To be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 15th December 2022

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

8th September 2022 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Councillor Dawkins (in the Chair)
Councillors Aisthorpe, Brasted (Substitute for Westcott) Boyd (Substitute for Batson), Goodwin (Substitute for Shutt) Parkinson (Substitute for Sandford) Pettigrew, and K Swinburn

Officers in attendance:

- Helen Isaacs (Assistant Chief Executive)
- Eve Richardson Smith (Deputy Monitoring Officer and Legal Team Manager)
- Neil Clark (Strategic Lead for Regulation and Enforcement Services)
- Paul Allen (Finance Lead)
- Carolina Borgstrom (Assistant Director Environment)
- Spencer Hunt (Assistant Director Safer & Partnership)
- Paul Condon (Anti-Social Behaviour Manager)
- Zoe Campbell (Scrutiny and Committee Advisor)

Also in attendance:

- Councillor Ron Shepherd (Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities)
- Councillor Stewart Swinburn (Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport)
- Superintendent Paul French (Humberside Police)

There were no members of the press or the public present.

SPC.16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from this meeting were received from Councillors Batson, Sandford, Shutt, and Westcott.

SPC.17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interests were received for any items in this meeting

SPC.18 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Panel held on 7th July 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

SPC.19 QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public for this meeting.

SPC.20 FORWARD PLAN

The panel received the current forward plan and members were asked to identify any items for examination by this panel via the pre-decision call-in procedure.

RESOLVED – That the forward plan be noted.

SPC.21 TRACKING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF SCRUTINY

The panel received a report from the statutory scrutiny officer tracking the recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Panel.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPC.22 COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23 – QUARTER ONE

The panel received a report from the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Economy, Net Zero, Skills and Housing providing elected members with oversight of performance against the Council Plan.

A member asked whether officers could add a note that told users how often the data on the council plan dash board was updated, and when the next update would be due. The specific areas mentioned at scrutiny were:

- Fuel poverty figures are from 2020
- Rough sleeper's figures from January 2022, I also picked up that temporary accommodation is from Feb 2022 and this could be updated monthly.
- ASB figures are from Q1 2021/22
- Workless households 2020
- Visitors 2020
- Level 4 qualifications December 2020

Ms Robinson agreed and would go back to the team to request this was actioned.

The number of long term empty properties appeared to have increased and members were concerned about the negative affect this had on communities in particular related to anti social behaviour and the causes. Members queried what action was being taken to reduce the number of empty properties. Ms Robinson confirmed that she would go back to the relevant officers and report this information back to the panel at a later date.

Members queried if there was any household recycling that was being sent aboard. Ms Borgstrom reassured the panel that no recycling was sent aboard and that only good quality plastic was distributed within the UK and the remainder was incinerated to produce electricity.

A member was interested to know if the Council could recycle plastic wrappings. Ms Borgstrom explained that officers constantly reviewed what we recycled and it was dictated by the demand for recycling market.

Air pollution that was caused when incinerating waste was a concern to members. Ms Borgstrom explained that most of the plastic was taken out beforehand and that it was more efficient to keep a small amount plastic in the waste to generate the electricity, however this was a whole system issue and improvements would need to be starting from the reduction in products made with plastic as well as taxation of single use plastic would help.

Ms Borgstrom offered for the panel members to visit the waste incinerator plant so see the process first hand which the members welcomed.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the report noted

(2) That members are provided with an update on what action was being taken to reduce the number of empty properties across the borough.

(3) That a site visit to the waste incinerator plant be organised.

SPC.23 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 - QUARTER 1

The panel considered a report from the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets which provided key information and analysis of the Council's position and performance against its Finance and Commissioning Plan for the first quarter of the 2022/23 year.

Members queried if inflation was factored into the budgets. Mr Allen explained that there was some protection for inflation and contracts were linked at API. Members asked if there were ways of mitigating inflation in the system and how did the council address budget overspends to stop going into ear mark reservices. Mr Allen explained that there were risks

and pressured across all services and this report covered quarter one and this picture could change over the next quarters. He reassured the panel that action would be taken to address any overspends and use of ear mark reserves

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPC.24 UPDATE ON MULTI AGENCY DAYS OF ACTION

The panel considered a report from the Executive Director, Environment, Economy, and Resources providing a summary of the outcomes from the Multi Agency Days of Action conducted in July 2022.

The panel welcomed the multi-agency day of action and were pleased to hear the results.

A member queried how many more days of action there would be. Mr Clark confirmed the aim was to undertake them on a quarterly basis and the next one would be before Christmas.

Members were interested in the link between fly tipping and people being caught without a waste carriers license. Mr Clark explained that it was only a snapshot on the day and there was no hard evidence that there was a link.

It was queried by a member if the results days of action compared with the time taken to set up and run the day of action were justified. Mr Clark confirmed that it was a positive day with legal action taken on a number of offences. Mr Clark explained that now they had completed the first one it would be easier going forward in terms of the system and multi-agency working.

A suggestion made by a member was to use more publicly about the days of action however Mr Clark confirmed that the approach was not to do any advance publicity because it would make the days of action less effective.

Members were interested to understand if new businesses who were setting up were informed, they would need a waste transfer licence where applicable. Mr Clark highlighted that officers did give advice when asked by a business however there was the assumption that businesses who may need a license would look into this when starting up their business.

The panel welcomed the multi days of action and results that they produced.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted

SPC.25 RENEWAL OF THE ASB AND THE DOG CONTROL PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER

The panel received a report from the Executive Director, Environment, Economy, and Resources providing an overview of the renewal of the Public Space Protection Order for anti-social behaviour and dog control matters undertaken in July 2022.

Members referred to the public consultation that took place and queried if there was a number of different options that the public could choose or were they limited to one per question. Mr Clark explained the details were on the website for members to look at the full consultation however more than one option was available.

There was a concern raised by members that there was more anti-social behaviour going on across the borough that was not reported especially in Grant Thorold Park and queried why this had not been considered as part of the PSPO review. Mr Condon explained that other areas could be added if the evidence supported it. Mr Condon highlighted that the Police were the enforcing agency in relation to PSPOs. Any breach of a PSPO would be reported to the Councils ASB Team who could then issue a fixed penalty notice. Superintendent French confirmed that the PSPO's were just one tool that could be used when dealing with anti-social behaviour and that Police Officers were encouraged to use them where appropriate.

A member felt that there was no confidence in reporting low level crime on the 101 telephone number through past experience. Superintendent French confirmed that during the summer months the calls into 101 had increased however he explained that the answer times had reduced by 70% and he hoped that gave some confidence to members and residents to report crimes using 101. He referred to Crime Stoppers as a golden way to report crime because the intelligence received was shared alongside incident data and it was reviewed and used to determine the Policing priorities for the month ahead.

Members queried why the Council were continuing with the PSPO's when they were underutilised citing the time and resources that were required to created them was unjustified. Mr Clark explained that a PSPO acted as a deterrent however they were reliant on good signage therefore it was difficult to assess if people were adjusting their behaviour because of the signage.

The panel agreed that they would welcome a workshop to review the anti-social behaviour PSPO's

RESOLVED –.

(1) That the report be noted

(2) That a workshop be set up to review the anti-social behaviour PSPO's.

SPC.26 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER

There were no questions for the portfolio holder at this meeting.

SPC.27 CALLING IN OF DECISIONS

There were no formal requests from members of this panel to call in decisions of recent Cabinet and Portfolio Holder meetings.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 3.30p.m.