

Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

28 October 2014

Overview and Scrutiny Review Organised Crime – Draft Scoping Document



Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of the Report

1. To present for consideration by Members a draft scoping document for the Committee's review on Organised Crime.

Background

2. At its meeting in April 2014, the Committee received information from Durham Constabulary on the approach to tackle organised crime and work undertaken by a Safe Durham partnership task and finish group. The presentation highlighted the range of criminal activity, economic impact of organised crime groups and positive partnership action.
3. In considering its work programme the Committee requested to undertake review activity looking at the impact on community confidence and crime reduction relating to organised crime. Further discussion with Durham Constabulary identified areas of illegal waste sites and their links to organised crime to be included within the Committee's work. In addition the review will also look at the potential risk of organised crime to the Council.
4. A draft scoping document and project plan is attached in Appendix 2. The document identifies the purpose of the review is to contribute to further enhancing tackling organised crime within the county through promoting the wider elements of tackling organised crime and the partnership approach, further improving confidence and reassurance within communities to report activity, identifying and removing illegal waste sites and looking at the potential risk of organised crime impacting on the Council.
5. The review will also seek to gather a wide range of evidence through research and holding review group meetings with key officers between November 2014 and January 2015.

Recommendation

6. Members of the Committee are asked to note information within this report and agree the scoping document attached in Appendix 2.

Background Papers

None

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None

Staffing – None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder – Information contained in this report and presentation relates to the Altogether Safer element of the Council Plan

Human Rights – None

Consultation – None

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications – None

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Terms of Reference

Rationale

The Government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy states that *"Serious and Organised Crime is not just a threat – it is a daily reality that can affect everyone and costs the overall economy at least £24billion each year"*

At its meeting in April 2014, the Committee received information from Durham Constabulary on the approach to tackle organised crime within the County and work undertaken by a Safe Durham Partnership task and finish group. The presentation highlighted the range of criminal activity, economic impact of organised crime groups and positive partnership action and within the previous 12 months there had been a minimum of £560,000 worth of drugs seized, £332,000 in cash detained (which does not include confiscation orders made of criminal benefit) and at least 70 arrests.

In considering its work programme, the Committee requested to undertake review activity looking at the impact on community confidence and crime reduction relating to organised crime. In developing the scope, discussions with Durham Constabulary identified illegal waste sites and their links to organised crime to be included within the Committee's work. In addition the review will also look at the potential risk of organised crime to the Council.

The review will seek evidence in relation to the direction set by the objectives of 'Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare' within the Government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy and how this is being met locally. Evidence will also be gathered on the approach between the Council, Durham Constabulary and the Environment Agency regarding raising awareness of the impact of organised crime in relation to illegal waste sites. Evidence on community confidence, will be gathered through the work of Neighbourhood Police Teams, innovative use of PACT meetings and Proceeds of Crime Act. The Government's strategy also aims to reduce the vulnerability and protect local government from serious and organised crime.

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the review is to seek outcomes to contribute to further enhancing tackling organised crime within the county through:

- promoting the wider elements of tackling organised crime and the partnership approach
- further improve confidence and reassurance within communities to report activity;
- identifying and removing illegal waste sites; and
- looking at the potential risk of Organised crime impacting on the Council

Objectives

- To undertake research on the link to organised crime in advance of each review group meeting in relation to improving confidence, illegal waste sites and protecting local government.
- To consider crime and confidence data within areas affected by organised crime, the wide range of activity across the county, partnership approach through the Disruption Intervention Panel and its impact on communities/businesses.
- To gain an understanding and comment upon delivery of the Government's strategy within County Durham through partnership working and linked into the work of the National Crime Agency.
- To gather evidence on the impact of organised crime within County Durham and existing approaches to engage and raise awareness with communities and businesses to report suspected organised crime through Neighbourhood Policing, PACT meetings, social media and use of the Proceeds of Crime Act.
- To receive evidence on a case study example of tackling an organised crime group operating an illegal waste site and to consider current partnership arrangements, powers and responsibilities to take action on illegal waste sites
- To raise awareness to the potential threat of Organised crime on the Council and look at the approaches to identify and reduce this is risk

Reporting Arrangements

The Overview and Scrutiny review group will report to the County Council's Assistant Chief Executive's Management Team, Neighbourhood Services, Corporate Management Team (CMT), Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on its findings and recommendations. The report will be also shared for comment with Durham Constabulary prior to agreement by the Committee.

Timescale

Review Group meetings and visits are to take place between November and January with a report scheduled to be presented to the Committee and Cabinet thereafter.

Organised Crime – Draft OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY REVIEW PROJECT PLAN

WHEN Times/Dates/ Locations	DESIGNATED LEAD Member/ Officer	WHO Key Witness	WHAT Evidence/Information	HOW Meeting/Visit/ Correspondence/ Briefing Paper/ Research	OUTCOMES	WHY
18th November County Hall, 9:30am Rm 1a	Cllr Boyes	Durham Constabulary	Background and Supporting information, covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DVD highlighting The Government’s Organised Crime Strategy & characteristics of an Organised Criminal Organised Crime within County Durham (inc high profile campaign, crime and confidence data, wide range of activity across the County, partnership Disruption Intervention Panel , impact on communities/businesses and priority areas 	Report and Briefing Presentation DVD	Provide Members with supporting information to gain further awareness of the impact and approach to tackling organised crime from both a National and local perspective	Understanding of Organised Crime Capture research and evidence in line with the objectives for the review group report
24th November County Hall 9:30am CR 2	Cllr Boyes	Durham Constabulary	<u>Community Intelligence to tackle Organised Crime</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guess Who?? Impact of Organised Crime on Communities Current approaches to engage and raise awareness and to report suspected organised crime within Communities through, Neighbourhood Policing, PACT meetings and social media and use of Proceeds of Crime Act Role of Crimestoppers and Neighbourhood Watch 	Research report, Presentation and interactive demonstration	To look at approaches to encourage awareness and increase confidence of action for communities to report suspicious activity within their communities.	Receive evidence to identify further improvements or methods to increasing confidence and engagement with communities.

<p>9th December County Hall, CR2 9:30</p>	<p>Cllr Boyes</p>	<p>Durham Constabulary Durham County Council Environment Agency</p>	<p><u>Illegal Waste Sites</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The link between organised crime and illegal waste sites • Presentation by Durham Constabulary on tackling illegal waste sites • Partnership approach and roles and responsibilities of Durham County Council and the Environment Agency 	<p>Presentation & Research report</p>	<p>Receive presentation from Durham Constabulary on an OCG relating to illegal waste sites but also look at responsibility of the Council and Environment Agency through licensing, regulatory powers and enforcement.</p>	<p>Evidence to support review objectives and identify any gaps or improvements</p>
<p>29th January, County Hall CR2 9:30am</p>		<p>Durham County Council Durham Constabulary</p>	<p>Risk of Organised Crime on Durham County Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to provide an overview on the risk and measures to prevent organised crime impacting on the Council's services 	<p>Presentation</p>	<p>Protecting local government key objective within Government Organised crime Strategy. Outcome of this session is to raise awareness to the threat and identify any improvements can be made to reducing the risk of the Council being impacted by organised crime</p>	
<p>TBA</p>			<p><u>Consider draft report</u></p> <p>Consider draft report containing findings from evidence meetings</p>	<p>Report</p>	<p>Agree report to be considered by Cabinet</p>	
<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>Cllr Boyes</p>		<p>Present Report to Cabinet</p>			