

**Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
20 September 2016**

Present:

Councillor C.A. Davis (Chairman)
Councillor S.C. Mooney (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

R.O. Barratt	A.L. Griffiths	O. Rybinski
S.M. Doran	N. Islam	R.A. Smith-Ainsley
K. Flurry	J.G. Kavanagh	B.B. Spoor
M.P.C. Francis	D. Patel	

Apologies: Councillors S. Capes

204/16 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2016 were approved as a correct record.

205/16 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

206/16 Call-in of Cabinet decisions

No Cabinet decisions had been called in for review.

207/16 Review of Community Safety

The Community Safety Manager gave an update on Community Safety issues over the past year. He detailed the performance data for the period April 2015 to July 2016 for the key priorities for the Community Safety Team: house burglary, vehicle crime, violence with injury and anti-social behaviour.

Acting Inspector Josh Parish provided up to date crime figures from those presented in the report: all notifiable offences were down 5%; violence with injury was down; overall violent crime was up although this included such incidents as shouting on the street, fighting in the playground and offences committed by prison inmates. Vehicle crime was up but a team of offenders who had been responsible for a spate of such crimes were now in prison. The biggest drop had been in reports of anti-social behaviour which were down by 451 reports (30%) compared to the same period last year. The Community

Safety Manager was unable to explain the reason for the drop which he believed could have been due to a number of factors, including people losing patience waiting to get through on the 101 non-emergency number and hanging up the phone. Acting Insp. Parish commented that incidents could be reported in ways other than calling on the phone.

The Community Safety Manager highlighted the fact that a need by Surrey Police to identify savings and still deliver core policing to local communities had led to a re-structure in April 2016 and as a result the Community Safety Team had seen a stark rise in residents contacting them particularly about neighbourhood issues. In addition, the decision by the Police to vacate their tenancy at the Council offices had resulted in a significant drop in communication and mutual exchange of information. The new model, called Policing in Your Neighbourhood (PIYN), was currently under review.

Acting Insp. Parish commented that the re-structure had not resulted in a reduction in police numbers, but that it had taken time to train up staff. Response police officers had been allocated specifically to the borough, so they would get to know the offenders and the areas to target. The police were aware of the issues that the changes had brought about but reassured councillors that they would give the police better resilience in future.

Acting Insp. Parish responded to issues raised by Residents' Associations relating to: nuisance caused by motorbikes; anti-social behaviour in Shepperton and Hengrove Park, Ashford; and litter from HGVs parked in laybys. He agreed to pass on the information the police had not previously been aware of to be looked into, and explained the actions police were already taking to deal with known issues as resources allowed.

The Community Safety Manager responded to concerns about non-working CCTV cameras in Hengrove Park explaining the plans in place to upgrade all cameras to wireless connectivity by April 2017. This was more cost effective than assessing and repairing individual cameras. He agreed to have the Hengrove camera prioritised for replacement when the upgrade began.

Surrey's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), David Munro outlined his role and highlighted as priority issues: raising with the Court Prosecution Service the length of time it takes to bring serious sexual and domestic abuse cases to court; transferring as many funds as possible to frontline services aided by an estates strategy aiming to raise as much money as possible from building sales; and undertaking two projects to improve 101 non-emergency responses by bringing in additional staff (including health professionals) and installing a proper call handling system.

Mr Munro explained that the aim of PIYN was to have police officers closer to their neighbourhoods. They were undergoing training to enable them to have the skills to support a victim throughout the process from reporting to conviction. He said he took the comments made in this forum seriously and would undertake a thorough review to look at all the implications of this policing model.

Mr Munro responded to further questions from the floor.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Ian Harvey, thanked Surrey Police for their work and support and the PCC for all the efforts he made for the borough.

Resolved to note the report of the Community Safety Manager on the review of community safety 2015-2016.

208/16 Joint Enforcement Team

The Group Head of Neighbourhood Services reported on the work of the Joint Enforcement Team (JET) which consisted of 4 law enforcement officers who worked with and assisted the police to enforce relevant Acts of Parliament and Council bye-laws and issued fixed penalty notices when required.

The JET had been working in many different areas of enforcement including: illegal estate agent boards, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, illegal moorings and dog fouling. The JET had also taken part in Partnership Action Days and the Junior and Senior Citizen events.

She reported on JET's success in catching fly tippers and how the implementation of a new process to deal with traveller incursions would remove travellers faster and prevent them from returning to anywhere in Spelthorne at any time, with the use of a Community Protection Notice.

Although the intention of setting up JET was for it to work side by side with the police, the Group Head of Neighbourhood Services explained that since the police had moved out of the Council offices, the communication channels had deteriorated and this had impacted on the Team's ability to respond quickly on day to day issues. However, there had been an improvement in co-ordination and working practices between the JET and the Community Safety Team since the Council's internal staff re-structure.

The Committee thanked Jackie Taylor and the JET for the work they were doing.

The Chairman asked for a straw poll of those councillors present on whether they would wish Surrey Police to make such adjustments to their working practices as necessary to reinstate the previous way in which they worked with the JET. Of all those present, both Committee members and other councillors, 15 indicated in favour.

Resolved to note the work of the Spelthorne Joint Enforcement Team.

209/16 Cabinet Forward Plan

The Committee considered the Cabinet Forward Plan.

Resolved to note the Cabinet Forward Plan.

210/16 Work Programme

The Committee considered its work programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2016/17. The Chairman asked members to contact him with any suggestions for a main topic to be discussed at the January 2017 meeting.

Resolved to note the Work Programme for 2016/17.