

minutes



Meeting OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 16th January 2009 (commencing at 10.30 am)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Edward Llewellyn-Jones (Chair)

Jen Cole
Yvonne Davidson (Vice-Chair)
John Knight (Vice-Chair)
Joe Lonergan MBE

A Peter D Prebble
Andy Stewart
Chris Winterton (Vice-Chair)
Brian Wombwell

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 8th December 2008, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Prebble.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Davidson declared a personal interest in the following item, as an employee of Nottinghamshire Police.

UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY SAFETY CHANGE PROGRAMME

Richard Hodge, Service Director, Community Safety, Resilience and Protection and Ann Marie Hawkins, Head of Service, Safer and Stronger Communities updated the committee on the Community Safety Change Programme. Mr Hodge apologised that Sharon Squires, Director of Change was unable to attend because of illness.

Mr Hodge reminded members that the Change Programme had emerged from the work undertaken by the Home Office Partnership Group with Nottinghamshire Police. He and Ms Hawkins guided the committee through the main points of the report. Mr Hodge concluded by saying that there was considerable scope for improvement, but the building blocks were in place.

Councillor Llewellyn-Jones opened discussion by saying that as a member of local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) he found a lack of local

coordination, which he hoped the Change Programme might help to resolve. He also believed that the deployment of police officers was inconsistent.

Councillor Lonergan was concerned by the deterioration in serious acquisitive crime, and by the lack of improvement over many years. He wondered how comparisons with other local authorities would be made, after the current Best Value performance indicators ceased. He reminded members that the previous Chief Constable had assured them that crime was going down, when it was going up. He did not believe that the many structures mentioned would produce the anticipated results. He would find it helpful to be able to access local statistics.

Councillor Winterton observed that some areas still suffered high crime rates, and that the Police would always be insufficiently resourced. High command was now better informed about crime patterns. He referred to the benefits of sharing good practice. Councillor Wombwell could see the role for CDRPs and the County Council in tackling the causes of crime. He asked about contacts with the judiciary, and whether there was a strategy to reduce re-offending.

Councillor Stewart was of a similar view to Councillor Lonergan. He referred to increases in the Police precept at the same time as the Police's role diminished. He gave the example of traffic policing. He asked whether the analysts mentioned in the report duplicated what the Police already did. He believed that the money spent on CDRPs and related activities would be better spent on extra police officers.

Councillor Cole said that it was uncertain how much worse crime figures would be without the efforts reported. She saw a need for analysis to explain what was behind the raw figures. She believed there should be a partnership with the media to get the message across. Councillor Llewellyn-Jones felt it would be helpful for members to look at crime statistics for their own areas. He reported that members would be able to scrutinise CDRPs from April 2009.

Mr Hodge responded to the points raised. He described community safety as a complex area, with many partners involved in addition to the Police. The problems were long standing, and would take time to tackle successfully. The new indicators could be compared with the previous ones. There was work with the local Criminal Justice Board. Reducing re-offending was one of the five themes led by the Safer Nottinghamshire Board. There was now one agreed set of statistics. Analysis would enable more effective use the figures, and could be done on very local areas. He welcomed the forthcoming scrutiny of community policing.

It was agreed to note the report and request a full performance report for Nottinghamshire and the individual CDRPs be brought to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Autumn 2009.

REVIEW OF THE EAST MIDLANDS AMBULANCE SERVICE

Ahmed Belim, General Manager Nottinghamshire A & E, East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) reported on progress in relation to the recommendations made by the Committee in January 2008. He began by pointing out that EMAS currently and for the previous few months had not been able to meet demand (known as REAP 4 status). Consequently the trust had provided additional resources. In relation to the recommendations, a demand and capacity audit had been carried out, whose outcomes would include consideration of services in rural areas. Strategic stand-by points were being adopted. The new trust headquarters and control centre at

Nottingham Business Park were now open, with functions being relocated on a phased basis. The fall-back control centre remained at Derby, with the possibility of it being relocated to Beechdale. The problem of frequent callers had been addressed by the appointment of a dedicated senior nurse. It was recognised that frequent callers might have complex health and social care needs, prompting the trust to look for joined up solutions. Mr Belim stated that EMAS was consulted about highway matters and property developments in the NHS. There was much improved sharing of information with other NHS trusts and outside agencies. He referred to the joined up approach to falls, strokes and thrombolysis, and to participation in county-wide groups on older people, falls and avoidable injuries. EMAS had a dedicated communications role, with a communications strategy being developed in line with the foundation trust proposal. Joint training with local authorities would feature in EMAS organisation development strategy and business plan. He gave details of joint work with Nottinghamshire Police and the Fire and Rescue Service.

Councillor Wombwell was pleased with the Trust's response to the recommendations. He asked how EMAS planned to come off REAP 4 status, and how frequent callers were to be dealt with. Mr Belim explained that support services were switched to core functions, and the risk to patients was minimal. Although targets had not been met in December, they had been in January, thanks to additional funding from commissioners. EMAS would remain at REAP 4 until the transfer to the new headquarters was complete. In relation to frequent callers, there was a joined up approach, involving the Police on malicious calls. He suggested late April for a visit to the new headquarters.

Councillor Winterton saw the benefits of strategic stand-by points and sharing sites with other services. In reply to Councillor Cole, Mr Belim said that EMAS had been warned of the current advertising campaign about strokes, and felt that the trust was well equipped to deal with the consequences. He explained that population centric modelling was a way of using demographic profiles to identify particular needs of, for example, former mining villages, ethnic minorities or migrant workers. There were links with the emergency call systems for older people, such as Lifeline.

Councillor Stewart referred to the closure of the A6097 on 25 January 2009, and the need for communication between EMAS and the highway authority about such matters. Mr Belim undertook to investigate. In reply to Councillor Lonergan, Mr Belim indicated that he was also responding to Lincolnshire members about the concerns they had raised during the review.

Councillor Llewellyn-Jones welcomed the progress made, and expressed the committee's interest in visiting the new headquarters when the winter pressures had diminished. He asked for a further report in six months time. He had earlier pointed out to Mr Belim that there was now also a mechanism for scrutinising health on a regional basis, which EMAS might find helpful.

PROGRESS REPORT - REVIEW OF STREET LIGHTING REPAIR

Rob Ludlow and Gary Wood from Communities Department and Richard Jackson, Steve Owen and Julia Williams from E-on attended in connection with this item. Councillor Llewellyn-Jones expressed disappointment that the Cabinet member was not present.

Mr Wood pointed out that performance against indicator BV215b had improved, although the target was still not being met. Moreover performance by Central

Networks East remained worse than Central Networks West, and their submission of invoices was slow.

Mr Jackson responded that Central Networks had taken steps to improve performance, including using a directly employed workforce since mid-2008. The fault reporting system had been improved. The latest quarterly figures for Nottinghamshire met Ofgem standards, and were better than in the West area. Currently there were two lighting columns out of order where the fault was with the electricity supply. Most faults, he pointed out, were in the lantern.

Mr Ludlow explained that the County Council aimed to carry out repairs within seven days. If the fault was in the electricity supply, they would refer it to E-on. The 15 day period for E-on to carry out the repair started at that point. In relation to the delayed invoices, Mr Jackson stated that the problem had been in getting costs from contractors. It would help that more work was being done in-house, or by smaller contractors who billed more promptly. All public lighting repairs were now in-house. Eon's aim was to invoice the County Council in 4-6 weeks. He pointed out that other local authorities had contracts where they paid for repairs as part of the cost of electricity.

It was agreed to note the progress being made, and request that the department report any particular concerns to the Cabinet Member and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

MANAGING THE PROGRAMME OF WORK

The updated programme of work for 2008/09 as set out in the appendix to the report was agreed.

The meeting closed at 12.40 pm.

CHAIR

Ref: overview and scrutiny/m_16feb09