

Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 22 March 2017

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), and Councillors Gareth Prosser, 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

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Jane Potter and it was confirmed that Councillor Gareth Prosser was attending as her substitute.

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 15th September 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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Chair

Crime and Disorder

Scrutiny

Panel

Wednesday, 22 March 2017

4. NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE REPORT

Officers presented a briefing note which outlined the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership in Redditch in 2016/17. During the delivery of this presentation the following points were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- Since May 2013 there had been a single Community Safety Partnership for the whole of north Worcestershire, covering Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest districts.
- The Safer Redditch Group took an operational lead on behalf of the partnership in respect of the Borough of Redditch.
- There was a statutory duty for the partnership to produce a three year rolling plan outlining how partners would address key crime and community safety priorities during the period.
- The partnership had links to the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). Although not a statutory partner, the PCC had a duty to co-operate with the Community Safety Partnership and vice versa.
- The West Mercia PCC provided funding to the Community Safety Partnership. The funding process was due to be reviewed and it was anticipated that this would lead to a more robust, outcome based framework in future.
- There was a typographical error in the total figure that had been quoted in Appendix 2 to the report in respect of funding requests by the partnership to the PCC for 2017/18; this should have been recorded as £199,950.
- The partnership had proposed a series of projects to be funded using grants from the PCC. These had been identified based on available data.
- During the period the Safer Redditch Group had received a referral from Councillor Brunner requesting action to address anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Matchborough district centre.
- A decision had been taken to allocate £10,000 to targeted youth intervention work that aimed to address youth ASB.
- Based on available data Appendix 3 had been developed to enable Members to assess the frequency of particular crime types in Redditch. Data had been provided for previous years and for both Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest for comparative purposes.
- The Safer Redditch Group had been working to address an increase in shoplifting in Redditch revealed by the data. This would involve identifying targeted retailers, persistent offenders and options for intervention that could help to address the problem.

Crime and Disorder

Scrutiny

Panel

Wednesday, 22 March 2017

- The Safer Redditch Group was also encouraging retailers to utilise an online platform called Facewatch. Local authorities and retailers could share information about offenders such as shoplifters and people who had been banned from premises on this platform as well share information about possible threats or goods being targeted.
- The Police managed Facewatch and could use this system to warn retailers about persistent offenders and the license conditions for those leaving prison.
- The figures indicated an increase in hate crimes. However, it was noted that these statistics mainly reflected numerous reports made by and against a single household, and did not represent an overall increase in this area.

Following presentation of the report Members discussed a number of points in detail:

- The definition of violence without injury. Members were advised that this was generally any type of violent incident which did not result in a physical injury breaking the skin, such as a pushing or shoving.
- The issues underpinning violence with injury and violence without injury cases. Partners were finding that there were often links to the night time economy, particularly in respect of alcohol consumption.
- The extent to which domestic abuse was recorded. Members were advised that these cases would be recorded as crime types such as violence with injury and the Police would then provide a further flag on their system when a particular case was connected to domestic abuse.
- The decline in vehicle crime and the reasons for this. Officers explained that this appeared to be due to improvements to technology for vehicles, though this had been accompanied by increases in burglaries linked to the theft of car keys.
- The potential for data to be provided to enable Members to assess which cases had resulted in successful prosecutions. Officers explained that figures for prosecutions at Magistrate and Crown Courts were not provided at a district level, however work was continuing with Criminal Justice agencies to access county level information.
- The possible reasons for a slight rise in the number of Business Crimes. The Panel was informed that this could be due to multiple businesses reporting a spate of crime in a particular location, possibly by the same offender. This would impact on the overall figures.
- The purpose of the £10,000 to tackle youth ASB. Members were advised that this would be allocated to commissioning a

Crime and Disorder

Scrutiny

Panel

Wednesday, 22 March 2017

positive activity that would target specific young people at risk of committing ASB.

- The County Council's arrangements for commissioning positive activities as youth services and whether this met local need.
- The provision of leisure services as positive activities for young people and the extent to which this diverted young people from ASB. Officers explained that the young people targeted through the positive activity to address ASB levels were unlikely to be engaging with existing leisure and cultural activities.
- The need for positive activities to tackle the attitudes of young people committing ASB in order to address the problem.
- The need for parents to be involved in any initiatives designed to reduce ASB committed by young people and the role of Connecting Families in helping to achieve this.
- The extent to which ASB was any greater in Matchborough than in other parts of the Borough. Officers explained that the problems that had led to this matter being raised related to the actions of a small number of identified young people.
- The potential for the funding to be used to commission projects that would tackle youth ASB in other parts of Redditch. Members were advised that the funding could be used wherever a need was identified in the district.
- The potential impact of a permanent police presence in Winyates on the ASB levels in that ward.
- The extent to which all partners regularly attended partnership board and operational group meetings. Officers explained that the majority of partners regularly attended meetings, though further work was being undertaken to more actively engage the Clinical Commissioning Groups.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the Panel's work programme and noted that, as requested at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14th February 2017, there would be two meetings of the Panel in 2017/18. At the first of these meetings, scheduled to take place in September 2017, a more detailed update would be provided in respect of ASB in the Borough. However, there were no items scheduled for consideration at the subsequent meeting of the Panel due to take place in March 2018.

Crime and Disorder

Scrutiny

Panel

Wednesday, 22 March 2017

The Panel discussed potential items for consideration at the meeting in March. The possibility of inviting the West Mercia PCC to attend a meeting was raised. However, Members were advised that, in line with legislative requirements, the Panel could only hold the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership to account and not individual partner organisations. Furthermore the PCC was not a member of the partnership and he was already held to account by the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel (WMPCP). The Council's representative on the WMPCP, Councillor Y Smith, could highlight any concerns on behalf of Members and would be providing an update about the work of this Panel for Members' consideration in a future edition of the Members' Bulletin. In the meantime copies of the minutes from meetings of the WMPCP could be viewed on Worcestershire County Council's website.

RESOLVED that

- 1) Members notify officers of any items in respect of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership that they would like the Panel to scrutinise further; and**
- 2) the Panel's work programme be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 7.10 pm