

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Minutes

MONDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2017

PRESENT: Councillor A Banks (Chair)
Councillors J Bull, D Grocott, K J Jackson, L D Lea, L A Malyon,
C Pearce, T Riley and P Wood.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr M Bowen Portfolio Holder for Communities
Cllr A Forrester Portfolio Holder for Environment
Cllr B Johnson Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Sport, Parks,
Housing and Countryside

APOLOGIES: Councillors C J S Atkins, A Hart and B A Hughes

38 **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS, IF ANY.**

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

DECIDED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Panel held on the 5th December 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

40 **REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL - 23RD
JANUARY 2017**

DECIDED: That the report of the Chairman of the Police and Crime Panel dated 23rd January 2017 be noted.

41 **URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS.**

Councillor Malyon raised an urgent item relating to the proposal to close the Waitrose store in Leek. The Panel decided that a letter should be sent to the managing director which outlined the concerns.

With regards to the recent news that the Co-operative bank was for sale, Councillor K. Jackson requested that the Panel was kept up to date with any developments due to it being a large employer in the area.

42 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:**

There were none.

43 **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.**

There were none.

44 **POLICE FORCE OPERATIONAL ANNUAL UPDATE - INSPECTOR MARK THORLEY.**

Inspector Mark Thorley provided members with an update on operational policing in the area which included the following performance statistics:-

- 84% of residents had confidence in the Police;
- The number of incidents reported had increased by 6.2%;
- Domestic violence had increased by 19.4% (This was attributed to repeat domestic violence incidents and two key sporting events during the summer);
- Sexual offences had increased by 124% (This had been reviewed and the majority of these incidents related to children under the age of consent);
- A reduction of 5.6% in burglary of dwellings & 29% reduction in other burglaries;
- Public order had increased by 41% (The was due to a peak of incidents involving youth violence at Leek Bus Station, Endon, Blythe Bridge and Biddulph which had now been targeted effectively);
- Personal robbery had increased by 114% (This was a total of 8 crimes);
- Vehicle crime has risen by 91.2% (The majority of these crimes were in the rural parts of the Moorlands and included thefts of quad bikes, tractors etc. A Road Crime Team had been successful in the detection of these crimes with the assistance of the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras and working closely with neighbouring Forces);
- Criminal damage had risen by 19% (This was mainly in Biddulph. Section 34 Notices had been issued and patrol plans were in place);
- Other offences had increased by 44% - (equated to 40 crimes, which included counterfeit notes and incidents reported at the Detention Centre in Werrington);
- 92% of victims of crime were satisfied with the Police especially around incidents of anti-social behaviour.

It was also explained that people felt more confident to report problems and that the Moorlands was unusual due to the high number of childrens care homes and the detention centre in the area. A PSCO was allocated to each care home and trigger plans were in place should a child go missing. At present there were some issues around anti-social behaviour at one care home.

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Four additional ANPR cameras had been strategically placed in the area which had helped with the theft of the motor vehicles and there were no plans to reduce the number of officers.

Members thanked the officer for the informative update and for the work carried out by the team in the area. Discussion took place around the positive impact of the ANPR cameras, the possibility of a speed reduction at Bottomhouse, industrial sized flytipping issues and how the Police would be affected by the reduction in funding to drug and alcohol services.

Since the Public Space Protection Order had taken effect at Leek Bus Station, a considerable reduction in the problems there had been noticed. However, it was questioned whether there was a more expedient way to introduce this type of order. It was explained that a process had to be followed to ensure the order couldn't be challenged.

It was also felt that there should be more prevention sessions in relation to accidents and dangerous roads. Road safety sessions did take place in schools and the road crime sergeant would look into a joint safety session with the Fire Service.

DECIDED: That the update be noted.

45

CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE A PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER IN THE AREA AROUND THE MILLENNIUM GARDENS, BIDDULPH.

Mark Forrester, Democratic and Community Services Manager, outlined a report on a proposal to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order in the area around the Millennium Gardens in Biddulph.

The area around the Millennium Gardens/Sainsbury's in Biddulph attracted relatively high levels of anti-social behaviour that continued to have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality. Following partnership work with Staffordshire Police, it was considered that a Public Spaces Protection Order would assist in stopping individuals or groups committing anti-social behaviour in the area.

The anti social behaviour generally involved young people ranging between the ages of approximately 11 and 18 years of age. The behaviour affected legitimate users of the Millennium Gardens, shoppers at Sainsbury's (including those using the car park), users of the nearby Methodist Chapel (which included community activities such as Girl Guides, Brownies and Rainbows) and general members of the public.

There were 34 incidents reported to the police in the period between 1st January and 14th October 2016. Most of the reported incidents involved groups of young people with approximately 40 young people congregating in the area on one occasion in October. The monument in Millennium Gardens had been damaged on two occasions.

A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was designed to stop individuals or groups committing anti-social behaviour in a public space in order to prevent or reduce any detrimental effect caused by those activities to local people. The District

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Council had the power to make such an Order, which could last for up to 3 years (but could be extended and/or varied), if certain conditions were met.

Following discussions with Staffordshire Police, it was believed that the introduction of a Public Spaces Protection Order was justified for the area around the Millennium Gardens because the problems encountered at that location had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality and were of a continuing nature. A draft Order was provided at Appendix A of the report.

Councillor Jackson supported the introduction of the order but queried the reason for more action not already being taken due to the proximity of the police station to the area and CCTV being in operation. It was also felt that in many instances it was the perception of the congregation of youths that was causing an issue rather than actual intimidation taking place.

Some action had been taken with current powers, the order would allow the Police to move on sheer numbers of children and the CCTV cameras would be checked.

Members also commented on the lack of social places for teenagers to meet in the area.

DECIDED: That **CABINET** be **RECOMMENDED** to instruct Officers to carry out formal consultation on a proposed Public Spaces Protection Order to prevent on-going anti-social behaviour in and around the Millennium Gardens in Biddulph.

46 WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel considered its work programme and agreed the items listed, subject to the Panel being briefed on the change of governance of Your Moorlands and the scrutiny arrangements.

Members also requested that statistical information was supplied to the Panel in advance of a meeting taking place.

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

The meeting closed at 3.20 pm

_____Chairman _____Date