

**SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE – ECONOMIC GROWTH AND
COMMUNITIES**

Thursday, 26th October, 2023

Present:-

Councillor Flood (Chair)

Councillors Hollingworth
S Niblock

Councillors Ogle

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

**11 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bagley, Twigg, Dyke, Yates and Wheeldon.

13 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED –

That under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

14 CRIME AND DISORDER UPDATE

The Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services presented a report updating members on issues relating to Community Safety,

including an overview of current crime and ASB trends and progress made within the night-time economy.

It was reported that Chesterfield Borough Council has developed an effective Community Safety Partnership. This enables coordinated delivery of appropriate actions that will support the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour in Chesterfield and contribute to the overall safety of Chesterfield residents, visitors and businesses.

The key concerns identified within local communities are Anti-social behaviour, Violent Crime, Domestic Violence and alcohol and drug misuse therefore efforts and resources are concentrated here.

It was reported that there has been a 19.8% decrease in nuisance ASB within the period September 2022 to August 2023. This accounts for the majority of ASB incidents in Chesterfield and includes neighbourhood disputes, street drinking and youth nuisance within local communities. Analysis also showed that diversionary activity undertaken by Chesterfield Borough Council and partners in Chesterfield town centre has had a positive impact on anti-social behaviour in the town with ASB reducing by 9.3% for August 2022 to July 2023, compared to the previous 12 month period.

Key areas of ASB incidents were discussed, including youth related ASB. It was reported that there would hopefully be funding from the PCC for 2 years for two new enforcement officers who would work alongside PCSOs in Staveley. This would help to expand influence and visibility.

An overview of crime trends within Chesterfield was given. It was noted that there had been a general increase in violence both with and without injury and Public Disorder but that this was due to better recording standards rather than an increase in crime. Similarly, there had also been an increase in recording historical crimes which had impacted upon Domestic Violence figures. There had been a decrease in burglary and car crime. The rise of shoplifting was a concern due to the current economic climate and cost-of-living crisis. This issue is consistent with all other areas of Derbyshire and reflects a national trend. There has been lots of work done from a police and partnership perspective i.e., many shoplifters are receiving Criminal Behaviour Orders which restricts their movements.

As a partnership, significant work is being done in the key areas of alcohol related crimes, domestic abuse crimes and violence against women and girls.

The report then focussed on how Chesterfield Borough Council and Derbyshire Police are working in partnership to provide a mechanism to coordinate and prioritise the resources and activities of the partnership, and all other relevant agencies to enable the further development of Chesterfield town centre as a safe and prosperous place to be in, with particular focus on the Night-time Economy.

An integrated and co-ordinated approach to the Night-time Economy at a strategic, tactical and operation level is now utilised. This takes the form of a monthly strategic meeting between Chesterfield Borough Council and Derbyshire Police with a fortnightly tactical meeting and a weekly operational meeting to collate intelligence, identify risks and coordinate tactical interventions. There is increased police and CBC enforcement presence and street pastors. The aim will be to achieve a consistent visible partnership resource, engagement with stakeholders in the night-time economy and the effective sharing of information and intelligence.

An overview of the Initiatives delivered by the partnership over the last six months was given. These included Best Bar None, Vulnerability Hub/ Safe Space, Digital Communications System and Safer Streets 5. It was also detailed how those initiatives provided the foundations for the Council to be able to apply for Purple Flag status, which is a nationally and internationally recognised award for towns and cities that can demonstrate a safe evening and night-time economy.

It was noted that to develop a collaborative working approach there were plans for the development of a training programme for enforcement staff. They would be upskilled in areas such as conflict management, problem solving and investigation techniques, as well as key legislation and best practice in a variety of enforcement areas.

It was reported that Chesterfield had recently been successful in securing funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner to recruit an additional two enforcement officers who will be specifically dedicated to patrolling areas that experience high levels of anti-social behaviour. The recruitment of these two officers will increase the overall establishment of the enforcement staff to five, which is a 200% increase of the resource

capacity that that the council has for enforcement work compared to January 2022.

Inspector Kara Simpson from Derbyshire Police reported that the Safer Neighbourhoods team were now fully staffed and that this was having a positive impact on hard-to-reach communities. It was noted that although crimes such as shoplifting had increased, arrests were being made and Criminal Behaviour Orders were being applied for. This is in part due to the increase in partnership working.

Members thanked The Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services for their report and applauded the Initiatives being undertaken. Specific questions were asked around the work patterns of the two new enforcement officers. It was reported that resources would be aligned to match issues. There would also be a much closer working with the police, ensuring that there will be a consistent presence. Questions were also raised around specific issues with Travellers. These would be answered in more depth at the next meeting of this committee, when a specific report around this would be submitted.

There were queries around the impact of covid on younger people and whether behaviours had changed. It was reported that the Police work with schools and there have been diversionary activities offered through the community safety partnership funding.

Members commented that as the figures submitted in the previous report were for the former ward boundaries, it was difficult at this time to do a comparison. It was anticipated that they would be better placed to comment on comparisons at the next update which would be in six months.

Members all passed on their thanks for the partnership working during the local floods by the Council, police force, ambulance service, and rescue services from the Peak.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

There were no Scrutiny Project Groups updates to be presented.

16 **SCRUTINY MONITORING**

This is a standard agenda item for the Committee to consider the scrutiny recommendations implementation monitoring schedule.

Members discussed the planned reports for up-coming meetings. It was agreed that in order to properly scrutinise and devote time to the big issues that would be raised, it would be best to have just one large report each meeting. Members were asked if they had any smaller items that they would like to focus on which could then be added into these meetings. It was agreed that there would need to be a scrutiny focus on the recent flooding within Chesterfield. This would likely be early next year.

RESOLVED –

There was no scrutiny monitoring schedule to be noted.

17 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 November 2023 to 29 February 2024. Members were reminded to check this document regularly as dates are changeable. As this Committee can complete pre-decision scrutiny it is timely to scrutinise areas before they go to Cabinet for decision. It was noted that if any Members had any queries or questions they should contact the Chair for discussion.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

18 **WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE -
ECONOMIC GROWTH AND COMMUNITIES**

There is no current formulated plan, however there are items over-running from the last programme which need signing off.

RESOLVED –

That the action be noted.

19 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting Scrutiny Select Committee – Economic Growth and Communities on 13th July 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.