



<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
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**Councillor Mrs J B Barrow, Safe and Confident Communities Scrutiny
Committee Chairman**

SAFE AND CONFIDENT COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2010-11

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report presents an overview of the work of the Safe and Confident Communities Scrutiny Committee in 2010-11.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Safe and Confident Communities Scrutiny Committee was one of five Scrutiny Committees established in October 2010, following an Overview and Scrutiny Fitness Check undertaken by Shropshire Council and I&DeA (Improvement and Development Agency). Its remit includes:
- Review of arrangements for shaping vibrant, cohesive local communities, able to take greater responsibility of their own wellbeing.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of agreed targets, on a Partnership basis, for reducing the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, and for increasing public reassurance.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of social, cultural and leisure facilities for local people, particularly younger people.
 - Review of the arrangements for ensuring that all local children and young people are reaching their full potential.
 - Review of arrangements for promoting more active communities.
 - Monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of lower levels of drug and alcohol misuse.
 - Review of arrangements for ensuring that families and individuals with complex social learning and vulnerable people are supported or protected.

3. What have we done?

- 3.1 School organisation proposals have featured prominently on the Committee's Work Programme. At its first meeting in October, the Committee recommended to Cabinet a number of amendments and additions to the principles and criteria in relation to the reorganisation of schools which were subsequently accepted. These included taking account of the Local Development Framework and ensuring local Members were consulted prior to wider consultation taking place.
- 3.2 The school organisation process was scrutinized again in March, to ensure that it complied with the methodology agreed by Cabinet and Council. This was also an opportunity for members of the public to raise issues and ask questions about the process.
- 3.3 Most recently, the Committee looked in detail at each of the decisions on individual school organisation proposals which had been made by Cabinet on 4 May.
- 3.4 The Work Programme has covered a number of other issues, including:
- Children and Young People's Services Placements Review 2010 – the Committee heard that the overspend on the residential placements budget has been reduced from £927,000 to £327,000. The Scrutiny Committee recommended a further meeting of the Placements Review Group and will continue to monitor progress.
 - Annual Adult Social Care Performance – the Committee turned its attention to adult services and considered the judgements made by the Care Quality Commission about the quality of adult social care services provided by, and on behalf of, Shropshire Council. The Committee expressed its satisfaction with the positive findings of the inspection, which placed Shropshire in the top four out of 14 West Midlands Councils.
 - Draft Local Transport Plan and Draft Bus Strategy – the Committee recommended that the numbers of disabled car parking spaces in council-run car parks should be kept under review; that the Wheels to Work Scheme, which was of considerable benefit to young people living in rural areas, should be promoted more widely; and that the standard of vehicles used on the bus network should be kept under review with bus operators to promote the welfare of passengers.
 - Options Appraisal on the Future Delivery of Culture and Leisure Services in Shropshire – the Committee scrutinized the interim findings of a service review of Shropshire Council's Culture and Leisure Services. Members welcomed the proposal for more commercial management of leisure centres, but wanted reassurance that all health and safety regulations, and disability discrimination legislation would continue to be met. Members felt there was potential to co-locate services and for the community to make greater use of facilities based at schools. The Committee further suggested the inclusion of a discount scheme in the specification when services went out to tender to external providers. A key

recommendation was that consultation with local Members should be prioritised at all stages of the process.

- Crime Reduction and Community Safety – the Committee looked at speeding, including Community Speedwatch, and endorsed the Crime Reduction, Community Safety and Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2011-14.

4. What are we currently doing?

- 4.1 The Task and Finish Group looking at 0-25 years Disability Services identified the transition process from children's services to adult services as a focus point for its work. This process began at the age of 14+ and continued until the young person reached adulthood. As there were considerable differences in the way services for children and for adults were provided, this could sometimes be a difficult time for young people, for their parents and carers, and for the professionals who supported them. Services are currently being reorganised into one team, covering the 0-25 year age range, which has been welcomed by Members. The impact of the introduction of personalised budgets for young people was also considered by Members, with a visit to Shropshire by Nic Crosby, a national expert in this area.
- 4.2 The Task and Finish Group has recommended more involvement between Members and the Parent and Carer Council and for Members to contribute to the work of the Disabled Children and Young People 0-25 Strategic Board, with a specific focus on personalisation and transition to adulthood. The issue of transport for disabled children and young people was identified as an area requiring further review.
- 4.3 A Joint Task and Finish Group with the Protecting and Enhancing our Environment and Healthy Communities Scrutiny Committees has been considering the important issue of fuel poverty and will report its findings at the end of July.

5. What are our future plans?

- 5.1 The Safe and Confident Communities Scrutiny Committee will receive half-yearly monitoring reports on safeguarding of adults and children in July and January. In addition, the Performance and Strategy Scrutiny Committee has delegated to the Safe and Confident Communities Scrutiny Committee the monitoring of key improvement actions identified in the Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services.
- 5.2 Interest in adult social care will continue, by scrutiny of the preventive strategy for Shropshire.
- 5.3 Scrutiny of the Community Action Team will be undertaken in the forthcoming year.
- 5.4 There will also continue to be a focus on crime reduction issues.