

At a Meeting of the **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kilworthy Park, Drake Road, **TAVISTOCK** on **TUESDAY** the 4<sup>th</sup> day of **JUNE 2013** at **2.00 pm**.

**Present:** Cllr M V L Ewings – Chairman

Cllr C Hall	Cllr L J G Hockridge
Cllr D M Horn	Cllr J B Moody
Cllr D K A Sellis	Cllr J Sheldon
Cllr D Whitcomb	

**Substitutes:** Cllr C R Musgrave for Cllr K A Clish-Green  
Cllr J R McInnes for Cllr D E Moyse

Corporate Director (AR)  
Head of Corporate Services  
Head of Environment Services  
Head of Environmental Health and Housing  
Community Manager  
Member Services Manager

**In Attendance:** Cllr M J R Benson  
Cllr W G Cann OBE

Karen Nolan – CVS Chief Executive  
Ewan Ray – CVS Trustee  
Superintendent Michelle Slevin

**\*O&S 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr K A Clish-Green and Cllr D E Moyse

**\*O&S 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and officers were asked to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of this meeting but none were made.

**\*O&S 3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman advised Members that the minutes of the previous meeting stated that a further report on Devon Home Choice would be presented to the 4 June 2013 Overview and Scrutiny Committee. That report was not on the agenda today but would be carried over to the meeting on 29 October 2013.

The Chairman also asked Members to note that it was her intention to cancel the meeting scheduled for the 13 August 2013.

**\*O&S 4      CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**\*O&S 5      PRESENTATION BY KAREN NOLAN OF THE COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SERVICES**

Members received a presentation from Karen Nolan, the Chief Executive of the West Devon Community & Voluntary Services and Ewan Ray, a Trustee. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session for Members.

**\*O&S 6      DRAFT PRIORITY ACTION PLANS FOR COMMUNITY LIFE, ENVIRONMENT AND HOMES**

The Community Manager presented a report (page 3 to the agenda) that asked Members to consider and comment on the draft updates to the action plans for Community Life, Environment and Homes following their review and update for 2013-2014.

The Community Manager updated the Committee by advising that the Action Plans had recently been presented to the Scrutiny Panels at South Hams District Council (SHDC). The Panels had commented that they considered the Environment Action Plan still too ambitious and also raised the issue of measuring success. Whilst the actions may not directly specify how each would be measured, officers felt that appropriate measures were in place for most actions and these would be referenced in the main document and reported on to this Committee as part of the annual monitoring process.

Members then went through the Plans in detail and made the following comments:

- There was a general concern about the use of jargon in the Action Plans;
- There was another general comment that the Action Plans did not refer to older people, even though there were actions related to children and young people. In response the Community Manager advised that the Council did have a Children and Young People's officer but not an officer with specific responsibility for older people. SHDC had asked that a Task and Finish Group look at how the Council could engage with young people and that work had resulted in some of the actions in the plan. In addition, whilst not specifically mentioned, many of the actions in the plans would apply to older people;
- The time allocated to produce Holiday and Play Activity Directories and to deliver Play Days as listed on page 9 of the presented agenda seemed high. One Member asked if funding would be available from public health or Clinical Commissioning Groups to assist with play activities;
- A concern was raised about the amount of work included in the Action Plans but the Community Manager advised that a lot of the actions

were not to be directly delivered by the Council but by partners such as Active Devon;

- Comments were made about the planning training sessions held recently and it was agreed that it would be useful to have in place a way of assessing feedback;
- The Chairman was concerned at the lack of budget information contained in relation to the actions on page 14 of the presented agenda report. The Community Manager advised that this would be available prior to submission of the action plan to the Community Services Committee;
- In response to a question related to progress on the Green Travel Plan the Community Manager confirmed that this was an action that required more work and it was not just about Council policies but also about supporting communities;
- In relation to page 17 of the presented agenda and the action to work with community organisations to use council land for community food production, a Member asked how much land was available. The Corporate Director responded that there was not a great deal of land available but interest in the scheme was growing;
- Concern was raised at the amount of time spent on land drainage according to the report, the Community Manager agreed to look into this and advise Members accordingly;
- The Chairman raised concern over the progress in relation to enabling the provision of suitable sites for Gypsies and Travellers and following a brief discussion it was agreed that this would be proposed as an item at a future informal Council meeting;
- In response to a query on page 26 of the presented agenda related to employment of a Children and Young Person officer, it was clarified that this post was funded by DCC and related purely to housing issues.

