**Safer and Stronger Communities
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Safe Durham Partnership Update

28 October 2014

Report of Peter Appleton, Head of Planning and Service Strategy

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Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee with a summary update on the key issues discussed at the September 2014 Safe Durham Partnership (SDP) Board.

Safe Durham Partnership Governance Review

2. It was agreed at the commencement of a new planning cycle to review the current governance arrangements of the partnership and refresh the terms of reference for both the Safe Durham Partnership Board and the Thematic Groups.

3. Changes to the governance arrangements of the Safe Durham Partnership include:

    a. Updated terms of reference.

    b. Updated membership to reflect recent legislative changes. The Chief of Staff for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has also been added to the extended membership.

    c. The number of Board meetings to be held each year has been reduced to five, with the July meeting no longer scheduled.

    d. The governance structure has been revised (see Appendix 2). This includes a new thematic group covering both Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, with the previous Vulnerability Group being disbanded. The Alcohol and Drugs thematic groups will remain separate until a review at the end of the Strategy periods (March 2017). The Reducing Re-Offending will merge with the Darlington Reducing Re-Offending group.

    e. A delivery plan including high level actions in the Partnership Plan 2014-17 will be monitored and reported to the Board on a six-monthly basis. These performance monitoring arrangements will ensure that the actions and performance measures in the Plan outline progress against the strategic objectives and outcomes agreed by the SDP. Monitoring of performance indicators takes place four times per year.

f. The SDP will consult on the strategic priorities for 2015/18 with each of the 14 Area Action Partnerships following the completion of the strategic assessment and supplement with existing consultation processes such as surveys conducted by the Police and feedback from the Police and Community Together (PACT) meetings.

g. A Media Protocol and Communications Strategy for the Partnership was agreed. A media and communications action plan is in development.

Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) and Community Safety

4. The Principal Area Action Partnership Co-ordinator with the strategic lead for the Safe Durham Partnership gave an update on AAP activity in relation to community safety. Six AAPs have selected Crime and Community Safety, Road Safety or Traffic Management as their priority for 2014/15.

5. Relevant Safe Durham Partners will continue to support and advise the AAPs task and finish groups to avoid duplication and ensure that projects developed locally complement and contribute to the Safe Durham Partnership Plan.

6. The AAPs, when considering targets and outcomes of the AAP Action Plans, will align these with those of the Safe Durham Partnership.

7. So far, 69 projects have been developed under the Altogether Safer theme in 13/14 and 14/15. The majority of projects align with the strategic objectives of reducing Anti-Social behaviour, Alcohol Harm Reduction, reduce Serious Crime. The AAPs have allocated over £85K of AAP Area Budget with an additional £344k from Councillors' Neighbourhood Budgets to projects which support children, young people and families. This gives a total of over £430k allocated to Crime and Community Safety projects of investment.

Safeguarding Framework

8. The Safeguarding Framework was agreed by the SDP Board; the framework outlines the joint working arrangements between the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) with the Health and Wellbeing Board, Children and Families Partnership and the Safe Durham Partnership.

9. The Care Act 2014 places the Safeguarding Adults Boards on the same statutory footing as the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. This will give the SAB a clear basis in law for the first time and will strengthen the existing arrangements that are in place.

10. The Safeguarding Framework demonstrates that there are close working arrangements in place and documents the commitments from the partnership boards and the LSCB and SAB to work together in protecting vulnerable children and adults from harm.

Community Cohesion Toolkit

11. The toolkit has been developed as a resource for Durham County Council and its partners. It follows on from work to address protest activity during 2012/13.

12. The purpose of the toolkit is to help employees:

- Support community cohesion
- Identify local 'triggers' which create or increase tension.
- Report and support responses to community tensions.
- Prepare for local protests and demonstrations if necessary.

13. The first section provides information on practical ways to build and support cohesive communities – these are the general activities which happen on a regular basis and help to reduce the risk of community tensions but also create resilience to help communities cope with difficult situations. The second section covers community tensions, how to identify and report them as well as the mechanisms in place to support communities if tensions escalate. Finally, the appendices include guidance on tension monitoring and a template action plan to be considered if there are significant tensions or if a demonstration is planned. Contact details are also included for various Durham County Council teams and other organisations which support cohesion.

14. The Tension Monitoring process will retain the existing method for raising issues and all forms will be sent to Durham County Council's Community Safety Team and Durham Constabulary's Prevent Team.

- Each piece of information will be considered by the recipients and the appropriate action taken. Forms that provide information that, on its own, present no risk will be retained for consideration alongside future submissions.

- Issues that have the potential for raising community tension and impacting upon cohesion will be shared with the Multi-Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) group covering the relevant locality. The MAPs group will respond in order to mitigate the risk. The toolkit provides a generic action plan template to assist with this.

- Should the issue remain unresolved, and presents a significant risk to cohesion, consideration will be given to putting in place a Partnership Gold group.

15. A communications plan has been developed to ensure partners are aware of and make use of the toolkit. The Durham County Council intranet page for Counter Terrorism and Extremism will be updated to include access to the toolkit, the tension monitoring form and contact details for advice and support.

Transforming Rehabilitation

16. The Transforming Rehabilitation Task and Finish Group was established in January 2014 and has met seven times. A Project Initiation Document has been developed including a risk register and issues log.

17. Two new issues have been added to the log. Firstly, following the deadline for bid submissions on the 30 June 2014 the competition entered an evaluation phase. Since this date there has been no communication or reassurance from the Contract Package Areas team to the Local Advisory Panel that all local issue have been captured, causing concerned within the task and finish group. Although verbal reassurances were given at the August meeting, the group agreed to put concerns in writing to the Contract Package Areas team.

18. The second issue added to the log focuses on the shorting of the mobilisation phase (now January 2015 to March 2015), due to the extension of the evaluation phase. Original dates from the Ministry of Justice had the completion of the competition process in October 2014. This date has now been put back and the announcement of successful bids with take place 'by the end of 2014'. The task and finish group will begin to plan for the mobilisation phase at their October meeting.

Domestic Abuse Referral Pathways

19. In early 2014 the Safe Durham Partnership (SDP) requested a simple referral pathway for disclosures of domestic abuse to ensure frontline practitioners could easily make appropriate referrals.

20. Nationally this has also been supported by the inclusion of this issue within the recently published Home Office report which provides an overview of lessons learned nationally in terms of Domestic Homicide Reviews.

21. A new Domestic Abuse Referral pathway was produced and presented to the Safe Durham Partnership (SDP) meeting on 29 July where it was well received and agreed.

22. At the SDP meeting in July the importance of this piece of work for County Durham and the need to ensure a robust programme of dissemination was raised. Further to that discussion the SDP asked that a communication plan be produced. Work has been undertaken with CAS Marketing and Information Team and a communication plan has been produced for partner's consideration. This has been circulated and amended based on comments from partners.

23. The rollout of publicity started in September with the launch of the Domestic Abuse Referral Pathway at the Domestic Homicide Review workshop held on 23rd September, which was well attended by partners from across Durham and Darlington.

Recommendations and reasons

24. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

    (i) Note the contents of the report.

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None

Staffing – None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder – Information within this report relates to reducing crime and disorder and contributes to the Altogether Safer element of the Council Plan.

Human Rights – None

Consultation – None

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications – None