

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 7 MARCH 2013

PRESENT:- Councillors Brian Ford (Chair), Robert Wright (Vice-Chair), Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Toby Elliott, Mary Friend, John Haines, Colin Lovell, Ann Richards, Joe Tray and Julie Wright

88. Minutes

Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2013 be confirmed and signed.

89. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

90. Public Question Time

There were no public questions

91. Neighbourhood Justice Panels

The Head of Public Protection and Streetsmart submitted a report which provided an update on the implementation of Neighbourhood Justice Panels in Swindon. Simon Evans, the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Manager explained to the Committee that in January 2012, Swindon was chosen by the Ministry of Justice as one of the 15 test areas for the trial of the Neighbourhood Justice Panels. The Neighbourhood Justice Panels are a government trial to test out the concept of restorative justice delivered by members of the community to tackle low level offending and anti-social behaviour.

Mr Evans reported that Swindon is by far the lead test area for the Ministry Of Justice, currently across England 40 Neighbourhood Justice Panels have been completed across all the 15 areas, of these Swindon has completed 30.. The majority of cases, 80%, have been referred by the police the remainder by Anti-Social Behaviour Unit Housing in neighbourhood nuisance cases

Over the last 12 months there has been a 36% reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour in Swindon, whilst this cannot all be attributed to the Neighbourhood Justice Panels it has contributed significantly to this especially in the way the panels tackled the town centre street drinkers.

Mr Evans went into further detail on the Council referred Panels. Representatives from the Police and Mr Evans answered Councillors questions about Neighbourhood Justice Panels and restorative justice in general.

Resolved – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That a further report concerning Neighbourhood Justice Panels be submitted to

this Committee in approx. nine months time.

92. Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Strategy

The Head of Public Protection and Streetsmart submitted a report providing this Committee with an update on the CCTV strategy for Swindon. The report outlined enhancements to the CCTV cameras already present in the Swindon town centre.

Phil Smith commented that the CCTV strategy aims to aggregate the existing outdoor public space CCTV cameras owned and operated by Zurich UK Life Centre, The Parade Shopping Centre, Brunel Shopping Centre, and the council's 6 car park locations at Carlton (including the Bus Station), Brunel West, Brunel North, Spring Gardens, Fleming Way and Wyvern. Images from Zurich, The Parade, and Brunel Shopping Centre are to be transmitted back in real time to Swindon Commercial Services Limited monitoring facilities at Waterside Park. There is currently discussion with Zurich UK Life about the timing of the works. All the other sites are being progressed with works due to be completed in the Spring of 2013.

The strategy aims link up the 78 cameras in the car parks, 10 cameras at The Parade, 8 cameras at Zurich and 8 at Brunel and a further 5 new cameras to be installed in the Town Centre covering Commercial Road, Canal Walk and Regent Street whereby currently there no public space surveillance cameras.

The CCTV will be used to pro-actively monitor crime and disorder within the town centre, for crowd safety during large events and to manage and direct emergency services in the event of a major incident.

The CCTV strategy seeks to include public WiFi infrastructure at Regent Street if it can be included in the camera installation works at nominal incremental cost and where an operator of public WiFi services can be interconnected at a suitable point of egress.

Phil Thomas undertook to provide the Committee with details of the current contractor and whether any other company was invited to complete the works.

Councillor Heenan asked that the unit costs for extending the scheme outside of the Town Centre be forwarded to members of the Committee.

Resolved – That the CCTV Strategy, as attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

93. Wiltshire Police Q & A

Chair's CommentsCouncillor Bob Wright made reference to the displacement of prostitution and the Police proposal to move people travelling out of the Town Centre to "red" routes. Representatives from the Police replied there was a need to

disperse people away from the Town Centre and that the police were fully engaged with the Council's licensing function

94.

Chair's Comments

The Chair thanked the Committee for all their hard work during the year and commented that he would liaise with the Scrutiny Officer to prepare an Annual Report.