

## **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 **Friday 22 September 2017 at 9.30 am**

#### **Present:**

**Councillor D Boyes (Chairman)**

#### **Members of the Committee:**

Councillors B Avery, J Charlton, J Considine, R Crute, S Durham, S Iveson, L Kennedy, H Liddle, J Maitland, E Mavin, J Nicholson, J Stephenson, D Stoker, K Thompson and C Wilson

#### **Co-opted Members:**

Mr A J Cooke

#### **Co-opted Employees/Officers:**

Chief Superintendent A Green

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Hampson, A Patterson, J Turnbull and Co-opted Member J Welch and Chief Fire Officer Stuart Errington.

### **2 Substitute Members**

No notification of Substitute Members had been received.

### **3 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held 26 June 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Jonathan Slee advised Members that responses to reports and presentations from the Committee's meeting on Open Water Safety, Hate Crime and Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence had been sent and that update reports would be provided as part of the Committee's work programme.

In response to a question asked by Councillor Avery on underage drinking, the Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that he had contacted the Alcohol Harm Reduction Unit for further information and was advised that a lot of work had been undertaken to engage with schools and young people around the Ferryhill area prior to the summer holidays and that a staysafe operation had taken place in September.

#### **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 Media Relations**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Jonathan Slee referred Members to the recent prominent articles and news stories relating to the remit of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (for copy see file of minutes). The articles included: 'Increased police presence across County Durham and Darlington' to which is linked to the agenda item on CounterTerrorism and within in relation to road safety within the performance report a headline on 'Police back national seatbelt campaign'.

Members were also advised of an article that appeared in The Northern Echo on the morning of the Committee's meeting concerning a campaign including emergency services within the county to cut road deaths, a copy of the article would be circulated to Members of the committee.

#### **Resolved:**

That the presentation be noted.

#### **7 Youth Justice Plan 2016/17: Progress Update**

The Chairman advised Members that due to unforeseen circumstances, apologies from the Youth Offending Service had been received as the Countywide Manager, Youth Offending Service was unable to attend the Committee's meeting. The Chair advised that any questions from Members would be sent to the Service and requested an update report in 6 months instead of 12.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented the report that provided an overview of performance, progress and achievements (2016/17) in the context of the Youth Justice Plan refresh 2016/17. A copy of the new Youth Justice Plan 2017/19 had been circulated with the report for information (for copy of report see file of minutes).

Councillor Maitland referred to the number of remand bed nights which was 629 in 2016/17 and the previous year was 227 and sought clarification on the reasons why there was a sudden increase.

Councillor Crute referred to paragraphs 12 and 13 of the report in relation re-offending and if further detailed information on the reduction within the cohort could be included within the next update. Councillor Crute added that the service were doing a fantastic job but further information would provide knowledge on the impact of effective intervention and performance outturn.

The Chairman referred to the reduction in first time entrants to the youth justice system and if offenders knew that they are not going to enter the youth justice system would this make them offend as they knew they would not be arrested.

Chief Superintendent A Green responded that an increase in remand bed nights did not always mean there was a large increase in offences and could be linked to a low number of individuals who had committed more serious offences. Chief Superintendent A Green also advised Members of the positive use of restorative approaches within the County to which could lead to reducing reoffending and greater outcomes for victims.

Councillor Thompson asked how the figures compared nationally and was this reflected in the figures for County Durham or does the Council stand out alone. He also asked if these figures could be included in the update report.

The Chairman and the Overview Scrutiny Officer referred to the number of awards the County Council had achieved which were highlighted in the report and how the Council were diverse in terms of projects.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the report be noted.
- (ii) That Members receive an update in 6 months.
- (iii) That Members receive the Youth Justice Plan 2017/19.

**8 Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 Update**

The Chairman introduced Detective Inspector Alfie Keane, Durham Constabulary who was in attendance to provide members with an update on progress of the collective response of all 'specified authorities' to the new duties imposed by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (for copy of report see file of minutes).

Councillor Thompson referred to the Home Office Prevent Innovation Project and the creative arts project and sought clarification on how the areas of Bishop Auckland and Darlington had been chosen for the project.

Detective Inspector Keane responded that he was unaware of the specific criteria used for the selection of these areas but would obtain this information and respond to Members of the Committee.

Councillor Stoker referred to a radio interview with the Metropolitan Police on how recent acts of terrorism had led to heightened security levels over an extended period and the ability of a reduced number of police officers to continue to provide protection at this level. He asked how long County Durham could sustain highlighted security levels.

Detective Inspector Keane responded that if Durham was at a critical status over a period then they would call on additional officers to sustain the level. The Government stepped up to critical status last week and extra resources were deployed and the army would release officers if needed. These options were available to all police forces.

Chief Superintendent Green advised Members of a national approach through mutual support within the police service and that Durham officers were deployed to Manchester following the terrorist attack and the concert which took place a few weeks later. Officers from Durham were also deployed to provide support following the fire at Grenfell Towers. Therefore, if County Durham needed extra resources this would be reciprocated from

other police forces and the police service also has the option to require officers to work 12 hour shifts although this was not in place for the last two escalations to critical status.

Councillor Charlton referred to the importance of neighbourhood policing and that there was currently no police inspector with her area.

Councillor Crute commented on the importance of communication with communities and this being achieved with a reduction in PACT meetings. .

Chief Superintendent Green responded that not all PACT meetings were well attended and so after careful consideration across the force area that had been a reduction in the number of PACT meetings. Chief Superintendent Green advised Members that he would ensure that the acting Inspector for the Stanley area would be in contact with local Members, and their details be available on the Force's website.

Councillor Thompson indicated that PACT meetings in his area were well attended and he would not like to see any reduction in meetings. In response, Chief Superintendent Green advised that the reduction in PACT meetings had taken place and there was no intention to change current PACT meetings.

Mr Cooke referred to para 3 of the report and asked if there were links with schools and a system of co-operation.

Detective Inspector Keane responded that they had recently held two events for Head Teachers and there was a structure in place and preventative education worked.

Councillor Kennedy advised Members that the structure in place in schools was fantastic, they had direct contact with the police who responded quickly.

The Chairman asked what Members should look out for in their areas.

Detective Inspector Keane encouraged Members to report any suspicious activity linked to terrorism or extremism within their communities.

Councillor Kennedy suggested training for Members as they were the first contact in the community. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that he would look into prevent training for Members.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**9 Quarter 1 2017/18 Performance Management Report**

The Chairman introduced the Team Leader, Performance Co-ordination and Development, Transformation and Partnerships who was in attendance to speak to Members in relation to the Quarter I 2017/18 Performance Management Report for the Altogether Safer priority theme (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor Crute referred to his concern of the use of performance indicators as evidence and asked if the terminology in the report could be amended to reflect that they are indicators and not evidence.

The Chairman asked the Officer to feed this back to the service.

Councillor Stephenson referred to the number of red indicators in particular the suicide rate per 100,000 population and sought clarification if there was a plan in place.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised Members that the Council's Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee were undertaking review activity on mental health and suicide to which once complete, the report could be shared with the Committee.

The Chairman and Councillor Crute referred to cross cutting activity across scrutiny committees and that this would be considered at a meeting scheduled to be held on 9 October 2017 with all Chairs and Vice-Chairs of scrutiny committees.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**10 Police and Crime Panel**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented a report that provided Members with progress of the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) for the Durham Constabulary Force area (for copy of report see file of minutes).

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**11 Review Updates**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer referred to the Cybercrime Working Group that had been held on 11 September 2017 that focused on hacking and young people. This area had been identified as a gap and the aim of the review is prevent young people from becoming engaged or remaining in cybercrime activity. Members were informed that Professor Irons from Sunderland University was in attendance together with Detective Sergeant Martin Wilson and Andrea Petty, Strategic Manager.

The next session would be held on 16 October 2017 and would be looking at prevention and education awareness and the 17 November 2017 session would be focused on how prevention from remaining in cybercrime activity.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer then informed Members of a forthcoming focused scrutiny session on the partnership response to an increase in arson and secondary deliberate fires in the East Durham area. This topic was requested at the Committee's meeting in June and the session would be held on 12 October 2017 at 1.00 pm. The Committee were advised that following agreement with the Chair, locality members within areas of higher incidents of arson and deliberate fires had also been invited to attend the session. Following the session a report would be sent to Safe Durham Partnership Board and the Portfolio Holder.

## **12 Safe Durham Partnership Update**

The Chairman introduced Julie Bradbrook, Partnership Manager who was in attendance to provide members with a summary update on key issues discussed at the September 2017 Safe Durham Partnership (SDP) Board meeting and related issues (for copy of report see file of minutes).

Councillor Kennedy sought clarification if they worked with schools on the Child Road Casualty Reduction.

The Partnership Manager responded that work was happening in schools and there was also a focus on young drivers.

### **Resolved:**

That the contents of the report be noted.