

## Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 14 December 2023 in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 5.00 pm  
Concluded 7.00 pm

### Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	GREEN
Robinson D Green Mohammed Regan M Hussain	Loy F Ahmed	Stubbs	Love

Apologies: Councillor Nazam Azam and Councillor Margaret Alipoor

### Councillor Green in the Chair

#### 42. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under discussion were received.

#### 43. MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2023 be signed as a correct record.

#### 44. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

#### 45. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### 46. VOLUNTEERING INITIATIVES IN THE BRADFORD DISTRICT 2022-23

The Strategic Director, Place, presented a report (**Document “V”**) which provided an update on volunteering initiatives across the Bradford District supported by Stronger Communities and VCS partners.

Members referred to the Citizen Coin initiative and questioned if the scheme had been rolled out more widely than was reported in Document “V”.

In response it was explained that successful work had been conducted with young people. Shipley College had been signed up to the scheme and work had been conducted with Bradford New College to train young people to promote the initiative. A progress report was awaited. Work had also been undertaken with pupils from Bradford Grammar School, Year’s 12 & 13, who were able to spend their coins in the school canteen. Wider opportunities for volunteering outside of school had also been sought by those pupils. It was hoped to progress Citizen Coin with pupils at schools where volunteering was currently not promoted. It was also reported that staff from Bradford University had joined the scheme.

It was questioned if the coins were accepted in retail centres and it was explained that 160 retailers were on board with the scheme. Those retailers may not have offers available constantly as they could choose when to offer the coin scheme. It was hoped that volunteers would travel outside of their own areas to spend their coins and efforts were being made to recruit retailers. The scheme provided a good opportunity for small businesses to capture data.

A Member who had been present at the Local Government Conference where it had been talked about all organisations being involved in the Citizen Coin initiative questioned progress and the role Councillors could play in support. It was explained that an audit of all retailers had been conducted and an audit to see how they could be supported and to access the app to its full potential was being undertaken.

It was reported that Monday 3 June 2024 was the first day of volunteer’s week. All Councillors and partners would be included, and events would be provided in all areas. It was explained that Wakefield Council had joined the scheme, and their involvement would allow the investment made by Bradford to be enhanced. A report had been provided to the Portfolio Holder and would be shared with all Members.

The Chair referred to a typing error on page 10 of the report and that the Risk Management system should have reported that there were ‘no’ significant risks arising from the proposed recommendations.

In response to the social media activity around the ‘People Can’ initiative concern was raised about the limited interest revealed in the report. In response it was explained that the initiative also promoted on X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook accounts. The social media co-ordinator had left their post, and the work had been conducted by the Area Teams. The Stronger Communities Team were now picking up that role.

It was reported that ‘People Can’ was a multi-agency brand owned by the voluntary sector. This was disputed by Members who maintained that it had been instigated by Bradford Council.

It was questioned if someone was interested in volunteering which of the various websites would they contact. It was confirmed that all schemes would be amalgamated on social media by the end of the financial year.

A figure of just under 4,000 people being recruited as volunteers was reported in Document “V” and it was questioned if that was the actual number already involved or an aspirational figure. In response it confirmed that the figure was the ambition and efforts were being made to engage more young people. Youth Services and the Stronger Communities Teams were involved in those recruitment measures.

The training available to volunteer organisations was queried and it was explained that the Volunteer Community Sector programme supported organisations to develop policies to support and supervise volunteers. If organisations were struggling, they would be provided with one-to-one support.

Reported in Document “V” was the number of Facebook followers, views and reactions to the People Can scheme. A Member commented that the figure for the Keighley constituency, at 802 followers, was poor. She had noted the last post on that page was in June and believed that interest would wane if regular posts were not made.

A Member, believing that the social media posts were confusing, questioned how those interested in volunteering would find the information they needed. It was suggested that face to face or paper communications would encourage more people to volunteer. In response it was acknowledged that there were a number of ways to market and communicate volunteering schemes. A person was now in post to help with that initiative and the service were preparing to meet the digital challenge.

The number of people engaging with the volunteer week which ran from 19 to 25 June 2023 was questioned and it was explained that a report had recently been published which would be shared with Members of the committee.

Members paid tribute to all those volunteers whose involvement was providing invaluable services and suggested that future progress reports include details of amalgamation of various schemes and advertising and communication outside of social media.

#### **Resolved –**

- (1) That officers from the Voluntary Community Sector be thanked for their attendance.**
- (2) That it be requested that officers work towards amalgamating programmes such as People Can and Bradford for Everyone under one brand, whilst also exploring approaches for improved advertising on social media.**

***To be actioned by – Strategic Director for Place***

## **47. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**Resolved –**

**That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the Not for Publication Appendix to Document “T” containing the Community Safety Partnership Report because information would be disclosed which is considered to be exempt information within paragraph 7 (Crime Prevention) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).**

**It is considered that, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information as it is in the overriding interest of proper administration that Members are made aware of the safety implications of any decision without prejudicing the work of the Community Safety Partnership.**

**48. BRADFORD DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE REPORT AND DELIVERY PLAN**

The Safer Communities Delivery Co-ordinator, on behalf of the Community Safety Partnership, Safer Bradford, presented a report, **Document “T” including Not for Publication Appendix two**, which provided an annual performance report summary for the twelve months to 30 September 2023 and presented the annual Delivery Plan.

**Resolved –**

**(1) That officers from West Yorkshire Police, be thanked for their attendance.**

**(2) That a further progress report be presented to the Committee in 12 months, which also reflects the comments raised by members, including crime statistics across the Districts wards.**

**To be actioned by – Strategic Director for Place**

**49. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

The report of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team Manager, **Document “U”**, was presented as a response to the resolution at full Council on 11 July 2023 to continue prioritising action against Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and working with the police and partners in measures to combat ASB.

