

Minutes of: PARTNER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 8th September 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Kenyon (Chair)
Councillors Fletcher, Gill (substituting for McInnes),
Kempson, Knowles, Roberts and Shipley

IN ATTENDANCE: Inspector Paul Leigh, Lancashire Constabulary
Mark Hutton, Community Protection Manager,
Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
Councillor Alyson Barnes, Leader of the Council
Councillor Sandiford
Pat Couch, Scrutiny Support Officer

3 Members of the public

NB: In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair, Councillor Kenyon Chaired the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor McInnes and Chief Superintendent Bithell.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th June 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items for discussion.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair agreed to deviate from the Procedure for Public Speaking and allow members of the public to ask questions as the reports were discussed.

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair informed Members that Headstart were due to attend the meeting to give a presentation, but unfortunately as a result of their

senior management team moving on and taking up more urgent commitments, the organisation has folded.

Also, North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) were due to attend but due to staff being unavailable they would be attending the next meeting in November. The Scrutiny Support Officer had circulated the NWAS Good2Great 5 year Business Plan for Members to look at before the next meeting.

7. CRIME STATISTICS – LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY

The Chair introduced Inspector Paul Leigh to the meeting to present crime statistics for April – August 2014 compared to the same period in 2013 as follows:

- All crime categories saw 1483 in 2013 and 1425 in 2014 – reduction of 3.9%
- There were 2 less robberies with 8 recorded for 2014 and 10 for 2013 – reduction of 2%
- There were 230 burglaries in 2014 with red to 232 in 2013 – reduction of almost 0.9%
- Criminal damage there were 260 reported in 2014 and 303 in 2013 – reduction of 14.2%
- There was a slight increase in violent crime with 326 compared to 299 in 2013 – increase of 9%
- There was a rise in domestic assault, 91 compared to 69 in 2013 – increase of 22%
- There was also a rise in domestic abuse with 137 in 2014 compared with 118 in 2013 – increase of 16.1%
- ASB had significantly reduced with 1272 in 2014 compared to 1583 in 2013 – down 19.6% on last year.

Recording of crime had to comply with the National Crime Recording Standards.

Concern had previously been made by Members in relation to the new 'signing on' at Burnley which the Committee felt would impact on response times.

Inspector Leigh provided the following information on response times as follows.

- Grade 1 incidents, arrival within 15 minutes - average response times were better at 11 minutes
- Grade 2 incidents, arrival within 60 minutes – average response times were better at 41 minutes

When asked about the response times since the new 'signing on' at Burnley, apparently there had been a slight slippage initially. However,

this had been replicated across the other areas in East Lancashire as part of the change in operating models.

Concern was again raised about what effect the winter months could have on future response times. Inspector Leigh indicated that they had maintained a 4x4 vehicle in Waterfoot.

When concern was raised by Members they asked whether video conferencing could be used at Waterfoot rather than Officers travelling to Burnley every day to be briefed. Whilst video linking conference facilities were available at all stations it was not used day to day as it was felt that face to face briefings were more suitable with the welfare needs of officers also being taken into account.

Inspector Leigh provided detailed explanation of the different shift patterns for Officers, with officers having a one hour shift pattern overlap.

Members raised concern about the 101 service and Inspector Leigh highlighted the fact that this was an issue raised by neighbourhood forums.

101 call centres had reduced from 6 to 1, which is based in Preston. Inspector Leigh informed Members that improvements are starting to be made with permanent trained staff now in place.

In terms of calls to the service, these had dropped dramatically with 1,000 (10%) less calls in the first five months of this year.

Inspector Leigh agreed to feedback the concerns of Members to the call-centre manager.

Inspector Leigh indicated that they had to make £75m of savings and therefore there had been significant cuts to the service, losing over 1,000 staff. There would be further savings of £25m to be made over the next four years and in 2015 they would lose more officers. This could impact on crime and the ability to target prolific offenders.

There had been similar cutback with plain clothed officers. There has also been over 500 roles lost from police staff roles.

RESOLVED:

That Chair thanked Inspector Leigh for his presentation.

8. LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (LFRS)

The Chair introduced Mark Hutton, Community Protection Manager for Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale, who presented the Lancashire Fire and Rescue 2014 Performance Report and Action Plan.

Like all public services, Lancashire Fire & Rescue has had to make significant savings. In the past 12 months they have made £2.6m savings from administration and back officer functions. They have also seen delivery of the combined North West Fire Control facility and 2 Private Finance Initiative funded community fire stations in Burnley and Chorley.

In broad terms, funding for the service comes half from Central Government and half from Council Tax/Business Rates. Central Government funding has been cut by 25% and Council tax precepts have been frozen for a fourth year.

In the past 12 months changes had been made to shift patterns at a number of stations to reduce costs without impacting on speed of response or community safety activity. Locally Nelson had moved to this approach and instead of having 28 staff working 4 shift patterns the station now has 14 staff working a self-rostering system called Day Crewing Plus which provided identical community safety and speed of response. This shift system is already in place at Rossendale.

Further savings were made by disestablishing the 2nd fire appliance at Padiham fire station. Padiham is staffed by retained officers who live and work (for other employers) within 5 minutes of the station and respond to emergencies when needed using an alerter system. The appliance was disestablished due to difficulties maintaining availability of two fire appliances as the 'on-call' nature of the duty system depends on availability of suitable staff within the local community.

Hyndburn station had moved from 3 fire appliances (2 wholetime and one retained) to 2 (1 wholetime and 1 retained), saving £1m per year, with low impact on overall service levels.

Mark provided detailed information on the 2013/14 key performance indicators which were stretch targets with explanations for those that had under achieved. Mark then explained the new Key Performance Indicators which focussed more on the 'outcome' of fires rather than just the number. This reflected the reality that not all fires could be prevented but the presence of working smoke alarms, coupled to good fire safety education, increased the likelihood that fires would be detected early and all occupiers would then be able to escape without injury.

With regard to call centres, previously there were 4 based in Greater Manchester, Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire. There is now one North West Control Centre based in Warrington. This move has saved around £1m.

New GPS systems in fire appliances track their location to enable a quicker response to an incident. Also, when a call comes in the fire control operator can see where the call comes from and the phone

number of the caller. This is a significant improvement, as previously the operator had to rely on the caller telling them where they were.

Within Rossendale there are the following stations.

- Haslingden has 1 retained pump
- Bacup has 1 wholetime pump and 1 retained pump
- Rawtenstall has 1 whole time pump and 1 retained pump

Within their Community Safety Strategy 2014-17 it outlines their ambitions and commitment to reducing risk across four priority areas:

- Home safety
- Business safety
- Road safety
- Working with young people:-

Start Safe will focus on children 2-6 year old with services to educate, support and protect them so that they are able to start their lives safely.

Live Safe will focus on young people and adults so that they are able to live their lives safely at home, at work or in the wider community.

Age Safe will focus on providing adults with services which will help them inform, support and protect them so that they are able to age safely based around social care.

Haslingden Fire Station has recently launched a new Prince's Trust Team programme in partnership with Accrington and Rossendale College.

The programme offers opportunities for young people to make a real difference in their local community and create great futures for them.

The programme is delivered three times a year with 16 young people aged 16-25 years old on each 12 week course and alternates between Hyndburn and Haslingden.

The service has undertaken between 40k and 50k home fires safety checks (HFSC) in Lancashire per year for the past 10 years. Over that period this approach has reduced casualties to a fifth of their previous levels. The Service has always targeted resources at risk however in future the overall number of HFSC will reduce but the service will increasingly focus on 'at risk groups' ie single parents or 65+ living alone, and asking crews to look at 'high risk' and 'very high risk' households.

A number of questions were asked throughout the presentation which Mark responded to. Mark invited all attendees to consider the consultation further and respond via the LFRS website.

RESOLVED: That Mark Hutton be thanked for his informative presentation.

9. TASK AND FINISH GROUP UPDATE

The Scrutiny Support Officer provided an update for Members on Task and Finish Group work being undertaken at the present time.

a)Rogue Landlords – The group had its final meeting of Phase 1 piece of work on 2nd September and an interim report would be presented to Cabinet in October asking for a response to be received to take to the first meeting of Phase 2 on 8th December 2014.

b) Green Vale Homes – The group would commence its work on 11th September.

c) Land and Property Transactions - This work would commence in October/November and the Scrutiny Support Officer asked for anyone interested in being on this group to contact her.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 9pm

Signed
(Chair)

Date.....