

Housing and Community Safety Select Committee

A meeting of the Housing and Community Safety Select Committee was held on Thursday, 12th January 2006.

Present: Councillor Mrs Fletcher (Chairman), Councillors Baker, Brown, Miss Inman, Trainer and Woodhead.

Officers: N Schneider, M Davies (DNS); P K Bell, Miss S Connolly (LD).

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Apedaile, Faulks, Jones, Mrs Nesbitt, Parry, Teasdale, and Woodhead.

967 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Brown declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 4, 5, 6 and 8 – Any reference to Tristar Homes Services as he is a member of Tristar Board.

Councillor Mrs Trainer declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 4, 5, 6 and 8 – Any reference to Tristar Homes Services as she is a member of Tristar Board.

968 Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 13th and 31st October 2005 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

969 Draft Minutes

Consideration was given to the content of the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2005 prior to their submission to Council.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meetings held on 24th November 2005 be submitted to Council.

970 Update on Community Warden Service

The Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services was in attendance at the meeting to update Members on the revised Community Warden Service.

The Director outlined that they were midway to establishing the revised service. The results of the Customer View Point survey had been taken into consideration when the new service had been drafted. The Director felt that the new service would be a greater deterrent, more effective and more enforcement focused.

A question was raised with regard to volunteer Youth Wardens, and the Director reported that they would be part of the new set up.

Members asked questions around future funding of the Community Warden Service and what areas the Director was looking at to achieve funding. In response the Director reported that much of the funding was now time limited and that all possible avenues were being looked at with regard to obtaining funding including the "Respect Agenda". Members felt that the "Respect Agenda" might be the best chance of securing funding for the Community Warden Service and that this avenue should be perused vigorously, and the Committee informed as to what funding would be available from the "Respect Agenda".

The Director also reported that there would be a seminar to brief Members on the Community Warden Service. He requested that Members forward any advance questions to him as soon possible.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services investigate what opportunities of funding for the Community Warden Service will be available through "Respect Agenda".

2. Any advance questions for the seminar on the Community Warden Service be forwarded to the Director of Development Services.

971 Response to Recommendations from the Review of Anti Social Behaviour

The Head of Community Safety was in attendance at the meeting to give Members a progress report on what steps the Anti Social Behaviour Team had taken with regard to the recommendations from the Review of Anti Social Behaviour.

All the recommendations from the review had now been actioned and overall Members were happy with the action that had been taken.

The Head of Community Safety went on to outline that all the Community Wardens would eventually be accredited. Also Police Officers regularly go out on rounds with Community Wardens.

Members felt that there should be more liaison on designing crime out and in particular designing out alleyways. The extra liaison should take place between Community Safety, the Planning Department and Cleveland Police.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The responses to the recommendations from the Review of Anti Social Behaviour be noted.
2. A meeting be arranged with the Chair, Vice Chair and the Head of Community Protection with regard the Planning issues.

972 Evidence received to date from the Anti Social Behaviour Team

Progress Report on the Anti Social Behaviour

The Head of Community Safety updated Members on the progress the Council had made following the introduction of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003. This update included the process with regard Anti Social Behaviour Order 13s, Criminal Anti Social Behaviour Orders, Acceptable Contracts, Dispersal Orders, Closure Orders, Fixed Penalty Notices and High Hedges. Members thanked the Head of Community Safety for her update and took the opportunity to thank her and her Officers for all the work they had undertaken since the Act came into place.

UNITE referrals

The Head of Community Safety outlined the situation with regard UNITE referrals and it was agreed that the Committee needed to follow up the successes, failures and withdrawals.

Referrals to the Anti Social Behaviour Team

The Head of Community Safety outlined that most referrals are received from the Police and are ASBO 13s. Only 113 had turned into cases as most are resolved by personal visits. 195 people had asked for Anti Social Behaviour Diary Sheets and 156 had been returned.

Evictees

Members discussed the situation with regard tenants who have been evicted and where they go once they have been evicted. Members felt that it would be useful to talk to the relevant Housing Officer about the situation. Also the Dundee Project was discussed and Members felt that the information on the project should be sent to all Members of the Committee.

Liaison Issues

Members felt that it would be useful to talk to stakeholders with regard Anti Social Behaviour.

CONCLUDED that:-

1. The information on the Dundee Project be distributed to all Members of the Committee.
2. All the information that has been distributed at this meeting be sent to Members of the Committee who are not in attendance.
3. The Committee invite the following stakeholders (UNITE, Housing Options Management, a Police Representative, a Tristar Homes Manager, and an Anti Social Behaviour Officer) to a future meeting, so that Members can question them Anti Social Behaviour issues.

973 Questionnaire Regarding Anti Social Behaviour Directory of Services

Members were presented with the Anti Social Behaviour Directory of Services. Members felt that a questionnaire should be prepared that could be sent to all Members of the Council on the effectiveness of the Directory.

CONCLUDED that the questionnaire on the effectiveness of the Directory be prepared by the Chair, Vice Chair and the Scrutiny Officer and sent to all Members of the Council.

974 Update – Ball Games Leaflet

Members were presented with a leaflet produced by Legal Services on the playing of ball games on open space. Members felt the Head of Community Protection should liaise with Legal Services to revise the leaflet as a matter of urgency.

CONCLUDED that Head of Community Protection liaise with Legal Services to revise the ball games leaflet before the next meeting.

975 Review of Access to Tristar Services

The Chair informed Members that the Review of Access to Tristar Services had been received by Cabinet. Also she had received two letters thanking the Committee for the review one from the Repairs and Maintenance Manager saying how the review was influencing their Service Plans and one from Accent North East Housing Association.

CONCLUDED that the above information be noted.