

Nottingham City Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 4 January 2023 from 2.02 pm - 4.40 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Samuel Gardiner (Chair)
Councillor Georgia Power (Vice Chair)
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora
Councillor Corall Jenkins
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Jane Lakey
Councillor Sajid Mohammed
Councillor Anne Peach
Councillor Angharad Roberts
Councillor Andrew Rule

Absent

Councillor Carole McCulloch
Councillor Merlita Bryan

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Ross Brown	- Corporate Director for Finance and Resources
Phil Broxholme	- Senior Community Safety Manager
Lord Vernon Coaker	- Chair of the Crime and Drugs Partnership
Richard Grice	- Transformation Programme Director
Clive Heaphy	- Interim Corporate Director for Finance and Resources
Councillor Neghat Khan	- Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion
Jane Lewis	- Community Safety Strategy Manager
Jane Paling	- Modern Slavery Team Manager
Yasmin Rehman	- Juno Women's Aid
Colin Wilderspin	- Community Safety Consultant
Councillor Adele Williams	- Portfolio Holder for Finance
Laura Wilson	- Senior Governance Officer
Councillor Audra Wynter	- Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport and Parks

50 Apologies for absence

Councillor Carole McCulloch - unwell

51 Declarations of interests

In relation to agenda item 5 – The Council's Budget Proposals 2023/24 (minute reference 54), in the interests of transparency the following Councillors made the following declarations:

Councillor Georgia Power stated that she is a member of an Area Based Grants Board.

Councillor Gul Khan stated that he is a member of Greenway Community Centre.

Councillor Andrew Rule stated that he is a member of the Parkgate Community Centre.

Councillor Anne Peach stated that she is a member of the Ice Arena and Playhouse Boards, and that her partner is a member of the Clifton Advice Centre.

These declarations did not prevent the Councillors from participating in the discussion.

52 Minutes

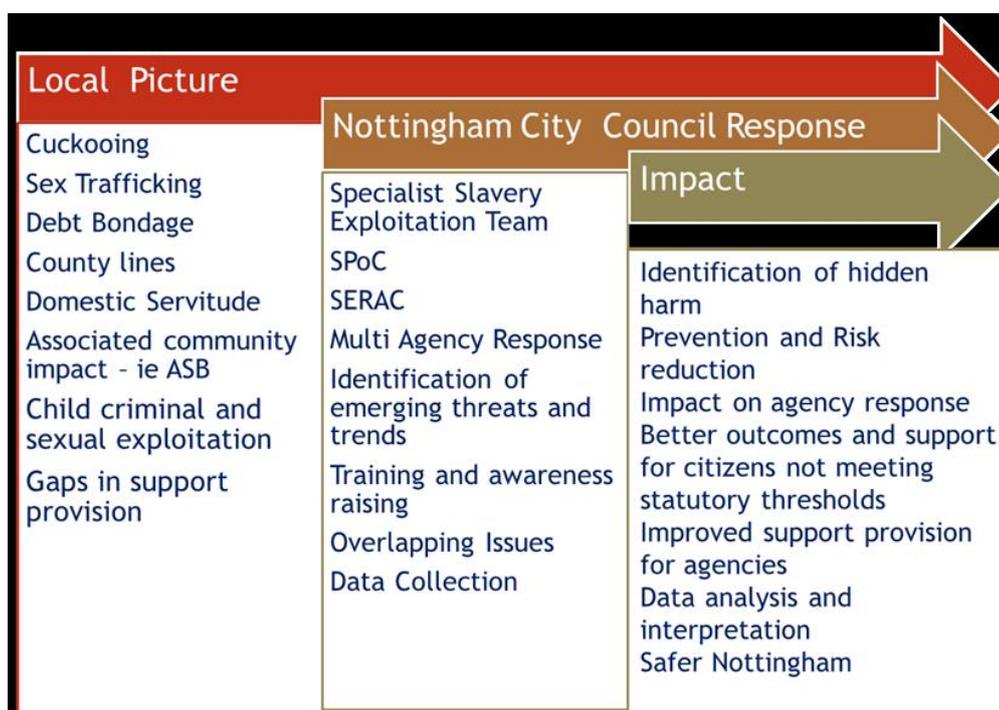
The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

