

Minutes of a Meeting of the External Partnerships Select Committee held at Council Chamber, Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15 3HD on 6 June 2023

+ Cllr Rob Lee (Chairman)

+ (Vice Chairman)

+ Cllr Mary Glauert
Cllr Louise Ashbery
Cllr Cliff Betton
Cllr Jonny Cope
Cllr Sarbie Kang
Cllr Liz Noble

+ Cllr Emma-Jane McGrath
Cllr Lewis Mears
Cllr Jonathan Quin
Cllr Kevin Thompson
Cllr Richard Wilson

+ Present

- Apologies for absence presented

Substitutes: Cllr Bob Raikes (In place of Cllr Mary Glauert) and Cllr Murray Rowlands (In place of Cllr Jonathan Quin)

Members in Attendance: Cllr Lisa Finan-Cooke, Cllr Shaun Garrett, Cllr Nirmal Kang, Cllr Pat Tedder, Cllr Morgan Rise, Cllr Valerie White, Sally Kipping, Eddie Scott, Renee France and Nick Steevens

Officers Present: XXX

1/EP Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2023 were confirmed by the Committee.

2/EP Introduction to the Committee

The Committee received a short presentation from Sally Kipping, Head of HR, Performance and Communications, which provided an introduction to the scope of the Committee, its key focusses and powers and the role of its Councillors and Officers.

Following a question from the Committee, it was advised that whilst Surrey County Council did not receive Revenue Grant funding from the Council and were not specifically covered by the terms of reference, if the Committee were minded it would be able to invite Surrey County Council to present to the meeting as an external partner.

3/EP Accent Housing

The Committee considered a presentation, by Julie Wittich, Chief Operating Officer, Louise Graham-Smith, Director of Housing Services, and Sarah Ireland,

Executive Director of Strategy and Growth, which provided an overview as to the progress which had been made against its Corporate Strategy 2021-2024, and its continued partnership working within Surrey Heath. The presentation was considered in conjunction with a report of the Democratic Services Officer, which summarised the Committees' prior consideration of Accent Housing Services and proposed a way forward.

It was highlighted to the Committee that Accent had an asset management strategy which reflected the organisation's desire to build more homes, invest in its existing stock in order to bring them to a positive standard. In addition to creating quality homes and sustainable communities, Accent aimed to create a personal customer experience and inspirational workforce, as outlined in its corporate strategy.

Accent had undertaken a number of initiatives which aimed to make the organisation an inspirational workplace and provide a high quality customer experience. This included the roll out of the Mary Guber International Customer Service Training programme, which every member of Accent staff would undertake. Moreover, Accent Housing staff would also now receive chartered institute of housing professional training. On top of the above, Accent undertook a vast array of partnership working within Surrey Heath. This included close partnership working with Surrey Police, an anti-fly tipping campaign with the Council and wider-customer engagement events in the community.

Resulting from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Any Councillors writing to advocate on Accent tenants' behalf needed to get consent from tenants to engage on their behalf.
- The Council used to appoint a Member to Accent's regional customer services committee. However, this Committee had ceased to exist following a rationalisation of Accent's governance structures a number of years ago. However, it was possible to apply for position on Accent's national board.
- There was an opined need for Ward Members and Accent housing to work more constructively and in closer partnership in respect of group meetings with Accent residents. Regard also needed to be paid to Accent's repair reporting process and any complaints procedures.
- There was acknowledgement that not all Accent customers would be able to access only reporting tools, and needed to report cases and problems via the phone. In addition, it was reaffirmed that Accent offered a very personal customer service offering in comparison to the rest of the sector.
- The outstanding maintenance backlog was still causing significant volumes of casework for Councillors. Significant progress was being made but it was anticipated it would still be a number of months before the backlog was completely cleared.

On consideration of the proposal in the Officer's report, and advice from officers, the Committee agreed that the workshop would be primarily kept to Committee Members-only. However non-Committee members would be able to ask for an invitation for the session by contacting the Chair and Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED that:

- I. An all-Committee workshop be co-produced with Accent Housing to:
 - a) Identify the causes of the poor performance of the maintenance and repairs service;**
 - b) Explore Accent tenants' current customer service experience; and**
 - c) Identify solutions and ways in which the Council can best support Accent; and****
- II. It be noted that any non-Committee members which wished to attend should write to the Chair and Vice-Chair to request an invite.**

4/EP Introduction to partnership working with the Integrated Care System

The Committee received a presentation from Tom Lawlor, Director of Operations, Frimley Integrated Care Board (ICB), on the makeup of Frimley Integrated Care System (ICS), and existing and opportunities for future partnership working in Surrey Heath.

The Health and Social Care Act 2022, which formalised the creation of ICSs and the formation of ICBs, brought together NHS trusts and boards, together with local authorities as equal partners to focus more widely on health, public health, social care and the wider determinants of health.

The Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) took the form of a joint Committee and published an ICS wide strategy, which set the high level objectives for health and wellbeing over the next five years across the ICS area. Unlike other ICPs, the Frimley ICP included organisations such as Healthwatch and the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector organisations.

Examples of existing strong partnership working between the ICB and the Council included the formulation of a whole system approach to obesity and healthy weight within Surrey Heath Place, and the deployment for an employment navigator for Surrey Heath Place.

Following Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- It was raised that there was a perceived hurdle to accessing services as a result of ICS commissioning boundaries, despite strong partnership working between Frimley ICS and Surrey Heartlands ICS. Confusion also arose in respect of two options to access primary care when Primary Care Networks (PCNs) overlapped multiple ICS boundaries. The Committee noted there was an opportunity to gently remind the NHS colleagues of the different boundaries of Surrey Heath Place and Surrey Heath borough.
- Each GP Surgery had a Patient Participation Group (PPG) and each PCN also had its own PPG, which residents could get involved in. Whilst guidance from NHS England and the department of Health and Social Care was still in the process of 'coming down', there maybe further room for patient involvement as ICSs developed.

- First contact practitioners, such as first contact physiotherapists, and social prescribers had the ability to release some of the burden off Primary Care. However, there was no quick fix solution to decrease GP appointment waiting times.
- Use of e-cigarettes among young people was an emerging issue; and work was being undertaken on a Surrey-wide level. There were also conversations taking place on how to support Surrey County Council trading standards in respect of enforcement against underage e-cigarette sales. Whilst it was noted that there was conflicting public health advice on the matter, there were potential opportunities to inform young people of the potential risks via secondary schools.
- There weren't yet any timescales or plans in respect of the Frimley Park Foundation Trust's successful New Hospital Programme bid. However the ICB and ICS partners were key stakeholders in respect of the project.
- Befriending services and how to access the services weren't always known to residents. It was noted that the ICS were always open to suggestions as to how this could be improved and support to promote volunteering in order to increase the capacity of such services.

The Committee thanked Tom for his informative presentation.

5/EP Introduction to Surrey Police

The Committee received a presentation from Inspector Sam Turner, Borough Commander, Surrey Police in respect of the priorities for policing in Surrey Heath and the current opportunities and challenges.

The priorities included in the Surrey Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025 provided the priorities for Surrey Police to follow and included:

1. Preventing violence against women and girls in Surrey
2. Protecting people from harm in Surrey
3. Working with Surrey communities so that they feel safe
4. Strengthen relationships between Surrey Police and Surrey residents
5. Ensuring safer Surrey roads

Despite a mix of increases and decreases in instances of crime types occurring in the borough over the last year, the number of Total Notifiable Offences were significantly lower in Surrey Heath in comparison to the neighbouring boroughs of Woking and Guildford.

Serious and Organised Crime was still present in the Borough and whilst there were no current active county lines operating within the borough, Surrey Police had issued one modern slavery closure warrant within the borough, 6 drug-related warrants and several related arrests.

However, vehicle crime, including catalytic convertor thefts were still high, which were being investigated to identify patterns and common themes.

Anti-social behaviour cases were comparatively low in Surrey Heath compared to other Surrey Borough and Districts. The vast amount of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases were contained in the town and the Committee were reminded that Surrey Police had the ability to implement Section 34 dispersal orders if high levels of ASB reporting took place.

Resulting from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- For the purposes of the provided data, fly-tipping was counted as an ASB offence. The Council had the responsibility to clear a fly-tip from publically owned land. In the case of privately owned land, the onus was on the landowner to clear the fly-tip, although the Council would work with the relevant landowner to find the perpetrators. The Council's contractor Amey collected evidence on fly-tips on the Council's behalf and it had recently been found that the deployment of ANPR cameras were effective at preventing fly-tips at locations, although it was unknown whether this was in fact just encouraged that change of location of the fly-tip.
- There was a wider communications and outreach piece required in order to remind members of the public that their reporting and intelligence resulted in warrants. Whilst the information ended up at the same place, web-reporting was more time-efficient for the reporting user than the 101 telephone service.
- Fraud was a crime which Surrey Police recorded and acted on where possible; and borough based-resource was used to visit victims following a report of fraud. Furthermore, Surrey Police deployed a call-to service which aimed to assess the risk to potential fraud victims and suggested changes in order to mitigate the risk.
- Neighbourhood Watch acted as an organisation which empowered local residents to prevent crime.
- Surrey Police took action on occurrences of dangerous parking and dealt with any repeat offenders. There were often a blend of civil and policing matters in respect of anti-social parking but also resulted in serious health and safety concerns.
- Following the announcement that the Metropolitan police would no longer attend emergency calls related to mental health incidents, it was noted that there was a significant balance to be struck between preventing harm to local communities and also working out the most appropriate body to respond to a mental health crisis.

The Committee thanked Inspector Turner for attending and his informative presentation.

6/EP Committee Work Programme

The Committee considered its work programme for the rest of the municipal year and agreed its work programme as per the agenda pack.

Chairman