

**Minutes of: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting:** 7 December 2010

**PRESENT:** Councillor Sandiford (Chair)  
Councillors A Barnes, Cheetham (substituting for Milling), Jackson, Kenyon, Morris, Nuttall (substituting for C Pilling), Oakes, Robertson (substituting for Lamb), Stansfield, H Steen and Thorne.

Irene Divine (Co-opted Member)  
Keith Pilkington (Co-opted Member)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Inspector Sewart, Lancashire Constabulary  
Trish Ellins, Community Safety Manager  
Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources  
Pat Couch, Scrutiny Support Officer

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Barnes, Crawforth, Lamb, C Pilling and Debra Molyneaux, STAR.

**2. MINUTES**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2010 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items for discussion.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present.

## 6. PRESENTATION FROM ROSSENDALE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Chair welcomed Chief Inspector Sewart to the meeting who presented to Members a performance overview of the Community Safety Partnership as follows:-

- 55% of people agreed that the Council and Police in Rossendale Borough were dealing with Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) and crime issues, in comparison to a baseline of 63.3% - Year to date this rose to 61.1%
- The Borough continues to achieve reductions in police recorded numbers of ASB (18.8%), this had been constant throughout the year with the exception of June and is above the Lancashire total reduction
- Criminal damage continues to show reductions – currently 11.9% and this has been sustained since May. Damage to vehicles accounts for the highest number of offences since September
- Year to date the Borough was currently surpassing the Force reduction rate of 4.4% for serious acquisitive crime
- With the exception of reductions in May and October and no growth in August, increases have been recorded month on month for burglary dwellings

Chief Inspector Sewart indicated that Rossendale had a good robust process in place for Anti Social Behaviour.

Members raised a number of questions to which the Chief Inspector responded.

Members agreed that they would not wish for front-line or neighbourhood Police to be reduced and the Chief Inspector commented that he was doing his best to keep reductions to a minimum.

A Member commented on the benefit of PACT meetings, indicating that neighbourhood policing was very successful in reducing crime rates in Rossendale.

Chief Inspector Sewart thanked members for the letters of support they had received for the retention of PCSOs.

### **Resolved:**

That Chief Inspector Sewart be thanked for the informative presentation.

In the absence of Debra Molyneaux, Co-ordinator of STAR (Services Targeting Abuse in Rossendale), Trish Ellins, Community Safety Manager provided the following information.

- STAR was set up in 1998 as a charitable organisation and the Council had a statutory duty to support the service.
- Referrals to the service have increased year on year with in 223 new referrals (women) and 240 children in 2009/10.. Targets were on track to be exceeded this year with 118 new women and 161 children being referred in the first half of this year.

STAR, like other domestic abuse organisations were finding it difficult to succeed in winning funding bids, although some joint funding had been successful for each individual area.

In August the Home Office approved a County-wide bid to increase the level of Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service, to ensure that each district received a minimum of £20,000 towards the IDVA service. This should be paid 6 monthly in arrears to Lancashire County Council (as the accountable body of this grant funding). LCC would directly pay this to the IDVA service provider (STAR Centre Rossendale - £13,340). However, there had been a delay in receiving this funding from the Home Office, so no payments had been made to the providers as yet.

The Community Safety Manager advised that because of the current funding issues, salaries to staff at the STAR Centre had been delayed twice in the last three months. The delay in funding receipt from the Home Office and the fact that it is paid in arrears is also causing cash flow problems which could again lead to a delay in salary payments in the future.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources indicated that the organisation should have asked the Council for a 'loan' until the funding had been received, at which time they could reimburse the Council. Members agreed to write to the Head of Finance to ask if this was possible.

A number of questions were raised by Members and it was agreed that literature and relevant telephone numbers be sent to all Members.

Members were asked to support the organisation by:

- Sending a letter of support to the organisation, which could be attached to future funding bids
- Provide information to STAR on who could provide assistance in completing funding applications
- Trustees
- Volunteers

A suggestion was made that STAR should contact REAL to ask for assistance in completing funding bids.

Members were asked to be kept up to date on the situation at STAR and it was agreed that the Scrutiny Officer liaise with the Community Safety Manager to provide any updates.

**Resolved:**

1. That a letter be sent to the two local MPs highlighting the issue of funding in arrears, asking them to challenge the Government to ensure that future payments were made 'up-front' to guarantee that there were no delays in staff receiving salary payments.
2. That a letter be sent to STAR indicating that Overview and Scrutiny fully support the crucial work of this organisation.
3. That, as the Council has a statutory duty to support the service, three Trustees be appointed at Annual Council in May 2011.
4. That a letter be sent to the Head of Finance asking for a 'loan' to fund salaries for STAR staff, until the money has been received from LCC.

**7. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT**

Councillor Cheetham, as Chair of the Disabled Facilities Grant Task and Finish Group, presented the findings of the Group.

Members welcomed the report and a number of questions were raised which the Chair of the Task and Finish Group responded.

She asked Members to consider the recommendations within the report and accept that the report be sent to the Cabinet and Lancashire County Council for consideration.

**Resolved:**

1. That the report, with its recommendations be sent to Cabinet asking them to respond to relevant recommendations within two months.
2. That the report, with its recommendations be sent to Lancashire County Council asking them to respond to relevant recommendations within two months.

**8. CHAIRS UPDATE/SCRUTINY PROGRESS REPORT**

The Chair provided an update on the following:

- Visit to the Rossendale Primary Health Care Centre to talk to patients regarding food served in the rehabilitation unit
- Visit to Accrington and Rossendale College
- Visit to Olive House regarding increase in rehabilitation beds in the Borough
- Meeting of Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee regarding the closure of the Children's Ward at Burnley General Hospital
- Meeting to discuss the closure of services at Rochdale and Fairfield Infirmary
- Progress to date on the work of the Enforcement Task and Finish Group
- Meetings with the Rossendale Locality Commissioning Lead, indicating that the Chair of the Locality Based Commissioning Group was Dr Williams
- Consultation responses had been sent regarding: NHS Consultation 'Liberating the NHS'; Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report and Plan 2011/12; East Lancashire's Making Infant Mortality Everybody's Business
- There would be no further work undertaken on the Local Area Agreements which no longer exist. Also the piece of work requested by the Cabinet on review of the main recipients of grants be suspended until further notice.

A report was also presented on the work of the Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee and other Scrutiny work which had been undertaken in the last three months.

**Resolved:**

That the progress report be noted.

**The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 9.25pm**

**Signed .....** (Chair)

**Date.....**