

Select Committee on Community Safety and Community Services
12th June 2008

Report of the Chief Executive

safe and sound, Dudley's Community Safety Partnership.

Purpose of Report

1. To inform select committee of the current structure of safe and sound, Dudley's Community Safety Partnership, and the delivery mechanisms it utilises to achieve its priorities.

Background

2. In 2003, the Dudley Borough Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (C.D.R.P.) merged with the Borough Drug and Alcohol Action Team (D.A.A.T.) to become safe and sound, Dudley's Community Safety Partnership.
3. At the same time, the partnership completely restructured its governance arrangements. This was undertaken because there was no clear process for the partners to hold each other to account for performance, strategy or policy issues. The structure chosen effectively separated the strategic and operational functions, a model which has subsequently been adopted by the Home office in their recent regulations, requiring all partnerships to identify a separate strategic body.
4. The partnership chose to invite the heads of all the partner agencies, whether they are statutory partners or volunteers, to form the strategic board of safe and sound, which would initially be chaired by the Chief Executive of the Local Authority. The board meets every three months. Two implementation groups were then defined, one to oversee delivery against crime reduction targets, and the other delivery against substance misuse targets. The implementation groups meet every six weeks.
5. The board and both implementation groups had new, agreed terms of reference. The key principle in the process is that the board agrees the priorities for the partnership, and the strategy to deliver them. The implementation groups then are accountable to the board for delivery. This is achieved by the chairs of both groups attending the board meetings. The chairs provide a quarterly performance report to the board at those meetings and are held to account by the board members. This process can be two-way, in that the chairs may identify individual agency issues which are proving to be a blockage against successful delivery, and this can then be raised with the head of the relevant agency. The implementation groups are chaired at assistant director, or superintendent level.

6. The implementation groups are able to form or dissolve any working groups as they deem necessary to deliver against the partnership priorities. The working groups determine their own meeting frequency according to need. The current partnership structure including the working groups is tabulated in appendix 1.
7. In addition to the working groups, the implementation groups may commission projects to deliver against the partnership priorities. Examples of these include the Alcohol Arrest Referral Scheme, the Home Security Initiative and the Fire Safety Initiative. The implementation groups have complete responsibility for the Allocation of partnership funds, and, again, are held to account for those decisions by the strategic board.
8. The structure in appendix 1 includes the working groups directly accountable to the partnership. Other groups contribute significantly to partnership aims, and have strong links to the partnership without being directly accountable to it. Examples of such groups would include the Domestic Abuse Forum, the Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) and the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Unit.
9. The partnership structure is supported by the Council's Community Safety Team along with partner agency's liaison officers, and various government funded posts.
10. The current partnership structure is efficient and effective in that it has contributed to a 31% reduction in recorded crime in the last three years, the highest in the West Midlands, and amongst the highest in the Country.
11. A key function of the safe and sound board is to review the structure of the partnership to ensure it is fit for purpose. Following the review of the Crime and Disorder Act, the partnership held a development event, the results of which have already been subject of a report to this committee. The resulting improvement plan will form the basis of the boards' work programme in the coming year.
12. The board awaits with interest the outcome of the governments response to the Flanagan report on police accountability, as this will certainly have direct implications for the accountability of safe and sound, as well as potential implications for Select Committees covering Community Safety issues.

Finance

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

Law

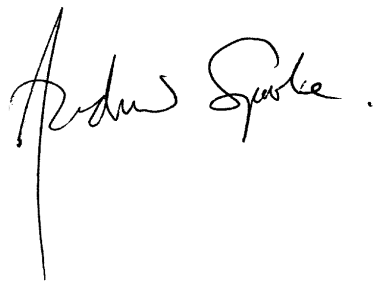
14. The principal legislation governing this report is the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the statutory instrument arising from the review of that act, namely The Crime and Disorder (Formulations and Implementation of Strategy) regulations 2007.

Equality Impact

11. This report is in accordance with the council's equality and diversity policy.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that the committee note the information contained in this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Sparke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long vertical line extending downwards from the end of the name.

Andrew Sparke
Chief Executive

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Agenda Item 7 - appendix 1

