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The Chair and Members of  
Community, Customer and  
Organisational Scrutiny Committee

12 September 2017

Dear Councillor,

Please attend a meeting of the COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE to be held on TUESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2017 at 5.00 pm in Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Chesterfield, S40 1LP, the agenda for which is set out below.

AGENDA

Part 1(Public Information)

1. Declarations of Members' and Officers' interests relating to items on the Agenda.
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes (Pages 5 - 12)

Minutes of the Meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 11 July attached.

4. Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing - Progress Report on Food Poverty, Mental Health and Deprivation

5.05 pm – (Report to follow)

(For Items 5 to 9 the Committee will sit as the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee in accordance with Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006)

5. Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing - Update as Chesterfield Scrutiny Member of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel (Pages 13 - 20)

5.35 pm – Minutes of the Meeting of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel held on 13 July, 2017 attached

6. Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of the Public

To move "That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act".

7. Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing - Progress Report on Community Safety Partnership (Pages 21 - 78)

5.45 pm – Community Safety Partnership Progress Report, Information on Alcohol related Hospital Admissions and Briefing Note on Illegal Encampments attached.

8. Local Government Act 1972 - Re-admission of the Public

After the consideration of an item containing exempt information that the public be re-admitted to the meeting.

9. Scrutiny Monitoring (Crime and Disorder Matters) (Pages 79 - 82)

6.15 pm – Scrutiny Committee Recommendations - Implementation Monitoring Schedule attached.

(For the Remaining Items the Committee will sit in its standard capacity as the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee)

10. Scrutiny Project Groups Progress Updates (Pages 83 - 104)

6.25 pm – Report from Friends' Groups Scrutiny Project Group (appendices previously distributed with 24 January, 2017 agenda)

11. Forward Plan

6.40 pm - Forward Plan of Key Decisions – 1 October, 2017 – 31 January, 2018 (available via the link below)

<http://chesterfield.moderngov.co.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=78&RP=134>

12. Work Programme for the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee (Pages 105 - 108)

6.50 pm – Work Programme attached.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Smith', written in a cursive style.

Local Government and Regulatory Law Manager and Monitoring Officer

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## COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 11th July, 2017

Present:-

Councillor P Innes (Chair)

Councillors Borrell  
Flood

Councillors Sarvent  
Niblock

Councillor Brunt +++  
 Councillor Huckle ++  
 Councillor J Innes +  
 Damon Bruce, Head of Customer Services +  
 Kate Harley, HR Manager ++  
 Charlotte Kearsey, Democratic and Scrutiny Officer  
 Brian Offiler, Democratic and Scrutiny Officer  
 Rachel O'Neil, Customers, Commissioning and Change Manager ++++  
 Paul Radcliffe, Operational Benefits Manager +  
 Anthony Radford, Venues Manager +++

+ Attended for Minute No. 4  
 ++ Attended for Minute No. 5  
 +++ Attended for Minute No. 6  
 ++++ Attended for Minute Nos. 4 and 5

**1** **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS  
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

No declarations of interest were received.

**2** **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Lisa Collins.

### 3 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 21 March, 2017 were presented.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That the Minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 4 **CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND CUSTOMERS - PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

The Head of Customer Services and the Operational Benefits Manager gave a presentation to update the Committee on the implementation of Universal Credit (UC).

Implementation of Universal Credit (UC) had commenced for new claims from single young people in March 2015 and was due to be rolled out for all new claims and changes in circumstances in November 2017, with migration of all other claims due between 2018 and 2021. Arvato staff were working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Council's housing staff to manage the increased workloads and to mitigate the impacts on households as far as possible.

The report referred to the steps being taken to maximise the award of UC. These steps included:

- Continued involvement of the Benefits Advisor to examine benefit awards to ensure people were receiving their full entitlements;
- Collaborative working with outside agencies and the DWP was being encouraged to identify further risks for claimants;
- Further to the separation of Housing Benefit from Council Tax Support the Take-Up Officer post was created to ensure that those entitled were utilising Council Tax Support;
- Cases with incorrect benefits awards to be referred to the DWP for correction;

- Further officers to be trained in providing personal budgeting support to those claiming UC;
- Routine interrogation of UC breakdowns to identify when the rent element had been omitted to assist with the level of arrears as a result of UC;
- It was confirmed that the Council could request managed payments of the housing element of UC be made to it by DWP as landlord where there was the potential for tenants to fall in to arrears;
- Vulnerable tenants affected by under occupancy, benefit cap and UC to be targeted so additional support could be provided.

Members questioned the Head of Customer Services, the Operational Benefits Manager and the Customers, Commissioning and Change Manager on a range of matters, including the level of arrears that must be reached before officers become involved. The Head of Customer Services explained officers stepped in once arrears were identified.

It was explained that payment allocation on accounts did not take place, and it was therefore not expected to be possible to separate rent add-ons, such as water rates, from rent arrears. The Head of Customer Services agreed to investigate this further.

Members also considered whether mobile libraries contained computer equipment which could be used to apply for UC. It was thought that this would not be the case as applying for UC was a very time consuming process. Members emphasised that accessibility to UC was a very important issue.

The Chair thanked the Head of Customer Services, the Operational Benefits Manager and the Customer, Commissioning and Change Manager for their input to the meeting and their proactive work on the topic.

## **RESOLVED -**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That a progress report be submitted to the Committee in November, 2017.

## **5 CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION - PROGRESS REPORT ON WORKFORCE FIT FOR THE FUTURE**

The Cabinet Member for Business Transformation and the Human Resources Manager reported to the Committee progress made in the development of the Council's Workforce Strategy.

It was reported that the Workforce Strategy had been revised with increased focus on the Investor in People (IiP) themes, and that the Council's IiP accreditation had been extended until January 2018.

The Human Resources Manager updated the Committee of the monthly Workforce Strategy Group meeting. The strategy group had discussed various topics such as:

- What makes a good manager;
- What makes team meetings work well;
- Spans of control - how teams are structured, sized and organised.

Further to the contribution of the Workforce Strategy Group talent management was being examined along with the introduction of a communication route for core brief communications to be delivered throughout the workforce.

Members were informed that Aspire Learning, the online learning platform, had been implemented and currently included over 70 online courses. Further to previous consideration online appraisals had been introduced which would provide greater transparency to ensure that appraisals would link to corporate objectives.

A commercial skills training pilot had been run for Venues and Visitor Information staff and it was hoped to extend this in to other services.

The procurement process for the provision of apprenticeships training had begun. It was confirmed that the Council would be required to have an average of 23 apprentices each year, either new apprentices or upskilling opportunities for existing employees.



Members questioned the Human Resources Manager regarding how the talent management work would be undertaken and they were advised that senior management had been tasked to consider individual training needs with middle and junior managers, in addition to the need to be conscious of management skills in the recruitment process.

Members praised the efforts of the Human Resources Manager and the Council in taking on both positive and negative staff feedback. The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation, the Human Resources Manager and the Customer, Commissioning and Change Manager for their contribution to the meeting.

#### **RESOLVED -**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That a progress report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

#### **6 CABINET MEMBER FOR TOWN CENTRES AND VISITOR ECONOMY - CULTURAL VENUES**

The Cabinet Member for Town Centres and Visitor Economy and the Arts and Venues Manager reported to the Committee on the cultural venues operated by Chesterfield Borough Council.

Details of activity and income levels at the Pomegranate theatre, the Winding Wheel conference and events venue, Hasland Village Hall and the Assembly Rooms were provided. The broad programmes at the venues and the positive results of the annual user survey were brought to the Committee's attention.

The Arts and Venues Manager advised of the target to develop a business plan for venues to be operating to a zero deficit by 2020/21. To achieve this target a number of priorities had been identified:

- Considering capital investment opportunities to increase income streams;
- Seeking to develop and increase audiences;

- Digital aspects - seeking to install WiFi at venues and increased online ticket purchasing;
- Greater contribution to health and wellbeing via improving accessibility to performances through having audio descriptions, signed performances, dementia friendly screenings and enhanced disabled facilities.

It was noted that consideration was being given to a programme of events in 2018 to celebrate the centenary of the end of World War I.

