

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

4.00pm 8 OCTOBER 2012

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Duncan (Chair); Barnett (Opposition Spokesperson), Bowden, Carden, Gilbey, Mac Cafferty, Meadows, Shanks, Pidgeon and Simson

Sussex Police: Graham Bartlett & James Davidson.

Communities of Interest: Clare Tikly, Dave Murtagh, Paul Reading, Clive Gross, Francis Tonks, Charlie Gibbs and Mark Rist.

Officers: Linda Beanlands (Commissioner, Community Safety), Peter Castleton (Community Safety Manager), Simon Court (Senior Solicitor), Matthew Easteal (Senior Sustainable Communities Officer), Andy Whippey (Operational Social Work Service Manager), Steve Barton (Lead Commissioner, Integrated Families) and Ross Keatley (Democratic Services Officer).

PART ONE

11. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

11a Declaration of Substitutes

11.1 There were none.

11b Declarations of Interest

11.2 There were none.

11c Exclusion of the Press and Public

11.3 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ('the Act'), the Community Safety Forum considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press or public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I of the Act).

11.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public are not excluded from the meeting.

12. WELCOME TO NEW CO-OPTED FORUM MEMBERS

12.1 The Chair welcomed the newly appointed co-optees agreed at the previous meeting.

13. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

13.1 That the Chair be authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2012 as a correct record.

14. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

14.1 There were none.

15. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

15.1 There were none.

16. MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

16.1 There were none.

17. COMMUNITY SAFETY ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

17.1 The Chair asked for new issues from the Forum. There were none.

17A CONTACT DETAILS FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

17.2 It was explained that following the LAT Chairs meeting further contact details had been requested – beyond those already agreed – and this information would be compiled and forwarded to the Forum in due course.

17B DEALING WITH DANGEROUS DOGS

17.3 An introduction was given by Sussex Police covering some of the legislative distinctions between dog related offences in public and private places. It was highlighted that where offences took place in public the Police had the power to seize the dog under existing legislative; however, where offences were in private homes the Police had to apply to the Magistrates Court for a warrant. Information was also provided on the process the Police used to deal with confirmed Pitball ownership, and in particular how they sought to work with owners and the Magistrates Court to keep the dogs with their owners wherever necessary.

17.4 Councillor Meadows asked specific questions in relation to advice the Police gave on obedience training, and the seriousness of dog on dog attacks. In response it was explained that the Police gave advice, and – as well signposting people to obedience training – also offered some of their own obedience classes. In relation to dog offences against other dogs the cases were referred to Animal Welfare Officers at the Council who could assess the dogs, and apply for control orders where necessary.

- 17.5 In response to a query from Councillor Carden about dog walkers it was explained that this was a known problem, but the legislation to allow the Police to properly address these problems was slow to progress.
- 17.6 Councillor Barnett highlighted problems with suspected Pitballs in her Ward, and it was agreed that these issues could be taken up with Officers outside of the meeting.
- 17.7 In response to a query from Councillor Bowden it was confirmed that Hospitals would always report incidents of dog attacks on children that were admitted to A&E departments.
- 17.8 Councillor Simson expressed her concern that Pitbulls were being bred for ownership, and in response it was explained that in recent years a breeder had been jailed, but also many owners were not aware of the breed of the dog as it was difficult to identify until they were 12 months old.
- 17.9 Following a request from the Forum it was agreed that a note would be circulated highlighting where dogs had to be kept on a lead.

**18. NATIONAL COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVES WHICH IMPACT LOCALLY:
STANDING ITEM**

18A PRESENTATION ON YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

- 18.1 An introduction was given by the Operational Social Work Service Manager, Andy Whippey updating the Forum on the Youth Justice Plan, and inviting the Forum to feed into the development of 2013/14 Plan.
- 18.2 Councillor Meadows asked about potential flexibility in the Plan, and in response it was explained that there were partnership arrangements in place between the Council and other responsibility authorities. A key aspect was that the Plan be responsive to changing circumstances, and it was better to prevent young offenders from entering into the service, and help reduce the level of repeat offence. In response to further comments it was noted that prevention was core to the service, and a multi-agency approach was important.
- 18.3 Following comments from Councillor Simson it was agreed that working with children from age 11 was seen as a vital point to help prevent repeat offences; it was considered Police resolution work within the community was instrumental at this age in highlighting the seriousness of offences.

- 18.4 **RESOLVED** – That the Forum notes the information.

