

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY
AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Thursday, 10th September, 2009 at 6.00 p.m.
in Committee Room 2, The Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor C. Wilson (Chairman)
Councillor Cotterill (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Attwood, Burston, Caunt, J. D. Davies, A. Finch, Foster and J. Martin.

OFFICERS

Assistant Director of Finance (Revenues, Benefits and Management Support) (Lead Officer to the Committee), Head of Community Safety, Performance and Commissioning Manager (Both Chief Executives Department), Head of Community Renewal (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services), Licensing Officer, Senior Solicitor, Mr J Jablonski and Miss K Fellows (All Directorate of Law, Property and Human Resources).

Also in Attendance

Superintendent Johnson, Inspectors V Willis and Khatkar and Police Constable Boyd – West Midlands Police.

11. **CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

The Chairman welcomed the members of West Midlands Police to the meeting.

He also referred to Agenda Item No. 7 – The Social Responsibility Scheme - advising that this item had been withdrawn and would be reported upon at a future meeting.

12. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Miller and Ryder.

13. **APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was reported that Councillor J. D. Davies had been appointed as a substitute member for Councillor Miller for this meeting of the Committee only.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No member made a declaration in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of any matter to be considered at the meeting.

15. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 11th June, 2009, be approved as a correct record and signed.

16. PUBLIC FORUM

No matters were raised under this Agenda Item.

17. ALCOHOL RELATED ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

A report of the Interim Director of Law, Property and Human Resources was submitted on alcohol related anti-social behaviour. A copy of a letter forwarded to sector inspectors outlining members concerns relating to alcohol related anti-social behaviour was attached as an Appendix to the report submitted.

A list of questions that had been formulated for the Police Representatives to answer was circulated at the meeting. The Police representatives responded to the questions and supplementary questions asked as follows:-

- It was confirmed that complaints in relation to alcohol related anti-social behaviour were recorded by the use of command and control incident logs with complaints being dealt with dependant upon the gravity of the crime.

It was further reported that crimes were brought to the attention of the Police either upon receipt of intelligence information; through Community based forum meetings (PACT meetings); by the general public and from information received from elected members.

- In relation to community intelligence being fed into the Safe and Sound Partnership it was stated that the provision of such intelligence would be dependant upon complaints received, as such one off incidents occur, the Police would engage with other partners which would then be referred back to the Joint Activities Group.

It was further reported that in relation to the underage sale of alcohol test purchasing operations were ongoing as part of the Social Responsibility Scheme and the Police continued to interact

with young children in order to educate them in relation to alcohol abuse.

- In respect of accessing and utilising information that Councillors had provided but residents for a number of reasons had not reported to the Police, it was stated that information that Councillors provided, would be acted upon, although it was accepted that some members of the public wished to remain anonymous although every effort would be made to encourage the public to report criminal activities by providing them with reassurances. It was stated that information continued to be received from a number of sources, however it was accepted that communication by all partners and members of the public should be encouraged. Reference was also made to and commented upon in relation to the OASIS information system.
- In relation to the police providing feedback following complaints it was acknowledged that this was an area where the police could improve upon. It was confirmed that neighbourhood teams dealt with incidents of anti social behaviour and a case would not be closed until the log reference stated that the victim/witness had been updated in relation to the action taken. It was further stated that the public would receive early responses in relation to serious incidents, whereby officers would attend the victims/witnesses homes in order to update them. In relation to low level anti social behaviour, the response time would not be as prompt. Due to the level of the crime and in order to improve response times, routine letters in the South part of the Borough were currently being processed.

It was indicated that issues that arose at PACT meetings were logged and reported on at the next PACT meeting.

It was reported that in order to keep the public informed, should there be a high level degree of action, such as Police raids, press releases would be organised.

Following a suggestion from a member it was agreed by Police representatives that appropriate Ward Councillors would be advised of any high level degree of action that had taken place within their Ward.

- In relation to concerns raised in respect of alcohol related anti-social behaviour particularly in relation to open spaces, including parks, and green spaces and concerns about displacement it was stated that a meeting had recently been held to discuss these issues, when there had been general agreement that a borough wide alcohol ban would be difficult to enforce. It was stated that Dudley Council were working with Trading Standards in relation to the Social Responsibility Scheme, targeting off licence sales to young people by test purchasing. It was further stated that in order to deter future crimes research was being undertaken in relation to the possibility of releasing photographs of those committing crimes of

anti social behaviour.

It was reported that the Police had analysed the number of incidents logged in open spaces, and as a result work had been completed in relation to these areas whereby the police had engaged with young people, had a structured media campaign and had attended schools to carry out presentations in relation to alcohol related anti social behaviour and since the end of July, 2009 Children's Services had been undertaking work with twenty five families.

- In respect of displacement and ensuring this was minimised particularly from areas where there had been an alcohol ban it was reported that dispersal orders could be obtained whereby details of young people would be taken and letters would be written to their parents, with the provision of Anti Social Behaviour Orders should the perpetrators return to those areas where dispersal orders had been obtained.

