

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

Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2010 at 6.00 p.m.  
in Committee Room 3, The Council House, Dudley

**PRESENT:-**

Councillor C. Wilson (Chairman)  
Councillor Cotterill (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Attwood, Burston, Caunt, A. Finch, Mrs D Harley, Islam,  
J. Martin, Miller and Ryder.

**OFFICERS**

Assistant Director of Finance (Revenues, Benefits and Management Support) (Lead Officer to the Committee), Interim Assistant Director of Finance (Financial Services and Corporate Finance), (Directorate of Finance), Head of Policy and the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit Development Manager (Both Chief Executives Directorate), Interim Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Senior Solicitor and Miss K Fellows (All Directorate of Law, Property and Human Resources).

**Also in attendance:-**

Inspector V. Willis – West Midlands Police.  
J Winpenny – West Midlands Fire Service.

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33.        **APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Foster.

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34.        **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was reported that Councillor Islam had been appointed as a substitute member for Councillor Foster for this meeting of the Committee only.

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35.        **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

36. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2009, be approved as a correct record and signed.

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37. PUBLIC FORUM

No matters were raised under this Agenda item.

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38. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2010/2011

A joint report of the Chief Executive, Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Interim Director of Finance was submitted on the proposed Revenue Budget Strategy for 2010/11 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2010/11 - 2012/13.

It was noted that the Analysis of Provisional 2010/11 Budget by the Division of Service should be amended in relation to Children and Families Social Services to £35,104 and Other Children's Services to £1,751 as referred to at Appendix C of the report submitted.

In responding to a question from a Member regarding the prioritisation and utilisation of the Community Safety budget the Head of Policy stated that streams of funding would be made available and directed towards those priorities expressed within the Borough's Community Safety Strategy such as Drug Intervention Partnership structures and the Crime Reduction Implementation Group.

It was reported that there would be a planning day shortly when mapping against available funding would be completed and undertaken in conjunction with the framework that had been previously reported upon.

It was further reported that in relation to efficiency and other savings maximising external income by redirecting external grants had and would take place as some funding for activities had been contributed to by Safe and Sound Partners such as the Police and the Primary Care Trust.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted on the Cabinet's Revenue Budget Strategy proposals for 2010/11 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2010/11 – 2012/13, be noted and that the Cabinet be informed that there were no observations that this Select Committee wished to make on the proposals presented.

39.

### OPERATION STAYSAFE

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on the development and implementation of Operation Staysafe within Dudley since July, 2009.

The Anti Social Behaviour Unit Development Manager in presenting the report made specific reference to the innovative work which had contributed towards alleviating anti social behaviour. The operation had targeted the Sedgley, Gornal, Coseley, Netherton and Pensnett areas of the Borough to date and advised that of the results referred to in the report submitted and reported upon that there had been up to a ninety percent reduction in reported incidents of anti social behaviour involving young people on Friday nights in the major hot-spot areas.

Inspector Willis reported on the process of Operation Staysafe advising that the operation targeted young people judged by agreed criteria to be vulnerable.

It was reported that Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers had been operating in anti social behaviour hotspots, transporting young people who were judged to be within the agreed criteria to a safe centre where Children's Services staff conducted interviews with young people and trained assessors carried out parenting assessments. Following the assessments debriefing sessions were undertaken with all parties when an agreed course of action would be suggested with the majority of referrals being made to Connexions.

Inspector Willis stated that as part of the follow up action she may also undertake school visits to the appropriate school of the young person who had been targeted by the Operation.

The Anti Social Behaviour Unit Development Manager reported that he had emailed elected members to advise them that Operation Staysafe would be operating in their Wards.

Arising from the presentation of the report submitted and the information reported on at the meeting Members asked a number of questions and made comments relating in particular to:-

- How Police Officers dealt with allegations of harassment following their intervention during Operation Staysafe;
- The siting of further staysafe centres;
- The action that could be taken against repeat anti social behaviour offenders;
- Would Operation Staysafe continue following the further trial period between the end of January and the end of March, 2010;
- The opening hours of the staysafe centres and whether these remained opened until parents attended to collect their children;
- The possible displacement of anti social behaviour as a result of

- Operation Staysafe;
- How were young people affected psychologically following the intervention of Operation Staysafe;
- Whether the perpetrators of anti social behaviour blamed their behaviour on the lack of facilities for young people.

In responding to questions and comments from Members, Inspector Willis stated that Officers confidence with the powers available to them to remove young people to designated places of safety was promoted and this enabled them to deal with any allegations of harassment during their apprehension of young people as a result of Operation Staysafe.

The Anti Social Behaviour Development Manager reported that the siting of further safe centres would be determined by further testing out ranges at which parents were travelling and young people would not necessarily commit anti social behaviour in the areas where they resided but would travel around other parts of the Borough.

Inspector Willis further reported that the ranges of locations referred to above would also take into account accessibility to parents in order that they could attend to move on the process.

It was reported that Anti Social Behaviour Orders would be sought should a young person repeatedly offend.

The Anti Social Behaviour Unit Development Manager indicated that Partners could not specify which mainstream resources could be committed to Operation Staysafe beyond 2011 as this was disallowed by the budget, although a planning meeting would take place next week, when partnership funding would be discussed.

It was reported that the staysafe centre remained open until midnight, however should parents indicate that they were to attend the centre it would remain open until they arrived.

It was further reported, that Officers usually began transporting young people to the centre between 7pm to 7.30pm although young people would ultimately be advised that should they return home and behave responsibly their parents would not be called and they would not be transported to the staysafe centre.

It was stated that monitoring displacement of anti social behaviour was undertaken by monitoring the numbers of incidents of anti social behaviour throughout the Borough.

It was further stated that there had been a huge marketing media campaign in relation to Operation Staysafe which had resulted in some young people remaining at home on the evenings that the operations had taken place.

It was indicated that the psychological effects on young people included the fear of their parents being contacted and attending the Centre and the fact that they were interviewed by Social Workers resulted in the view that

they may be taken into care, however the centre was a very controlled caring, calm environment which resulted in young people being in a better frame of mind when they left than when they arrived. This had resulted in some of the Young People requesting to attend the Centre for work experience.

It was indicated that in some instances the process in order to tackle behavioural issues began when parents were contacted and advised of their children's whereabouts as when this became known, parents were then in a position to deal with the behaviour.

It was reported that detached youth workers would become involved with the next stage of the project and would advise young people of the facilities and groups available within their areas, however young people were advised that the lack of facilities was not an excuse for anti social behaviour.

The Anti Social Behaviour Unit Development Manager reported that when a young person had been transported to the staysafe centre and interviewed, this was usually in the presence of or communicated to the remainder of that young persons peer group and resulted in the shock factor reducing further incidents of anti social behaviour and removing peer pressure.

It was further reported that the staysafe centre contained leaflets and DVDs informing young people of the various facilities and activities available to them together with details of how to access the Council's websites to check on further activities.

Members expressed support and praise for the operation advising that Elected Members had received fewer reports of anti social behaviour whilst Operation Staysafe had been taking place and hoped that this would be rolled out to the wider Borough.

A Member also praised the operation for ensuring that young people did not become involved with the criminal justice system.

Members expressed best wishes to Inspector Willis upon her transfer to Halesowen Police Station and thanked her for attending the meeting.

#### RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, and as reported on at the meeting, on the development and implementation of Operation Staysafe within Dudley since July, 2009, be noted.

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40.

#### 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 second quarter of 2009/10, July to

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September, 2009 inviting members to review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in respect of the matters under the responsibility of this Select Committee.

In responding to questions from Members the Head of Policy advised that the targets pertaining to incidents of domestic abuse crimes were the responsibility of the West Midlands Police and did not relate to the Community Safety Team.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the Report, submitted on the Council's quarterly performance for the second quarter of 2009/10, on the activities relating to the Terms of Reference to this Committee, be noted.

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41. TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO REQUEST THE ATTENDANCE OF ANY SAFE AND SOUND BOARD MEMBER OR THE PROVISION OF ANY INFORMATION AT A FUTURE MEETING IN RELATION TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES WORK PROGRAMME.

Following discussion on this issue it was:

RESOLVED

That the attendance of any Safe and Sound Board Member or the provision of any information at the next meeting would not be required.

The meeting ended at 7.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN