

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

4.00pm 9 JUNE 2014

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor J Kitcat (Chair); Simson (Opposition Spokesperson), Daniel (Opposition Spokesperson), Barnett, Carden, Deane, Mac Cafferty, Robins and Wakefield

Sussex Police: Chief Superintendent: Nev Kemps, Inspector Gareth Davies, John Eagles (Office of the PCC)

Statutory Services: Mark Matthews (ESFRS)

Communities of Interest: Richard Barraball (London Road LAT); Ray Metcalfe (Moulsecoomb LAT); John Phillips (Tarnor LAT); Christine El-Shabba (Whitehawk Crime Prevention Forum); Mark Green (Brighton & Hove Mediation Service); Charlie Gibbs (Victim Support).

Officers: Linda Beanlands (Head of Community Safety); Peter Castleton (Community Safety Manager); Simon Court (Senior Lawyer); Anna Gianfrancesca (Services Manager: Youth Offending) and Ross Keatley (Acting Democratic Services Manager).

PART ONE

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1a Declaration of Substitutes

1.1 There were no declarations of substitutes.

1b Declarations of Interest

1.2 There were no declarations of the interest in matters listed on the agenda.

1c Exclusion of the Press and Public

1.3 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).

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

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 2.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Community Safety Forum meeting held on 3 March 2014 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

3 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 The Chair stated it was recognised that there were concerns about the impact to businesses and residents of squatting in commercial premises. Peter Castleton, who led on dealing with anti-social behaviour and hate crime, was preparing protocols and putting in place new arrangements for all agencies to work together to deal effectively and quickly with commercial squats.
- 3.2 Following a review of Local Action Teams, the Council was planning to provide a higher level of support to LAT's; those arrangements were nearing completion and a LAT's meeting would be called shortly to share that information with everyone.
- 3.3 The Independent Drugs Commission had concluded its work on 19 recommendations for improved action, ranging from an increased focus on new psychoactive substances, joined up services for those with both mental health and substance misuse problems, quicker information sharing and intelligence arrangements within the criminal justice system and many other actions. The full report on progress was going to the Health & Wellbeing Board the following day and at the Safe In The City Partnership meeting the following week.
- 3.4 A compact version of the Community Safety & Crime Reduction Strategy was being prepared and will be circulated and made available on the Safe in the City website.

4 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- 4.1 There were no petitions, deputations or public questions.

5 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

- 5.1 There were no petitions, written questions, letters or notices of motion from Members.

6 'YOU SAID, WE DID'

- 6.1 The Forum noted the update that had been laid round for information. By way of clarification the Head of Community Safety explained to Councillor Simson that whilst 'the Bevandean' was not an alcohol free pub it had been her intention to profile it for its positive work and community use; she added that it was important the city continue to push for an alcohol free pub.

- 6.2 Councillor Daniel thanked Sussex Police for looking in her concerns in relation to Queen's Road; she noted she had undertaken a 'walkabout' and witnessed violent and threatening behaviour, but not felt reassured that Sussex Police had properly followed up her concerns.

7 REPORT FROM THE POLICE & CRIME PANEL

- 7.1 It was noted there was no update for the Forum as the Panel had not met since the previous meeting.

8 CRIME TRENDS AND PERFORMANCE IN BRIGHTON & HOVE: POSITION UP TO MARCH 2014

- 8.1 The Forum considered a report of the Head of Community Safety describing recent activities and progress relating to priority areas in the Brighton & Hove Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2011-14. Graphs showing monthly crime data from April 2013 to March 2014 were provided which set recent data in the context of both longer term trends and seasonal crime cycles.

- 8.2 In response to Councillor Daniel it was explained that an increase in domestic violence during the Football World Cup was statistically expected, and there was a plan in place which was similar to operation annually over the Christmas period.

- 8.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Forum note the information provided in the report.

9 UPDATE FROM THE BOROUGH COMMANDER ON CHANGES TO EAST SUSSEX FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES

- 9.1 The Forum received an update from the Borough Commander, Mark Matthews, on changes to East Sussex Fire & Rescue Services. He explained that as part of savings to the service the Fire Authority had recently undertaken an integrated risk management plan. Fire coverage had been considered across East Sussex and Brighton & Hove and two key proposals had been agreed: firstly that the number of fire appliances for the city would be reduced to four from five, and secondly there would be reduction in staff at Roedean to provide a different shift pattern. These proposals had been accepted by the Fire Authority on 5 June 2014, and the reduction in appliances would commence for the 2016/17 financial year. It was noted that there were no proposals to close any fire stations.

- 9.2 In response to the Chair it was clarified that the preventative work each year amounted to over 3000 visits to vulnerable people in the community, and calls to the fire service had reduced by 50% in the last decade. It was noted that the number of Fire Safety Officers would be reduced from ten to six, but every firefighter would spend half of their shift undertaking preventative visits.

- 9.3 In response to Councillor Daniel it was explained that if all four appliances were in use in the city then the service would be able to draw on wider resources as appropriate or in the case of significant fires.

- 9.4 Councillor Simson asked how individuals were identified for the preventative homes visits, and Mr Matthews explained that there was sophisticated working with partners to identify vulnerable individuals; data on fires was also collected and fed into this activity.
- 9.5 In response to Councillor Deane it was explained that incidents where all five appliances had been needed were rare (such as large fires); however, there was resilience in the service for this type of eventuality.
- 9.6 In response to a query from one of the LAT representatives it was explained that the change in service would be kept under review; especially given the length of time before the changes were due to be implemented.
- 9.10 **RESOLVED:** That the Forum note the update from the Borough Commander.

