

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 18TH APRIL, 2005

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the Annual Report of the Select Committee for the review of the 2005/2006 year.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Article 6 of the Council's Constitution requires Select Committees to report annually to the full Council and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods, if appropriate.

2.2 Annual Report

The work programme for the 2004/2005 municipal year has been the following:

Select Committee on Community Safety 2004/2005

21st July 2004

- Re-appointed the Working Groups for:
 - Children and Young People
 - Housing and Neighbourhood Nuisance
 - Community Safety Strategy
- Agreed the Work Programme for 2004/2005
- Considered the Equality and Diversity Annual Report (2003/2004) of the Director of Law & Property

10th September 2004

- Considered a report of the Director of Finance on the Council's Capital Strategy, dealing with an update on the Strategy
- Ross Cranston, QC, MP and Mr B Richens (a local magistrate) were invited to attend the meeting to discuss various aspects relating to progress on community safety issues in the borough.

1st November 2004

- Considered a report of the Community Safety/Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT) Manager and work undertaken to identify the emerging priorities and statistics for recorded crime, disorder and substance misuse in the

borough, recognising that issues such as Alcohol/substance misuse should be a high priority.

- Considered the implications of introducing a borough-wide alcohol ban in response to the views expressed by Members that they were generally dissatisfied with the anti-social behaviour associated with alcohol and requested information how other local authorities were handling this matter.
- Considered the recommendations and matters arising from the meeting of the Working Groups of the Committee.
- Considered a request to undertake a review of decision sheet CE/09/2004 regarding the appointment of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).
- Considered a report of the Director of Law and Property on a case study regarding Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO's) specifically from the Key Witness perspective and received a presentation from a Key Witness who had experienced the process and was able to respond to questions put to him by Members of the Committee regarding his experiences and the impact on his everyday life.

24th January 2005

- Considered a report of the Lead Officer to the Select Committee on Economic Regeneration and the implications for the retention and attraction of businesses to vandalised sites.
- Considered a report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance on the proposed Revenue Budget and Council Tax for 2005/06.
- Consider information presented on the current position regarding a borough-wide alcohol ban and that a further meeting with the West Midlands Police was needed to explore evidential issues.
- Considered a report of the Director of Law and Property on the Draft Scrutiny Protocol for Select Committees.
- Considered a report of the Monitoring Officer on a draft Protocol for Relationships between Members and Officers of the Council.
- Considered the recommendations and matters arising from the meetings of the Working Groups of the Committee.

21st February 2005

- Received an update from the Assistant Director, Legal and Democratic Services, and discussed the position with regard to Alcohol Bans.
- Considered current Community Safety issues with a visiting member of the Crown Prosecution Service.
- Considered a report of the Director of Law and Property on Equality and Diversity.
- Received a presentation from the Assistant Director of Social Services and held a discussion regarding Establishing a Children's Safeguarding Report.
- Considered a report of the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning on Data Trends and Development Relating to Exclusions, School Attendance etc.
- Considered and commented on the Draft Chairman's Annual Report to Council.

Work Programme for the Working Groups 2004/2005

Children and Young People

30th September 2004

- Considered a report of the Council's role in the Children and Young Peoples' Strategic Partnership.
- Considered a survey of the Dudley Youth Offending Team (YOT) on Young Peoples' Attitudes to Community Safety and Parenting Orders and identified that further feedback would be appropriate in the future with information from Youth Parliament Members.

14th December 2004

- Considered a report of the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning on the Data, Trends and Developments relating to Exclusions, Attendance, Admissions and Children in Public Care for 2003-04 Academic Year.

25th January 2005

- Considered a report of the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning on Establishing a Childrens' Safeguarding Board and requested that all Members of the Select Committee receive the report and presentation in view of the implications of the Childrens Act and the local authority's duty concerning Child Protection Issues.
- Considered a report by the Youth Offending Team (YOT) on the Prolific and Priority Offenders Strategy and requested that the report be referred to the Select Committee for their consideration.

Housing and Neighbourhood Issues

22nd September 2004

- A presentation was received and consideration given as to how mediation could play a part in settling neighbourhood disputes and anti-social behaviour issues.
- A presentation was received from Legal Services and consideration given in respect of legal and other implications particularly relating to neighbourhood nuisance issues and anti-social behaviour incidents, recognising the importance of complainants keeping appropriate evidence records of incidents.
- A presentation was received outlining the role played by Neighbourhood Managers in problem solving neighbourhood nuisance and anti social behaviour issues and consideration given to partnership working encompassing the Housing, Legal, Community Safety Services of the Council, and other agencies and policies concerning the issues of problem families.

9th December 2004

- Considered a report explaining the consultation process in compiling the Landlord's Statement Policy which consists of a Statement of Policy and a Statement of Procedures stating that Dudley Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations (DEFRA) had discussed the issue at a Conference and that a Focus Group had been set up.
- Considered the report and minute of the Central Dudley Area Committee held on 4th November 2004.
- Received a presentation on the Review of Tenancy Conditions and agreed the recommendations of the review.

1st February 2005

- Considered a report of the Director of Housing concerning the process for prioritising the Housing Schemes and Community Safety bids.

Strategy

8th September 2004

- Received a report of the Community Safety/DATT Manager identifying the requirement for a Community Safety Audit and Strategy to be published every three years and considered the issue that alcohol and drugs were often a leading factor in crimes committed and incidents of domestic violence.

7th December 2004

- Considered a report of the Community Safety/DAAT Manager on the prioritisation of Community Safety Targets from 2005 to 2008 and identified that key factors that impact across all priorities were issues concerning young people and also prolific and priority offenders. It was acknowledged that the strategy (produced by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Strategic Board) would be published in April 2005.
- Considered a report of the Assistant Director of Culture and Leisure concerning the developing culture strategy and its implications for community safety.
- Considered the legal position with regard to powers to close premises known to be used by sellers of illegal drugs.

9th February 2005

- Considered the recommendation of the Select Committees on Economic Regeneration in relation to the implications for the retention of business and the attraction of new business to vandalised sites and agreed that the

Community Safety Committee be requested to add the issue to the Committee's work programme for 2005/2006.

- Received an update from the Community Safety Manager on progress and the outcome of the merger of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) and the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)

2.3 Emphasis

The work of the Committee has focussed primarily on aspects associated with the Working Groups. That is:

- Developing policies and actions to meet the needs of young people and the 'diversionary' benefits that can result on positive impact on community safety.
- The cross cutting and partnership strategies that are being actioned, especially through the strategic partnership arrangements, and
- Consideration of the various services provided by the Council and their impact on Housing and Neighbourhood Issues.

2.4 Scrutiny

There were no 'call ins' of decisions relating to the remit of the Committee through the decision sheet process during the year. The Committee considered a request to review the decision made concerning the appointment of Police Community Support Offices (PCSO's) and information was presented personally to the Committee by the Lead Member for Community Safety in this report.

2.5 Conclusions for 2004/2005

The Committee has continued to consider the wider issues and activities of the Council and its impact on Community Safety within the Borough with reference to its terms of reference of reviewing aspects of Crime and Disorder and Anti Social Behaviour.

The Committee and its Working Groups have recognised the importance of strategic partnership working across the Council's services and the partnerships within the area.

Major concerns of the Members of the Committee continue to reflect the expressions made by local people that priority action for the Council and the Partnership to consider and focus future developments are issues of:

1. Anti Social Behaviour, and
2. The impact within the Borough of Alcohol and Substance Misuse.

2.6 Work Programme 2005/2006

The Work Programme for the Select Committees on Community Safety will be scheduled at the next meeting of the main Committee.

It is proposed that the following items be included in the Work Programme for 2005/2006.

- Recommendations and findings from each of the Select Committee's Working Groups.
- The following items referred by the Working Groups:
 - Representation and information from the Youth Parliament concerning survey of young people's attitudes to community safety,
 - Information and developments relating to exclusions, attendance, and admissions and children in public care,
 - Information and updates on the developing establishment of a Children's Safeguarding Board,
 - Prolific and Priority Offenders strategy progress updates,
 - Updates on the developments concerning the use of mediation to resolve anti-social behaviour,
 - Statistical information indicating the causes of crime (e.g. alcohol, drugs etc),
 - Progress on the priority community safety targets, with particular reference to the local targets,
 - Consideration of the published Partnership Strategic Board's 3 year Strategy.
- In addition the work items identified by the Working Groups the following themes will be considered for bringing forward reports and information to the Committee for consideration:
 - The alignment of local and national priorities.
 - The developing issues and the various links to impact on Community Safety
 - The outcomes and progress regarding sustainable communities
 - The development of corporate strategy on Anti Social Behaviour.
 - The links to the strategic work of the Crime and Disorder Partnership.
 - The impact of various reassurance measures to address issues of 'fear of crime'
 - The activities and decisions of the Council Services in relation to the duty placed by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act.
 - Updates on the progress against the targets within the Community Safety Strategy, and Prolific and Priority Offender Strategy.
 - Updates and progress on introducing measures concerning Alcohol and Substance Misuse.

3.0 PROPOSALS

3.1 It is proposed that:

- i. That the Annual Report of the Select Committee on Community Safety as detailed in this report be approved, and
- ii. That the proposed Work Programme for 2005/2006 as detailed in the report, be approved.

4.0 FINANCE

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report at this stage.

5.0 LAW

- 5.1 The requirement for the Committee to make an annual report to the Council is contained in Article 6 of the Constitution.
- 5.2 The relevant statutory provisions regarding the Council's Constitution are contained in Part 11 of the Local Government Act 2000, together with Regulations, Orders and Statutory Guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 5.3 The legal provisions regarding the issues referred to in section 2 above are indicated in the reports submitted to the Committee on those issues.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 6.1 The report complies with the Council's equality and diversity policy.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That the proposals set out in section 3 above be approved.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Article 6 of the Council's Constitution, etc etc.

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Councillor David Blood
Chairman of the Select Committee on Community Safety