

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14<sup>th</sup> February 2017

### POTENTIAL JOINT SCRUTINY OF THE NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Yvonne Smith – Community Safety and Regulatory Services
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis, Head of Community Services
Wards Affected	<b>All</b>
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Non-Key Decision	

#### **1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 Officers are suggesting that as the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership is now a shared partnership over North Worcestershire, (Bromsgrove, Redditch and Kidderminster) that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider forming a joint Scrutiny Panel in order to cover its statutory responsibility of scrutinising the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership at least once during each municipal year.
- 1.2 This report details a number of options for consideration by the Committee.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are asked to consider the following options:

**Option 1 – to accept Bromsgrove District Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Board’s proposal to participate in a new Joint Scrutiny Committee of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership; or**

**Option 2 – To take no further action and to continue with the current arrangements for scrutinising the local Community Safety Partnership.**

#### **3. KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 Section 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 require local authorities to scrutinise the work of the local crime and disorder reduction partnership. Councils must designate one of their committees with responsibility for this function. Local authorities had to ensure that the Partnership was scrutinised at least once a year and this requirement remains in place.

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- 3.2 When the legislation was introduced the majority of Councils in Worcestershire chose to appoint their main Overview and Scrutiny Committees to scrutinise the CDRP. In Redditch however, the decision was made to establish a separate Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel as a sub-committee of the main Committee.
- 3.3 At the time when the legislation was introduced there were three separate Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest. However, more recently the three partnerships merged into one, in the form of the North Worcestershire Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. Despite this, Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest continue to each hold separate scrutiny committee meetings to hold the partnership to account.
- 3.4 In the South of the County there has been a joint partnership covering Worcester, Malvern and Wychavon districts since the legislation was introduced. These Councils chose to scrutinise their partnership jointly.
- 3.5 The benefits of joint scrutiny are that the partnership can concentrate its resources on discussing the key issues of their work once and by working collectively there is less risk of duplication occurring.

### **Financial implications**

- 3.6 Each of the authorities could take it in turns to host the meeting, and it is believed therefore that the costs associated with undertaking scrutiny of the partnership would reduce overtime for all partner authorities.

### **Legal Implications**

- 3.7 It should be noted that under the legislation scrutiny committees can only hold the partnership as a whole to account and not individual partners.
- 3.8 The West Mercia Police and Crime Panel, which is facilitated by Worcestershire County Council has separate responsibility for holding the Police and Crime Commissioner to account. A representative of Redditch Borough Council sits on this Panel, which is Councillor Yvonne Smith.

### **Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.9 As Bromsgrove District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board put forward the proposal it is suggested that the first joint meeting should take place in that district with subsequent meetings taking place in Redditch and Wyre Forest in future years.

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- 3.10 At the time of writing Wyre Forest have not yet confirmed whether they will be participating in joint scrutiny of the Partnership. It is understood that to date Wyre Forest have not yet scrutinised the Crime and Disorder Partnership in this municipal year.
- 3.11 At present there is nothing on the Work Programme for the Redditch Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel to discuss. Taking part in joint scrutiny arrangements would not therefore disrupt any scheduled work.
- 3.12 In the seven years since the Panel was established members have only made six recommendations. No recommendations have been made since 2010. It is therefore questionable as to whether this Panel is adding any value in its present form.

#### **4. APPENDICES**

None

#### **5. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

National Support Framework Delivering Safer and Confident Communities (Guidance for the Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Matters – England) 2009.

#### **AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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