10 THE NEW ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT

- 10.1 The Forum received a presentation from the Community Safety Manager, Peter Castleton, in relation to the New Anti-Social Behaviour Act. It was added that, similar to previous changes, some short courses could be run for LAT members. It was also agreed that a short update could be circulated for all Councillors with the minutes.
- 10.2 Councillor Daniel noted that she welcomed the swiftness of the new measures, but she had concern in relation to misuse against vulnerable individuals. The Community Safety Manager explained that there was quite a broad interpretation and this would need to be applied effectively; there would be further detail in the guidance and this could be shared with the Forum.
- 10.3 In response to Councillor Robins the Community Safety Manager explained that anti-social behaviour complaints were often inter-household. The approach with the new legislation would focus on resolution before the point of taking legal action was reached – this was also the more cost effective approach.
- 10.4 **RESOLVED:** That the Forum note the update.

11 DEALING WITH BUSINESS CRIME

- 11.1 The Forum received a presentation from Lisa Peretta from the Business Crime Partnership.
- 11.2 In response to Councillor Wakefield it was explained by Ms Peretta that there was a restorative programme, and the partnership would seek to gain appropriate information from young people committing crimes that could be passed on to case officers. It was added that taxi marshals and SIA staff were trained to assist in feeding back information appropriately.
- 11.3 In response to questions from Councillor Simson it was explained that: the majority of businesses in the partnership were smaller ones as many of the larger businesses had their own security arrangements. Smaller businesses were more likely to join for security reasons such as staff lone working. It was noted that many of the larger national stores

were part of the scheme and they would pass on incidents and help with imaging and profiling. In the city there were approximately 500 members.

- 11.4 In relation to marketing it was explained to Councillor Robins that the partnership was a not for profit organisation and therefore was limited on the amount of funds that could be used on marketing; however, much of this already came from work of mouth. There were currently some funds allocated to target growth in Hove where there were fewer members. The partnership was funded through the membership and would be able to take on more staff as the uptake demanded.
- 11.5 **RESOLVED** – That the Forum note the presentation and information provided through the questions.

12 SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

- 12.1 The Community received a report in relation to supporting young people from the Manager of the Youth Offending Service Anna Gianfrancesca.
- 12.2 In response to Councillor Carden the Service Manager explained that there were joint programmes with both East and West Sussex County Councils and ongoing liaison work.
- 12.3 In response to Councillor Daniel the Service Manager explained that the service had specialist workers from areas such as the Police, Probation Services and CAHMS; when young people came into the service with specialist requirements it was the intention that this would be dealt with in a timely manner as part of long-term planning.
- 12.4 In response to Councillor Simson it was explained that the transition during the period when an individual was no longer considered a young person was managed by the probation officer. The officer would undertake a probation assessment for the transition, and there also a planned timetable that should have been in place for this.
- 12.5 **RESOLVED:** That the Forum note the presentation and responses to questions.

13 MANAGEMENT OF UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS

- 13.1 The Forum received a presentation from the Head of Tenancy Services, Rachel Chassaud in relation to the management of unauthorised encampments in the city.
- 13.2 In response to queries from Councillor Barnett the Head of Tenancy Services explained that since the partial closure of the Horsdean site it was much more difficult for the Council to use its Section 62 powers to direct to a transit site, and the groups were often larger than the available number of pitches. There were discussions with Sussex Police in relation to taking a piecemeal approach, but there were issues around splitting up family groups. In relation to anti-social behaviour it was explained that the Council were very aware of the sensitivity of this for the settled community, but it was important the Council achieve a balance and use enforcement powers proportionately – it was also added that there were contracted services that undertook clean-up work.

- 13.3 In response to Councillor Simson it was explained that there was an important distinction between ethnic travellers and van dwellers – which was considered a separate matter; there was legislation that defined which groups were legally protected. In relation to the drainage at Horsdean it was explained that the expected works were waiting on a decision from the Secretary of State before a decision could be taken in relation to the permanent works. The Chair noted that the Council had asked the Police & Crime Commissioner to lobby the Secretary of State on this matter.
- 13.4 In relation to the number of travellers that came to the city the Head of Tenancy Services explained that it was not clear why an increased number came to the city when compared with East and West Sussex County Council's; however, there was proactive work with the other local authorities and Sussex Police to look into this further.
- 13.5 In response to queries from the LAT representatives on the Forum it was explained that work was always undertaken to move groups on when they set up in community areas such as parks, and there was no easier solution to prevent travellers gaining access to parks such as Preston Park and Stanmer Park.
- 13.6 In response to further queries from the LAT representative it was explained that it was very difficult to balance the concerns of residents and the rights of the protected groups. The Chief Superintendent added that residents should be forthcoming in reporting any crimes that were committed by travellers and the decision about moving groups on would give consideration to incidents such as reported assaults. It was also added that plain clothes officers would assess sites for anti-social behaviour, but it was experienced that open dialogue was much more effective to prevent groups feeling excluded.
- 13.7 In response to Councillor Deane it was explained that the increase in the number of van dwellers could be partially attributed to the increasing number of people becoming homeless, and there was work underway to look at the housing needs of individuals who were in this situation. In relation to the promotion of communities and cultures there was close work being undertaken with 'Friends, Families and Travellers' and there was a key part of the relevant strategy to engage more with the settled community through the LATs.
- 13.8 Councillor Robins noted he had sat on the scrutiny panel looking at this area, and he felt the proactive meetings with some representatives from the local press had helped to remove some of the hysteria from the issue.
- 13.9 **RESOLVED:** That the forum note the update and the points arising from the questions.

14 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 14.1 Forum noted the future meeting dates:
- 6 October 2014; and,
 - 2 March 2015

The meeting concluded at 6.16pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of