

Crime and Disorder Select Committee

A meeting of Crime and Disorder Select Committee was held on Thursday, 16th December, 2021.

Present: Cllr Pauline Beall (Chair), Cllr Paul Weston (Vice-Chair), Cllr Clare Gamble, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Alan Watson, Cllr Sally Ann Watson (sub for Cllr Steve Matthews).

Officers: Marc Stephenson (CS&T); Gary Woods (MD).

Also in attendance: Cllr Steve Nelson (Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety); Kay Glew, David Ripley (Thirteen Housing Group); Chris Smiles (Cleveland Police).

Apologies: Cllr Steve Matthews

CD 35/21 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CD 36/21 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

CD 37/21 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee meeting which was held on the 11th November 2021 for approval and signature.

AGREED that the minutes of the Committee meeting held on the 11th November 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CD 38/21 Scrutiny Review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees (Task & Finish)

Consideration was given to the draft final report and recommendations for the Scrutiny Review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees (Task & Finish).

In thanking the Task and Finish Group for the work undertaken as part of this review, the Committee Chair expressed deep concerns regarding a significant breakdown in communications by Cleveland Police (and Cleveland Fire Brigade) following a major incident which occurred yesterday (Wednesday 15th December 2021) in the Hartington Road area of Stockton. Despite a robust, multi-agency agreed, Emergency Plan being in place, the communication provided to Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC), relevant Ward Councillors, and the Lead Officer for the Emergency Plan was very poor and very disappointing.

Members were informed by the Cleveland Police representative (and joint-Link Officer for the review) present for this agenda item that a formal debrief would be taking place within the organisation and gave assurance that concerns would be fed back to the Force's command structure. It was also noted that the

events of the last 24 hours would be picked-up by the Emergency Planning Team and that mechanisms existed to obtain a resolution on what had / had not taken place.

Concluding discussions, the Committee requested that, as well as an addendum being added to the Task and Finish Group's final report reflecting concerns in relation to this recent major incident, Cleveland Police provide an update to a future Committee meeting regarding the reasons for the lack of communication with SBC / key personnel and assurance around its future approach to such occurrences.

The Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety thanked the Task and Finish Group for its diligent and comprehensive work on this scrutiny topic.

AGREED that:

- 1) subject to the required addendum identified, the final report for the Scrutiny Review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees (Task & Finish) be approved for submission to Cabinet.
- 2) Cleveland Police provide an update following its formal debrief on yesterday's (Wednesday 15th December 2021) major incident around Hartington Road, Stockton, to a future Committee meeting (specifically in relation to the significant communications-failure).

**CD
39/21**

Monitoring the Impact of Previously Agreed Recommendations

Consideration was given to the assessments of progress on the implementation of the recommendations from the Committee's previously completed review of Protection of Vulnerable Older Residents Living at Home. This was the second progress update following the Committee's agreement of the Action Plan in October 2020 and key developments were noted as follows:

- Recommendation 1 (The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Cleveland Police provide assurance around the measures put in place to address the failings highlighted in the Force's recent HMICFRS PEEL assessment around identifying vulnerable victims and providing adequate safeguarding.): The OPCC continues to closely monitor the progress of recommendations contained within the PEEL inspection report, many of which will be delivered out over the long-term, with the OPCC providing scrutiny and ensuring timely delivery of actions – this Committee recommendation was therefore deemed to be fully achieved. Also relevant to the review, the OPCC had tendered for a new victims' service (which had now closed), and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was in the process of evaluating those bids which had been received.
- Recommendation 2 (Thirteen extend its older people support service to tenants in the Borough's dispersed bungalows on a needs basis (in line with

neighbouring Local Authorities): No further update had been provided as Thirteen considered this action closed following the last update in September 2021.

