

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 May 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Bartlett – Chairman
Cllr V Slade – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr L Allison, Cllr M Cox, Cllr L Dedman, Cllr B Dion, Cllr M Earl,
Cllr J Edwards, Cllr L Fear, Cllr M Howell, Cllr D Kelsey, Cllr T O'Neill
and Cllr C Rigby

Also in attendance: Councillor Mark Anderson
Councillor May Haines
Councillor Mohan Iyengar

13. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr D Farr and Cllr S Gabriel

14. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

15. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest received.

16. Public Speaking

There were no public statements, petitions or questions.

17. Scrutiny of Community Safety Related Cabinet Reports

Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy and Delivery Plan 2020-2023 –
The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Portfolio Holder outlined the key issues within the report and responded to points raised by the Board including:

- Board Members thanked the Portfolio Holder and Officers for the improvements seen in the report since the Board previously considered this issue in December 2020.
- It was confirmed that the Domestic Abuse Bill had received royal ascent the previous week. This would be amended in the strategy document.

- That gay and bisexual women should be mentioned with equal rights in the report, in the same way that gay and bisexual men were referenced.
- With reference to point 45 through to point 48 , it was good to see them and it was important to be able to revisit this as a living document
- There was no reference to dementia within strategy would like to see The Alzheimer's Society and dementia advisers to be made aware of the services available to those living with dementia and to be referred to within the report. This crossed over into the work with health partners, work was underway with colleagues in Clinical Commissioning Group. Issues concerning dementia had been picked up on and the impact of this was being looked into.
- Concern was raised that there was little mention of the actions and steps that would be taken to address some of the issues outlined in the report, in particular to target people with particular characteristics such as mental health issues, or people with English as a second language.
- It was positive to see the impact of Covid-19 and the lockdown had been mentioned in the report.
- The report did not outline the impact that the actions and funding were expected to achieve and how many people it would reach. A Board member also questioned how the effectiveness of the strategy would be measured and how the performance of the service would be monitored. The Portfolio Holder advised that in terms of data – historical and current data was available, but it was difficult to predict with any real certainty what the number of cases would be going forwards. There were pieces of work on going but this was the beginning of a journey using the data available to help inform decisions. It was suggested that a review could be brought back in approximately 12 months time. **It was agreed to add an item to the Forward Plan to review.**
- In response to a question it was confirmed that refuges could offer support to victims and their families. This provision was supported through the housing department, who would liaise directly with providers to see where accommodation may be found. In some instances, alternative temporary accommodation would be sought.
- In response to a query on the table outlined in paragraph 34 of the report it was noted that this was the additional funding provided by the government due to Covid and the additional funded workstreams for what was appropriate to support delivery through the new responsibilities of the Domestic Abuse Act. It was noted that the base budget was included in the report in addition to this funding. It was noted that as this was a partnership programme it was difficult to define the whole programme in financial terms. **The Chairman requested that if any further information could be provided to Councillor Howell this would be welcomed.**
- The Board requested that when a paper returns to the Board it includes some key performance indicators to outline what is considered a measure of success.
- It was confirmed that target hardening was very much business as normal which allowed victims to remain in their own homes through

provision of specific facilities, ability to target harden their homes – something we don't do anymore.

- In terms of refuge spaces there would be an accommodation needs based assessment which would look into this.
- The 8-week toolkit programme for children who had witnessed domestic abuse in their household. Clear commitment that those are the children who witness domestic abuse were vulnerable to following this cycle and the pressures on the budget concerning this.
- Whether training for staff could this be expanded out to partners like schools, it was noted that this was provided online and could be expanded but schools had a slightly different arrangement for how they undertook training and spot children who may be witnessing domestic violence. It was noted that the training could be utilised for elected members in future.

Following the debate, it was proposed and seconded and following a vote resolved that the Board:

RECOMMEND: To Cabinet that additions be made to the draft domestic abuse strategy to include detailed actions for improving the services ability to engage with residents who have struggled to engage previously, including male victims of domestic abuse and those in same sex relationships, victims who are BAME and/or don't speak English as a first language and those who have multiple needs such as mental health and/or substance misuse.

Voting: Unanimous

The Chairman thanked the Portfolio Holder and Officers for presenting the report and all the hard work which had gone into the report and detailed plan.

