

Minutes of a Meeting of the External Partnerships Select Committee held at Surrey Heath House, Camberley on 11 September 2012

+ Cllr Josephine Hawkins - Chairman
+ Cllr Bob Paton – Vice-Chairman

+ Cllr Glyn Carpenter	+ Cllr Adrian Page
+ Cllr Ian Cullen	- Cllr Ken Pedder
+ Cllr Paul Deach	- Cllr Ian Sams
+ Cllr David Hamilton	- Cllr Pat Tedder
+ Cllr Beverley Harding	- Cllr Alan Whittart
+ Cllr Paul Innicki	+ Cllr John Winterton
+ Cllr Lexie Kemp	

+ Present

- Apologies for absence presented

Substitutes: Cllr Rodney Bates substitute for Cllr Pat Tedder
Cllr Charlotte Morley substitute for Cllr Ken Pedder
Cllr Judi Trow substitute for Cllr Alan Whittart

In attendance: Councillors David Allen, Tim Dodds, Edward Hawkins, John May, Audrey Roxburgh and Valerie White.

006/EP Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 May 2012 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

007/EP Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed and introduced Bob Stephens, Counter Terrorism Team Leader at Surrey Police, Tara Hastings and Nigel Downey, the Manager and the Deputy Chair of Camberley Citizens Advice Bureau, and John Cleary, a Trustee of Voluntary Services Surrey Heath.

A further welcome was extended to the County Council, Parish Council and business representatives in attendance at the meeting.

PART I

(public)

008/EP Counter Terrorism Presentation

Bob Stephens, Counter Terrorism Team Leader introduced himself and Charlie Harris, Counter Terrorism Intelligence Officer and Michelle Carroway, Community Engagement Officer, for Surrey Police.

The Government's Counter Terrorism strategy was to pursue, prevent, prepare and protect. The biggest risk was recognised as the lack of belief that any threat actually existed.

The current threat level in the UK, which was set by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, was considered to be substantial, with an attack being considered a strong possibility.

The main threat was from international terrorism, principally from Al Qaeda. There was also currently a substantial threat from Irish dissidents who had not recognised the Good Friday Agreement; it was thought that these dissidents had the capacity to launch an attack in the UK. In addition there were threats from domestic extremists, principally activists with extreme political views or advocating single issue causes who, whilst generally causing nuisance rather than fatalities, could have a significant impact upon daily lives.

Members were informed that crowded places were key terrorist targets as they provided for simultaneous attacks which resulted in mass casualties. Counter terrorism staff were engaging with centres and assessing the vulnerability of sites in order to reduce the threat.

Mr Stephens stressed that awareness was central to the prevention of terrorism and the Council could assist with identifying audiences for awareness sessions. He informed Members that there were a number of training packages available and specific training sessions could be designed for particular audiences. The Committee proposed that a training session should be designed and carried out for Members and Officers. Members also considered that Heathscene should be used to disseminate information to the public.

The Committee recognised that counter terrorism awareness in the business community was important. Mr Stephens advised that he had experienced difficulties in engaging with businesses, particularly in small and medium sized enterprises, principally due to time constraints. It was noted that a self-assessment tool was available online, which could be more accessible for such businesses. In view of the difficulty in arranging sessions for businesses, Members suggested that one could be held immediately after a Business Breakfast event.

RESOLVED that

- (i). the report be noted;**
- (ii). Heathscene be used to raise counter terrorism awareness and provide information on the training sessions available;**
- (iii). further investigation be carried out into the possibility holding a Counter Terrorism training session for businesses immediately after a Business Breakfast event; and**
- (iv). further work be undertaken on arranging a training session for Members and Officers.**

Note 1: It was noted for the record that Councillor Rodney Bates declared that he knew Charlie Harris and Michelle Carroway in a professional capacity.

009/EP Camberley Citizens Advice Bureau

Nigel Downey, Deputy Chair of Camberley Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), and Tara Hastings, Manager of the Bureau, introduced themselves to the

Committee. Members were informed that the aims and objectives of the CAB were to provide free, independent, confidential advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities, and to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and to improve policies and practices that affect people's lives.

The services provided by the CAB were free at the point of delivery and available to all borough residents. It was advised that approximately 10% of enquires dealt with by the Bureau were from clients outside the borough, with similar numbers of borough residents seeking advice from bureaus in other boroughs.

In 2012/13 the CAB had received a grant of £70,109 from the Council, which had remained the same for the past 5 years. The CAB also currently received accommodation from the Council, including car parking provision.

The CAB also provided a weekly pro bono solicitor rota, a weekly dedicated Ghurka advice session, a Debt Relief Order Intermediary and a weekly form filling session dedicated to assisting clients complete attendance allowance and disability living allowance forms.

The provision of a core service, which was principally funded by the grant from the Council, had in turn enabled the CAB to bring in additional monies for projects: since 2009 a total of £218,156 additional funding had been obtained. The CAB had recently obtained funding from the Frimley Fuel Allotments Charity and the Council's Community Grants to fund an Independent Living Adviser who would be able to visit clients in their homes.

A grant from the Department of Communities and Local Government had enabled additional hours of advice to be given. The Additional Hours project had enabled the CAB to introduce a gateway assessment, which involved an initial 10 minute assessment, with follow up appointments being made when necessary. This gateway assessment had helped the Bureau to focus upon those most in need and meet the increasing demand of complex casework.

The Money Advice project, which had commenced in October 2011 and was funded by a grant from Accent Peerless and SHBC Housing Needs (DCLG) funds, had been very successful. Repossession and eviction had been prevented in 29 households. The project had been extended by 6 months to April 2012.

In 2011/12 the CAB's service had been delivered by 62 volunteers, including trustees, advisers, supervisors, receptionists, administrators, IT staff and students. This amounted to over 15,500 volunteer hours, with the value of volunteers in 2011/12 being assessed at £250,000.

The Committee was informed that in 2011/12 the Bureau had dealt with 15,000 enquiries and assisted clients with managing more than £5m of debt. It had processed 22 successful debt relief orders. Homelessness advice had been provided to 211 clients.

Members considered opportunities for raising awareness of the Bureau and its work and suggested that a presence on social media would assist

with its promotion. It was noted that the Bureau's website was under development. Members also considered fundraising opportunities and were advised that fundraising was contained in the Bureau's business plan.

The Committee considered future challenges for the Bureau which related increasing income to maintain core services, increasing opening hours to meet projected demand, and addressing accommodation issues.

RESOLVED

- (i). to note and thank the presenters for the report;**
- (ii). that a further report be received in 12 months; and**
- (iii). that Camberley CAB's progress be monitored against its priorities, as identified in its business plan.**

Note 1: In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillors declared non-pecuniary interests in respect of the above item as follows:

- a) Cllr Glyn Carpenter as she was a trustee of Camberley CAB;
- b) Cllr Paul Deach as he had published material for the CAB on the Residents' Network website;
- c) Cllr Paul Innicki as he was a trustee of the Frimley Fuel Allotments, which had provided funding to the CAB; and
- d) Cllr Josephine Hawkins as she was a trustee of the Frimley Fuel Allotments, which had provided funding to the CAB.

Note 2: It was noted for the record that Cllr Rodney Bates declared that a friend of his was an advisor for the CAB.

010/EP Voluntary Services Surrey Heath

John Cleary, a trustee of Voluntary Services Surrey Heath (VSSH) informed the Committee that the role of VSSH was to promote any charitable purposes within the Surrey Heath area for the benefit of community cohesion and social inclusion. VSSH worked in partnership with statutory organisations, businesses, churches and voluntary organisations within Surrey Heath.

The organisation's aims were carried out by the promotion and co-ordination of volunteering in the borough, the management of a volunteer centre, and assisting with the development of volunteers. VSSH also developed and maintained a directory of community organisations.

VSSH was funded by Surrey County Council, Surrey Heath Borough Council and NHS Surrey. In 2012/13 the total funding it received from these 3 organisations was £77,200, of which £24,970 had been received from the Borough Council. Members were informed that it was expected that funding from Surrey County Council would decrease significantly in the next financial year.

Mr Cleary informed the Committee that, following a recent restructure, the organisation had reduced its staffing to 2 full time posts and he detailed the roles carried out by the post holders. Following this restructure, VSSH had entered into joint management arrangements with Runnymede Action for Voluntary Services (RAVS) and in July 2012 had voted to merge with RAVS. It was hoped that the merger would be concluded by the end of September 2012.

The Committee was informed that one of the principal benefits of the merger with RAVS would be the integration of staff and the consequent extension of the organisation's knowledge base. It was expected that staff would be based in both locations with arrangements remaining flexible to suit the service provision. Members were advised that a Business Plan would be developed shortly.

The Committee was advised of the outcomes of VSSH's work. It was reported that VSSH had assisted with raising £23,000 for other organisations in the area. 643 volunteers had been referred in the previous year, of which 157 had obtained long term placements. VSSH also provided a grantfinder to assist organisations with accessing grants. VSSH was also a lead partner in the production of the Surrey Heath Show, which generated significant funds to be distributed amongst local causes.

Members considered whether volunteers could assist with fundraising for VSSH. It was advised that, whilst this could be a possibility in the future, no fundraising for VSSH directly was currently carried out and its Constitution did not provide for this, with any money raised by VSSH being specifically intended for other organisations. Members also enquired whether volunteers could provide services for VSSH; it was advised that, whilst this opportunity had occasionally been utilised in the past, there was opportunity for this to be further developed.

RESOLVED

- (i). to note and thank Mr Clearly for the report;**
- (ii). that a further report be received in 12 months; and**
- (iii). that Voluntary Services Surrey Heath's progress be monitored against its priorities, as identified in its business plan once it has been produced.**

Note 1: In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Councillors declared non-pecuniary interests in respect of the above item as follows:

- a) Cllr Paul Deach as he had published material for Runnymede Action for Voluntary Services on the Residents' Network website; and
- b) Cllr Charlotte Morley as VSSH had placed a volunteer with Surrey Heath Sports Council, for whom she was a trustee.

011/EP Committee Work Programme

The Committee considered a report on the work programme for the 2012/13 municipal year.

Presentations from organisations in receipt of community grants had been scheduled for the committee meetings in November 2012 and January 2013. The Committee would also receive an update on Community Safety in the borough at the January meeting in accordance with the Committee's role as the designated Crime and Disorder committee.

The Committee was informed that a presentation from the Ambulance Service had been scheduled for the meeting in March 2013 to consider the request from the Community Scrutiny Committee in 2011/12 to investigate the practicalities of imposing a financial charge on persistent avoidable users of emergency services. It was, however, recognised that the Ambulance Service might not have the authority to introduce such charges.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2012/13, as attached at Annex A to the agenda report, be agreed.

CHAIRMAN