

SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY

Tuesday, 9th March, 2004, at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor Mottram (Chair)
Councillors Burt, Cotterill, Mrs. Dunn, Finch, Ms. Foster, Mrs. Millward, Mrs. Turner and Tyler, together with Mr Mayou (Executive Directorate – Lead Officer to the Committee), Director of Law and Property, Ms. P. Sharratt (Directorate of Social Services), Ms. C. Peek (Directorate of Education and Lifelong Learning), Mr. M. Galikowski (Youth Offending Team), Mr. A. Hicks and Mr. A. Cooke (Community Safety Team, Executive Directorate), Mr. M. Farooq and Mrs. J. Holland (Directorate of Law and Property).

44

MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21st January, 2004, be approved as a correct record and signed.

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APOLOGIES

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Burston.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Member made a Declaration of Personal or Prejudicial Interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted asking the Committee to consider and comment on the Directorate of Law and Property 2004/05 Equality Action Plan.

In presenting the report and amplifying the key points, Mr. J. Polychronakis, Director of Law and Property, confirmed that Dudley Council possessed a robust Equality and Diversity culture within its workforce. He explained that, once approved, the Legal and Property Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2004/05 would be progressed by means of a Decision Sheet signed by the appropriate Lead Member.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, in respect of the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2004/05 for the Directorate of Law and Property 2004/05, be noted.

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APPOINTMENT, COMPOSITION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF SELECT COMMITTEE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR WORKING GROUPS

A report of the Lead Officer was submitted seeking confirmation regarding the appointment of the three Working Groups set up to deal with aspects of anti-social behaviour on behalf of the Select Committee and the terms of reference and membership thereof. In anticipation of the formal appointment of the Working Groups, meetings of two of the Groups had already been held.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the appointment of the three Select Committee Community Safety Anti-Social Behaviour Working Groups below, and their composition, terms of reference and membership as indicated be confirmed.

(i) Children and Young People Issues Working Group

Councillors Burt (Chair), Burston, Mrs Dunn, Mrs Millward and Ms Foster.

(ii) ASBO/CDRP/Administration Working Group

Councillors Cotterill (Chair), Ms. Foster, Tyler and Mrs. Turner.

(iii) Neighbourhood Nuisance Issues

Councillors Finch (Chair) Cotterill, Mrs. Dunn and Mrs. Millward.

- (2) That the terms of reference of each respective Working Group, as indicated in the report submitted, be approved.

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CHANGE IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 13(c), it was

RESOLVED

That a proposal put forward by Councillor Cotterill be taken as the next item of business.

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PROPOSAL PUT TO THE COMMITTEE FOR THEIR RECOMMENDATION

Councillor Cotterill requested that members of the Committee support a proposal to resolve to request the Lead Member for Community Safety to write to the Lord Chancellor expressing the Committee's grave concerns, together with those of Dudley residents, at the overturning of the sentence imposed by Magistrates in the case of a youth who had been caught speeding at 116 mph in Thorns Road, Quarry Bank. The Committee were of the opinion that the overturning of the sentence had not conveyed the correct message to the community at large with regard to the issue of community safety.

Following a short discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That the proposal put forward by Councillor Cotterill, that the Lead Member write to the Lord Chancellor expressing the concerns referred to above, be supported.

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SECTION 17 – CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

A report of the Director of Social Services was submitted reviewing the work of the Directorate of Social Services in relation to the functions of the Council on community safety under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Following a short discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, in respect of the work of the Directorate of Social Services in relation to Community Safety, be noted.

DRAFT YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM REVIEW FOR 2003
AND PLAN FOR 2004

Mr. M. Galikowski (Youth Offending Team Manager) presented the Draft Youth Offending Team (YOT) Review for 2003 and Plan for 2004.

Following a lengthy question and answer session, during which Mr. Galikowski explained the working relationship between the YOT team, and its other partners, and their commitment to the youth of the Borough; also issues with regard to data protection. Particular reference was made to the following issues:

Councillor Mrs Millward expressed concern with regard to the increased rate of crimes committed by females. In response, Mr Galikowski stated that he would investigate the statistics for underlying trends to explain the increase and report back to a future meeting of the Committee with a more definitive breakdown.

Councillor Burt expressed concern with regard to the use of agency staff within YOT, to which Mr Galikowski replied that the situation was being kept under review.

In response to a request from Councillor Cotterill, the Lead Officer agreed to write to local MP's inviting them to meet with the Select Committee to discuss issues with regard to the way the punishment of crime perpetrated by young people was dealt with by the Courts.

In response to a question put by Councillor Tyler, Mr Galikowski stated that YOT had a dedicated member of staff dealing with issues relating to drug abuse and crime.

In response to a question put by Councillor Tyler, Mr Galikowski suggested that various aspects of the report would be better submitted to the appropriate Working Group for dissemination of the information. The report was required to be produced to a standard government template as demonstrated by the report submitted.

In response to a question put by Councillor Tyler, Mr Galikowski explained that YOT was a government initiative and constituted by law; the Youth Justice Board provided some funding to YOT towards the achievement of specific outcomes.

In response to a question put by Councillor Tyler, Mr Galikowski agreed to collate the Children Development Review Programme (CDRP) figures and include them in the report to be submitted by 31 March 2004.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Millward, regarding the percentages for crime committed by young people in local authority care, Mr Galikowski replied that he would forward the information to Councillor Mrs Millward in due course.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Lead Officer to write to all local MPs, inviting them to meet with Select Committee Members to discuss issues regarding crime and the punishment of crime.
- (2) That members' comments on the report submitted be conveyed to Mr Galikowski by 12th March, 2004.
- (3) That the Youth Offending Team Manager précis the comments received from members of the Committee and incorporate them into the report to be forwarded to the Partnership.
- (4) That the paragraph for inclusion in the report to be approved by the Chair and the Lead Officer.
- (5) That the Committee support the Partnership in its collation of information and in the compilation of an Action Plan for the Community.
- (6) That the information contained in the report submitted, in respect of the Draft Youth Justice Plan Review of 2003 and Plan for 2004, be noted.

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

A report of the Chair was submitted seeking approval for the Annual Report of the Select Committee on Community Safety submitted, prior to its submission to the Executive and the Council.

Following a brief discussion, it was

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted be approved for submission to the Executive and the Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF WORKING GROUPS

The Chair of the Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group on ASBO/CDRP/Administration updated the Committee on the outcome of the recent Working Group meeting held on 2nd March, 2004. It was indicated that the Working Group had agreed areas requiring top priority for scrutiny i.e. substance misuse and alcohol related crime.

The Chair of the Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group on Housing and Neighbour Nuisance Issues updated the Committee on the outcome of the recently held Working Group meeting held on 2nd March, 2004. The Working Group had concluded that their top priority was to scrutinise the lettings of Council houses and the lettings procedure itself, including the conditions of tenancy. He also reported that the Working Group had agreed to visit Beacon Council in Manchester whose lettings procedure was considered to be a model for other Councils.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the oral reports of the Chairs of the Working Group on ASBO/CDRP and Administration and the Working Group on Children and Young Peoples' issues be noted.
- (2) That it be noted that the Working Group on Children and Young Peoples' issues is not due to meet until 11th March, 2004, and that the Chair will report orally to the next Select Committee Meeting on Community Safety, as to the recommendations of that Working Group.

The meeting concluded at 7.30 p.m.

CHAIR