

**COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 29th September, 2022

Present:-

Councillor Borrell (Chair)

Councillors Blakemore
Kelly

Councillors Kellman
Wheeldon

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

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

No declarations of interest were received.

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Collins and Fordham and Dyke.

20 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

**21 CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING - CRIME AND
DISORDER**

The Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services presented a report to the Committee regarding Community Safety.

The purpose of the update was to provide a short overview as to the development of a new integrated partnership approach to managing anti-social behaviour between the Housing Service and the Community Safety team. The report would also outline how the Community Safety Partnership in Chesterfield was seeking to tackle violence within the night-time economy and finally identify the current crime and anti-social behaviour issues that are impacting on Chesterfield.

Chesterfield Borough Council had developed an effective Community Safety Partnership (which included for example, Chesterfield Borough Council

representatives, Derbyshire County Council, Police, Derbyshire Fire and Rescue, Health, Probation Service etc.). The role of the partnership was to coordinate delivery of appropriate actions that would support the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour in Chesterfield and contribute to the overall safety of Chesterfield residents, visitors and businesses.

To provide an integrated, proactive and coordinated approach across the partnership in Chesterfield, it had been necessary to introduce a multi-agency tasking process involving community safety, housing, environmental protection, licensing, private sector housing and external partners such as Police and Fire Service. This tasking process which had recently been introduced enabled these agencies and service areas to meet on a weekly basis to share information and intelligence on emerging issues and agree a joint problem-solving approach.

An adaptable approach to enforcement activity was required and therefore the new integrated approach would allow for the flexible use of enforcement officers within the council. Enforcement staff would continue to work within their own service areas and specialisms but may be tasked to work in specific locations or on specific problems, based on priority, creating greater flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness.

A case study showed that Chesterfield Town Centre had suffered from youth related anti-social behaviour with groups of young people congregating, consuming alcohol, and coming into conflict with residents, visitors and businesses. The behaviour of some of the youths had also led to graffiti, criminal damage, and violence.

The town centre, like many other town and city centre locations, had issues with beggars, street drinkers and rough sleepers. Some of these individuals engaged in activity whereby they asked residents and visitors for money and engaged in anti-social behaviour which raised the perception that Chesterfield was unsafe.

To help combat the issues above a series of interventions / actions were developed and these included.

- Consistent visibility – council enforcement, PCSO's and Police had undertaken regular patrols in the Town Centre to provide reassurance and take appropriate enforcement action.
- The collation and development of intelligence and information from across partnership to identify key emerging issues.
- Provision of training to all partnership enforcement staff to ensure a consistent, proportionate but robust approach to using the PSPO within the town centre.

- Introduced a new incremental escalation process for our enforcement activity which ensures our activity is consistently justifiable, proportionate, and reasonable.
- Developed a partnership approach with third sector organisations, such as Spire Trust and Blend to develop regular engagement and diversionary activity for young people in Chesterfield town centre. This approach has led to the creation of the 'Boots on Ground' project that interacts with up to 100 young people on each Thursday / Friday and Saturday evening.
- Identification of additional funding to secure dedicated enforcement officer capacity to engage with local businesses and residents.
- The creation and promotion of direct reporting mechanisms to partners / stakeholders with regular feedback on the activity we have undertaken to address the issues raised.

As a result of these actions there was a significant reduction in ASB and criminality reported in town centre, a visible reduction in begging and street drinking, businesses and residents consistently reporting a reduction in youth related ASB, improved trust and confidence in CBC and the Police as the town centre community was seeing action being taken together with improvements being made to their environment and additional resources had been secured.

The report presented detailed tables of ASB and Crime data across Chesterfield and whilst the majority of areas had seen reductions violent crime and public order offences had increased as the night time economy had re-opened post lockdowns.

In response to this Chesterfield Borough Council and Derbyshire Police were working in partnership to provide a mechanism to coordinate and prioritise the resources and activities of the partnership alongside all other relevant agencies to create a common understanding of demand and risk in the town centre, identifying hotspots and priority locations for coordinated and targeted partnership activity to take place to address those risks with specific reference to the night-time economy.

This would take 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 effective tactical interventions such as an increased police and CBC enforcement presence, street pastors, Nightclub ID scanning systems, use of drink banning orders and other relevant legislation as appropriate to the issues being faced.

The partnership would seek to work with the licensing industry to build resilience and improve standards. Initially, the partnership would seek to consider the `Best Bar None` programme, which was aimed at developing high standards of safety and security within licensed premises. The longer-term consideration was working towards Purple Flag accreditation.

Future plans included developing a wider understanding of legislation and enforcement activity across a range of disciplines. To this end we would develop a training programme for our enforcement staff, upskilling them 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.

A Member asked a question relating to the training program and queried if there was any already in place. The Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services confirmed that existing enforcement staff had varying amounts of experience in different areas so the training was being introduced to ensure everyone was working to an agreed set standard.

Members raised questions about the high levels of stalking, harassment and domestic abuse and were advised that one key aspect of the increase was the improved levels of reporting and that whilst it was the responsibility of the Police to address, CBC had a role to play with the education of their staff entering homes to understand signs of vulnerability and actions that could be taken to address concerns.

Members also queried the education of people in the night time economy and were advised that this covered educating licensees, door staff and taxi drivers so they have an awareness of vulnerability and how these can be reported so they have a positive impact.

In response to a Member's question the Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services stated that it was hoped future funding would be secured to ensure "Boots on the Ground" would continue in Chesterfield.

A final Member's question was asked relating to Adult Crime figures and the apparent lack of action following reporting of incidents such as drug taking and supplying. It was noted that Police were still experiencing resourcing issues but with regards to prevention and intervention the next step for CBC was to develop a partnership in Chesterfield to address substance abuse to understand what CBC can do positively.

The Chair and Members thanked the Head of Community Safety and Regulatory Services for providing the update.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

22 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - RE-ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

23 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUPS PROGRESS UPDATES

The next steps for the Scrutiny Project Group (SPG) for the CBC Lighting Strategy was to attend an after dark walk through in Chesterfield town centre on Wednesday 5th October to support the progression of the Revitalising the Heart of Chesterfield (RHOC) project, which included the development of a new lighting strategy for the town centre.

The walk about was planned to last approximately 2 hours, starting with an introduction to the RHOC project and a briefing on the aims for the evening. The tour would be led primarily by ARUP, who had been appointed as lighting consultants for the project.

Recommendations would be made by the SPG to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) at the end of the scrutiny project. OSC would consider the work and agree any recommendations to Cabinet or other decision making bodies.

It was agreed that Democratic Services would set up a further meeting to discuss next steps for the SPG.

There was no update available for the committee on the Outside Bodies SPG.

It was noted that Democratic Services would provide an update with regards to future Scrutiny involvement.

RESOLVED –

That the updates be noted.

24 SCRUTINY MONITORING

The Committee considered the scrutiny recommendations implementation monitoring schedule.

RESOLVED –

That the scrutiny monitoring schedule be noted.

25 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 October 2022 to 31 January 2023.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

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

The Committee considered the items on its work programme for 2022/23.

RESOLVED –

That the work programme be noted.

27 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 21 July 2022 were presented.

RESOLVED –

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