

Northampton Borough Council

Community Safety and E- Government Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 4 May 2004

Present: Councillor Barron (Chair); Councillor Lane (Deputy Chair); Councillors Eldred, M Hoare, Matthews, McCutcheon, Robinson and Woods
M Hunter, Head of Overview and Scrutiny
Councillor Tavener, Portfolio Holder
S Eley, Environmental Health Manager
D Ferguson, Community Safety Manager

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Miah.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2004 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were none.

4. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

5. LEGALISATION OF DRUGS

Councillor McCutcheon raised the issue of drugs and circulated a paper for information. He expressed interest in the options open in partnership with the PCT, CSP etc regarding regulation of drugs and requested thoughts on possible research.

Members commented on alcohol and smoking, both of which are freely available but cost much in health and related problems and commented that the issue was more the misuse of drugs.

The Environmental Health Manager advised of the impending licensing policy and the current review of property categories. Members agreed to look at the category review, obtain any further research information and request information from the police to enable the Committee to decide on further action.

Conclusions: That the relevant planning officer be invited to the next meeting to give an overview of the policy review for categories.

6. OPTIONS ON NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS

The Environmental Health Manager advised that the Neighbourhood Warden scheme was underway. This was a pilot scheme being carried out in St Crispin, St David and Eastfield wards and would be continually evaluated over a 9-10 month period. After this period, it would be rolled out across the whole borough.

Members heard that the pilot scheme had deliberately not been implemented in the wards where CASPAR wardens were already in place, and part of the project plan was to discover what other kind of work was going on, in order that projects and schemes could complement

each other.

The job descriptions for Wardens had been produced, the recruitment process was being developed and a programme schedule was being written. It was planned to consider training, uniforms, style and image etc. The project would inform an evaluation of all support roles with the aim of networking to provide maximum resources.

Conclusion: (1) That the committee receives further information regarding the Neighbourhood Wardens at a future meeting.

7. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Community Safety Manager circulated a report regarding the dispersal of intimidating groups and outlined its contents.

As part of the Anti-social Behaviour Act, the police now had the power to disperse groups of 2 or more and to return people under the age of 16 to their homes, but only in nominated areas. For an area to be nominated, consent had to be given by the Borough Council through an officer at Chief Executive, Directorate or Borough Solicitor level. Members were advised that to this end, a formal protocol was being drawn up between the police and Borough Council. Members expressed the wish to input into the protocol.

Conclusions:

- (1) That the draft Dispersal Protocol between the Police and the Borough Council be brought to this Committee.
- (2) That a report on the recent research into local youth provision be an agenda item at the next meeting.
- (3) that the Committee consider e-government programmes and how they are joined-up and implemented.