

## **Minutes of the Meeting of the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6 December 2018 at 7.00 pm**

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- Present:** Councillors Lynn Worrall (Chair), Qaisar Abbas and Elizabeth Rigby
- Apologies:** Councillor Angela Lawrence
- In attendance:** Councillor Rob Gledhill, Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour  
DCI Jasmine Frost, Essex Police  
Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways  
Michelle Cunningham, Thurrock Community Safety Partnership Manager  
Joanne Davies, Anti-Social Behaviour Service and Strategy Manager  
Fiona Kell, Housing ASB Officer  
Jason Read, Team Leader (Operations & Performance) Youth Offending Service  
Vincent Taylor, Strategic Lead - Clean and Green Services  
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer
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Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

### **14. Minutes**

The minutes of the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 4 October 2018 were approved as a correct record.

### **15. Items of Urgent Business**

No matters of urgent business were received.

### **16. Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

### **17. Gang Related Violence Update Report**

The Chair welcomed DCI Jasmine Frost, Essex Police and Councillor Gledhill, Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour to the committee.

Michelle Cunningham, Thurrock Community Safety Partnership Manager, presented the report that addressed the issues of gang related violence in Thurrock.

Michelle Cunningham thanked the Chair for allowing the report to be deferred from the last meeting this had enabled Officers time to report on the injunction that had been put in place and the actions which had taken place following that. It was noted that there was a huge shift in the change of the dynamics of gangs now operating in Thurrock. Michelle Cunningham stated that the purpose of bringing the report was to assure Members that through partnerships the monitoring and recording of gangs had recognised the changes and that a strong partnership response was in place to address this issue. The funding received from the Council had allowed for a lot of the operations to be put in place. Michelle Cunningham stated that since the report had been written the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner had received confirmation that Essex had been successful in their bid for early intervention funding to which Thurrock would be part of and have access to that to be able to put in place the early intervention programmes which would include schools.

DCI Jasmine Frost stated there were currently 9 injunctions in place, which were for 5 adults and 4 young people. A further 13 community protection warnings and 2 community protection notices had been issued with 2 further gang applications which are currently at the application stage. In the operations undertaken with the injunctions there had been 5 arrests in relation to breaches, breaches such as wearing hooded tops or being associated with someone who they should not be associating with. This should assure Members that Essex Police are actively policing every breach that gang members had been involved with. Following these breaches there had been appearances at the county court and 2 people subject to a youth supervision order which are managed by the youth offending team. A custody sentence had also been given which had been suspended for 2 years. In relation to the additional funding received an additional 180 hours of foot patrols had taken place in Grays over the October and November period with more patrols planned over the next few months. DCI Jasmine Frost stated that the public feedback received had been overwhelmingly positive in relation to the town centre and how residents now felt safer going into the town centre. That the C17 gang had been displaced from Grays and that drug dealing had not been as visible as it had been before. The future plans would include the high-viz patrols and the other 2 gang injunctions being applied for those individuals who were heavily linked to anti-social behaviour currently in South Ockendon. That 7 members of the C17 gang were currently under investigation for possession with the intent to supply and weapon offences and expect that all those would result in charges from CPS once investigations are completed. That in the summer there had been 2 individuals who had been arrested following the recovery of shot guns, ammunition and drugs to which 1 of the individuals received 7 years in prison and the other received 3 years.

Jason Read from the Youth Offending Team stated that apart from managing a number of young people, who have potential gang affiliations or who were at

risk from gangs within the youth offending service, who had been subject to court orders, the team also offered support to the 4 children who had been made subject to the gang injunction with this support being named on that injunction. It had transpired that 2 of those young persons had breached the gang injunction, been sent to court and been subject to civil supervision orders which are now a legal duty that they must see the youth offending team. One of the young persons had not been engaging and he and his family would be visited this week to make contact and to encourage some engagement so that some of the issues can be addressed.

Councillor Abbas thanked Officers for the positive report and questioned whether the comparison of outcomes of 2017 to 2018 was due to less police presence. DCI Jasmine Frost clarified the figures in the report for 2017 were for a whole year and that 2018 was the figure for 6 months only. Michelle Cunningham stated that by the end of 2018 the figures would be superseded by the 2017 figures and would be like for like.

