

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Joint Scrutiny Committee

held on Thursday, 9 March 2017 at 6.30 pm

at the Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton OX14 4SB

**Open to the public, including the press**

### Present:

Members:

South Oxfordshire District Councillors: David Dodds, Toby Newman, Ian White and Jeannette Matelot (in place of John Walsh)

Vale of White Horse District Councillors: Debby Hallett (co-Chair, in the chair), Alice Badcock, Mohinder Kainth, Ben Mabbett and Chris Palmer

Officers: Susan Harbour, Gerry Brough, Karen Brown, Liz Hayden and Helen Novelle

Also present:

South Oxfordshire District Councillors: Anna Badcock, Elizabeth Gillespie and David Turner.

Vale of White Horse District Councillors Councillor Eric Batts and Councillor Elaine Ware. Superintendent Rory Freeman (Thames Valley Police)

### Sc.46 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from South Oxfordshire Councillor John Walsh and South Oxfordshire Councillor Jeannette Matelot was his substitute.

### Sc.47 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2017 were agreed as an accurate record and were signed by the Chair as such.

### Sc.48 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest or conflicts of interest raised by councillors.

### Sc.49 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

There were no items of urgent business.

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The Chairman made the housekeeping announcements.

## **Sc.50 Public participation**

South Oxfordshire District Councillor David Turner asked a question to the committee about why South Oxfordshire District Council had withdrawn its funding which contributed to the provision of six PCSOs. Although this was considered to be a question appropriate for South Council or South Scrutiny, it led to a further conversation about the valuable work done by PCSOs and it was established that there had not been a significant reduction in the number of PCSOs in the TVP area.

## **Sc.51 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings**

The work schedule and date for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings was noted by councillors.

The clerk reported that, in consultation with the Chairman designate, the Five Councils' Partnership Scrutiny committee had been postponed from 28 March to 23 May 2017.

## **Sc.52 South and Vale Community Safety Partnership – performance report**

In attendance to present this item and to answer questions from the Scrutiny Committee were:

- Councillor Eric Batts, Cabinet member Vale of White Horse
- Councillor Anna Badcock, Chair of the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and Cabinet member South Oxfordshire
- Superintendent Rory Freeman, Local Police Area Commander, South and Vale
- Liz Hayden, Legal Licensing and Community Safety Manager
- Karen Brown, Community Safety Team Leader

Liz Hayden introduced the report on behalf of the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership.

The report had two recommendations:

**Recommendation One** - To note the progress that the South and Vale CSP has made so far in 2016-17 in delivering its priorities and statutory functions.

Statutory duties include:

- a) the need to develop and publish an annual plan
- b) functions relating to anti-social behaviour
- c) duties to protect vulnerable people, This includes:
  - a Prevent action plan in accordance with section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which places a duty on local authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism;
  - raising awareness of and reporting to the Secretary of State any person identified as a victim of Modern Day Slavery;

- carrying out a Domestic Homicide Review when a homicide takes place in either district and the victim and offender were in a relationship.

The added value work of the Partnership includes:

- a) funding an outreach service for victims of domestic abuse and paying to help secure victims' homes;
- b) joint agency tasking meetings (JATAC) have been combined with police tasking. The aim being to maximise partnership working and make best use of resources;
- c) funding community based projects that aim to improve resilience for example projects that divert young people away from committing anti-social behaviour and/or becoming victims of crime.

**Recommendation Two** - To support the CSP's view that the 2017-18 plan will focus on the protection of vulnerable people, prevention and early intervention, reducing re-offending and serious organised crime and terrorism.

The committee then discussed the report with the panel. The following is a summary of the main topics raised.

**The committee was interested in the funding arrangements for the Partnership and how it best managed its funding challenges to enable it to carry out its functions.**

- The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) provides annual funding via Oxfordshire County Council to allow the partnerships to deliver on a local level.
- The Partnership would like to work with charities in partnership arrangements for longer term projects.
- The Partnership is working across the county and sharing resources on some issues, for example Prevent and domestic abuse services.
- The PCC funding has reduced year on year and, therefore, the Partnership is working in collaboration with other bodies to work smarter, for example in commissioning groups. As a third party funder it can be effective in opening the doors to other funding and group working.
- The community safety officers are all mainstream funded by the districts and this represents a significant contribution and commitment to the Partnership.

**The committee asked a range of questions about the focus of the Partnership and its areas of work and how it identified who to work with and in what way.**

- Over the last ten years there have been changes to the main focus of crime: it had been focussed on vehicle crime, but is now more focussed around vulnerable people.
- The Partnership funds projects in secondary schools that work with vulnerable young people. Young people are referred to projects by schools, direct street work in areas of need, and from early intervention hubs. The purpose of interventions is to assist young people in learning to make the right choices in their behaviours and aiming to improve their resilience to exploitation.
- Hate crimes. After reviewing the project, the Partnership is working with SOHA to develop a third party reporting centre during 2017-18. This approach would help to keep the Champions and the victims safe.
- The police have changed their crime recording standards and are recording far more crime, which explains some of the increases in crime statistics this year.

The committee was keen to express its gratitude at the work done by the Community Safety Partnership in a variety of areas.

**Resolved**

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To commend the work of the Community Safety Partnership, to note its progress in delivering its priorities and statutory functions and to support their focus for 2017/18.

### **Action points for officers for the next report**

- To set specific and measurable targets for the next year.
- To specify the numbers of gold, silver and bronze Nightsafe awards.
- Other specific localised questions raised by members of the committee would be addressed through the action log.

## **Sc.53 Use of Affordable Housing Commuted Sums**

In attendance to present this item and to answer questions from the Scrutiny Committee were:

- Councillor Elaine Ware, Cabinet member Vale of White Horse
- Councillor Elizabeth Gillespie, Cabinet member South Oxfordshire
- Gerry Brough interim head of development and regeneration
- Helen Novelle, team leader housing development and regeneration

The report was brought to Scrutiny at the request of the committee and intended to inform Scrutiny of the recommendations to be made to South and Vale Cabinets and Scrutiny committee was invited to provide guidance on the strategy.

The committee discussed this item.

Options were raised including that the council purchase land and allow self build on the land and that third party organisations such as the Oxford Community Land Trust who offer long term/ guaranteed affordable housing, could be engaged in partnership working.

There is currently an identified shortage of housing that meets specialist needs and this needs to be tackled. There is a county wide physical disability strategy. The County Council provides each district with a summary of housing need for different client groups and South and Vale Councils aim to address this need on strategic sites and/or perhaps on small pieces of land. There are also issues for people with learning disabilities, for example, complex autism. There are particular difficulties for people who are currently having to live out of district.

### **RESOLVED**

- To support the recommendations to Cabinets
- To receive an annual report on the status of commuted sum payments received and expenditure to date, including measurable Key Performance Indicators.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm