

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2014 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Luckley (Chairman) Councillors Ellis, Mrs Prest,
Miss Sherriff, Scarborough, Mrs Stevenson, Mrs Vasey and Wilson

ALSO

PRESENT: Mr Barker, Secretary of the Carlisle and Rural Tenants Federation
Councillor Mrs Riddle, Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder
Councillor Mrs Mallinson, Lead Member on the Hate Crime Task and
Finish Group
Councillor Whalen, Observer
Councillor J Mallinson, Observer
Councillor Allison, Observer

OFFICERS: Policy and Communication Manager
Contracts and Community Services Manager
Communities Development Officer
Deputy Chief Executive (from 10.55am)
Overview and Scrutiny Officer

COSP.17/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Ms Quilter, Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder.

COSP.18/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs Luckley declared a registrable interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of Agenda Item A2 – Questions by Members of the Public. The interest related to the fact that she was a City Council representative on the Divisional Board of Riverside Cumbria.

Councillor Mrs Luckley declared a registrable interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of Agenda Item A.4 – Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Partnership Annual Plan 2014-15. The interest related to the fact that she was a Member of the Cumbria Gateway Board.

Councillor Mrs Mallinson declared a registrable interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of Agenda Item A2 – Questions by Members of the Public. The interest related to the fact that she was a co-opted Member on the Divisional Board of Riverside Cumbria

COSP.19/14 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – 1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2014 be agreed as a correct record of the meetings and signed by the Chairman.

2) That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 February 2014 be noted.

COSP.20/14 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

There were no matters which had been the subject of call in.

COSP.21/14 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman welcomed Mr Barker, Secretary of the Carlisle and Rural Tenants' Federation to the meeting.

Riverside Carlisle

Pursuant to Procedure Rule 10.1, the Director of Governance reported the receipt of the following questions to the Chairman which had been submitted on notice by Mr Barker, Secretary of the Carlisle and Rural Tenants' Federation:

“Concerns have been raised that Riverside tenants' interests are not sufficiently protected and catered for. Could the Panel ensure that this is an issue that is raised with Riverside representatives when they next meet with Members for their bi-annual scrutiny?”

The Chairman answered Mr Barker's question as follows:

“The Panel will next consider an update from Riverside in July 2014. The Panel will ask Riverside to include information in their report on how tenants are represented.”

The Chairman gave Mr Barker the opportunity to ask a supplementary question.

Mr Barker did not have any further questions.

The Chairman thanked Mr Barker for his question.

COSP.22/14 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.07/14 which provided an overview of matters relating to the work of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel and included the latest version of the work programme and Key Decisions of the Executive which related to the Panel.

- The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported that the Notice of Key Executive Decisions, published on 7 March 2014, included the following items which fell within the remit of this Panel.

KD.02/14 – Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Partnership Annual Plan 2014/15 – the item was on the agenda for consideration later in the meeting.

KD.04/14 – Playing Pitch Strategy – the strategy would be available for consideration at the meeting of the Panel on 19 June 2014.

KD.08/14 – Changes to the Landlord Accreditation Scheme in Carlisle – the Executive will be asked to consider the closure of the existing Council Landlord Accreditation Scheme and approve the recommendation to a transfer to a Cumbria wide partnership with the National Landlords Association at their meeting on 7 April 2014.

- The following minute excerpts were submitted from the meeting of the Executive held on 15 January 2014.

EX.24/14 – Carlisle and Eden CSP Annual Plan 2014/15

EX.28/14 – Riverside Carlisle

A Member asked if Riverside had responded to the Council with regard to the Choice Based Letting Scheme. The Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder advised that there had not yet been a response but she would follow up the matter.

- The Annual Scrutiny Report 2013/14 was appended to the report. Panel Members raised the following points on the draft which was being considered by all three Overview and Scrutiny Panels prior to formal approval by the Scrutiny Chairs Group at their meeting on 17 April 2014:
 - That 'Training for Scrutiny Members' included training on scrutiny and performance, making the scrutiny process non political, working collaboratively together and scrutinising financial budgets.
 - Discussions regarding the Work Programme would take place between the Overview and Scrutiny Officer, the relevant Portfolios Holders and relevant Officers to identify matters for consideration in the next municipal year. The draft Work Programme would be discussed and finalised at the first Scrutiny meeting in the new municipal year.
 - The Panel wanted to include the following issues
 - Health including children's health and wellbeing
 - Housing issues
 - Food City which would feed into healthy eating issues
 - Community Neighbours Scheme

The Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder informed the Panel that she valued the robustness of the questions from Scrutiny and she believed they added value to Executive decisions. She thanked the Panel for the courtesy extended to her and was happy to attend the meetings and answer questions.

RESOLVED – 1) That, subject to the issues raised above, the Overview Report incorporating the Work Programme and Notice of Executive Decisions items relevant to this Panel be noted.

2) That the additions set out above be included in the Annual Scrutiny Report before its consideration by the Scrutiny Chairs Group.

COSP.23/14 HATE CRIME TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer submitted report OS.08/14 which included the final report of the Hate Crime Task and Finish Group.

The Lead Member of the Hate Crime Task and Finish Group reminded the Panel of the background to the Task and Finish Group and the importance of raising the awareness of what Hate Crimes are and how they could be reported. She felt that the Task Group had given great consideration to what they wanted from the Group and witnesses were very honest about the subject.

The Group wanted to ensure that the right protocols were in place and that they were up to date and relevant to ensure the Council had completed policies on Equality and Diversity and Hate Crime.

The Lead Member reminded Members that Hate Crime covered a wide variety of crimes in local communities and the profile of Hate Crimes needed to be raised.

