

Minutes of the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee Meeting held on 8 July 2016

Present: John Francis (Chairman)

Maureen Compton
Mike Davies
Terry Finn
Bob Fraser

Robert Marshall
Mark Olszewski
David Williams (Vice-Chairman)

Also in attendance: Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

PART ONE

9. Apologies

Apologies were submitted by Councillors Margaret Astle and Christine Mitchell.

10. Declarations of Interest

There were none received.

11. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 June 2016

Referring to page 9 the Committee Chairman requested the timetable for the Children, Young People and Families Transformation work.

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 8 June 2016 were a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

12. Youth and Community Service Update

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People introduced the report and commented that the item had come to the Committee on a number of occasions prior to implementation and afterwards and at a regular basis since. It was suggested that the service update would be presented to the Committee for the last time as it had now been fully implemented.

A Member queried the savings achieved from properties and how this correlated with the Property Proposal Plan in terms of the savings.

The Project Manager – Capital Programme, confirmed that the Property Plan was ahead of target. All sites had been transferred and the Council was no longer responsible for the running costs at an earlier date than had been proposed, with the exception of Wheaton Aston which had not yet transferred but had been decommissioned so was costing the County Council very little and Stone where there was a proposal for the site to go to a third party so it would therefore not be costing the Council anything in the near future. In addition to the revenue saving forecast, the sites at Brewood and Millward Hall in Leek were likely to be sold and achieve capital receipts in addition to the revenue savings proposed. Since the report was written Chesterton Vision and Knutton sites had

been approved and the sites handed over. There were few costs to the County Council and all expected had been achieved. It was confirmed that the £3.3 million was savings in running costs and other areas. There had been no capital receipts anticipated initially.

A Member requested a breakdown of the successful bids in Lichfield and it was confirmed by the County Commissioner Children's Wellbeing that this money had been delivered through the District Commissioning Leads and a more detailed breakdown had been shared with the Committee previously.

A Member raised concerns regarding anti-social behaviour at a skate park in Lichfield and the Chairman suggested that this topic could be one for discussion with the Police and Crime Commissioner when he attended the next Committee meeting. The County Commissioner for Children's Wellbeing explained that it could be useful to discuss this matter with the local District Commissioning Lead and the Member confirmed that the District Commissioning Lead was aware of the issue.

A Member welcomed the increase in volunteers. It was queried however how many and why a small number of schools had ceased to provide the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

The County Commissioner for Children's Wellbeing clarified that three schools had ceased delivery as they had not got the staff with the required qualification to lead the scheme. A number of additional schools had however taken on the licence. In 2011/12 before the transition of youth services, there were 2277 new entrants and in 2015/16 there were 2529. Although the number of awards gained had dropped in 2014/15 an increase was expected in 2016/17.

The Committee Chairman queried if the £3.3million in savings was incorporated within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The County Commissioner for Children's Wellbeing explained that staff costs had been built into the MTFS over the past five years as there would be redundancy costs over this period.

The Committee Chairman queried how local Members could be informed about the funding available in their area.

The County Commissioner for Children's Wellbeing confirmed that the District Commissioning Lead would be asked to provide the detail as Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS) had not always been involved.

The Chief Executive, SCVYS confirmed that SCVYS passed relevant information to the District Commissioning Leads and was looking at how to develop this from August onwards so that elected Members could signpost people to individual support.

The Cabinet Member referred to the one off allocation of £400 thousand and that each District had received approximately £50 thousand. The District Commissioning Leads had used set criteria to allocate the money. There was the opportunity for the District Commissioning Leads to share more information at the Member Meetings and he undertook to suggest this item be included on meeting agendas.

A Member referred to the report and queried if the New Bremen exchange would continue.

The Cabinet Member gave the commitment that the Council wanted to continue with the visits however referred to the need for appropriate local accommodation and to ensure that the exchange fulfilled what the Germans wanted it to do so. A meeting was planned to discuss this.

The Chief Executive, SCVYS clarified that outdoor education centres had been used to accommodate the exchange previously but these centres were now run by Entrust and were block booked from the beginning of July to the end of August. This year an Army Cadet Camp would be used to accommodate the exchange group however this would not be possible in the future. Ensuring access to accommodation in the right locality, near to the cemetery, was key. Another issue was making sure that there was enough work at the cemetery for the young people to do as the cemetery was well maintained.

The Committee Chairman referred to his visit to New Bremen and stated that the cemetery there was in a worse condition than the one in Cannock Chase.

