

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on 06 January 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Bartlett – Chairman (attended virtually)

Cllr S Aitkenhead – Vice-Chairman, in the Chair

Present: Cllr P Broadhead, Cllr J Beesley, Cllr L Dedman, Cllr C Goodall,
Cllr S Mackrow, Cllr L Northover, Cllr Dr F Rice, Cllr K Salmon,
Cllr T Trent, Cllr O Walters and Cllr C Weight

Also in attendance: Cllr K Wilson, Cllr M Earl

83. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Stephen Bartlett.

84. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

85. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

86. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th December were confirmed as an accurate record.

87. Action Sheet

The Board's Action Sheet was noted. The actions which had been resolved were removed.

88. Public Issues

There were no public issues for this meeting.

89. BCP Community Safety Partnership Annual Report

The Portfolio Holder of Housing and Regulatory Services 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. Public Report. This item was deferred from the O&S Board meeting on 9 December 2024. The paper set out elements of development and delivery by the BCP

Community Safety Partnership (CSP), 'Safer BCP' and its constituent agencies. It provides Members with an update since the last report to Overview and Scrutiny Board in December 2023.

The Local Government Act 2000 includes crime and disorder scrutiny as one of the functions the council must ensure its scrutiny arrangements cover. Sections 19 and 20 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and related regulations require the Council to have a committee with the functions of reviewing and scrutinising decisions and actions in respect of the discharge of crime and disorder functions by "responsible authorities".

The specifics of the duty are set out in the Police and Justice Act 2006, which also allows members to refer any "local crime and disorder matter" raised with them by anyone living or working in their area, to the Crime and Disorder Committee. The Board designated as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee must meet at least once every 12 month period to conduct the functions.

It was reported there were lots of events organised around the town including 16 days of action and the white ribbon campaign.

The Board was advised that funding is a key issue the Community Safety Partnership face., Funding is going to arrive, although, there is no idea on when or how much will be coming. Funding comes from the Home Office directly. The Domestic Abuse fund had been approved.

As the representative from the Police was unable to attend the meeting a question was asked around crime reporting in the early hours which will be asked of the police and the answer will be passed onto the Board.

The Board congratulated the Community Safety Partnership on the valuable work they had done over the year. The Board endorsed any efforts for the Community Safety Partnership to secure funding.

It was RESOLVED that:

i) Members note the progress of the Community Safety Partnership over the past year, to November 2024

ii) Members note the BCP Community Safety Partnership's progress under the Serious Violence Duty which came into effect 31 January 2024

Voting: Unanimous

90. Devolution

The Leader of the Council presented a 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 Board was informed that the Government requested that the Council return an expression of interest pro-forma in September, stating its devolution preferences. This matter was debated at the Board meeting in September 2024, considering the options set out by the Chief Executive. Subsequently, a response was submitted expressing the Council's preference for devolution on a BCP-only geography.

On 16 December, Government released its Devolution White Paper which set out some new parameters, building on the previous framework, with the aims of working at a larger scale, bringing consistent governance to the devolution process and bringing into law the creation of Statutory Authorities.

Those councils leading the Heart of Wessex proposal stated they would opt to set up a mayoral model, which has raised their profile with Government, offering the chance to be part of the new “Devolution Priority Programme”. BCP Council has been invited to join the Heart of Wessex configuration and the proposed Mayoral Statutory Authority. This report sets out this context in more detail for members to consider the situation and recommend a way forward.

There was a presentation given by the Chief Executive which set out the Heart of Wessex Proposal and the Hampshire and Solent proposal that BCP could also join.

There was a long discussion regarding the proposals and the Board felt that the deadline was unreasonable and that more time should be taken to explore other options that could be available. The Board were also of the view that the Heart of Wessex proposal was not necessarily the right one for BCP as those areas were more rural than BCP.

It was RESOLVED that

a: The Leader arranges an emergency Full Council Meeting at the earliest opportunity to enable a vote of ALL of the available options

b: An evidence-based piece of work be undertaken on the pros and cons of a devolution arrangement with both the Solent deal AND Wessex deal, including exploring a public referendum for BCP residents.

Voting: For:10, Against:0, Abstentions:1

91. Work Plan

The Chair presented a report, 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.

RESOLVED that the O&S Board review and comment on the work plan at their next meeting.

Voting: Unanimous

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm

