

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 16 JULY 2007 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors:

Jones, R. (Chairman)
Faulkner, B. (Vice-Chairman)

Bullock, L. W. Easton, R.
Easton, Mrs. D.M. Pearce, Mrs. L. J.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2007 be approved as a correct record.

4. Communal Alarms

The Select Committee received a presentation from the Community Safety Development Officer, on the provision of communal alarms, under the Council's Community Alarm Scheme.

It was explained that those who considered themselves to be vulnerable and at risk were entitled to have a community alarm, not just the elderly and disabled. There was no qualification required. The system enabled residents to lead safe independent lives at home knowing that help was at hand should problems arise and gave reassurance to their families. The alarm was automatically linked to the Council's Control Centre where experienced operators answered the calls.

The Community Alarm System had recently been advertised in a local publication aimed at older residents and available in locations such as libraries, doctors surgeries etc. The article gave detailed information on how to use the alarm system. It was explained that the system had been in operation for approximately 20 years with residents normally being referred by health and social care professionals.

The cost of a 'Patron' unit was £110 and it could be purchased direct from the manufacturer via the Council or could be rented at £2.12 per week. A monitoring charge was made of £1.43 per week and this was invoiced quarterly at £18.59.

To meet servicing requirements a courtesy call was made to residents who had not contacted the Control Centre within a three month period and visual checks were carried out every 12 months and batteries replaced every 5 years.

There were other care systems available to enable people to live at home rather than in care homes or the need for constant carers. These included, amongst others, bed monitors for people with epilepsy to detect seizures and for those with dementia, a locator wrist pendant could be worn which triggered an alarm when doors were opened between set times.

The Partnership Development Manager explained that the Housing Department ran a 'Safe as Houses' Scheme which had proved successful for those who had suffered from domestic violence. This included providing a range of security measures, depending on the circumstances, with funding being received from the Home Office and Housing Corporation.

The Select Committee were of the opinion that the majority of users of the Community Alarm Scheme were Council tenants and that the Scheme should be more widely publicised. It was considered that further ways of providing residents with information on the Scheme should be explored including:-

- providing leaflets when the Council tax bills were despatched
- issuing press releases
- providing information on the Council's website.

The Select Committee were invited by the Community Safety Development Officer to visit the Control Centre.

RESOLVED:

That Officers be requested to investigate ways to further advertise the Community Alarm Scheme.

5. Development of the Work Programme 2007/08

Consideration was given to items to be included in the Work Programme (Enclosure 5.1 – 5.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme be agreed subject to the following amendments:

- (A) That representatives from the Youth Action Council and from local high schools be invited to attend the meeting of the Select Committee scheduled for October 2007.
- (B) That the Drug Enforcement Officer be invited to attend the meeting of the Select Committee when the outcome of the work undertaken by Lichfield and Tamworth Councils with respect to under age consumption of alcohol and drugs was considered.
- (C) That with regard to Road Safety issues, a representative from the Staffordshire Casualty Reduction Partnership be invited to attend a future meeting of the Select Committee.
- (D) That with respect to the LAA Block Two - Safer and Stronger Communities,

quarterly updates be provided on whether the County and District were meeting targets.

CHAIRMAN