

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Minutes

MONDAY 27 MARCH 2017

PRESENT: Councillor A Banks (Chair)

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

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor M Bowen (Portfolio Holder for Communities);
Councillor A Forrester (Portfolio Holder for Environment);
Councillor D Ogden.

APOLOGIES: Councillors: T McNicol, D Grocott, P Jackson, C Pearce
and P Wood.

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

DECIDED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Panel held on the 13th February
2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

48 **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS.**

There were none.

49 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

There were none.

50 **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.**

There were none.

51 **SAFER, FAIRER, UNITED COMMUNITIES FOR STAFFORDSHIRE.**

Matthew Ellis, Police and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire, provided the Panel with an overview of the Safer, Fairer, United Communities for Staffordshire Strategy 2016-2020.

The PCC's five priorities were:

- **Modern and Transformed Policing** "A police force that is fit for a changing future."
- **Early intervention** "Identifying and tackling root causes at the earliest opportunity."

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- **Supporting Victims and Witnesses** “Making it easier for victims and witnesses to get the support they need, when they need it.”
- **Managing Offenders** “Preventing offending in the first place and reducing reoffending.”
- **Public Confidence** “Creating opportunities for communities to shape policing, with greater transparency and openness to increase confidence in policing.”

The PCC advised members that a consultation would commence shortly in relation to a proposal for the Police working more closely with the Fire Service.

He also explained that neighbourhood policing was at the heart of policing with a link to national issues such as serious organised crime and cyber crime. A vast amount of money had been invested in technology and automation which allowed officers to carry out tasks on tablets in the community. Information could be shared with other agencies and would lead to intelligence being used much more effectively than in the past.

Following the update members had the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which were summarised below:-

Armed Police and media coverage – After the recent tragic event in London, a member queried the level of media coverage and whether there were plans to arm police officers. The PCC was against arming regular police officers, more funding had been allocated to armed response teams and it was explained that the attention of the media had been frustrating at times.

Industrial scale fly-tipping – Incidents had occurred in the Biddulph area and the vehicles used hadn't been detected by Automatic Number Plate Recognition. It was thought that the agencies needed to work together to solve these crimes. This level of fly-tipping had become more prevalent, the Environment Agency was the lead and the Serious Organised Crime Agency was now involved. Matthew Ellis would see if an update on these matters could be sent to Councillor Kevin Jackson after the meeting.

Use of drugs in Leek and safety of residents – A member asked if there was plan to tackle the problem of drug users in the community and what steps had been taken to ensure the safety of our residents. The PCC understood the concerns raised and advised that there had been a lot of drug related arrests in the past three months. There was a national drive to focus on the providers of drugs and the local level issues raised would be covered at the PCCs performance meeting.

Appearance of Police Officers – Panel members had differing views on the appearance of officers. Matthew Ellis wasn't aware of this being an issue but would look into this matter.

Anti-Social Behaviour – Concerns were raised in relation to a noticeable increase in the level of anti social behaviour in Werrington, which was generally caused by a particular group of young people. The PCC responded and advised that the problem should be reported to the Local Commander and could be included on the agenda for an upcoming meeting of the Safer Neighbourhood Panel. A member also recalled a time where there had been some anti social behavioural issues in her ward and after contacting the Local Commander the problems were dealt with effectively.

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Generally, reporting of anti social behaviour had improved, the People Power Fund had engaged many young people but there were still some challenges around youth services. It was still possible for a group to apply for funding through the People Power Fund and members of the public could contact 101 to report any issues.

Cheadle Police Station – It was brought to the attention of the PCC that the Police station in Cheadle had been closed for a period of three weeks. Matthew Ellis wasn't aware of this and would provide an update after the meeting. It was possible to contact the Police Control Room via the intercom outside of the station and longer term there was a strategy to rationalise buildings as modern technology allowed officers to have a 'mobile office'.

Overall, the Panel were in agreement with the list of priorities included in the strategy and the Police Crime Commissioner was thanked for attending the meeting.

DECIDED: That the Panel supported the Safer, Fairer, United Communities for Staffordshire Strategy 2016-2020.

52 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP SCHEME.

The Panel considered a report, introduced by Linden Vernon, Senior Officer (Governance and Member Support,) which outlined a range of activities to improve the Council's support for councillors.

The Community Leadership Scheme was approved following the publication of the Communities and Local Government Select Committee report "Councillors on the Front-line". This noted the changing role of elected members, becoming increasingly community-based with councillors spending more time out and about supporting their constituents, and working with external organisations.

The report provided an update on the Scheme which comprised a package of measures - existing, new and enhanced - which delivered improved support for councillors in their wards. These included:

- Improved IT resources
- Parish and town council liaison
- Community engagement support
- Multi-agency response
- The Councillors' Community Initiative Fund
- Improved demographic information
- Case management development
- Dedicated officer support
- Alliance Management Team input

A councillor referred to recent communication issues with Your Moorlands due to data protection and was of the opinion that case management would be very useful with the correct training.

The officer responded, advising that data protection shouldn't be a barrier, the appropriate training would be arranged and any themes which emerged from these sessions could be included on scrutiny agendas.

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53 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel considered its work programme and agreed the items listed, subject to the following items being added:-

- Update on potential joint working of the Police and Fire Service
- VAST (Applying for grant funding)

The Chair also requested the exact remit for the scrutiny arrangements of Your Housing/Your Moorlands.

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

The meeting closed at 11.12 am

_____Chairman _____Date