In response to Members' questions it was explained that:

- It was only possible to estimate numbers attending hired events (i.e. for non-ticketed events or where tickets were sold by the organisation hiring the venue- e.g. Retail awards, school performances);
- The pantomime was the most profitable of the theatre's performances;
- Well attended shows provided a significant contribution to the fund for future improvements through the Theatre Restoration Levy (£1.50 per ticket).
- There was potential for growth across the Pomegranate and Winding Wheel venues;
- The aim was to provide a range of types of performance, including contemporary entertainment, through approaching and being approached by promoters and undertaking a procurement exercise for the pantomime.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Town Centres and Visitor Economy and the Arts and Venues Manager for their contribution to the meeting.

## **RESOLVED -**

- (1) That the report be noted.

- (2) That a progress report be submitted to the Committee in January, 2018.

## **7 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 August – 30 November, 2017.

### **RESOLVED -**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

## **8 SCRUTINY MONITORING**

The Committee considered the Scrutiny recommendations monitoring schedule. It was noted that updates on the crime and disorder items on the schedule would be provided to the Committee's meeting in September.

### **RESOLVED -**

That the Scrutiny monitoring report be noted.

## **9 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee considered the list of items included on its Work Programme for 2017/18.

It was requested that information be included in the Community Safety Partnership report at the September meeting on actions being taken to deal with travellers camping on Council land, including preventing their return.

The Chair updated the Committee that following further discussion of the corporate considerations arising from the recommendations of the Friends Groups Scrutiny Project Group it was hoped that a revised report could be finalised by the Project Group to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee in September.

**RESOLVED -**

- (1) That the work programme be approved.
- (2) That information be included in the Community Safety Partnership report at the September meeting on actions being taken to deal with travellers camping on Council land, including preventing their return, and that appropriate officers and agencies be invited to attend.
- (3) That consideration of the Friends Groups Scrutiny Project Group report be included in the work programme for September, 2017.

PUBLIC

**MINUTES** of a meeting of the **DERBYSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL** held on 13 July 2017 at County Hall, Matlock.

## PRESENT

Councillors R Ashton (Amber Valley Borough Council) (substitute member), B Atkins (Derbyshire County Council), C Dale (Bolsover District Council), H Elliott (Derbyshire County Council), D Froggatt (Derby City Council ) J Frudd (Erewash Borough Council) R Harris (Erewash Borough Council) (substitute member), C Hart (Derbyshire County Council) T Kemp (High Peak Borough Council) (substitute member), J Lilley (NE Derbyshire District Council), C Ludlow (Chesterfield Borough Council), P Murray (South Derbyshire District Council), B Murray-Carr (Bolsover District Council), P Pegg ( Derby City Council), G Potter (Derby City Council) G Purdy (Derbyshire Dales District Council) and Dr S Handsley, K Jackson-Horner and V Newbury (Independent Member).

Derbyshire County Council officers also in attendance: J McElvaney (Director of Legal Services), E Wild ( Legal Services) D Rose (Improvement and Scrutiny Officer) and I Walters (Democratic Services Officer).

H Dhindsa, Police and Crime Commissioner, K Gillott, Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner, D Peet, Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner & Andrew Dale, Chief Finance Officer.

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Orton (Amber Valley Borough Council), G Hickton (Erewash Borough Council) K Morgan (Derbyshire County Council), J McCabe (High Peak Borough Council)

**19/17**      **CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR MEMBERS**      The Director of Legal Services of Derbyshire County Council invited the Panel to review its composition following the commencement of the new municipal year and to co-opt 6 additional Councillor Members to ensure that the Panel met the statutory balance required.

Each of the ten constituent authorities in Derbyshire had nominated a Panel Member for the new municipal year from its majority group and this had resulted in a Panel of four Labour Members and six Conservative Members. It was considered that balance may be best achieved by co-opting an additional six Councillor Members: four Labour, one Liberal Democrat and one Conservative. Such co-options would be subject to the approval of the Secretary of State. The constituent councils and the political groups had liaised together and the following six Councillors were proposed for co-option:-

Councillor Diane Froggatt, Derby City Council (Labour), Councillor Helen Elliott, Derbyshire County Council (Labour), Councillor Christine Dale, Bolsover District Council (Labour), Councillor John Frudd, Erewash Borough Council (Labour), Councillor Ged Potter, Derby City Council (Conservative) and Councillor Beth Atkins, Derbyshire County Council (Liberal Democrat)

In putting these Councillors forward for co-option the constituent Authorities had regard to the wider objectives of balance (geography, population etc.) as well as political balance.

**RESOLVED** to approve the co-option of Councillors Diane Froggatt, Helen Elliott, Christine Dale, John Frudd, Ged Potter and Beth Atkins, on to the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel.

**20/17**      **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**    **RESOLVED** that Councillor C Hart be appointed as Chair of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing municipal year.

Councillor C Hart (in the Chair)

**21/17**      **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**    **RESOLVED** that V Newbury be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel for the ensuing municipal year.

**22/17**      **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G Hickton (Erewash Borough Council) J McCabe (High Peak Borough Council) and J Orton ( Amber Valley Borough Council)

**23/17**      **MINUTES**    **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel held on 23 March and the Confirmation Hearing held on 13 April 2017 be received.

**24/17**      **POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE REPORT** Hardyal Dhindsa, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Derbyshire, gave an update on some of the areas of work that he had recently undertaken.

The Commissioner updated Panel Members in relation to community engagement work and focused particularly on the #D383 initiative, which had been launched in June 2016 and would reflect his manifesto pledge to visit all 383 towns and villages in Derbyshire and actively engage with the public in these communities. To date, 81 separate locations had been visited. It was noted that in relation to the 'Listening to You' consultation, 2250 surveys had been completed between June 2016 – June 2017, with 31 consultation events held since the last Panel meeting.

An update was given on the ASB Victims Service, which commenced on 1 April 2017. Both children and adults could access the service and support could be accessed regardless of being reported to the police. 7 total referrals had been received between April-June and 4 self referrals had already been received by Derbyshire Victim Services.

Following on from the City Centre Summit a new 12 month pilot service had been located in the Padley Day Centre, Derby aimed at providing specialist support to drug users and street drinkers. It had the capacity to manage up to 20 vulnerable people at the same time and was a Partnership funded jointly by the Police and PCC - £77,000.

The Hate Crime survey was launched on 26<sup>th</sup> June in Shirebrook Academy. The aim was to gather feedback from victims who had suffered first hand as a result of hate. Over 100 responses were received in the first week. It was noted that Hardyal Dhindsa had recently been appointed as the national APCC Hate Crime lead.

Following the recent Terrorism events in London & Manchester there had been a notable increase in reported Hate Crime from April to May seen in Derbyshire. Mention was made of the pressures in aligning funding to counter terrorism activity.

Thee PCC informed the Panel that he had been appointed as the APCC National Substance Misuse lead. There were 21 national portfolios covering all aspects of policing. 40 PCCs and 2 Mayors for England and Wales had representation across these portfolio areas. Scoping work was currently being undertaken across other PCCs across England and Wales to understand priorities.

In relation to Mental Health Awareness week a Round table event was held on 11<sup>th</sup> May at Force HQ, Ripley. It was attended by key partners including Chief Constable Simon Cole who is national lead for mental health. A number of regional and national developments surrounding Mental Health were discussed. The concept of a blue light 'hub' service within the Contact Management centre at Force HQ. Police, Fire and Health sharing services was also under consideration.

Details were given of the Summer Events that had been planned across the County.

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions and also made a number of comments and observations on the update, to which the Police and Crime Commissioner responded.

**RESOLVED** to note the update provided.

**25/17 POLICE & CRIME PLAN STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 : WORKING TO TACKLE THE IMPACT OF DRUGS AND ALCOCHOL ON COMMUNITIES**

Members were informed of progress made against Strategic Priority Three of the 2016-2021 Police & Crim Plan for Derbyshire.

The City centre Summit was called in December 2016 following requests from a number of partners in Derby City ranging from the business community, the local media, to the police and other public sector agencies to tackle issues of street-drinking, drug taking and other anti-social behaviour that was having a negative impact on people's perceptions and use of Derby City Centre.

