

EXETER BOARD

Thursday 28 April 2016

Present:-

Exeter City Council
Councillors Sutton (Chair) and Owen

Devon County Council
Councillors Foggin, Hannaford, Hannan, Morse, J Owen, Prowse and Westlake

Associate Members
Superintendent Sam De Reya (Devon and Cornwall Police), Jude Taylorson (Faith Groups)
and Diana Moore (Exeter Community Forum)

Also Present

Detective Sergeant Zoe Nowell : Devon and Cornwall Police
Patsy Lang : Superact

Also Present

Head of Youth Services, Senior Inclusion Officer, Partnership and Policy Officer, Community Involvement and Inclusion Officer, Parks and Open Spaces Manager and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (HB)

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APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Denham, Edwards, Hill, Leadbetter and Mottarm, Phil Atwell and Simon Bowkett.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 FEBRUARY 2016

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2016 be taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

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OPEN FORUM

No representations or questions had been received under the Open Forum arrangements.

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SCHOOL EXCLUSION STRATEGY

The Chair welcomed Marc Kastner, Senior Inclusion Officer of Devon County Council, who informed the Board of current strategies, policies and practices in respect of the exclusion of school pupils in both primary and secondary schools. The report had been requested because of the high level of exclusions in Exeter and in one school in particular and, with reference to the County wide situation, he confirmed that high rates were to be found across the County and that, in some cases, were higher than the national average. Exclusions had significant impact on future educational and social aspirations for individual pupils.

The Education Inclusion Service comprised three Inclusion Officers with a fourth to shortly join the team. Behavioural and Attendance Panels met every other week in

Exeter involving Assistant and Deputy Head Teachers and is being modelled on the early assessment process. A variety of organisations were also utilised in assessments including educational psychologists, education welfare and behaviour support specialists, youth offending teams etc.

He explained the different types of exclusion – permanent and fixed term -, the reasons behind them and the differing solutions provided.

Managed moves entailed a pupil being placed in an alternative school for six weeks, remaining there if the placement worked well. Alternatively, the child could return to the original school with other arrangements considered. Options would include staying within the mainstream, moving to a special school or to a School Company/Pupil Referral Unit. A new school could often benefit a pupil with a fresh start. There were three School Company's in the County - at Barnstaple, North Devon, Sowton, Exeter and Dartington, with some pupils having to travel some distance to the allocated school, which was not ideal. The School Company's offered alternative curricula and could exclude a pupil on a temporary basis but not permanently. Of those excluded last year to School Company's, 67% remained. There are children moving to Elected Home Education whose parents state that their child is at risk of exclusion.

The Devon Youth Service also operated Chances in Newton Abbot, an alternative education provision for secondary age provision for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream school. Youngsters who attended remained on school rolls with staff working to resolve their problems.

Those missing education through sustained absence from the school roll are followed up through Devon County Council Missing Education Meeting held weekly and was a beacon of good practice nationally.

There were increasing concerns that the situation with regard to mental health was worsening. Pupils were able to access on line support out of school hours but those without broadband provision were disadvantaged. Assistance was also available from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) through the NHS and YoungMinds. Training on these issues for teachers was also being undertaken by Early Help 4 Mental Health.

He stated that there were concerns over the use by some schools of exclusion and the impact upon the child. Ofsted monitor the rate of exclusions. The philosophy and ethos differed from school to school, with individual schools possessing different thresholds in respect of exclusion. Tensions also existed within schools such as between pastoral and academic outlooks and possible lack of communication, with a growing demand for a greater emphasis on the academic element. The Academisation of schools was also a factor, as was a growing emphasis on side-lining activities such as arts and drama within the curriculum. The Government was seeking to accelerate the switch-over from local authority-controlled to Academy schools. The Government White Paper had called for schools to contribute financially to the education of those excluded.

A County Council Task Group on a Review of School Exclusions had been submitted to its Peoples Scrutiny Committee on 28 March looking at the exclusion process and prevention, reasons for exclusions, school and off-site provision, how funding was used to support students at risk of exclusion and the use of alternative providers and multi-agency engagements.

Councillor Hannan, as chair of the Task Group, explained the work of the Group. It had received evidence and gained insights from experts, predominantly those from

the Council who were involved in the field and had made half day visits to four secondary schools, one Pupil Referral Unit and one alternative provider. The report also included the views and experiences of pupils and staff, as well as statistical data and evidence provided by County Officers.

