

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 MARCH AT 4.00 P.M.**  
**IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK**

**PART 1**

**PRESENT:**

Councillors

Dudson, Miss M.J. (Chairman)

Gamble, B. (Vice-Chairman)

Dean, A.

Snape, P.A.

Foley, D.

Stretton, Mrs. P.Z.

Kraujalis, J.T.

Sutherland, M.

Lea, C.I.

Witton, P.T.

Pearson, A.

Also in attendance –

- Councillor C. Bennett (Crime & Partnerships Portfolio Leader, Observer).
- Matthew Ellis, Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner (for agenda item 4).
- Glynn Dixon and Jennie Hammond, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (for agenda item 4).
- Geoff Knight, Chief Inspector, and Simon Brownsword, Inspector, Cannock Local Policing Team (for agenda item 5).

**13. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillor B. Hardman.

**14. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations**

No declarations of interests or party whip declarations were received.

**15. Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed.

**16. Change in Order of Agenda**

The Chairman advised that due to the delayed arrival of the Police & Crime Commissioner, the update on the Staffordshire Police Transformation Project and

the Quarter 3 Priority Delivery Plan Update Report would be considered before the item on Child Sexual Exploitation.

## **17. Staffordshire Police Transformation Project Update**

Geoff Knight advised that the Cannock LPT was performing better than LPTs from other Staffordshire Police areas in respect of; response times to incidents; detection rates of burglaries, thefts from motor vehicles and significant acquisitive crime; the number of case files being referred back from the courts for being 'deficient' in content; and call handling and customer service. Conviction rates through the courts were also extremely positive, running at just over 90%. Areas still under development and review were; working relationship with the CID; role and utilisation of PCSOs; and community engagement.

A Member commented that the figures provided were positive, but did not match up with views presented at another meeting by representatives from the local traders' associations who felt the town centres were unsafe and lacking in a visible policing presence. Geoff Knight responded that those views appeared to be a perception rather than the reality, as no real concerns or priorities had been identified for the town centres. In terms of policing presence, both 'visible' and plain clothed officers and PCSOs had been out on foot patrol on a regular basis. Simon Brownsword further replied that a weekly review was undertaken of priority areas of concern and appropriate resource directed to those areas.

A Member raised concern with difficulties faced by parish and town councils in getting officers to attend their meetings to provide update reports for the local area. Geoff Knight replied that officers should make every effort to attend if able to do so, but will look to address this if it is a wider issue for all parishes.

A Member queried if the Cannock LPT would lose any officers once the pilot stage of the Transformation Project had finished. Geoff Knight replied that there was no expectation that the number front line officers or PCSOs would reduce, but there were still questions marks about the number of detectives in post.

The same Member then raised that the figure of 36% of case files being returned as being 'deficient' was still quite high, even if it was lower than elsewhere, and that the visibility of officers seemed to have dropped in recent months. Geoff Knight replied that prior the pilot the deficiency figure was 80%, so there had been considerable improvement, but there was still work to do as the figure had been as low as 20% at one stage. In respect of visibility of officers, the LPT had technology in use which could track and plot the movement of officers out on patrol, and had shown that visibility has increased.

A Member queried when the expected end date was for the pilot stage of the Project. Geoff Knight responded that there was no set end date as such as the Project was operating on a rolling basis, but the PCC may have in mind a conclusion date based on available resource and budgets.

A Member suggested that one way to improve community engagement would be to make better use of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme in local areas. Geoff Knight replied that this matter had been discussed with PCSOs, so was certainly

being looked into.

A Member asked for clarification on the differences between the roles and responsibilities of PCs and PCSOs. Geoff Knight replied that he would ask Simon Brownsword to pull some information together and circulate it to Members via the Council.

**18. Quarter 3 2015-16 Cleaner and Safer Environments Priority Delivery Plan Update (Community Safety Section Only)**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Governance (Item 6.1 – 6.7 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the performance information relating to the 'Community Safety' section of the Cleaner and Safer Environment Priority Delivery Plan in quarter 3, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

**19. Child Sexual Exploitation**

*Prior to the commencement of this item, Councillors Kraujalis and Stretton left the meeting and did not return.*

Matthew Ellis, Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, and Glynn Dixon and Jennie Hammond, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, were in attendance for this item.

Matthew Ellis provided background detail on the work being undertaken at a national and local level to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), and sought Members' views on what support district and borough councils in Staffordshire could provide to the key agencies involved.

A Member asked for a specific definition of CSE. Matthew Ellis replied that it covered matter such as modern day slavery, sexual exploitation of children – forcing them to do things against their will. Jennie Hammond further replied that the Government had recently reported on a definition of CSE, which also covered child sexual abuse.

A Member then queried to what extent CSE was an issue in Cannock and Staffordshire. Glynn Dixon replied that Operation SafeNet had resulted in a number of arrests being made and property such as computers etc. being seized. Matthew Ellis further replied that at a national level there was concern about the increasing number of CSE cases judges had to deal with, and so support was being put in place to help them manage their caseloads. Jennie Hammond also replied that Staffordshire Police had received specific funding to combat CSE online as well as 'on-street'.

A Member queried what duty of care was in place for police officers and staff involved in CSE cases. Matthew Ellis and Glynn Dixon replied that duty of care was a priority as there was a risk that officers and staff could become either

deeply affected or desensitised by the CSE work, and so welfare support was put in place as necessary.

A Member queried if there were any CSE issues in Staffordshire on the scale that had happened in other areas such as Rotherham. Matthew Ellis replied that thankfully nothing was happening on that scale, but agencies were taking more responsibility now than may have been the case previously to tackle such issues. Glynn Dixon further replied that the Child Safeguarding Boards across the County saw CSE as a top priority to tackle and try to ensure it doesn't happen.

A Member commented that there was a need to ensure that everyone had a clear understanding of what exploitation and abuse meant, and that when incidents were being reported, they were being taken seriously by the appropriate authorities.

A Member queried if there was any credibility to social commentary on CSE mainly being 'family-centred'. Jennie Hammond replied that such abuse was still the most prevalent out of all types, and as such was a key focus of the Strategic Governance Board.

## **20. Work Programme Discussion**

The Chairman reported that the main item of business for the next meeting on 14 April would be a review of the Committee's work programme for 2015/16.

A Member requested that the Prevent training, which was discussed at the meeting held in December 2015, be arranged before the next meeting takes place. The Partnerships and Communications Manager replied that she would liaise with relevant Officers to determine what could be arranged.

The meeting closed at 5:55pm

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CHAIRMAN