An approach had been put forward for intensive case working with these individuals alongside a robust enforcement regime by police and local authority colleagues. Funding had been identified from a range of partners to support a pilot of

this approach that would be run through the Padley Centre. Contrary to what had been reported in the media this would not be a provision solely for those using NPSs

The pilot would run for 12 months and its impact evaluated and if successful the PCC would attempt to secure a more stable and sustainable funding stream to support the work.

Following the success of the City Centre Summit an approach had been made to the PCC to support a similar process of facilitation in Chesterfield to help tackle issues experienced there.

As part of its development work the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) have identified a number of portfolios of work and assigned leads to these. This approach emulated the approach taken by the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC). It was hoped that this would help ensure PCCs were engaged with national debates.

The portfolio lead for Substance Misuse was the PCC for Derbyshire, Hardyal Dhindsa. The PCC was supported by a deputy lead, on this agenda this was Paddy Tipping, PCC for Nottinghamshire. The PCC had also supported national campaigns such as the White Cider campaign.

In relation to Alcohol and Young People and building on the work undertaken under the previous PCC, a strong relationship with Derby University had continued to be developed. Work was currently underway to ensure safety messages were delivered during the Freshers Fairs in September. This would include messages such as safer drinking and keeping safe when out. This was being delivered by a number of partners. The PCC's office and the University had been working to encourage the use of the Citizen Card to ensure that door supervisors and bar staff were able to identify those who were of legal age to drink. It was hoped that this would prevent the need for young people to take out important documents such as passports on a night out to prove age. Another successful initiative had been working with local licensed taxis who would accept a student card in lieu of payment and then the student 'buys' their card back from the Students' Union. As the card was vital to be able to access services such as the university library students were keen to get it back and were also able to get home safely after a night out. A new partnership with University of Derby Students Union is to be launched in Fresher's week – the Drinkaware Crew. The Students' Union taking the lead and employing minimum of 3 Crew to work in associated University Bars on student nights, contributing to a Safe Night Out.

Other areas of partnership working were also outlined including the street pastors, 'Intoxicated – No Sale Initiative' and the 'Pub Watch' schemes in operation across the County.

Panel members were given the opportunity to ask questions and also made a number of comments and observations on the update, to which the Police and Crime Commissioner responded.



**RESOLVED** That the Panel notes the report on the progress against this Police and Crime Plan Objective

**26/17 REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND PCC BUDGET MONITORING WORKING GROUPS**

The Panel agreed at its pre-meeting on 28 January 2016 to establish a working group to look in more detail at the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC's) in year and longer term budgets. The Panel also agreed at its pre-meeting on 17 November 2016 to establish a working group to look in more detail at regional collaboration of PCCs and police forces. Furthermore, the Panel agreed on 26 January 2017 for it to be a standing working group and for regional collaboration to be a standing agenda item.

It was necessary for the Panel to agree the working group's composition of Members due to some past Members coming off the Panel and/or having other commitments.

It was proposed the working groups would continue to meet three or four times a year (more if necessary) to monitor developments and proactively scrutinise both the PCC budget and regional collaboration activities. This may include:

- Ongoing monitoring of the PCC's in year and longer term budgets, with a view to being able to advise the Panel especially for the annual pre-cept report
- Ongoing monitoring of the PCC's regional collaboration activities. This may include a regional collaboration workshop, probably in the autumn 2017, as previously reported in March 2017.

**RESOLVED** (1) that D Rose, Improvement and Scrutiny Officer circulate further information to Panel members on the role of the Working Groups with a view to members being appointed at the next meeting.; and

(2) that arrangements be made for Panel Members to visit the Joint Police and Fire Headquarters in Ripley.

**27/17 REGIONAL COLLABORATION WORKSHOP** Approval was sought to progress plans for a workshop on the issue of Police Regional Collaboration.

At its meeting of 23 March 2017, the Panel agreed in principle to further develop a proposal to hold a workshop event to look at the issue of Regional Collaboration between the five Police forces and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) in the region.

The workshop would enable a consistent and clear understanding of progress with Regional Collaboration to be shared across the five Panels in the East Midlands region.

A further planning meeting had subsequently been held with the potential organisers Frontline Consultancy, attended by the support officers for the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Police and Crime Panels (Panels). A suitable central location was being sought, with one possible option being East Midlands Councils at Melton Mowbray.

It was hoped that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, who produced a review of Collaboration Arrangements in the region in 2013 at the request of the five PCCs, would be able to send a representative to the event.

At this stage, plans were still being finalised but it was anticipated that the workshop would take place in the week commencing 9th October 2017 and all five PCCs and Chief Constables would be invited to attend or send appropriate representatives. Currently, the Derbyshire Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable, together with the Derbyshire PCC had indicated their interest and availability for the event. Each PCP will be able to send five Members to the event.

It was proposed that a regional workshop event was the best way of progressing this issue. It could be argued that the support officers of each Panel could arrange the workshop event without external input but this would prevent the Panels utilising the wider experience and specialist skills of an organisation such as Frontline Consultancy.

**RESOLVED** to approve the finalisation of plans for the workshop event, to be facilitated by Frontline Consultancy.

**28/17**      **POLICE AND CRIME PANEL COMMUNICATIONS** Following consideration at earlier Panel meetings discussions had been undertaken with the Communications team about promoting the work of the Panel.

It was proposed to provide a quarterly newsletter outlining the work of the Panel and to reach out to a wider audience. A draft would be provided for the next meeting with a view to the circulation of the first newsletter shortly after.

**RESOLVED** to not the update

**29/17**      **RECENT/FORTHCOMING EVENTS** David Rose, Improvement and Scrutiny Officer had recently attended the LGA PCP Conference and would circulate the notes and presentations to Panel Members.

There was still a proposal to create a National Association of Police and Crime Panels and it was anticipated that this may be in place towards the end of the year.

**30/17**      **DATE OF NEXT MEETING RESOLVED** to note that the next meeting of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel would take place on Thursday 14 September 2017 at 11.00 am at County Hall, Matlock.

## **FOR PUBLICATION**

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS REPORT**

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MEETING: COMMUNITY, CUSTOMERS AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE)

DATE: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017

REPORT BY: HEALTH & WELLBEING MANAGER

WARD: ALL

BACKGROUND PAPERS N/A  
FOR PUBLIC REPORTS:

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#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee of the progress of the Community Safety Partnership towards the delivery of the current action plan (2017/18).
- 1.2 To inform the Crime and Disorder Committee of the Partnership performance to date as recorded by the Safer Derbyshire Research and Information unit and trends in the crime and disorder data.
- 1.3 To provide a verbal update on issues around alcohol and crime.
- 1.4 To provide a verbal update on progress of activities to address anti-social behaviour following the recent summit organised by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

#### **2.0 PARTNERSHIP WORK AND DEVELOPMENTS**

- 2.1 To support the work of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee, the Community Safety Action Plan 2017/18 has been previously distributed. Attached to this report is an update of the Action Plan and also a copy of the most recent 2017 Recorded Performance Data for the County.

2.2 The Health & Wellbeing Manager will be available to present an overview of the activities and also an update on alcohol related issues and respond to any issues Members wish to raise about the Community Safety Partnership's work and role.

### **3.0 CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS**

3.1 There are no risk, financial, legal or equalities considerations arising from the contents of this report.

### **4.0 RECOMMENDATION**

4.1 That the Committee considers the information presented and the performance of the Community Safety Partnership with a view to making observations and recommendations that would be useful for the continued development of Community Safety in the borough of Chesterfield.

MARTIN KEY  
HEALTH & WELLBEING MANAGER

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## **Briefing Note for Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee**

**19<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

### **Responding to Illegal Encampments**

This is a summary of how the Council responds to reports of illegal encampments reflecting both the legislative restraints and legal obligations that apply.

#### Background

Although the most recent Gypsy & Travellers Accommodation Assessment 2015 established that there is a need for an authorised site for Gypsies and Travellers within the Borough, the only existing authorised site is a private site. There is no authorised site for gypsies and Travellers passing through the Borough or seeking a short term stay.

