

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### CORPORATE AND PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on 23 January 2012 commencing at 10.30 am.

#### PRESENT:-

County Councillor Liz Casling in the Chair.

County Councillors Val Arnold, Philip Barrett, Bill Houtt (substitute for Brian Simpson), Neville Huxtable, David Ireton, David Jeffels, Andrew Lee, Stephen Shaw, Cliff Trotter (substitute for Bernard Bateman) and Geoff Webber.

In attendance:

Executive Member County Councillor Carl Les.

Officers:

Ray Busby, Helen Edwards, Neil Irving, Rob Polkinghorne, Jonathan Spencer.

Present by Invitation:

York & North Yorkshire Probation Trust – Joanne Atkin and Pauline Stokell

North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service – Nigel Hutchinson

North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service – Ed Horwood, Lesley Ingleson and Iain Walker.

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Karl Arthur and John McCartney.

---

### **COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK**

---

#### **64. MINUTES**

##### **RESOLVED –**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2011, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **65. PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS**

There were no public questions or statements to be put to the Committee.

#### **66. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND REFERRAL PANELS**

##### **CONSIDERED –**

The report of the Manager of the North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service providing the Committee with an overview of the work of Referral Panels and reparation projects in North Yorkshire.

Ed Horwood, Restorative Justice Project Worker for the North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service provided a power-point presentation on the Referral Order

arrangements in the county. He outlined the legislative background to Referral Orders and the principle of restorative justice; the operation of Referral Orders; the role of volunteers on the Referral Panels; the involvement of victims in the process; and the growing emphasis nationwide on restorative justice.

Lesley Ingleson, Manager of North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service referred the Committee to appendix 1 detailing the current reparation projects in the county. She introduced Iain Walker, Reparation Development Officer for the North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service, who was responsible for overseeing the projects.

Members made the following comments:

- How volunteer panel members were selected and if there were difficulties in recruiting volunteers. Ed Horwood said that at present sufficient numbers of applications were coming forward from prospective volunteers without the need to do an active recruitment campaign. Typically he received two to three applications a week. There was a rigorous selection procedure and successful applicants were chosen on the basis that they could demonstrate a range of skills and qualities and were representative of their local community.
- The ratio of male to female panel members and how that related to the offenders' being reviewed by the panel. Ed Horwood said that the panels were mixed but the nature of youth justice meant that there were a disproportionate number of male offenders. However recent trends showed that the number of female offenders coming through the youth justice system had risen.
- In response to a question Ed Horwood explained that under certain circumstances a re-offender was eligible for a second Referral Order. However this was not a common occurrence and only applied to minor offences. The re-offending rate for young offenders given Referral Orders demonstrated their effectiveness in reducing re-offending, particularly so in relation to other interventions. Figures on the re-offending rates of young people in North Yorkshire in comparison to other types of interventions would be circulated to Members of the Committee following the meeting.
- The number of panel members resident in each area varied. There were no volunteers for example in Ryedale district and so were there sufficient reparation projects in place in areas where there few volunteers? Ed Horwood mentioned that two volunteers had subsequently been recruited to Ryedale. Volunteers tended to work in their own locality and this worked well. Iain Walker said that the Youth Justice Service was always on the look out for meaningful projects to include in reparation programmes. At present the reparation projects being undertaken across the county were varied in nature and scope. Some had proved to be more successful than others.
- How supervisors were recruited and if there was a shortage. Ed Horwood confirmed that supervisors were recruited from the pool of volunteers. There was not a shortage of volunteers coming forward to be supervisors. Applicants were required to have a formal interview and complete a specific training programme.
- The monetary savings to the taxpayer gained from a young offender being given a Referral Order instead of a custodial sentence, and the costs to the Youth Justice Service in managing the Referral Order process. Lesley Ingleson confirmed that the cost associated with Referral Orders was

significantly cheaper than they were for a custodial sentence. The main costs related to the recruitment and training of volunteers and the salaried posts of the Restorative Justice Project Worker and the Reparation Development Officer.

- The support given to individuals, who had successfully completed their Referral Order, to enter employment. Lesley Ingleson said that because the Youth Justice Service was part of a multi-disciplinary team, referrals were made to link individuals up with educational provision for instance. Iain Walker mentioned that the reparation programmes in themselves helped equip young people with important life skills which they could then demonstrate to a prospective employer.
- The Chairman asked how the competing influences of the victim and the offender were managed in the Referral Order process, and the extent to which the victim got a say in the type of reparation project to be undertaken by the offender. Iain Walker said that victims were able to input indirectly through their Victim Liaison Officer or more directly by attending the panel. There were occasions where there was a direct link between the type of offence that had been committed and the reparation project. There were other instances where the offender worked for a charity of the victim's choice.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That Members note the work of Referral Panels and reparation projects in North Yorkshire.

#### **67. THE COMMUNITY SAFETY AGREEMENT AND THE WORK OF THE YORK & NORTH YORKSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES FORUM**

#### **CONSIDERED –**

The report of the Chair of the York and North Yorkshire Safer Communities Forum providing the Committee with an update in respect of the York and North Yorkshire Safer Communities Forum (the Forum) and to outline the priorities contained in the Community Safety Agreement (CSA) 2011/12.

