

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS

Minutes of the meeting of the **JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the Mead Room (Rose) - Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Wednesday, 8 January 2020

PRESENT:

Councillors:	James Caston	Siân Dawson
	Kathryn Grandon	Lavinia Hadingham
	Alastair McCraw (Co-Chair)	Mary McLaren
	Andrew Mellen	David Muller
	Adrian Osborne	Keith Scarff
	Keith Welham (Co-Chair)	

In attendance:

Councillors:	Gerard Brewster
	Derek Davis
	Sarah Mansel
	Suzie Morley
Officers:	Assistant Director – Planning and Communities (TB)
	Community Safety Professional Lead - Communities (FJ)
	Service Improvement Advisor (Sustainable Communities) (DC)
	Corporate Manger – Democratic Service (JR)
	Senior Governance Officer (HH)

Apologies:

Councillor	Jane Gould
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1 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

1.1 There were no declarations of interests.

2 TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME

2.1 There were no declarations made by Councillors.

3 QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

3.1 There were no questions by the public received.

4 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

4.1 There were no questions by Councillors received.

5 JOS/19/20 WESTERN SUFFOLK COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (WSCSP)

5.1 The Chair welcome the Witness to the committee and asked they introduced themselves:

Cllr Joanna Spicer	Chair of Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Suffolk County Councillor
Paul Goodman	Group Commander for Prevention and Detection – Suffolk Fire
Clair Harvey	Community Safety Lead - Localities & Partnerships Team Health, Wellbeing & Children's Services Suffolk County Council
Emma Gaskell	Senior Primary Care Manager NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group
Kim Warner	Western Area Commander – Police Vice-Chair of WSCSP
Lois Wreathall	Head of Primary Care NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group

5.2 Councillor Sarah Mansel, the Mid Suffolk District Council's representative on Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP), introduced the report. She detailed the aims of the partnership and the priority areas for as outlined in paragraph 5 in the report.

5.3 She said there was much to be done and that these issues were complex and far reaching and asked that Members focused their questions to areas, which were within the partnerships' remit. If Members had any further questions or individual cases, they would like to discuss then Franstine Jones, the new Community Safety Professional Lead for Communities, would be happy to assist after the meeting.

5.4 The Chair asked each witness to make a short statement of their work and how this related to the WSCSP.

5.5 Councillor Joanna Spicer began her statement by emphasising that the WSCSP covered all the western region of Suffolk and including three Districts Council and Ipswich Borough Council. There were also representatives from the police, fire services, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), probations and rehabilitation services. The WSCSP was a partnership and members were required to actively contribute to work undertaken. However the partnership was also for Members to be encouraged and enabled. The membership had been increased in the past year to include other organisations other than the statutory members.

- 5.6 Councillor Spicer outlined the work and programmes undertaken by the WSCSP including issues around social housing. Lee Crowdell – Tenants Services Corporate Manager had contributed to this area. Work programmes for schools and education had focussed on County Lines and gangs. West Suffolk College, secondary schools and the Pupil Referral Units now had representatives on the WSCSP.
- 5.7 The WSCSP would welcome feed-back from Members at the Committee regarding issues in their wards as the WSCSP were in the process of producing the tactical plan for WSCSP for the next five years.
- 5.8 Domestic Homicide Investigations (DHR) was being carried out by the WSCSP as part of its statutory role. She informed Members that in the past three years, these had been in the Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council.
- 5.9 Paul Goodman, Group Commander for Prevention and Detection – Suffolk Fire, outlined the usefulness of the fire services being involved with the WSCSP. As part of the Suffolk Information Partnership and the WSCSP information was shared and used with in the Service. Upskilled and frontline staff resources were useful the WSCSP Work programme and The Fire and Prevent Service supported the police in areas such as County Lines. The Fire Services, through the work of the fire liaison officers also referred cases through the WSCSP regarding issues in schools such a County lines and radicalisation. Resources were also shared between the services. Fire Officers received extensive training in not just protection and prevention of issues, but also on how to spot signs of domestic violence and drug abuse in the community. Officers would report back to other services if necessary.
- 5.10 In a response to Councillor Morley’s question regarding victims of domestic abuse, Group Commander Goodman explained how the Fire Service used to fit locks on letter boxes as part of a target hardening programme. Recent funding had now enabled this service to be outsourced to free up officers time.
- 5.11 The Chair advised Members that these issues was addressed in report JOS/19/22 Target Hardening for High Risk Victims of Domestic Abuse included in the Agenda.
- 5.12 Emma Gaskell, Senior Primary Care Manager for CCG explained the role of the NHS contribution to the WSCSP in relation to health, domestic abuse and County Lines. The CCG fed recommendations from such case back to GPs, A& E, hospitals and other services.
- 5.13 Educational lectures were provided to GPs regarding safeguarding issues, domestic abuse and County Lines. The CCG had collaborated on recommendations for the DHR and shared any information with the relevant organisations. The CCG provided a different aspect for community safety in particular for primary care and could provide a cohesive picture of issues by gathering information from across the NHS and feed this back to the relevant organisations.