- Recommendation 5 (Thirteen liaise with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Adult Social Care around the identification and provision of recognition equipment for vulnerable tenants): The SBC OneCall team did not currently offer this recognition service, and Thirteen were awaiting feedback from SBC Adult Social Care around whether this equipment still existed – this recommendation was therefore deemed ‘on-track’ (as opposed to the ‘fully achieved’ assessment stated within the published update). Thirteen had been reminded of the existing referral routes already in place with SBC Adult Social Care where vulnerable customers require extra support and awareness around the wider Adult Social Care offer.
- Recommendation 7 (Catalyst collate a list of local befriending initiatives offered by the VCSE sector and partner organisations (including SBC OneCall, Thirteen and Cleveland Fire Brigade), for circulation to vulnerable older people living at home (which can also be advertised via Stockton Information Directory): VCSE directory further updated in July 2021 to reflect befriending and other support services that can be offered to a wide range of residents, including those older residents living independently at home (‘older people’ feature as a dedicated category within the directory along with a breakdown of services which provide ‘social inclusion’). Further call made to the sector for information on befriending services as many only have this as part of a wrap-around offer rather than stand-alone provision – a definitive list will then be collated and made available in required formats (linked to recommendation 11, work was also ongoing with the SBC Communications Team to produce a more user-friendly guide).
- Recommendation 11 (SBC and Catalyst produce an easy-read document listing the main contacts for support / advice which can be circulated via Stockton News and by local VCSE organisations to older people living in their own homes across the Borough): As per recommendation 7 above, the VCSE directory was updated in July 2021 to reflect changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Meeting held between SBC Communications Team and Catalyst regarding next steps for producing an easy-read guide, with further progress around this action anticipated in the first quarter of 2022.

Regarding recommendation 1 (see above), the Committee felt that a further update on developments in relation to progress of the PEEL inspection recommendations should be received in around six months. Members were reminded that the OPCC had expressed a willingness to address the Committee directly around this action.

Views were sought in relation to the status of recommendation 2 (see above) which had previously seen a difference of opinion between the Committee and Thirteen Housing Group (who were responsible for the agreed action associated with this recommendation). Members had previously expressed disappointment with the response provided as part of the last progress update in September 2021, and felt it was not acceptable for Thirteen to merely refer

their Stockton-on-Tees dispersed bungalow tenants to the Council's OneCall service rather than extend their own older people support service to these clients – this was not what the recommendation envisaged, and not what the Committee had been led to believe when the review was undertaken back in 2019.

Thirteen's Executive Director of Customer Services, accompanied by their Director of Operations, was in attendance and informed the Committee that other Local Authorities had identified a need for an older people support service (which was in a similar mould to the existing SBC OneCall offer) and had subsequently procured it – in some geographical areas, Thirteen had been successful in securing the commissioned contract. Services had been developed as a result of this commissioned-need and Thirteen had tried to put in place a comprehensive offer with a range of options available that allowed residents to live independently or with support. Additionally, all customers of Thirteen, including those living in Stockton-on-Tees, have direct access to the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) service, and should any issues arise, they can be reported and investigated. Where further measures are required, Thirteen will work with partners to address any and all ASB concerns to the full extent of its powers as a landlord. Thirteen would be happy to have discussions with the Council if any commissioned-need was identified (in addition to the available OneCall service) in the future.

In response, the Chair reminded those present that the Committee's review was not concerned with how things were done in other Local Authorities and that the dispersed bungalows referenced within recommendation 2 were Thirteen's tenants, not the Council's. The impasse around this particular recommendation demonstrated the need for organisations to ensure that they are sending appropriate representatives to give evidence in scrutiny reviews, and that they have the authority to respond, and agree, to any recommendations the Committee may have. Drawing the discussion to a close, the Chair felt that, on this occasion, the Committee would have to agree to disagree with Thirteen's stance on the matter.

AGREED that:

- 1) the Progress Update be noted and the assessments for progress be confirmed (subject to the amendments identified);
- 2) a future update on outstanding actions be provided to the Committee in approximately six months.

**CD
40/21**

Work Programme 2021-2022

Consideration was given to the Crime and Disorder Select Committee Work Programme for 2021-2022.

The next Committee meeting was scheduled for the 27th January 2022 and would involve consideration of the Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs)

draft final report and the first progress update on the agreed actions in relation to recommendations from the previously completed review of Fly-Grazed Horses. Members were also informed that the next progress update regarding the Councillor Call for Action (CCfA): Obstructive and Illegal Parking around Whitehouse Primary School investigation would be presented at the following Committee meeting (3rd March 2022).

AGREED that the Crime and Disorder Select Committee Work Programme for 2021-2022 be noted.

**CD
41/21**

Chair's Update

As this was the last Committee meeting of 2021, the Chair wished all those in attendance a happy Christmas and New Year.