

## **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

At a Meeting of **Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham** on **Friday 23 September 2016** at **9.30 am**

#### **Present:**

**Councillor D Boyes (Chairman)**

#### **Members of the Committee:**

Councillors J Armstrong, J Charlton, S Forster, J Gray, C Hampson, S Iveson, N Martin, T Nearney, F Tinsley, J Turnbull and C Wilson

#### **Co-opted Members:**

Mr J Welch

#### **Co-opted Employees/Officers:**

Chief Fire Officer S Errington and Chief Superintendent A Green

#### **Also Present:**

Councillors J Allen

#### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Hodgson, G Holland, H Liddle, J Maitland, Mr A J Cooke and Temp Assistant Chief Constable H McMillan.

#### **2 Substitute Members**

No notification of Substitute Members had been received.

#### **3 Minutes of the Meetings held 21 June, 29 June and 25 July 2016**

The Minutes of the meetings held 21 June, 29 June and 25 July 2016 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

#### **4 Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

## **5 Any items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties**

There were no items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties.

## **6 Media Relations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to the recent prominent articles and news stories relating to the remit of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (for copy see file of minutes). The articles included: motorists taking photographs and video while at the wheel, with some drivers “streaming” video; Durham Constabulary catching over 100 speeding drivers per day; linking to the Organised Crime item, 11 arrests being made in connections with drugs across South Shields, Durham and Sunderland; and linking to the Youth Offending Service item, a pet charity had teamed up with the Youth Offending Service in terms of “status dogs” and on issues of the animals’ welfare.

The Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities, Councillor J Allen noted that following the success of the “Dying to be Cool” water safety campaign, the Local Government Association (LGA) were taking the issue forward nationally, with Durham as a key contributor and the work undertaken being seen as best practice.

### **Resolved:**

That the presentation be noted.

## **7 County Durham Youth Offending Service - Youth Justice Plan**

The Chairman introduced the Strategic Manager, County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS), Gill Eshelby who was in attendance to give a 2015/16 update for Members in respect of the Youth Justice Plan 2015/17 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS referred Members to the report circulated with the agenda papers and associated appendix which set out the refreshed Youth Justice Plan 2016/17. Councillors noted that number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Justice System was the lowest ever, being 161 a reduction of 16.6% when compared to 2014/15 and an 85.7% reduction since 2007/08. It was added that use of custody had also reduced by 60% compared to 2014/15, with the figure of 8 being better than the regional and national figures and that the number of remand bed nights had also reduced by 35.9% on the previous year. Members were reminded that the costs of remand bed night were met by the Local Authority, partly offset by a grant from the Youth Justice Board (YJB), and 227 bed nights in 2015/16 represented an overall reduction of 78.1% since 2010/11.

The Committee noted that Ministry of Justice (MoJ) data showed that the re-offending rate was 44.7% from a cohort of young people sentenced in court or cautioned. The Strategic Manager CDYOS highlighted the table on page 5 of the Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 which shows the impact of successful diversion and robust case management. Since 2007/08 the number of young people in the cohort has reduced by 80.2% (from 2145 to 425); the number re-offending has reduced by 73.9% (from 728 to 190); and the number of re-offences committed has reduced by 68.7% (from 1950 to 611).

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS explained that there had been a 54.6% reduction in the number of offences committed and the number of young people offending since 2010/11 (see page 5 of the Youth Justice Plan).

The Strategic Manager CDYOS also highlighted the service's innovative work on speech language and communication needs. Two members of staff were awarded a joint Butler Trust Award 2015/16 for their innovative work and leadership of the CDYOS's Speech and Language Communication Needs Strategy and development of ClearCut Communication resources. Members noted this was evidence of the focus in Durham on quality, adding that the CDYOS having achieved the Restorative Service Quality Mark (RSQM) was another demonstration of this, noting that the CDYOS was the only service in County Durham and Darlington to have achieved the RSQM. Councillors noted other achievements included the renewal of Investing in Volunteers Quality Mark and achieving Investing in Children status. The Strategic Manager, CDYOS noted that Lord McNally and Colin Allars, the Chairman and Chief Executive of the YJB, were in Durham today to present the RSQM, Investing in Volunteers and Investing in Children awards to CDYOS. The Strategic Manager CDYOS added that Lord Ramsbotham, the former Chief Inspector of Prisons and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Speech and Language Difficulties, had commended CDYOS staff for their work in this area. Councillors noted that the ClearCut Communication resources were copyright to Durham County Council, recognised by the Butler Trust and purchased by other youth offending services/teams nationally.

