

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
1 MAY 2014
7.30 - 9.15 PM**



Present:

Councillors Leake (Chairman), Angell (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Birch, Ms Brown, Finnie, Gbadebo, Harrison, Mrs McCracken and Virgo

Mr R Briscoe, Parent Governor Representative
Ms L Wellsted, Parent Governor Representative

Executive Members:

Councillors McCracken

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Baily, Heydon and McLean

In Attendance:

Timothy Wheadon, Chief Executive
Richard Beaumont, Head of Overview & Scrutiny
Ian Boswell, Community Safety Manager
John Campbell, Assistant Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police
Chief Inspector Dave Gilbert, Bracknell Local Police Area, Thames Valley Police
Alison Koen, Community Safety Officer

70. Minutes and Matters Arising

Following a query raised by a member of the Commission, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 17 March 2014 confirmed that he considered the minutes to be an accurate reflection of the discussion that took place at the meeting.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission meetings held on 17 March 2014 and 20 March 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

At its meeting on 30 April 2014, Council had considered a report on the Call-In of the Executive Decision to introduce a no right turn restriction Beehive Road/B3408 London Road Binfield and had resolved to recommend to the Executive Member that the original Executive Member decision should not be implemented. A resolution requesting more detailed analysis on the traffic flow around the junction be carried out before any further decisions were taken in relation to this matter was also approved.

Information requested by members at the meeting on 20 March, concerning economic activity rates, and staff turnover in the Children, Young People and Learning Department, had been circulated separately to members.

71. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

Councillor Mrs Birch declared an interest as the spouse of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Housing.

Councillor Mrs McCracken declared an interest as the spouse of the Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection.

72. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

73. Public Participation

There were no submissions from members of the public in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

74. Community Safety

Meeting as the Crime and Disorder Committee, Assistant Chief Constable John Campbell, Chief Inspector Dave Gilbert, Timothy Wheadon Chairman of the Community Safety Partnership, Ian Boswell Community Safety Manager and Alison Koen, Community Safety Officer, were welcomed to the meeting.

Ian Boswell, Community Safety Manager gave a presentation in respect of the performance of the Bracknell Forest Community Safety Partnership during 2013-14. The presentation included an overview of the Partnership's make up, priorities and challenges, resourcing and comparator data.

The Community Safety Partnership was a statutory partnership which was well supported by all agencies involved in its work. Both statutory and non-statutory partners were fully engaged with the Partnership's work bringing their own areas of expertise to the table.

For the past few years, Thames Valley Police and the Community Safety Team had been focused on reducing crime levels across the area and tackling the public's disproportionate fear of crime. Work that was proving successful as crime levels continued to fall. Total recorded crime levels were now at their lowest level since 1998 and between 2008/9 and 2013/14 there had been a 42% drop in recorded crime. The innovative development of a Community Safety Team that was shared between the Police and the Local Authority and the strength of the Bracknell Forest Community Safety Partnership, were considered to be key to this success. Measures of note for the Partnership during 2013-14 included:

- 5% reduction in all crime
- 25% reduction in burglary from dwellings
- 15% reduction in criminal damage.
- 8% reduction in violence with injury
- There had been 47 incidents of robbery which represented a 38% increase on the previous year however this was considered relatively low when compared against neighbouring Local Police Areas (LPAs) e.g. Slough LPA (139 incidents), Windsor and Maidenhead LPA (60 incidents) and Reading LPA (146 incidents)

It was reported that when compared against the performance of the closest fourteen

comparator police areas Bracknell Forest LPA had been ranked as being the fifth best performing LPA in the comparator group. The independently managed Crime Survey of England and Wales also indicated a significant drop in the levels of crime experienced in the Borough over the past year.

In December 2013, the Community Safety Partnership carried out a strategic assessment the results of which were subsequently used to inform the Community safety Partnership's 12 crime and disorder priorities for 2014/15. Of these twelve priorities tackling Domestic Abuse and IT related crime and internet safety would be key work areas over the coming year.

Tackling domestic abuse was seen as being a key priority area for the Partnership during 2014/15 not only because of the impact that it had on victims but also because of the impact that it would have on other priority areas. Domestic abuse had a broad definition that covered threats, harassment, fear of intimidation and violence against a person and whilst the statistics relating to domestic abuse were rising a significant amount of work had taken place to raise awareness of the problem and encourage reporting and the rise gave the police confidence that people were becoming more willing to come forward and report the problem.

Tackling domestic abuse was a cross cutting piece of work and a number of initiatives were already taking place in an effort to reduce levels including the Domestic Abuse Service Co-ordination (DASC) Service which was working with 2 cohorts of 90 perpetrators and their victims, the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Service (DAPS) which was working with perpetrators where children who were on child protection plans due to domestic abuse were present and PICADA a programme of positive interventions for children affected by domestic abuse.

