

Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

Minutes - 26 January 2016

Attendance

Members of the Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Paula Brookfield (Chair)
Cllr Ian Claymore
Cllr Bishan Dass
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
Cllr Barry Findlay
Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Lynne Moran
Cllr Patricia Patten (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Daniel Warren

Employees

Deborah Breedon	Scrutiny Officer
Tony Ivko	Service Director - Older People
Ros Jervis	Service Director - Public Health and Wellbeing
Karen Samuels	Head of Community Safety
Paul Smith	Head of Commissioning - Older People

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 Apologies**
Apologies were submitted on behalf of Cllr Elias Mattu
- 2 Declarations of Interest**
There were no declarations of interest received.
- 3 Minutes of Previous Meetings**
The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.
- 4 Matters Arising**
Cllr Patricia Patten referred to page five of the minutes relating to the 'Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Community Offer' and asked if any progress had been made in checking all schools to ensure the community offer is being fulfilled. Tony Ivko, Service Director Adults agreed to pursue the progress and report direct to Cllr Patten.

Cllr Paula Brookfield, Chair informed the panel that the directory of access points for help and advice was now available. She welcomed that the directory included locations and contact information for food banks across the City. She requested, the Service Director to provide an update about welfare reforms.

The Service Director informed the panel that the scrutiny review of Welfare Reform had been a driver in developing access to advice support and information about benefit changes and that the directory has been prepared as a result of the review. The Directory would be available to public, Councillors, employees and partner organisations on Wolverhampton Information Network (WIN) from February 2016. He asked that thanks be recorded to the Welfare Benefits Team for the work they have carried out on the Directory.

Cllr Rita Potter, former Chair of the scrutiny review group, welcomed the directory, the importance of access to information and support, and the list of food banks.

Cllr Patricia Patten indicated that the language facility available on the WIN website provided access for hard to reach people. The Service Director confirmed that there are also care navigators in libraries to assist people with enquiries on the WIN website and using other information sources. He advised that the WIN website is becoming popular and that in addition to over 200,000 hits, there are several connections posted on twitter and it is fast becoming a first port of call for information, advice and support.

The Panel agreed the importance of keeping welfare reforms, food banks, information and support for the most vulnerable in society on the work programme for scrutiny; particularly with the introduction of Universal Credit (UC) in 2017. Cllr Patricia Patten requested an update relating to how the City is preparing for UC to a future meeting.

Resolved:

1. That the update is noted and thanks to the Welfare Benefits Team be recorded.
2. That a progress report be submitted to a future meeting of the scrutiny panel to consider how the City is preparing for Universal Credit.

5 **Report back of the main messages from site visits to see Assistive Technology (Verbal)**

Paul Smith, Interim Manager for Commissioning, Older People provided a verbal summary of the visits on 18 January 2016. Nine Councillors attended the site visits to Stowlawn 24 hour control centre for concierge service which houses CCTV cameras across the City, and to a permanent telecare site with assistive technologies in Bilbrook.

He advised that the visits were well received and useful and that if required more visits could be facilitated at time that would be more convenient for Councillors who work. The Commissioning Manager advised that Wolverhampton Council and Wolverhampton Homes are giving consideration to providing a property in Wolverhampton that can be fitted out and utilised by residents to explore what assistive technology is available in a safe and supportive environment.

The panel raised a number of points for discussion including the following:

- **People with dementia**

There was some concern about how assistive technologies will help people with dementia, particularly if the person was confused or disorientated. Panel were advised that assistive technology will assist the carers of people with dementia. Assistive technology includes alert buttons in the house, texting and GIS tracking which can be used to locate people who may have wandered outside or become lost in an unfamiliar place. Sensors can be fitted in homes to assist their carers to monitor the individual's movement in the house and can help to alert the carer to unusual behaviours such as losing track of day and night, not going to the kitchen or bathroom etc. Carrying trackers outdoors can help carers to locate an individual who has become lost in hours rather than days which will help the person and their carers to be more confident in their safety. The time spent to locate them could reduce risk of accidents and therefore prevent or reduce the longer term impact and recovery of the individual, which would save resources.
- **Telephone reminders**

