

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of **Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in **Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham** on **Monday 23 March 2015 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor D Boyes (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors J Armstrong, J Charlton, P Conway, M Davinson, S Forster, J Gray, C Hampson, J Maitland, N Martin, T Nearney, K Shaw, P Stradling, J Turnbull, C Wilson and J Allen

Co-opted Members:

Mr A J Cooke and Mr J Welch

Co-opted Employees/Officers:

S Errington

Also Present:

Councillor J Allen

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Hodgson, G Holland and Chief Superintendent G Hall.

2 Substitute Members

No notification of Substitute Members had been received.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held 16 February 2015

The Minutes of the meeting held 16 February 2015 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Assistant Chief Executive's, Jonathan Slee noted that, in reference to the minutes, the response on behalf of the Committee had been submitted in respect of the consultations relating to the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy and the draft Safe Durham Partnership Plan 2015/18.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

5 Any items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

There were no items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties.

6 Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

The Chairman thanked the Deputy Chief Constable, Durham Constabulary, Michael Banks, who was in attendance to speak to Members regarding the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (for copy see file of minutes).

The Deputy Chief Constable thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak on the topic of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Members were reminded of the Safe Durham Partnership's (SDP) priority of "Counter-Terrorism and the Prevention of Violent Extremism", noting that the nature of potential threats had changed considerably in the 6 years since the SDP was established. Councillors noted that the partnership working in County Durham was very good and formed a firm foundation on which to build. It was reiterated that the changing nature of potential threats meant that all partners needed to remain "fleet of foot" and resolved to making effective use of the resources available. The Committee learned that the Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy was called "CONTEST" and had been in place since 2008, with a number of iterations since. It was added that the CONTEST Strategy had four objectives, the "4 P's", them being:

- Pursue – to stop terrorist attacks (being the remit of the Police and Security Services)
- Prevent – to stop people becoming or supporting violent extremists
- Prepare – where an attack cannot be stopped, to mitigate its impact
- Protect – to strengthen our overall protection against terrorist attacks

It was explained that there was a need to provide a "counter-narrative" to help prevent people become vulnerable to extremism, noting that the journey to becoming self-radicalised had shortened and the type of threats had changed from larger scale events to those of "lone actors" as seen recently in France, Belgium, US, Canada and Tunisia. Members noted that while Durham did have some iconic sites, the threat of a large-scale incident was low. The Deputy Chief Constable explained that a key challenge was countering extremist narratives, with guidance expected shortly from central Government.

The Committee noted that the SDP's CONTEST "Silver Group" had developed a 2014/17 Action Plan and was in the process of commissioning a Counter Terrorism Local Profile. It was noted that the 2-3 year Plan was a rolling programme and delivered against Protect, Prevent and Prepare. Councillors noted that the CONTEST Silver Group had several achievements and activities including: implications of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015; National Counter-Terrorism week; Prevent awareness week with partners and the public; "Trust Your Instincts" a video and e-learning course made available via the SDP website; and the Community Cohesion Toolkit, a resource for the Council and partners.

Members learned of the Channel process where a professional, or member of the public, could refer someone they believed to be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism to the Police. The Committee were reminded that the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 set out obligations and duties for "Specified Authorities": Schools; the Police; Higher and Further Education; Health; Prisons and Probation; and Local Authorities. It was added that the CONTEST Silver Group had noted there would be increased demand placed upon those specified authorities and there would be need for people within those authorities to gain a level of knowledge to be able to meet those demands. Councillors learned that the Act provided the Secretary of State with the power of enforcement where a specified authority failed to discharge the duty imposed upon it.

The Deputy Chief Constable explained that in respect of the Prevent objective, Durham had effective leadership in place and good partnership arrangements with appropriate capabilities. In relation to the duties for Specified Authorities, the Deputy Chief Constable noted that a good model to follow could be that of the "Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat". It was noted that having a consistent approach that was proportionate to any threat, while still being appropriate for each community was important and guidance from Government due in July 2015 should help to clarify how to approach this. Members were reminded that in addition to the CONTEST Silver Group, there was the Gold level, which was the Chief Executives of all the partner organisations, and a Bronze level, which was the operational level.

The Chairman thanked the Deputy Chief Constable and asked Members for their questions on the report and presentation.

The Committee asked questions in relation to: an additional security presence; would there be a risk to how organisations would be able to discharge their duties in 4-5 years' time with continuing pressures on resources and budgets; how the radicalisation of prisoners would be tackled; and whether there was a communication strategy within the Prevent strand, especially in the context of schools, colleges and universities.

The Deputy Chief Constable explained that any additional security presence would be a proportional response to any intelligence received, and would more likely be an issue for larger cities, such as London. It was added that a National Decision Model was used as regards what methods and tactics would be employed, in conjunction with a Code of Ethics. The Deputy Chief Constable noted that reducing budgets was an issue, however, types of crime were changing with the rise of cybercrime and the reduction in other types. It was noted that terrorism was changing with a global dimension, though there was still the potential for lone actors that have self-radicalised.

Members noted that Prisons were a Specified Authority and the Police would work in partnership with Prisons and it was added there were some formal routes, such as licences, and other bespoke and innovated approaches. It was added that the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), Prisons and the Probation Service were involved in CONTEST and there were some established tactics and approaches. The Deputy Chief Constable explained that in terms of communication, there was the National Counter-Terrorism Awareness Week; the National Counter-Terrorism Hotline; and the Police themselves. It was added that it was one of the roles of the CONTEST Board to make sure that the issues were highlighted and that organisations and the public were "alert not alarmed" to the issues relating to terrorism.

The Chairman thanked the Deputy Chief Constable and noted that the appropriate links relating to further information could be circulated to the Committee.

Resolved:

- (i) That the report and presentation be noted.
- (ii) That a further update report on Counter-Terrorism and Security Act be presented at a future meeting of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7 Cybercrime

The Chairman thanked Acting Detective Superintendent Victoria Fuller, Durham Constabulary who was in attendance to give a presentation on the issue of Cybercrime (for copy see file of minutes).

The Acting Detective Superintendent explained that she was the force lead for cybercrime and set the context of the potential issues including: 2 Billion People access the internet worldwide; 93% of children in the UK aged 12-15 say they use the internet at home; and research suggested that the cost of cybercrime to the economy was an estimated £27 Billion.

The Committee noted that there were different crimes associated with the overall term “cybercrime”, with: “Dependent” crimes, meaning a computer connecting to a computer, high level activities such as distributed denial of services (DDoS) attacks; “Enabled” crimes, existing types of crime such as fraud or theft that are enabled via use of computer or information sourced from computers or social media; and “Facilitated” crimes, where criminal activities are organised or facilitated, such as drug sales. Members learned that fraud was the most prevalent form, accounting for 35% of all reported cybercrime, with most of that type being associated with online shopping.

The Committee noted the Government’s UK Cyber Security Strategy and activities undertaken to promote cybersecurity including Safer Internet Day, 10 February 2015 and activities to promote regular updating of operating systems, applications and anti-virus software, use of strong passwords, avoiding e-mail scams and to monitor your online privacy settings. Members noted that there was a Cybercrime Strategy for County Durham and a Cybercrime Working Group, which operated according to the “4 P’s” as previously mentioned: Pursue; Prevent; Prepare; and Protect, with an emphasis on prevention. It was explained that the Police had trained staff in respect of cybercrime prevention messages and that those messages were also spread by volunteers and officers from local Universities. It was noted that the message was consistent and bespoke activities would try to reach as many types of computer/internet user as possible. Members learned that there was a bespoke Cyber Unit at Durham Constabulary to provide advice and support, and Durham Constabulary was delivering a training programme to over 300 of their investigators over the next 12-18 months.

The Acting Detective Superintendent noted that a survey in relation to cybercrime had shown that, in County Durham, half of those surveyed noted they did not feel safe online and at moderate risk of cybercrime, with 11% feeling at high risk.

It was added that 78% noted that they had not been a victim of cybercrime, however, some people surveyed had experienced incidents online that potentially could have been a cybercrime. It was explained that of those surveyed, 62% did not know where to report cybercrime to or where to go to get information relating to cybercrime. Members noted that issues of cybercrime often did not relate to a technical point, rather a behaviour that led to information being vulnerable, and the point was made to “don’t do online what you wouldn’t do offline” in terms of sharing personal information.

The Chairman thanked the Acting Detective Superintendent and asked Members for their questions on the report and presentation.

The Committee asked questions in relation to increasing public awareness of issues, where to report and how to rectify problems and how internet service providers (ISPs) were helping in terms of removing or restricting access to inappropriate websites, for example those detailing self-harm.

The Acting Detective Superintendent explained that prevention of potential cybercrime was key, with a need to educate the public and those within the public sector as regards the importance of keeping personal data secure and to avoid scams and e-mail fraud. It was added that the promotion of good practice would be through the use of a partnership approach, with the message of enjoy using the internet, however, “don’t do online what you wouldn’t do offline”. Members noted that the Police did link in with ISPs where appropriate and always pursued issues where there was any element of criminality.

Resolved:

That the report and presentation be noted.

8 Quarter 3 2014/15 Performance Management Report

The Chairman introduced the Performance and Data Services Manager, David Knighton and the Performance Manager, Durham Constabulary, Gary Pearson, who were in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Quarter 3 2014/15 Performance Management Report for the Altogether Safer theme (for copy see file of minutes).

The Performance and Data Services Manager referred Members to the report and noted key performance achievements, including: increased performance in terms of interventions for crime/anti-social behaviour (ASB); a reduced number of ASB incidents; a reduction in alcohol related ASB and alcohol related violent crimes; a decrease in the number of theft offences; and a reduction in reoffending.

It was noted that the key performance issues included: underperformance in relation to reoffending in the Integrate Offender Management (IOM) cohort; and a slight underperformance in respect of the number of people completing alcohol and drug treatment.

The Performance Manager, Durham Constabulary explained that figures had shown a slight increase in the overall crime rate, though these figures were affected by investigations into historic offences and changes in recording practices as directed by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC).

It was added that the majority of crime types showed a decrease, with County Durham having one of the highest “solve rates” in the country, however shoplifting was noted as having increased.

The Chairman thanked the Performance and Data Services Manager and the Performance Manager, Durham Constabulary and noted that there would be further meetings of the Committee’s Working Group relating to the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centres in due course. The Chairman noted disappointment in the reoffending figures for the IOM cohort and asked whether the 40% stretch target was one that needed to be reviewed. The Head of Planning and Service Strategy, Children and Adults Services, Peter Appleton noted that the cohort represented the most prolific offenders and “Transforming Rehabilitation” was still ongoing, with the Safe Durham Partnership to report back on this in due course.

Councillor N Martin noted that the graphs as set out in Appendix 4 to the report were confusing and that it would be beneficial to have all the scales within the graphs start at zero. Councillor N Martin added that it would also be helpful to have all of the numbers of successful alcohol and drug treatment completions listed alongside the graphs, the figures being required in order to work out those percentage figures as shown. Councillor N Martin asked whether the completion of such treatment courses was on a rolling basis and whether therefore the reporting by quarter was the best way to understand this information. The Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Manager, Tom Gorman noted the issues as regards the graphs for future reporting.

Councillors noted concern regarding an increase in the suicide rate and the Chairman noted that this was a cross-cutting issue with other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and the work programme for the Committee would be refreshed after May. Chief Inspector C McGillivray noted that there was analysis in terms of the involvement of drugs and alcohol in suicide, and that there was work looking for early identification of those potentially at risk. Councillor C Wilson noted that mental health issues should also to be considered in this regard. The Head of Planning and Service Strategy noted that colleagues in Public Health may have more information on this issue, and also in the context of the Mental Health Action Plan.

