

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Minutes

MONDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2018

PRESENT: Councillor A Banks (Chair)

Councillors B A Hughes, K J Jackson, M M Lovatt, L A Malyon,
J Redfern and T Riley.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor D Ogden, B Johnson, M Bowen and A Forrester.

APOLOGIES: Councillors T McNicol, L D Lea, C Pearce and P Wood.

106 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.**

DECIDED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Panel held on the 9th July 2018
be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

107 **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS.**

There were none.

108 **MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING OF THE POLICE AND CRIME
PANEL.**

DECIDED: That the Minutes of the Staffordshire Police and Crime Panel Meeting
held on 3 July 2018 be noted.

109 **URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS.**

There were no urgent items of business.

110 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:**

No declarations of interests were made.

111 **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.**

Questions to Councillor Bowen from Councillor Linda Malyon:

**Q1. I would like to ask if this Council could write to the County Council and
ask why they are cutting back on school crossing patrol wardens?**

Response:

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Councillor Bowen explained that this matter was included on the agenda for Full Council on 4th October 2018 as a Notice of Motion and would be discussed at this meeting.

Councillor Malyon asked if anything could be done before this meeting. The Portfolio Holder responded to the effect that this was a County Council decision and other options for school crossings could be looked into.

Q2. Has there been any progress with talks with Aimee's Travel and the County Council on the bus services in rural areas?

Councillor Bowen advised that SMDC had invited representatives from the County Council to a Working Group but unfortunately, the County Council declined the invitation. Councillor Malyon wished to know if the District Council had heard anything from Aimee's Travel and it was confirmed that SMDC had not been in discussion with the company.

Councillor Malyon didn't wish to ask her final question but the Portfolio Holder gave a response.

Q3. Is the Chairman of this Panel being included in talks that this Council is having with regards to the future of the hospitals?

It was explained that this wasn't within the remit of the Community Panel. Councillor Hughes (Chair of the Heath Panel) was the Council's representative on the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee at the County Council.

112 SUPPORT STAFFORDSHIRE PROJECTS UPDATE. (PRESENTATION).

Esther Jones, Staffordshire Moorlands Team Leader, gave a presentation to the Panel on Support Staffordshire's current services. The topics covered were as follows:-

- Introduction
- About Support Staffordshire
- Community Group Support
- Projects in the Moorlands
- Recent Achievements

Discussion took place around the benefits of the Community Transport Service, costs, withdrawal of Staffordshire County Council's funding and alternative options for the service to continue.

The Chair thanked Esther Jones for attending the meeting.

DECIDED: That the presentation be received.

113 FLY-TIPPING UPDATE. (PRESENTATION).

Keith Parker, Head of Operational Services, provided an overview of fly-tipping and the service which the Council provided to remove fly-tipping. On average there was 1 fly-tip per day in the area and there didn't tend to be any trends in fly-tipping. Some

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slides were shown to the Panel to demonstrate the levels of fly-tipping in comparison to other local authorities.

David Smith, Principal Officer (Partnerships and Communities), explained the Environmental Protection Act, the process for enforcement of fly-tipping offences and the level of fines which could be issued.

Some members felt that the recorded numbers of incidents of fly-tipping were very low compared to the number of fly-tips they saw on a regular basis. In particular, it had been noticed that take-away food bags were a problem and it was questioned whether the Council could assist with this problem. The Officer explained that the Council had powers to ensure take-away food outlets took responsibility for the waste around their shops. Another member referred to a Fly-Tipping Working Group for which the outcome was that the Council provided a quick efficient response to fly-tipping and that the scale of the problem was lower than assumed.

DECIDED: That the update be noted.

114 **ENFORCEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME.**

Members considered a report which provided an update on environmental enforcement and proposed changes to the levels of the fixed penalty notices set by the Council.

The Council was able to set its fixed penalty notice (FPN) charges within certain statutory bands governing maximum and minimum levels. The maximum full penalties for littering, graffiti, fly-posting and unauthorised distribution of free printed matter had been increased from £75 up to £150. The minimum permitted early payment discount charge (the "lesser penalty") was being increased from £50 to £65 from 1st April 2019.

It was proposed that the Council adopted a fixed penalty amount of £150 for each offence to deter environmental crime.

It was also proposed that the Council set the 'lesser amount' at £100 if paid within 10 days to encourage early payment.

Councillor Jackson welcomed the report but wished to highlight an issue with the early payment of fines. He felt that people should have the opportunity to pay the lesser amount in instalments. David Smith, Principal Officer (Partnerships and Communities) appreciated this comment, explained that instalments were not set out in the legislation and that if required, the Council only had 6 months to take cases to court.

Discussion took place around the numbers of Enforcement Officers and their flexible working hours, the approach the Council took when FPNs were issued to minors and the feasibility of Councillors being able to issue fines.

The point was made that more FPNs should be issued for dog fouling. David Smith responded and advised that the staff had concentrated on littering, dog fouling was more difficult to prove but the team would prioritise this in future and look to improve these figures.

115 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel considered its Work Programme and agreed the items listed. During this part of the meeting, Members were reminded that the Staffordshire Commissioner would be in attendance at the next meeting and were asked to notify the Member Services Team in advance of this meeting of any specific queries they wished to ask the Commissioner.

DECIDED: That the Panel's Work Programme for 2018/19 be agreed.

The meeting closed at 3.35 pm

_____Chairman _____Date