

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 JANUARY 2010 AT 2:00PM

Present: Councillors Mrs W Metherell (Chairman); Mrs E Eastwood; G Garrity; F Gleaves; F Heathcote; K Hitchen; J Park; W Southward; Mrs C Watson and P Watson.

Also present: Councillors Mrs Y Clarkson, G Clements and N Williams.
Inspector J Murray, Cumbria Constabulary

Officers: A Johnson, Interim Scrutiny Consultant; K Parker, Acting Director Quality of Life; M Jepson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services; J Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy; H Mitchell, Head of Policy & Performance; L Priebe, Housing Services Manager; A Crane, Safer Communities Officer; R Osborne, Sustainability Officer and C Willoughby, Member Services Technical Support Officer.

Apologies for absence: Councillors J Jackson, Mrs J Williams and Mrs M Woodburn.

SSC 08/09 Minutes of the Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2009 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SSC 09/09 Order of Agenda Items

Due to the attendance of Officers and Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Children, Young People and Healthy Communities Committee, it was

AGREED to take Item 9 (Gender Equality Scheme) immediately after Item 7 (Copeland Community Safety 2009 Progress Report).

SSC 10/09 Underage Drinking in West Cumbria

Members received a presentation from Inspector J Murray, Cumbria Police Community Safety Inspector for West Cumbria on Underage Drinking in West Cumbria.

During the discussion that followed, Members raised the issues of alcohol related domestic violence, funding arrangements, alcohol licensing and the role / responsibilities of the Council.

Members believed the Council must work closely with the other agencies in tackling the problems.

It was suggested that a Working Group made up of Members from this Committee be established to take this issue forward.

RESOLVED – That

- a) the presentation on Underage Drinking in West Cumbria be received, and
- b) a Working Group made up of Members from this Committee be established to take this issue forward.

SSC 11/09 Copeland Community Safety 2009 Progress Report

Members received a progress report for 2009 from the Head of Development Strategy, on behalf of the Section 17 Community Safety Officer, on Copeland Community Safety.

The Committee was reminded of the Council's responsibilities contained in Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

An overview was also provided of the work undertaken by the Section 17 Community Safety Officer to date, with local partners and groups.

In the discussion that followed, a request for the Section 17 Community Safety Officer's contact details was made and this would be circulated to all Members.

RESOLVED – That the 2009 progress report on Copeland Community Safety be received.

SSC 12/09 Gender Equality Scheme

The Committee received details of the Draft Gender Equality Scheme from the Head of Policy and Performance. The Committee were advised that this followed consultation with stakeholders and the Equality Impact Assessment Plan was now available on the Copeland Borough Council website.

Members then asked questions regarding the inclusion of Rural Proofing, consultation with Parish Councils and the role of the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership in the process.

RESOLVED – That the Draft Gender Equality Scheme be received.

SSC 13/09 Copeland Draft Fuel Poverty Strategy 2009-2011

Members received a presentation from the Head of Development Strategy on Fuel Poverty.

The Committee were advised that Fuel Poverty was defined as 'a household that needs to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain an adequate level of warmth.'

Possible causes of fuel poverty were given and the effect this had on people, particularly illness.

In Copeland, the strategy was to help residents, owner occupiers and private landlords. Also to target vulnerable groups and work in partnership with other agencies.

Members were asked what they thought the priorities should be. It was suggested that pre-paid meters were a major concern. Insulation and any grants available should also be considered along with the need to promote the advice and assistance available.

Members also asked for a clear definition of Fuel Poverty, was this 10% of disposable income or 10% of salary?

RESOLVED – That

- a) the presentation on Fuel Poverty be received, and
- b) a clear definition of Fuel Poverty be provided to Members.

SSC 14/09 Joint Scrutiny Manager's Briefing to the Cumbria Joint Scrutiny Committee on 17 December 2009

Members were informed of the Joint Scrutiny activity with particular reference to developments around crime and disorder.

The Committee's attention was drawn to appendix one of the Briefing Report which aimed to raise its profile amongst Members.

Members were asked to note

- a) the joint scrutiny work going on in relation to the Carlisle and Eden Crime and Reduction Partnership, in accordance with Home Office evidence on implementing sections 19 & 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, at paragraph 5 of the report,
- b) the joint scrutiny work going on between Carlisle, Eden, South Lakes and Cumbria County Councils which is examining the implications for individual Crime and Reduction Partnerships should the current funding arrangements change, as set out in paragraphs 7.2 and 7.3 of the briefing report, and
- c) the proposed joint scrutiny work in relation to CCTV in Cumbria to begin in January 2010, requiring membership from across all

scrutiny members in the 7 local authorities. Councillor G Garrity volunteered and it was AGREED that his name be put forward to the Cumbrian Joint Scrutiny Manager as the Council's representative on the CCTV Task and Finish Group, as set out in paragraphs 7.4 and 7.5 of the Briefing Report from the Joint Scrutiny Manager.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee either on or after 11 March 2010 at an Eden venue. It was also agreed that the work of the Joint Scrutiny Committee should be a regular item on the agendas of OSCs.

RESOLVED – That

- a) the Joint Scrutiny Manager's Briefing to the Cumbria Joint Scrutiny Committee on 17 December 2009 be received,
- b) Councillor G Garrity be put forward to the Cumbrian Joint Scrutiny Manager as the Council's representative on the CCTV Task and Finish Group,
- c) the work of the Joint Scrutiny Committee should be a regular item on the agendas of OSCs.

SSC 15/09 Multi-Storey Car Park

A site visit by the Deputy Chair, Interim Scrutiny Consultant and Member Services Technical Support Officer had taken place earlier in the day, with Whitehaven Multi Storey Car Park staff in attendance. The purpose was to look at referrals from the meeting held on 16 July 2009 relating to signage in particular, the position regarding the lift and the toilets having been reported by the Chief Executive of the Harbour Commissioners at that meeting.

It was reported that signage was much improved and the lighting was very good, with good security. It was noted that the car park had received the Park Safe Award run by the Association of Chief Police Officers. Those who had attended the previous site visit in September 2008 found a much improved car park.

Whilst there remained a couple of signs which were particularly misleading, on pointing these out, they were accepted and taken on board by the car park Managers.

The Committee asked for a letter of thanks to be sent to the Chief Executive of the Harbour Commissioners for the improvements made in the Car Park and for this to be passed on to the Car Park Management team.

RESOLVED – That

- a) the update on the Multi-Storey Car Park be received, and
- b) a letter of thanks be sent to the Chief Executive of the Harbour Commissioners for the improvements made in the Car Park and for this to be passed on to the Car Park Management team.

SSC 16/09 Work Plan

Members considered the Committee's updated Work Plan.

RESOLVED - that the Work Plan be received and updated, placing it on target for completion by 29 April 2010.

The Meeting Closed at 4:45 pm

Signed:.....

Date:.....