It was **RESOLVED** that Members had considered the draft 2013-14 action plans for Community Life, Environment and Homes and made comments and recommendations as to their further development as noted above.

## **\*O&S 7**

### **HEALTH AND WELL BEING BOARD**

The Head of Environmental Health and Housing presented a report (page 28 to the agenda) which provided information on the Health and Well Being Board and outlined a future strategy for how the Council could effectively contribute to the local Health agenda. In particular, he drew Members attention to the four main themes contained within the strategy and added that as a Borough Council the Council needed to be realistic about what it could achieve. He concluded by advising Members that an offer had been received from Devon County Council for a district health officer to work across all districts in Devon.

During discussion, Members noted that there was mention of alcohol issues but not drugs. In response, the district Member on the Health and Well Being Board advised that the strategy had been based on joint health needs across Devon and statistically drugs were not as much of an issue as alcohol; also that the areas included in the strategy were those where

the Board felt they could bring groups together to provide a better outcome.

He also encouraged Members to visit the Devon Health and Well Being website which was informative and interesting. Another Member advised that there were a number of ways of scrutinising the Health and Well Being function.

Members were also pleased to note, in reference to the previous agenda item, that a number of Health and Well Being issues were addressed through the Connect Strategy. The Chairman added that the Council should work more with groups such as the Children's Centres, as joint working would lead to more effective outcomes.

Members had a brief discussion about deprivation factors and specific figures were outlined for Tamarside ward. Members asked if this information could be regularly provided for all wards as had been done in the past, however the Community Manager advised that with significantly reduced resource this would not be possible. As a compromise it was suggested that this information be provided each election year.

To conclude, the Chairman advised that the original recommendation had been amended following agenda publication.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted and that actions in support of the Devon Health and Well Being Strategy be incorporated in future versions of the Connect Strategy under Community Life and Homes Action Plans.

**\*O&S 8**

**COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP – ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Head of Environmental Health and Housing (EH&H) presented a report (page 37 to the agenda) that provided Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) as defined by Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009. Superintendent Michelle Slevin was also attending and able to respond to some of the queries raised.

The Head of EH&H took Members through the key points of the report and highlighted some of the achievements. Superintendent Michelle Slevin discussed the crime data at paragraph 4.15 of the presented report. She advised that a Sector Inspector had recently been introduced for the West Devon area. He would be held accountable for any increase in crime figures over the year. She also advised that rural crime was a priority and had been identified as such by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

During discussion, Members raised the following points in relation to the presented report and action plan:

- Concern was raised about the payback scheme, there was capacity in the system to bid for work but at a cost and facilities had to be provided;
- The Prevent project worked on referrals to a multi agency group consisting of health, council, police and education, and a plan being put in place to monitor escalating/illegal activity;
- Concern was raised at the disbanding of the DAG (Drug and Alcohol Group). Members were advised that drugs and alcohol were still a priority for Police and an increase in figures could be as a result of being proactive or a particular initiative taking place;
- Both the Police and Licensees have found the H2O project beneficial and Plymouth University were considering a formal evaluation of the project. There may also be the possibility of lobbying licensing authorities to make it a condition of the licence, but data would be needed before this could happen;
- In terms of poor engagement in relation to Probation Community Projects the Head of EH&H stated that this would be taken up at the Community Safety Partnership;
- Members agreed that for £9,000 the Community Safety Partnership undertook brilliant work and was very good value for money. It was also agreed that the Anti Social Behaviour Officer represented excellent work on a limited budget.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the report and the achievements of the South Devon and Dartmoor Community Safety partnership in 2012 be noted and comments made as detailed above.

#### **\*O&S 9**

#### **WD GRANT ALLOCATIONS 2012/2013**

The Community Manager presented a report (page 58 to the agenda) that provided an update on projects supported through the West Devon Borough Council grant schemes in 2012/13 and advised Members of the intention to review the schemes in 2013/14 to ensure they continued to support the delivery of a wide range of local projects in the most financial efficient way, delivering value for money.

A Member asked if, in these days of localism, it would be possible for an individual to apply for a grant. The Community Manager advised that this would be difficult as any application needed to be audited and information would be required in terms of aims and objectives. There was an acceptance that some smaller groups may not be in a position to answer all questions so there was flexibility with the scheme to a degree.

Some Members raised concerns that there were few sport related bids and felt this was as a result of the Sports Officer having left and therefore there was less emphasis on sporting matters as the link with sporting organisations had been lost. There was also a query relating to Chagford Pool which the Community Manager agreed to provide further information on.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The projects that had benefitted from Council grant funding in 2012/13 had been reviewed; and
- (ii) The intention to review the West Devon Borough Council grant schemes to ensure they remain 'Fit for Purpose' as set out in section 3 of the presented report be noted, and any particular issues that should be considered as part of the review be advised.

**\*O&S 10 MINUTES OF THE RURAL BROADBAND GROUP**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the minutes of the Rural Broadband Group meeting held on 17 April 2013.

Cllr Sheldon advised the Committee that this was no longer a joint Working Group with SHDC but was continuing as a West Devon Working Group. He also advised that there may still be up to seven and a half years to wait until superfast broadband was in place. Members were advised that they would soon see green street cabinets. He concluded that he had attended a digital champion event at which the frustration of the rural parishes was evident.

**\*O&S 11 REVIEW OF THE PROCESS AND DECISIONS THAT LED TO THE JUDICIAL REVIEW JUDGEMENT RELATING TO THE FORMER FOCUS DIY STORE, TAVISTOCK RETAIL PARK, PLYMOUTH ROAD, TAVISTOCK**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report from the Focus Review Working Group that updated Members on their progress. The Chairman of the Working Group took Members through the key points.

It was **RESOLVED** that the progress to date of the Focus Review Working Group be noted, and that a final report be presented to Council on 30 July 2013 be agreed.

**\*O&S 12 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

A report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2012-2013 was presented (page 82 to the agenda) which outlined the membership, meetings, task and finish groups and topics covered throughout the year. The report would be presented to the next meeting of full Council.

Members of the Committee agreed that they were happy for this report to go forward.

**\*O&S 13 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – UPDATE AT THE REQUEST OF THE 2012/2013 CHAIRMAN**

The Head of Corporate Services advised Members that there was not a Performance Indicator Report on the agenda, however she was able to update on indicators where concern had previously been expressed.

A written explanation had been circulated that explained the reasons for delays in the end to end time for processing change of circumstances and these included resources being diverted to align the Revenue and Benefit computer systems across SHDC and WDBC, the introduction of the new Council Tax Support Scheme resulting in increased customer contact and the issues with the ATLAS notifications that had previously been advised. It was anticipated that improved performance would be demonstrated for the following year.

In respect of sickness statistics, the Head of Corporate Services advised that there was only one long term sickness case outstanding. That member of staff would be returning to work on a phased return. The improvement on long term statistics had however been negated by issues with short term sickness, that related to a number of viruses experienced by staff this year. It was not expected that this level of sickness would continue.

The Head of Environment Services updated in respect of car parking income and advised Members that the income was in line with national trends. The targets for income would be re-aligned through the budget process to ensure they were realistic. Further monitoring would take place through the Performance Indicator reports.

**\*O&S 14      REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000: REPORT ON INSPECTION AND AUTHORISATION**

As a standing item on the agenda, Members noted that there had been no requested to use the powers under RIPA during the last quarter.

(The meeting terminated at 4.30 pm)