The Head of Planning and Service Strategy added that in relation to ASB, a “confidence rating”, as obtained by survey, may be a useful addition to the performance report.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Draft Council Plan 2015-2018 - Refresh of the Work Programme

The Chairman thanked the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Manager who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Draft Council Plan 2015-2018 - Refresh of the Work Programme for the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (for copy see file of minutes).

The Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Manager explained that the report was the first stage in the usual annual process of setting the work programme for the Committee, in the context of the “Altogether Safer” priority theme as set out in the Council Plan 2015-2018.

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Committee would consider a draft work programme and project plan, based upon the comments from Members brought forward at the meeting today. Councillors were informed that the meeting of Council to be held 1 April 2015 would consider Draft Council Plan, with the "Altogether Safer" section attached at Appendix 2 to the report in the agenda pack.

The Committee noted that the work undertaken by the Committee over the last year was set out within the report and it was for Members to suggest topics for further investigation, taking on board issues raised from performance reporting, upcoming legislation and issues discussed at the Committee.

The Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Manager noted that Paragraph 13 highlighted gaps within the work programme and noted comments from the previous agenda item in relation to suicide rates.

The Chairman thanked the Corporate Improvement Manager and noted that any comments or suggestions for potential topics for future reviews could be forward to the Overview and Scrutiny Officer for inclusion in the report to be considered at the June meeting. Councillor J Armstrong reminded Members that reviews would need to be taken in the context of capacity and in terms of being achievable and adding value. The Chairman agreed noting that it was important that review activity had a positive impact.

Resolved:

- (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That the Committee receive a further report detailing the Committee's work programme for 2015-2016.

10 Overview and Scrutiny Review Activity

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer thanked the Chairman and asked the Committee to note the Organised Crime Working Group would have a final meeting following the Committee meeting and would look at key findings to inform the draft report which would come back to Committee in due course. The Committee noted that a Working Group had been identified to look at the topic of 20mph Limits and meetings of this Group would take place in April, with an update to come back to Committee in June.

Resolved:

That the verbal update be noted.

11 Police and Crime Panel

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred Members to the report setting out the main issues discussed at the last meeting of the Police and Crime Panel (for copy see file of minutes).

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer noted the main issues included:

- Reviewing the Police and Crime Plan 2015-17
- Revenue and Capital Budgets 2015/16
- HMIC Inspection Update
- Presentations on “Checkpoint”, Mental Health and interactive Public Performance Report

Members noted that Superintendent Kevin Weir, Durham Constabulary had provided two presentations on “Checkpoint” and Mental Health, with the former building upon restorative practices with the aim to reduce reoffending following “low-level crime”, thorough partnership working. It was explained that the Police and Crime Plan 2015-17 had been considered and the Plan and a public performance report were available to view via the Police and Crime Commissioner’s website.

Resolved:

- (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That a link to the Police and Crime Plan and Performance Report be circulated to Members.

12 Safe Durham Partnership

The Chairman asked the Community Safety Manager, Caroline Duckworth to speak to Members as regards an update from the Safer Durham Partnership (SDP).

Members noted the information as regards: feedback from the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee being incorporated into the Safe Durham Partnership Plan 2015-18; the “Blue Light” Project, to develop alternative approaches and care pathways for treatment resistant drinkers, linking to issues of domestic abuse; the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat Action Plan, noting multi-agency working, key priorities and data sharing proposals.

It was added that 5 of the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) had agreed “Community Safety” as a priority, and all AAPs had considered: the SDP Plan 2015-18: the PCC’s Police and Crime Plan 2015-17: the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service’s (CDDFRS) Strategic Plan 2015-18; and the CDDFRS’ Safer Homes Project.

Members learned that the partner feedback from the Governance Review had highlighted the SDP could coordinate media and communications better and accordingly a Communication and Marketing Action Plan 2015/16 was set out, identifying joint working; key messages; methods of communication; and lead agency. The Committee noted that the Multi-Agency Interventions Service (MAIS) had a new information sharing agreement signed off by the SDP, which included support for case management and secure document sharing.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.