



Minutes

Name of meeting	FIRE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL
Date and time	WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2009 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM
Venue	COMMITTEE ROOM ONE, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs Heather Humby, Susan Scoccia, Jerry White, Adrian Whittaker, David Williams
Officers Present	Simon Dennis, Zoryna O'Donnell, Paul Thistlewood, Simon Wiggins
Other members	Cllr David Pugh

7. **Election of Chairman**

In the absence of a Chairman the panel was invited to elect a chairman for the day.

RESOLVED:

THAT Cllr David Williams be elected Chairman for the day.

8. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on [5 October 2009](#) be confirmed.

9. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Adrian Whittaker declared a personal interest in Minute 12, Dog Control Orders, as he had previously been involved with them.

10. **Anti- Social Behaviour**

The Head of Community Safety gave an update on revisions to how Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) was approached following the case of Fiona Pilkington in Leicestershire. The panel was advised that the Home Secretary had written to all Crime and Disorder Partnerships (CDRP) and Local Criminal Justice Boards, which suggested improving how breaches of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO's) were dealt with.

It further asked for the establishment of minimum service standards that the public could expect. It was noted that these standards would vary from area to area but as a minimum they should cover a commitment from partners on six key themes. Panel members were given a summary of how the Island CDRP group measured against these themes:

Reduce perceptions of ASB year on year

It was noted that the Island had a track record of reducing perception and that this was reflected through the results of the Place survey and additionally through results of the residents' survey. Members were told that it was key to keep victims informed of the progress that was being made and to be seen to be dealing with ASB, advertising through the partnership how to report incidents and what work was being done to tackle this type of behaviour. It was reported that the Island position in regard to levels of ASB was better than the national average but still below the regional average. Since the last survey had taken place there had been a summer policing campaign which had seen a reduction of 28% in ASB on the Island between 1 July and 30 September and 677 less incidents reported than the previous year.

Take reported cases of ASB seriously

The panel was told that the Island had already established minimum standards in this area that included the police maintaining a victim's charter. The charter required the police to inform the victim of any significant development in the investigation within five days of the incident being reported. If the victim was identified as being vulnerable this limit would automatically be reduced to twenty four hours.

Provide regular information to residents

Information of the work that was taking place on the Island was communicated through the partnership via regular press releases and the Environment Neighbourhood Officers (ENO's) provided feedback to the residents through attending local Town and Parish council meetings.

Offer support and practical help

The Head of Community Safety stated that the CDRP was mindful that agencies may concentrate solely on the perpetrators of the crime and not the victim and to combat this ENO's had been trained in mediation for both sides and conducted home visits to victims to discuss the fine details. This allowed the ENO's to assess the victim and enabled them to draw on the support services of the council and partners within the CDRP.

Ensure an effective link between neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood management

It was noted that Safer Neighbourhood teams and ENO's were working as one through partnership management and this had established patrol areas being agreed with the police to minimise cost and double coverage, opportunities for information sharing were also maximised across the

partners. The panel was told that the tasking coordinating group of the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group (ASBAG) met monthly to study hotspots on the Island, why they were there and what action could be done to reduce incidents in these areas. Actions could include improved lighting, removal of furniture or social intervention including youth intervention to explain the perception of young people on residents.

Provide residents with a right of complaint to CDRPs

Members were told that this could be developed through the Councillor Call for Action mechanism and that the CDRP was looking at the best practise used elsewhere including the outcomes of the Leicestershire case.

It was reported that following the letter from the Home Secretary some funding should be made available and that this would be finalised prior to the council's budget being set. Members further noted that the first ASBO was issued in 2003 on the Island, as it had taken some time to understand the legislation and that eight had been issued in the last year. The panel was told that a third of the ASBO's on the Island had been breached but that the order could be varied to reflect the level of the breach, although this was a decision of the court.

RESOLVED :

THAT the Council's response to the advice from the Home Secretary relating to the minimum service standards on anti-social behaviour be supported.

11. Dog Control Order

Members were given a presentation by the Community Safety Operations Manager in regard to the Council's proposal to make a revised Dog Control Order under section 55 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. The Order would amend the areas of beach that dogs were prohibited from during the period of 1 May to 30 September.

Panel members were told under which legislation a dog control order could be made and the increased powers that were available in regard to issuing fixed penalty notices for dogs being in a prohibited area or not on a lead. It was noted that this new power was particularly relevant in regard to dog beach bans which had previously been difficult to enforce.

A summary of the three dog control orders that were in place was given. The need for these to be reviewed included receipt of feedback from the public and submission of requests for further areas to be adopted as an exclusion zone. Members were given examples of the confusing descriptions for current exclusion areas and how it was intended to simplify these.

The Panel noted that there were a number of amendments to the existing dog exclusion orders which included the removal of the ban at Yarmouth, the addition of a beach ban in St Helens and extending the area of restriction in Ventnor. The Community Safety Operations Manager stated that the consultation period for the revision of the dog exclusion orders was between 23 October and 18 December 2009 and that part of the consultation was to ask for feedback from the scrutiny panel.

The scrutiny panel asked for consideration to be put to both the size and location of the notices advising residents and visitors and that where possible it would be of benefit to display them at points of entry to the beach. The panel was advised information about the exclusion zones would be included in leaflets provided to tourist offices on the island and at all council help centres and libraries, once the areas had been agreed.

It was noted that in the last financial year fifteen fixed penalty notices had been issued and that to date this year seven had been served. The first priority was to educate residents and visitors instead of moving straight to enforcement. In regard to dog fouling the panel was advised that the Island had over five hundred and forty dog bins, which were cleared by contractors four times a week in the tourist season. In conjunction with this the panel noted that the provision of free dog bags cost the authority £14k per annum. Given the overall need for the council to reduce expenditure and a number of supermarkets not supplying free plastic bags it was felt that the policy regarding dog bags should be reviewed.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Cabinet Member for Fire and Community Safety be recommended to consider withdrawing the free provision of dog bags.

12. Hampshire and Isle of Wight Crimestoppers Annual Report 2008/09

Due to the Chairman of the Isle of Wight Crimestoppers Board being delayed due to work commitments the panel agreed to defer this item to its next meeting.

CHAIRMAN