A Member queried the increase in paid staff and if these staff had been transferred from the County Council and how their roles compared. Liberty Staffordshire Community Interest Group was also referred to and the Member asked what could fill the gap in provision in the north of the county.

The Chief Executive of SCVYS clarified that there had been an increase of staff in the voluntary sector but staff had not been TUPED over from the County Council. Of the seventeen new organisations that had been set up, the majority had been led by ex Youth Services staff. The voluntary sector had risen to the challenge and brought money in to support youth services. In response to the second question, the Chief Executive of SCVYS clarified that there were two approaches to the delivery of opportunities for those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Some facilities were set up specifically for young people with learning difficulties or disabilities whilst others were inclusive of all. More than half of SCVYS registered provision was open access and offered provision for young people with additional needs. It was possible therefore that there was not a requirement for a Liberty type organisation in the north of the county.

A Member requested more information about the Liberty Staffordshire Community Interest Company and it was confirmed that the relevant contact details would be passed on to him by the SCVYS Chief Executive.

A Member highlighted the importance of information, advice and guidance and queried what the Youth Box website had been replaced with and how this agenda was being taken forward.

The County Commissioner for Children's Wellbeing referred to market research undertaken with young people which had revealed that Youth Box was not meeting the required credentials. Work had been undertaken to consider different ways of accessing information, advice and guidance with Entrust as they provided this in schools. Work

had also been undertaken to consider how things were advertised and promoted and SCVYS had supported this work.

It was commented by the Chief Executive, SCVYS that the online marketplace was being disbanded. There was still work to be undertaken to offer information, advice and guidance at every level. This included careers information in schools, online information and support to navigate the web. Twenty seven thousand young people were accessing some form of youth provision which was positive as people from youth organisations could support young people to access information.

A Member suggested that there were still gaps and that work was being undertaken to improve information, advice and guidance.

The Chief Executive, SCVYS, explained that the organisation's new contract would commence in August. One of the key elements of the contract was connectivity at a local level. All needed to have the right information available and know where to access it. A map of local activities was still available on the SCVYS website.

The Chairman expressed disappointment that the scheduled Youth Debate had had to be cancelled. The Chief Executive, SCVYS reassured the Committee that twenty five young people had been signed up and wanted to go ahead with the debate but due to the time of year it had been difficult to get enough audience members. It was hoped that the event could be re-arranged to take place in November 2016.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People explained that the engagement and participation of young people was a difficult area to get right. Previously there had been the YAK, the Young People's Advisory Board and the District Boards and some people were attending all of these meetings/groups. The Youth Parliament had been put on hold but different ways of working were being considered to take this forward.

The Chairman referred to Walton Hall Youth Community Hub (WHYCH) and the support to Doxey House and queried this.

In response to the Chairman's query the Chief Executive, SCVYS, confirmed that WHYCH and Doxey House were both part of SCVYS membership and all groups were encouraged to work together to learn from one another and grow their programmes.

The Chairmen referred to the need for young people with learning disabilities to take the lead in youth activities.

The Chief Executive, SCVYS, explained that former youth service staff were engaging with young people and involving them in the process.

The Chairman sought reassurances that safeguarding principles were built in to youth provision.

The Chief Executive, SCVYS, explained that SCVYS had a standard safeguarding policy template what could be used by organisations if required. Organisations were advised to have a safeguarding lead and SCVYS encouraged and advised that

volunteers had the appropriate safeguarding training. It was difficult to quality assure every group but policies were in place and questions asked.

The Committee Chairman requested that the Committee had sight of the audit process used by SCVYS.

The Chief Executive, SCVYS, clarified that all organisations were independent. Support was provided by SCVYS and advice had been provided regarding the occasional safeguarding issue. SCVYS worked with the Council to mitigate risk and to ensure changes were made. There were over one hundred and fifty member groups.

The Committee Chairman sought further reassurances and the Chief Executive, SCVYS, referred to the training offered by SCVYS and the provision of a Disclosure and Barring Service. Safe recruitment was encouraged, including ensuring satisfactory references of volunteers.

The Cabinet Member emphasised that a voluntary group's membership of SCVYS provided an extra level of governance. There was however nothing that forced a group to become a member of SCVYS. Reassurance was provided that Liberty was originally provided by the County Council and was now run by former County Council staff who knew about safeguarding issues.