It was reported that the Police had been utilising their powers under the Children Act by supplying vans to remove young inebriated people from the streets, transporting them to a Safe Centre, whereby parenting assessments had been undertaken, with parents being made to account for their children's behaviour. This exercise had been carried out on ten occasions and a further three exercises were planned, however it was pointed out that problems could occur with future funding for safe centres and the provision of children workers.

It was stated that the Police operated two further events, Survive Alive and Safety Town whereby engagement with schools across the Borough had and would continue to take place. Elected Members were invited to make suggestions to the Police in relation to any future items that the events should target.

- In respect of alcohol related anti social behaviour It was confirmed that this continued to be one of the key priorities for the Police force, with crime and anti social behaviour being a top priority. It was accepted by neighbourhood police that this behaviour continued to be the number one complaint and often related to youths.
- In relation to Police resources it was indicated that these were targeted by resource deployment prioritisation by working to Borough Strategic assessment. It was stated that tactical assessments were produced monthly in the South and every two weeks in the North of the Borough by utilising intelligence and crime patterns in order to target resources in appropriate areas. It was reported that a meeting of key people would take place in order to prioritise tasks and co-ordinate a team who were provided with priorities for the forthcoming period.

It was further stated that the Police were aware of the problems

referred to at the meeting. It was also reported that forty five members of the Special Constabulary supplemented Police Officers whilst undertaking their duties on Friday and Saturday evening in the Stourbridge area which had resulted in a reduction in violent crime statistics during the previous two years in that area.

Arising from the questions answered by the Police representatives, Members asked a number of questions and made comments relating in particular to:-

In responding to a question from a member relating to how incidents relating to alcohol related anti social behaviour would be categorised, it was stated by Superintendent Johnson that incident logs contained numbered categorisations with alcohol related anti social behaviour being categorised by a certain number.

In responding to a question from a member Inspector Willis stated that reporting crime would continue to be actively encouraged as this would enable them to carry out policing specific areas at relevant times and figures could be provided in relation to the number of incidents reported within specific areas.

Concerns were raised in relation to:-

- people going onto streets already inebriated.
- young people who continually abused alcohol, and health related problems as a result of this behaviour.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted, and as reported on at the meeting, in respect of Alcohol Related Anti-Social Behaviour, be noted.
- (b) That, the Licensing Officer be requested to arrange for a letter to be sent on behalf of the Chairman of this Committee to the four Members of Parliament for the Borough outlining members concerns relating to anti social behaviour associated with alcohol and this being displaced from designated areas banning the consumption of alcohol to various parks around the Borough.

Renewal Processes and joint working. The rationale for community engagement in relation to community safety and the benefits of improving community safety as part of a package of measures to improve the borough by addressing poorer performing neighbourhoods; giving examples of community safety and on the wider outcomes resulting in community engagement for community safety were also reported on.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, submitted in respect of Community Engagement with Community Safety, be noted and endorsed.

19.

THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY OF SAFE AND SOUND, DUDLEY'S COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP.

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on potential arrangements for the Committees exercise of its oversight and scrutiny function of Safe and Sound, Dudley's Community Safety Partnership.

It was noted that the Committee currently met five times a year and not six times as indicated in paragraph 4 of the report submitted.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the information contained in the report submitted, on the arrangements for the overview and scrutiny of Safe and Sound, Dudley's Community Safety Partnership, be noted.
- (b) That no significant changes be made to the existing committee structure, work programme or meeting frequency, given existing arrangements.
- (c) That a standing agenda item be adopted whereby at the end of each meeting, members debate and decide if they wished to request the attendance of any Safe and Sound Board member or required the provision of any information at the following meeting.
- (d) That the Chief Executive in his capacity as Chair of the Safe and Sound Partnership be requested to attend the June meeting of the Committee in each year following the publication of the annual performance summary document, and the submission of a report containing details of that performance and of the following year's plan.

20.

NEXT GENERATION LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (NGLAA)
COMMUNITY SAFETY RELATED TARGETS AND INITIATIVES – FINAL
AGREED ACTION PLANS.

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted outlining the focal points of each of the Delivery Plans that related to the various NGLAA national indicators that had been adopted locally in respect of community safety. Details of each of the delivery plans were attached as Appendices to the report submitted.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted on Next Generation Local Area Agreement (NGLAA) Community Safety Related Targets and Initiatives – Final Agreed Action Plans, and Appendices to the report submitted, be noted.

21.

QUARTERLY CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on the performance of the Council in relation to activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee for the first quarter of 2009/10, April to June, 2009.

Arising from the presentation of this report and comments made it was

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted on the Council's quarterly performance for the first quarter of 2009/10, April to June, 2009, on the activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee, be noted.
- (2) That the Lead Officer to this Committee be requested to forward to Councillor Cotterill details of the areas within the Borough that completed questionnaires relating to satisfaction with the area in relation to the Place Survey 2008 - Headline Findings.
- (3) That the Chief Executive be requested to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee in respect of the percentage of victims reporting incidents of domestic violence in other areas of the Country.

The meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.

CHAIRMAN