Private land has been redeveloped or access blocked with heavy stones et al. leading to the increased use of public parks and recreation areas. Most of the Travellers seen in Chesterfield in recent years have said they have a settled pitch somewhere in the country and are travelling to attend events (Appleby Fair, Evangelical convention) or to meet up with others during the school holidays. Some have work in the area – usually paving, landscaping, garden clearance etc.

Not all illegal encampments will come to the attention of the local authority. Travellers prefer to camp out of the way, but within easy distance of toilet and water sources. Small family groups of 2-3 caravans are not always detected, or move on quickly, staying only 1 or 2 nights.

#### Legal Action to Recover Land

In taking legal action to move travellers and reclaim Council land the Council has to be seen to be proportionate in its action, to have regard to the travellers' human rights including health, housing and welfare needs, race and equality laws and to take a balanced view between the needs of the settled community and the travellers.

NB: Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised as indigenous ethnic minority groups.

### Eviction Process

The Council uses the powers contained in the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and the procedure for dealing with illegal encampments is as follows

1. Confirm the location & send map to legal services to confirm land ownership. Please note that even if the encampment is on Council land Council Officers do not have the power to intervene and try to prevent the illegal encampment. Officers will risk assess whether it is appropriate to approach the occupiers at this point.
2. If not Council land, find and notify the land owner who must then take their own legal action.
3. In all cases officers will aim to visit to speak to the occupiers within 24hrs of receiving an initial notification (during the standard working week – out of hours visits are not conducted). This visit requires 2 officers and will include:
  - Clarification on reason for encampment & likely duration
  - Provision of black bags and discussion on management/cleanliness of site etc.
  - Prevention of nuisance, management of dogs, use of vehicles and quad bikes etc
4. Traveller Welfare Needs check (required by law and the court can refuse to grant a removal order if the Council hasn't done this.

Officers will attempt to deal with matters amicably. The police may be asked to attend if aggression is anticipated/encountered.

5. If Council land, notify legal services so that they can prepare the legal paperwork & organise a court date for a hearing if the travellers don't move on when served with a Direction Order to leave



6. Make a welfare visit to establish whether there are likely to be any health issues and notify community health services accordingly – this is a legal requirement
7. Serve Direction Order on every vehicle (caravans, cars etc) specifying date by which Travellers must leave. Orders also have to be placed on all entrance points on the boundaries of the land. This means that the Direction Order will also apply to any new occupiers coming onto the land after the Direction Order has been served.
8. Serve Court Summons notifying travellers of date of court hearing ( they have a right to be present or have representation). Summons must be served for every vehicle (caravans, cars etc) and also place copies on all entrance points on the boundaries of the land
9. Prepare evidence for court and attend court to apply for the removal order. This involves officers preparing witness statements & other evidence and attending court with the Council's solicitor.
10. Notify Travellers that Court Order obtained and give deadline for removing vehicles.
11. If necessary arrange forced eviction with police present.

Once the Removal Order has been granted the Council may tow vehicles off the site. Each vehicle must be towed to the Borough boundary and may not return to the land covered by the Direction Order for 28 days.

Normally Travellers move on either following the service of the Direction Order or on the morning of the Court hearing. If they do not leave the Council has to use its own tow vehicles and staff to remove the vehicles – this requires a police presence and Council staff have to wait until the police force attends for this purpose.

NB the Council could choose to employ independent bailiffs and removal vehicles but this would be far more expensive. Travellers are sensitive about their vehicles and wont usually wait to be towed off.

## Site Management

- In the meantime officers monitor activity at the site. With assistance from Environmental Services arrangements can be made to remove refuse bags from site – preferably on a daily basis to prevent the bags being damaged by pests.
- Officers will also liaise with park managers & environmental services regarding clearance & repairs required when the Travellers leave. NB Most itinerants have the tools required to break padlocks and chains so there is no merit in trying to use/reinstate them while the site is occupied – the likelihood is that they will just be damaged. Under no circumstances would any attempt be made to secure the area at any point as trapping people or vehicles on site, and potentially separating those on site from the rest of their family could lead to aggressive confrontations and potential violence towards staff.
- Any complaints concerning aggressive, threatening or otherwise criminal behaviour should be reported directly to the police on 999 (immediate threat and danger) or 101 (no immediate threat). The police will be aware of the encampment and will also be monitoring the situation. They have their own powers under Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994 to order Travellers to leave if aggravating factors apply.
- Fire risks should be reported to the Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service.
- Dangerous dogs should be reported to Environmental Health through the Council switch board and the Derbyshire Constabulary
- Because the work to move travellers on is labour intensive the private sector housing team does not contact all complainants individually. Email updates are sent to the call centre, publicity, the Leader, ward councillors, the Chief Executive & senior management – this allows officers to focus on the work required to move the Travellers on

- Any new information should be sent to team via [hia@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:hia@chesterfield.gov.uk)  
– or if a manager is required using [pshmanager@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:pshmanager@chesterfield.gov.uk)

### Clean Up Arrangements

Depending on what is required clear up is arranged between the Park Managers, OSD and Environmental Services. There is no dedicated budget for this work so the cost will usually fall to the land manager.

### Useful Documents

Derbyshire, Peak District National Park Authority, and East Staffordshire Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2015

Derbyshire Inter-Agency Guidance on Traveller & Gypsy Issues

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## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS - IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING SCHEDULE

Ref No	Item (Scrutiny Issue or Topic. SPG = Scrutiny Project Group work)	Decision Dates (Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet, Council & its Committees)	Scrutiny Committee Recommendations and/or <i>Decision making body resolution</i> ( <i>italics = Agreed by Scrutiny Committee but not yet considered by decision making body</i> ) *	Completion Date for Actions	Action / Response Completed	Further Action Required by Scrutiny (6 monthly progress reports)
EW5  Page 19 CO2	New Leisure Facilities (SPG) ( <i>now Leisure, Sport and Cultural Activities SPG including various sub groups</i> ) - -	<b>EW 05.06.14</b>  <b>Cabinet 23.09.14</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consider Community Engagement Strategy principles throughout corporate projects.</li> <li>2. Pre consultation dialogue takes place with key stakeholders.</li> <li>3. Internal communications and engagement plan be developed for projects impacting on employees.</li> </ol>	6 month progress report	CCO agreed 24.11.15 to monitor corporate progress following next major consultation exercise. EW Progress report received 23.04.15. SPG to attend meeting with Leisure Centre Build Programme Board to sign off the Phase 1 work.	Next CCO2 - corporate progress report TBA. Next EW5 leisure progress report TBA.

Ref No	Item (Scrutiny Issue or Topic. SPG = Scrutiny Project Group work)	Decision Dates (Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet, Council & its Committees)	Scrutiny Committee Recommendations and/or <i>Decision making body resolution</i> ( <i>italics = Agreed by Scrutiny Committee but not yet considered by decision making body</i> ) *	Completion Date for Actions	Action / Response Completed	Further Action Required by Scrutiny (6 monthly progress reports)
CCO1	<b>Statutory Crime &amp; Disorder Scrutiny Ctte</b>			6 monthly meetings		Next 6 monthly meeting due 21.03.17
	“ “	<b>29/09/11</b> (No 0044)	Progress report on sharing information re alcohol related health problems and hospital admissions.	6 monthly wef 29/09/11.	Statistics requested for each 6 monthly meeting	Agreed on 08.01.15 that statistics on alcohol related health problems / hospital admissions be reported to each 6 monthly meeting.
	“ “	<b>08.01.15</b> (No 35)	That the Executive Member for Environment be recommended to carry out a review of the decision to stop locking the park gates at night and to consider whether this may have led to the increase in anti-social behaviour and criminal damage and all the associated costs; and That the Crime and Disorder (Community, Customer and Organisation) Committee be provided with the details of the outcome of the	Report requested for 24.11.15 Meeting	Cabinet Member attended and responded to CCO meeting held on 07.07.15.  Progress reported 15.09.15 and 24.11.15 (CCO requested account be taken of its	Date for next progress monitoring report TBC.