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS concluded by encouraging Members to read the executive summary within the Youth Justice Plan if they had not already done so and added that the message to take away was that reductions in re-offending meant in turn that there were fewer victims of youth crime.

Councillor S Iveson noted the excellent work of CDYOS and congratulated the Strategic Manager, CDYOS and her staff. The Strategic Manager, CDYOS thanked Councillor S Iveson. Linking to the Media Relations Item, the Strategic Manager CDYOS noted another example of partnership - the Paws4Change programme with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), one of only two pilots in the country. Young people help to train abandoned dogs to get them ready for rehoming, with a graduation ceremony after completing the programme.

The Chairman noted the reducing resources in the public sector and also the huge successes made to date. He asked the Strategic Manager, CDYOS if the service would be able to continue to see improvements or would performance level out; would the service still be able to ensure young people were in suitable accommodation after custody. The Strategic Manager, CDYOS explained that there were very few young people from Durham in custody, and having reduced from over 3,000 to a under nine hundred nationally over a number of years. It was added that now any young person in custody was classified as a "looked after child", with this not being an issue for County Durham as numbers were very low.

Councillor F Tinsley noted that the huge reduction in the number of FTEs and asked whether this was through restorative approaches and as this seemed to be going against national trends, was there pointers for the wider culture beyond young people specifically.

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS explained the service was fully engaged in the partnership arena and shared good practice with the Safe Durham Partnership (SDP), Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Checkpoint and the service's out of court disposals work and early intervention helped to reduce the number of FTEs. It was added that the Taylor Review of the Youth Justice System had an interim report in February 2016 and had suggested secure schools that would have between 70-80 young people and that education would be at the heart of youth justice. Members noted there was no due date as yet in terms of the final report from the Taylor Review. It was noted the Strategic Manager, CDYOS and the Head of Children's Services, Carole Payne had met Charlie Taylor in March and he had understood the issues in terms of speech language and communication needs. Officers were awaiting the final report.

The Strategic Manager, CDYOS reminded the Committee that the CDYOS was fully integrated into Children's Services; there were excellent relationships with partner agencies and this was vitally important in ensuring success.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the report and Youth Justice Plan 2016/17 be noted.
- (ii) That a progress update be received by the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 12 months.

**8 Progress of Recommendations following the Overview and Scrutiny Review of Organised Crime**

The Chairman introduced the Detective Chief Inspector Dave Ashton, Durham Constabulary who was in attendance to give an update presentation in respect progress of recommendations following the Overview and Scrutiny Review of Organised Crime (for copy see file of minutes).

DCI D Ashton thanked Members for the opportunity to speak to the Committee and reminded Councillors of the definition of serious and organised crime, namely: serious crime was planned, co-ordinated, conducted by people working together on a continuing basis, with the motivation being often, but not always, financial gain. It was added that since a national strategy was launched in 2013, the estimated cost nationally of organised crime was £24 Billion annually. Councillors noted that the Police worked in partnership with other agencies to look to be able to affect organised crime groups (OCGs) in their many areas of activity to help provide many benefits. It was explained that these benefits were not only in human terms by ending misery for those exploited by OCGs, such as drug addicts, those being defrauded and those subject to sexual exploitation, but also in terms of financial benefits in terms of early intervention in cases such as waste management fraud, the Committee being aware of the recent examples in our area from the Scrutiny Review.

Members were reminded of the national tools used to capture data and to score and map OCGs based upon their intent and capability and linked to their level of criminality to give an overall threat assessment score. DCI D Ashton referred Members to a graph showing 39 OCGs within Durham, and that the threat assessment determined that 44% of the OCGs had low-level or infrequent criminality and that their impact was primarily local. Councillors noted the types of activities included: drugs; violence; money laundering; theft; economic crime; environmental crime; and child sexual exploitation.

DCI D Ashton noted the disruption tactics used to target OCGs, under the Police branding of “Sledgehammer” and successes had included: significant seizures of Class A drugs; tackling animal cruelty linking to environmental offences; environmental crimes, including the examples of the site in Darlington Members were familiar with from the Review; and dwelling burglary, with a gang operating in our area recently imprisoned for 10 years.

Members noted that areas for development included the stolen goods and counterfeit markets and the rise in the use of psychoactive substances, and there was a need to be vigilant in terms of the signs of activities such as human trafficking, modern day slavery and child sexual exploitation.

DCI D Ashton reminded Members that this was tackled by working in partnership to disrupt OCGs’ activities with the Partnership Disruption and Intervention Panel coordinating activities. Councillors were reminded of the 4 Ps in terms of the Action Plan to tackle OCGs, Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare and that a lead for areas could come from the Police or a partner as appropriate. Members learned of the national Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN) as a tool to be able to share information and make referrals to other agencies as required.