He made the following additional points, commenting also that the inclusion officers were held in high regard in Devon schools:-

- those receiving free school meals because of low “parental” income were significantly more likely to be excluded and was more evident in Devon than nationally;
- those with special educational needs were significantly more likely to be excluded, both nationally and in Devon;
- Children in Care in Devon were nearly eight times as likely as other children to receive temporary exclusions; and
- boys were three times more likely than girls to be excluded.

The Task Group’s recommendations included examining the extent to which disadvantaged pupils and those with Special Educational Needs featured amongst those excluded; that all teaching and support staff were able to enhance their skills in relation to emotional and social education; that schools were provided training on how effective pastoral support systems could be developed and provided for all pupils; the legality and effectiveness of providing late and early school and the use of part-time timetables in schools; multi-agency partnerships with particular attention to pupils with mental health needs and how schools worked with the Child and Adult Mental Health Service and for the Council to investigate the impact of Elective Home Education on pupils in Devon.

The Board thanked Marc Kastner for his presentation and noted that the recommendations of the working group would be monitored by the County Council.

MODERN DAY SLAVERY IN DEVON

The Chair welcomed Superintendent Sam De Reya and Detective Sergeant Zoe Nowell who spoke on the background and challenges in respect of human trafficking which was now the fastest growing international crime generating \$150 billion annually, with an estimated 35.8 million in slavery today. Globally, it was the second most lucrative criminality only to the illegal firearms trade. The Home Office estimated that there were between 10 and 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in the UK in 2013 and, in 2014, a total of 671 potential child victims were referred to the National Referral Mechanism - the top five countries of origin being Albania, Vietnam, UK, Slovenia and Nigeria.

Modern slavery included servitude and compulsory labour and the common types of exploitation/enforced service were explained. The presentation also itemised the indicators of this condition and likely locations and occupations of those kept in these conditions. The specific offences and sentencing powers under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 were detailed. Individuals detained under the Act, if identified as victims of slavery and exploitation, were not dealt with as criminals. Under the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) being piloted by Devon and Cornwall Police and other Forces, victims could be referred to other areas. For example, the Salvation Army, had statutory responsibility for safeguarding and arranging a victim care package and a care centre at Bournemouth was being used. However, the consent of the victim was necessary and some could be reluctant to move on.

The Force was seeking to increase public awareness of this issue. Training was to be rolled out to public sector staff as it was important for visiting officers and custody staff to be alert to signs. Similarly, hoteliers and taxi drivers had important roles to play as well as the general public in identifying potential victims. As part of publishing these issues, an article on Modern Slavery would be included in the Exeter Citizen.

Presentation attached.

The Chair thanked Superintendent De Reya and Detective Sergeant Zoe Nowell for their presentation.

Sergeant Nowell's email was zoe.nowell@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk and further information was available on www.modernslavery.co.uk

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SUPERACT - PRESENTATION BY PATSY LANG

The Chair welcomed Patsy Lang to the meeting who explained the work of Superact, an arts organisation specialising in creative interventions working across all abilities, age groups and backgrounds, principally within the healthcare, education and criminal justice systems. Music and arts were used to enable individuals in the justice system to engage with the creative process and for communities as a tool to deliver development projects. A number of projects were also conducted in healthcare environments such as hospitals and care homes.

Examples of projects included:-

- Exe Arts - weekly session at St David's Community Centre;
- taking music to wards in hospitals in the Bristol area; and
- developing a new BTEC qualification in partnership with Exeter University - Supporting Employability Skills through Creativity (SEPE).

The organisation did not have a regular income source and was project funded by various bodies such as the Big Lottery Fund, the Arts Council, the National Offender Management Services and the EU Lifelong Learning Programme as well as the European Social Fund.

As an Exeter resident, she was keen to develop further projects in the City and was looking to focus on the homeless community. In this respect, Superintendent De Reya stated that she would raise the work of Superact at the Community Safety Partnership Street Attachment Group.

Members welcomed the work being undertaken and suggested that linkage with the Exeter Community Forum would be very helpful.

The Chair thanked Patsy Lang for her presentation.

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GRASS CUTTING - UPDATE

The Parks and Open Spaces Manager updated the Board on progress of the new vegetation management regime and the operational details agreed between City and County Council officers following City wide issues with highways grass cutting and weed control that had occurred in recent years.

A co-ordinated approach had been adopted for all grass cutting over both authorities' land with health and safety standards maintained and a contract let for weed spraying, resulting in cost reductions and an improved, joined up approach. In detail, grass cutting had commenced in March, with a range of cutting regimes based on location and need, with input directly from the grass cutting teams. Some roadside areas had been identified in consultation with the Devon Wildlife Trust for seeding with wildflowers for the overall benefit of the City's appearance with clearance cuts to occur later in the year when there would be less work pressure for the grass teams. Weed spraying had commenced on 18 April and the first application was due to be completed on 6 May.