A Member referred to the fact that organisations were autonomous and therefore had liability, however stated that even if these groups were not run by the County Council, the Council could not abdicate its moral responsibility. It was important for the right framework to be in place to ensure an appropriate monitoring system that would provide assurance that checks were in place.

The Chief Executive, SCVYS, explained that SCVYS were a member of Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board and that the Board was interested in the role of the voluntary sector and groups understanding of safeguarding. There were potentially some faith based groups for example which were not always as knowledgeable as they should be. Work was being undertaken to make sure the voluntary sector was as safe as it could be.

A Member gave reassurances that he had visited the Walton Hall provision and the checks and balances on staff were in place.

It was **Resolved** that:

- The District Commissioning Leads share more information more information about local funding at Member Meetings.
- More information about the Liberty Staffordshire Community Interest Company be shared with Councillor Finn.

13. C,Y P&Fs Transformation Programme - Overview of Programmes including the Vision Pilot

The Cabinet Member introduced the report which detailed the Pilots which were part of the model implementation within the Children and Families System Transformation Programme.

The Commissioner for Culture and Communities introduced the Senior Business Designer who has been working on opportunities to pull together evidence and develop data collection methods from the Pilots. The Building Resilient Families and Communities (BRFC) Co-ordinator, was also in attendance as the Pilots all referenced and aimed to embed BRFC techniques and principles. The Commissioner for Culture and Communities discussed the key strategic outcomes anticipated as detailed within the presentation slide and the work streams to take this work forward. Funding has been secured through a variety of streams for the pilot programmes including through BRFC. Referring to the report, the Commissioner for Culture and Communities provided detail about each of the Pilots being undertaken.

In the course of the presentation it was confirmed by the BRFC Co-ordinator that Girl Power had been set up in Newcastle initially as a result of concerns relating to child sexual exploitation as a number of young people were being influenced and groomed by young men. The model had been successful in preventing sexual exploitation, supporting vulnerable children and had brought schools together. It had been expanded to Chesterton. Wollstanton and Kidsgrove school clusters also wished to do a similar piece of work. The schools community in Newcastle wanted to build on the success of Girl Power.

The Commissioner for Culture and Communities explained that the development of an intelligence system locally would help support Girl Power as it would enable information and data to be shared and provide appropriate and timely support locally.

A Member queried which five primary schools in the cluster would be involved in the South Staffordshire pilot and it was confirmed by the BRFC Co-ordinator that that the pilot had started with the involvement of three proactive Headteachers and had extended as more Headteachers wished to get involved.

A Member queried how and which schools would be involved in the Stafford pilot and the BRFC Co-ordinator clarified that this pilot built on the former extended schools agenda.

The Commissioner for Culture and Communities explained that both the Stafford and the South Staffordshire Pilots built on the Room 21 initiative in Leek and the MAC initiative in Tamworth. In response to the Chairman's question the BRFC Co-ordinator explained that an organisation had been commissioned in Leek and schools had put forward the number of families who attend. Schools are asked to contribute and not just refer. When the information on referrals had been cross checked, not all families have been appropriate to be part of the project as they already had involvement with some of the County Council's services. This is a learning and development process with the schools. The schools included Leek High School, St Edward Middle School, Churnet View Middle School, Beresford Memorial First School and Leek First School.

In conclusion the Commissioner for Culture and Communities emphasised that each pilot was taking a different approach dependent on local need. All pilots focussed on early help and embedded the BRFC principles. The intention was to build community capacity and reduce the demand on statutory services. Work had been undertaken to develop data collection systems to gather evidence. The pilots would be evaluated

quickly and learning built upon. If pilots were not working then the funding for them would cease. The approach would take time and was not without some cost and there would need to be work with the community to ensure success. A comparison was made with the work undertaken in relation to libraries. This project had taken two years and resulted in twelve libraries becoming community managed and delivered to date. It was recognised that The Children, Young People and Families Transformation Programme is much more complex and there was more risk attached. To draw demand away from statutory services there was a need to understand low level demand and ensure services were in place.

A Member queried how schools had been chosen to be involved in the Stafford pilot.

The BRFC Co-ordinator stated that this was dependent on needs for example the number of children in receipt of the Pupil Premium or eligible for free school meals and who were the enablers within the community. In some areas there was already connectivity locally. It was confirmed that information would be sent to Members on school involvement in each of the Pilot areas. As the pilots were developing, more schools wanted to be involved for example in South Staffordshire the number of schools involved in the Pilot had increased from two to six.

A Member queried the innovative ways of working and when information would be analysed to determine best practice that could be shared across the County. It was queried when the learning would be presented to the Committee and how sustainable the pilots would be.

The Senior Business Designer explained that the baseline was being developed for each Pilot. The Newcastle pilot for example had considered thirty young people at risk and the impact of the pilot on those young people. The potential cost savings would be considered to identify which pilot was having the most impact. The District Commissioning Leads were trying to take a multi agency approach so that the projects funded themselves. Peer mentoring and learning in the community and parents helping other parents was being encouraged.

The BRFC Co-ordinator explained that all commissioned services were using the same Family Plus Outcomes Star tool to identify progress made by families.

A Member asked what were the timescales for this piece of work and the Senior Business Manager explained that the Programme Board had agreed that outcomes would be measured. This was complex however as data did not sit within one team and this therefore needed coordinating. Over the next few months the impact would be measured and reported back to the Governance Board and Steering Group. This work would commence in September.

The Head of Families First confirmed that the projects were slow to begin with as they relied on the community capacity available and on developing this. There would be different partners involved, different levels of engagement and different needs in each of the Pilot areas. The ability to gather data would be more difficult with the involvement of arms length organisations however the County Council would influence the partnership and report back change.

The Commissioner Culture and Communities explained that the County Council would not be occupying the same space that it had done so previously.

The Chairman stated that the Council was investing in prevention and that this was the only way to move forward considering the limited resources available.

It was suggested by the Cabinet Member and agreed by the Committee that an update would be provided to the Committee in December 2016.

It was **Resolved** that:

- The names of schools involved in the Pilots be circulated to the Committee following the meeting.
- An update be brought to the Committee in December 2016.

14. Verbal Update: Preventing the Low Level Neglect of Children in Staffordshire Working Group Final Report Recommendations - Cabinet Member response

The Cabinet Member explained that he had considered the Working Group's report and the recommendations approved by the Committee. The vast majority of the recommendations were linked with the work being undertaken as part of the Children, Young People and Families Transformation Programme. All the recommendations had been considered and a full written response would be provided to the Committee in September 2016.

Resolved: That a full written response to the recommendations would be presented to the September Select Committee meeting.

15. Work Programme - July 2016

The Scrutiny and Support Manager requested that any lines of inquiry for discussion with the Police and Crime Commissioner at the next Select Committee meeting should be sent to the Scrutiny and Support Manager/Officer to enable the questions to be collated and put forward for response.

A Member suggested that the steep increase in knife crime should be considered.

A Member reported that local crime statistics were no longer available and it had previously been useful to have this information.

It was agreed that the Cabinet Member for Communities and the Environment would be invited to attend the next Committee meeting.

A Member suggested that the Police and Crime Commissioner be asked about work with the Fire Authority.

The Scrutiny and Support Manager referred to the other items on the Work Programme that would come to the next Select Committee meeting.

In response to a query from the Chairman, the Head of Families First confirmed that the change of use of a children's residential care home had been discussed at the Corporate Parenting Panel.

In relation to the items for discussion at the September meeting the Head of Families First explained that the use of police cells to house young people who had not been bailed was a pertinent issue and a national concordat had recently been signed.

The Scrutiny and Support Manager confirmed that the use of police cells for adults with mental health issues was an item that had been discussed at the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee. She undertook to confirm with the Cabinet Member why he had raised this issue at the Triangulation meeting.

A Member suggested that the Committee ask the Police and Crime Commissioner about the appropriate use of police cells.

The Cabinet Member explained that the local mental health Trusts had been undertaking work in relation to this matter.

The Scrutiny and Support Manager referred to the Wood report: reviewing the role and functions of local safeguarding children boards which had been published in May 2016. The Head of Families First agreed that this report could have implications for the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board, however it was not clear at the time what the government's response to the report would be. It was suggested that the November/December meeting may be a good time for the Committee to consider the implications of the report, for example if two separate Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Boards were required or not.

The Chairman asked if the information regarding the pilot programmes would be recorded on Care Director.

The Head of Families First explained that this would not be the case as Care Director was not flexible enough to record the wide ranging information. Also external organisations could not access this system. Information would be collated at a local level.

It was **RESOLVED** that;

- Knife crime, the availability of local crime statistics, the relationship with the Fire Authority and the appropriate use of police cells would be put forward as items for discussion with the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- That the Wood Report: review of the role and functions of local safeguarding children boards be included on the Committee work programme.

16. Exclusion of the Public

Chairman

Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.