She summarised the reasons for each of the Task and Finish Group's recommendations as set out in the report:

Recommendation 1

It was essential that the City Council worked in partnership, Cumbria Constabulary had carried out a review of the hate incident reporting scheme which they would re-launch in the near future.

Recommendation 2

Carlisle City Council had been the only District Council not to attend a Cumbria Multi Agency event in March 2013. The Task Group felt that this sent out the wrong message.

The Contracts and Community Services Manager informed the Panel that Hate Crime had been included as a priority for the Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Partnership for 2014/15. He added that the City Council always had an indirect representative at Multi Agency events, however, moving forward the Council would have a direct representative.

Recommendation 3

The Task Group asked the Portfolio Holder to take this recommendation forward.

Recommendation 4

The Task Group were aware that training could not be made mandatory but they wanted to encourage more Members and staff to attend training. They wanted to ensure that the Senior Management Team understood that there was a problem and that refresher training should be made available.

Councillor J Mallinson, Leader of the Opposition, suggested that the Panel change the wording in recommendation 4. He felt that Group Leaders would not be able to ensure all Member attended training and that encourage would be a more achievable and realistic term.

Recommendation 5

It was felt that the Informal Council sessions were an ideal opportunity to brief Members on Hate Crime issues.

Recommendation 6

Cyber bullying had not been in the initial remit of the Task Group but it had emerged as a real issue for young people and it was vital that the authority knew how to deal with it.

The Policy and Communications Manager explained that it would be very difficult for the authority to maintain separate policies for each of the emerging media tools. The Council had a staff Code of Conduct, a Members Code of Conduct, a Dignity and Respect Policy and disciplinary policies which were robust as long as people were aware that they would be used to deal with cyber bullying. In response to a question the Policy and Communications Manager advised that if the cyber bullying was carried out anonymously then those experiencing the bullying would be directed to the service provider to identify the bully.

Members highlighted the low turn out by Members for training and asked how this could be addressed. The Policy and Communications Manager reminded the Panel of the Council's E-Learning Modules which staff and Members could access whenever was suitable for them.

The Chairman had raised the issue of Hate Crime at full Council and had asked the Portfolio Holder how Carlisle City Council events could be used to promote Hate Crime reporting.

The Communities and Housing Portfolio Holder responded that the matter fell within the Culture, Health, Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder's remit. She had attended the Violent Crime Task Group meeting in which Hate Crime had been discussed. The City Council had been congratulated on the speed in which offensive graffiti was removed once reported. She felt that the key issue for the Council was to raise awareness so that the incidents were reported.

She stressed the personal responsibility that each Member had to raise awareness, the Council had a part to play but ultimately the responsibility lay with each Member.

A Member highlighted 6.10 of the report and asked if there would be costs involved in reintroducing in house training. The Policy and Communications Manager responded that discussions were being undertaken with other District Councils and the County Council to find the most efficient way of providing joint training to all authorities.

RESOLVED: That the Panel endorse the recommendations of the Hate Crime Task and Finish Group as set out in report OS18/14 with the following amendment:

Recommendation 4 – change 'ensure' to 'encourage'

and refer it to the Executive for a formal response to the recommendations.

COSP.24/14 CARLISLE AND EDEN COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PLAN 2014-15

The Contracts and Community Services Manager submitted report SD.03/14 presenting the Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Annual Plan for 2014/15. The Plan had been developed by the CSP's Leadership Group with input from the City Council Officers and the communities and Housing Portfolio Holder. The Plan was drafted using data from the Community Safety Strategic Assessment and Strategic Assessment.

The Contracts and Community Services Manager gave an overview of the Strategic Assessment which the Panel had considered at their previous meeting.

The report presented the work of the CSP for the coming year in the form of their Partnership Plan. The Contracts and Community Services Manager explained that the document was a live working programme which would develop throughout the year and could be influenced and shaped through the City Council's representation on the CSP Leadership Group. Comments from the Panel would be offered to the Executive and subsequently full Council.

The Communities Development Officer reiterated that the Plan was a broad overview and that Anti Social Behaviour continued to be the top priority. She gave an overview of each of the priorities drawing particular attention to Hate Crime and the promotion of reporting methods.

In considering the Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Partnership Plan Members raised the following comments and questions:

- Would the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) continue funding the CSP?

The Communities Development Officer explained that the PCC would hold the funding and the CSP would have to bid for funding for projects. It was understood that long term projects such as Best Bar None would continue to be funded and other projects would require the submission of a bid.

- Were the priorities of the CSP in line with the PCC priorities?

The Contracts and Community Services Manager confirmed that the priorities of both were aligned to secure funding opportunities.

- Would the CSP be working with the Cumbria Gateway project to reduce re-offending?

The CSP would work closely with the Integrated Offender Management Scheme to reduce re-offending.

- A Member asked for more details with regard to the Carlisle and Eden Leadership Group, the CSP Task Group and the Problem Solving Groups.

The Contracts and Community Services Manager responded that the Carlisle and Eden Leadership Group dealt with strategic matters, the Task Group managed district wide projects and Problem Solving Groups addressed emerging issues on the ground before they escalated.

Members supported the work being carried out by the Problem Solving Groups and asked that details of the Groups and their meetings be circulated to all Members to encourage their participation and the opportunity to report issues.

RESOLVED: 1) That report SD.03/14 – Carlisle and Eden Community Safety Partnership Annual Plan 2014-15 – be noted.

2) That details of the Problem Solving Groups and their meeting dates be circulated to all Members of the City Council.

COSP.25/14 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman thanked all Members of the Panel, the Overview and Scrutiny Officer and Committee Clerk for their attendance and contribution over the year

(The meeting ended at 11.06am)