

### Minutes of the Meeting of the NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: THURSDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2017 at 5:30 pm

## <u>PRESENT:</u>

<u>Councillor Gugnani (Chair)</u> <u>Councillor Thalukdar (Vice-Chair)</u>

Councillor Bajaj Councillor Cutkelvin Councillor Fonseca Councillor Khote

In Attendance: Councillor Clair, Deputy City Mayor Councillor Master, Assistant City Mayor - Neighbourhood Services Councillor Sood, Assistant City Mayor - Communities & Equalities

> Also Present: Councillor Cole

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### **39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cank.

Members of the Children, Young People and Children Scrutiny Commission had been invited to attend the meeting for agenda item 9, "Leicester City Community Safety Work". Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cassidy, Councillor Dr Moore and Councillor Riyait in relation to this.

### 40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

#### 41. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

#### AGREED:

That, subject to the deletion of the second paragraph of minute 36, "Community Languages", the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission held on 25 October 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

#### 42. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AGREED AT THE LAST MEETING

The Chair reported verbally that, where appropriate, all actions agreed at the last meeting of the Commission, (held on 25 October 2017), had been included in the Commission's work programme. One change from that meeting was that knife crime would now be considered at a future meeting, (minute 37, "Work Programme", referred).

It was noted that a report on barriers created by language and IT skills was being prepared and was likely to be presented to the Commission at its meeting in January 2018.

#### AGREED:

That the Scrutiny Policy Officer be asked to add a report on barriers created by language and IT skills to the Commission's work programme for its meeting on 24 January 2018.

#### 43. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Gugnani reminded the Commission that he had chaired its last meeting as Vice-Chair. Since then, he had been appointed as Chair of the Commission at the meeting of Council held on 30 November 2017. He thanked Members for their support in this.

In addition, at the 30 November meeting of Council, Councillor Thalukdar had been appointed as Vice-Chair of this Commission. On behalf of the Commission, the Chair welcomed Councillor Thalukdar to the meeting.

#### 44. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

### 45. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Chair advised the Commission that various questions had been received in relation to the re-procurement of Social Welfare Advice, but these could only be asked if the questioner was present. Consequently, the following three questions were put to the Commission:

a) Question from Mr M Shenton, (presented on his behalf by Mr A Ross)

Can the Council confirm that the Welfare Rights Service will not face cuts to its budget based on the levels of need identified in paragraphs 4.2-4.5?

b) Question from Mr J Grocock, (presented on his behalf by Mr A Ross)

Will any savings be used to meet the needs identified in paragraphs 4.2-4.5?

c) Question from Mr C Goodwin, (presented on his behalf by Mr A Ross)

What criteria will be used at the initial client's needs assessment when determining whether someone can use self-help channels?

In response to question a), the strategic Director for Adult Social Care and Health advised that the Council had no intention of creating a saving in the budget of its internal Welfare Rights Service at this time. In response to question b), Mr Forbes stated that, as no saving was to be made, there was no funding to be used in the way set out.

In response to question c), the Head of Revenues and Customer Support stated that throughout the recent review it had recognised that self-help was beneficial, as the Council was unable to help everyone, but the approach recommended was that a move to self-help channels should take place slowly. For this reason, a three year programme was recommended to facilitate this shift.

The Head of Revenues and Customer Support stressed that no decision had been taken yet, but if this model was adopted, soft market testing, on how selfhelp take up could be promoted, would be undertaken before it was introduced. In addition, work would be carried out to identify the gateway for clients to establish whether they could use a computer and had access to IT equipment. If they were unable to use this technology, additional help would be offered to them, including referral to digital skills training.

### 46. SOCIAL WELFARE ADVICE RE-PROCUREMENT UPDATE

The Director of Finance submitted a report providing an analysis of the recent Social Welfare Advice (SWA) Consultation and the preferred model for the future provision of SWA.

Councillor Master, Assistant City Mayor – Neighbourhood Services, introduced the report, thanking officers and Councillor Waddington, formerly the Assistant City Mayor – Jobs and Skills, for the work they had done on this review.

Councillor Master noted that the responses received during the consultation had been varied, as a result of which three options for the way forward had been drawn up. These were outlined in the report. He stressed that the aim of the review was not to generate a financial saving, but to find a service model that was the best fit to customer need. For this reason, the report did not contain an indicative saving.