53 Crime and Drugs Partnership

Following an introduction by Lord Vernon Coaker, Chair of the Crime and Drugs Partnership (CDP), Phil Broxholme, Senior Community Safety Manager, Jane Paling, Modern Slavery Team Manager, Jane Lewis, Community Safety Strategy Manager, and Yasmin Rehman, Juno Women's Aid, presented the report detailing the performance of the CDP and its delivery of priorities within its Partnership Plan, highlighting the following points:

- (a) the CDP is a multi-agency community safety partnership responsible for tackling crime, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and reoffending, which was established by the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. It also functions as the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board and the Substance Use Strategic Partnership
- (b) it comprises five 'Responsible Authorities' - Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire Police, Probation Service, Integrated Care Board, and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, and a number of other public bodies on a voluntary basis: - Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner, University of Nottingham, Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham City Homes, and HMP Nottingham
- (c) the partnership has three primary functions – accountability, governance, and leadership
- (d) the partnership is responsible for local strategic management, engaging and consulting with the local community, commissioning of a local strategic assessment, development of a local delivery plan, overseeing delivery and performance against targets, commissioning of services for DSVAs
- (e) the headline targets for the Partnership are to reduce crime, to reduce hate crime repeat victimisation by 10%, to reduce anti-social behaviour by 25%, and to maintain performance in respect of successful completions from substance misuse treatment. These targets will be assessed over the four year period 2019-23

- (f) the 2022 Strategic Assessment Identified six key priorities - Vulnerability and Exploitation, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, Prevent Serious Violence, Housing and Homelessness, Substance Use, and Anti-Social Behaviour
- (g) anti-social behaviour is still above the target. The instances reported peaked during lockdown when more people were at home, but has reduced again since
- (a) enforcement activity for anti-social behaviour follows the model of – ask, warn, initial enforcement, substantive enforcement, breach. Other responses to it include Partnership Tasking, Community Trigger, Mediation, Restorative Solutions, and Behavioural and Parenting Contracts
- (b) in relation to slavery and exploitation:



- (c) referral rates to the specialist slavery and exploitation team have increased since it was introduced in 2019, which demonstrates that more people are aware of the team and they work they do
- (d) the specialist slavery and exploitation team was initially a city service, but it was expanded to the south conurbation in 2020. It has the potential to expand to cover the county, and discussions are in progress with Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Executives of the county and district councils
- (e) Juno Women’s Aid is the largest domestic abuse organisation in Nottinghamshire supporting women, children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse for more than 40 years. It is commissioned to deliver services in Nottingham City, Ashfield, Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe
- (f) the services Juno provide include 24 hour Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Domestic Violence Helpline (the first in the country), Pet Fostering Project (first in the country), Children and Young People’s Services, Survivor Advocacy

Support Services, Justice Services, Accommodation, Specialist services, Administration of MARAC in the City and County South, and a central Hub service for professionals referring into its services

- (g) The CDP is currently undergoing a review process that aims to deliver a new governance and operating model. This involves a review of priorities and the creation of clear outcomes, a clear ambition and an understanding of what the 'additional value' of the partnership is and what it can bring to partner organisations and the city beyond the business as usual of the partner organisations. Board members are committed to refocusing the partnership around vulnerability, prevention and early intervention, with the aim of delivering a more progressive and holistic approach that is inclusive of both citizens and partners. It is felt that the name of the partnership should be changed to reflect this and a process is in place to agree a new name and terms of reference prior to the beginning of 2023/24.

During subsequent discussion and in response to questions from the Committee the following points were made:

- (h) the review won't preclude any current activity, but they will have to be prioritised and amended to reflect current issues;
- (i) the CDP Board doesn't have statutory powers, but all partners work together to come to a common view on what is important to communities and how the issues should be tackled
- (j) the partnership does work with other partnerships nationally and locally to learn from their best practice
- (k) long term solutions and funding to address anti-social behaviour need to be found to ensure that any improvements made are sustainable, and further work needs to take place to improve cross-boundary working, and partnership working also needs to be improved to provide a consistent approach
- (l) male survivors of domestic abuse are supported as robustly as female survivors, although the report and presentation supplied to the Committee did not include this information
- (m) the success of drug treatments is measured through the number of successful completions, and how many people require multiple treatments.

Resolved to

- (1) look at how joint working with bordering Local Authorities can be strengthened to improve services**
- (2) liaise with the Portfolio Holder responsible for housing, as the CDP Plan identifies the removal of Selective Licensing as a risk to increasing anti-social behaviour**

- (3) seek to improve communication with other local and national organisations to share best practice**
- (4) work to develop a more consistent approach to the response to anti-social behaviour across partners**
- (5) ensure that future reports include information on male domestic abuse survivors as well as female**
- (6) provide information on the statistics for drug treatment success rates.**

54 The Council's Budget Proposals 2023/24

Clive Heaphy, Interim Corporate Director for Finance and Resources, presented the report on the budget for 2023/24 and MTFP for 2024/25 to 2026/27 and approved proposals for public consultation, highlighting the following points:

- (a) whilst a surplus is currently projected by 26/27 there still remains further work to do to testing all assumptions and estimates across all years, and a reported remaining gap of £3.2m for the 23/24 budget after all endorsed savings and the inclusion of a risk assessment
- (b) new saving and income proposals total £29.0m in 23/24 rising to a cumulative £52.8m by 26/27, which includes public consultation on £10.3m rising to £42.2m, and non-consultation on £18.7m falling to £10.6m
- (c) the proposed City Council Band D Council Tax for 23/24 is £2,052.89, representing a 2.99% core increase and a 2.0% ASC precept. The tax base for 23/24 will be approved by 17 January Executive Board
- (d) the draft MTFP assumed a rolled over 'cash flat' core settlement with projected extra Social Care funding, but the provisional figures in the settlement published on 19 December are slightly more complex, so Detailed analysis is continuing, especially with regard to any conditions attached to Social Care grants. The full funding picture will also not be known until business rates projections are finalised
- (e) there is a need to continue to work at pace on the budget over the coming weeks to ensure a balanced 23/24 position in time for final MTFP to be reported to Executive Board on 21 February, which will then recommend it for Council to approve on 6 March
- (f) proposals that are being publically consulted on have an impact upon service users or potentially put staff at risk, and those that are not publicly consulted on do not have an impact on service users or staff

During subsequent discussion and in response to questions from the Committee the following points were made:

- (g) the commencement of the consultation period was delayed as inflationary rises, etc impacted on the proposals and required further work

- (h) there are two ways in which the Council can consult on the budget which includes the budget as a whole, or new savings proposals only, with the latter being favoured by the Council
- (i) all budgets have been rebased with consistent underspends removed
- (j) inflationary pressures are being accounted for and contingencies have been put in place for projects as a result
- (k) the financial pressures resulting from Robin Hood Energy and the Housing Revenue Account do have an impact on the Council's reserves
- (l) the Council has a sound borrowing strategy with robust controls in place
- (m) savings that have been included in the budget but not achieved have now been removed. Some of these will have been refined and are covered by new proposals, and others have been included as a pressure. All saving proposals now have an implementation plan, so unachievable savings will not be an issue for future budgets
- (n) Resident Services has the biggest budget reduction because it delivers the most non-statutory functions, but services will not reduce due to income generation and a review of fees and charges
- (o) the Council is looking at whether it could work with a voluntary organisation or charity to deliver the Shop Mobility scheme at Victoria Centre, but this is made difficult by increasing rent charges and structural issues with where it is currently located
- (p) consultation on proposals to close the £3.2m budget gap is not programmed in
- (q) a Finance Improvement Plan is in place to ensure accounting standards are met, and work is being done to try and address the resourcing gaps in the finance division
- (r) transformation programmes are being tracked and are on target to deliver the savings detailed in the MTFP.

Resolved to

- (1) submit a response from the Committee to the budget consultation**
- (2) request that it is ensured that the budget consultation is presented to scrutiny committees in December in future years, as is usual practice**
- (3) request that the Portfolio Holder commits to going out to consultation earlier, as is usual practice**

- (4) provide information on whether voluntary organisations have been approached with regard to managing the Shop Mobility, and an assessment of whether this is achievable**
- (5) request that the Corporate Director ensure that the necessary levels of senior staff are recruited to and retained in the finance division**
- (6) request that actively fees and charges on an ongoing basis, and in a timely manner.**

55 Recommendation Tracker

The Committee considered the responses received to the recommendations that it made at made at the October and November meetings of the Committee, and also the outstanding responses to recommendations made in August.

Resolved to note the tracker.

56 Work Programme

The Committee considered its work programme for the remainder of Municipal Year 2022/23.

The Committee requested that traffic lane enforcement be considered for inclusion at the March meeting.

Resolved to consider the inclusion of an item on traffic lane enforcement for the March meeting, subject to the Chair meeting with officers to ascertain whether this would be relevant.