The report was divided into the three heading areas in the resolution: progress on tackling ASB; options for any new approaches; and learning from other areas to build on our measures to tackle ASB and its causes.

The report revealed that there had been an overall improvement in performance in the majority of areas related to anti-social behaviour over the last 12 months based on police recorded data. That followed significant increases over the period of the Covid pandemic and the current falls in ASB were welcomed.

Document “U” also reported that overall ASB victim satisfaction with support services in the Bradford district had risen steadily over the past 12 months.

Members referred to the perception of ASB in towns and the city centre and believed that this affected the quality of visits to those locations. It was felt that people congregating; sleeping in doorways and begging at traffic lights was becoming increasingly concerning and frightening for women drivers. It was suggested that could be some organisation behind the traffic light begging and concerns that a shift system was in operation were raised. Members expressed concern that no improvement in ASB had been seen in the city centre and it was questioned how those issues had been addressed.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Team Manager addressed the meeting and reported that he had been in post for only three months. He recognised Members’ concerns and whilst being compassionate to vulnerable people and trying to provide support his team would use all legislation available to them if other measures failed. Community Protection Warnings and Notices would be issued where appropriate.

A Member referred to the Members Call for Action currently being conducted. He reported that Eccleshill Ward Partnership and the Police were tackling ASB robustly and it was felt that there were some signs of reduction. The single biggest issue he had experienced was residents’ reluctance to ring the police as they believed their issues would not be resolved. Their experience had been that they would be provided with a crime number but no police presence would be provided. He questioned if ASB was actually reducing or was it the case that people were just not reporting issues.

In response representatives of the West Yorkshire Police confirmed that reports of ASB had reduced. They discussed the work of the ASB team; Operation Steerside, the Licensing Team and others outlined positively in the report. The Anti-Social Behaviour Team, a multi-agency team including the police and Council, had resulted in reduced figures for repeat offending and provided support before enforcement action became necessary. It was explained that 16 Criminal Behaviour Orders, some for begging, and 38 Final Warnings had been issued. It was stressed that the team did try to address issues at the lowest level possible. Mediation could be funded and work with the community alert system to encourage reporting was ongoing.

It was reported that anti-social driving continued to be an issue, although the number of reports was genuinely reducing.

A Member reiterated his belief that people were not reporting crime and anti-social behaviour and felt that it could not accurately be reported that people were satisfied if the majority of them were not engaging with support services.

He stated that he heard about issues on the doorstep, but residents did not report to the police. He reported issues occurring in the Fagley area where he felt that people were just keeping their heads down and were disengaged. A Crime Forum in that area had been arranged but no residents had attended. Officers were asked to take his observations on board and advise residents of the results of ASB interventions so they would feel able to rely on support in the future. He

reiterated that although the number of people reporting were more satisfied that was probably not a true reflection when many residents did not feel they could engage successfully with the police and other services.

A police representative acknowledged those concerns and explained that engagement plans were in place and work was being conducted with partners to develop an intelligence portal. It was explained that West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) previously conducted perception surveys. Those surveys had ceased, however, WYCA had said they wished to reinstate those surveys and had been encouraged to do so. It was known that there were big issues around youth nuisance; dangerous driving and the use of vehicles by people taking drugs and they were being addressed as a priority. There was an awareness that some local communities lacked confidence or were afraid to report behaviours because of fears of intimidation and acknowledged that there were no easy answers to those problems.

It was agreed that more people should be encouraged to report issues as the more that were reported the more likely it would be that action would be taken.

A Member discussed an increase in nuisance at Keighley Bus Station and questioned what action to support people and prevent nuisance had been undertaken. In response the Safer Communities Delivery Co-ordinator, reported that Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) had been utilised and if a more rigid approach was needed fines would be issued. The West Yorkshire Mayor had worked to get three Police Community Support Officers for travel deployed at Keighley Bus Station and the wider area. A number of days of action had also been held in Keighley. It was agreed that the three Keighley Ward Members on the Committee would receive a briefing on action being taken in that area.

A Member questioned if street furniture was encouraging people to congregate in particular areas and also suggested that the use of CCTV was merely moving problems to other areas. In response it was explained that some street furniture had been relocated from places where it was facilitating street drinking. It was noted that CCTV cameras could result in problems moving to other areas but with a more robust enforcement approach those issues could be addressed. Officers undertook visual environmental inspections to assess if issues such as a lack of street lights, overgrown bushes or street furniture were contributing to ASB and reported to Neighbourhood Management Teams to allow those problems to be addressed.

Future plans for the enforcement of the vehicle PSPO were questioned and it was confirmed that Operation Steerside was a useful tool to amend behaviour and demonstrate that the police were responding. ASB driving needed manual scrutiny and evidence to progress and the PSPO was a route to improve road safety.

All those involved in the work of the ASB Partnership were thanked for their hard work.

**Resolved –**

**That the work of the wider Anti-Social Behaviour Partnership be acknowledged.**

**To be actioned by – Strategic Director for Place**

**50. CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

The Chair of the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee presented a report (**Document “W”**) which included the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2023/24, which was attached as appendix 1 to Document “S”.

Also attached as appendix 2, was a list of unscheduled topics for 2023-24.

Members were requested to contact the Overview and Scrutiny Lead with any comments.

**Resolved –**

**That the Committee discussed and amended the work programme.**

**To be actioned by: Overview and Scrutiny Lead**

(Mustansir Butt – 07582 101597)

Chair

**Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER