

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER**

**THURSDAY, 7TH MARCH 2019 (6PM)**

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**Present:**

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), M Rayner (Vice-Chairman), N Harris, K Henderson, N Knowles, D Little, S Miah, H S Williams and S J Williams.

**Observers**

Councillors: M J Hart and F M Oborski MBE.

**OS.81 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**OS.82 Appointment of Substitutes**

No substitutes were appointed.

**OS.83 Declarations of Interests by Members**

No declarations of interest were made.

**OS.84 Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

Councillor M Hart entered the meeting at this point (6:02pm).

**OS.85 Recommissioning the Home Improvement Agency**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Strategic Growth which outlined the recommissioning of the Home Improvement Agency, which is the organisation that delivers the Disabled Facilities Grants and other related services on behalf of the Council. She talked Members through the report, highlighting areas for further information, and clarified that the name of the Home Improvement Agency was Worcestershire Care and Repair (WCR).

Members of the Committee expressed their support for the recommissioning having had experience of the agency whilst supporting their own constituents, but raised concerns about the possible Public Health revenue cuts to the service. The Head of Strategic Growth informed Members that she would circulate exact funding details for their information.

## **Agenda Item No. 4**

Councillor Rayner asked about the potential money that this service had saved the Health Service and the number of people that had been able to stay living in their own home rather than enter a care facility. The Head of Strategic Growth told Members that the accepted formula was for every £1 spent it saves £4 from the NHS budget. She said she would circulate to Members the 2017/18 data in more detail but highlighted that 257 residents were able to stay in their own homes, 553 households were saved an unplanned hospital admission and 321 households were able to be discharged from hospital in a timely manner.

**Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet that:**

**1. Approval is given to recommission the Home Improvement Agency.**

Councillor M Hart left the meeting at this point (6:20pm) and returned at 6:21pm.

**OS.86**

**Annual Review of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership 2018/19**

The Committee considered a report from the Community Safety & Partnerships Officer which provided an update on the priorities, performance, successes and challenges in relation to the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) during 2018/19.

The Community Safety & Partnerships Officer led Members through the report highlighting aspects for their information and reminding Members of the agreed priorities and funding of the NWCSP. She updated Members on some of the key community safety projects that were delivered in 2018/19 and their results as well as giving details of work in development.

Members asked questions about current knife crime figures in Wyre Forest, Community Support Officer numbers in Kidderminster, the Blue Light initiative, speeding vehicle figures and the Street Angels scheme that is in development.

The Community Safety & Partnerships Officer confirmed that information on PACT meetings was not included in the report as PACT is not a NWCSP initiative. Councillor Dyke informed Members that a letter was due to go out to PACT Chairman following the recent scrutiny panel review.

Members discussed the figures included at appendix 2 of the report and voted 6 to 3 in favour of agreeing it was premature to say that recorded crime in 2018/19 was decreasing compared to the previous year.

Councillor Oborski praised the Community Ambassadors and the Young Citizenship Celebration event and said she hoped the Youth Detached Team would continue after the pilot.

**Agreed:**

**1. That progress by the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership and the Safer Wyre Forest Operational Group be noted.**

- 2. Members communicate the successful work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership and the Safer Wyre Forest Operational Group.**
- 3. Members note the partnership activity engaged in tackling the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership priorities in Wyre Forest.**

**OS.87 Recommendations from the Civil Enforcement Review Panel**

The Committee received the recommendations from the Civil Enforcement Review Panel which was established to undertake a review of Civil Enforcement issues including on and off street parking, litter, fly tipping, dog fouling and use of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO's).

Councillor Miah led Members through the report and recapped the aims of the review panel and highlighted the work that had been undertaken. He mentioned that members from all areas of Wyre Forest had the same issues in their areas and thanked Sharon Clifford-Smith and Rob Beeston for taking time to educate the panel.

Councillor Dyke commented that she had seen social media posts from the Communications team about fly tipping and was pleased to see this medium was being used to engage with the public on this issue.

It was clarified that several issues were raised during the process that included landlords and registered social landlords and it was felt these issues were significant enough to require an in depth piece of work and this should be considered after the May elections in order to give the subject the attention it deserved.

Councillor Williams asked why the panel had only considered contacting Town Councils about the possibility of funding a Civil Enforcement Officer for there areas and suggested the Parish Councils also be contacted. Councillor M Hart congratulated the panel for the recommendations and agreed that Parish Councils could also be contacted about funding an Enforcement Officer and some may take the opportunity to share a post between them.

Each recommendation within the report was considered individually by the Committee. Amendments and additions as agreed were made.

**Agreed:**

- To ask all Town and Parish Councils in Wyre Forest to investigate the possibility of funding a Civil Enforcement Officer to work specifically in their area. The Officer would be funded by the Town/Parish Council and employed by Wyre Forest District Council with a Service Level Agreement in place. Each Town/Parish Council would be able to decide the work priorities for the Officer in their area.
- To request a meeting with the Chief Constable and the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner to discuss issues around street parking and current policy.

## **Agenda Item No. 4**

- To ask that a communications plan is produced and implemented to raise residents awareness of all aspects of environmental enforcement. This would include fly tipping, littering, nuisance parking and PSPO's for dog controls and street drinking. Promotion of the suitable disposal of green waste and informing people who use illegal waste carriers that they are responsible if the carrier does not dispose of their waste correctly.
- To suggest that, following the May 2019 elections, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider establishing a review panel to investigate the issue of anti social behaviour in Wyre Forest and the response by private and registered social landlords. This was considered an important action as the review panel was only able to consider anti social behaviour within the Councils remit within the Civil Enforcement Review Panel, and members are aware that this is a much larger problem across the district.

### **Feedback from Cabinet**

**OS.88**

**Agreed: The content of the Cabinet decision list following consideration of the recommendations from its meeting on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019 be noted.**

### **Work Programme**

**OS.89**

The Chairman thanked the Committee for their work over the municipal year. She advised that as there were no outstanding items on the work programme the need for the next meeting scheduled for April, would be reviewed.

**Agreed: The work programme be noted.**

### **Press Involvement**

**OS.90**

There were no future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7:16pm.