Cllr M Cox and Cllr L Dedman – left the meeting at 7.00pm

18. Place Operations Enforcement

The Chairman introduced the item and the background to why the report had come forward, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these minutes in the Minute Book. The Director of Communities explained that enforcement was a major part of the Council's responsibilities and outlined the key aspects of the report. In the subsequent discussion a number of points were raised including:

- A Non-Board member noted that several historic issues had been rectified in the last few months but asked about areas where the Council was unable to use enforcement powers and the expectations surrounding this and how this was addressed. The Director advised that it was important to explore all the different options available to the Council and what was the best means to secure the best outcomes.

Much of the legislation that the Council had to work with was incredibly out of date.

- Whether it was still the case, as it was under the previous Bournemouth Council, that the Council was unable to seize goods from street pedlars as there was no provision to store goods securely. Goods had been confiscated from pedlars operating in Bournemouth Town Centre. However, there were issues with capacity, but that legislation had been enforced when possible.
- Whether the Council was operating successfully as an agency for the DVLA, under the powers to tow vehicles. There was set criteria in place when the Council could tow away vehicles for illegal parking. The Council was working with the DVLA in this regard.
- Prevention of sleeping on the highway in cars and vans. This was a challenging area which relied on traffic regulation orders which were not consistently in place across BCP. There was a concern raised with this issue and it was hoped this could be given further consideration to address.
- 'A' Boards being used by businesses on the public highway presented an uninsured trip hazard.
- Issues concerning enforcement around the seafront and the apparent selective approach to dealing with enforcement issues. This often didn't present a good picture to residents.
- Whether further information on the numbers of opportunities for enforcement versus enforcement taken and the number of enforcement cases resulting in prosecution.
- Communication on issues concerning enforcement was extremely important to residents. There were often difficulties on where responsibilities lie and there should be greater clarity on this.
- That options outside of enforcement should be explored more fully to address some of the issues.
- It was suggested that it would be useful to have a dedicated part of the website to address enforcement issues for the public to access the right information, and whether responsibility lied with the Council or Police.
- A Non-Board member asked about training for officers and the different types of enforcement officers and how the Council responded to intelligence led issues. There were several different teams for different types of enforcement struggling to get around the conurbation and what consideration had been given to more generic enforcement roles.
- Issues concerning future enforcement were raised including the prohibition of idling near schools and pavement parking and the enforcement of yellow boxes.
- It would be interesting to see options for what enforcement would be expected to look like in future. For example place based solution rather than task based solutions.

The Director for Communities noted that there were some opportunities at this point in terms of the transformation programme, quick reporting and the ability to get to right place. These were all issues that formed part of vision for what the Council wanted to try to achieve.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Operations Officer for organising this paper which was much appreciated evidenced by the interest shown by members and also to the Director of Communities and the other officers on the call. The Chairman noted that the Board was clearly interested in a number of areas. However, there was a need for further consideration on which issues could be taken forward and how this would be best achieved. It was noted that there may be an opportunity for a future Task and Finish Group to consider further action.

The meeting adjourned at 8:36pm and resumed at 8:46pm.

19. Seasonal Response 2021

The Chairman introduced the report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'D' to these minutes in the Minute Book, and outlined the reasons why the report had been brought to the Board. The Portfolio Holder for Tourism, Leisure and Culture gave a presentation to the Board including the key points on the plans for the summer season. In the subsequent discussion a number of points were raised by the Board including:

- It was noted that although the weather had not been very good up to this point there would be a time in the future when the deluge of visitors would come and there were a number of issues to address this outline in the plan.
- There has been a soft run to test principles of tactical plan and an opportunity for delivery over the Easter period, although visitor numbers had remained relatively low.
- The plans would be in place for the period from the end of June to the beginning September, but it was explained that the necessity for them would be very much weather dependent.
- A Councillor asked about the level of additional provision and how much of extra provision there was, whether it was enough to carry on to the following year. It was noted that the funding was limited and was being monitored though the logging of where deployment had been used and an assessment of the effectiveness of deployment.
- Data on visitor numbers was being kept under constant review, which would enable deploying force to ensure safety of visitors where necessary.
- A Councillor asked where, within the Tactical plan were things currently with the 2021 delivery. It was noted that there was a significant challenge to manage the litter collection as it requires lorries accessing the seafront but things were currently on track for the current delivery.
- In response to a question regarding the number of officers in traffic enforcement and whether it was sufficiently staffed. It was noted that recruitment was underway but there was now provision in place to tow away vehicles if they were parked dangerously or causing obstructions.
- A park and ride service was being introduced and it would have its initial trial on the end of May bank holiday weekend.

- It was discussed that the actions outlined in the plan would not only benefit the conurbation during the summer but would give long term benefits as well. Number of different operations across the conurbation – prioritise areas where there is an influx in demand. This would enable the Council to have a good bottom-up, resource-based view on what the area would need next year.
- In response to a request it was noted that there would be a mechanism in place to help keep all Councillors informed of issues surrounding the plan as necessary but could not commit to issuing this on a weekly basis.
- Timing of certain issues and responsiveness to the weather had been factored into the plan and timing of when issues changed and developed. Particular anti-social and alcohol related behaviours and the likely timing of these were also anticipated and the police had been working alongside the Council on this.
- How residents or anyone visiting the beach could report issues and the responsiveness to issues raised. There was a reporting mechanisms in place and information would be in a prominent place in time for the summer season.
- A Councillor commented that they were pleased to see detail in the plan and asked how the general maintenance would be managed including toilet supplies, blocked drains etc. The Portfolio Holder advised that this was difficult to manage when visitor numbers were high but there were responses in place and the officers were dedicated in undertaking a sometime dirty, hazardous role, sometimes under provocation.
- It was noted that the toilets on Poole Quay remained closed and there had been an issue with compliance and enforcement on the planning condition regarding these. **The Chairman advised the Board that he would write to the planning enforcement team regarding the issue of the closed toilets at Poole Quay.**
- A Councillor commented that the reasons bins had overflowed was that the Council's response to emptying them when full was not quick enough and that was due to a financial decision to not run as many collections.
- A non-Board member commented that the Council needed to also focus on other areas of the conurbation which were frequented by tourists, not just on the beach but areas where people tend to go when weather is less than good.
- A Councillor commented that they were pleased to see the recognition from the MHCLG of the best practice element and was pleased to see Christchurch developing as a major seafront site.

The Chairman thanked the Portfolio Holder and Officers for outlining the very robust plan and wished the team luck in its implementation.

20. Future Meeting Dates 2021/22

The future meeting dates were noted.

21. Urgent Item Scrutiny of Fly-tipping and Fly-posting Enforcement Pilot Cabinet Report

The Chairman introduced the item and explained that he was varying the order of the agenda to take this item next. The Chairman explained that this was being considered as an item of urgent business because the report was due to be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 26 May and it was therefore not possible to delay scrutiny of this issue for a future meeting of the Board and because members of the Board had expressed a particular interest in scrutinising this issue. The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety presented the report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book. The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Cleansing and Waste outlined the key issues within the report and responded to points raised by the Board including:

Cllr D Kelsey left the meeting at 7:10pm.

- That the pilot did not remove any of the cost of removing fly-tipping. The service was to cover investigations and potentially reduce instances of fly-tipping and there would be an opportunity to recover some of the cost if investigations were successful.
- Whether other options to address fly-tipping had been considered. Other areas had removed the services charges for visiting the tip at certain times, whether there could be provision for household collections for some waste or other options to reduce fly-tipping which do not involve enforcement.
- That an In-House Service was looked at but this would require additional staff within regulatory services. Whereas an external provider could focus on fly-tipping and were specialists in the service.
- There wasn't currently a deterrent for householders not to fly-tip, although there had been lots of encouragement for people on how to address things correctly.
- There was also a need to push the message out on how to manage waste responsibly.

There were a number of requests to address issues outlined within the non-public appendix the Board therefore:

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs such interest in disclosing the information.

Cllr M Cox and Cllr L Dedman returned at 7:27pm

The meeting moved into non-public session.

During the consideration of exempt information questions were raised regarding what due diligence had been undertaken on the preferred provider, on the reputation of the provider and the process of selection, the contractual requirements, including the right to terminate the contract with 30 days-notice, risk of reputational damage

The meeting resumed in public session

Following the debate, it was proposed and seconded and subsequently resolved that Cabinet be:

RECOMMENDED to reconsider the decision, not proceed with the contract at this time and go back and look at what other options are available.

Voting: 9 for, 0 against, 3 abstentions

The meeting ended at 9.36 pm

CHAIRMAN