Councillor Abbas had concerns that the activities appeared to be spreading to Purfleet areas and questioned what action would be undertaken to prevent any such activities. DCI Jasmine Frost stated that Essex Police would be undertaking any investigation work but was confident that those involved in the anti-social behaviour were not the same people that were involved in the criminality around burglaries and theft offences with the crimes unlikely to be linked. That fortnightly tasking was used to look at all the crime types and the anti-social behaviour and on a 2 weekly cycle resources would be directed for that next period and this was how policing was undertaken through the year. Michelle Cunningham stated that an increase in anti-social behaviour had been picked up earlier in the year on the Garrison Estate, there had been a huge amount of work had gone into that area where target hardening and CCTV had been and would continue to be used to identify individuals. That the Housing Team had carried out a lot of work with extra police patrols being undertaken. That there was currently a list of young people who had been identified and been referred to Children's Social Services. Michelle Cunningham stated that the issues were known and were being addressed.

Councillor Worrall stated that the focus tonight had been on young people being part of gangs who moved from London and that Members should also be aware that not all gang members are young people. That gang relation activities are being carried out on Thurrock's housing estates, in Thurrock Council homes, those people were setting examples in young persons who were probably the young people being picked up by the youth offending service and questioned what was being done to keep on top of these activities and to break the trend. Jason Read stated it was important to stick to the Home Office definition of what a gang was and how they operated. Jason Read stated he had worked in Thurrock for nearly 20 years and could relate to Councillor Worrall's comment and agreed that some of the adults that would have been supervised about 15 years ago and would not put those people under the same umbrella as gangs.

Councillor Gledhill stated that for clarity the agenda outlined the Home Office definition of a gang and the report had been focused on what the agenda stated.

Michelle Cunningham stated that Jason Read chaired the Operational Gang Group for the past 3 years that meet monthly to discuss. That last year there had been 60 individuals who had gone through that group and that the demographics of that group were continually monitored, dominantly ages of 17 and 18 with the eldest being 37. If those individuals were affiliated with the gangs they would continue to be monitored.

Councillor Worrall asked what work was being undertaken with London Borough Councils and questioned at what time are gang members known for being in Thurrock where they have been involved in other gang related activities outside the borough. Jason Read stated that historically the situation had been known and the possible risks involved. Gang members were often not known about until they had offended. In the past a member had written to every London Borough to raise concerns about transfer of offenders and moving some difficult and challenging families into the borough without making the Council aware, only one response had been received back from one of those London boroughs. It was also stated that this affected not just Thurrock but a number of local authorities around the M25 with accommodation being cheaper in Thurrock compared to other areas.

Michelle Cunningham stated the development of the violence and vulnerability framework had been undertaken with the Police Fire and Crime Commissioners Office and as part of the funding a coordinator and a coordinator hub across Essex will pick up issues such as transferring of offenders into the borough as Thurrock would not have to tackle this issue on its own. DCI Jasmine Frost stated that from a police prospective this was a challenge as offenders would go missing in the evening when information required about them could not be obtained.

Councillor Gledhill stated he had attended a meeting with Essex Leaders today alongside the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner where this issue had arose and had become a regular item on the agenda. As a collective all members of the group will write one letter which would represent one voice from across Essex to the Mayor of London, all the London Authorities, Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government with the pressure being kept on for a response. The letter would state that every time an individual, either homeless or troubled families, had been moved into another area that London Borough when makes contact states that they are no longer their responsibility. That the process had got to stop as this had huge safeguarding issues not just with gangs but with vulnerable people and with the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner identifying that this had created some huge problems in Essex. That also the British Transport Police would be aware of some of these individuals with a good coordinated approach with all the relevant Police Forces.

The Chair stated that she felt comfortable that the Council were on top of the good work being undertaken. The Chair questioned whether there would be sufficient funding for all secondary school students to be able to undertake this work and this should not have to wait until students reach Years 10 and 11. This training was vital to ensure young people were given the opportunity to be able to recognise the signs of being tempted into gangs and signs of being part of a gang. DCI Jasmine Frost stated to ensure early intervention students should receive this training before they reach secondary school. That in Essex a presentation had been presented to all head teachers and senior leadership teams around county lines and gangs. DCI Jasmine Frost will shortly be undertaking work with school nurses about sharing information and suggested that several schools work as clusters to ensure that Police work can be undertaken to support staff and to get the intelligence into the system so that the appropriate referrals can be made. DCI Jasmine Frost agreed that there was a lot more that needed to be done.