19. LOCAL ISSUES: STANDING ITEM

19A CRIME TRENDS AND PERFORMANCE FIGURES

- 19.1 The forum considered a report of the Commissioner for Community Safety describing recent activities and progress relating to priority areas in the Brighton & Hove

Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011-14; statistical updates relating the first five months of 2012/13 – April to August 2012 were also highlighted. Graphs showing monthly crime data from April 2008 to August 2012 were provided which set recent data in the context of both longer term trends and seasonal crime cycles.

- 19.2 Councillor Simson asked for clarification in relation to the domestic violence statistics, and it was explained that 45% of 'solved' crimes related to incidents where the Police had enough evidence to charge. Following further questions from Councillor Gilbey it was agreed that confirmation would be provided in relation to the statistics to eliminate any confusion. Some explanation was also provided that victims were sometimes afraid to speak to the Police to actually give evidence; work was also undertaken to discuss safety issues with victims, and more cases were put to court, but some of these would drop out further down the line.
- 19.3 Councillor Bowden noted his disappointment that LGBT hate crime had increased, and hoped that there could be a greater role played by the local media in de-escalating the fear. Councillor Mac Cafferty welcomed the positive work being undertaken and encouraged the Forum to attend the hate crime vigil on 20 October which would start at Old Steine.

19B UPDATE ON POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER AND POLICE & CRIME PANEL

- 19.4 The Commissioner, Community Safety, Linda Beanlands noted that the Police Commissioner Elections would take place on 15 November 2012, and the elected person would take up office on 22 November 2012 at which point the responsibility for policing in the area would change. Following negotiation over the summer it had been agreed that the Council would have two representatives on the Police and Crime Panel to represent the higher population of the city, and the Panel would have the power of veto in relation to the budget and Local Police Plan. Work was being undertaken before the elections to help ensure that the issues which most affected the city would be prioritised under the new regime.
- 19.5 Councillor Bowden expressed his concern that the priorities of the city might differ from those of the other authorities in East and West Sussex. In response the powers of the Panel were reiterated, and Officers would work within the new arrangements to help bring these issues to the forefront.
- 19.6 Councillor Meadows also expressed concern that there was a general lack of awareness on the part of the public in relation to the changes and the elections. It was explained that Officers were attending LATS as much as possible to raise awareness, and the national campaign was due to start in the run up to the elections. There was also a great deal of information on the Sussex Police website.

19C HATE CRIME SERVICE OFFER

- 19.7 An introduction was given by the Partnership Community Safety Team Manager, Peter Castleton, outlining the service offer from the Casework Team, and the report also gave an update on services where the team was integrated with partner agencies.

- 19.8 Councillor Simson asked for confirmation that, regardless of where the reporting took place, there would be a co-ordinated approach for victims. In response it was explained that this would be the case, and all professionals would have access to the same information.
- 19.9 Councillor Bowden welcomed this, and suggested that Members use every Forum possible to help increase awareness of the service.
- 19.10 Councillor Gilbey asked how the Casework Team would make themselves known locally; it was explained that they would be attending LATS and other interest groups.
- 19.11 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee note the report.

19D WORK OF COMMUNITY SAFETY PROJECTS TEAM

- 19.12 The Senior Sustainable Communities Officer, Matt Easteal, gave an update on the work of the Projects Team and highlighted the following areas: Community events; LAT promotion; Shoreham Harbour Regeneration; Communities Against Drugs; St James Street; Sussex Probation; Soundscape and CAFTA.
- 19.13 Member of the Forum gave thanks for the presentation and welcomed the joined up thinking and work.

19E SAFER FAMILIES, SAFER COMMUNITIES

- 19.14 The Lead Commissioner, Integrated Families, gave an introduction and stated that the national programme focused on three outcomes, and a multi agency working group had been set up to look at these issues from a broad approach locally. The group were also looking at families and households, and how individuals health and wellbeing was affected by substance misuse and domestic violence. Local Authorities had been given a target figure over the life of the 3 year programme, the Council had been charged with engaging with 675 families; when this had been demonstrated there would be funding based on results. Work was currently being progressed to form a Family Intervention team'; who would work with other agencies. It was hoped that by the end of 2012 the Team would have engaged 225 families, and currently this was families who were already known to the Council and other partner bodies and agencies.
- 19.15 Councillor Simson asked how the first 225 families had been identified, and it was explained that this was done by working closely with partnership agencies, and referrals and identifying the most vulnerable cases; however, this was a complex and difficult task.
- 19.16 Councillor Meadows asked for more information on the payment by results, and it was explained that Local Authorities would be reporting back nationally, and have their own internal; audit processes. They would also have to demonstrate how they meet each of the criteria.

20. SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 JULY 2012

20.1 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the minutes be noted.

21. EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2012

21.1 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the minutes be noted.

The meeting concluded at 6.19pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of