

CLIMATE CHANGE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Tuesday, 26th March 2024 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Ashley Taylor in the Chair

Councillors: Rob Hiney-Saunders, Cathy Jeffery, Janet Tait, and Carol Wood.

Officers:- Ellie Bircumshaw (Anti-Social Behaviour Case Worker), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Victoria Dawson (Head of Service – Housing), Thomas Dunne-Wragg (Scrutiny Officer), Jim Fieldsend (Monitoring Officer), Matt Liddy (Community Safety and Enforcement Manager), Louise Parsons (Anti-Social Behaviour Case Worker), Mark Seston (Community Safety Officer), Jo Wilson (Housing Strategy and Development Officer), Amy Bryan (Governance and Civic Manager) and Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting was Councillor Clive Moesby (Portfolio Holder for Resources), Councillor Anne Clarke (Portfolio Holder for Environment), Councillor Jeanne Rospin (Junior Portfolio Holder for Environment) and Police Sergeant Martyn Whyte.

CLI39-23/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Emma Stevenson and Catherine Tite.

CLI40-23/24 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to be considered.

CLI41-23/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made.

CLI42-23/24 SPECIAL MINUTES – 20TH FEBRUARY 2024

Moved by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Carol Wood
RESOLVED that the minutes of a Special Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 20th February 2024 be approved as a true and correct record.

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CLI43-23/24 MINUTES – 20TH FEBRUARY 2024.

Moved by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Carol Wood
RESOLVED that the minutes of a reconvened Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 20th February 2024 be approved as a true and correct record.

CLI44-23/24 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Moved by Councillor Robert Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Carol Wood
RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and Items to be considered in the private document be noted.

CLI45-23/24 REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICY ON SKY LANTERNS AND HELIUM BALLOONS - POST-SCRUTINY MONITORING (FINAL REPORT)

Committee considered the final monitoring report regarding the review of the Council's Policy on Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons.

The report set out that to date, one out of the five recommendations had been achieved. One had been achieved but not within target, two remained overdue and one had been extended to allow for action at the new review of tenancy agreements. A further update would be submitted to advise Members when the outstanding recommendations had been completed.

Moved by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Carol Wood
RESOLVED that (1) progress made against the review recommendations be noted;

(2) a further update be provided during the 2024/25 municipal year on the implementation of the remaining review recommendations.

CLI46-23/24 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Committee considered its Work Programme for 2023/24.

Moved by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Carol Wood
RESOLVED that the Work Programme 2023/24 be noted.

CLI47-23/24 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE BOLSOVER COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Community Safety Officer gave a presentation on the Bolsover Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The CSP's mission statement was to "*work together to reduce crime*

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and disorder and improve the quality of life for you and your Community". The presentation covered:

- Why we have a Partnership;
- Statutory organisations in the CSP;
- Bolsover CSP and Priorities;
- Police and Crime Commissioner New Priorities (2022-2025);
- What had been achieved.

The current three-year plan covered 2023-26 and had been developed from the findings of a Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment. The design of these plans had been tailored to each local authority.

The local Police and Crime Commissioner's New Priorities (Police Crime Plan 2022-2025) was also presented to the Committee, but with 2024 being an election year, the current plans could change.

For the CSP's priorities for 2023-2026, the intent was to: reduce and manage Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and criminal damage; reduce domestic abuse, violent crime, and sexual offences; counter terrorism; reduce and prevent acquisitive crime (vehicle crime – the District was in close proximity to the M1 motorway); reduce alcohol and substance misuse; and reduce the risk of child exploitation. The Community Safety Officer stressed the one cross cutting theme: to build cohesive communities capable of resisting crime and actions of disorder.

The CSP worked closely with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, receiving £25,000 last year in financial support (that was reviewed every year). This grant helped fund projects like youth diversionary activities and the purchase and installation of CCTV cameras. There was also contingency planning for emerging risks and threats; examples were shown of the diversionary activities deployed in 2023-24, as well as what the CSP had achieved, including the provision of personal alarms and door cameras to reduce the fear of crime, crime being repeated, as well as the purchase of wildlife cameras that could record deliberate fires and acts of fly tipping.

The Community Safety Officer passed over to Sergeant Martyn Whyte to elaborate on the work of the CSP.

Sergeant Whyte noted the CSP team was effective as there was strong leadership in place, resulting in Bolsover performing better than neighbouring local authorities. Some projects in place across the District would not have taken place without CSP funding. Successes included large LED electronic speed boards and banners and stands outside of primary and secondary schools to help improve road safety. Another secondary benefit of the police visiting schools was building up a beneficial relationship between the police and young people.

In recent years, the District had encountered high levels of burglary, shoplifting and theft due to the ongoing Cost of Living Crisis, but there had also been high levels of domestic abuse. One project used Acceptable Behavioural Contracts (ABCs) and had been established with the intention of the police attending meetings with young people and their parents to try and learn why crimes were being committed. Sergeant Whyte reiterated that the District was an example of success in respect of the CSP.

