

**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**Date: Monday 2 November 2015**

**Time: 18.00 hrs.**

**Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage**

**Present:** Councillors: S Mead (Chair), M Notley (Vice Chair), L Bell, E Connolly, L Harrington, J Mead and P Stuart.

**Also Present** Councillor S Batson, Portfolio Holder Safer Communities & Equalities. Scott Crudgington, Chair of Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) and Police Inspector Simon Tabert, Stevenage Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Start Time: 18.00 hrs.

End Time: 19:35 hrs.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies of absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors C Saunders, G Snell and the Youth Mayor, Yvan Tiako.

There were no declarations of interest.

**2. MINUTES – 6 OCTOBER 2015**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**3. 2015/2016 COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION PLAN**

In introducing the above item, Councillor S Batson, the Portfolio Holder, Safer Communities & Equalities informed the meeting that the current Sosafe Strategy published earlier in the year had been produced after consultation with partners and after considering the annual strategic assessment, various county strategies, local profiles, local opinion and a Members survey.

The Committee received a presentation from Scott Crudgington, the Chair of Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) highlighting the aims and objectives of the strategy and Members were updated on the progress of the agreed priorities and the various initiatives employed. He noted that the priorities were set around a number of themes such as Domestic abuse, Reassurance/Public engagement, Health/Mental Health and Children and Young People.

With regards to the effectiveness of some of the initiatives directed at addressing

domestic abuse such as Operation Acorn and Herts Change, the Senior Corporate Policy Officer (Community Safety & Strategic Partnerships) informed Members that although this was presently being evaluated, there was no evidence of perpetrator drop out from the schemes considering its voluntary nature. Members were informed that due to its success, the scheme, having won a national award, was to be rolled out to other districts within Hertfordshire as part of the Police and Crime Commissioner's joined up approach on addressing domestic abuse.

On the issue of public engagement, Members welcomed initiatives such as street meets, shop watch and pub watch which were appreciated by residents but enquired whether the use of neighbourhood watch stickers/flyers on windows would serve as a further deterrent. Members were advised that following new legislation for dangerous dogs, the Police had devised LEAD (Local Environmental Awareness of Dogs), an awareness campaign for members of the public who owned dogs. A suggestion to use the Chronicle to publicise and promote all aspects of community safety was noted.

In response to questions about including as a priority crimes affecting older people such as scams, door to door sales and cyber crime in the Action Plan, the Chair of RAG advised that this would have to be raised at a future strategic meeting when priorities are identified and agreed.

With regards to mental health issues, Scott Crudgington advised that a long term strategy was required especially in addressing issues identified in the plan. He acknowledged that although a number of actions had been completed one of the recent breakthroughs had been the involvement of the Chair of the Clinical Commissioning Group to the partnership meeting, as they have an important role to play.

Members expressed the view that the proposed diversionary activities at No 15 The Hyde was unlikely to address the prevailing anti-social behaviour in the area among young people as it was unlikely to incorporate things of interest to them such as creative art (e.g music and photography). A suggestion that Councillor J Mead be invited to a RAG meeting to further discuss this issue was noted by the Chair of RAG.

The Chair of RAG informed Members that with regards to the 2016/17 Action plan the Senior Corporate Policy Officer (Community Safety & Strategic Partnerships) was in the process of preparing it in conjunction with partners. He acknowledged that for the themed priorities, all actions had to be properly analysed to ensure that it was not only realistic but achievable. He also noted the support the partnership had received from the Police Crime Commissioner especially in terms of attracting funds for some of the initiatives.

Members were informed that as part of central government's attempt to prevent children and young people from being involved in radicalism and terrorism, the Community Safety Partnership had received £10,000 for the 'Prevent Agenda' initiative.

A suggestion was made by the Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities & Equalities for the partnership to promote the "Beacon" Hertfordshire Victim Care Centre, which

provided practical and emotional support for victims of crime.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Action plan be noted.

#### **4. PROGRESS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REVIEW INTO STEVENAGE'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

The Senior Corporate Policy Officer (Community Safety & Strategic Partnerships) informed the meeting that the night time economy in Stevenage had changed in the last three years as there were fewer night clubs in the Leisure Park.

The Officer also acknowledged the work of the Police and Council staff especially in developing good relationships with licensees and security staff through regular licensing visits. The Officer noted that since the introduction of the pub watch online, there had been an increase in the take up by licensees of the scheme as they had recognised its benefit as a tool of effective policing trouble makers and anti social behaviour.

Inspector Tabert welcomed the presence of the Taxi Marshals especially in ensuring people got home safely.

On the impact of Part Night Lighting of residential areas, Members were of the view, notwithstanding the HCC scrutiny report which concluded that there was no evidence of increase in criminal activity, that it was now impossible to identify criminal activity or the Police to identify suspects.

It was **RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

#### **5. URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

None.

#### **6. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required.

### **PART II**

#### **7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

### **Chair**