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Ref No	Item (Scrutiny Issue or Topic. SPG = Scrutiny Project Group work)	Decision Dates (Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet, Council & its Committees)	Scrutiny Committee Recommendations and/or <i>Decision making body resolution</i> ( <i>italics = Agreed by Scrutiny Committee but not yet considered by decision making body</i> ) *	Completion Date for Actions	Action / Response Completed	Further Action Required by Scrutiny (6 monthly progress reports)
			review and the cost benefit analysis.		views in the final executive decision.	
<p>Abbreviations Key : OP = Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum. CCO = Community, Customer and Organisational Development Scrutiny Committee. EW = Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee). TBA (to be agreed).  Note recommendation wording may be abridged.</p>						

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**CHESTERFIELD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

*Community, Customer and  
Organisational Scrutiny Committee*

**Scrutiny Project Group**

report on

*Friends Groups*

Date: Updated September 2017

## Project group members:

Councillors:

Lead	Kate Caulfield
Group Members	Jenny Flood Shirley Niblock Gordon Simmons
Project group officer support	Martin Elliott

### 1.0 Introduction and review aims

- 1.1 This review looked at how friends and community groups<sup>1</sup> work with Chesterfield Borough Council to improve local parks and open spaces.
- 1.2 For the purpose of this review a friends group is defined as a group of local residents and other interested parties who dedicate their time, skills and knowledge to improve their local park or open space. The project group notes that other groups and organisations may use the term " friends ", for example the Friends of the Pomegranate Theatre, however these groups did not meet the project group's scope, and were therefore not considered in the group's research.
- 1.3 The Council has an important relationship with the friends group including as the landowner of the parks and open spaces and a public service provider. The management of the key relationship with the groups has not previously been reviewed. The project group wanted to consider if this relationship enables the best possible outcomes for the council, groups and the borough's parks and open spaces.
- 1.4 The review also aimed to evaluate how the various friends groups from across the borough worked together in order to share best practice. Transparency and accountability was also a key consideration.
- 1.5 The project group set out to achieve the following objectives:
  - To have increased and productive communication between the council and individual friends groups.
  - Better communication and the sharing of best practice between friends groups, and for a more consistent method of operation to be taken by the groups

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<sup>1</sup> Referred to as "friends groups" throughout the report.

- Increased support and training being made available to enable all friends groups to be effective and successful.
- For friends groups to have the support and resources to engage with all local residents.
- That all friends groups have strong, robust and inclusive constitutions in order to be accountable to local residents, and that the groups have the resources and training in order to do this.
- Greater synchronisation in the work and priorities of friends groups across the Borough, so as to maximise positive outcomes for the council's parks and opens spaces and for local residents.
- That friends groups have the tools and training to make sure that equality and diversity is considered in their decision making processes.

## **2.0 Reasons for the review and link to priorities**

- 2.1 The review of friends groups was established as a result of the new annual work programming process. This process involved cabinet, overview and scrutiny and backbench members, as well as the senior and corporate management teams working together to create one overarching overview and scrutiny work programme for the municipal year 2016/17.
- 2.2. The review contributes to the council's vision "putting our communities first" and the Council Plan 2015 – 2019 aim "to improve the quality of life for local people" in particular the objective "to increase the quality of public space for which the council has responsibility through targeted improvement programmes".

## **3.0 Introduction to recommendations**

- 3.1 The project group sought in the review to learn how examples of best practice from elsewhere could be applied to Chesterfield so that all friends groups could play as full a part as possible in the care and management of the borough's open spaces. The group was also mindful that any changes recommended to the processes and resources needed to encourage new groups to form, and for established groups to succeed, should not create excessive demands on officers' time and workloads. The group's recommendations have been formed with consideration to both these objectives in mind.

## **4.0 Recommendations**

### **The Project Group recommends:**

- 4.1 That an up-to-date data base of friends of groups contacts is maintained by officers and that all friends of groups are given a single point of contact at the council to facilitate streamlined , effective and accountable channels of communication between groups and the council.
- 4.2 That the Friends of Groups information pack is reviewed and updated to provide:
  - Guidance on developing a new group or joining an existing group
  - Guidance on developing aims, constitutions, management committees and financial arrangements
  - Advice and tips for key management committee roles including the chair, secretary and treasurer
  - Tips for keeping the members of the friends of group, local community
  - and council updated including social media and links to council publications, social media and websites
  - Basic insurance and risk management advice
  - Advice on developing an action plan
  - Templates and examples of key documents to assist groups
  - Where to go for help and support including Chesterfield Borough Council and Links CVS
- 4.3 That an annual survey with Friends Groups be carried out to collect information on their activities and achievements to enable the council to see how their work is contributing to the delivery of the councils objectives, as set out in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.
- 4.4 That the council encourage and support friends of groups to develop a plan for their park or open space. This plan should be developed in

consultation with both the council and the local community and should clearly set out both the group's and council's role in developing the park or open space.

- 4.5 That in addition to the support within recommendations 2 and 3, the council's policy and communications service work with the green spaces team and friends of groups to develop case study material for Chesterfield Borough Council led promotional opportunities including Your Chesterfield (the Council's magazine that goes to all homes in Chesterfield borough), the website and social media channels.
- 4.6 That a bi-annual friend's group's forum is re-established to share key messages, best practice, increase networking and support and to enable the work of the friends groups to be shared and celebrated with a wider audience.

## **5.0 Review approach**

5.1 The review was carried out by:

- a) Reviewing and analysing the current resources and officer support available to friends groups provided by Chesterfield Borough Council.
- b) Reviewing and analysing the current resources and officer support to friends groups provided by other local authorities. This included a visit to Karen Lewis, Community Partnerships Officer at Sheffield City Council.
- c) Project group meetings to review findings.
- d) Meetings and discussions with Cabinet Members and officers including:
  - Councillor Chris Ludlow, Cabinet Member for health and wellbeing
  - Michael Brymer, commercial services manager
  - John Ramsey, principal green space strategy officer
  - Lead officers from the policy and communication service
- e) Consultation and discussion with local friends groups via an online survey and face to face meetings

5.2 The information received from the survey with the friends groups was collated and analysed for trends. This data together with the information gained from the subsequent meetings with friends' group

members was considered by the project group in formulating their recommendations.

- 5.4 The project group selected a set of other local authorities to examine how they worked with friends groups. These were selected on a basis of either demonstrating best practice or having a similar demographic to Chesterfield.
- 5.5 The project group also referred to the extensive report "What are Friends for?" published by Cambridge City Council in 2013 as part of their research.

## **6.0 Review findings and analysis**

- 6.1 At the start of the review the project group recognised the importance of talking with existing friends groups in Chesterfield to learn how they operated and about the types of activities they were involved in. The project group also wanted to learn how the groups communicated with council officers, and about the level of support officers provided to the groups.
- 6.2 The group agreed that to gather this information a survey should be conducted with members of friends groups in Chesterfield. This action however highlighted some concerns regarding information management. The information published on the council's website was out of date and incomplete as was the information provided directly by the green spaces team. The Democratic and Scrutiny Officer then worked with group members to update the list so that it could be used to send a survey to key contacts in every active friends group.
- 6.3 After the survey had been completed by the friends groups, the project group invited representatives of each group to meet with them at the town hall. These meetings allowed the project group members to discuss the data collected directly with the friends groups as well as to hear their thoughts regarding how the relationship between friends groups and the council could work more effectively.
- 6.4 Representatives of the well-established groups were in agreement that council officers were able to be contacted, and were helpful and supportive when they interacted with them. However representatives of a group that was in its early stages of development noted that initially it had been difficult to find out which officer they should

contact when setting up their group. All the groups noted that it can also be difficult to know who to contact at the council about specific enquiries that may not be the responsibility of the green spaces team. The green spaces team does have an online information pack on setting up a friends group which contains a list of key officer contacts; this list however is very out of date and needs to be reviewed.

- 6.5 Friends group representatives, as well as project group members were in agreement that while officers were very helpful when contacted, especially the Principal Green Spaces Strategy Officer, one officer should not be expected to deal with all enquiries from all of the groups. Project group members were in agreement that friends group and officer communication should be organised in a way that provided groups with a single point of contact, but at the same time did not put all the responsibility on one officer to deal with all of the enquiries from all the groups. This could potentially be facilitated by providing friends groups with a list of officer contacts at the council and their area of responsibility to enable enquiries to be dealt with by the appropriate officer.