The Head of Revenues and Customer Support reminded the Commission that consultation had been held on four main proposals. The majority of the respondents did not support the main partnership model or locating the service only in the city centre. The Head of Revenues and Customer Support then went through the report highlighting and explaining key sections (tables 2 and 3) to the Members.

Of the options now presented, the third option met the Council's procurement aims, including the reduction of contract management pressures, and made a more streamlined offer, focussing on specialist advice. Delivered from a central location, the Customer Service Centre Granby Street, access to each area of advice would be through a single gateway, with advice on discrimination matters being embedded across all advice categories.

It was noted the location of the face to face offer within the Customer Contact Centre was not supported in the consultation exercise. However, the authority remained of the opinion this was the best solution, as it would provide a more joined up journey for clients with clear outcomes. It also would speed up referrals, improve communication and make better use of buildings to ensure more funding was available for funding advice. The co-location would help meet the Homelessness Reduction Act duty, with several services located in one area. These were Housing Options, Adult Social Care and Children's Services Crisis, which going forward would be a key access point for newcomers to the city. Additional outreach facilities were recommended for Highfields, as the consultation had highlighted a gap in provision there.

The Head of Revenues and Customer Support summarised the risks as:

- The market could not respond due to Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment implications;
- More people were unable to self-help than predicted and consequently experienced digital exclusion;
- Demand outstripped provision;
- Gateway assessment failed to identify those most in need; and
- New arrivals and other vulnerable groups could fear using the Granby Street location.

The Head of Revenues and Customer Support then emphasised:

- The Council had listened to the sector;
- The option met the procurement aims;
- The advice service needed modernising and streamlining to improve the client journey; and
- Soft market testing would be undertaken for clarity, covering:
  - Demand management
  - Gateway assessment

- o Common referral process and joined up IT requirements
- o Language and digital support
- o Robust outcomes
- Social value charter

The Head of Revenues and Customer Support explained that comments made by this Commission would be considered as part of the next stage in reprocuring SWA. When a decision had been taken on which option should be adopted, it was anticipated that soft market testing would be undertaken, with contract procurement in February / March 2018, so that the contract could start in October 2018.

During discussion on the report, Members expressed concern that in some areas of the city, many people had low levels of computer literacy, so could be limited in how they could help themselves. In reply, the Head of Revenues and Customer Support explained that a priority of gateway assessments would be to identify those with no, or limited, computer skills and language barriers. Language and computer skills were useful in other areas of life, so general help would be provided to overcome these barriers. It was proposed that the move to self-help would be taken slowly though, evolving during the first three years of the five year contract.

Work had been done with the city's libraries to ensure that appropriate hardware and software were available for members of the public to use to gain computer skills. It was acknowledged though that there could be a gap in provision for people who were confident in using IT but not confident in using it to access services, particularly Universal Credit (UC). To address this, it was hoped that champions could be available in the offices at York House and for a few hours a week at libraries to build their confidence with UC IT issues. These champions would not offer welfare advice.

Members welcomed the aim to create a more streamlined SWA service, but expressed some concern that the options presented could have the opposite effect, resulting in a more fragmented system. The Head of Revenues and Customer Support explained that the concerns of the advice sector and contract managers had been taken in to consideration when drawing up the options now presented, which included that contract management would be best facilitated by having one division managing the contract, under one contract manager, at central offices. Advice providers also wanted to be able to influence the management of what was offered at Tier 3. The contract would be reviewed annually, to ensure that the provider was responding to the needs of the city.

During further discussion it was recognised that people using the SWA service could have complex problems, needing more than one type of advice. This raised a potential problem of different organisations having their own targets and criteria, which could conflict with those of providers of other types of advice required by an individual. Alternatively, it could lead to organisations passing on clients they did not feel they could help, or only helping those through which targets could be met. In reply, the Strategic Director for Adult Social Care and Health advised that each contract would be offered individually and would be run by one provider. It was unlikely that one organisation would have the resources to provide all of the gateway services and advice, but it was the Council's responsibility to determine the level of standardisation, (such as key performance indicators), and define where no deviation from those standards would be permitted. If there was a cost implication to this, the providers would recognise this is the tender(s) they submitted.

The Director also confirmed that the tender specification would include specifications for passing on clients, although it would not be possible to completely cover every aspect of this in a service specification. Practitioners would be expected to determine for each client what the main issue was at the time of assessment and base their actions on that.

