

## **PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 24 OCTOBER 2019**

**Present:** Cllrs Daryl Turner (Chairman), Cherry Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Robin Cook, Jean Dunseith, David Taylor, Simon Gibson, Val Potheary, Andrew Starr and Roland Tarr

**Apologies:** Cllrs Ryan Hope

**Also present:** Cllr Tony Alford, Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Graham Carr-Jones, Cllr Les Fry, Cllr Barry Goringe, Cllr David Gray and Cllr Andrew Kerby

**Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):**

Marc Eyre (Service Manager for Assurance), Andy Frost (Community Safety and Drug Action Manager), William Haydock (Senior Health Programme Advisor), Kerry Pitt-Kerby (Environmental Health Manager - Environmental Protection), Karyn Punchard (Corporate Director of Place Services), Kate Shelley (Communications Officer), Jane Williams (Team Leader - Public Protection) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

**12. Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Ryan Hope.

**13. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2019 were agreed and signed.

**14. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

**15. Public Participation**

A question from a member of the public had been received on graffiti around the Weymouth town and Upwey areas. The question and answer is attached as an Annexure to these minutes.

There were no statements or questions submitted from Town and Parish Councils at this meeting.

**16. Statutory Guidance on Overview & Scrutiny Committees May 2019 (SW Councils Scrutiny Recommendation)**

The Chairman advised members that at a recent South West Scrutiny Chairs meeting that he had attended, it was suggested that The New Statutory

Guidance was placed on the Agenda of Committees for record. He had also sent this to all elected members along with the New Centre for Public Scrutiny Guide "Good Scrutiny Guide".

### **Noted**

#### **17. Annual Community Safety Report**

As the Place Scrutiny Committee was the Council's formal Crime and Disorder Committee (as required under the Police and Justice Act 2006), Members considered a report which set out the work undertaken by the Dorset Community Safety Partnership (CSP), and statutory plans and strategies for adoption by the Council.

The Cabinet Member for Housing introduced to members the Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), Andrew Kerby. Cllr Kerby had been Chairman of the Partnership for the past four years and welcomed the opportunity to bring this report to members. He advised members that the work of CSP was very complex and contained a lot of acronyms. He took this opportunity to remind members of the statutory responsibility for Dorset Council adding that crime was no longer the sole responsibility of the Police. There was now a multi-agency approach to tackling difficult issues at a strategic level.

In respect of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs), the Chairman noted that he and the Vice-Chairman had recently attended a meeting in order to gain better insight into DHRs. He had learned that there was a high degree of scrutiny taking place during the whole process but felt that this Committee should review actions specific to Dorset Council and a process for this had now been put in place.

Members noted that the reports were created by multi-agencies and attention was drawn to Appendix 2 of the report which showed graphs giving trend information. The trends looked as if they were rising but the notes below gave the reasons why.

Following a question from a member relating to cyber-crime, Chief Inspector Jim Bushell noted that they were undoubtedly seeing an increase in this area of crime. In respect of scams he advised that the Police had done a lot of work with banks locally and nationally to help in this regard. Officers sent out a high number of alerts and messages to the public and were working hard to find other ways to get messages out to the older members of the population. He added that one of the main problems was that a lot of the offenders appeared to be based overseas and highlighted the work of the Action Fraud work that was being undertaken.

The Vice-Chairman made reference to the drug and alcohol section and felt that some of the words/statements were not quantified and therefore was unable to get an idea of the scale of the problem. Dr Will Haydock advised Public Health could provide data and analysis on specific issues if requested

but noted that certain figures were only estimates. The figures were reported to the Joint Public Health Board which oversaw the work this area.

### **Resolved**

That Members of the Committee considered and commented on partners' community safety work.

### **Recommended**

That Cabinet be asked to recommend the Community Safety Plan 2017-2020 (2019 refresh), Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2018-2021 (2019 refresh), including the amendment, and Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset 2016-2020 Alcohol and Drugs Strategy to Dorset Council for adoption as amended by the Supplement for Item 6, Appendix 4 – Amendment of Wording in the Reducing Reoffending Strategy (Page 4 – Dorset, Devon and Cornwall Community Rehabilitation Company).

### **Reason for recommendation**

To ensure Dorset Council met its duties as set out in relevant legislation.

## **18. Proposed content of Public Consultation for a dog-related Public Spaces Protection Order**

Members considered a report which set out the content of the consultation for a Dog-related Public Spaces protection Order (PSPO) to replace and consolidate existing PSPOs and byelaws for the Dorset Council area.

Members were also asked to consider the time extension of current Dog-related PSPOs covering the former East Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland council areas to 31 December 2020 to enable the new Order to be properly made.

The Cabinet Member for Customer, Communities and Regulatory Services advised members that any changes made during the consultation period would require an extension to the current consultation period (Appendix B of the report refers). Appendix A of the report was about engaging with members of the public.

The Chairman shared with members 2 emails that had been received from Cllr Gill Taylor and Cllr Ryan Hope regarding the wishes of Weymouth Town Council to reduce the time that dogs are banned from certain areas of the beach in order to support the economy of the town.

The Environmental Health Manager explained that the existing Order already provided for part of the beach to be used as an exercise area and therefore dog walkers could use part of Weymouth Beach now and throughout the summer. Any changes made now would need to go through another 12 week consultation period, which would mean being behind with this consultation. He recognised and understood the wishes of Weymouth and suggested they engaged with this consultation which was expected to cover all the points that had been raised.

In response to a question about the signposting of dog walking areas, members were advised that the Beach team at Weymouth displayed notices which clearly signposted dog walkers to the appropriate places.

One member highlighted the importance of these Orders being kept and adhered to in respect of bacteria, infections and infestations.

Following a concern from the Vice-Chairman about the reluctance to push forward what was being put forward by Weymouth Town council, the Environmental Health Manager explained that it could be progressed but the implications were that this would not start until the New Year and would result in having 2 consultations running at the same time and the chances of getting it in place by next summer would be unlikely. The Cabinet Member noted that this would involve a lot of additional time and effort along with confusion and officers had not as yet identified the benefits. Government guidance in respect of consultations was highlighted. There was an opportunity within the consultation in the comments box to bring Weymouth in.

In response to a query about question 4 in the proposed consultation, 'dogs on leads on roads and pavements within 30 mph zones', officers advised this was in line with Highways legislation.

Following a question about beaches in the eastern end of the county as they now came under the authority of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP), officers advised BCP would have to make their own decisions on how they wished to address their expiry dates for their Orders.

Officers advised that the consultation did not include school playing fields as the Government viewed education areas as different so therefore was outside of this control

In respect of question 20, the Chairman sought agreement from members to consider adding a time limit for dogs to be allowed on beaches, say 6am - 8am. The Corporate Director for Place Services advised caution as beach cleansing regimes took place in the early hours and this could result in a heightened risk of faeces being left behind. It was also noted this could affect the blue flag status of beaches. Following discussion, Members did not agree to adding a time limit in this regard.

The Chairman felt as there was such a huge difference in public opinion in different areas the Council was unlikely to achieve one Order covering all beaches

Following a discussion about the number of enforcement officers and their hours of duty, the Corporate Director advised she would be looking at capacity across all Place services. Dog wardens were from predecessor councils and worked outside of normal working hours, and would need to be brought together with other enforcement officers. It would be important to pull teams together as part of the transformation work and this could involve looking at terms and conditions. As well as dog wardens and enforcement officers there were a lot of other staff that were engaged in enforcement work.

Members agreed there was a real problem with dog fouling in all areas, not just on the beaches but in town areas also, and felt that the only way to change these habits would be to have a campaign and carry out more enforcement.

The Vice-Chairman felt there was a real opportunity here to encourage dog walkers to carry on using beaches, where permitted, in respect of the health and wellbeing agenda.

Members felt that the proposed consultation was thorough and provided the information that was required and therefore unanimously agreed the proposals.

### **Recommended**

1. That Cabinet be asked to consider the consultation proposals and approve the content of the consultation as set out in Appendix A for the Director's report.

2. That Cabinet be asked to approve the extension of the current Dog-related PSPO's in the former East Dorset, Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland council areas until 31 December 2020.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. One Dog-related PSPO for the council area will help ensure consistency, fairness and clarity for residents and visitors to Dorset and will assist the efficient use of enforcement resources.

2. While it is a requirement to consult with stakeholders prior to introducing a PSPO, it is appropriate to define the parameters of the consultation in order to avoid generating unworkable proposals or raising unreasonable expectations.

3. A number of Dog-related PSPOs currently in place from predecessor councils will expire during the period of making the new Order. Should those expiry dates not be extended, it will not be possible to enforce the relevant requirements for public safety and animal welfare.

## **19. Complaints**

Members considered a report which provided an update for members on the numbers, types and outcomes of complaints made against services that sit within the Place Directorate.

The key messages for this quarter were highlighted to members. The Service Manager for Assurance highlighted that the numbers of complaints generating learning for the organisation were currently low, but that his vision for the new service would include analysing of trends and embedding organisational learning. There were no complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman during this period, therefore no issues of maladministration to report.

The Service Manager for Assurance highlighted that 36 Compliments had been received across the directorate in Quarter 1 which continued the work that had been done in Quarter 4.

The Chairman welcomed the report and felt there was a real opportunity to build on this in respect of trends and analysis of complaints.

The Vice-Chairman felt it would be helpful to see how many complaints were signed off satisfactorily. She was pleased to see that compliments received were included in the quarterly report.

### **Noted**

#### **20. Forward Plan Place Scrutiny and Cabinet Decisions**

Members considered the Cabinet Forward Plan. The Chairman highlighted the Quarter 2 budget update which was a crucial part of the budget building exercise. He also reflected on the Somerley Household Recycling Centre item which members had commented on prior to it being taken to Cabinet. The Leader of Dorset Council had now met with Hampshire County Council with the aim of moving forward and this would be discussed at Cabinet on 5 November 2019.

Members also noted the decisions made by the Cabinet at meetings prior to Place Scrutiny Committee meetings.

Members considered the Place Scrutiny Forward Plan. The Chairman advised that he and the Vice-Chairman had met with Members from the Town and Parish Councils/Local Area From Task and Finish Group and discussed how they could add value to the Executive Advisory Panel (EAP) on Relationships with Town and Parish Councils. As the EAP were due to meet with Town and Parish Councils at a number of workshops, members felt it would be prudent to await the outcome of these meetings before moving forward with more practical ways of looking at service delivery, Localism and Area Boards.

The Cabinet Member for Customer, Communities and Regulatory Services Alford advised members on the progress of the work being done with the Executive Advisory Panel (EAP). Workshops with Town and Parish councils had been arranged and the first one had recently been held in Bridport. Nearly 60 town and parish councillors attended and engaged with other members. This work would continue with more workshops and a survey which would run until the end of November. In December some summary work would take place prior to a second round of workshops in the New Year.

Members discussed the undertaking of a piece of work on the merging of the policies of previous councils into Dorset Council policy. The Chairman advised that having had a look into Dorset Councils Policy Library (for Place) he had found a number of Policies from many predecessor Councils that needed updating in order to produce Policies for this Council. These could be looked at via Working Groups or through this Committee. Members may also wish to look at the library for themselves and bring forward their priorities. In the first instance the Chairman felt the following policies; Tree, Car Parking and Dorset County Council Carbon Management Beyond 2010 should be taken forward.

Cllr Tarr wished to pay his compliments to all the staff who had helped him in the past 6 months especially in relation to recent highways and engineering works. He also wished to thank Democratic Services for their training and induction sessions which he had found very helpful. He also mentioned recent AONB sessions which had been really helpful and informative.

**Noted**

**21. Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items of business.

**Duration of meeting:** 10.00 - 11.18 am

**Chairman**

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