

COMMUNITY PROFILE & PARTNERSHIPS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
22 APRIL 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Community Profile & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Monday, 22 April 2013

PRESENT: **Councillor Brian Dunn (Chairman)**

Councillors Chris Dolphin, Ian Dunbar, Robin Guest, Ron Hampson, Brian Lloyd, Dave Mackie, Mike Reece, Paul Shotton and Ian Smith

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors Alison Halford (for Nigel Steele-Mortimer)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Ron Davies.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Patrick Heesom and Nancy Matthews

CONTRIBUTORS: Chief Executive, (for minute No.46) Mr. Winston Roddick QC, North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and Anna Humphreys, Chief Executive of the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner North Wales.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Acting Overview and Scrutiny Manager and Committee Officer

44. DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

45. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 March 2013, were submitted.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

46. NORTH WALES POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Chairman welcomed and introduced Mr. Winston Roddick QC, North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and Anna Humphreys, Chief Executive of the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner North Wales.

Mr. Roddick gave an outline of his role and responsibilities and commented on the work he had undertaken since his appointment in November 2012. He advised that he was the public's representative in its dealings with North Wales Police and that his overriding duty was to deliver an efficient and effective police force which demonstrated value for money and cut crime.

Mr. Roddick advised that one of his main responsibilities was to set the strategic direction for policing in North Wales. He referred to the Police and Crime Plan which set out his police and crime objectives, the financial and other resources to be made available to the Chief Constable, how the Chief Constable would report on his provision of policing and how his performance of the objectives would be measured. He reported on the following objectives which together would be expected to deliver security in the home, safety in public places, and visible and accessible policing.

- Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- Protect people and reduce harm
- Deliver a quality service that met the needs of communities
- Promote a well led, organised, and skilled workforce

Mr. Roddick explained that the Plan was being implemented and was a flexible document which would be reviewed at regular intervals. He emphasised the need to address rural crime and said that a number of Police Officers had recently been appointed specifically to prevent crime in rural areas. A dedicated rape and sexual abuse unit had been established in North Wales due to an increase in the reporting of incidents of that crime. Fifty-one additional Police Constables had been appointed to increase the visibility of front line duty in North Wales in order to reinforce people's view of safety in the home and public places.

In concluding his presentation Mr. Roddick commented on the vital importance of partnership working in making North Wales a safer place to live, work, and visit. He reported that he was answerable to the Police and Crime Panel which had a statutory responsibility to scrutinise his activities as the Police and Crime Commissioner. He also made reference to his own fundamental powers with regard to the Police Service one of which was to appoint or dismiss a Police Constable, and to offer constructive criticism, praise or help as necessary.

The Chief Executive referred to the positive partnership work undertaken by the Authority in terms of a regional context and gave an assurance that a strong regional mechanism was in place. He also commented on the local arrangements and referred to a reduction in crime and the Authority's strong partnership with the Police. He highlighted the success of the Flintshire Connects project in Holywell which was a shared facility between the Authority and the police force and provided a 'one stop shop' service for the community.

The Chief Executive advised that the Committee held a designated Crime and Disorder meeting once a year. He also made reference to the lead role taken by the Authority to address the cause of domestic abuse through work on prevention and with perpetrators.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Roddick for his presentation and invited Members to raise questions.

During discussion Mr. Roddick responded to the concerns and queries put forward by Members around partnership working, the involvement of Town and Community Councils, Police representation at Town and Community Council

meetings, and the new Police boundaries. Mr. Roddick emphasised the importance of a close relationship between the community and the Police. He said he would pursue the matters raised with the Chief Constable and referred to the intent to arrange a programme of partnership working with Town and Community Councils.

Councillor A.I. Dunbar referred to the need for more prisons to be built in Wales and the proposed building of a new prison in Wrexham. Mr. Roddick said he strongly supported the need for a prison to be built in North Wales and cited the infringement of human rights, cultural differences, and the importance of access to family support networks particularly in the rehabilitation of young offenders, as some of the reasons in support of his view.