Councillor Gledhill stated the violence and vulnerability framework was now available for the Council to work from and the training had been presented to 1100 pupils in Year 10 but it was Year 6 and up and down the school years that should be targeted. This will be a multi-agency approach as it could not fall just to the local authority or the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner paying for it; it needed to be built as one whole piece of work not just in Thurrock so that people are missed when they move. A paper will be presented on Funding to Cabinet going forward into next year but stated that Cabinet and the Administration were geared up to put money where it was needed to help prevent anti-social behaviour and gang violence and how to prevent people getting into that life style which would also include getting the voluntary sector involved.

Michelle Cunningham stated working with crucial crew and the road safety team they had delivered training to 1100 Year 6 pupils, provided by Youth Offending for 3 days and 2 days by the Police covering gangs and the consequences of gang crime. That the Walk on Line Roadshow that the LSCB would present, with contribution from the community safety partnership, will be held in March 2019 and would be aimed at Years 5 and 6. The remit this time would be broader to include gangs, grooming and prevent, with conversations will be held shortly.

The Youth at Risk project addressed those children that are not at present in schools and is looking to include pupils that are home schooled. That Active Citizens programme had 2 officers in Thurrock who had presented in schools to Years 4 and 6 and this will continue to be offered. Unfortunately the appetite for schools to engage was low and the need to address how these training sessions can be better badged and encourage more engagement. A community programme pilot was due to finish on Friday which was being run in the Harris Academy by the Chafford Hundred Church. That the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner would be evaluating some of the mentioned programmes as there was no national evaluation on what works and what did not work.

Councillor Gledhill stated that a large demographic missed was those residents that did not understand what county lines were or understood the name of something and what they do. These residents could be educated and become the eyes and ears of the community and the Police.

Michelle Cunningham stated another risk of the community were the vulnerable people where the crime stoppers campaign had been very targeted and work had been undertaken with Lifestyle Solutions and Sheltered Housing.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested that:**

- (a) Noted the continually changing landscape and challenge in Thurrock and partnership working to combat an increase in violent crime.**
- (b) Noted the approach and resources identified to implement the action plan.**
- (c) Encouraged reporting by communities through the “Report It” campaign.**

*At 7.40pm Michelle Cunningham, DCI Jasmine Frost, Councillor Gledhill, Jason Read, Fiona Kell and Joanne Davis left the committee room.*

### **18. Grounds Maintenance, Street Cleansing and Fly Tipping Update**

Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways, gave apologies for Daren Spring and presented the report that provided Members with an update on the progress made by the Cleaning and Greening services and outlined the service aspirations for the future. Julie Rogers referred Members to Appendix 2 the Communication Plan and stated that this was a draft plan but was provided to give a flavour of what would be launched in January 2019.

Councillor Abbas thanked Officers for the report and questioned how effective the street cleansing was. Julie Rogers stated that the Council was only responsible for roads in their portfolio and not for private housing estates where this would fall under management companies to maintain the cleansing of roads. Julie Rogers stated that if Councillor Abbas had concern over a certain road he should contact the team and they would investigate.

Councillor Abbas questioned whether there should be rules for those management companies to ensure they follow cleansing regulations. Vincent Taylor stated that this would be outside the remit of the Council.

Councillor Abbas questioned how effective fly-tipping removal was in particular abandoned vehicles, full of waste on the A1306 in Purfleet. Julie Rogers stated that the team were aware of known regular hot spots and used enforcement powers but the main problem had been proving who had

committed the crime. Mobile CCTV has been used in various locations to record such actions. Julie Rogers stated that a change in legislation proposed for next year would mean that the vehicle owner would be held responsible.

Councillor Abbas stated that it was alarming vehicles could be left for such a long time and was there a strategy to identify those through vehicle registration numbers. Vincent Taylor stated those that carried out fly-tipping activities undertook this for a living and were very clever knowing how to avoid prosecution. The Council do not have facility or funding to remove these vehicles, from private land and it would fall under specialists to take vehicles away.

