

## **Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Meeting held on Thursday, 7th April, 2016.**

**Present:-** Councillors Nazir (Chair), Strutton (Vice-Chair), Ajaib, Bains, Bal, Malik and Usmani

**Apologies for Absence:-** Councillor N Holledge and Rana

### **PART I**

#### **73. Declaration of Interest**

Councillor Bal declared that his daughter worked for Slough Borough Council.

Agenda item 6: Burnham Station Road Network Alterations. Councillor Strutton declared that had had involvement in the organisation of the petition against the closure of Burnham Station Road.

#### **74. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 3rd March 2016**

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016 be approved as a correct record.

#### **75. Member Questions**

None received.

#### **76. Presentation by Francis Habgood, Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police**

Francis Habgood, Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police (TVP), accompanied by Superintendent Gavin Wong, Local Area Commander (LAC) for Slough, Simon Bowden, outgoing LAC for Slough, made a presentation to the Committee outlining the strategy for Policing in Thames Valley 2016/17 and referring in particular to the Slough policing area. There was a clear focus on continuing to improve public confidence and working together to build stronger more resilient communities.

Findings of the annual overview of policing were highlighted, which showed that TVP had been given a good rating in the areas that had been inspected - effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy.

The priorities for TVP 16/17 were outlined as:

- Developing operational capacity and capability in collaboration
- Working with partners to further develop response to mental health
- Protecting children from abuse and responding to serious sexual assaults
- Addressing 4 P's for terrorism and serious organised crime
- Better use of technology and resources
- Developing the workforce

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Details of crime reduction and outcome rates were illustrated and it was noted that whilst there had been an increase in violent crime and sexual offence statistics, this was as a result of greater reporting of these types of incidents.

Referring specifically to Slough, the following points were highlighted:

**Children's Services.** This provision had now been formally taken over by the Slough Children's Services Trust. Mr Habgood stressed the importance of ensuring that an effective information network, between the appropriate agencies, was established to deliver the best possible services.

**Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).** A soft launch was held in July with the full launch currently scheduled for September 2016. It was noted that the MASH would initially incorporate children and provision of services for adults to be incorporated at later stage.

**Mental Health Triage.** TVP considering developing a triage pilot across East Berkshire, and Slough was one of three LPAs that would be affected. Although the support of the local Clinical Commissioning Groups, to joint fund the scheme had been secured, responses from the Local Authorities as to whether they would provide the additional costs involved was still outstanding.

**Incidents of serious crime.** There had been several instances of youth violence over the year including a murder in Slough and a stabbing in South Bucks (Burnham) involving youths from Slough. Addressing youth violence was one of the priorities for TVP and there are a number of activities underway to focus on this including a youth violence and gang meeting.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).** TVP had jointly commissioned research with the Local Authority and Home Office to scope and assess the push/pull factors for the causes for people to become victims of CSE. This will have academic rigor and predicate further activity once that research is completed. Reference was made to the recent launch of Hotel Watch which would help to identify those using hotels to commit offences.

On completion of the presentation, Members raised several issues, including what resources were being invested to address the issues of youth crime in Slough. Members were informed that TVP were taking a pro-active approach in tackling youth crime, which included a Youth and Gang Violence Lead as part of the Neighbourhood Teams within the Borough. Working in partnership with Slough Children's Services Trust was vital in providing young people with opportunities to move away from that area of work.

A Member queried what impact savings could potentially have on policing in the Slough area and specifically which areas were likely to be compromised. Mr Habgood stated that there had not been a reduction in the core amount of funds allocated to Slough over the past five years. Efficiency savings had been achieved via greater use of technology and working from home. It was

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noted that Slough was supported by specialist units such as Domestic Violence and Safeguarding with support from local officers as required.

A Member raised concern relating to the number of serious incidents that had taken place at Salt Hill Park and asked what measures TVP had taken to mitigate the issues. The Committee were informed that additional resources had been allocated for improvements to the area which included improved lighting and additional CCTV. Further details regarding planned improvements at the park and immediate vicinity would be reported to the Committee once finalised.

A Member commented on the increase in online fraudulent activity and what strategies TVP were engaging to combat these types of crimes. It was noted that education regarding safe use of the website and was key and TVP were working in partnership with Slough Borough Council in developing a CyberSafe strategy.

Responding to whether TVP had the resources required to adapt to the needs of the town with an increasing population, it was explained that an increase in population potentially meant an increase in resources for TVP. The future of Langley Police Station was raised and whilst it was recognised by TVP that there was a need for visibility and accessibility in that area, this did not necessitate a police station in the area. Drop in zones were being considered at a number of sites in Langley including the fire station.

Following discussion regarding the lack of night time economy in Slough, Superintendent Wong stated that provided businesses took their responsibilities as premise licence owners seriously, TVP would work in partnership with local businesses to support the night time economy in the town.

### **Resolved:**

- (a) That the Committee thank Mr Habgood, Chief Constable TVP, Superintendent Gavin Wong, LAC for Slough and Simon Bowden, outgoing LAC for Slough for their attendance, presentation and responding to Members' questions.
- (b) That details of the presentation be noted and the Committee be provided with an update regarding improvements implemented at Salt Hill Park.

## **77. Annual Scrutiny Report 2015/16**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Annual Scrutiny Report 2015/16 for members consideration. The review included details of the scrutiny work for the past year, assessing the impact scrutiny had had on influencing policy and holding the Executive to account.

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**Recommended to Council** – That the Annual Scrutiny report 2015/16 be endorsed.

### 78. **Burnham Station Road Network Alterations - Final Review Analysis**

The Acting Head of Transport reminded the Committee of details of the Scheme. The Council had been approached in the past by residents and local community groups to improve traffic flow and address commuter parking issues in and around Burnham Lane and Station Road.

Transport modelling was commissioned by officers in 2014 to assess 12 different scenarios. The scenarios included reversing the one way on Burnham Lane, making Station Road one way northbound and then southbound and closure of Station Road. The report found that all options would result in an improvement around the station but would also have some impact on other local roads.

In terms of the experimental traffic scheme, Members agreed to initially proceed with the scheme option involving the full closure of Station Road, as part of an experimental order. The experimental scheme began mid October and involved the full closure of Station Road at the railway bridge. Following the month three report for Phase 1, the Council took the decision to trial a second experimental phase for the scheme, involving the northbound operation of Station Road as opposed to a full closure.

The Committee were informed that the Phase 2 experimental scheme involved:

- Opening Station Road at the railway bridge, to northbound only traffic, from Stanhope Road to Burnham Lane
- Narrowing Station Road near the bridge to deter vehicles attempting to travel southbound under the bridge and to assist pedestrians crossing the road here
- Keeping some of the existing features of the current scheme including:
  - Station triangle being one way
  - Mini roundabout at the junction of Burnham Lane with Buckingham Avenue
  - Bus stop location remaining on Station Road at the triangle (in both directions)
- New direction and information signs
- Traffic signal works to support the new scheme

Although Phase 2 of the Scheme had been in place for only a month, details of feedback collated to date were outlined. A total of 58 response to date had been received and analysis of those responses indicated that 72% of individuals had indicated that they had had a better journey compared to the area prior to both experimental schemes. In comparison, it was noted that 508 responses were submitted in the first month of Phase 1 of the scheme and although some general assumptions could be made at this stage; with a low

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response rate the results should be viewed as an indicator of the current feedback and not the full response from the community.

A Member requested clarification regarding responses received, if any, from schools within the vicinity. It was noted that due to the Easter break it had not been possible to collate any responses from schools and that this information would be made available once received. A response from Haybrook College had been received who confirmed that they were happy with the one way system.

Responding to concerns raised relating to speeding vehicles under the bridge, officers confirmed that minor safety modifications/alterations to the scheme could be, if appropriate, explored with the stakeholder group.

The Committee were reminded that analysis of Phase 2 of the Scheme and the final recommendation regarding a permanent decision were due to be considered by Cabinet in June 2016. An update report would be provided at the July Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

**Resolved** – That the feedback and data gathered to show the progress of the experimental scheme Phase 2 be noted.

### 79. Annual Petitions Report 2015/16

The Committee were provided with details of the Annual Petitions Report 2015/16. For the period 1 May 2015 to 31 March 2016, a total of 16 petitions were received – 9 paper petitions and 7 e-petitions.

A Member commented that the current e-petition system was not user friendly and that a number of individuals had had difficulties in both accessing and navigating around the system. It was noted that the current system was one which a number of Local Authorities used and that the comments would be fed back to the system providers. The Chief Executive informed the meeting that the Council's website was currently being reviewed with a view to making it more user friendly.

**Resolved** – That details of the Annual Petitions Report 2015/16 be noted.

### 80. Contract Management Task and Finish Group: Terms of Reference

The Committee were reminded that a Contract Management Task and Finish Group was first raised as a possibility by Members at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016. At this meeting, it was decided that the most appropriate solution would be the establishment of a Task and Finish Group.

The Scrutiny Officer tabled the proposed terms of reference, as formulated by the Task and Finish Group at its meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016. It was noted that the terms of reference would examine the issues that Members had encountered with existing procedures and processes.

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Councillor Bains informed the Committee that he was withdrawing his membership of the Task and Finish Group, as he was employed by Amey and the Group could potentially be examining/reviewing the Council's contract with Amey. It was noted that a replacement Member would be sought from the Conservative Group.

**Resolved** - That the following Terms of reference for the Contract Management Task and Finish Group be approved:

1. To research potential improvements in the process for procuring contracts for outsourced services, and in managing such contracts once they are in operation. This will be undertaken through the following methods:
  - 1.1 Research into specific examples of contract procurement and management to highlight key themes.
  - 1.2 Investigation into methods for increasing member engagement and improving communications with members of scrutiny during preparations for procurement.
  - 1.3 Research into methods for increasing efficiencies and savings in procurement.
  - 1.4 Consideration of overall standards to be observed in contracts awarded by Slough Borough Council.
  - 1.5 Consideration of overall principles for the management of contracts once in operation
  - 1.6 Investigation into opportunities for using digital transformation and 'smart working' to improve services and make efficiencies.
  - 1.7 Research into the role of contracted staff in providing outsourced services.
2. To make recommendations on the above matters.

### 81. Attendance Record

**Resolved** – That details of the Members Attendance Record be noted.

### 82. Date of Next Meeting - 14th June 2016

The date of the next meeting was noted as 14 June 2016

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### **83. Vote of Thanks**

The Committee passed a vote of thanks to the Chair for his service during the municipal year now ending. The Chair thanked Members and Officers for their support and contribution during his year of office.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.43 pm)