Councillor R. Guest commented on the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner and asked how the Commissioner saw the split in strategic and operational terms between the Commissioner's role and that of the Chief Constable. Mr. Roddick advised that operational matters were easily identified from non operational matters and the split was not changed by the 2012 Act, however, what had changed was the governance and accountability. He added that the principle object of the change was to give the public a real say in who would carry out that function with the Commissioner being held to account by the public. Mr. Roddick commented that he had a 'voice' with regard to the manner in which the operational powers were exercised by the Chief Constable and that he was interested in the results produced by him.

In response to a further concern from Councillor Guest around the deployment of police officers 'on the beat' Mr. Roddick explained that public statistics verified that the visible presence of the Police deterred criminal activity. He outlined in broad terms the three stages to a crime and the cost and consequences of each and emphasised that if the crime was not committed in the first place the costs and human suffering incurred in the next two stages would be prevented.

Mr. Roddick stated that he did not have a proposal to appoint a Youth Commissioner, however, he was keen to enable young people to have their 'say' and to be assured that their views were acknowledged and taken into account. He would welcome further advice and guidance from the Authority towards achieving this aim.

Councillor C.J. Dolphin referred to the need for better cooperation between social services, schools and the police when dealing with incidents of crime and abuse. Mr. Roddick acknowledged the points made and commented that close partnership working with relevant stakeholders, organisations, bodies and Authorities was essential. He also responded to the further query raised by Councillor Dolphin concerning the disposal of capital assets and commented on the need to make best use of the Police estate and use the opportunity to share accommodation with other bodies to make the Police presence visible. He confirmed that there was no intention to close any Police Station which was in current use. The Chief Executive advised that his understanding was that the Police intended to dispose of the old Holywell police station.

The Chief Executive referred to case management and complex referral arrangements and advised that new project work was being undertaken in Wrexham between Social Services and the Police.

During discussion Mr. Roddick responded to the further concerns raised by Members around a possible increase in criminal activity due to the current welfare reform and social deprivation. He advised that the Police Service had sufficient resources to deal with the amount of crime predicted and that statistics indicated that crime was going down due to the adequacy and effectiveness of the police force.

Councillor P. Shotton sought Mr. Roddick's views on the use of CCTV surveillance. Mr. Roddick commented that the use of CCTV was significant in reducing and solving crime and should be maintained in good working order and obsolete and ageing equipment replaced. Regarding Councillor Shotton's further query on an all Wales police force Mr. Roddick reiterated that his overriding duty was to provide an effective and efficient police service which gave value for money and reduced crime. He expressed his views as to why he believed that the Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner should stay out of the political arena.

The Chief Executive advised that the North Wales regional proposal for an integrated public CCTV system based on a twin monitoring centre model would be considered at the next meeting of the Cabinet to be held on 23 April 2013.

Councillor A.M. Halford raised further written supplementary questions concerning the North Wales Police budget, the standardisation of police uniforms in Wales and across the United Kingdom, and the issue of Police performance in answering 101 calls. It was agreed that Mr. Roddick would provide a written response to the matters raised by Councillor Halford for distribution to the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Roddick for a detailed and informative presentation.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be received and Mr. Roddick be thanked for their attendance; and
- (b) That Mr. Roddick would provide a written response to the matters raised by Councillor Halford for distribution to the Committee.

47. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Acting Overview and Scrutiny Manager introduced the Forward Work Programme of the Committee.

Members reviewed the current programme and agreed that the following items be considered at the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 20 May 2013:

- Flintshire Community Safety Partnership - update

In response to a suggestion put forward by Councillor D.I. Mackie concerning the venue for future meetings of the Committee, it was suggested that a site visit be arranged to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be agreed subject to the above; and
- (b) That a site visit be arranged to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

48. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were three members of the public and one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.40 am)

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Chairman