

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of South Norfolk District Council held on Wednesday 21 July 2021 at 9.30am.**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillors: G Minshull (Chairman), Y Bendle, J Easter and T Spruce

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors: B Bernard, V Clifford-Jackson, B Duffin and J Rowe

**Officers in Attendance:** The Assistant Director of Individuals & Families (M Pursehouse), the Assistant Director for Regulatory (N Howard), the Community Safety and Intervention Lead (T Munro), the Senior Governance Officer (E Goddard) and the Committee Officer.

**Also in Attendance:** Liam Bannon – Community Safety Officer at the Norfolk County Community Safety Partnership (NCCSP)

### **1288 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 31 March 2021, were confirmed as a correct record.

*Minute No: 1284 – MINUTES*

The Chairman updated the Committee on the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance's report on the recent flooding, he explained that the report had been delayed in order for the Alliance to gather as much evidence as possible.

### **1289 COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE**

The Assistant Director of Individuals and Families introduced the report which sought to update members on the Norfolk County Community Safety Partnerships (NCCSP) current consultation on its strategic plan.

Liam Bannon, Community Safety Officer at the NCCSP, presented an update to the Committee which advised them that Norfolk's Community Safety Plan was in the process of being refreshed and had been out for consultation

between 24 May – 16 July 2021, to allow Norfolk residents to give their views on community safety priorities, approaches, and long-term outcomes. 330 responses to the consultation had been received (68 from South Norfolk) and were in the process of being reviewed; amendments would then be made to the plan before it would be signed off by Norfolk Councils in and a delivery plan would be developed.

The NCCSP's strategic assessment of crime and community safety issues affecting Norfolk informed the seven proposed priorities for the next three years. These were:

- Serious violence
- Domestic and sexual abuse
- Preventing terrorism
- Criminal exploitation, including modern slavery and county lines
- Neighbourhood crimes like robbery, burglary, anti-social behaviour, vehicle crime, and other theft offences
- Hate crime and community tensions
- Fraud, which amounted to £16m a year in Norfolk

The proposed approach to responding to these priorities used the evidence-led Public Health Model. This meant the NCCSP would develop an understanding of the proposed priorities using available data and information. It would then develop interventions that would be effective in achieving its long-term outcomes.

The NCCSP wanted to make the public and professionals aware of a variety of community safety issues in order to enable them to better protect themselves and others. Once the priorities had been agreed, the partnership would use a variety of approaches to promote important community safety messages to both the people of Norfolk and professionals.

The NCCSP had proposed setting 12 long-term outcomes, which it would work to achieve over the course of the next three years. These were spread across the following four strategic areas:

**Building resilient, cohesive communities**

- So people felt safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in Norfolk
- Reducing overall levels of hate crime, fraud and anti-social behaviour
- So victims felt confident reporting their experience and were able to cope and recover.

**Tackling and reducing neighbourhood crime**

- So victims of neighbourhood crime were supported to cope and recover from their experience
- To reduce overall neighbourhood crime levels
- To reduce reoffending.

**Reducing the threat of criminal exploitation**

- So people were prevented from being drawn into criminal exploitation and terrorism

- So victims of exploitation were made to feel safe
- People most at risk of criminal exploitation in Norfolk were identified and supported as early as possible.
- Safeguarding communities from abuse and serious violence
- So victims were more confident reporting their experience and were satisfied with the response
- So victims of abuse and violence were supported to cope and recover
- To reduce overall victimisation, risk, harm, perpetration and reoffending for rape and sexual offences, domestic abuse and serious violence.

The Community Safety Partnership brought together organisations from across Norfolk to tackle crime and disorder, and thematic priority delivery groups would be responsible for responding to these priorities, including domestic abuse, modern slavery, serious violence, and community cohesion.

One member explained that Council officers who engage with the public were trained on MECC – ‘Make Every Contact Count’ and queried whether Norfolk Constabulary’s officers also utilised that policy, Mr Bannon explained that all Norfolk Constabulary officers were trained with a very similar policy.

Members queried whether the resource levels of the NCCSP would cover the differing demands on the city and rural areas of South Norfolk, they were concerned that focus would be given to areas of concern in the city to the detriment of the rural villages. Mr Bannon informed the Committee that the NCCSP were aware of the urban/rural divide and were working to prioritise and respond to concerns in both areas. He added that the NCCSP have more resources than ever before to enable them to meet demand. Members were reminded that each District had a dedicated Locality Officer that could prove useful to members. Mr Bannon offered to circulate the relevant contact details with councillors outside of the meeting.

Members discussed the root causes of the community safety issues and felt that drugs and drug addiction was the underlying cause of a lot of the community safety issues faced; it was felt by the Committee that more needed to be done to help support addicts. The Committee was advised that Project Adder had been developed to assist those with serious drug addiction and the Police were also signposting individuals to drug treatment services where appropriate.

During a discussion about engagement with the public on community safety matters, Members noted that a lot of the work carried out and the outcomes of the work were not reported by Norfolk Constabulary, which could lead to apathy and a lack of engagement from the public. It was suggested that the Committee recommend that the Norfolk Constabulary promote more of the work carried out and what had been achieved as a result. Members further noted that many of the events and briefings held by the Council and Norfolk Constabulary were not being attended by members of the public, the

Community Safety and Intervention Lead explained that more proactive methods of engagement such as door knocking, and action days had proved to be more effective. Mr Bannon added that the Norfolk Constabulary hold a number of street surgeries on market days to engage with the public; one member suggested that the Council send an officer to represent the Council at these street surgeries.

After further discussion, it was

## **RESOLVED**

To

1. Recommend that:
  - a. Norfolk Constabulary increase promotion and publicity of outcomes in relation to action taken.
  - b. Norfolk Constabulary increase their support to rural communities.
  - c. Council officers attend street surgeries conducted by Norfolk Constabulary.
2. Support the Strategic Plan 2021-2024.

### **1290 NORFOLK HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2019/21**

The Chairman introduced the briefing report from Cllr N Legg who sits on the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NHOSC). The report updated members on the work carried out by NHOSC between 2019-2021.

The Committee noted the report and requested that Cllr Legg attend a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to provide a more information.

One member noted that the minutes of the NHOSC meetings are available to view on the Norfolk County Council website.

### **1291 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND CABINET CORE AGENDA**

The Committee noted the Work Programme and Cabinet Core Agenda.

The Senior Governance Officer provided the Committee with an update on recommendations made following the briefing report on how the planning system assesses flooding issues, she explained that:

- Training was in progress for all parish councils on the role of planning in regard to how the planning system assesses flooding.
- Recruitment was underway for the role of a Water Management Officer, and it was currently at the shortlisting stage.

- The Planning Team were working on an additional planning condition, which would require all relevant applications to submit a verification report to provide assurance that drainage had been installed and met relevant requirements, which was due to be implemented by September 2021.

One member queried why the Early Help report had not been brought to the Committee. The Chairman explained that the Help Hub had been under increased pressure due to Covid 19 and had not been in a position to bring the item forward.

Members discussed future items to be considered by the Scrutiny Committee and suggested that the following be brought before the Committee:

- Home Options Review
- Planning Design Code
- Effect of Covid 19 on Leisure Centres
- Community Safety Review in December 2022

(The meeting concluded at 10.44am)

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Chairman