He acknowledged Members' gratitude for improved information flow to local Councillors on grass cutting regimes and confirmed that local residents were encouraged to participate, where appropriate, in maintaining appearances of open spaces/road sides.

RESOLVED that the report on the delivery of solutions to manage and control highway grass and weed growth in Exeter be noted.

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YOUTH STRATEGY

The Head of Youth Services Devon County Council reported on progress in developing a Youth Strategy for the City, the aim being to develop a multi-agency strategy to respond to the needs of young people aged 10-25 in Exeter City and its immediate surrounds.

Current work was to establish a steering group of commissioners/partners and for parameters to be agreed. The group would include himself, Dawn Rivers, the full time youth worker for Exeter and representatives of agencies such as the Police and the Exeter Community Forum. County Councillor Parsons had agreed to Chair. The steering group would co-ordinate and research, facilitate consultation in organisations and with young people, identify relevant local partners and agree the scope of the strategy.

Members welcomed progress made and, whilst accepting the need for a small group, asked for appropriate political and geographical representation on the steering group of City Council Members. The City Council Champion of Community Engagement was suggested and further consideration would be given to this issue after the local elections.

Diana Moore suggested a wider reference group of stakeholders, including formal and informal organisations working with the youth sector and for explicit references and detailed mapping of all layers of spaces and facilities provision in the City e.g. arts, sports, open spaces and permanent facilities.

Members referred to the huge range of youth groups in the City, particularly uniformed groups, such as Scouts, Guides, Police cadets and those associated with the military. Kevin Henman confirmed that the Strategy would recognise this diverse provision and the importance of offering a mix of opportunities for young people. He confirmed that Devon VOYC would be included in the consultation process.

He reported that the procurement process for the future delivery of the Youth Service would commence in June with an announcement likely by September. Although the specification would reflect operational similarities to existing, a culture change was expected with a fragmented, asset based approach to be replaced with a more collaborative, holistic and community orientated philosophy.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the update be noted; and
- (2) a further report back be made on progress, including details of steering group membership.

17 **FUNDING SUB GROUP - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 3 MARCH 2016**

The minutes of the Funding Sub Group of 3 March 2016 were noted.

18 **FEEDBACK FROM MEMBER REPRESENTATION MULTI AGENCY GROUPS**

Exeter Health and Wellbeing Board

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2016.

Councillor Owen reported that the July meeting of this Board would receive a presentation from City and County Council officers on implementing a Clear Streets Charter.

Community Safety Partnership

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2016.

Superintendent Sam De Reya, as the new Chair of the Partnership, reported that at its meeting on 21 April 2016, the main items considered had been Modern Day Slavery and the new Street Attachment Group. The latter, which had met five times to date, was looking at helping entrenched rough sleepers to adopt alternative lifestyles and move to appropriate accommodation.

Responding to a Member, she advised that court cases were pending in respect of four individuals arrested and bailed in respect of graffiti activity around the City.

Exeter Community Forum

The Chair welcomed Diana Moore who, as Joint Chair of the Exeter Community Forum, reported on the work of the Forum. It had now adopted the Exeter Community Strategy and she emphasised the importance of, and encouraged other agencies to similarly adopt, the strategy. The City Council had already done so and the County Council was likely to follow suit. Work was progressing on implementing the strategy with a sub group set up to identify investment sources as quickly as possible for projects to be initiated. This, in turn, would attract further investors. She emphasised the importance of youth involvement.

Dawn Rivers reported that a joint public consultation event hosted by the Forum and Integrated Care Exeter (ICE) was to be held on 30 June in the Corn Exchange. One focus would be to seek the involvement of agencies in the ICE, Community Forum and public sector in Exeter agenda to support people and communities to take the lead in their own and the community's well-being. The event would also progress further the work of various agencies on mapping and assessing how to maximise use of assets across the City.

It was hoped that Cormac Russell, an academic and leading exponent of asset based community development, would attend.

The Chair thanked Diana Moore for the update.

DATES OF MEETINGS AND FUTURE BUSINESS

The following dates of future Board meetings were noted, all commencing at 5.30pm in the Civic Centre:-

Thursday 28 April 2016
Thursday 14 July 2016
Thursday 22 September 2016
Thursday 17 November 2016
Thursday 2 February 2017
Monday 27 March 2017
Thursday 13 July 2017
Thursday 21 September 2017

The following matters were suggested as future business with dates identified where possible:-

Exeter BID Update – July
Clear Streets Charter - July
Dementia –September

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.55 pm)

Chair