Councillor Abbas referred to a large car showroom and how they used the road to park their vehicles on and questioned what could be done to stop this. Vincent Taylor asked Councillor Abbas to provide details and he would pass them onto the enforcement officers. Julie Rogers stated that the enforcement officers monitored and targeted certain areas and discussions were taking place on how to broaden the team so that it worked 24/7 more effectively and particularly through the night. Julie Rogers stated that safety was paramount in considering what activities should be monitored. Civil enforcement officers would also be attending training in January 2019 on hate crime and how to get into safe situations.

Councillor Abbas questioned whether mobile teams could undertake and monitor random site visits. Julie Rogers stated the civil enforcement team was small with less than 10 members with various priorities, including schools and monitoring known hot spot areas. Discussions were taking place to look at how much income was required to self-fund more civil enforcement officers so that more random checks could be undertaken.

Councillor Rigby had noted less fly-tipping and questioned whether it was the larger organised crimes that should now be targeted. Julie Rogers stated that small fly-tipping were still taking place but the Council had become smarter on picking these up. That educating people through social media, to ensure that waste carrier licences are asked for before any rubbish was removed from their property, as unfortunately it was still innocent residents who were getting fined.

Councillor Rigby asked what was the best action on dealing with dog faeces not being picked up by dog owners. Julie Rogers stated it was difficult to tackle and that an advertising campaign will follow the new public bin roll out to let residents know that dog faeces can be placed in household bins and incinerated alongside normal household rubbish. Julie Rogers stated that the enforcement team work tirelessly to address these issues.

The Chair questioned how we prosecuted those that fly-poster. Julie Rogers stated the process for fly-poster was very rigorous with any posters placed on street furniture would be removed and used for evidence. Fines would be issued and where not paid those individuals would be prosecuted.

The Chair questioned whether the Council had a good enough relationship with the Port of Tilbury to ensure those lorries that leave the port are sheeted-up. Julie Rogers stated that the Council had no powers in relation to moving vehicles this enforcement falls to the Police. That the Port of Tilbury undertook their own checks to ensure vehicles were sheeted-up.

The Chair questioned what was being done about graffiti in the borough as some buildings including Council buildings were not being cleaned. Julie Rogers stated that the process was that incidents would be reported and the Council would ensure they were cleaned. Julie Rogers stated that if the graffiti was on private property the enforcement officers would write to the land owner and ask that the graffiti be removed but unfortunately it would be their choice whether to remove it or not. Julie Rogers asked the Chair to provide her with the Council building in question.

The Chair asked whether the CCTV cameras could be strategically placed to ensure that the Council caught those perpetrators who fly-tipped. Julie Rogers stated that those captured on CCTV and recognised would be prosecuted. That unfortunately this tends to be organised crime with vehicles having false number plates. The Council were working in partnership with the Environment Agency to track down such groups.

Julie Rogers stated that the next stage would be to set up mobile cameras in known hot spot areas but by law residents would need to be told about them.

The Chair questioned whether small waste collection vehicles could be used to target those missed bins and help reduce the number of bins being missed. Julie Rogers stated that narrow access vehicles would be used to address those blocked areas and work was being undertaken with the design team on yellow lines coming into force on waste collection days. Some areas would have bag collections and wheeled containers could be used in cemeteries.

The Chair asked whether bins would be available in cemeteries before spring. Vincent Taylor confirmed that work was being undertaken with the design team to trial a new wheeled bin and these would be rolled out in the next financial year.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the performance and service achievements in relation to Fly Tipping.**
- 2. That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the performance in relation to the Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing section elements of the Clean It Cut It Fill It Programme since last reporting to the committee in July 2017.**

**19. Fees & Charges Pricing Strategy 2019/20**

Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways, presented the report that set out the charges in relation to services within the remit of the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee that will take effect from the 1 April 2019. Julie Rogers stated that the fees and charges crossed over with a number of directorates including housing, health and place, she would do her best to answer but where she couldn't, she agreed to take any questions away and provide follow up responses.

The Chair questioned Enforcement Fees – Fly-Posting – no discount for early repayment. Julie Rogers stated this was an automatic policy charge that had resulted in a slight decrease in payment but the Council continued to prosecute and advertised those court cases. Julie Rogers was pleased to advise a very high, if not 100% success rate on prosecutions.

