



Notes of evidence

Name of meeting	POLICY COMMISSION FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES
Date and time	THURSDAY, 2 APRIL 2009, COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM
Venue	COMMITTEE ROOM ONE, FLOOR 4, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Commission	Cllrs David Williams (Chair), Henry Adams, Mike Cunningham, Heather Humby, Susan Scoccia, Jilly Wood
Cabinet	Cllrs Barry Abraham, Diana Tuson, David Pugh
Officers Present	Jan Alexander, Stuart Love, Zoryna O'Donnell, April Ross, Paul Street, Peter Taylor, Simon Wiggins Pauline Helliard-Symans – Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)

1. **Notes of Evidence**

- 1.1 The notes of evidence arising at the meeting held on [19 February 2009](#) were agreed (Paper A).

2. **Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 Cllr Mike Cunningham declared a personal interest in Paper C as he was a member of the Licensing Committee.
- 2.2 Cllr Susan Scoccia declared a personal interest in Paper C as she was the chairman of the Licensing Committee.

3. **Public Question Time**

There were no public questions received

4. **Road Safety Enquiry Blue Paper**

The Road Safety Enquiry Blue Paper was presented by Peter Taylor, Traffic Manager, Isle of Wight Council Traffic Management Section.

- 4.1 The Commission was told that the blue paper had been the result of a two year enquiry into a wide ranging and interesting subject. Evidence had been received from a variety of Stakeholders and interest groups including the former member of the UK

Youth Parliament, H.M. Coroner and the Isle of Wight Driving Instructor's Association. The Policy Commission had also undertaken a visit to Devon County Council's Road Safety Centre in Exeter and the advice that had been received from an authority with an area four times larger had been valuable evidence for the enquiry.

- 4.2 It was noted that most of the Island's accident sites had received the traditional low cost remedial work and that the implementation of further measures would become increasingly expensive. These further measures included the provision of education courses and programmes, which would be more labour intensive and the measurement of the outcomes was more difficult to register.
- 4.3 The Traffic Manager stated good partnership working had been recognised and a reduction in the number of road casualties could be demonstrated although there remained opportunities for members of the voluntary sector to become involved through the Road Safety Forum.
- 4.4 The Blue Paper recognised the need for vocational training and that the Council provided a small amount of this training to organisations such as Royal Mail. However, there was a need to roll this training out to other organisations that employed vocational drivers ensuring that good practise was Council lead by example. The training also promoted the fuel economy benefits and the promotion of "Eco Driving" would make a positive contribution to the Council Eco Island Agenda.
- 4.5 The enquiry had highlighted that human error was the major contributory factor in the majority of collisions and the 16 – 24 age range had been the highest risk group on the Island, which was in line with national trends. Drivers in this age range accounted for 34% of all of the collisions and 44.4% of the Island's fatal collisions over the last five years, while only representing 11% of the Island population.
- 4.6 The Commission was told that there was an increasing concern about the number of elderly drivers and the reliance on the continued use of their cars. It was noted that elderly drivers would be targeted within the road safety strategy and emphasis would be placed on the risk of more severe injury if they were involved in an accident and the subsequent recovery time.
- 4.7 Members were told by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services that a number of the recommendations carried a cost implication that would need to be researched and achieved within existing budgets, whilst it should be acknowledged a large amount of work had been completed towards increasing road safety. These recommendations included that Devon County Council be invited to undertake a peer review of the Islands Road Safety Activities.
- 4.8 Work that had been undertaken to date had included the deployment of 130 speed reactive signs Island wide and a £1.27m programme of improvements to skid resistance on Island roads. It was noted by the Commission that following a number of recent incidents involving the vandalism of road safety devices those responsible would be prosecuted within the full force of the law.
- 4.9 The Cabinet Members for Safer Communities and Residents and Resources both stated that a need for education and training particularly at an early age had been recognised as being of significant benefit, as had the recent 'Safe Drive Stay Alive' campaign that had included advertisements on Island buses and had demonstrated

the impact a fatal accident could have to a family.

4.10 It was noted that the enquiry had produced seven recommendations the majority of which would be cost neutral, the recommendations included:

- Opportunities for partnership working and the involvement of the voluntary sector are maximised.
- A stakeholder group should be established to support the Road Safety Forum.
- Courses should be developed to help older drivers to continue to use their cars safely.

