

Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 16 September
2015

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Gareth Prosser (Chair), and Councillors Jane Potter, Paul Swansborough and Nina Wood-Ford

Also Present:

Councillor Yvonne Smith (Portfolio holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services)

Officers:

Bev Houghton and Judith Willis

Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

1. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any party whip.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel held on Wednesday 29th October 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE REPORT

Officers presented a briefing note updating Members on the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP)

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Chair

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in the last 12 months. During the presentation of this report the following key points were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- A review of Community Safety Partnership arrangements in Worcestershire was being undertaken. The aim of the review was to determine whether responsibilities and lines of accountability were clear.
- The review would also provide an opportunity to assess how resilient partners were and the potential for the partnership to adapt in a changing legislative environment.
- The contents of the NWCSP plan had been updated at the latest meeting of the Partnership Board that day and a copy of the new plan would be circulated for the consideration of relevant partners.
- In previous years the NWCSP had to apply to the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for grant funding. However, partnerships in Worcestershire were working with the Office of the PCC to develop a new commissioning model which would influence future funding settlements.
- An initial presentation from the Office of the PCC to the partnership board had addressed the approach that they would be adopting to commissioning which would focus on the evidence basis for funding projects.
- A number of multi-occupied block security schemes had been delivered in various locations such as Winyates district centre. Officers were aiming to deliver further security schemes in Auxerre House and in the three storey flats in Batchley in due course.
- The alley-gates that had been installed on Unicorn Hill had helped to deter anti-social behaviour as intended and had been welcomed by local businesses.
- The Redditch Roadway Arts project had had a number of successful outcomes. The works undertaken for this project needed to be delivered in appropriate weather conditions and therefore the work was mainly seasonal.
- A number of specialist watch systems exist in the Borough such as Pub Watch and Shop Watch and through the Business and Rural Crime plan other systems such as Farm Watch and Horse Watch, to protect horses and expensive equine equipment, were being explored with the aim of working with specific communities to help to reduce crime.
- There had been significant interest amongst staff in participating in Introduction to Crime Prevention Training. As these sessions had been oversubscribed the Community Safety team was aiming to deliver further sessions in 2016.
- There continued to be under reporting of hate crimes. In some cases this was because people were not always aware that an

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incident was a hate crime though in other cases victims did not feel comfortable reporting hate crimes.

- Funding had been provided for events to be run as part of Hate Crime Awareness Week. Elected Members and partners would be invited to attend an event at Hindlip Hall as part of this event and transport would be provided to enable invitees to attend.
- The Worcestershire Safe Places Scheme, involving provision of safe locations, such as the Town Hall, to vulnerable and distressed people, had already been introduced in Redditch, Worcester City and Wyre Forest. The scheme would be extended across the rest of the county in 2016.

The following additional points were discussed by Members during consideration of this item:

- Arrangements for reporting the outcomes of meetings of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel to Members in Redditch. Councillor Smith, as the Council's representative on the Panel, explained that she reported back to the Executive Committee and Council as and when appropriate.
- The reasons why the review of community safety partnerships in the county had been launched at this time. Officers explained that the NWCSPP was the first partnership to be shared between areas and it had always been intended that a review would take place to assess the outcomes of partnership working across three district areas. Members requested a copy of the review once this had been finalised so that they could assess the outcomes of the exercise.
- The allocation of funding for the CCTV systems across the three districts. Officers clarified that the funding was allocated in equal shares. In the first year this funding had had to be used for capital expenditure but in the second year it was proposed that the funds be used to support revenue costs.
- The location of CCTV cameras in the Borough was also discussed. Members were advised that there were CCTV cameras in a variety of locations across the Borough, though some in the town centre were operated by the Kingfisher Shopping Centre.
- The monitoring system for the CCTV team, who managed operations for Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest.
- The provision of crime prevention design advice for planning applications by the Community Safety Officers. Officers confirmed that at present the team did not charge to provide this advice to developers though this was something that could potentially be introduced in future.
- The ability of the Council to recoup costs involved in undertaking improvement works on derelict buildings. In the case of St

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Gregory's Church in Winyates Members were advised that the Council would recover these costs as part of the sale of the property.

- The changes to the bus route operating on Far Moor Lane meant that one of the bus shelters installed as part of the Redditch Roadway Arts project on that road was no longer in use. To ensure that this asset was utilised Members requested that Officers investigate the potential to relocate this bus shelter so that it could be used once again by passengers.
- Members expressed an interest in the profile of business and rural crime in Redditch that was in the process of being developed. Questions were raised as to when this profile would be finalised and the findings made available for the consideration of interested partners including elected Members.
- The Panel also expressed an interest in the revised advice sheet on unauthorised encampments that was in the process of being developed and requested that the contents be circulated for Members' consideration once finalised.
- The focus of the Rural Watch website. Officers explained that the website was intended to be a communications tool for people living in isolated communities and would provide information about how to protect properties and disseminate information about burglaries in rural areas.
- The potential for elected Members to receive basic crime prevention training once training has been delivered to relevant Council Officers.
- The funding used to deliver security schemes in multi-occupied blocks. Officers advised that the majority of schemes in Council blocks were funded through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), although the security scheme in Winyates had been financed using funds from the Area of Highest Needs project.
- The complex issues involved in introducing security schemes on blocks containing both Council housing and owner occupied properties. Members noted that there were specific needs for security enhancement works on some of these buildings and it was suggested that further investigation of this matter could have a beneficial impact on the quality of life for residents living in these properties.
- The process used to monitor the effectiveness of Community Safety projects. Members were advised that the outcomes of specific projects were monitored. In the long-term the monitoring process would be enhanced once a new data analyst could be recruited into the Community Safety team as this officer could access useful data.
- The support provided by the NWCSP to the local lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) community. Officers explained that support was provided to the LGB&T community

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through the work of the North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership and a member of the Council's Community Safety team attended meetings of the Worcestershire LGB&T Hate Crime Forum.

- The involvement of community safety in any future development work within the district centres. Members were assured that the Community Safety team would be consulted as and when any developments occurred.

Following these discussions it was

RESOLVED that

subject to noting Members' comments as detailed in the preamble above, the report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.19 pm