

## **COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY PANEL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Safety Scrutiny Panel held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2006 at 6.00 p.m.

### **PRESENT**

Councillor B.T. Breeze (Chair)

Councillors A. Atkinson, G.C. Glass, H.S Guildford, J.G. Ingham, M. Jobling, D.V. McMahon, C. Marshall

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillor I. Agnew

Chief Superintendent Suddes, Inspectors Proud & McConnell of Durham Police.

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor D. Bennett

#### **11. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 be approved as a correct record.

#### **12. SCRUTINY OF RED RISK RATED BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Performance Management Officer presented the report to members which detailed the action planning initiatives in place for the nine red risk rated best value performance indicators (BVPIs.) The Head of Human Resources presented an Action Plan of Best Value Performance Indicators appended to the report.

In particular reference was made to BVPI 2a one red risk related indicator that falls within the Community Safety Scrutiny remit.

The Head of Human Resources highlighted the hard work undertaken by the Policy Officer in setting up the Equality and Diversity Scheme and commented that this was ongoing. Project and progress would continue to be monitored.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the content of the report be noted.

### 13. PRESS RELEASE – DURHAM POLICE

Chief Superintendent Suddes presented the press release detailed in item C. Some of the points in the press release were as follows:-

- Durham Police could be forced to shed up to 300 Police Officers jobs in less than three years to offset a projected £10 million budget shortfall.
- a blueprint has already been drawn up to meet the financial challenge head on
- major remodelling of the force has been submitted to the home office for consideration.
- more uniformed staff into neighbourhood policing
- create key posts to tackle organised crime, major disasters and threats posed by terrorism and extremism
- negotiations are still going on with the Home Office in last efforts to prevent the reduction in Police officer numbers.
- promise there would be no planned redundancies
- reduction in the number of front line staff would be kept to a minimum by cutting 200 jobs of desk bound officers and replacing them with civilian staff.
- major recruiting process of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

In response to questions from the Community Safety and Information Officer, Chief Superintendent Suddes confirmed that there would inevitably be reductions in operational policing levels; however all efforts would be made to minimise any detrimental effects on the operational requirements of neighbourhood policing, area priorities and Streetsafe commitments in Derwentside. The community, including this panel, would be kept informed of developments.

The Chief Superintendent stated finally that partnership working was still fundamental to the Police, and that they remained committed to implementing the current Crime, Disorder and Substance Misuse Reduction Strategy and related Action Plans.

**RECOMMENDED** that the content of the press release be noted.

#### **14. COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVES**

The Director of Development and Asset Management submitted a report to inform members of two initiatives to facilitate community engagement in tackling local community issues:-

- Members' Pro Formas for use at ward surgeries
- Multi Agency Estate Walkabouts

The panel on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2006 considered and expressed support for the above initiatives, which were developed in liaison with community safety partners.

A newsletter has been developed which gives contact details where ward surgeries are held and crime prevention details. The Multi Agency Estate Walkabouts have been arranged in South Stanley, Hamsteels, Catchgate / Annfield Plain. A further walkabout is scheduled to take place in New Kyo.

**RECOMMENDED** that progress be noted and the continued development of these initiatives be supported.

#### **15. STANLEY BUS STATION**

The Director of Environmental Services gave a presentation on Stanley Bus Station identifying areas of concern.

##### **BACKGROUND**

The Construction of Stanley Bus Station commenced in February 2005 and opened in November 2005 at a cost of £2 million. The completion was scheduled to be in March 2007. The Bus Station had received an 'excellence award' for incorporating solar panels in the design.

There are 3 CCTV cameras in location of the station the major areas of concern are:-

- £7000 has been spent on broken windows to date (this has been met by the developer.)
- Pigeon damage
- Opening hours

The broken windows have been picked up by the developer. The pigeons are causing re-occurring problems. Corrective measures to be undertaken to prevent the problems such as the installation of spikes to prevent pigeons roosting. Also, a cleaning programme of pressure washing is to be undertaken to remove detritus on walls.