Members were reminded that intelligence was vital in terms of being able to tackle OCGs, with the smallest piece of information sometimes being the key to unlocking a larger picture. It was added that an important aspect for partners was to look to say “does my work take me behind closed doors” and if so and signs of child sexual exploitation, drugs, slavery, or any form of criminality then this should be shared with the Police and relevant agencies for further consideration.

Councillor N Martin noted that economic crime was a concern, with more frequent attempts by telephone and e-mail by fraudsters to try and trick people out of their personal information and asked how people could forward information to the Police and also should a fraudster be successful, what support was available. DCI D Ashton noted that these types of OCGs were typically national or international and there was information contained within an Action Fraud leaflet as regards what to look out for, and what you can do if you are subject to such fraud.

Councillor T Nearney noted during the Scrutiny Review, Police had spoken in terms of Proceeds of Crime (PoC) monies that could be fed back into local communities and also of the links between anti-social behaviour and OCGs. Councillor T Nearney asked had the community Trigger and Community Remedy been used, and if so how effective had they been, and also asked as regards any issues in terms of the Memorandum of Understanding where the Council worked with the Environment Agency. DCI D Ashton noted that there were links between ASB and OCGs, and highlighted initiatives such as the Haggrid project to engage with young people with high risk factors and to divert them away from criminal activities. Members noted horticultural schemes where the activities provided an opportunity to engage with the young people in order to help them look at attitudes and it was added that Home Office funds meant this scheme could be rolled out more widely. Councillors were reminded of another scheme that looked to try and change perceptions of authority, including the Police, included the “Mini Police” project. DCI D Ashton added that Durham Constabulary worked very well with the Environment Agency and noted that the strategic “Gold Group” that included the Chief Constable, met to discuss at a strategic and tactical level and noted there was good agreement from all those involved.

The Chairman referred to the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review, set out as Appendix 2 to the report with DCI D Ashton noting recommendations 1 to 4 having been touched upon and with enhanced awareness raising as set out in recommendation 6 including presentations at the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) and Partnership Forums as well as the roll out of an associated online training package, by the end of the year.

Councillor J Allen explained that intelligence was key and that Councillors could help to feed in information, though the successful “In the Know” tool, and through Crimestoppers and their local Police Teams.

It was added that cybercrime had been identified by the SDP as an increasing risk and that within the Authority, the Director of Transformation and Partnership would be looking to appoint cyber-champions within departments to raise awareness of potential issues. Councillor J Allen added that as Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities, she was a Member of the Gold Group which looked at the issues of disruption and reiterated that partners all worked hard together to ensure that all avenues were pursued in order to catch out OCGs and put a stop to their activities.

The Chief Fire Officer, S Errington noted that the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) would be keen to see what they could do to help, with FRS now falling within the remit of the Home Office and with OCGs having been identified as a strategic priority. Members were reminded of the CDDFRS’s Safe and Wellbeing Visits (SWVs), a topic also being looked at by a Working Group of the Committee, and that while this presented a “foot in the door” and an opportunity to alert agencies should safeguarding issues be noted, there was also a need to ensure that the good reputation of the CDDFRS was maintained. DCI D Ashton noted that there were different way of reporting information, and reinforced that if there was a safeguarding issue then this would be something to be passed to the Police as a priority. It was added that there were various sophisticated methods by which the Police could protect sources of information and also should a member of the public wish they could utilise the anonymous Crimestoppers service.

Councillor F Tinsley noted that there were very low levels of immigration into County Durham and noted that some people were of the opinion that OCGs were as a consequence of such immigration and asked whether there was any evidence of this or whether it was simply a misconception. DCI D Ashton noted there were OCGs operating across all types of communities and at all levels of society from those working on the streets, to accountants and solicitors, so indeed there was no one particular group OCGs were limited to. Chief Superintendent A Green added that it was also to be understood that in fact some of those in immigrant communities were in fact amongst the most vulnerable to exploitation by OCGs and cited examples nationally where some immigrants had been trafficked to Norway to work as slave labour.

Councillor C Wilson noted the example that had been given in terms of the waste management fraud and asked if there had been and further progress. DCI D Ashton noted that this was being led by the Environment Agency, however, feedback and discussion with local people would likely be best served via the relevant local Police and Communities Together (PACT) meeting.

## **Resolved:**

- (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That a progress update be received by the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 12 months.

## **9 Road Safety Reduction Partnership**

The Chairman introduced the Strategic Traffic Manager and Chair of the Road Safety Partnership, Dave Wafer who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Road Safety Reduction Partnership (for copy see file of minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager thanked Members for the opportunity to address the Committee and noted that there were a lot of statistics and trends identified regionally and within the County. Members noted that the North East in general performed better than the country as a whole, with the number of casualties in 2015 being the second lowest since records began in 1979. It was added that the number of collisions was 2% less than the 2005-2009 baseline and this was in the context of traffic levels having increased almost back to pre-recession levels.

The Committee noted that for County Durham it was more a of a mixed pattern, with overall casualties reducing however the number killed or seriously injured (KSI) had increased by 16%, albeit lower than the 2005-2009 baseline figure. It was added that as the figures in terms of numbers of people was low then a few incidents can result in large increases in the percentages, however, it was highlighted that vulnerable groups appeared to be disproportionately effected and that one incident involving 86 child casualties was skewing figures. The Strategic Traffic Manager noted that while this was the case, the national comparators in terms of child casualty numbers remained unfavourable.

Members noted decreasing trends in 2015 in relation to pedestrian casualties and significant improvements to bus occupant casualties and increasing trends in terms of a slight increase in the number of motorcycle casualties. It was added that while the number of pedal cyclists remained relatively static, the number of cyclists seriously injured had increased 125% on the previous year.

The Strategic Traffic Manager noted benchmarking using the latest available data from 2014 and that North East Council's generally perform well in comparison to the other 139 English Councils. Members noted County Durham performance was in general good, however, the County did not compare well in terms of the safety of bus occupants and child casualties.

Members were referred to graphs showing the rate of casualties per billion vehicle miles against Local Authorities within the Country, and noted Durham was within the second quartile and performing better than the England average. Councillors noted that County Durham also performed well in terms of rate of casualties per million population, however, was below the England average in respect of the rate of child casualties per billion vehicle miles. Members noted that when looking at rate of child casualties per 100,000 child population then Durham performed poorly, being second from bottom.

The Strategic Traffic Manager explained that regionally a link between deprivation and casualty numbers was being seen and that car passengers were more likely to come from deprived areas, especially those aged 18-24. Members noted that deprived areas also tended to have higher levels of pedestrian casualties and child casualty rates in deprived areas were 3 times greater than for those of the least deprived areas.

Members noted a number of current and future actions including from April 2015: 12,785 young people engaging in practical road safety training working with AAPs; 97 older people having received SAGE driver assessments; 148 safe and fuel efficient courses being delivered to drivers for companies in South Durham and 39 riders had attended BIKESAFE post-test workshops.

The Committee noted actions since November 2015 included: 3,706 young people having completed the practical child pedestrian training course; 920 young people having received EXCEerate presentations; 2,287 Year 5 and 6 pupils having completed bikeability training and 39 young people having completed the EXCEerate post-test practical training course.

The Strategic Traffic Manager concluded by noted actions since January 2016 had included 357 community speed watch activities having taken place and 148 speed camera deployments had resulted in 3,225 detections of excess speed.

The Chairman thanked the Strategic Traffic Manager and asked Members for the question as regards the report and presentation.

The Chairman asked how the Local Authority could help in terms of targeting road safety issues. The Strategic Traffic Manager explained that visibility was an issue and therefore there was a need to keep campaigns in the public eye, such as in connection with mobile phone use.

Councillor S Forster asked as regards who decided upon where the moveable speed cameras were deployed. The Strategic Traffic Manager noted that the Police can move their equipment and also if there were complaints as regards speeding then the Council could look to measure to see if there was an issue in an area. It was added that should here be a casualty, then regular visits to an area could be factored in, and also working to any intelligence received, for example via PACT meetings. Councillor S Forster asked whether there would be feedback from PACT meetings in this regard. The Strategic Traffic Manager noted that if the Council or Police go out to a site and carry out measurements and there are no issues, enforcement action would not be looked at. Members were reminded of schemes such as Community Speedwatch, with Councillor T Nearney agreeing on its importance.

Councillor T Nearney noted the "Fatal Four" and asked if, when looking at the links to deprivation, whether there was any one of these factors that was more prevalent. The Strategic Traffic Manager noted that when looking at rural areas, there were issues in terms of drugs and alcohol late at night. Members noted that attitudes were hard to change and programmes such as EXCEerate looked to try and change people's mind-sets and to try and get across the message of the impact that drink/drug driving can have.

The Chairman noted the links to 20mph zones and also in terms of more deprived areas being more likely to have less roadworthy vehicles, and more likely to have non-qualified and non-insured drivers behind the wheel.

