

Housing & Community Safety Select Committee

A meeting of Housing & Community Safety Select Committee was held on Thursday, 13th November, 2008.

Present: Cllr Julia Cherrett(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Jackie Earl, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr Bill Noble, Cllr Bill Woodhead

Officers: Mike Batty(DNS), Peter Mennear, Sarah Whaley, Kirsty Wannop(LD)

Also in attendance: Chief Inspector Ted Allen(Cleveland Police)

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Allison Trainer, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Mrs Liz Nesbitt

HCS 34/08

Declarations of Interest

Cllr Bill Noble declared a declared personal/non prejudicial interest in agenda item 7 - Work Programme, as a tenant of a Registered Social Landlord.

HCS 35/08

Minutes of the Meetings held on 10th July 2008 and 4th September 2008

The minutes of the meetings held on 10th July 2008 and 4th September 2008 were signed by the chairman as a correct record.

HCS 36/08

Minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2008

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2008.

RESOLVED that the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16th October were approved and forwarded to Council.

HCS 37/08

Parish Church Issues

Members asked questions on issues arising from the previous meeting, in particular the issue of public drinking in Stockton Parish Church Gardens, and cycling on pavements. Members were informed that the Parish Gardens were private land, and that church representatives had so far been unwilling to co-operate regarding the implementation of a no-drinking zone, but that the police would continue to work with the church to examine the problem. In terms of the enforcement of the wider Stockton town centre no-drinking zone, Members were informed that the arrest figures in relation to this may not be significant as the actual offence was that of 'failing to desist from drinking in public when asked to do so by a constable', and most people co-operated with such requests.

In terms of the wider issue of the presence of nuisance drinkers and those sleeping out in the town centre area, the Committee requested that Chief Inspector Allen be in contact with the Council's Housing Options Manager in order to see how many complaints have been made in relation to this, what has been done to remedy the situation, and what can be done in the future.

Regarding the issue of cycling on pavements, members were informed that the police had recently been more pro-active in relation to the enforcement of this.

Members were also informed that as the Safer Stockton Partnership had received two petitions on the issue, a request for extra enforcement powers had been made to the Home Office, and any response received would be reported back to the Committee.

RESOLVED that the information be noted and updates on the issues be reported back as appropriate.

HCS 38/08 Review of Neighbourhood Police/Neighbourhood Watch/Outward facing aspects of CCTV

Consideration was given to the draft scope and project plan for the review of Neighbourhood Police/Neighbourhood Watch/Outward facing aspects of CCTV. Members discussed the scope and project plan, and were informed that it would be helpful if Members provided details of specific pieces of information that they would need from the police, prior to the meetings. In addition to the draft scope, it was also suggested that it may be appropriate to hold focus groups to undertake further research amongst residents, based on the detailed analysis of the 2008 MORI survey when that became available.

The Committee also requested that further relevant evidence should be gathered from the following:-

- All Council Members
- Residents groups via SRCGA
- Neighbourhood Watch Members

The Head of Community Protection informed the Committee that the basic infrastructure for CCTV was getting old and new equipment was needed, and that bids for funding had already been prepared, as part of the financial planning process.

RESOLVED that the requested additions/changes to the draft scope and project plan be added and it be agreed.

HCS 39/08 Work Programme

Members were informed by the Scrutiny Officer that the recommendations made for the review of registered social landlords were accepted by Cabinet on 6 November, and that an Action Plan would be brought to the next Committee meeting.

The Committee also questioned about the review of travellers' sites and were informed that a site was yet to be found and that an update report was due to be reported to Cabinet in March.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

