

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel Minutes 18th July 2016

PRESENT: Councillor A. Banks (Chair)

Councillors: M. Gledhill (Substitute for C.J.S. Akins), D. Grocott, L.D. Lea, M.A. Lovatt (Substitute for K. Jackson), L.A. Malyon, T. McNicol, C.W. Pearce, J.P. Redfern, T. Riley and P. Wood.

N ATTENDANCE: **Portfolio Holders:**
Councillor M. Bowen (Communities)

APOLOGIES: Councillors: C.J.S. Atkins, S. Ellis, A. Hart, K.J. Jackson, B. Johnson, D.J.T. Shaw and P. Wood.

10. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 6TH JUNE 2016** (10)

DECIDED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Panel held on the 6th June 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

11. **ITEMS CONSIDERED AT THE MEETING OF THE STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON THE 23RD MAY 2016**

DECIDED: That the items considered at the Meeting of the Staffordshire Police and Crime Panel held on 23rd May 2016 be noted.

12. **URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were none.

13. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none made at this stage of the meeting.

14. **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

There were none.

15. **CHANGES TO HIGHWAYS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

Mary-Anne Raftery, Community Infrastructure Manager, gave an overview of the County Council's current priorities. In relation to highways, preventative maintenance was the priority and a risk management approach was taken. Efficiencies had been made by the department which included a reduced Neighbourhood Team and some types of maintenance were no longer funded such as the cleaning of signs. From April 2017 the

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Lengthsman scheme would cease to be funded. It was confirmed that the weed spraying and grass cutting service delivered by the County Council would continue but it was planned for this to be reviewed in the future. There would be a commitment to provide amenity maintenance and the Community Liaison Officers would continue to work with communities and advise on solutions and alternative funding streams.

Members expressed their concerns around Lengthsman scheme ending and felt that the duties would fall to the Parishes to undertake. It was felt that there should be a more rigorous inspection scheme for grass cutting as Councillors had received complaints in the Cheadle and Biddulph area.

Councillors thanked the Neighbourhood Team for the work that had been carried out in Ipstones, Checkley, Cheddleton and Leek.

DECIDED: That the update be noted.

16. **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

The Panel received a report, introduced by David Smith, which advised members on the Council's action to meet its safeguarding duties and also proposed some revisions to the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

The Council was committed to ensuring the safety and protection of people using its services.

Legislation and statutory guidance made it necessary for the Council to ensure that it had policies and procedures in place to ensure that children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect were safeguarded when using services provided by or on behalf of the Council.

The Council approved a Child Protection Policy in 2006 and subsequently updated the policy to incorporate adults at risk of abuse and neglect in 2014. The introduction of the Care Act in May 2014 necessitated some changes to the Council's policy as reported in the 2015 update to members. These consequential revisions had been made and the revised policy was presented at Appendix A of the report.

The Council had established an officer group, chaired by the Executive Director (People) to co-ordinate the Council's response to safeguarding. Actions overseen by the group included improvements to the Council's website and procurement arrangements; requiring services to review their risks in relation to safeguarding; arranging safeguarding training for staff members; and various activities to improve policies, procedures and training in relation to licensed taxi drivers.

Members complimented the report author as they found it easy to follow and very informative.

Questions were raised on issues that included homeless vulnerable males and liaison between the district council and Stoke on Trent City Council. Responding to member queries, David Smith clarified that the District Council had a duty to deal with the

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homeless matter and to report any safeguarding issues to the relevant agency. Adult safeguarding was a single arrangement there was consistency with the Police and the local authorities works together closely.

Councillor Bowen advised that a lot of training had taken place wished to pass on his thanks to the staff involved.

DECIDED:

- a) That the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel RECOMMEND that CABINET agrees the revised Safeguarding Policy.
- b) That the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the actions taken by the Council in response to its safeguarding duties.

17. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered the Work Programme for the remainder of 2016/17 and agreed the items listed.

DECIDED: That the Panel's Work Programme for 2016/17 be agreed.

The meeting closed at 2.45p.m.

_____ Chair _____ Date