

Communities Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 6 September 2017

10:00am Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Mrs M Dewsbury – Chairman

Mr D Bills

Mrs J Brociek-Coulton

Mrs S Butikofer

Mr N Dixon

Mr R Hanton

Mr H Humphrey

Mr M Kiddle-Morris – Vice-Chairman

Ms C Rumsby

Mr T Smith

Mrs M Stone

Mr V Thomson

1. Apologies and substitutions

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Ms J Barnard and Mr I Mackie (Mr V Thomson substituted).

2 To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2017.

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2017 were agreed as an accurate record by the Committee and signed by the Chairman subject to the inclusion of Ms S Butikofer in the Membership of the Norfolk Community Safety Partnership Sub-Panel.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 No declarations of interest were made.

4. Urgent business

- 4.1 There was no urgent business.

5. Public Question Time

- 5.1 No public questions were received.

6. Local Member Issues / Members Questions

- 6.1 The following question had been received from Cllr S Morpew. The Committee agreed that a written response should be provided.

“What would be the advantages and disadvantages for the council and public in Norfolk if the Fire and Rescue Service was given statutory responsibilities for flood response?”.

7 Friends Against Scams

- 7.1 The Committee received and **noted** a presentation by the Lead Trading Standards Officer about the Trading Standards initiative to sign up “Friends Against Scams” across Norfolk. A copy of the presentation is attached at Appendix A.
- 7.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
 - 7.2.1 The Lead Trading Standards Officer agreed to re-circulate the details of the one-day conference on 14 September 2017 to Members.
 - 7.2.2 No national database of scams or scammers was kept, although a national team worked with various organisations throughout the world to identify scams and scammers. Even though intelligence was shared among organisations, the scams changed so frequently it was difficult to identify and prevent them.
 - 7.2.3 Community champions worked within local communities to support and help victims of scams. Notices were placed in shops, doctor surgeries and libraries to raise the public’s awareness of scams.
 - 7.2.4 The Committee was reassured that scam awareness was being raised in many different places, including banks and large supermarkets. The Trading Standards team had carried out some work with parish councils and had also attended some parish council meetings to highlight the issues. A suggestion was made about drafting an article for parish councils to include within their village magazines.
 - 7.2.5 Any incidents of fraud could be reported on the following link:
www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud

8 Norfolk Armed Forces Community Covenant Strategy and Action Plan

- 8.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services updating it on the independent Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board’s new Strategy and Action Plan for 2017-2020.
- 8.2 The Committee welcomed Wing Commander Stew Geary, from RAF Marham; Tony Tomkinson Armed Forces Commissioner and Councillor Keith Kiddie Norfolk County Council Armed Forces Member Champion, who attended the meeting to present the report and answer questions.
- 8.3 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
 - 8.3.1 Although every service member leaving the armed forces received a transition package, awareness needed to be raised about what skills they were able to transfer to the local jobs market. Each resettlement pack included information about available training courses, the local community and housing etc.

- Awareness needed to be raised with the local businesses about what skill sets service leavers could offer which would help businesses understand the skills ex-service personnel could bring to the workplace. The resettlement pack also gave information on how to write a CV using non-military terminology.
- 8.3.2 The Covenant Board Membership included a representative from the NHS.
- 8.3.3 On arrival at RAF Marham service personnel received a pack containing information about schools, doctors, dentists, public services. etc as well as information about the local community.
- 8.3.4 A suggestion was made that treatment offered by dentists to forces personnel on military bases could also be offered to the families of forces personnel.
- 8.3.5 There was no system in place for checking that ex-service personnel were settling into civilian life once they had left the service. There were organisations and charities which offered support to ex-service personnel, but if an individual decided not to engage with the resettlement service, there was no over-arching group in place to help those non-engaging individuals.
- 8.3.6 A suggestion was made about contacting the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) who may be able to signpost individuals to local businesses who needed staff with particular skill sets.
- 8.3.7 There were approximately 2500 service personnel based at RAF Marham, with an approximate additional 500 civilian employees. This meant that, while there were some opportunities for ex-service personnel to work at the bases, there was insufficient jobs for everyone leaving the services.
- 8.3.8 The Committee was reassured that work was carried out with Children's Services to support the families of service personnel. Additional funding could be applied for to support children of service personnel, particularly those who moved school frequently and whose parents were away for long periods of time on deployment.
- 8.3.9 Mrs M Stone proposed that Communities Committee ask Children's Services Committee to join with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to form a joint Task and Finish Group to consider how to improve access to dental services for service families living in the west of the county. The Committee **agreed** the proposal.

8.4 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

1. **Endorse** the strategy and action plan for 2017-2020.
2. Consider any actions that the Committee could take to support delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan, particularly in relation to Paragraph 6.2 of the report.
3. Ask Children's Services Committee to join with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to form a joint Task and Finish Group to consider how to improve access to dental services for service families living in the west of the county.

9 Norfolk Sexual Health Strategy

- 9.1 The Committee received the report by the Director of Public Health setting out the strategy to support the Council's public health strategy approved by Members in November 2016. The Strategy meets the commitment to develop a county-wide all age sexual health improvement strategy.
- 9.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:
- 9.2.1 Anyone attending a clinic with concerns that they may have contracted HIV were given a point of care test undertaken by the Terence Higgins Trust. The test results were available instantly.
- 9.2.2 Anyone who did not want to attend a clinic could visit the Terence Higgins Trust website or iCASH express test (www.icash.nhs.uk or www.test.hiv) and request a testing kit online. They would then be able to take a sample in the privacy of their own home and send the test back through the post.
- 9.2.3 If the result for someone who had submitted an online test was negative, they would receive a text giving them the result. If the result was positive, the individual would receive a text asking them to make an appointment to visit the clinic to receive their result and were offered treatment. The cost of an online test was £9 compared with the cost of attending a clinic of £130.
- 9.2.4 Individuals who had been diagnosed with HIV were no longer subject to penalties when applying for life insurance. With the treatments now available, HIV could be effectively treated to the point where it was no longer detectable within the blood stream and individuals were no longer infectious.
- 9.2.5 Approximately £10m was being invested by Public Health England into a trial on PrEP for approximately 10,000 people across the country. (<http://www.tht.org.uk/sexual-health/about-HIV/Pre-exposure-Prophylaxis>). Cambridge Community Services had all its Norfolk clinics included in the trials.
- 9.2.6 A suggestion was made by a Councillor that all County Councillors take the HIV test to raise awareness of the test and to help destigmatise the disease. The Director of Public Health agreed to investigate the possibility.
- 9.2.7 A lot of work was being carried out to target different age groups to reduce sexually transmitted infections, reduce unplanned pregnancies and to raise awareness of HIV. A social media campaign with the Communications team to raise awareness was also being planned.
- 9.2.8 A media campaign titled "Safe Sex Texting" was being targeted at younger people which was part of a research project looking at safe sex texting and what a good relationship looked like.

9.3 RESOLVED

That the Committee:

1. **Agree** Norfolk's sexual health strategy in order to improve health

outcomes for Norfolk residents.

10 Strategic and Financial Planning 2018-19 to 2021-22

10.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services providing an update on the Council's budget setting process, and summarising the Policy & Resources Committee's guidance to Service Committees on the actions required to enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2018-19. This included an overview of the Council's budget planning process, the principles for this year's budget setting activity and the latest forecast gap for budget planning purposes for the period 2018-19 to 2021-22.

10.2 The following responses were noted in reply to questions asked by the Committee:

10.2.1 With regard to the savings target of £622k for libraries and £490k for the Fire & Rescue Services, detailed proposals were being worked through. A detailed report would be brought to the next Communities Committee meeting in October for consideration by the Committee.

10.2.2 In this instance, the word "note" within the recommendations was clarified as being for the Committee to be aware of.

10.2.3 The Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services reassured the Committee that a balanced budget for Communities Committee was forecast for 2017-18 and that he was highly confident that the budget savings agreed for Communities Committee would be achieved. All the other savings commitments outlined in the report were being managed and regularly monitored.

10.2.4 Concern was expressed about the services under the remit of Communities Committee, for example Fire & Rescue, Trading Standards and Libraries and that if there was no direct knowledge of what money would be received from Government services could be cut. The Executive Director said that the planning assumption was that the £36m grant from Government would not be received as they had said they wanted local authorities to be more reliant on their own funds, rather than government grants.

10.2.5 Officers would be drafting a range of proposals for the Committee to debate at its meeting in October. The proposals would focus on those lower risk services, avoiding high risk services wherever possible.

10.2.6 Staffing levels were continually monitored. Last year the Community & Environmental Services department removed 40 posts, mainly through vacancy management. Staffing was the County Council's biggest asset, although it incurred significant costs. It was acknowledged that management of vacancies could put additional pressure on existing staff to take on more work within their existing role.