Some concern also was expressed by Members about locating the services at the main Customer Service offices in Granby Street as, although this was a good central location, it was a very open building. In reply, the Head of Revenues and Customer Support explained that those offices already were classed as a "safe" location for working with vulnerable people. Vulnerable clients already used the building to access Homelessness services, Adult and Children's crisis services and, in some instances, these are likely to be the same clients. Those seeking SWA would be directed to the first floor of the building for a gateway assessment process. Private rooms were available to use, should this level of confidentially be required.

Anecdotal evidence from Councillors suggested that some vulnerable people going in to the offices at Granby Street had not been treated with respect and had had been kept waiting for long periods of time when trying to use the telephones at the offices to access the services they needed. Members noted that a programme of training for front line staff had just been completed, so they were now fully trained in dealing with vulnerable clients. In addition, more free telephones would be installed shortly. There also was a telephone that connected straight through to advice provision services. Any further incidents should be reported to the Head of Revenues and Customer Support for investigation.

The Commission questioned how people would be able to identify the advice services they required if they were to all be located together. The Head of Revenues and Customer Support reminded Members that clients would firstly receive a gateway assessment. It was anticipated that advice under tiers one and two would be located on the first floor of York House, in Granby Street. The providers on that floor would be identified, possibly by sitting under a banner with the organisation name on and information on the advice provided.

The Commission questioned how people would be able to identify the advice services they required if they were to all be located together. The Head of Revenues and Customer Support reminded Members that clients would firstly receive a gateway assessment. It was anticipated that advice under all tiers would be located on the first floor of York House, in Granby Street. The providers would be clearly identified on a display banner showing where the advice was delivered.

Locations for the outreach centres already had been agreed, taking in to account the Transforming Neighbourhood Services programme, but suggestions from Councillors for a venue in Highfields would be welcome.

There was likely to be a significant number of requests for advice on universal credit, which was one reason for the changes proposed for accessing advice. Many local authorities were reducing non-statutory advice provision, but Leicester City Council wanted to protect these services. However, funding was very limited, so the gateway access would enable severity of need to be assessed, to ensure that those most in need were helped.

Soft market testing would help the Council know if its assessment of the anticipated increase in demand, and its associated risks, was robust. Advice providers also would be asked to share information on areas in which they had seen an increased need for advice, (for example, the demand for housing advice had increased significantly in recent months), so the Council could see how such increases, and their associated risks, were being managed.

The Head of Revenues and Customer Support further advised the Commission that one provider would take responsibility for, and manage, data protection under the contract. This would be the provider of the gateway services, who it was anticipated would provide the IT system that all other SWA providers would use. This would be explored further through soft market testing.

The Commission noted that all advice providers would have to be accredited in the future, which would establish a standard of service that could not be guaranteed under current arrangements.

#### AGREED:

- 1) That Option 3 of the proposed models of future provision of social welfare advice contained in the report be supported;
- That the Director of Finance be asked to submit regular updates to this Commission on progress with the re-procurement of social welfare advice services; and
- 3) That all Members be invited to suggest a suitable location for a social welfare advice outreach centre in the Highfields area.

#### 47. LEICESTER CITY COMMUNITY SAFETY WORK

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submitted a report briefing Members on the City Council's work relating to the community safety agenda through the Safer Leicester Partnership. The report also highlighted key areas that the Council and partners had identified as priorities to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Members of the Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission had been invited to attend this meeting to participate in the scrutiny of this item. Councillor Cole therefore was present in his capacity as Vice-Chair of that Commission.

Councillor Clair, Deputy City Mayor, introduced the report, inviting Members to consider community safety issues on which further reports could be made to this Commission.

The Head of Community Safety and the Safer Leicester Partnership explained that the Council had a statutory responsibility to address crime and the fear of crime. This was done through a partnership with other agencies, which identified its objectives and priorities in response to issues put forward by the partners. Each objective and priority was delivered through a multi-agency approach. It was recognised that different objectives and priorities needed to be approached in different ways, so the make-up of the delivery group for each was different.

In addition, within each strand, the partners developed different strategies, which determined how services within that strand were commissioned and delivered. For example, a strategy for addressing violent crime was due to be launched on 8 December 2017. This included the establishment by the Police and ambulance service of a medical treatment centre at the Clock Tower in the centre of Leicester on Fridays and Saturdays over the Christmas period.

A Partnership Plan was produced to explain the outcomes being sought and how these would be measured. It had been agreed that plans would include information on the level of resources available to deliver the outcomes being sought. Members were invited to identify key areas that could be programmed in to future Plans.

