

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE
HELD ON 20 JULY 2015 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES, WEELEY**

Present: Councillors Miles (Chairman), Baker (Vice-Chairman), Bennison, I J Henderson, Land, Newton and Poonian.

Also Present: Councillors Turner (Coastal Protection Portfolio Holder) and B E Brown.

In Attendance: Democratic Services Manager (Colin Sweeney) and Democratic Services Officer (Janey Nice)

Also in Attendance: Ms Rebecca Polden (Senior Coastal Operations Officer for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency)

1. WELCOME

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to all present at the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Yallop.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on 30 March 2015, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor I J Henderson declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Item No.5 (Work Programme for 2015-2016) (Review of Fire and Rescue Service), by virtue of the fact he was a member of the Essex Fire Authority.

5. REVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF OTHER EMERGENCY SERVICES (COASTGUARDS)

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting, Ms Rebecca Polden (Senior Coastal Operations Officer for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency), who delivered a presentation on the achievements of the Coastguards' Emergency Service. Ms Polden, who was based at Walton-on-the-Naze, advised Members that the Thames Coastguard station had now closed at Walton, was now being operated from the South Coast and that this had been part of a process of a number of station closures around the United Kingdom (UK). Despite these closures, Ms Polden reassured Members that the work of the coastguards remained 'business as usual.'

Ms Polden gave details of the six missions the Maritime and Coastguard Agency worked to and also gave details of the 18 centres, which covered six geographical areas within the UK, the different zones from which they operated and, in addition, made mention of 165 remote radio sites throughout the UK. Ms Polden said that any one of the different zones could be run remotely from any other station, as each zone had a data package for other zones and that the local knowledge had been captured for each local area.

In conclusion, Ms Polden said that there were a number of search and rescue helicopters based at some 20 sites throughout the UK, which included the Shetlands, Inverness, Humber, Lydd, Newquay, Solent, Prestwick and Stornaway and Sea King helicopters that had been based at Wattisham were being replaced with faster machines. Ms Polden added that each of the six divisions (18 areas), ranging from N E Scotland down to the West Country and up to the Irish Sea, had a Divisional Commander for each of these areas, and

these were run by over 300 volunteer operators and 352 coastal rescue teams. She said that training was being provided at a dedicated training centre.

In response to a Member's question in relation to aircraft bases serving the East of England, Ms Polden responded by saying that there was a base at Humber to the North and Lydd in Kent to the South with new Belgian aircraft meaning that coverage was not affected and no difference in response times should be noticed.

In response to a Member's question regarding response time targets, such as the Ambulance and Fire Services had to work to, Ms Polden confirmed that she did not have that information to hand but that the Coastguards' business statement contained a lot of useful figures, which she would arrange to send out to Members of the Committee.

In response to a Member's question with regard to the specific operations dealt with by the Coastguard, Ms Polden said that rescue at sea, land persons lost in water, aiding Fire and Police, Mayday at sea response and general assistance to waterborne and marine activities were the thrust of the operations conducted. She added that the Coastguards also dealt with pollution by co-ordinating pollution response, vessel traffic management, maritime safety, broadcasting of safety messages in different formats, giving any relevant information and accident and disaster response working with other responders.

Councillor Turner, Portfolio Holder for Coastal Protection, said he was somewhat reassured that local knowledge was not being lost and was not worried if a major issue occurred such as an oil spill, but was concerned about small local things, where services would go to for help and information. Ms Polden informed him that local knowledge was being distilled with response exercises going on and she wanted to reassure the Committee that it was business as usual as the Maritime Agency worked twenty four hours per day, 365 days a year.

In response to a Member's question with regard to how sea rescues were undertaken, Ms Polden said that new helicopters had two winches aboard to secure a rescue from the sea.

In response to a Member's question with regard to any capacity at the Walton offices in order that other services could merge, Ms Polden advised the Committee that this was a possibility as there was space available but no decision had been made whether the building would be kept or sold.

The Chairman thanked Ms Polden for her very informative presentation and extended an invitation to her to attend a future meeting when the Committee considered the matter in future.

6. WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Chairman asked the Committee if there were any items it would like added to the proposed Work Programme for 2015/16. The following matters were raised:

- (i) Councillor I J Henderson queried the funding for small business, whether information was actually getting through to small businesses and what was the advantage to the Tendring area of having Core Status. In response, the Chairman said it would be in order for a special meeting of the Committee to be held and to be dedicated to regeneration. Accordingly, she asked whether Councillor Henderson would be willing to work with Officers to lead on the matter from the Committee's perspective. Councillor Henderson agreed to this.
- (ii) Councillor Henderson also raised the issue of public transport in Tendring and how young people were being affected by poor access to public transport in Tendring. It was suggested that young people affected by this could be identified and invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to explore this further.

- (iii) It was also suggested that the issue of proposed cuts to Mental Health services in Tendring could be addressed especially with the County Council taking over responsibility from the NHS and that this could put extra pressure on agency services.
- (iv) Councillor Newton said she would like to see a review of highway issues and the inevitable congestion that extra housing in Tendring was likely to bring, however Councillor Miles said this was not an issue for this Committee but could be considered by the Local Plan Committee.

Councillor Land also expressed his concern over regeneration matters, particularly where access to Local Enterprise Partnership money was concerned and also the issue of transport for youngsters as they now compulsorily had to stay at school until they were 18 years of age. Councillor Miles thought this would be a good issue for the Education and Skills Committee to address and the loss of Connexions was very sad with young people not getting sound advice. It was recognised by the Committee that a lot of work needed to be done to help young people in receiving the best career advice and to let them know what opportunities were available to them.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held at 7.30pm on Monday 26 October 2015 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Weeley.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.40pm.

Chairman