Contact by telephone is a good way to connect with an individual and is considered valuable to check if they are prepared for cold weather spells, ask if they have taken their medication, remembered a doctor's appointment or just to say hello if they have not been out of the house that day. Panel recognised that people need contact and a phone call reminder from someone about a doctor's appointment, or just to check the weather can reduce the individual's isolation and potentially delay the early signs of dementia.
- **Quality of Life**

Assistive technology for use by the individual, by the carer or by family and friends is really important to make the individual's quality of life better. Sensors being fitted in homes to monitor movement could prevent bed blocking in hospitals and improve quality of life for individuals who remain in their own home longer or return from hospital earlier. Councillors wanted more evidence of what we are getting in social capital, quality of life and sustaining individuals in their own homes. How do we prove that money is saved as well as satisfying the individual request to stay in their home and reassuring carers and relatives about on-going assessment?
- **Range of products**

The Panel appreciated the range of products available to help individuals at the Bilbrook facility. It was felt that Wolverhampton people would benefit from a similar facility. Panel indicated that older people would rather see products in action and take advice from an independent person rather than from a relative.
- **The Fire Service**

The Panel welcomed on-going work with the fire service to develop the responder service. Panel recognised the good work fire officers carry out in the community, in relation to fire prevention and alarms but also recognised this as a good way to diversify their community work and helping people stay safe in their own homes. It was considered that police also have a community role to play.
- **Reliability of technology**

There were initially some concerns about the reliability of technology and the preference of individuals to have a person as their carer. The site visit gave an insight to the benefits of technology as a further support mechanism for the

individual and the carer, not the replacement. This was very re-assuring to Councillors, they found designs to be practical, clever and eye opening, indicating that some of the technology should be an integral part of getting older, just like we use glasses to aid out eyesight.

- Capacity
The Chair highlighted a capacity issue and indicated that without capacity the proposals may be undeliverable, she indicated that it is hoped there will be some financial backing to give the capacity that is needed. The Chair requested a report back to a future meeting to highlight if the Council has capacity to support 3,000 people and to show the added social value, and the potential savings to other partner organisations.
- Value for Money
The Chair highlighted the need to demonstrate the value for money the technology can bring; how the council can show the cost savings from fall prevention through use of technology and how we would evidence it. The Head of Commissioning advised that there may be funding in the future to help with technology for people with dementia. He indicated that partners are working closely and have considered the benefits of three statutory resources getting added value. There was some discussion about the National Health Service saving in care costs and people being cared for in their own home and a suggestion that there could be an initial cash injection to technologies to realise the savings.
- Further evidence
One Councillor suggested it may be helpful to ask some of the technology users, individuals and carers, about their experience.

The Service Director clarified that much research and feedback has been gathered to develop telecare and supporting people in their own homes. He advised that some of the feedback has picked up on loneliness and isolation being a contributory factor for people being admitted to hospital; as they want someone to talk to.

Ros Jervis, Service Director Public Health and Well Being advised that it is difficult to put a cashable value on the benefits of assistive technology. She agreed that the case studies and feedback from technology users has to be used. She identified that some resource is attached to the prevention of falls and that information relating to prevention of falls should be revisited to help build a picture of how much falls cost in real terms. The panel recognised that it is difficult to quantify costs but highlighted that if a person falls the time that person lies on a floor could depend on the technology available to call for help and the sooner assistance arrives the less time would be spent recovering. They suggested that hospital admittance may not be necessary at all if individuals are helped in minutes rather than hours or overnight.

The Chair indicated that many valuable resources have been reduced and several community connections lost for older people. The panel highlighted the benefits of adult classes and courses such as flower arranging and discussed the social benefits of meeting up with others. They highlighted the need for community schools and voluntary organisations to open doors and access for lonely and isolated people.

Resolved

The Panel requested an update report to a future meeting to clarify if the Council has capacity to support 3,000 people in their own homes and to show the added social value, and the potential savings to other partner organisations.

- 6 **Progress on Joint Dementia Strategy for Wolverhampton 2015 - 2017**
Paul Smith, Interim Head of Commissioning, Older people provided an update on the progress on Joint Dementia Strategy for Wolverhampton 2015-2017.

Cllr Patricia Patten, Vice-Chair welcomed the forward thinking in the Joint Dementia Strategy. She highlighted the need for an early diagnosis in people to be able to put in pace activities and technology to delay the onset of dementia. She highlighted the need for Doctors (GPs) to be able to recognise the symptoms and spot dementia in its early stages.

Panel welcomed the progress particularly the change in culture, the dementia cafes, the many initiatives in place in the City and the close work with health partners and other organisations. Some panel members had attended dementia training and shared their experiences relating to how useful the training had been to them personally and in their role as ward Councillors. Panel highlighted the need to get the message out about dementia in different languages as often older people with dementia will revert back to their first language.

Cllr Barry Findlay raised the issue of SMART posters and highlighted the need for them to be shared across the City. The Head of Commissioning advised that the Council does own the rights to the poster and that electronic copies could be shared with schools across the City.

Cllr Jasbinder Dehar welcomed progress with cafes and agreed that socialisation is good. She asked what more could be done to encourage schools to become dementia friendly, bearing in mind that most of the young people have parents, grandparents and great grandparents.

Cllr Bishan Dass raised some points of concern relating to independent living and people being isolated in society, potentially not talking to anyone for days. He considered older people from different cultural backgrounds, how lifestyles, eating and drinking can have a negative impact on their health. Tony Ivko recognised the issues when a person moves from independence to dependency. He advised that there needs to be a referral to go to day care from the GP and suggested that there is a need to find ways to encourage community access to day care.

The group were united on the need to make early diagnosis of dementia.

Chief Inspector Tracey Packham informed the Panel that dementia awareness is available to police officers and is extremely useful in their role in many situations.

Resolved

That all new Councillors at the start of the municipal year 2016 participate in the Dementia awareness training and that it is included in the Councillors toolkit.

That frontline employee's including receptionist and new starters undertake dementia awareness training as part of the induction package.

That employee's raise the dementia friendly City Status and if not already done carry out the training.

7 **Local Police and Crime Plan 2015-16**

Chief Inspector Tracey Packham provided a report to update the Panel on progress and performance against the Wolverhampton Local Police and Crime Plan for the first three quarters of the performance year from April – December 2015.

The Chief Inspector advised that the Wolverhampton Police and Crime Plan focus is on three main objectives:

- Reduce crime
- Reduce harm and vulnerability
- Understanding and responding to community concerns

She highlighted the performance detailed in the report which was welcomed by the Panel. She indicated that there was recognition of the need to provide more support in some areas than in others and that despite the cuts the police are committed to neighbourhood policing in a refreshed approach to 2015, aligned closer to the community.

In response to questions she advised that the PACT meetings were still positive. Panels considered that the types of issues raised were related to prostitution, parking. Anti-social behaviour etc. she advised that the local police teams work closely with Wolverhampton Homes (WH) where criminal investigations are not the best way forward there are other options such as tenancy solutions. She advised that that in response to specific community concerns around the police use of stop and search powers bi-monthly scrutiny panels take place to ensure issues are looked into and appropriate actions taken to policy and procedures.

Cllr Daniel Warren welcomed the reduction in overall crime, he indicated that the fear of crime often did not relate to the number of actual crimes in a community and the performance figures clearly show that there is a reduction in many types of offence. Panel considered how many in the community did hear about crime. They considered that there were usually only a few regular attendees at PACT meetings and that the wider community tended to hear local news by facebook or word of mouth. The Chief Inspector acknowledged that the PACT meetings need to be looked at and advised that there will always be people who perceive crime is higher than it is but that fear of crime was monitored in a twice yearly satisfaction survey. She advised that the survey asks if the police deal with what matters and the outcome is usually high, 86-90%, demonstrating that people have confidence in local policing. She advised that the way police talk to people and use positive news to balance out the fear to show a visible police presence.

