

Minutes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26th September 2012



Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
P R Barlow	Yes	F Ricci	Yes
C A Cadman	Apologies	W J Rose	Yes
Dr R L Evans (Chairman)	Yes	A F Shelton	Yes
P Horner	Yes	J S Sutton	Yes
S A Howell	Yes	J R Swift	Yes
R P Ramage	Yes		

Cllr Schmitt, Cabinet Member, Place, was also in attendance.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

INFORMATION: There were no declarations of interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, all councillors remained in the meeting for all items and took part in the debate and decision thereon.

16. QUESTION TIME

INFORMATION: There were no questions asked or statements made.

17. MINUTES

DECISION: That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11th July 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18. CABINET RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON TRANSPORT AND ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES ACROSS THE DISTRICT

INFORMATION: Members noted the generally positive response of Cabinet. Members agreed that the Committee should a report around late summer 2013 reviewing progress regarding the recommendations.

DECISION:

1. That the response of Cabinet to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations be noted.

2. That the Committee receives a report around late summer 2013 reviewing progress regarding the recommendations in its report on Transport and Access to Health Services across the District.

REASON FOR DECISION: To monitor progress regarding the recommendations in the Committee's report on Transport and Access to Health Services across the District.

19. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2012-13 – SCRUTINY OF THE BRAINTREE DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

INFORMATION: The Chairman welcomed the following invited speakers:

Nicola Beach	Corporate Director, Braintree District Council and Chairman, Braintree CSP
James Taylor	Essex Fire and Rescue Service and Vice Chairman, Braintree CSP
Helena Goodwin	Community Services Manager, Braintree District Council
Chief Inspector Nick Lee	District Policing Area Commander, Uttlesford and Braintree

Invited speakers provided the following information in response to questions raised by members:

- Monitoring progress of actions and items in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Annual Plan is a standing item on Partnership meeting agendas. The Plan is regularly updated in terms of outcomes and Council Officers would be pleased to provide Committee members with an updated version of the Plan as soon as it becomes available;
- CSP strategic priorities are developed based on evidential data and are intelligence led;
- Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) remains an issue within the district. However, the number of incidences has decreased each year since 2005. As a result, Anti Social Behaviour is not a priority in itself for the CSP. ASB does link in through CSP work on its education and prevention programme in schools;
- A large number of children in schools are covered by the programme. Although a direct correlation in terms of ASB incidences in the district as a result of the programme is not possible, ASB in the district is reducing;
- Areas covered by the Community Led Solutions approach include ASB and nuisance behaviour. People calling to report issues are now asked to be part of the solution. As a result, there is now stronger engagement with communities with some taking responsibility for the situations;

- There are 3 local Delivery Groups in the district which operate through schools. The Groups are managed by Essex County Council with a representative on the CSP;
- Each organisation in the CSP has its own corporate objectives and targets with partners working together to address jointly those which are appropriate to do so. Joint working has been effective with CSP outcomes achieved through good collaboration and focussing resources in to priority areas. The CSP also brings together people and organisations with the right skills to address the various objectives and targets;
- Focus groups are only held when there is a particular issue to be resolved. The groups, when held, usually lead to the development of community led solutions;
- The Council's objectives include safe and health living and flourishing communities which link directly to those of the CSP. Members noted that there are no annual reports to the Council on the performance of the CSP;
- Crucial Crew is targeted at Year 6 pupils and cover all 49 primary schools in the district and is the starting point in terms of community safety. A "Being Safe" programme is offered to every secondary school in the district;
- A Twitter account for the CSP was opened in July 2012. Numbers following the account are currently low although it is hoped that they will rise as it is a low cost and quick communication tool;
- The CSP has discussed the issue of raising awareness of its existence and its work. However, the public is more interested in the outcome of the CSP eg. crime reduction than the existence of the CSP;
- Legislation specifies that the portfolio holder attends CSP meetings with non-voting rights. Portfolio holders do not have voting rights as they belong to a political group. However, if other elected members wish to observe CSP meetings, provided other CSP members gave their consent, there should not be an issue with an elected member attending in this capacity;
- Voting rights has never been an issue for the CSP as it has always operated successfully through consensus;
- The relationship between the CSP and the Police will change through the introduction of the directly elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in November. It is understood the PCC will have to have regard to the CSPs although it remains to be seen what this will mean in practice;
- Around 3-4 years ago, the CSP received around £144,000 per year directly from the Home Office. In 2012-13, the CSP has received £10,000 and moving forward, the PCC will hold the budget for community safety;
- Unlike some CSPs, the Braintree CSP has not spent all of the funds it has received and therefore, still has some funds available. The CSP's work programme

is being assessed against these available funds. However, if less funds are available, there will inevitably be redundancies;

- The North Essex Joint CSP Commissioning Group comprises Colchester, Tendring, Uttlesford, Maldon, Chelmsford and Braintree CSPs. The Group is looking at innovative ways of working including the pooling of resources and working together where joint priorities can be agreed. The Group should also provide an effective and focused way to work with the PCC. Although pooling resources, each CSP is still looking to maintain local priorities;
- Statistics obtain by the CSP will still be forwarded to the Home Office although they will also be seen by the PCC;
- In the light of the changes in the NHS, a Public Health Coordinator has been appointed for the district. The Coordinator has links with a number of organisations including the Public Health Intelligence Unit and the Clinical Commissioning Group and is well placed to work with the CSP. The Coordinator spends part of his time working in Braintree District Council which helps ensure good close working relationships;
- The Police target prolific offenders, many of whom are responsible for crime in both rural and urban areas. The CSP does not differentiate between geographical areas but focuses resources on target groups, e.g. Young people and themes, e.g. Domestic Abuse.

Members also thought Neighbourhood Action Panel and Joint Action Group meetings could be better publicised with a view to increasing attendance by members of the public. Council Officers agreed to work with the Police on how these meetings are publicised.

The Chairman invited Councillor Schmitt, Cabinet Member, Place, to add any comments. Councillor Schmitt noted that members concerns included the Cabinet member being a non statutory member of the CSP and having no voting rights. She said there had never been a vote at a CSP meeting and that all matters are taken forward by consensus.

Councillor Schmitt commented that there were concerns about the future of CSPs in the light of funding issues. However, a lot could be achieved by close working without money.

Councillor Schmitt also said that the district is fortunate in the calibre of officers and partners and their ability work together. She thought that even if funds are not available for the CSP, the ethos of joint working will continue.

The Chairman thanked members for their questions. The Chairman also thanked the invited speakers for their extremely helpful contributions. He commented that the Committee still had further work to carry out in reviewing the CSP but the meeting had provided a very good start to the review.

20. **DECISION PLANNER**

DECISION: That the Decision Planner for the period 1st October 2012 to 31st January 2013 be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 8.53pm.

Dr R L Evans
Chairman