

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT  
(in it's capacity as Crime and Disorder Committee)  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

6<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER, 2014

A MEETING of the COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014, 2pm.

PRESENT:

Chair – Councillor Jane Kidd

Councillors Iris Beech and Mark Houlbrook.

Also in attendance:

Karen Johnson – Assistant Director of Communities;  
Bill Hotchkiss - Head of Service for Community Safety  
Helen Conroy - Public Health Specialist;  
Gill Gillies – Assistant Director for Environment;  
Councillor Joe Blackham – Cabinet Member of Community Safety and Neighbourhoods;  
Karen Hanson - Head of Service Environmental Protection;  
Chief Inspector Jakki Hardy (South Yorkshire Police);  
Linda Mayhew – Local Criminal Justice Board (and also the Substance Misuse lead within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner)

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Cynthia Ransome, Richard Cooper-Holmes, Deborah Hutchinson, Kevin Rogers and Yvonne Woodcock.

		<u>ACTION</u>
<b>1.</b>	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b>	
	There were no declarations of interest made.	All to note
<b>2.</b>	<b><u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u></b>	
	Mr Tim Brown attended and made reference to the Professor Gus John report 'Tired of Fighting' and the issues around inequalities that were raised in the the report. He commented that inequalities still exist and stated that less that 1% of Black, Minority and Ethnic Groups are working for Doncaster MBC.	All to note

Mr Brown pointed out that Hate Crime had risen but that detection rates were low and questioned what statutory agencies were doing about this.

Mr Brown referred to Councillor Blackham acknowledging that the Due Regard Statement for the Community Safety Strategy was produced after the Strategy went to Cabinet and that this was not acceptable.

Mr Brown stated that there were no longer BME forums (of which he had been Chair) where individuals could articulate their concerns.

Mr Brown expressed that he was also a parent and asked for an explanation as to why there had been a lack of progress in addressing the inequalities raised in the report 12 years ago. He commented that he wanted family members to have fairness in Doncaster. Reference was made to the proliferation of organisations such as the English Defence League and Mr Brown said that he does not feel that he can go out to certain areas of Doncaster. It was added that people should not get jobs in accordance to the colour of their skin. Mr Brown asked for an explanation as to why employment of BME group was so low since being initially raised in the Gus John report 12 years ago and stated that nothing tangible is being acted upon.

Mr Brown made reference to the Police and Crime Commissioner who had a statutory duty to meaningful engage with BME communities. It was added that responses had not been received to requests for information and that he was still chasing DMBC Officers.

A mention was made to an Information Commission tribunal that Mr Brown went to in order to access information. Mr Brown questioned why it had taken 12 years to release this information and referred to the money that had been spent on a Barrister (of which was stated as being £10,000) which would have gone a long way being used in communities being for the prevention of drug abuse. Mr Brown asked what was being done to get the message out.

Mr Brown went on to speak about being a parent of a 12 year old daughter and his concerns about the recent issues raised in relation to child sexual exploitation.

Mr Brown later referred to the unfairness his generation

	has experienced and expressed hope that someone could say that there had been some meaningful and proportionate efforts made.	
<b>3.</b>	<b><u>DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE WITH A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON ENFORCEMENT.</u></b>	
	<p>Members received a presentation which provided an overview of Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership actions in relation to drugs and substance misuse with a particular focus on enforcement. The presentation covered: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Treatment</li> <li>• Enforcement</li> </ul> <p>The Panel was informed that the picture in Doncaster was similar to other metropolitan areas. It was noted that there were now new performance indicators which included Successful exits from treatment.</p> <p>The Panel was informed that improvements could be made in making drugs and substance misuse services more attractive to a more diverse population. Members heard that it was a challenge encouraging more people to access treatment and that for some communities there were cultural barriers.</p> <p>It was explained that there was a three year strategy in place with a one year delivery plan; it was offered to the Panel that this could be circulated. Members were also informed that children's services delivery is separate and a new strategy for Children and Young People is under development.</p> <p>During a discussion around prevention, the Panel was informed that the approach was now far more coordinated and focused. The Panel was informed about the work of the Substance Misuse Theme Group. Members were informed that GPs are undertaking more screening as part of their work.</p> <p>In respect of training, more frontline staff including St. Leger, South Yorkshire Police and Community Teams were being trained to recognise people with drink or substance misuse problems. It was commented that alcohol is often an issue seen within incidents of domestic abuse. The Panel was informed that frontline</p>	<p>Bill Hotchkiss - Head of Service - Community Safety</p>

staff were being made aware of the pathways that are available. It was recognised that family members and partners also may wish to access help and support for themselves.

The Panel was informed that patterns of drinking had changed with more people having drinks in the home before going out into town and that licensed premises in the town centre were now thriving later on in the night and continuing until 4/5 am in the morning.

In relation to underage drinking, Members were told about measures in place such as: -

- a new Education Officer for Alcohol and Tobacco
- DMBC Enforcement Officers working with South Yorkshire Police;
- Regular review of licences including licenses regularly reviewed by main statutory bodies.
- Test purchases co-ordinated throughout the year (including supermarkets).
- Challenge '21' Campaign.

The Panel was informed that some family members were purchasing alcohol for younger members of the family and that certain families deem it acceptable for children to drink. It was commented that shoplifting of alcohol was also an issue.

It was noted that the Police were very active right through to the early hours of the morning and that they routinely visit places frequented by young people drinking. In relation to shops, the Panel was informed that if they failed the test purchase three times then further action would be taken. It was confirmed that all premises, including supermarkets, that sold alcohol would be subject to test purchases. Members were also informed about the work being undertaken with A&E departments and information being gathered as to where underage drinkers or those intoxicated had been and then targeted those establishments.