The Chief Inspector informed panel that as part of the Police 2020 programme the way policing is conducted at force level is changing, incorporating partners and the use of new technology. Installation of new technology can help to reduce fear of crime and prevent crime and gave the example of protecting vulnerable people from unwanted phone calls simply by screening calls. Officers can also make better use of technology to follow up and give feedback to the public.

The Chief Inspector advised that there are changes planned, the PACT meetings are to be reviewed in light of recent changes which have taken place with neighbourhood policing teams. She gave an example where recent changes has led to a petition of 500 signatures and advised that all petitioners that had left an address had been contacted to reassure them and keep them fully informed around changes made.

In response to concerns raised about the increase in knife crime and reducing resources the Chief Inspector advised that knife crime is a concern to the police and that when there were emerging issues such as gang related tensions, further resources are deployed into Wolverhampton from across the Force area.

She advised that persons who are arrested for carrying knives are routinely asked about their motivation for doing so, and officers try to discourage the person carrying weapons. Prevention is the way to reduce knife crime, encouraging people not to carry knives and to surrender weapons into the knife bins. The Chief Inspector stressed the need to use new technology as a tool to reduce crime, information, awareness and intelligence can all help to monitor interventions and suppress activity.

Karen Samuels, Head of Community Safety referred to information provided to the panel by Chief Superintendent Keith Frazer relating to the gang strategy for the City; she advised that the intelligence relating to gangs membership and location is extensive and that there is a shift from reducing gang harm to preventing gang involvement, a greater focus on communications, texting etc and better use of social media will be a key feature of the new approach.

In response to questions raised by Cllr Jasbinder Dehar relating to honour based crime the Head of Community Safety advised that there are intentions to move forward the agenda to address this and other hidden crimes such as Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). She explained that there is an understandable reticence amongst victims to report these crimes when family members may be complicit and part of the problem; targeted work is needed within communities to challenge the culture of acceptance and make it easier for victims and those at risk to come forward.

The Head of Community Safety advised that mandatory reporting for FGM was introduced on 31 October 2015 but staff need to have the confidence and skills to report and work with all involved. She advised that pivotal to this work is the need to develop communication and reduce risks.

The Head of Community Safety advised the panel that the Council and partners are working hard to reduce risks relating to gangs and violence against girls and women strategies. Proposals to develop a new Preventing Gang Involvement Strategy and a new Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy were discussed at this Scrutiny Panel on September 2015; both strategies have recently been endorsed by Cabinet and work is underway to finalise delivery plans for both. The strategies will ensure

strengthened links to safeguarding, MASH, Early help and the Troubled Families programme.

In response to points raised by Cllr Lynne Moran about the St Peters ward drugs problem Chief Inspector Tracey Packham advised that the police and partners are acutely aware of the problems as issues about needle litter and the associated anti-social behaviour had been raised at the local PACT meeting. She confirmed that the reports had been escalated to a community worker, currently working on a needle exchange project. She confirmed that the local police would have a look what more could be done in the Whitmore Reans area.

Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur highlighted some dissatisfaction reported to her from people who had reported a crime and the method in which they had been contacted. The Chief Inspector indicated that the satisfaction survey is carried out twice a year; participants are made up of a dip sample of people who had reported a crime. She advised that there is an established complaints procedure in place if there was a matter to report.

In response to a question from the Chair the Chief Inspector advised that the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) thresholds have remained the same and that where thresholds are not met the police have to consider what further investigative opportunities exist.

Resolved

That the update on Wolverhampton's Local police and Crime Plan 2015/16 – April 2015 to December 2015 is received.