

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
8TH AUGUST 2018

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Miah)
The Vice Chair (Councillor Parsons)
Councillors Bebbington, Capleton, Fryer, K. Harris
and Seaton

Councillor Taylor (Cabinet Lead Member for
Communities, Safety and Wellbeing)

Chief Executive
Head of Neighbourhood Services
Community Safety Manager
Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer
Democratic Services Officer (LS)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Ranson

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. He also advised that, under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

10. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

11. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

The following disclosure was made:

Councillor Bebbington – following discussion at this meeting, under Item 6 on the agenda, of a possible scrutiny panel to consider impact of the planned Waste Incinerator near Junction 23 of the M1 motorway, a personal interest as a member of the liaison committee relating to that incinerator.

12. DECLARATIONS - THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations were made.

13. QUESTIONS UNDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROCEDURE 11.16

No questions had been submitted.

14. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY GROUPS AND PANELS

Considered a report of the Head of Strategic Support to enable the Board to agree the Scrutiny Work Programme, including considering requests from other scrutiny bodies and updates on the delivery of the Work Programme, and identify Key Decisions on which scrutiny could be undertaken, also to consider whether scrutiny of any procurement activity should be programmed (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Chief Executive assisted with consideration of the report.

RESOLVED

1. that, following a request made by the Policy Scrutiny Group at its meeting on 10th July 2018 (Minute 10.4) that scrutiny of the Lightbulb Service Implementation be allocated to a different scrutiny body, scrutiny of the matter be allocated to the Performance Scrutiny Panel;
2. that, following the Board's decision at its last meeting that Councillor Bebbington draft a proposed scrutiny scope document for a scrutiny panel to consider the risks to all parties associated with the implementation of Universal Credit and how those risks might be minimised (Minute 8.2, Scrutiny Management Board 13th June 2018), it be noted that Councillor Bebbington met with relevant officers and concluded that a scrutiny panel was not needed;
3. that forthcoming Executive Key Decisions or decisions to be taken in private by the Executive, set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and scheduled scrutiny of those matters, be noted, and that items be added to the Scrutiny Work Programme as follows:
 - Capital Plan Outturn 2018/19 (Overview Scrutiny Group, June 2019);
 - General Fund and HRA Revenue Outturn 2018/19 and Carry Forward of Budgets (Overview Scrutiny Group, June 2019);
 - Future Options for the Provision of Revenues and Benefits Services (Overview Scrutiny Group, 15th October 2018);
4. that the Annual Procurement Plan (and Quarterly Updates), set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be noted;
5. that Councillor Parsons, with the assistance of the Democratic Services Manager, drafts a proposed scrutiny scope document for a scrutiny panel to consider the likely impacts of the planned Waste Incinerator near Junction 23 of the M1 motorway, aimed at adding value in that respect, particularly for local communities, with a view to consideration of that proposed scope at the next meeting of the Board (24th October 2018);
6. that the Scrutiny Work Programme, set out in Appendix 3 to the report, be noted and updated in accordance with the decisions taken above and at this meeting.

Reasons

1. The Policy Scrutiny Group already had a number of items scheduled for its September 2018 meeting and had considered that, while the matter should be scrutinised, it did not fit within its remit. Having considered the matter, the Board decided that the matter related to performance scrutiny and was therefore within the remit of the Performance Scrutiny Panel. The Board also noted that a report on the matter was scheduled to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting in October 2018 and that it might be necessary to ask for that consideration to be deferred, to enable the Panel to look at the matter first.
2. Having discussed the matter with officers, Councillor Bebbington had noted that implementation of Universal Credit was much closer than he had thought and he was of the view that officers had already done a sterling job in preparing for that implementation. He concluded that the only action necessary was warning councillors about some of the problems they may be faced with.
3. To ensure timely and effective scrutiny.
4. The Board had decided to consider the Annual Procurement Plan and Quarterly Updates (submitted to Cabinet) to ensure that timely and effective scrutiny of any procurement activity is programmed or to ensure that the Cabinet is informed of any views of the Board on procurement matters.
5. The Board agreed the issue as potentially suitable for consideration by a scrutiny panel and wished for that to be investigated further before deciding whether or not to establish such a panel. The Board noted that it was important that the scope document considered scrutiny already being undertaken (there was an established liaison committee in respect of the matter) to avoid duplication, took a balanced approach so as not to cause undue concern, and included a proposal to consider experience of incinerators elsewhere.
6. To ensure that the information contained within the Work Programme is up to date.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Considered a report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services providing a review of the work of the Community Safety Partnership so that the statutory responsibility to scrutinise the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), at least every six months, was undertaken and to ensure the continued monitoring of incidences of crime in Charnwood and the identification of issues requiring further scrutiny (if any) (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Cabinet Lead Member for Communities, Safety and Wellbeing and Chair of the CSP, the Head of Neighbourhood Services, the Community Safety Manager and Sergeant Latham assisted with the consideration of the report.

The following provides a brief summary of the Board's scrutiny of this matter, including responses given to questions:

- (i) The role of retailers in helping to reduce shoplifting was discussed, together with the position taken by some of those retailers, the measures that could be taken to reduce incidences, the guidance the Police provided to retailers, the work the Police were undertaking in respect of prolific shoplifters, and the range of penalties for shoplifting and how those were decided.
- (ii) Figures set out in the report did not always appear to be consistent with those presented previously, examples of which were given.
- (iii) Concern was expressed regarding the increase seen in burglaries over the period. It was noted that only a few additional burglaries could result in the percentage figures showing a significant increase and that, for example, the release from prison of a single individual could significantly affect matters.
- (iv) It was important that fear of crime was not fuelled by the way crime and work to reduce it was discussed and reported.
- (v) The position with Police resourcing of beats was explained.
- (vi) Individuals could assist in preventing some crimes, examples of which were given. The local knowledge of councillors was also helpful.
- (vii) Some factors affecting crime levels were outside of the control of the Council and the CSP and were matters for the Government to address. The CSP was restricted by the resources it had available and could only work to make most effective use of those.
- (viii) It was very difficult to assess what impact the activities being undertaken by the CSP were having on crime, in particular what was effective and what wasn't. Officers tried to illustrate that in the report as far as was possible. Explanation was provided of the ever-changing position with crime, in particular in relation to individual repeat offenders and how as one received a prison sentence, another was released, and the effect that had on the level of different crimes. A targeted approach was being taken, based on individuals causing the most harm, examples of which were given, and on key issues impacting crime levels, such as drug misuse, knife crime and vulnerable adults and youths. The focus was continually assessed and changed as required.
- (ix) As detailed in the report, Charnwood CSP was the best performing CSP in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland in 2017/18, recording a 12.6% all crime increase (against a 23% all crime average increase). It was suggested that crime levels would be much worse without the effective, targeted work being undertaken by the CSP.
- (x) Reference was made to the value of a collective approach to making use of all tools available to partners, an example being civil injunctions. Also, to the increase in crime figures caused by successful activity to target and reduce it, such as finding knives as a result of searches.
- (xi) The position in respect of anti-social behaviour caused by youths who gathered in Loughborough town centre was discussed, including the approach being undertaken to address that, whether that was sufficient and having an effect based on conflicting reports, and that those youths also travelled to other locations.

RESOLVED

1. that the report be noted;

2. that future reports to the Board are based on the position at a single point in time, if possible.

Reasons

1. To acknowledge the work undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership and to ensure that the statutory responsibility to scrutinise the Partnership is met.
2. The Board acknowledged that those providing information for the report were trying to provide information that was as up to date as possible. However, focusing on the position at a single point in time would provide a more consistent and user-friendly report for its purposes.

16. CORPORATE PLAN - ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

Considered a report of the Chief Executive presenting the annual performance information for 2017/18 which evaluated how effectively the Council had delivered the themes set out in the Corporate Plan 2016/20 (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer assisted with consideration of the report.

The following provides a brief summary of the Board's scrutiny of this matter, including responses given to questions:

- (i) The later part of the report included commentary on what had been achieved up to Quarter 4 and, where appropriate, mitigating action at that stage or actions planned to improve performance moving forward (which would be included in the 2018/19 Business Plan).
- (ii) Where targets had not been met was clearly indicated in grey in the infographic section of the report, which was helpful and accommodated previous feedback from the Board.
- (iii) Reference was made to the importance of customer satisfaction with the web service received, in particular working towards improving that performance and considering the set target on a regular basis.
- (iv) Performance in respect of reducing dog fouling was briefly discussed, in particular how that was assessed (set out on page 13 of the report) and whether the public might believe such data. Inclusion of the wording "in targeted patrolled areas" (or similar) against the statistic on page 3 of the report would be useful.
- (iv) It was confirmed that the 3,509 attendances stated on page 6 of the report related to 3 older people's sports and physical activity programmes (rather than 3 events). Amending the way this was worded in the report might make that clearer.

RESOLVED

1. that the report be noted;

2. that the comments made by the Board be taken back by the Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer and conveyed to the relevant service areas as appropriate.

Reasons

1. To acknowledge the Council's progress in delivering the themes set out in its Corporate Plan in 2017/18.
2. To ensure that those comments are taken into account in future reports.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on XXXX unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on the fifth working day following publication of these minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board.