

## **Minutes of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board**

**2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2018 at 5.30pm  
at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Present:** Councillor Ahmed (Chair);  
Councillor Crompton (Vice-Chair);  
Councillors Allcock, Chidley, Hadley, M Hussain,  
Phillips and White.

**Apologies:** Councillors Hevican, M Y Hussain and S Jones.

**In attendance:** Alan Caddick (Director – Housing and Communities).

### 8/18 **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2018 be approved as a correct record.

### 9/18 **Anti-Social Behaviour, Community Safety and Crime in Sandwell**

The Council's Director – Housing and Communities attended the meeting and presented on a range of topics relating to anti-social behaviour, community safety and crime. These included:-

- The implementation of the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy;
- Update on the West Bromwich Public Space Protection Order (PSPO);
- Crime Prevention and the role of the Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board;
- Vehicle-based anti-social behaviour.

The Council's refreshed Anti-Social Behaviour Policy had been agreed by the Cabinet in October 2017 and work had taken place since that time, and was ongoing, to implement all aspects of the procedures and practices that underpinned the Policy.

The Scrutiny Board had previously discussed the proposals for a West Bromwich PSPO (see Minute No. 7/17) and since that time consultation had been carried out with the public, the local business community and

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other stakeholders. The feedback from this consultation was overwhelmingly in support of restrictions relating to:

- Alcohol related anti-social behaviour;
- Threatening/intimidating behaviour;
- Violent behaviour;
- Begging;
- Nuisance parking.

The Cabinet had agreed the PSPO on 25 July, 2018 (see Minute No. 102/18) and it was implemented from 1 August, 2018 for a period of three years.

The Director advised the Scrutiny Board that he was the vice-chair of the Safer Sandwell Partnership Police and Crime Board, which brought together representatives of a range of partner organisations to address crime and improve community safety. The Safer Sandwell Partnership's current key priorities and themes were:-

- Prevent violence and exploitation;
- Reduce offending and organised crime;
- Solve problems in the neighbourhoods – including tackling crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Protect and support vulnerable victims.

There were a number of initiatives used in and planned for Sandwell including the popular Safer 6 programme which was a collaborative multi-agency initiative in the autumn targeting one of Sandwell's towns each week over six weeks with a range of activities to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, tackle environmental issues, work with partners and local people and support young people.

Other initiatives included the reintroduction of tasking processes, a multi-agency 'Street a Week' initiative to address streets experiencing problems from crime and anti-social behaviour in an intensive way to help reassure the local community.

The Scrutiny Board noted that in 2017-18 vehicle related anti-social behaviour accounted for 15% of cases, which made it the third most common anti-social behaviour case behind loud music/neighbours and verbal abuse/harassment.

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From the comments and questions by members of the Scrutiny Board the following responses were made and issues highlighted:-

- The Director – Housing and Communities was restructuring services and the Anti-Social Behaviour Team was planned to transfer to the Housing Management Service, which would allow earlier intervention and prevention in anti-social behaviour cases. There would also be a dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour Manager.
- There was a refocus on the victim and a person-centred approach would be used, which it was acknowledged had been missing previously. This refocussing was welcomed by the Scrutiny Board.
- Work continued on the development of a portal system, which would help to manage communication about anti-social behaviour cases and allow people to check progress online.
- The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy set out the range of powers and tools available to the Council to address anti-social behaviour.
- A performance dashboard for Neighbourhoods had been developed. The dashboard included performance indicators related to anti-social behaviour. This would be shared with the Scrutiny Board.
- Tenancy agreements for Council housing were being reviewed. It was intended to add good behaviour elements to the agreement for new tenants.
- The issue of Council tenants installing CCTV on their homes was being investigated. There was a suggestion that many tenants were not aware they needed to ask permission to install CCTV systems or that they needed to register with the Information Commissioner's Office.
- Council Policy prevented people made homeless due to anti-social behaviour from registering for a Council property; instead the Council would discharge its homelessness duties in other ways, for example through the privately rented sector.
- Tasking would be carried out in a way that was in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 with pseudonymisation used when necessary.

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- The Council and partners were engaging in outreach work with people begging in West Bromwich, with appropriate support offered to those who were homeless.
- There was an agreed framework of criteria for establishing a PSPO, and each area was taken on its own merits to determine if a PSPO was the most appropriate way of addressing issues in that locality.
- The Police were engaged with the Council in establishing the PSPO in West Bromwich and fully supported its introduction. The Police were represented on the monitoring and implementation group that had been established for the PSPO.
- The West Bromwich PSPO would last three years, after which it would need to be re-established if it was determined that it was still the most appropriate way of tackling any issues that remained in the area.
- Intelligence would be used to track and address any dispersal of anti-social behaviour to other areas as a result of the PSPO. This will be complemented by the re-introduction of Tasking processes.
- The Council acknowledged that specialist approaches were needed in relation to modern day slavery and preventing violence and exploitation. To assist in this, two posts had been established and were currently being recruited to.
- The Director – Housing and Communities was Sandwell's representative on the West Midlands Community Safety Partnership, which was set up by the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- The West Midlands Community Safety Partnership was commissioning a Drive Project programme, which was aimed at perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- A programme of 'target hardening' was being used, which deployed measures such as forensic marking of property to discourage crime and to reassure the community.
- The Black Country Car Cruising Injunction included motorcycles and there had been successful prosecutions using the Injunction.

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- Multi-agency meetings had been held regarding nuisance off-road motorcycles and green spaces.
- It was important to strengthen communication and community engagement around road racing, nuisance motorcycles and other vehicle based anti-social behaviour.
- Clarification around the responsible agency in situations where an untaxed vehicle was abandoned on Council land was requested.

The Scrutiny Board thanked the Director – Housing and Communities for attending the meeting.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) that the Director – Housing and Communities provides the Scrutiny Board with the performance dashboard information relevant to anti-social behaviour, with data made available at town level where possible;
- (2) that the following documents be circulated to the Scrutiny Board for information:-
  - (a) Anti-Social Behaviour Policy;
  - (b) Framework for Public Space Protection Orders;
  - (c) Sandwell Tenancy Agreement.
- (3) that, when in post, the details of the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Manager be circulated to all councillors.
- (4) that an update on Universal Credit in Sandwell be provided to the Board as part of its housing themed meeting in October 2018.

(Meeting ended at 7.13pm)

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