**(County Councillors Neville Huxtable and Stephen Shaw declared a possible personal interest in this item as Members of the North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority.)**

Nigel Hutchinson, Chair of the York and North Yorkshire Safer Communities Forum provided an overview of the work that the Forum was doing to address the issues set out in the Community Safety Agreement, including the priority issues for 2011/12. He went on to highlight the Forum's track record of performance. The Forum had undertaken two pieces of work recently; the first had looked at the internal arrangements of the Forum and the second had looked at the sustainability of community safety partnership working across the Force area. These had been prompted by reductions in grant funding; the move to arrangements under a Police and Crime Commissioner from November 2012; additional responsibilities placed on the Forum in the form of conducting Domestic Homicide Reviews; and a new set of partnership principles agreed by Local Government North Yorkshire and York.

Nigel Hutchinson referred to paragraphs 6.2 to 6.4 in the report detailing the various actions that had been put in place as a result of both reviews. The focus was on ensuring the longer term sustainability of the Forum to enable it to continue to deliver

against its priority areas, albeit with reduced resources. There was now closer working with the district-based Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), in particular with the CSP Chairs, to allow the CSPs to be more effective in fulfilling their role as the local delivery groups for the Forum. The intention was also for the Forum to provide a strategic body to work with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Members made the following comments:

- The need to centralise the administrative functions, if not the delivery functions, of CSPs in light of budgetary pressures. Nigel Hutchinson replied that the CSPs were embarking on rationalisations. Hambleton CSP and Richmondshire CSP had merged and Selby CSP and York CSP, whilst still separate entities, had common governance arrangements. CSPs pre-dated the Forum and although the Forum could not mandate CSPs to merge there was now a growing recognition from all that certain functions were best delivered at the county level. There was still some way to go though, which was why there was a need to forge stronger ties between the Forum and CSPs through the active participation of the CSP Chairs at Forum meetings.
- Was the Forum achieving less now that it was only meeting twice a year? Nigel Hutchinson said that it was difficult to make a definitive judgement at this stage because a full annual cycle of meetings had not yet been held. Assurance mechanisms were still in place and although meetings were held less often that did not mean that there was less communication between the partners. To some degree communications had improved because previously CSP Chairs did not attend the Forum meetings. There was recognition by all that there was a need to liaise between the county and district areas especially with the Police and Crime Commissioner arrangements coming into place.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That Members note the update in respect of the York and North Yorkshire Safer Communities Forum (the Forum) and the priorities contained in the Community Safety Agreement (CSA) 2011/12.

#### **68. ONE COUNCIL UPDATE**

The Chairman announced that the following item would be considered next for the convenience of the Officer who was in attendance at the meeting.

#### **CONSIDERED –**

The oral report of Rob Polkinghorne, Organisational Change Programme Director providing an update on the One Council programme.

Rob Polkinghorne said that since his last update the Executive had agreed the financial expectation figures for the nine workstreams'. Since then effort had centred upon working on the implementation plans, due to be finalised by the end of February. The overall programme plan would be approved by Management Board at the end of March. Presently each of the workstreams were at different stages of development and commencing later in the week the 'One Council Vision group' would be meeting with each of the workstream leads to ensure that there was a single coherent programme. The One Council Members Task Group at its next workshop on 8<sup>th</sup> February would have sight of the draft structure plans that had been completed to date.

## **RESOLVED –**

That the report be noted.

## **69. MULTI AGENCY PUBLIC PROTECTION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **CONSIDERED –**

The covering report of the Corporate Development Officer providing the Committee with an overview of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements in North Yorkshire and York.

Pauline Stokell, Public Protection Manager for the York & North Yorkshire Probation Trust provided an overview of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in the county and outlined the legislative background including the reasons why the legislation had been introduced.

Pauline Stokell went on to provide the number of MAPPA eligible offenders nationally and for North Yorkshire and York in March 2002 (the end of the first year that the MAPPA arrangements had been introduced) and the number for the same in March 2011. She noted that the overall increase both nationally and locally was largely due to the cumulative total of sex offenders registered with the Police. The vast majority of serious offenders were managed by a lead agency outside multi-agency meetings, allowing resources to be focussed on cases where multi-agency resources were needed the most.

Joanne Atkin, Area Manager Public Protection for the York & North Yorkshire Probation Trust said that the formalised information sharing that was brought about by the introduction of MAPPA was invaluable. Its effectiveness, however, relied upon the contribution provided by each partner organisation.