**Recommendation 1** - That an up-to-date data base of friends of groups' contacts is maintained by officers and that all friends of groups are given defined points of contact at the council to facilitate streamlined, effective and accountable channels of communication between groups and the council.

- 6.6 The Chesterfield Borough Council website currently invites anyone considering setting up a friends group to contact the council by phone or email and includes a link to the document "Establishing a Park Friends Group". This document contains information and guidance to new groups and example documents such as a model constitution for groups. However due to officer resource this document has not been reviewed for some time and contains out of date information, especially with regard to officer contact details.
- 6.7 As part of the group's research it reviewed the written resources provided by other local authorities to new groups setting up and compared them to the documents offered by Chesterfield Borough Council. The group found wide variances in style and content of the written resources available, some were very similar to the document provided on the council's own website, however other authorities'

documents were much more comprehensive with regard to content, and were presented in a much more user friendly and modern style.

- 6.8 The set of guidance documents for new friends groups that stood out to the group were those offered by Sheffield City Council. At the outset of the review project and group members read the report "What are friends for?" which had been commissioned by Cambridge City Council to look at their relationship with friends groups. In this report Sheffield City Council had been praised for demonstrating "best practice" with regard to their collaborative and constructive relationship with its large network of over 70 friends and community groups. To learn more about this relationship and to consider if some practices could potentially be implemented in Chesterfield, the project group lead member met with Karen Lewis, Community Partnerships Manager at Sheffield City Council.
- 6.9 Sheffield City Council provides a Starter Pack, "Starting a New Community Group" for new friends groups. The document sets out comprehensive but clear information in a series of worksheets which promote good practice for operating a friends group as well as providing templates for key documents such as an example constitution. Sheffield City Council is happy to share this documentation with other authorities to utilise or adapt for themselves. The pack is attached at **Appendix D**.
- 6.10 The pack provides all the resources needed for a group to be set up correctly and to give it firm foundations. The representatives of the longer established friends groups noted that receiving structured support at the outset of forming their group in areas such as establishing a constitution and developing other essential policies and procedures had been key to their groups' success and longevity.
- 6.11 The survey of friends groups in Chesterfield showed that while all groups had a constitution only three had public liability insurance and only one had risk assessment forms. When the project group met with the friends groups, lack of available guidance and expertise was cited as the main reasons for not having these documents in place. It is not realistic to expect every group to have the expertise "in house" to create these documents. Consequently the group members feel strongly that it is vital in order to ensure equality of outcomes for different groups that guidance on key documents and procedures, as well as information on running an effective friends group is available



to all groups. Other authorities provide example risk assessments in their start up material in recognition that groups will need guidance in creating these documents.

- 6.12 The project group also reviewed the constitutions of friends groups in Chesterfield and found large variances between documents. While all the constitutions considered set out the minimum requirements needed to have a formally constituted group, some were much more detailed and specific than others.
- 6.13 The project group understands that each group's constitution will by necessity vary, and that as each group is an independent organisation it is important that they should have control over their own affairs. To this end the council should not insist that each group's constitution should contain mandated objectives or commitments; however the council should provide the tools to ensure that each group can build a strong constitution that will effectively meet the needs of each park or open space. This approach will ensure that each friends group is able to work with the council as well as their local community constructively and inclusively, and in a way that is both accountable and transparent.
- 6.14 The project group reviewed several example constitutions provided by other authorities, and again wide variances in style and content were seen. The project group approved of several elements included over different constitutions for example with regard to equality issues and accessibility. While, as already noted the group believes constitutions should not be excessively prescriptive or contain excessive details that could be better included in protocol papers for groups, constitutions should always formalise the working relationship between friends groups and the council. The project group were of the opinion that the wording used in the Manchester City Council example constitution met this objective effectively as it made it both the friends group and the council's relationship clear and unequivocal, but was worded in a cooperative and "light touch" manner.

### **"Aims**

**(that friends groups) work in partnership with Manchester City Council Leisure Department (and whilst recognising that the ultimate responsibility for funding lies with the Council) to identify other funding sources"**

## ***Manchester City Council" Friends of Park" Start-up pack***

The full example constitution is included at **Appendix E**.

**Recommendation 2** - That the Friends of Groups information pack is reviewed and updated to provide:

- Guidance on developing a new group or joining an existing group
- Guidance on developing aims, constitutions, management committees and financial arrangements
- Advice and tips for key management committee roles including the chair, secretary and treasurer
- Tips for keeping the members of the friends of group, local community and council updated including social media and links to council publications, social media and websites
- Basic insurance and risk management advice
- Advice on developing an action plan
- Templates and examples of key documents to assist groups
- Where to go for help and support including Chesterfield Borough Council and Links CVS

6.15 The council's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2015 – 2024 is a key document that links with the council's key corporate priorities as set out in the council plan. The strategy is primarily concerned with the management and development of publicly accessible green space that has recreational value within the borough. The strategy aims to direct and prioritise resources in order to gain maximum health and wellbeing benefits through the provision of high quality and accessible green spaces.

6.16 The friends of groups have and can continue to play an important role in the delivery of the strategy. This includes attracting external funding in order to drive improvements and attract more people to use parks and open spaces. However from the meetings held with the

representatives of the friends groups it became clear that most groups were unaware of the strategy and how their work was contributing to the achievement of its objectives. Some groups did note that they were aware of the strategy but had not used it when setting out their objectives. Only two groups advised that they were both familiar with the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and had used it when drawing up their improvement plan so to ensure that their priorities and objectives supported those of the council.

- 6.17 As previously noted the project group used an online survey in order to consult with and gather information from friends groups in Chesterfield. The questionnaire sent to the friends groups is attached at **Appendix A**. The survey received a good response from the friends groups with eight groups completing the online questionnaire.
- 6.18 The survey responses provided a significant amount of quantitative and qualitative data about friends groups and their activities. The full results of the survey are attached at **Appendix B**. The survey results provided a comprehensive record of the activities of friends groups in areas including community engagement, fund raising and bidding to external organisations.
- 6.19 Currently the green spaces team is generally well informed with regard to the activities of friends groups. For example if friends groups are holding a fundraising event this needs to be discussed in advance with officers. There is however no strategic over-arching data collection exercise with regard to friends group activities and subsequent evaluation of this data against the objectives of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.
- 6.20 Sheffield City Council, who has strong and constructive relationships with their network of friends groups, conducts an annual survey of friends groups. This allows data to be gathered on group composition, activities, fund raising and information on how many hours group members have spent on site as volunteers or organising events. The survey used by Sheffield City Council is attached at **Appendix F**.
- 6.21 Project group members were in agreement that the actions of friends groups operating on council owned land must support and be in alignment with council priorities and that for this to happen council officers must be fully aware of the each group's activities and objectives. This will also improve opportunities for publicising friends

of and council improvements to parks, events and opportunities for volunteering and links to recommendation 2.

**Recommendation 3** - That an annual survey with Friends Groups be carried out to collect information on their activities and achievements to enable the council to see how their work is contributing to the delivery of the councils objectives, as set out in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

- 6.22 One of the key areas that the project group were keen to review was how the relationship between friends groups and the council was managed. The group found from their discussions with both the groups and officers that the relationship was generally good with open channels of communication. Friends' group members consult with officers regarding their plans and officers attend friends groups' committee meetings where appropriate.
- 6.23 As previously noted the majority of friends groups advised that they were unaware of the content of the council's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, and as a consequence did not know how their activities were in alignment with council priorities. It should be noted that communication between the council and the groups is at a level where it would be extremely unlikely that a group's activities would be totally contrary to the objectives of the council. However it is possible that some groups could be carrying out activities that are not as strategically focussed and aimed at meeting the council's objectives for parks and open spaces as they could potentially be.
- 6.24 From the responses received to the survey only 20% of the friends groups in Chesterfield stated that they had a current management, improvement or master plan for their park or open space. The groups that did have a plan advised that they had been developed and agreed with the green spaces development officer and had been drawn up with full regard to the council's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. These groups advised that developing a plan had positively assisted them in producing better outcomes for their park or open space. These plans had also been beneficial in clearly defining the relationship and responsibilities between the council and the group with regard to the development of the park and open space.
- 6.25 The friends groups that did have a plan noted that it was important that the community was involved and consulted in their development

to ensure that the group's priorities were aligned to those of the local community as well as to those of the council and the friends group members.

