

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26 JANUARY 2010

REPORT BY SCRUTINY OFFICER

7. ROLE AND EFFECTIVENESS PCSOs: JOINT SCRUTINY EVDIENCE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: all

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report is intended to allow Community Scrutiny Committee members an opportunity to discuss their views on the ‘role and effectiveness of PCSOs’ prior to an evidence session with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) topic group.

RECOMMENDATION FOR : Community Scrutiny Committee	
(A)	that members identify specific examples from their wards of where PCSOs have offered an effective service
(B)	that members discuss whether they feel PCSOs are making a difference
(c)	That the Executive member for Community Safety and Protection be asked to consider these points when framing his evidence to the HCC topic group

1.0 Background

1.1 As part of their work programme, Hertfordshire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee identified the issue of ‘role and effectiveness of PSCOs’ as one they wanted to review via a topic (task and finish) group.

1.2 The issue was identified as one which affected all Districts and Boroughs and the topic group was set up as a ‘joint scrutiny’ in

order to hear evidence from interested councils. East Herts registered its interest in being involved.

2.0 Report

2.1 The draft scrutiny remit received from HCC shows the topic group is planning to review the evidence against three HCC priorities – which are different to the priorities/straplines used by East Herts. Members need to be mindful of this when illustrating their evidence with specific examples. The priorities are highlighted below.

2.2 HCC DRAFT SCRUTINY REMIT: Crime & Disorder Scrutiny:

OBJECTIVE:

The focus for this scrutiny will be to consider the effectiveness of PCSOs in Hertfordshire.

To assist in this process the topic group will review the west Herts pilot.

QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED:

1. Do PCSOs provide an effective service in return for the HCC investment?
 - To support independent living
 - To secure a good education for all
 - To provide reassurance and confidence to our residents that they live in safe neighbourhoods
2. Are Members satisfied that PCSOs are making a difference?

METHOD: One off topic group

DATE: 1 & 4 March 2010

MEMBERSHIP: X5 members

SUPPORT:

Scrutiny Officer: Natalie Rotherham

Lead Officers: Philip Winter

Democratic Services Officer: TBC

HCC Priorities for Action:- how this item helps deliver the Priorities

1. **Support economic well being**
This scrutiny will not be addressing this Priority directly
2. **Maximise independent living**
Neighbourhood PCSOs provide proactive and consistent support for residents to ensure that those that are more vulnerable in society (the elderly, those with learning disabilities, mental health issues etc) are able to live independently for longer

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| <p>3. Ensure a positive childhood
<i>This scrutiny will not be addressing this Priority directly</i></p> <p>4. Secure a good education for all
Schools PCSOs actively support schools to ensure that children are provided with improved life chances and opportunities.</p> <p>5. Reduce carbon emissions
<i>This scrutiny will not be addressing this Priority directly</i></p> <p>6. Promote safe neighbourhoods
All PCSOs should provide evidence that they are supporting neighbourhoods in their ability to become more resilient to anti-social behaviour (ASB) criminal damage. As a result neighbourhoods become stronger and more cohesive thereby supporting a range of national indicators</p> <p>7. Be a leading council
<i>This scrutiny will not be addressing this Priority directly</i></p> |
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2.3 East Herts Executive member for Community Safety and Protection will have an opportunity to contribute to the HCC review. Members are invited to discuss the topic with him and ask that their points are considered when he prepares his evidence to the topic group.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within Essential Reference Paper 'A' (Page 7.4).

Background Papers

Four principles of good public scrutiny published by CfPS (Centre for Public Scrutiny) [click here for link to CfPS external site](#)

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Community Safety and Protection

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives</p>	<p>Effective use of the scrutiny process contributes to the Council's ability to meet two core objectives:</p> <p>Fit for purpose, services fit for you <i>Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.</i></p> <p>Leading the way, working together <i>Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.</i></p> <p>In monitoring the performance of the council's services and action plans, the Committee is monitoring the Council's achievement of all of its corporate objectives.</p> <p>Any additional issues identified for scrutiny will relate to at least one of the Council's corporate objectives.</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Potential topics for scrutiny are always invited from members of the public, the Executive and all Members.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>According to the Council's constitution, the scrutiny committees are responsible for the setting of their own work programme in consultation with the Executive and in doing so they shall take into account wishes of members on that committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>Any additional meetings and every task and finish group has resource needs linked to officer support activity and time for officers from the services to make the required input.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>Matters which may benefit from scrutiny may be overlooked. The selection of inappropriate topics for review would risk inefficient use of resources. Where this involved partners, it could risk damaging the reputation of the council and relations with partners.</p>