

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**OF THE PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY 28 JUNE 2005**

Present: Councillor C Patching (Chair)  
Councillors R Burnip, P J Campbell,  
J Haggan, B Joyce, T Longstaff,  
Mrs S Mason, W R Peardon, Mrs B A Sloan  
and R G Wharrier

Also Present: Councillor D Myers – Executive Member for  
E-Government and Scrutiny Liaison  
Councillor J Goodwin – Executive Member for  
Community and Culture

1 **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 7 June 2005, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were confirmed.

2 **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE** held on 14 June 2005, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the information contained within the Minutes, be noted.

3 **PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

4 **CRIME AND DISORDER STRATEGY 2005 - 2008**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Neighbourhood Initiatives which provided an overview of the Easington Community Safety Partnerships Crime and Disorder Strategy 2005 – 08, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The Senior Community Safety Officer explained that under the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, District Councils were identified as responsible authorities and had to prepare a three year Crime and Disorder Strategy for their locality. Other responsible authorities included the County Council, Police, Fire and Rescue Service and Health Authorities.

It was explained that the Partnership's structure consisted of thematic task groups of which there were seven. A co-ordinating team, based at Lee House dealt with the day to day management operational group which consisted of senior officers that met on a six weekly basis and the implementation group of the Local Strategic Partnership.

The Senior Community Safety Officer gave Members details of the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership.

The Crime and Disorder Strategy was informed by a crime and disorder audit which covered the period 2001 – 2004. The audit identified the following crime and disorder trends for the district:-

- total recorded crime increased by 7.9%;

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- national and regional increased by 7%;
- County Durham decreased by 3%;
- domestic burglary decreased by 27%;
- other burglary decreased by 22%;
- theft of motor vehicles decreased by 15%;
- criminal damage increased by 40%;
- thefts from motor vehicles increased by 58%;
- anti-social behaviour increased by 25%;
- youths causing annoyance decreased by 0.5%.

An area of constant concern was anti-social behaviour and drugs. The fear of crime was falling but was still disproportionately high when compared to actual crime statistics.

The Senior Community Safety Officer explained that overall, the total recorded crime in Easington had decreased by 6%. Total recorded crime in County Durham had decreased by 3% and the North Area command had decreased by 0.5%.

Targets had been set for the Government Office. The headline target of a 15% reduction in crime was set centrally and was non-negotiable. The report detailed targets that had been set by the partnership to achieve the 15% target.

It was explained that the key initiatives for 2005 were:-

- Supporting Young People Programme;
- CCTV;
- Street Warden Co-location;
- Street Safe Initiative;
- Together Action Campaign;
- Extension of Priority Policing Area (PPA) to Wingate;
- Restoring Reassurance Group;
- National Intelligence Model (NIM) and Priority and Prolific Offenders (PPO) Strategy.

The Senior Community Safety Officer explained that operational structures had been amended. The new structures would increase joint working across agencies and become a particular force in directing the work of the Street Wardens and the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team. The principles behind the review had been to rationalise the amount of officer time spent in meetings at the expense of "getting the job done". Regarding the level of resources available to tackle Crime and

Disorder, the Senior Community Safety Officer reported that there were now some 40 officers available for deployment onto the streets. These included Street Wardens and the recently established Police Community Support Officers.

In conclusion, the Senior Community Safety Officer explained that the 2005/08 strategy would build on the success through joint working, reshape the partnership, better intelligence sharing, develop innovation and help reduce the fear of crime.

A Member asked if there was anything being done to stop youths from carrying and drinking alcohol. The Senior Community Safety Officer explained that off licences were still being monitored for illegal sales. Although it was illegal to purchase alcohol under age it was not illegal to drink. If alcohol was found on a youth then it would be taken off from them and poured away. Under recent legislation, alcohol bye-laws had changed.

A Member explained that a number of void properties in his village were being used by young people to drink alcohol and take drugs. The Senior Community Safety Officer explained that the mobile CCTV could be moved to hot spot areas.

A Member commented that the strategy did not include statistics on individual villages. The Senior Community Safety Officer explained that local statistics were not included in the document although the partnership was aware of local trends. Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs) were related to targets and reported through the committee structure.

The Chair commented that the strategy was very positive and developmental and felt that there needed to be close monitoring on not only progress made against specific priority areas but also the inter-connectivity between these priority areas. This will enable gap analysis in services to be identified where they existed.

The Chair thanked the Senior Community Safety Officer for his comprehensive report.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

## 5 **PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS**

The Executive Member for Community and Culture had been invited to the meeting to discuss partnership arrangements within his remit.

The Executive Member for Community and Culture explained that the first part of his report regarding community safety had been provided by the Senior Community Safety Officer in the previous report. He went on to update Members on the partnership work which had been undertaken during the year.

### (a) **Leisure Centres**

The Council had entered into a ten year agreement with Leisure Connection to operate and manage both Peterlee and Seaham Leisure Centres. The Council agreed to enter into the new arrangements for the provision of the service as it had been established that the private sector would be able to bring business acumen and expertise from within the leisure industry, introduce capital investment, improve the service offered to customers and reduce the cost of management arrangements.

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On commencement of the new arrangements, the contractor had made an investment of £600,000 to improve the facilities and undertook to operate the centres for a management fee that reduced annually over the first five years of the contract. Following this, a profit share agreement would come into place.

Monthly monitoring meetings were held between the Council and Leisure Connection to ensure the contract was operating satisfactorily and in addition, the Health and Safety Unit conducted quarterly inspections. Quarterly reports were submitted to Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee.

Working in partnership over the past twelve months, the company had achieved a number of targets:-

- both centres had achieved Quest accreditation (independent quality assessment conducted by Sport England);
- completed the Sport England benchmarking surveys which would be used as a tool to measure how the centres were performing against similar facilities in the country;
- Peterlee Leisure Centre had received an “Inclusive Fitness Initiative Award”. A Sport England scheme awarded to centres which demonstrated a commitment to greater use by disabled people. This award also supported the Council’s commitment towards improving access to the facilities.

### (b) **Sports Development**

It was explained that the team worked with a number of partners to deliver the service:-

- School Sports Co-ordinators Programme;  
a programme to increase the amount and quality of physical activity opportunities both in and out of school for children. The team provided activities/coaching at lunch time and out of school hours clubs;
- Positive Futures  
the project involved working in a multi-agency environment to deliver sporting opportunities to young people at risk of offending. Partners include DISC, Youth Engagement Service, schools, Police and community centres/groups;
- Easington Primary Care Trust  
the team worked with Physical Activity Co-ordinators to deliver activities as part of the GP Referrals Programme that operated in the district;
- National Governing Bodies  
the team worked in partnership with a number of national governing bodies to deliver a range of activities/competitions,

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these included Durham Sport, Lawn Tennis Association and Durham County Cricket Club.

(c) **Arts**

The arts team worked with a range of partners to deliver arts programmes across the districts. These included professional arts organisations, statutory bodies, community centres, Durham Heritage Coast and Defining the Future. Defining the Future was a youth arts programme supported through Neighbourhood Renewal Funding to increase the opportunities for young people to engage in arts taster sessions.

The Executive Member for Community and Culture explained that if any Member wished to visit the Leisure Centres to view the improvements that had taken place he would make arrangements.

A Member referred to the Sports Development and explained that a member of his family had been attending Durham County Cricket ground and felt this was a great idea for the children.

The Chair thanked the Executive Member for Community and Culture for his report.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD

CHAIR .....

DATE .....