Arising from members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- The DASC programme was being monitored by Cambridge University and following completion of data analysis a report on its outcomes would be given to members
- The recent report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary that 20% of reported crimes were not recorded, did not apply to Thames Valley. HMIC's previous inspections of Thames Valley Police performance on this matter had not raised undue concerns. Thames Valley Police's central Performance Team regularly sampled all 999 and 101 calls received across the Thames Valley Police area and cross checked these against the crimes recorded by officers. The analysis was then used to help inform the distribution of staff across the region ensuring that officers were deployed in the most effective and appropriate way. Members of the Commission would be welcome to visit Oxford Headquarters to receive a further briefing on this area
- At a local level all crime reports directed to the Bracknell Forest LPA were scrutinised by a local team of officers on a daily basis
- One of the strengths of the CADIS anti-social behaviour database was that the database was informed using a wide range of sources. Checks were made to ensure that incidents were not being double counted
- When an incident occurred that fell under one of the defined crime categories was reported this was classified as a Recorded Crime. If a call was received where an allegation was made that something had occurred but there was no credible evidence to show the existence of a defined crime then this was classified as a Crime Recorded Incident. It was the difference between these two sets of figures that had been highlighted in a recent Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Report

- Thames Valley Police used the same definition of domestic abuse as that used by the Home Office
- Police Intelligence Teams used the information supplied by the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) System to help them track the movement of criminals travelling into and out of the Borough
- The ANPR system currently covered all the main routes into and out of the Borough. Business cases had to be produced to justify why ANPR systems should be used on a particular route
- Restorative justice was considered to be a powerful tool. It was already being used by the Youth Offending Service and work was taking place to extend the scheme in Bracknell Forest
- It had been recognised that the presence of Broadmoor Hospital had a negative impact on levels of recorded crime in Crowthorne and work was taking place to ensure that the Hospital's presence was distinguished in national data sets. Work was also taking place with Broadmoor Hospital directly to try and reduce the level of crime taking place in the Hospital and increase the number of prosecutions for crimes occurring in the Hospital
- The Partnership had strong links with the National Probation Service and both the Police and the Council's Community Safety Team worked closely with the Probation Service in Bracknell Forest
- It was acknowledged that the imminent changes to the National Probation Service had created uncertainty about arrangements going forward however it was also considered a positive move with the creation of a new Community Probation Service which would work with offenders who had been sentenced to less than 12 months in prison. A situation that did not currently happen
- The Police and Crime Commissioner had indicated that the funding available to Community Safety Partnerships would reduce in coming years however it was expected that any reduction in Bracknell Forest would be at a similar level to the reductions that would be experienced by other Thames Valley Community Safety Partnerships
- The presentation would be circulated to the Commission
- Mr Wheadon drew attention to the links between the CSP's work and other council activities, and said that the CSP was regarded as an exemplar partnership.

The Police and Crime Commissioner had commended the performance of the Bracknell Forest LPA and acknowledged that the strength of the Community Safety Partnership played a significant role in this successful performance citing it as an exemplar in of close positive work.

The Commission thanked Assistant Chief Constable John Campbell, Chief Inspector Dave Gilbert, Timothy Wheadon, Ian Boswell and Alison Koen for their informative update and commended the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

75. Executive Forward Plan

The Commission received and noted a report summarising the Executive Key and Non-Key decisions relating to corporate issues.

76. Appointment of Parent Governor Representative

The Commission received a report seeking approval to appoint a Parent Governor Representative on to the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

The Council's Constitution stipulates that Council will appoint members of the Overview and Scrutiny commission and the Commission shall then appoint members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

At its meeting on 30 April 2014, Council resolved that Mrs Linda Wellsted, a Parent Governor at Brakenhale School be appointed as a parent governor representative to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for a term of four years.

RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Commission appoint Mrs Linda Wellsted as a parent governor representative to the Children, Young people and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel for a term of office of four years.

77. Work Programme and Panel Activity Update

The Commission received a report providing an update on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2013-14, with particular reference to the Working Groups of the Commission.

It was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14 had been approved by Council on 30 April 2014. The majority of the work in the 2013/14 work programme was now complete and work would now commence on the 2014/15 work programme.

It was requested that Members respond to Councillor Finnie's recent request for information to feed into the Working Group Review of Cultural Services as soon as possible.

It was noted that the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel had identified a small number of concerns over the 2014/15 budget and these were being worked through.

The Commission noted the report and thanked officers for the support that they had given the Council's Scrutiny process over the past year.

CHAIRMAN