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The Committee discussed the use of electronic speed boards and facilities for young people to help reduce Anti-Social Behaviour.

The Community Safety Officer stated that for all projects, like new play areas, deterring Anti-Social Behaviour was considered as part of the design process.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Officers left the meeting.

A Member noted that whilst he realised it was not practical for the CSP to engage with all parish councils individually, he queried if a single representative could be allocated to attend any/all meetings to inform councillors of the data every quarter. The Community Safety Officer confirmed that the CSP Strategic Group had appointed a parish council representative, but they had not yet started in post. Once in post, all parish councils would be contacted and advised.

In response to a question regarding fly tipping, the Community Safety and Enforcement Manager confirmed that any impact from changes at recycling centres would be monitored.

Moved by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Carol Wood
RESOLVED that the report and presentation be noted.

CLI48-23/24 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

CLI49-23/24 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE BOLSOVER COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP EXEMPT PARAGRAPHS 1, 2, & 7

The Community Safety Officer highlighted the Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime comparison data sets. The reason the data was exempt was due to the request for information at District and individual Ward level and the specific crimes being reported; access to this information could be used to identify individuals.

Shoplifting, Motor Vehicle Theft and Arson had increased exponentially, and the Community Safety Officer noted there had also been increases in Stalking and Harassment, Rape, and Other Sexual Offences.

In answer to a question on the lack of online/digital fraud in the figures, Sergeant Whyte explained that some crimes would be classified under something else. The Community Safety Officer added there were other departments for reporting online/digital crime like Action Fraud.

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A number of Members were concerned by the Possession of Weapons Offences statistics, and the Community Safety Officer spoke about Operation Sceptre, an early intervention, education, and enforcement initiative to combat knife crime. Sergeant Whyte added that “zombie knives” (a bladed weapon often with one serrated edge, which nationally had been increasingly linked to violent crimes and gang use) was now banned in private properties and so individuals could be charged if the offending article were found when these were searched.

Regarding the increase in reporting of Domestic Abuse offences, the Community and Safety Officer highlighted that victims were coming forward more quickly than in previous years and there was a need to ensure victims had the confidence that they would be supported throughout the entire process.

The document detailed the increases in high-risk referrals of Domestic Violence and in which areas they were being reported from. Case studies from each area were also provided.

The work of the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) was detailed to the Committee and the levels of support available to victims of Domestic Abuse, including the long lasting effects on child development, with the statistic that 90% of children were in the same or adjacent room where an incident of Domestic Abuse was occurring. The Committee went on to discuss the work of the Domestic Violence Officer.

The Chair noted that Gender Violence and Abuse (GVA) was increasing nationally and asked what else the Council could do. The Assistant Director of Housing Management and Enforcement talked about the statutory duties to provide secure accommodation for those fleeing Domestic Abuse. The Community Safety Officer added that local knowledge was vital to protect those entering the District from other local authority areas and why the funding of doorbell cameras had been vital in identifying further offences.

Councillor Anne Clarke left the meeting.

The Community Safety and Enforcement Manager provided Committee with information on the role of the Ranger and Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

The Rangers were part of the Enforcement Team, formerly known as the Community Action Network, and had new vehicles provided to dissuade and prevent crime. Patrols were undertaken with different roles each shift. During the day, the Rangers would focus on housing and tenancy management issues and Anti-Social Behaviour, while in the evening they would patrol, record CCTV, handle any further cases of Anti-Social Behaviour and respond to emergency housing issues (e.g., leaks).

In 2023, there had been 7,661 Ranger Reports made in the following categories: Housing; Anti-Social Behaviour; Environmental; Safe and Secure; and Other (which also covered issues like parking).

The Community Safety and Enforcement Manager noted that Anti-Social Behaviour could mean different things to different people. Car cruising was an issue, but so too was drug crime, criminal damage, or making others feel uncomfortable. Criminal Behaviour Orders, formerly known as Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO) currently stood at none, along with Civil Injunctions.

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The Community Safety and Enforcement Manager detailed the use of Criminal Behaviour Orders, Community Protection Warnings and Community Protection Notices.

There had been a drastic increase in dangerous/nuisance driving in the District. This was due to the proximity of the M1 motorway, but further to issuing Fixed Penalty Notices to both drivers and spectators, the District was now seeing a reduction of this crime while other local authorities were seeing an increase. The Community Safety and Enforcement Manager reiterated the importance of camera investment and CCTV collection to issue these fines.

The Committee were provided with an example of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team's work in relation to a Premises Closure.

A Member thanked the police for their work and engagement with the CSP. He had also been made aware of abuse aimed at the Rangers, but that the police had been available to provide support.

The Chair thanked the police representatives present and CSP Officers for their reports and presentations.

Moved by Councillor Robert Hiney-Saunders and seconded by Councillor Carol Wood
RESOLVED that the report and presentations be noted.

CLI50-23/24 REVIEW WORK

The formal part of the meeting concluded at 12:16 hours and Members then met as a working party to continue their review work. The informal meeting closed at 12:56 hours.