10.3 RESOLVED

That the Committee:

1. Note the budget planning guidance for 2018-19 agreed by Policy & Resources committee and in particular note:
 - a. The budget assumptions set out in the report;
 - b. The budget planning principles for 2018-19;
 - c. The forecast budget gap of £100m reflected in the Council's latest financial planning;
 - d. The allocation of savings targets for the MTFS period 2018-19 to 2021-22 to departments and Committees, noting the existing savings for 2018-19 and beyond which were agreed as part of the 2017-18 budget round.
2. Consider and agree the service-specific budgeting issues for 2018-19 as set out in section 3 of the report.
3. Consider whether any planned 2018-19 savings could be implemented during 2017-18 to provide an in-year saving.
4. In order to help close the forecast 2018-19 budget gap (as defined in recommendation, commission officers to report to the October Committee cycle:
 - a. Whether any savings identified for 2019-20 have the capacity to be brought forward to 2018-19;
 - b. To identify alternative new savings for 2018-19;
 - c. To identify further savings for the future years 2019-20 to 2021-22 to close the budget gap identified in those years.

11 Finance Monitoring

11.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services providing it with information on the budget position for services reporting to Communities Committee for 2017-18.

11.2 In response to a question, it was explained that the Single Employee Portal was part of an invest to save scheme allowing staff records of leavers and new employees to be managed.

11.3 RESOLVED

That the Committee **note**:

1. The forecast out-turn position for the Communities Committee and the current budget risks that are being managed by the department.
2. The capital programme for this committee.
3. The current planned use of the reserves and the forecast balance of reserves as at the end of March 2018.

12 Forward Plan and Decisions taken under delegated authority

12.1 The Committee received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services setting out the Forward Plan for Communities Committee, together with details of the delegated decision on the Award of

Drug and Alcohol Recovery Grants.

- 12.2 In response to a question about whether the total grant money for Drug and Alcohol Recovery had been allocated, the Director of Public Health said that the response to bids had been disappointing, therefore not all the funding had been allocated. Further work would be undertaken to raise awareness of the grants and encourage businesses to bid for part of the grant.

12.3 **RESOLVED:**

That the Committee:

1. Review the Forward Plan and identify any additions, deletions or changes to reflect key issues and priorities the Committee wishes to consider.
2. Note the delegated decision detailed in section 1.2 of the report.

13 Update on Fire at Wretham, nr Thetford

- 13.1 The Chief Fire Officer updated the Committee on the recent fire at the Recycling Centre at Wretham near Thetford.
- 13.2 A full investigation into the cause and emergency response to the fire would be carried out in due course and feedback would be sent to Councillors.
- 13.3 The Committee was reassured that a multi-agency approach was taken to ensure air sampling was carried out and offering advice to local residents. The multi-agency response team included representatives from the District Council Environmental Health officer team, Public Health England, fire service and police.

The meeting concluded at 11.55am.

Chairman

Appendix A

Norfolk Trading Standards

Teresa Haxell
Lead Trading Standards Officer



Community Protection



Trading Standards Priority

- **Safeguarding** communities and vulnerable people by engaging with communities and businesses to build resilience to scams and rogue traders



Financial Scamming

- Mass marketing fraud or doorstep crime
- Trading Standards receives information from the National Trading Standards Scams Team of scam victims in Norfolk
- Trading Standards advises, supports and visits victims in Norfolk
- Trading Standards works with partners, NSAB, voluntary and third sector organisations



Who is who in Friends Against Scams?

Friends

SCAMchampions

SCAMBassadors



Five key points about scams



 **Norfolk** County Council

The Challenge

•‘Take a Stand Against Scams.’

 **Norfolk** County Council

The Challenge

- Council employees recognise that responding to scams constitutes Financial Abuse - Care Act 2014
- Ensure there is adequate intervention, prevention and support
- Working together across teams, services and communities to tackle the problem of scams in Norfolk
- National Trading Standards Scams Team 1 million Friends Against Scams by 2020
- Norfolk Trading Standards 600 Friends by March 2018

 **Norfolk** County Council

Working with NSAB



Contact

- teresa.haxell@norfolk.gov.uk
- www.norfolk.gov.uk/alerts
- www.norfolk.gov.uk/friendsagainstscams

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