The current opening of Stanley Bus Station is on a 24 hour basis, the proposed closing times of 11.30pm – 6.00am would mean people will not have access within the times stated.

Lengthy discussion took place on complaints and in response to questions regarding security the Director of Environment Services said the one member of staff present as a cleaner was not there to undertake security duties.

Discussion arose regarding displaying pictures of youths in the bus station as part of an anti social behaviour order. It was concluded that it may become a 'badge of honour' to the young people. The issue of smoking was also discussed it was noted that smoking was prohibited in the bus station.

Police Inspectors present discussed a dispersal order however; in their opinion the bigger issue was that a facility was required for young people and that it should be a permanent fixture not a mobile fixture.

Councillor Marshall suggested it would be helpful to have an audit undertaken of the problems. In his opinion what was needed was facts and figures then the Panel would be able to look at solutions how to address the problem areas.

In response to Councillors questions Police Inspectors Proud and McConnell stated a new bus station has not provided a decline in problems only a new venue for them to take place.

The Community Safety & Information Officer asked whether problems of anti social behaviour were restricted to the bus station. Inspector Proud confirmed that youth anti social behaviour was more widespread, and was prevalent in Stanley Town Centre, and various venues within the town including the new Bus Station.

Chief Superintendent Suddes suggested that these problems should be considered as a partnership issue, and that the Scrutiny Panel would be kept informed of developments.

Request was made for a Member Champion for the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership Task Force.

### **RECOMMENDED**

- that Councillor Breeze be the Member Champion for the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership Task Force.

## **16. CLOSE CIRCUIT TELEVISION**

The System Integration Manager gave a presentation on CCTV.

Illustrated:-

- Standard box camera
- 6m columns
- Telewest fibre
- Records 25 frames / second
- Images stored 31 days

Aim:-

- Crime disorder
- Dog fouling

The original town centre cameras have a fibre connection at Stanley rather than the coax connection at Consett and the picture is slightly better quality although this does not have any effect on the performance or usability of the camera. In future as part of the regular maintenance regime the Consett cameras would be upgraded to fibre. There are 60 cameras – with at least one in every ward (excluding Ebchester who did not request a camera.) There have been 199 incidents reported from January 2006 to date due to camera presence.

In response to questions regarding how many cameras were operational, the System Integration Manager stated that there were only 4 cameras from the final phase which were not operational and these would be on-line early in the new year. Discussion arose regarding illegal parking. Councillor Ingham said it was a major problem in Lanchester and asked why cameras could not be used to monitor illegal parking. The Police stated the main aim of cameras was to prevent crime and increase public reassurance.

Councillor Ingham requested that his dis-satisfaction be noted in the minutes regarding the response received to illegal parking.

**RECOMMENDED** that the content of the presentation and discussion be noted.

## **17. OFF-ROAD MOTORCYCLING**

No representative was in attendance – the Executive Support & Scrutiny Manager deferred presentation to the next meeting.

## **18. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND GENERAL COMPLAINTS**

The Director of Environmental Services submitted the report supporting the authority's approach to the identification and delivery of a range of actions to ensure that the council fulfils its statutory duties in relation to anti social behaviour and neighbourhood nuisance complaints.

Members were advised that the partnership with Derwentside Homes had now been drawn up to reduce crime. A multi agency task force responsible to the Corporate Management Team was to be set up to meet the deadline in March 2007.

The Executive Support & Scrutiny Manager asked for a Member Champion for an Anti Social Behaviour Task Force Group.

### **RECOMMENDED**

- That the partnership agreement with Derwentside Homes in tackling, crime, disorder and anti social behaviour be noted
- that the development of a joint action plan by March 2007 be supported by the panel
- that the establishment of a multi disciplinary task force reporting to the Director of Economic Development, to develop and implement the authorities joint action plan be supported by the panel
- Member Champion for Anti Social Behaviour Task Force Group

### **Conclusion of meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.

### **Chair**