The Commission expressed an interest in viewing the Strategic Needs Assessment for Leicester, but was advised that this was a Police document that contained a lot of confidential information. Officers therefore were unable to make it available to Members. However, information in this Assessment was used to inform the Partnership Plan.

Councillor Cole addressed the Commission at the invitation of the Chair. He drew attention to concern regarding the increase in knife crime in the city and nationally, but noted that no reference was made to this in the priorities set out in the report, despite several young people having died in the city as a result of knife crime.

The Head of Community Safety confirmed that knife crime was subsumed within the priorities and therefore, to reassure Members, it was covered. However, clearly discussions during the past year and the work that was taking place was rightly highlighting this issue. She confirmed that this was a high level plan and therefore it was not intended as a detailed document. A number of partners, including the Council, were working on different aspects of knife crime, such as considering how to help those at risk of carrying knives and how knife crime was managed elsewhere.

Councillor Cole expressed disappointment that knife crime was not a high level work theme, as it appeared that the influence of knife crime on young people was not being taken seriously enough. He also questioned whether it was being viewed as a race issue, rather than a demographic one. In reply, Councillor Master, Assistant City Mayor – Neighbourhood Services, advised that knife crime was being considered as a major work area, not as a subsection of anything else.

Councillor Clair referenced the importance of learning, where useful, from other local authorities in terms of work that they did on knife crime.

Councillor Master advised Members that a meeting had been held with the Knife Crime team at the Home Office and a lot of work was being done on it, which the Council was involved in. He further confirmed that, as the Head of Community Safety had indicated, the current Partnership Plan was for 2017/18 and the issue of knife crime had become more prominent during the year, but all partners recognised its importance. It was hoped that the education programmes being used and the sharing of information across all agencies would make a difference on this important issue.

Councillor Sood, Assistant City Mayor – Communities and Equalities, stressed the need to address any violence against anyone. Some acts of violence were more specific to certain communities, such as violence against women and children, violence due through dowry systems, gender-based abortions, female genital mutilation, honour-based violence and violence against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people. She therefore suggested that it could be useful for the Commission to consider reports on these issues.

Work that also was being undertaken on how to tackle the use of New Psychoactive Substances (NPSs) was noted. Furthermore, following a successful workshop a year ago, work was on-going around tackling street lifestyle issues. This work was looking at access to support and, as appropriate, use of Public Space Protection Orders.

In reply to a question, the Head of Community Safety and the Safer Leicester Partnership advised Members that the current PSPO prohibiting street drinking expired in December 2017. Following public consultation, this would be reintroduced in January 2018, along with a new PSPO prohibiting the use of NPSs. Through this, the Police would have additional powers to confiscate alcohol where anti-social behaviour was involved. A possible PSPO on street begging was likely to be considered later in 2018.

Members also raised concerns about how Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) was addressed. The Team Manager – Domestic and Sexual Violence confirmed that there had been some improvements in this area, as it was identified as a risk by the partnership members. For example, efforts were made to ensure that there was a regular representative of the CSE operations group at the domestic violence and abuse partnership meetings, to aid effective co-

ordination between work streams.

The Commission noted that the 2018/19 Partnership Plan would be prepared shortly. It therefore was suggested that the comments made during discussion on this item could be passed to the Safer Leicester Partnership, with a request that the comments be taken in to consideration when setting the Partnership's objectives and priorities for 2018/19.

AGREED:

- 1) That the work being done by the Safer Leicester Partnership be welcomed and noted; and
- 2) That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be asked to:
  - a) Arrange a briefing for Members on what action the Council is taking to address knife crime;
  - b) Circulate the link for the "Slice of Reality" knife crime video and include this video in the briefing referred to under a) above;
  - c) Draw up a potential schedule of reports for consideration by this Commission on the issues identified through the objectives and priorities of the Safer Leicestershire Partnership's partnership plan for 2017/18;
  - d) Pass the comments recorded above to the Safer Leicester Partnership, with a request that the Partnership take them in to consideration when drawing up its 2018/19 partnership plan; and
  - e) Report the programme for the preparation of the Safer Leicester Partnership 2018/19 partnership plan to this Commission at an appropriate time.

### 48. CAMPAIGN AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Councillor Clair, Deputy City Mayor, introduced the campaign to improve awareness of sexual and domestic violence, advising Members that further information on any particular area of the campaign was available if required.