The Strategic Traffic Manager noted that there was joined up working, linking into the previous item on OCGs, with a lot of technology available and used in order to track and detect those types of vehicle and drivers. The Chairman added that there were a number of diverse issues across the County and the Strategic Traffic Manager noted he would be back to speak to Members more in-depth later this year.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer noted that the issue of the Fatal Four was picked up within the Work Programme and as the Officer had mentioned a further update would be provided to Committee in December.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**10 Quarter 1 2016/17 Performance Management Report**

The Chairman introduced the Strategic Manager - Performance and Information Management, Keith Forster and the Analyst, Durham Constabulary, Samantha Level who were in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Quarter 1 2016/17 Performance Management Report for the Altogether Safer theme (for copy see file of minutes).

The Strategic Manager - Performance and Information Management referred Members to the report and noted key performance achievements, including: continued good performance in relation to those using services having said those services made them feel safe and secure; the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System being better than target; and a reduction in anti-social behaviour (ASB) figures.

It was noted that the key performance issues included underperformance in respect of the number of people completing alcohol and drug treatment, noting the new provider, Lifeline had been in attendance to speak to Members at a special meeting of the Committee.

In respect of crime statistics, the Analyst, Durham Constabulary reminded Members of the changes in national timescales in terms of recording of crime and how this nationally was increasing the crime rate, however, in County Durham the rate per 1,000 population in Durham was 10.9, lower than a national figure of 11.7. Members noted that the number of harassment cases had reduced and that the number of hate incidents had seen an increase of 12.2% in comparison to the same period last year. It was explained that while the figures for theft offences had increased, the rate of theft offences in the Durham area was lower than for similar areas and the national average. Members noted the levels of anti-social behaviour, the lowest since 2014 and the Strategic Manager - Performance and Information Management added that the issues in terms of road safety had been covered within the presentation by the Strategic Traffic Manager.

The Chairman thanked the Strategic Manager - Performance and Information Management and noted that the 49% increase in crime was comparable to other areas across the country and appeared to be as a result of the changes in reporting crime. The Chairman added that the performance in terms of the drug and alcohol service continued to be disappointing, with the Committee to continue to monitor the situation.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**11 Overview and Scrutiny Review Updates**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer explained that the report of the Alcohol and the Demand on the Emergency Services Working Group would be brought to the October meeting of the Committee for consideration.

Councillor T Nearney added that two meetings of the Working Group looking at the CDDFRS's SWVs had taken place looking at the background to the new visits, and the processes and referral routes being used. It was noted the next meeting would be at the Fire Headquarters and would focus on the experiences of partners, impact on resources and outcomes.

**Resolved:**

That the verbal update be noted.

**12 Police and Crime Panel**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to the report setting out the main issues discussed at the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel (for copy see file of minutes).

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer noted the main issues included:

- Membership of the Panel – remained unchanged
- HMIC Inspection and Year End Performance
- Report of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner's Annual Report 2015/16
- Draft Police, Crime and Victims Plan 2016-2021
- Commissioning and Community Safety Funding 2016/17
- Police and Crime Panel Work Programme
- Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner and Police and Crime Panel, Memorandum of Understanding/Partnership Working Agreement.

Members noted the draft Police, Crime and Victims Plan was out for consultation until the end of October and Councillor would be provided with a link to the relevant pages. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reiterated that the role was now entitled Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner to ensure victims were being put at the centre and their needs being addressed.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

### **13 Safe Durham Partnership Update**

The Chairman asked the Community Safety Manager, Caroline Duckworth to speak to Members as regards an update from the Safe Durham Partnership (SDP).

Members noted that many of the issues discussed by the SDP Board had been touched on during the meeting, including the issues of OCGs and cybercrime, with the latter having a Task and Finish Group, chaired by DCI D Ashton, which worked to an action plan looking at raising awareness, especially within specific groups within the public, private and voluntary sectors. Councillors noted Get Safe Online events, with over 500 people having attended events at Durham Town Hall and an event being held this week at county Hall.

The Community Safety Manager noted that other issues discussed at the SDP meeting included: the Multi-Agency Intervention Service (MAIS) Review, with the Neighbourhood Protection Manager to speak to the Committee on this in more detail at the January meeting; SDP Governance Review; Modern Crime Prevention Strategy, focusing on 6 key drivers; collaboration between the CDDFRS and Durham Constabulary; funding; and Durham Constabulary and Durham County Council having signed up to a Concordat on Children in Custody.

The Chairman thanked the Community Safety Manager for her update.

#### **Resolved:**

That the report be noted.