- 6.26 Sheffield City Council, which the group used as an example of "best practice", had in the past considered using a formal partnership agreement between the council and friends groups to set out mutual expectations. This approach however was never implemented as it was feared that it could become a contractual relationship that might not be sustainable in the long term. The project group note that it is important that expectations between the council and the friends groups are clear from the start of the relationship.
- 6.27 The project group appreciates that each friends group has varying levels of expectations of both their role and of the balance of responsibility between the council and themselves with regard to the upkeep and development of parks and open spaces. All groups were in agreement however that the relationship between themselves and the council, as well as each group's objectives needed to be clearly defined for each party by developing a mutually agreed plan. This approach would help define the relationship between the groups and the council, provide a basis for mutual accountability and understanding and also assist with the setting of clear, targeted and realistic objectives for both the council and the friends groups from the outset.

**Recommendation 4** - That the council encourage and support friends of groups to develop a plan for their park or open space. This plan should be developed in consultation with both the council and the local community and should clearly set out both the group's and council's role in developing the park or open space.

- 6.28 The project group, at an early stage in their research looked at friends' group websites and social media activity to gain information about each groups activities. The project group found wide variances in how each group was using websites and social media, with some groups having both their own websites and social media accounts while others had no web presence at all. There were links to some group's websites from the council's website, but not all groups' websites were listed.

- 6.29 During project group meetings with the friends groups, the representatives noted that maintaining an up-to-date and professional looking web site was very time consuming and that not all friends groups were fortunate enough to have the expertise available to their group in order to do this type of work. Several groups noted that while they still had a website their primary method of online communication was via a Facebook page as this method of online communication had numerous advantages over a traditional website. The representatives noted that a Facebook page was both easy to set up and maintain, as well as having the benefit of being easier for members of the local, and wider community to access and subsequently get to know about the activities of the groups.
- 6.30 In addition to using websites and social media the different friends groups had mixed approaches to how they communicated with their local communities. The friends groups noted that it was important for them to engage with the wider community beyond those who came to their meetings or sat on their committee, so as to learn about what the community wanted for their park or open space.
- 6.31 The methods of communication that the groups had used included leafleting their local area, public meetings and using community events on their park or open space so they could talk face to face with local residents to learn about what they wanted to happen in their park. The success of leafleting had been very disappointing for many of the groups as the activity was very time consuming and had resulted in very low response rate. Public meetings had also been held by some groups in the past, but these had been discontinued due to poor attendance. All of the friends groups that were spoken to thought that face to face communication with local residents was the most effective method of learning what they wanted for their park or open space.
- 6.32 In order that friends groups' activities are to be focussed on the priorities of their local communities the project group members and the friends' groups' representatives were in agreement that there must be effective communication between the group and their local community.
- 6.33 While information on the friends groups' activities can be found by following links from the council's website to individual websites, the representatives of the groups felt that the council could do more to

promote their activities to a wider audience. This could be done by including news stories on their activities in council publications or promoting their events on the council's web site and via social media activity.

**Recommendation 5** – That in addition to the support within recommendations 2 and 3, the councils policy and communications service work with the green spaces team and friends of groups to develop case study material for Chesterfield Borough Council led promotional opportunities including Your Chesterfield (the Council's magazine that goes to all homes in Chesterfield borough), the website and social media channels.

- 6.34 With friends groups being comprised of volunteers each group will as a consequence have members with different skills, strengths and experiences that can be utilised for successful operation of the group and for the benefit of their park or open space. Enthusiasm and generosity in giving up their time are attributes that are common to all friends groups, but the project group acknowledge that some groups will have more specialist knowledge than others in key areas such as compiling risk assessments, writing policy documents, obtaining insurance and submitting bids for funding etc.
- 6.35 In order to achieve the best outcomes for parks and open spaces and communities across the borough, steps should be taken to enable the sharing of skills and best practice between groups.
- 6.36 One solution considered for this issue solution is the development of a central store of ideas e.g. via a website, however this was considered to be too resource intensive for both the council and its officers, and friends groups. Another option which the project group considered and discussed with the friends groups was the establishment of a friend's group forum to enable group members to come together and meet with officers to facilitate communication and information sharing. Some of the longer established friends group advised that a forum for friends groups had been facilitated in the past by the council, and that they had found this arrangement useful. During the project groups research members saw at first hand the value and potential of friends groups coming together and talking to each other to share ideas and experience. All the groups consulted with said they would like a forum to be re-established so that they could meet with

their counterparts from other friends groups in order to share information, ideas and best practice.

- 6.37 Bi-annual meetings facilitated by the council would have the benefit of further strengthening the communication channels between the friends groups and the council and also enable officers to give out information once, rather than always needing to meet with groups individually. This will provide a “safe space” for friends groups to discuss and consider common issues and support each other. These meeting would also provide valuable case study material to support recommendation 5.
- 6.38 Other methods of communication between groups, and between groups and the council, used by other authorities were also looked at. Sheffield City Council and Mansfield District Council, amongst others publish a newsletter. Sheffield City Council publishes an e-newsletter four times a year that it circulates to friends groups, containing news from the council and features on interesting activities that others might wish to replicate. This also gives Sheffield an opportunity to communicate the same messages at the same time to all its wide network of friends groups. Mansfield District Council publishes a newsletter called “Parklife” quarterly to which all friends groups are encouraged to have an input in. The newsletter enables groups to promote their activities, encourage new members to join and allows them to report any good new stories to other groups and the community in general. The newsletter has been a success and in addition to it being available on their website, their officers are now looking into the newsletter being added to their district wide newspaper to help promote friends groups throughout the district. An edition of Parklife is attached at **Appendix C**.
- 6.39 After careful consideration of benefit against resource we are not recommending the development of a friends of newsletter at this time with the preference being for wider community communication as detailed in recommendation 5.

**Recommendation 6** – That a bi-annual friends groups forum is re-established to share key messages, best practice, increase networking and support and to enable the work of the friends groups to be shared and celebrated with a wider audience.



- 6.40 Friends groups play an important role in the life and development of the parks and open spaces in the borough by applying to external organisations for funds to enable improvements to the parks and open spaces to be made. The funds that are accessed by the friends groups are largely from sources that are not available to the council, so without the work of the friends groups many of the improvements and new facilities in the borough's parks would not be possible.
- 6.41 Friends groups in Chesterfield have been successful in securing substantial grants in recent years to enable several schemes to be developed; including the Stand Road friends group receiving £13,000 from Viridor to fund a wetland area project, and the Somersall Park friends group receiving £8,000 from Tesco Bags of Help.
- 6.42 Friends groups are encouraged before making a bid for funding to initially speak with the green spaces officers at the council to see if the council can support the bid and to offer technical guidance. This is a critical part of the process as some grant giving organisations require some match funding for the project for which the bid is being made to be in place before an application is submitted. The Council has in some cases been able to assist with providing the match funding required enabling friends groups to make bids for grants but this is not always the case so dialogue is needed.
- 6.43 From the consultation held with the friends groups it became clear that the process of applying for grant funding was an area of great concern to several groups. Areas of concern included:
- Lack of expertise and knowledge amongst group members to enable the successful completion of complex grant application forms
  - Difficulties in getting the match funding needed in order to make a bid
  - Lack of coordination between groups and the council in the submission of bids, resulting in bids from neighbouring groups being submitted to the same organisation at the same time for similar projects which had resulted in bids being unsuccessful
  - Written guidance or pro-formas not being available to assist groups in writing bids that had a good chance of being accepted and also being successful

6.44 As previously noted there is currently limited communication and best practice sharing between friends groups in Chesterfield, meaning that the expertise that there is with regard to submitting bids is concentrated in a few groups. These groups have consequently been more successful in accessing external grant funding than others. The project group members were very concerned about this situation and the subsequent inequalities that it could create with regard to the facilities available in the parks and open spaces, and between the different communities across the Borough.

