

Time Commenced – 6.05pm
Time finished – 7.15pm

**Communities Scrutiny Review Board
17 August 2020**

Present: Councillor P Pegg (Chair)
Councillors Atwal, Nawaz, Hudson, Pearce and Testro

In Attendance: Andy Thomas – Head of Partnerships and Communities

01/20 Apologies for Absence

There were none.

02/20 Late items introduced by the Chair

There were none.

03/20 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

04/20 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

05/20 Public Protection Officers Update

The Board received a verbal update from the Head of Partnerships and Communities on the Council's Public Protection Officers (PPOs).

The Board noted that the Council had originally seconded PPOs from Nottingham City Council and that these PPOs had focused on environmental crime in the Normanton and Arboretum wards. It was reported that the Council had then seconded a second group of PPOs to focus on tackling anti-social behaviour in the city centre. It was noted that in total, eight PPOs had been seconded from Nottingham City Council.

It was noted that a report had gone to Council Cabinet in March 2019 setting out the premises for the Council to hire its own permanent PPOs. It was reported that the Council's budget situation at the time had put pressure on the PPO service to raise income through parking fines. The Board noted that the Council's PPO service had faced challenges around management and that the Team Leader had been suspended.

It was reported that the national lockdown due to Covid-19 had changed the premise of the PPO service. It was noted that during the lockdown PPOs had continued working on the frontline, engaging with the public. It was reported that the PPOs had played a role as the face of the Council's response to Covid-19. It was noted that the PPOs' responsibilities had moved away from parking fines and had become more focused on dealing with anti-social behaviour and environmental crime. It was noted that as the lockdown had now eased, it was important for the PPOs to return to their other responsibilities too.

A councillor questioned how many PPOs had originally been hired and how many there now were. The Head of Partnerships and Communities informed the Board that there had originally been 20 PPOs and that this number was now down to 14. A councillor questioned whether the Council were still paying PPOs who had been suspended. The Head of Partnerships and Communities informed the Board that the HR process for these individuals was being progressed and that the management structure of the PPO service was being reviewed.

A councillor asked for advice to be given to councillors on what information they could share with neighbourhood officers and PPOs. The Head of Partnerships and Communities stated that they were eager for the PPOs to work closer with neighbourhood officers and councillors and that they would look into sharing this advice with councillors. A councillor stated that it was important for PPOs who had been suspended or laid off to be replaced quickly.

The Head of Partnerships and Communities informed the Board that over the coming weeks, work would be taking place to ensure that the PPO service was run efficiently and to make sure PPOs were accountable for their work. It was noted that the Council did not have an unlimited number of PPOs and that it was important for this service to take a flexible approach to working and for its resources to be targeted.

A councillor questioned what powers the Council's PPOs had. The Head of Partnerships and Communities informed the Board that PPOs had powers to deal with: anti-social behaviour, environmental crime, community protection and issuing fixed penalty notices. A councillor expressed concern that fixed penalty notices being issued by PPOs were not being enforced. The Head of Partnerships and Communities asked councillors to report any concerns such as this directly to him in the future.

A councillor questioned how the PPO service would be funded if targets for parking fines were not met. The Board noted that the Medium Term Financial Plan had allowed the Council to prepare for this scenario. A councillor asked whether figures on what enforcement had been carried out by PPOs could be shared with the Board. The Head of Partnerships and Communities informed the Board that they would do this.

A councillor asked what the PPOs working hours were and was informed that PPOs worked 8am – 4pm or 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday. It was noted that there was some flexibility with these hours and that PPOs could work some weekends when their assistance was needed. A councillor commented that it was important for PPOs not to be too heavy handed with the public. The Head of Partnerships and Communities stated that the mantra for PPOs was: engage, educate, enforce. It was noted that PPOs would only enforce as a last resort.

A councillor questioned whether Derby Homes had given tasks to the Council's PPOs. The Head of Partnerships and Communities informed the Board that Derby Homes had provided the PPOs with tasks and intelligence but that this relationship needed to be strengthened.

The Board requested that the Head of Partnerships and Communities attended the next Board meeting to provide an update on the Council's Public Protection Officers. The Chair requested that the Cabinet Member for Communities, Neighbourhoods and Streetpride be invited to the next meeting.

The Board Resolved:

- 1. To note the information provided in the verbal update.**
- 2. To request that the Head of Partnerships and Communities attends the next Board meeting to provide an update on the Council's Public Protection Officers.**

06/20 Terms of Reference and Work Programme

The Board considered a report setting out the Terms of Reference and Remit of the Board.

The report provided Members of the Board with the opportunity to consider its terms of reference and remit for the forthcoming municipal year, its work programme for 2020/21 and any topic reviews.

Resolved to note the information provided within the report.

Minutes End.