Reference was made to garages and Members were informed that although they were often used by young people they were not perceived as a problem regarding the selling of alcohol to those underage.

The Panel was told about the Amelix Youth Project, trialed at Danum Academy and delivered targeted messages in a fun interactive way which had received

positive feedback. Members also learnt that Children and Young People Services was about to re-commission a School Nurse. During the discussion, concern was raised about whether volunteers of youth clubs had received relevant training. The Panel was told about a piece of work that had been undertaken mapping voluntary sector including Youth Clubs, and that although volunteer training was offered there needed to be a more systematic approach in place. Members were also informed that this point was also raised during a Project 3 Away Day by a foster carer.

In relation to criminal acts, the Panel was informed that mandatory drug testing was only carried out for certain offences and that only specific drugs can be tested for.

During a discussion about those with long term drug addiction problems, Members were informed that it was about catching individuals at the right time. Initiatives taking place included a needle exchange, drop-ins, peer mentoring and one-to-one mentoring that supported individuals to come to terms with life challenges and move forward. In respect of mentoring, Members were informed that RDASH ran an accredited peer mentoring training course for people in recovery, which could lead to providing peer mentoring and treatment support work themselves.

It was noted that individuals had recovered through support from mentoring and community/support groups. It was recognised that what areas of importance to recovering users included accessing jobs/volunteering opportunities. An example of this was the work being undertaken through the Rovers Fund.

It was explained that the Council and partners were looking at a whole service approach. A Member expressed concern that the wheels were being reinvented and made reference to previous schemes, which included; the Bungalow project at Moorends and Streetreach that had provided a 'holistic approach'. Members were informed that a new 'Changing Lives' project had taken over the Streetreach project and that treatment services were still available.

The issue of addiction to prescribed medication was raised and it was noted that this was something that generally begins in GPs practise and that GPs could do more. Members were informed that it was something being monitored and was a national issue costing

billions. It was noted that the level of abuse of prescription drugs has spread throughout the prison system.

During a discussion about trends in drug use, Members were told that there had been a move away from heroin abuse but in recent years cannabis cultivation had rocketed. Members were told that intelligence was collected providing information on local areas and demographics and that locally investigative and neighbourhood teams worked side by side. Members were informed that there was an interactive approach to enforcement through mechanisms that encouraged reporting through: -

- Community Teams
- Crimestoppers
- Ward Members

Members were informed that work was being undertaken linking neighbouring councils that identified any significant connections and delved deeper to assess any other criminal activities.

Regarding the use of social media, Members were informed that it had been trialed previously on 'Mad Friday' which was the last Friday before Christmas Eve. During the trial, the four Yorkshire and Humberside Police forces tweeted details of incidents that were reported to them to help local residents understand the variety and quantity of calls that officers deal with at that time of year. It was acknowledged that in respect of social media and technology which was moving so fast, further progress could be made in the way that it is used.

Members were informed about new trends in Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS). There was a debate around the growing trend of NPS and Members were informed that there had been a Government Select Committee held on this issue. It was also noted that NPS was becoming increasingly common in prisons. Members were told that the Substance Misuse Theme Group was being very proactive in this area and had appointed a representative from the Prison Service to it. Research was also being undertaken in what was happening further afield in Scotland and Belfast.

In respect of the selling of NPS, the Panel was told that the Regeneration and Environment directorate was reviewing their policies with Market Traders. Although

	<p>there was no age restriction in relation to the sale of NPS, communications had taken place with market traders asking them not to sell it to young people under the age of 18. It was noted that there was a big challenge with shops selling the products but that the product included a 'not for human consumption' statement which covered sellers. Members were informed that there had been deaths and ill health that were related to NPS and data was being received from Accident and Emergency departments to monitor this. It was also recognised that it was a growing trend in prisons due to it being cheap and replicating the effect of illegal drugs. Members were advised that until there was Government legislation in place in respect of NPS there was little that can be done in terms of enforcement. There was a brief discussion in what could be done by the Panel to raise their concerns in relation to NPS.</p> <p>The Chair thanked officers for the information and concluded that the issue went far beyond a set of figures.</p>	<p>All to note</p>
	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> that the Panel recommend in respect of the dangers and concerns around NPS: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Mayor gives consideration to writing on behalf of the Council to local MPs.</li> <li>2. That the Panel in their capacity as the Crime and Disorder Committee raises this issue as a priority to the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Policy and Crime Panel as appropriate in due course.</li> <li>3. For an all Member awareness raising seminar on NPS to be delivered as soon as possible.</li> </ol>	<p>Senior Governance Officer</p> <p>Senior Governance Officer/Chair of Communities and Environment Panel</p> <p>Assistant Director of Communities</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b><u>SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – JOINT WORKING PROTOCOL.</u></b></p>	
	<p>This report provided the Panel with a proposed joint working protocol between the four local authority crime and disorder scrutiny committees and the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Officer sought the Panels agreement to the proposed working protocol as attached in Appendix A of the report and to report back to the Police and Crime Panel as appropriate.</p>	<p>All to note</p>
	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Panel agree the proposed working protocol.</li> <li>2. That the Scrutiny Officer reports this agreement back to the Police and Crime Panel as appropriate.</li> </ol>	Scrutiny Officer
<b>5.</b>	<b><u>COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKPLAN</u></b>	
	The Scrutiny Officer updated members of the Communities and Environment Overview and Scrutiny on the updates on the workplan including the new dates for the Waste Review meetings in December 2014, February and March 2015. The Panel was informed that they would be notified in due course about the Voluntary Strategy review which had yet to begin.	All to note
	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> That the Panel:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the updated work plan for 2014/15;</li> <li>2. Note the minutes in relation to the Panel's meetings held to date that took place on the 6th, 21st August and 23rd September 2014 in relation to the Waste Review.</li> </ol>	All to note