

**Tipton Scrutiny Panel**

**15 October, 2012 at 5pm**

**at Brook Street Community Centre, Brook Street, Tipton**

**Present:** Councillor S Jones (Chair);  
Councillors Allen, Hartwell, Haque and Cherrington.

**Observers:** Councillor J Hadley (Town Lead Member) and  
Councillor I Jones (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood  
Services).

**In attendance:** Gary Bowman (Service Manager - Area Working);  
Rosie Edwards (Anti-Poverty Manager);  
Sergeant Stephanie Court (West Midlands Police);  
PCSO W Hickinbottom (West Midlands Police);  
Malcolm Keyte (Six Towns Credit Union);  
Trisha Newton (Democratic Services).

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action By</b>
9/12	<p><b>Notes of the meeting held on 3 September, 2012</b></p> <p>The notes of the previous meeting of the Scrutiny Panel on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012 were agreed.</p>	
10/12	<p><b>Support Mechanisms for Dealing with Deprivation</b></p> <p>A discussion took place regarding the Welfare Reform Act which would take effect in April 2013. Concerns were expressed with regard to the transitional housing payment, capped benefits, young people being unable to access self contained accommodation and major disruption to communities.</p> <p>The Anti-Poverty Manager confirmed that much preventative work was being undertaken.</p>	

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	<p>Sandwell Homes were undertaking a lot of work around the Act and liaising with affected tenants.</p> <p>Officers were looking at support services behind the scenes in an attempt to reduce the amount of contacts and streamline the service. Officers were also working closely with community groups and the Credit Union.</p> <p>Malcolm Keyte, of the Six Towns Credit Union, outlined details of a new current account which would be introduced and changes that were being made so that the service operated like a bank rather than just a savings/loans organisation. An arrangement was also currently being piloted with Sandwell Homes.</p> <p>Malcolm Keyte informed the Panel that there was a need to change the mindset of people - to encourage saving rather than taking out loans.</p> <p>The Chair stressed the need for a food bank in Tipton in the form of a collection point.</p> <p>The Anti-Poverty Manager informed the Panel that most food banks offered food for three days, three times a year. Colleagues in health were encouraging access to cheap food locally.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services informed the Panel that a food bank was due to open in Union Street being led by Murray Hall Trust in partnership with the Church. However, there were problems with food banks in that they were very rigid and prescribed.</p>	

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	<p>The Anti-Poverty Manager stressed the need to bring together the various groups to establish what work was being undertaken and by whom to establish where the gaps were in order to take the issues forward.</p> <p><b>Agreed:-</b></p> <p>(1) officers to liaise with community groups with regard to the Welfare Reform Act and initiatives that can be put in place, together with support in respect of the food bank and report back with an update to a future meeting.</p> <p>(2) with regard to the changes that the Welfare Reform Act will bring, officers to investigate options/way forward and report back to a future meeting.</p>	<p><b>Service Manager - Area Working (Rosie Edwards/ Heather Chinner)</b></p> <p><b>Service Manager - Area Working (Rosie Edwards)</b></p>
11/12	<p><b>Costs and Impact of Permanent CCTV Cameras in Tipton</b></p> <p>Sergeant Court presented details of a problem area to the Panel which was difficult to manage with anti social behaviour, graffiti, criminal damage, drugs, motorcyclists and damage to Police cars. There was a lot of fear amongst the residents who were afraid to report any crime, resulting in a lack of evidence.</p> <p>The Panel requested that the Community Safety Manager be requested to attend the next meeting and submit a report on costs of permanent CCTV, similar to that used on the Friar Park estate.</p>	

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<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action By</b>
	<p><b>Agreed:-</b></p> <p>(1) that Reg New, Community Safety Manager, be invited to attend the next meeting of the Panel;</p> <p>(2) that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel on the cost of installation of permanent CCTV cameras.</p>	<p><b>Director - Legal and Governance Services (Trisha Newton) Service Manager - Area Working (Gary Bowman) and Interim Chief Executive - Sandwell Homes (Reg New)</b></p>
12/12	<p><b>Local Neighbourhood Forums</b></p> <p>The Service Manager - Area Working presented a report on attendance levels at Neighbourhood Forums.</p> <p>Although attendance levels were lower at Tipton Neighbourhood Forum, the volume of issues dealt with was similar compared to other wards.</p> <p>Concern was expressed by the Panel that the same people were attending and officers were not reaching out to communities.</p> <p>The Service Manager - Area Working confirmed that other ways of reaching communities would be investigated, including working with the Police and Sandwell Homes community development officers.</p>	

