

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (EXTERNAL)

10<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2008

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PRESENT                      Councillor Anderson (Chair)  
                                    Councillors Bowser, Mrs. Jopling, V. Shuttleworth,  
                                    Mr. John Raw, Liason Officer for Neighbourhood  
                                    Watch (co-optee)

APOLOGIES

ADVISERS                      R. Bowman, Scrutiny Manager

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The Chair welcomed John Raw to the meeting. Mr. Raw was a co-opted Member of the Committee for the duration of the CDRP review. Members who had attended the recent Executive and Tasking and Coordinating Group meetings of the Wear and Tees Community Safety Partnership (CSP) informed the Committee of their impressions of the meeting. Members were especially interested in the Tasking and Coordinating Group which dealt with the practicalities and operational aspects of the work of the CSP. At the meeting of the Executive Group attended by Members, the Community Safety Manager had placed on the agenda two documents for comment from the group. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (External) requested that the two documents be placed on the agenda at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (External) for Members' comment. The comments were to be collated by the Scrutiny Manager to be relayed to the Community Safety Manager, to allow consideration of the views of the Committee in finalising the documents.

## 24.      **TO DISCUSS THE SECOND DRAFT OF THE WEAR VALLEY COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN**

Members raised the following issues with the plan:

The relatively low number of certain crimes meant that it would take little to cause a huge increase in percentage terms of reported incidents. Therefore the Committee recommended that actual figures be included in the table on page 3. This is to avoid the impression that levels of certain crimes are disproportionately high. The example cited by the Chair was a rare but severe town centre altercation which may result in several people being wounded.

Members would also like to see included in the plan further details on the 'changes to how crime is recorded by the constabulary' (p. 3). This may assure the reader that crime statistics are subject to a degree of variance depending on the classification or recording method employed.

In relation to the strategic priorities detailed in the plan, Members sought clarification on the weighting accorded to each. Were the priorities all given equal consideration or were some a higher priority than others? Members noted that Crook, for example, was the worst area in County Durham for criminal damage. Did the relevant strategic priority (criminal damage and anti-social behaviour) therefore become the number one priority for Crook? The Committee recommended that this be clarified in the report.

Regarding the Community Safety Actions in Wear Valley: Members of the Committee were interested to know more about the 'education in the community and outreach services' mentioned. The Committee suggested that these services be described in more detail in the plan.

**25. TO DISCUSS THE DRAFT OF THE WEAR AND TEES ALCOHOL STRATEGY**

Members considered the strategy and concluded that no further comment from the Committee was necessary.

**CHAIR**

The meeting concluded at 6pm