Members made the following comments:

- The extent to which there was national co-ordination of MAPPA eligible offenders, and if it was the case that most MAPPA eligible offenders were managed outside of MAPPA meetings how was the Responsible Authority able to share information concerning all these offenders? Pauline Stokell replied that since 2005 the Police had had access to a national IT system, called VISOR, for the management of people who posed a serious risk of harm to the public. Since 2008 VISOR had been fully operational allowing key staff from the Police, Probation and the Prison Service to work on the same IT system. This enabled them to share intelligence and enable the safe transfer of key information when MAPPA eligible offenders moved. She went on to note that the Police and Probation Service made a joint decision about how a MAPPA eligible offender should be managed upon leaving custody, either through ordinary agency management or through active multi-agency management.
- The high priority for social housing given to people who had committed serious offences and the impact this had upon other homeless people; adding to the existing shortage of social housing in the county. Pauline Stokell replied that the various agencies involved in the MAPPA could not determine the rules and regulations associated with housing people who had left custody. The priority was to work with all the housing providers to get the best, most stable form of accommodation for the individual concerned. This

provided a benefit to society as a whole because individuals were less likely to re-offend if they were not homeless. Community safety benefits were brought about by the relevant agencies knowing where an individual lived, particularly in relation to registered sex offenders. The system of approved premises for offenders under the supervision of the Probation Service was only suitable for housing individuals for a short-time.

- The extent to which information was obtained on MAPPA eligible offenders entering and leaving the country. Pauline Stokell explained that the UK Border Agency provided regular information to the Responsible Authority. Travel Orders could be placed on registered sex offenders.
- How MAPPA was funded and by which organisations. Pauline Stokell explained that there was not a specific budget for MAPPA. Partner agencies provided a small contribution for training and audit purposes.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That Members note the work of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements in North Yorkshire and York.

#### **70. UPDATE ON POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE - POLICE REFORM AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT 2011**

#### **CONSIDERED –**

The report of the Assistant Director, Policy and Partnerships providing a briefing on the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, in particular the duty on the nine local authorities in North Yorkshire and York to establish a police and crime panel.

Neil Irving reported on the timescales for the election and appointment of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). He referred to paragraphs 3.3 and 5.3 of the report outlining the key roles of the PCC and the powers of the Police and Crime Panel (PCP). Local Government North Yorkshire and York (LGNYY) had established a group of elected members from the nine local authorities in North Yorkshire and York to oversee the development of the arrangements for the PCP in this area. The PCP would comprise 10 councillors with a minimum of one from each local authority. North Yorkshire County Council was being proposed as the lead local authority for the PCP and, within the overall budget agreed by the nine local authorities, would provide administrative and other support to the PCP. The Act had not altered the requirement for each local authority to have a Crime and Disorder Committee.

Members made the following comments:

- The composition of the PCP in unitary areas. Neil Irving replied that the PCP would still be a formally-constituted joint committee of all the authorities in the Force area. Where the Force area consisted of ten or fewer authorities, the number of members of the PCP would be 10 councillors. Where the Force area consisted of more than ten authorities there would be as many members as there were local authorities in the force area.
- The principle of ensuring democratic representation from all local authorities in North Yorkshire and York against the need to appoint the most effective councillors to the PCP. Neil Irving replied that the only flexibility in the rules

was how the tenth seat was allocated. Each local authority within the force area had to have one seat.

**RESOLVED –**

That the update be received.

**71. WORK PROGRAMME**

**CONSIDERED –**

The report of the Scrutiny Team Leader to invite the Committee to consider the work programme.

Jonathan Spencer, Corporate Development Officer reported that the Committee's recommendations relating to changes to the criteria for No Cold Calling Zones would be considered for comment by the relevant Executive Portfolio Holders in February but would then need to go to the Executive for approval.

Ray Busby, Corporate Development Officer informed the Committee of the date of the Alcohol Substance Misuse Review Group. He invited four Members of the Committee to join the Review Group.

The Chair noted that a visit to the North Yorkshire Police Force's Central Control Room in York was being arranged by Craven District Council. The invite was open to district and county council Members on the respective Crime and Disorder Committees in North Yorkshire. However the range of dates available was limited and so the possibility of a separate visit for Members of this Committee would be investigated.

**RESOLVED –**

That the future work programme be noted.

**72. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS – UPDATE ON THE NEWSPAPER PARTNERSHIP**

The Chair advised that the update on the Newspaper Partnership would be considered at this meeting due to special urgent circumstances, namely that agreement had only been reached recently with the newspapers and the pages were due to be published from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2012.

Helen Edwards, Head of Communications reported that agreement had been reached with Johnston Press to include council information in six of its newspapers. This partnership would result in one page per month appearing in the Harrogate Advertiser series, Malton and Pickering Mercury, North Yorkshire News, Scarborough Evening News, Selby Times and Whitby Gazette. The page would include public notices and local news on council issues for residents. The pilot would run for six months, after which it would be reviewed and evaluated.

Members made the following comments:

- The Yorkshire Evening Press was not included in the partnership. Helen Edwards confirmed that the said newspaper was owned by the Newsquest group and whilst it was hoped that negotiations would be able to continue, a satisfactory agreement had not been reached at present. The Darlington &

Stockton Times, The Northern Echo, The Craven Herald and the Ryedale Gazette & Herald were also owned by Newsquest. This meant that until agreement had been reached with Newsquest there would inevitably be gaps in the County Council's coverage of resident communications in local newspapers

**RESOLVED –**

That the update on the Newspaper Partnership be noted.

The meeting concluded at 12.21pm  
JS/ALJ