RESOLVED

THAT the Recommendations in the Policy Commission Blue Paper on Road Safety be adopted.

5. **Crime and Disorder and Fear of Crime Enquiry Blue Paper**

The Crime and Disorder and Fear of Crime Enquiry Blue Paper was presented by Zoryna O'Donnell, Head of the Community Safety Services.

- 5.1 The Head of Community Safety Services stated that the enquiry had involved a large amount of work which had been completed within a short timescale. The evidence that had been collated had assisted the Community Safety Services and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) to take into account all of the points when dealing with the Islands crime and disorder and the fear of crime.
- 5.2 It was noted that it was a statutory requirement for the local authority to be involved in the reduction of crime, disorder and substance abuse. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 further required five responsible authorities to be jointly accountable for the development and implementation of a strategy to tackle crime and disorder in their area and the Isle of Wight Council was one of the statutory members of the Island CDRP, which had been established to perform this function.
- 5.3 The Commission was told that the Island CDRP was a standard structure including a communications group, a partnership tasking and co-ordinating group and a delivery/action group. It was unique that the CDRP and the Drug Action Team (DAT) had been merged and that this had greatly assisted towards a consistent approach in dealing with substance misuse on the Island. It was noted that the Islands drug problem was no worse than national levels and that the Island had an excellent drug treatment programme which had allowed intervention before the problem became a serious addiction.
- 5.4 The CDRP had a number of key objectives including:
- Satisfy the statutory requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
 - Promoting a wider understanding of the contributions and responsibilities

- of the individual agencies, based on shared commitments and aims.
- Delivering crime reduction strategies and action plans.

5.5 Members noted that during the four month enquiry the Commission had undertaken 37 interviews and that this had included people from within the authority and from outside organisations including Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and a visit to the Isle of Man.

5.6 The communication of consistent messages regarding the work that the CDRP was undertaking to reduce crime and the fear of crime on Island, including alcohol related crime and substance misuse, had achieved a reduction in the fear of crime levels. The Island had a disproportionately high fear of crime compared to a relatively low level of crime and this had been tackled through the delivery of over 100 projects in 2008 by the partnership.

5.7 It was noted that the Community Safety Services consisted of a small number of committed staff which had meant that it had not been able to engage in early intervention case work. The enquiry had re-emphasised the importance of early intervention and the impact that this had on the level of the fear of crime on the Island.

5.8 The Head of Community Safety Services told the Commission that the CDRP had received a ring fenced grant allocation from the Government Office for the South East (GOSE), however from 2010 funding would be allocated through the Local Area Agreement. The CDRP would have to bid for monies on a year on year basis, which would make it difficult to forward plan although it was planned to work closer with partner agencies.

5.9 The Cabinet Members for Safer Communities stated that it had been recognised that there was a disproportionately high level of the fear of crime on the Island and it was alcohol related crime that had impacted on the perceived level. It was noted that the scheme which refused sales of alcohol to under 21's on Friday's and Saturdays which had been launched in Ryde in May 2008 had been rolled out to Sandown and Shanklin, although the scheme was voluntary.

5.10 It was noted that the enquiry had produced five recommendations which included:

- The Isle of Wight Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership consider focussing on:

Early interventions as means of stopping escalation of the offending behaviour.

Alcohol misuse as a precursor of violence (including domestic abuse), criminal damage, disorder and the fear of crime.

- Acknowledgement of the many examples of good practise and effective partnership working already ongoing in relation to tackling crime, disorder, substance misuse and the fear of crime on the Island.

RESOLVED

THAT the Recommendations in the Policy Commission Blue Paper on Crime and Disorder and Fear of Crime be adopted.

6. **Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan**

A presentation was received from the Chief Fire Officer

- 6.1 The Commission was told that the National Standards of Fire Cover which had been agreed in 2004 and based the risk upon property density and not around people and the way they lived. The responsibility was now held by the Fire and Rescue Service to assess the risk in their local area.
- 6.2 The Island Fire and Rescue Service had completed an assessment which had identified where the Island was most vulnerable and what actions could be taken to improve these areas. The information that had been collected had been used to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for the Island, which set out how the Fire Service would use its resources effectively to minimise any identified risks.
- 6.3 It was noted that the current two year plan was due to expire in April 2009 and a replacement five year plan was to be proposed to Full Council on 15 April 2009, which would allow the service to follow up on projects that had a longer timescale. The Chief Fire Officer stated that within the Fire and Rescue National Framework there were a number of key points which maintained service resilience, these included prevention, protection and response. It was noted that the service had previously been viewed as a “blue light” response service and that the education area had always been weak.
- 6.4 Members were told that the Fire and Rescue Service had a number of objectives which included:

Community Objectives

Ensuring that communities felt safer through improved education and less fire incidents.

Protection of the built and natural environment through minimising damage to property and surroundings.

Process Objectives

Emergency Response
Community Protection
Incident Prevention

It was noted that these would be achieved through excellent data sharing techniques both with the Council and with other outside agencies and partners.

Resource Objectives

Priority driven resource allocation being achieved by ensuring that the service had the correct and modern equipment.

Management of resources including the staff within the service who would be both in the right numbers and well trained.

People Objectives

Ensuring that the service had a competent and healthy workforce.

Matching the workforce to the needs of the service.

- 6.5 The Commission was told that the service was committed to partnership working to ensure the delivery of service and using this method allowed for the sharing of resources, information sharing and gaining a better understanding of the services clients, enabling better targeting of resources.
- 6.6 The role of the Fire Service had evolved following the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 which gave the service the responsibility of fire fighting, fire safety and the rescue of people from road traffic collisions (RTC's) however, it was noted that a greater emphasis had been placed on the provision of prevention and education by the service. Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 the service had a further duty to provide emergency management as a category 1 responder including effective business continuity plans.
- 6.7 The Chief Fire Officer stated that the IRMP had to be robust and had been designed to produce measurable outcomes against its objectives; these would be measured through performance indicators and monitored through the use of a balanced scorecard and quality standards. The plan had 20 community objectives and each had a number of outcomes that would be used to gauge the progress against the objectives goal. The Commission was given a number of examples of the objectives and the measurable outcomes, these included;

Community Objective 1: Ensuring communities feel safer

- Increased community confidence in the service.
- Residents and visitors feeling safer from risk of fire in their home/accommodation.

Community Objective 2: Save lives and reduce injuries

- A Reduction in deaths and injuries.
- Reduced fires, RTC's and other emergencies including rescue from height, inland water and flood.

It was noted that this was the "core" business of the Fire and Rescue Service and that rescue from height, inland water and flood was now a statutory duty of the service.

Community Objective 3: Protect the built and natural environment

- Improved prevention and protection through enforcement and education.
- Reduced environmental impact from premises, vehicles and business processes.

The Commission was told that this was linked to the Council's Eco Island Themes and assessment of the method used to tackle a fire and the impact that it would have on the environment.

Process Objective 2: Emergency Response

- Improved assessment and appropriate response to incidents.
- Resilient service able to deliver against community risks.

The Chief Fire Officer said through improved education and information sharing including knowledge on oxygen cylinders and firearms, the number of fires on the Island would reduce. However, provision of a well trained workforce to deal with incidents remained essential.

Process Objective 3: Incident Prevention

- Enhanced understanding of community risks through shared information.
- Improved service delivery through shared resources.

Resource Objective 1: Priorities drive resource allocation

- Service delivery resourced to strategic service objectives.

Resource Objective 2: Manage Resources

- Effective service that provides value for money
- Effective management of natural resources, physical assets and people.

People Objective 1: Competent and healthy workforce

- Reduced accidents and injuries at work.
- An Effective, healthier and more efficient workforce.

Members noted that additional funding would not be provided to the service and there was a need to improve the spending of the existing monies. The Audit Commission had identified that there remained £200m to be found nationally by the Fire Service.

- 6.8 The Commission was told that the Integrated Risk Management Plan contained a number of strategic programmes that would be underway during the lifetime of the plan, all of which would work towards risk reduction and ensure good governance and performance management. These programmes included the Community Engagement and Communication Programme, Response and Resilience Programme and Intelligence and Risk Management programme.

6.9 The draft IRMP and the consultation results were due to be discussed at the meeting of the Full Council on 15 April 2009 and subject to approval the plan would be sent to the Council Communications department to be designed and printed in preparation for release to the wider Island audience. The consultation results would also be published on the Council's website and the IRMP would be published publicly on 1 May 2009.

7. **Members Question Time**

There were no members questions received.

CHAIRMAN