The Team Manager – Domestic and Sexual Violence then gave a presentation on the work that the Council was involved in as part of the campaign. A copy of this presentation is attached at the end of these minutes for information.

The following points were then made:

• The campaign had run throughout November 2017;

- It was known that high numbers of men and women were affected by this form of abuse. The figures in the presentation were taken from self-completion surveys as part of the National Crime Survey;
- The majority of people affected did not tell the authorities about the abuse, but were more likely to tell family and friends;
- There were many reasons why abuse was not reported. These included the fear of things such as an escalation of the abuse, losing children, loss of life, not being believed and stigma / shame that those being abused would be judged and seen as to blame;
- In Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland approximately 13,000 incidents had been reported to the Police in 2016/17 and approximately 11,000 telephone calls made to the helpline commissioned by the Council and partners. These showed an increase in both sexual and domestic violence crimes, representing 44% of the violent crime in the City;
- The "wrong" campaign had been developed in 2016 and was shaped differently for different times of the year;
- The group in which it was felt there was the most under-reporting of domestic and sexual violence was those aged over 55. There also was a degree of under-reporting by Asian / British Asian women;
- Men were very reticent about reporting domestic and/or sexual violence;
- Information on reporting methods was gathered where possible and the pathways / referral routes used examined to inform future work;
- An aim was to encourage perpetrators to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours and self-refer to interventions to support them to change;
- Funding had been made available to increase the visibility of the campaign through means such as large posters put up in various locations around the city. It was hoped that further posters could be put up in areas where there had been a decrease in the number of incidents reported, or where a severe incident was known about, so that reassurance could be offered that services were available;
- Low cost items, such as stickers with contact numbers on, had been given away at events and electrostatic stickers giving contact details had been put up in places like public toilets;
- It was hoped that the number of community champions could be increased; and

• A full evaluation of the campaign was likely to be received in January 2018, but it would take some time to see if the number of referrals increased.

The Commission welcomed the initiatives being taken, but some Members expressed concern that they had not seen the stickers referred to.

Members noted that officers visited schools to increase awareness of domestic and sexual violence and make students aware of services available, but currently there was no comprehensive offer that could be made to schools. However, a national programme was being rolled out under which the Police or Children's Services (following notification from the Police) would contact the relevant school when a report of domestic violence in a home with children in was made. The school would be advised that an incident had occurred, but not the full nature of the incident. It was hoped that this scheme would begin in the city in the next few months

#### AGREED:

That the Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services be asked to:

- a) Present the evaluation report of the November 2017 campaign to increase awareness of domestic and sexual violence to the Commission; and
- b) Give consideration to producing posters containing contact details for services for those experiencing domestic and sexual violence that can be displayed at venues such as schools and community centres.

#### 49. WORK PROGRAMME

#### AGREED:

That the work programme for the Commission be received and noted.

#### 50. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.49 pm

# Minute Item 48

21/12/17

# Sexual and Domestic Violence & Abuse Awareness

- 37% of victim-survivors never tell an official agency about the abuse
- People are more likely to tell family and friends
- Which community members know what, and how do they respond?
- Some people suffer far longer abuse than others
- We seek earlier support/challenge and better repair



#### Key messages for under-reporting groups

#### Women over 55

Are you tired of putting on a brave face? If you'd like to talk about your options, call UAVA.

#### Asian/British Asian women

Abuse in marriage or family relationships is wrong. If you'd like to get information and support, whatever your language or culture, contact UAVA.

#### Men

Abuse from a partner or family member is wrong, whether you're male or female. You're not alone.





#### 21/12/17

### **City locations for visuals**

LCC public buildings – libraries, community centres, children's centres, leisure centres

Perpetrators City centre JCDecaux boards, customer service centre, Police stations

Women over 55 City centre JCDecaux boards Park & Ride buses Glenfield Hospital

Asian/British Asian Shama Women's Centre, Holy Bones Gurdwara, Highfields/Belgrave community centres and libraries, Zynthiya Trust



#### Support for events

**19 Nov** East Park Rd Gurdwara open day

23 Nov Shama centre event

**25 Nov** Domestic abuse & faith: A vision for Leicester

28 Nov Braunstone CYP centre event

28 Nov Staff bake sale, City Hall

5/6 Dec UAVA open house for stakeholders







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# **Considerations for Scrutiny**

- Is the resource balance of engagement, support and accountability right?
- What role do scrutiny members have in this work?
- Where do scrutiny members think the focus should be?