at Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS), provided an update on Road Safety. Key points included the shift to a Strategy Road Safety Group so as to ensure consideration of all relevant factors in road safety rather than maintain a focus solely on casualty reduction. This more strategic approach has involved the joint working between senior officers from relevant partner agencies. Mr Adams advised that the Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) figures had increased, that this was a national trend and while further research was being undertaken to identify the main cause, it was believed to be due to a general increase in road traffic. Mr Adams highlighted the positive work being undertaken; the Road Safety Experience at the new Rochester Fire Station, the education programmes around the risks of distraction driving and the continued success of the 'License to Kill' events. Mr Adams commented on the positive effect of the partnership approach which has allowed the alignment of enforcement, prevention and education to deliver a better outcome.
11. Jess Mookherjee, Assistant Director of Public Health, provided an update on substance misuse. She explained that the focus was now on enabling effective joint work between Kent Police, the Community Safety Team and Public Health with recognition of the benefits of aligning the multi-agency work already going on in relation to drug and alcohol misuse. She noted the particular negative impact of drug and alcohol misuse in relation to user crime; increased acquisitive crime and prostitution funding addictions and being used to control vulnerable people. Ms Mookherjee also highlighted the damaging effect of substance misuse on trust and cohesion within communities. She explained the work was based on a significant evidence base, citing three significant needs assessments; drug use (young people and adults) and alcohol health impact. It was noted that these data sets showed that 61% of young people had tried cannabis and that drug use was associated with 25% of deaths in this age group. The data showed that the landscape for adult drug misuse had changed over time, which presented its own challenges such as long term, older addicts with the associated co-morbid health risk issues. Ms Mookherjee commented that the recent Annual Community Safety Conference on addiction had been excellent and that it had helped encourage more of the necessary partnership working to address this increasingly complex issue.
12. Mr Peerbux summarised the update by highlighting how the community safety landscape was continuing to change and develop, which brought new challenges. He reassured the Committee that the commitment of partners to work together and share information and best practice was thoroughly embedded and boded well for the future.

13. Responding to Member questions, the Community Safety representatives explained that the Kent Community Safety Team was based at Maidstone Fire Station and that the co-located approach involved each service paying for its own staff. No specific savings had been achieved directly through the introduction of the KCST but it was emphasised that this had not been the intention, as the goal of the unit was to be a centre of excellence and a strategic co-ordinator to allow for more efficient and effective working on local areas.
14. A Member questioned whether the reported drop in Anti-social behaviour could be assumed to represent a real drop in incidents rather than a reduction in reporting due to lack of confidence from the public. T/Supt Cook explained that Kent Police, working with partners, had managed ASB carefully with a focus on repeat victims. He noted that there had been reduction in the number of repeat victims due to effective management of their cases rather than a loss of confidence. He also advised that the confidence and satisfaction levels recorded in relevant surveys were consistently good for Kent Police.
15. Members discussed problems with the 101, non-emergency police phone number. These were noted T/Supt Cook who would flag them with the Force Control Room. Also responding to Member questions, T/Supt Cook explained that the 2014 Crime and Anti-social Behaviour Act had provided useful tools to the police and partner agencies in managing ASB. T/Supt Cook also explained that the local profiles for OCGs and linked crime issues, had been developed with the support of partners to support multi-agency working by providing useful frameworks for developing local action plans that drew together appropriate agencies to deal with specific issues. It was noted that the focus on partnership working had involved the voluntary and community sector and that the partners had not observed a reduction in their support despite the continuing financial pressures on the VCS.
16. Ms Mookherjee, responding to questions, explained that Hospitals bore the brunt of the pressure arising from service demand around alcohol use with people presenting at Accident & Emergency. This ongoing high demand was being managed through trained nurses undertaking screening and referrals for relevant treatment, with the aim that this may reduce long term demand. She also noted that the each district had its own local alcohol plan that should support joint work between partners on addressing these issues.
17. Members discussed the positive update provided by the representatives of the Kent Community Safety Team.

RESOLVED that the Committee thank the Officers and partnership agency guests for attending and answer members' questions and that the Community Safety Agreement update be noted.