The Chair questioned Cultural Services – Internet and Word Processing – Use of the Internet – per subsequent hour. The Chair stated that young people used the library as not everyone had the facility to access the internet at home and stated she was not happy about the new charge. Julie Rogers stated that Wi-Fi in libraries was currently provided by a code which entitled users 2 hours free Wi-Fi service, on their own devices or library PC's. To ensure fair access to all users the charge had been introduced to manage the risk of people staying logged onto library PC's without really using the PC and preventing someone else from having access.

The Chair questioned whether the charge would be applied to those residents who only used the Wi-Fi through their own devices. The Chair asked for further clarification from Officers and a meeting would be arranged for next week.

Councillor Rigby and Councillor Abbas agreed that as the Council was encouraging more residents to use on-line services it was unreasonable to ask residents to start paying for Wi-Fi in libraries and that further clarification was required.

The Chair questioned all the new charges for Cultural Services – Thameside Theatre and Central Complex. The Chair had concerns how these extra charges would affect smaller groups such as dancing and art groups in paying for facilities and questioned whether they had been consulted. Julie Rogers referred Members to page 133, paragraph 13.3 of the agenda which referenced the fees and charges that was undertaken for the 2017/18 financial year. The Chair thanked the Officer but stated further clarification was required and a meeting would be arranged for next week.

The Chair questioned the new charge Heritage - School Visits (Coalhouse Fort or Thurrock Museum) - per class and asked should the Council be charging schools for this facility. Julie Rogers stated that this was not a new charge to schools and was already been paid.

Councillor Abbas pointed out that no charges had been made to services such as adult gambling services and licensing but those local services for residents appeared to have been increased. Councillor Abbas felt that this was not fair and unreasonable.

Councillor Abbas questioned why there had been an increase in charges to the Residents Services – Registration of Marriage and Birth Certificates. Julie Rogers stated further clarification from Officers was required and a meeting would be arranged for next week.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That Members asked for clarity on a number of areas and a meeting would be arranged for next week before the recommendations are agreed.**
- 2. That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the revised fees, including those no longer applicable and commented on the proposals currently being considered within the remit of this committee.**
- 3. That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted that director delegation authority will be sought via Cabinet to allow Fees and Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to commercial requirements.**

**20. Tree Planting Strategy**

Julie Rogers, Director of Environment and Highways, presented the report that outlined the future planting and maintenance options of the report in response to a Motion that had been raised at Full Council on the 25 July 2018 by Councillor Redsell. Julie Rogers stated that currently there was no tree replacement strategy in place or funding for planting of trees in the borough. That the Planning Team had been very supportive of Option 3 proposing that trees are planted as part of any new housing development. Julie Rogers also stated that a capital submission had been made and if successful would be included in the finance report at Budget Council in February 2019.

The Chair invited Councillor Redsell to speak.

Councillor Redsell thanked the Chair for allowing her to speak and stated that so many trees had been lost in the borough which had not been replaced. That 50 trees had been planted in her ward from funding and that trees were good for the environment with some trees being over 100 years old. Councillor Redsell stated that a provision should be place to replace those trees that had been lost.

Councillor Abbas agreed to the support of Option 3.

Councillor Rigby also agreed to the support of Option 3 and asked where the replacement trees would be planted. Julie Rogers stated that the proposed 66 trees in the first year would be planted, where possible, in the same place or close to where the trees were originally.

Julie Rogers referred Members to some good news that the Council were in the process of obtaining an arboriculture system, a full survey of all the trees in the borough will take place and the data uploaded into the system, which would provide a full understanding of the condition of trees. Currently this is a manually recorded and going forward this would provide a more efficient and effective monitoring and would identify any areas where there was a lack of trees.

The Chair asked for clarification that the 66 trees would be placed where they were originally planted and questioned where the remainder of those trees would go. Julie Rogers stated that the trees would be planted in the same location or as close as possible and the survey would identify any gaps. Any discussions on location would then take place with ward members.

The Chair stated it was great to report on nice items and obviously everyone wants a greener Thurrock and stated that Option 1 must be agreed before any plans for development are agreed.

The Chair would welcome a report back on this in a year's time.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the options available and recommend to Cabinet option 1 outlined in the report.**
- 2. That the Cleaner Greener and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered option 3 and recommend to Cabinet for financial year 2019/20 subject to capital funding approval.**

**21. Work Programme**

Members agreed to the work programme published in the agenda.

**The meeting finished at 8.50 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**