6.45 All representatives of the friends groups agreed during the consultation that more support and guidance from the council and partner agencies e.g. Links CVS being available to groups would be extremely beneficial when they were submitting bids. There are currently some very brief guidelines regarding the bidding process included the start-up pack, however other authorities provide much more detailed guidance to their groups. This can be seen in the document provided by Manchester City Council which is attached at **Appendix E**. The friends groups that had been successful in bidding for grants also advised they would be happy to share their experience to support other friends groups in Chesterfield in the writing and submitting of bids.

6.46 The project group agreed with the friends groups that there needed to be much greater coordination and communication between all groups and the council with regard to the bidding process. This would ensure that neighbouring friends groups were not simultaneously bidding to the same organisation at the same time for the same money. The project group notes that a more coordinated approach being taken in the submitting of bids could result in more bids being successful. Recommendations 2 and 6 within this report support this aim.

**Recommendation 7** – That a working group be established to assist with the delivery of the recommendations within the report.

6.47 The project group agreed that in order to support the delivery of the recommendations, a working group with representation from all stakeholders needed to be established.

## **7.0 Review conclusions**

- 7.1 In conducting this review the project group has met with friends groups from across the borough and would like to acknowledge the positive contribution that they make to the upkeep and development of the Borough's parks and open spaces. The project group recognise that many of the improvements to and activities that take place in the parks and open spaces would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of the members of the friends groups. The project group would also like to express their appreciation of the work of the officers who work with and support the friends groups with their activities.
- 7.2 In acknowledging the vital role of friends groups in the upkeep and development of the Borough's parks and open spaces, as well as to ensure that current groups flourish and that new groups are formed, the project group notes that there has to be high quality and easy to follow written guidance on key documents and procedures available to all friends groups.
- 7.3 During the project group's research members saw at first hand the value and potential of friends groups coming together and talking to each other. Consequently, for there to be the best possible outcomes for parks and open spaces across the borough, both the project group and the friends groups think it is essential for there to be structures in place to encourage and facilitate effective communication between groups. This approach should not only ultimately reduce the demand on officer time but also allow for there to be greater equality of outcomes across all parks and open spaces for the benefit of all communities across the Borough.

## **8.0 Considerations**

- 8.1 To inform the review, the project group considered the equality impact of the recommendations. No negative impacts were identified within the equality impact assessment; indeed the improvements suggested should improve accessibility and engagement in volunteering opportunities with the friends of groups and improve parks and open spaces for all members of the community.
- 8.2 Resourcing the recommendations was at the forefront of the project group's consideration to ensure that unrealistic expectations are not raised with the groups and further resource pressure placed on the council. Following further conversations with relevant officers the

project group consider that the revised recommendations should be achievable within existing resources however this will need to be a further point of exploration with Cabinet colleagues and officers.

8.3 Risk management was also a key consideration. The table below highlights the key risk considerations.

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Retaining the current approach to engagement between the council and the friends groups reduces the opportunity for maximising positive outcomes for different groups, parks and communities across the borough.	Medium	High	The recommendations within the review aim to offer more support to groups including guidance and advice via the information pack and re: introducing networking opportunities. These recommendations also aim to improve overall relationships and engagement between the Friends of Groups and the Council.	Low	Low
The recommendations will create additional financial and resource burdens for the Council which have not previously been planned for and do not fall within the priority areas identified within the Council Plan.	Medium	High	The recommendations have been revised following further officer consultation to take into account resourcing pressures.  Further consideration by Cabinet and officer colleagues will however be required.	Low	Medium
Creating a level of expectation from friends groups in terms of council support that is not sustainable in the long term.	Medium	Medium	The project group's recommendations have been formulated to enable groups to have better resources and to support each other. Initially there will be an input of resources from the council but in the medium to long term groups will be more self-supporting and less dependent as they will be able to utilise the better written resources as well as accessing support and guidance from other friends groups.	Low	Low

## Appendices

- A:** Survey sent to friends groups
- B:** Summary of responses received to the survey sent to friends groups
- C:** Mansfield District Council "Park Life" newsletter
- D:** Sheffield City Council guide "Starting a new Community Group"
- E:** Manchester City Council "Friends of Park" Start-up pack
- F:** Sheffield City Council Friends of Green Spaces Survey
- G:** List of Friends and Community groups in Chesterfield Borough.

## Bibliography

- What are Friends for? - A report for Cambridge City Council by Phil Back Associates Ltd, October, 2013
- Chesterfield Borough Council Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2015 – 2024

### **Contacts:**

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**CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**WORK PROGRAMME : COMMUNITY, CUSTOMERS AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE for 19 SEPTEMBER 2017**

	<b>Scrutiny Meeting Date :</b>	<b>Business Item :</b>	<b>Status :</b>	<b>Raised by :</b>	<b>Cabinet Responsibility:</b>
	<b>19.09.17</b>	Food Poverty / Mental Health	Report considered by CCO on Health Scrutiny / Deprivation, including Press Red work on 21.03.17.  Progress report requested for 19.09.17.	<i>Scrutiny Work Programme Action Planning – 2016 &amp; 2017</i>	<i>Health &amp; Wellbeing</i>
	<b>19.09.17</b>	Crime and Disorder Scrutiny (with Police & Crime Panel Update and Monitoring Reports)	Reports considered by CCO on 21.03.17.  Progress reports requested for 19.09.17.	<i>Statutory requirement at least once per year</i>	<i>Health &amp; Wellbeing</i>
	<b>21.11.17</b>	Public Consultation	Possible link to Monitoring Item (see below)	<i>Scrutiny Work Programme Action Planning – 2017</i>	<i>Governance</i>
	<b>21.11.17</b>	Implementation of Universal Credit	Report considered by CCO on 11.07.17.	<i>Scrutiny Work Programme Action Planning –</i>	<i>Homes &amp; Customers, Health &amp;</i>

## CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

	Scrutiny Meeting Date :	Business Item :	Status :	Raised by :	Cabinet Responsibility:
			Progress report requested for 21.11.17.	<i>2016 &amp; 2017</i>	<i>Wellbeing,</i>
	<b>23.01.18</b>	Cultural Venues	Report considered by CCO on 11.07.17.  Progress report requested for 23.01.18.	<i>Scrutiny Work Programme Action Planning – 2016 &amp; 2017</i>	<i>Town Centres &amp; Visitor Economy</i>
	<b>? 23.01.18</b>	Workforce Fit for the Future	Report considered by CCO on 11.07.17.  Scrutiny Member included on Workforce Strategy Steering Group	<i>Scrutiny Work Programme Action Planning – 2016 &amp; 2017</i>	<i>Business Transformation</i>



## CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

	Scrutiny Meeting Date :	Business Item :	Status :	Raised by :	Cabinet Responsibility:
<b>Scrutiny Project Groups :</b>					
	19.09.17	Friends Groups	SPG report considered by CCO on 24.01.17.  Further report to take account of corporate considerations requested from SPG.	<i>Scrutiny Work Programme Action Planning 2016, CCO 24.05.16</i>	<i>Health &amp; Wellbeing</i>
<b>Monitoring Items :</b>					
	? 19.09.17	<b>Monitoring:</b> Review of decision to stop locking park gates at night	Progress reported 15.09.15 and 24.11.15 – CCO requested account be taken of its views in final decision.	CCO 8.01.15	<i>Health &amp; Wellbeing</i>
	? 21.11.17	<b>Monitoring:</b> Community Engagement, Internal Communications, etc	CCO agreed 24.11.15 to monitor corporate progress following next major consultation exercise.	<i>New Leisure Facilities (SPG), EW 05.06.14, Cabinet 23.09.14.</i>	<i>Governance, Business Transformation</i>

## CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

	Scrutiny Meeting Date :	Business Item :	Status :	Raised by :	Cabinet Responsibility:
<b><i>Items Pending Reschedule or Removal:</i></b>					
<b><i>New Business Items Proposed :</i></b>					

**Note:**

Members may wish to schedule items from the Forward Plan and Scrutiny Monitoring Form into the work programme.

***[KEY to abbreviations :***

*OP = Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum.*

*CCO = Community, Customer and Organisational Development Scrutiny Committee.*

*EW = Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.*

*TBC = To be confirmed].*