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Place Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 8 December 2016

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON THURSDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2016

PRESENT

County Councillors K W Curry (Chair), G R Banks, V E Evans, D C Jones, H Lewis, ET Morgan, R G Thomas and D H Williams

Officers: Clive Jones, Professional Lead, Trading Standards and Fay Smith, Community Safety Partnership Co-ordinator

1.	APOLOGIES	PLSC53-2016
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County Councillors M J Dorrance, G Hopkins, G Morgan and G Price

2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	PLSC54-2016
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There were no declarations of interest.

3.	DISCLOSURES OF PARTY WHIPS	PLSC55-2016
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There were no disclosures of party whips.

4.	MINUTES	PLSC56-2016
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Documents:

- Minutes of 6 October 2016
- Minutes of 31 October 2016

Outcome:

- **The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of meetings held on 6 and 31 October 2016 as correct records**

5.	CRIME AND DISORDER	PLSC57-2016
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Documents:

- Community Safety Partnership update

Discussion:

- It was noted that there had been an increase in crime reported both in Powys and the Dyfed Powys area – however, this could be attributed to a spate of low level shed break ins, travelling criminals in the south who have been apprehended. Other travelling criminals in the north are subject to cross border work.
- There has been less of an increase in anti-social behaviour in Powys than the rest of the Force area. Gwalia have the contract to manage anti-social behaviour across the area and are settling in to that role
- Data relating to road traffic accidents is not being processed due to limited capacity within the service. Strategic and analytical capabilities have been virtually removed. Members were concerned that road traffic accidents were a major issue in the County and the data was essential to identify accident hotspots and ensure remedial action could be taken or whether strategies implemented are effective. The committee believed that the service was compromised and asked that this be the subject of a scrutiny review.
- Domestic Abuse is not a responsibility of the CSP, but it is required to conduct domestic homicide reviews – the County is currently conducting its first review
- Local Authorities can benefit from the Proceeds of Crime Act. Members asked if this influenced the cases that were pursued – it is the aim of the service to support trade rather than prosecute. The emphasis is on prevention and tight enforcement and prosecution criteria are in place. Less than 5% of cases are prosecuted. A policy regarding the proceeds of crime is also in place. Any intervention must be appropriate and proportionate.
- The Committee asked if Powys managed to cover its costs, particularly when joint prosecutions are brought. Memoranda of Understanding are in place with other agencies and agreement is reached as to which agency will pursue a case through the courts. Awards of costs are determined by the court. Operation Gleam has been awarded full costs for example.
- Trading Standards had taken over the National Estate Agency function and staff had been moved into that function which assisted in the process of efficiency savings. It is a challenge to ensure work is relevant and that the service can access income sources.
- It was noted that a Street Pastors scheme had been launched in Newtown some time ago and Members asked how successful that had been. Newtown and Gwent have supported the launch of a new scheme in Brecon. There is a network across Powys and sharing of experience. The night-time economy has changed in recent years and historic incidences of group behaviours are fading. Licensing laws are much stronger, there is a tendency for people to drink at home and the downturn in the economy have all had an effect.
- The Powys Reducing Offending Project is a statutory responsibility of the CSP. A new way of working has been introduced into the Dyfed Powys area whereby offenders have voluntarily agreed to undertake gps tracking and a remote alcohol monitoring system.
- A pilot scheme regarding counter terrorism has been established. There are eight pilot schemes, only one of which is in Wales. It is anticipated that the pilot schemes will last for a year and the CSP Co-ordinator will keep the Committee informed.

- The new Police and Crime Commissioner is keen to engage with CSPs and attended a recent showcase event. A meeting is to be arranged with all CSP managers to develop closer working.
- Other partners are committed to the Partnership. Attendance at the CSP itself is good although the Area Planning Board is not so well attended.
- There were clear cut reporting lines for hate crime, but cybercrime reporting is more variable depending on how the crime is reported
- School Police Liaison Officers are available to all schools in Powys and operate under a specific mandate from the Welsh Government. They can deal with a variety of issues including substance misuse, communications, IT, sexting and hate crimes. Pupils can report any issues to police officers.
- Whilst local police officers are somewhat restricted in dealing with cybercrime, issues must be reported to ensure the development and application of strategic policies and preventative measures
- Cybercrime is seen as a major issue going forward
- There is a hope to extend the 'make every contact count' initiative whereby a multiagency approach is taken – for example, Fire Service Officers fitting smoke alarms or Adult Social Care staff working with the elderly can reinforce messages.
- The community messaging system (which replaced Ringmaster) is managed by the Police and can be accessed through the following link <https://www.dyfedpowyscommunitymessaging.org/en/>

Outcomes:

- **The issue of road traffic data analysis be referred to Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs Steering Group for consideration for a scrutiny review**

6.	PLACE SCRUTINY GROUP 1 - LIBRARY STANDARDS	PLSC58-2016
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Documents:

- Scrutiny Summary Report

Discussion:

- Members noted the additional responsibilities being put on library staff and that no additional resources were in place to support that work.

Outcome:

- **Noted**

7.	JOINT CHAIRS STEERING GROUP	PLSC59-2016
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Documents:

- Notes of a Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs Steering Group held on 18 October 2016

Discussion:

- Members noted that it was proposed that there be a review of the division of work between the two scrutiny committees and that they be renamed 1 and 2 or A and B
- The Committee noted the difficulties experienced by Chairs being restricted in speaking at Cabinet and would wish to support the continued role of scrutiny committee Chairs being able to comment on issues at Cabinet
- Members were of the opinion that Cabinet should be answerable to scrutiny and have a voice to ensure that the Cabinet is held to account.
- The Cabinet forward work programme was not thought to be sufficiently structured to allow adequate scrutiny to take place before Cabinet meetings – some items are only raised on the day
- The Chair reminded Members that attendance at scrutiny working groups was also an issue
- There was further concern that scrutiny was not working as it should with some items being rejected for scrutiny which could lead to risks to the Authority
- Other Members expressed concern that local Members cannot challenge Portfolio Holders

Outcome:

- **The Scrutiny Manager be invited to the next meeting to discuss the role of scrutiny**

8.	WORK PROGRAMME	PLSC60-2016
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Documents:

- Work Programme

Discussion:

- A number of items were included within budget proposals, but Members believed there were few opportunities to scrutinise these issues – this would be discussed with the Scrutiny Manager at the next meeting

Outcome:

- **Noted**

9.	TIMING OF WORKING GROUP MEETINGS	PLSC61-2016
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As the Vice Chair was not present, no discussion took place on this item.

10.	CORRESPONDENCE	PLSC62-2016
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There were no items of correspondence.

County Councillor K W Curry (Chair)

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