

minutes



Meeting CRIME REDUCTION SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 19th March 2007 (commencing at 10.30 am)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Councillor John Knight (Chair)
Councillor Joe Lonergan MBE (Vice-Chair)

	John Carter	Pat Lally
A	Jen Cole	Bruce Laughton
A	Alan Davison	Mark Spencer
	Stan Heptinstall MBE	

CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The appointment by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26th February 2007 of Councillor John Knight as Chair and Councillor Joe Lonergan MBE as Vice Chair of the Select Committee was noted.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE

It was reported that Councillor Stan Heptinstall MBE had been appointed to the Select Committee.

The membership of the Select Committee was noted.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jen Cole and Councillor Alan Davison.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

Councillor Knight drew attention to the aims of the review set out in the scoping report agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which were about performance but also value for money. Councillor Lonergan referred to a recent County Council seminar on performance where the speaker had said that the targets we had set ourselves would not lift us out of the "red" zone and implied that the

targets were too low as other authorities were moving away faster. Councillor Knight agreed there was a need to look at why Nottinghamshire was bottom of the performance statistics and whether there was anything we could do as a County Council. It was noted that the Nottinghamshire Police were under funded but that the Select Committee would not be able to influence that. Councillor Heptinstall reported that crime was now recorded at local level and he had received information about the number of crimes committed in South Broxtowe in one week. He suggested that the Select Committee chose a division and analyse the information and invite the Divisional Commander or other local police officer. Councillor Carter commented that the County Council had a budget for crime reduction and he thought the role of the Select Committee was to ensure value for money. Councillor Laughton thought there was a complete disregard for authority and that work was needed in schools if the problem was to be tackled.

The scope of the review agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was noted.

CRIME REDUCTION

Chris Walker the Safer Communities Manager gave a presentation to the Select Committee on crime reduction. He outlined the community safety chart for Nottinghamshire and indicated that the Nottinghamshire Community Safety Board was Chaired by Councillor Gilfoyle. In Nottinghamshire there had been a specific community safety function since the early 1990s and the Safer Communities Team had been operating since 2003. The budget was £900,000. The themes funded were anti social behaviour (wardens, ASB officers, PCSOs etc); partnerships; vulnerable groups (victim support, domestic violence); and strategic data sharing. He gave details of statistics for domestic burglary and vehicle crime and indicated that it was expected that they would both show an increase when the final quarter's figures were included. With regard to violent crime the rates were increasing but they were increasing nationally faster than in Nottinghamshire. He indicated that the number of robberies was creeping up and that they had started to move out into the conurbation.

Mr Walker referred to the crime problem solving triangle which had an offender, a victim and a location. He commented that if one of these was removed crime would be reduced. He suggested that future meetings look at the role of partners and the local area agreement together with the input from the Police and the District Councils. A further meeting could look at the County Council's contribution with input from the portfolio holder.

Councillor Knight felt that the Select Committee needed to look at whether the budget of £900,000 was being used effectively. Chris Walker reported that the Home Office put £1m into the Local Area Agreements which was divided up between the 7 district partnerships. Councillor Carter commented that if the Local Area Agreement targets were not achieved the authority was penalised. He thought there was a need to encourage people to give information about people who committed crime. He thought that a lot of work could be done by schools and partners.

Councillor Laughton felt that the statistics for domestic burglary and car crime were distorted because people did not report crimes as they felt it made no difference or that there would be no Police action afterwards. He thought that this lack of reporting had an impact on the way the Police allocated their resources. Councillor Knight felt

that if any society had a lack of confidence in its law and order it was important. He thought that there was a need for a meeting with the Police so that the concerns could be put forward. Councillor Lally thought that people should be encouraged to report crimes.

In response to a question from Councillor Lonergan, Chris Walker explained that the performance targets were set in the Local Area Agreements including the best value ones. He added that the Government determined that some indicators were mandatory and work was then done with Government Office to set targets with partners. He commented that the Authority had previously set targets which were aspirational and that people had felt they were too high and would never be achieved.

Councillor Heptinstall felt that the purpose of the Select Committee was about reducing crime. He pointed out that information from the Police was available at local level and referred to newsletters which were produced which gave information about what was being done and reported successes. He added that he had now put this information on his County Councillor webpage. He thought that perhaps we could look at an individual councillor level as to what can be done and suggested that we ask the Police what more could be done.

Councillor Carter felt that partnership working only worked if everyone was committed. Councillor Knight suggested that the Select Committee invite the Chief Constable to the next meeting.

Councillor Lonergan referred to the crime problem solving triangle and commented that another aspect was the question of what happened when a person was caught carrying out a crime.

It was reported that a Nottinghamshire Police Chief Superintendent, Richard Johnson, had joined the County Council on a two year secondment.

In view of the Committee's decision to look next at crime figures and action being taken it was agreed to invite the Chief Constable to the next meeting, together with the Council's Cabinet Member.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Select Committee would be held on Monday, 23rd April 2007 at 1.30 pm subject to the agreement of the Whips.

The meeting closed at 11.40 am.

CHAIR

Ref: crime reduction/m_19 march07