- 5.14 Councillor McCraw thought that the NHS must be one of the prime indicators of issues emerging and the Senior Primary Care Manager for CCG confirmed that this was the case, which had most recently been highlighted through the DHRs.
- 5.15 Clair Harvey, Community Safety Lead - Localities & Partnerships Team began by confirming that the five priorities had not changed, but that the Community Safety Partnership plans were under review. There had recently been an event at which partners and members had been invited to identify areas that the WSCSP should be working on in the Future. The WSCSP plan would be published on the 1st of April. She stated that County Lines remained a priority but that two further areas of priority were emerging. Recently a Violence Bill had been released from Government, which placed statutory responsibility on the WSCSP to tackle violence. The purpose of the bill was to address severe violence and included County Lines and drug induce violence. There had been no resources allocated by Government for this extra responsibility.
- 5.16 She stated that the role of the WSCSP was to make communities and residents aware of the issues relating to the five priorities. This was done by promoting community safety to residents across the areas and to prevent further development of the problems in the future
- 5.17 She made Members aware of two further emerging priorities; modern day slavery and anti-social behaviour, which would be added to the current five priority areas.
- 5.18 Councillor Grandon asked if Suffolk differed from other areas in relation to crime and violence. The Community Safety Lead responded that none of the issues were special for Suffolk.
- 5.19 Western Area Commander Warner added that Suffolk had a relative low crime rate, but that the WSCSP priorities reflected national trends and were not disproportional with any other similar areas.
- 5.20 Councillor Scarff referred to paragraph 14.3 and asked what the outcome was for the Non-policing Reporting Service.
- 5.21 The Community Safety Lead responded that the partners in the WSCSP had decided this was not the right service for Suffolk.
- 5.22 In response to Councillor McCraw's question, she clarified that the District and Borough Councils held the statutory responsibility for fulfilling the requirement for the Crime and Disorder act and that this Act was the principle area of work of the WSCSP.
- 5.23 Western Area Commander Kim Warner (Police) provided his statement to Members and outlined how the WSCSP had changed during the last five years, fundamentally due to the work the partnerships were delivering by

tackling meaningful topics. He emphasised that focus on the right issues were important and that County Lines remained a priority. However, there was no short-term solution to this problem. Currently County Lines had been involved 17 to 20 cases last year and it was anticipated this would remain the same this year but could increase. Since April last year 70 people had been arrested in connection with County Lines or other drug related serious incidents. A risk assessment of the work around County Lines had been conducted and indicated that the work of the police was having an effect.

- 5.24 The Police Service also had team in Schools, which worked with pupils and students to create awareness and conducted preventative work. The Crime Disruption Team had been very effective and worked with the Metropolitan Polices and other police forces across the country. He detailed how the police had various teams which conducted preventative measures for County Lines and how the Crime Disruption team had been effective,
- 5.25 He described how the Police Force had worked with Head Teachers to provide parent awareness sessions, which had been supported by the WSCSP.
- 5.26 He thought that the WSCSP was looking at the right areas and that currently nothing needed to change for the way the WSCSP were cooperating within the partnership.
- 5.27 Councillor Hadingham asked if there was a difference between the gangs in Ipswich compare to gangs in rural areas. She had experienced gang cultures in other countries and wondered if the gang culture in Suffolk was similar.
- 5.28 Western Area Commander Warner responded that some young people were anti-social but the gangs in Ipswich was not like the gangs Councillor Hadingham had experienced in abroad.
- 5.29 Councillor Spicer added that the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group allocated funding and support for work in relation to urban street gangs and County Lines around Ipswich.
- 5.30 Councillor Muller informed Members of his experience working with the Police and the SNT, which he found worked well.
- 5.31 Councillor Caston enquired how the police reached students when working in schools. Commander Warner responded that this was a challenge, but that the support of the Head Teachers, and that there was a growing acceptance in education that this was the way forward, had help . This was part of WSCSP tactical plan discussed earlier.
- 5.32 Councillor McCraw referred to the section regarding Violence against Women and Girls, Men and Boys and asked if domestic abuse was increasing.
- 5.33 Councillor Spicer responded that this was still a priority, however the rise in the number of cases reported were partly due to victims being more confident

in coming forward, as awareness of the issues were increasing.

- 5.34 Clair Harvey – Community Safety Lead, added that better reporting and positive attitude from the police had also allowed victims of domestic abuse to come forward.
- 5.35 Councillor Brewster asked how difficult it was to persecute partners who had conducted coercive abuse of their partners. Group Commander Warner explained it was often difficult to persecute in all domestic abuse cases but that other techniques were used to identify and persecute perpetrators.
- 5.36 Councillor Spicer added that the Committee had not discussed mental health issues but that the Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust were now represented on the WSCSP.
- 5.37 Emma Gaskell Senior Primary Care Manager NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group added that awareness of mental health issues was important in the primary health care sector and that information provided to GP had been part of the engagement with GPs. However, an absence of knowledge of what to do with this information once mental health issues or abuse has been established appeared to be an issue and a solution to this was important.
- 5.38 Councillor Caston informed Members that he had undertaken awareness training for these issues and that this training had been essential in his role as Community First Responder.
- 5.39 Councillor Davis, the Babergh representative on the WSCSP added that the WSCSP was very relevant to the Babergh and that the Council could not be complacent and that lessons learnt should be shared with the various groups working together in the WSCSP.
- 5.40 Councillor McCraw referred to Appendix 3 and asked if the 23-specialist satellite beds were for women and girls only, which was confirmed by officers.
- 5.41 He then enquired if there were any beds available for men and boys as victims for domestic abuse and officers responded that there were none in the County but that beds were available nationally.
- 5.42 The Chair enquired if the Member Information Pack or Contact Tool-kit produced last year as the recommendation of the Committee, had been updated. The Community Safety Professional Lead for Communities explained that the Information Pack would be re-designed and update in due course.
- 5.43 Councillor McCraw proposed that the Member Information Pack for Community Safety be updated and distributed to all Members.
- 5.44 Members and witnesses then debated how Members could assist in helping the work of WSCSP including:

- Member briefings;
- Members to consider how they could share the information available with the wider community;
- Raise awareness amongst Council employees;
- Use meetings and committees as a catalyst for awareness for both Counsellors and communities;
- Use social media for awareness campaigns;
- News releases to Parish Councils;
- Approach Suffolk Association of Local Council to assist with Parish Council for the above;
- Display poster on for community notice boards
- Members, who were involved with Community Safety, to share their training experiences with other Members.

5.45 Councillor Spicer suggested that an action working group be set up to work with the MOD in Wattisham for issues such as domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour.

5.46 Councillor Morley, on behalf of the Suffolk Public Leaders Group thanked for the work undertaken by WSCSP.

5.47 Councillor McCraw, the Chair, thanked the witnesses for attending the Committee and providing valuable information to Members.

5.48 The Chair reminded Members of the suggested recommendation, which was proposed by Councillor Hadingham and seconded by Councillor Muller.

By a unanimous vote

It was resolved: -

That the confidential member 'Contact tool kit' pack be updated and distributed to all Members as a Babergh and Mid Suffolk Confidential 'Contact Tool Kit'

6 JOS/19/21 TARGET HARDENING FOR HIGH RISK VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

6.1 The Chair advised Members that report JOS/19/21 had been detailed in the previous item.

7 JOS/19/22 TASK AND FINISH GROUP FOR CITIZENS ADVICE - TERM OF REFERENCE

7.1 The Chairs provided a background for JOS/19/22 Task and Finish Group for Citizens Advice – Terms of Reference and asked that Members approved the proposed Terms of Refence.

7.2 Councillor Hadingham proposed that the Terms of Reference be approved,

which was seconded by Councillor Muller.

By a unanimous vote

It was Resolved:

That the Task and Finish Group for Citizens Advice – Terms of Reference be approved.

8 TASK AND FINISH GROUP - CITIZENS ADVICE REPORT

- 8.1 The Chair clarified that this was not a report but the recommendations which would be presented to Babergh and Mid Suffolk Cabinets on the 13th and 16th of January 2020.
- 8.2 He explained the actions taken by the Task and Finish Group for Citizens Advice in relation to the draft report and the recommendations.
- 8.3 He proposed that the Committee approved that the Members of the Task and Finish Group completed the report and recommendations in time for the Report and Recommendations to be presented to both Cabinets.
- 8.4 Councillor Muller seconded the proposal.

By a unanimous vote

It was Resolved: -

That the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee approve that the Members of the Task and Finish Group completed the report and recommendations in time for the Report and Recommendations to be presented to both Cabinets in January 2020.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 4.01 pm.

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Chair