

Community Safety Partnership

Minutes of the Public Meeting held on 26th May 2010

Desborough Suite, Town Hall, Maidenhead

1. APOLOGIES RECEIVED FROM:

Cllr Colin Rayner, Lead Member for Community Safety	RBWM
Cllr Majeed	RBWM
Asma Aziz	WMVA

2. INTROCUITION

Ian Trenholm welcomed everyone to the event and introduced Theresa May.

Theresa May gave a short speech, expressing how useful the meeting is to hear grassroot experience and how the public feel the partnership is working. She indicated that she wanted to ensure the country had the right partnerships in place and that they provide services which benefit the community. She mentioned that there will be changes to partnerships and that it is important to see what is being done and how it is working now before any changes are made.

IT introduced what the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is, who the responsible partners and invitees are and what the CSP does for the public. IT explained how the work is done, through prevention, intervention and enforcement.

3. CRIME AND POLICING

Tim De Meyer (TDM) introduced himself and his colleagues and explained how Thames Valley Police are working to reduce crime and disorder. 09/10 performance has seen a reduction in burglary, theft of vehicles, personal robbery and business robbery but there has been an increase in theft from motor vehicles. Burglary levels are down as a result of improved investigation and prosecution. Preventative work has increased; examples include community messaging, which sends out targeted messages, and the Safe as Houses project which offered crime prevention advice and equipment to the vulnerable members of the community. Theft from motor vehicles is still a problem and most of the offenders are from the area and are dependent on drugs and/or alcohol. Violent crime is still slightly up but work has been done to help this, for example controlling drink promotions, increasing police presence on Friday and Saturday nights, using Section 27 powers (notice to quit), introducing a taxi marshalling scheme and closing roads to make policing the area easier. Criminal damage is one of the greatest successes of recent years, due to the work of PCSOs and Community Wardens intervening in anti-social behaviour (ASB). Work has been done on improving victim care for hate crimes, which has resulted in increased detection rates. During the coming year, work will also be done on improving public confidence.

4. TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Gail Lumsden (GL) introduced her anti-social behaviour (ASB) team and the community wardens, who will total 14 in the next few months. The ASB team deal with private residents and work with the other agencies to listen, support and resolve ASB problems. There are many different types of ASB and these affect people in different ways. The borough, housing association and police are involved when dealing with ASB complaints and each complainant is sent an ASB pack with diary sheets. There are monthly case conferences to discuss ASB cases and regular meetings to discuss individual cases. ASB work covers prevention, for example clean-up events, intervention, such as warning letter and Anti-Social Behaviour Contracts, and enforcement like Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and the issue of Fixed Penalty notices. The ASB team have zero tolerance to ASB and in November 2009 and February 2010 the team recorded the lowest figures for ASB incidents in the last 4 years, which is encouraging for the future. The ASB team will continue to work towards reducing ASB, work on repeat victimisation and vulnerable people linked to ASB and exceed and promote our ASB minimum standards to the public.

5. FIRE SAFETY

Paul Jacques (PJ) talked about the prevention work the fire service does, alongside their work as a response service. In terms of performance figures, primary fires and fire casualties have reduced significantly, as a result of good partnership work. The fire message is getting across to the public, but more still needs to be done to reduce dwelling fires. Deliberate fires have also reduced from 418 in 2003 to 2004, which was mainly due to car fires. Partnership work has been carried out around reducing false alarms. A lot of work has been done with partners, for example reducing arson risk by clearing rubbish bins at lunchtime before people go out in the evening. RBFRS have also been working on the Safe Drive Stay Alive campaign, working with East Berkshire to stop people smoking and work with Thames Valley Police and the Royal Borough at the Joint Action Groups and Water Safety. There is also a fair amount of effort around education, such as the Phoenix and Evolution schemes which are notable best practice and are aimed at young offenders and increasing personal qualities and skills. In 2010 to 2011, RBFRS will continue to do Home Fire Safety checks, which often provide referrals for other services such as police (crime reduction) and health, and continue the educational work, done with schools in particular.

6. REDUCING REOFFENDING

Di Wright (DW) introduced her team and T2, the main service for drug and alcohol advice and treatment. Reducing reoffending is the DAAT's main target and DW described how most of the crime caused is by a small group of people and most of them do have a drug and/or alcohol problem. The DAAT's role is to ensure that there are effective treatment services in place to stop people taking drugs or alcohol. The DAAT work closely with the police, probation and community safety team and work on providing intensive interventions for the most prolific offenders. These Prolific and Priority Offenders are seen at least four times a week by our partners and get help with accommodation, education. There is also the Integrated Offender Management scheme which deals with the 'slightly less' prolific offenders, most of whom are using drugs and/or alcohol and work towards getting them into treatment. Work is also done with the prison service to arrange an after-care plan for those with a drug or alcohol problem to ensure they have support when they leave prison. There are many different forms of treatment available. The specialist prescribing is for those who have the most chaotic drug and alcohol use and those who are the most vulnerable. Key working is for anyone who has a drug or alcohol problem and anyone can attend the drop-in session, from neighbours to families, anyone who feels them or someone else might have a drug or alcohol problem. There is also access to alternative therapies such as acupuncture and residential rehabilitation if the person cannot be treated in the community. Funding was received last year to provide alcohol arrest referral workers who see people who are in custody and provide them with brief interventions and advice on their levels of drinking.

7. QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL

7.1 Question from Cllr Holness: The fire service identify places and people who are at risk of a fire, could the police not do this work too?

Answer: PJ replied that the fire service works with the police in locating areas at risk of fire; they look at the demographic of the fire and groups of people who might be more susceptible. TDM explained that the police look at the place, time, victim and suspect of crimes and this is discussed in the weekly tasking meeting to see if any of the features are significant. Cllr Burbage added that the coalition agreement has indicated they want to see an increase in crime mapping to make more information available to the public and enable the public to compare crime across counties. TDM replied that Thames Valley Police (TVP) is looking into an information technology solution to this. TVP is keen to show the crimes that take place and how they were responded to, potentially combining this through community messaging. TVP would like to share more information and have more transparency about what the police are doing in the community.

- 7.2 Question: The Community Safety Partnership is keen to improve public confidence but other areas spin their figures to make them look better. What is Thames Valley Police's view on this?
Answer: TDM answered that the way community messaging is being used, which is the best in Thames Valley, shows how TVP are trying to include more details about crimes to the public. Sometimes public perception about crime is worse than the reality and providing people with more facts and information will help improve public confidence.
- 7.3 Question: There used to be an active fire station in Cookham but the resources have been moved to Maidenhead. Can the fire service reinstate the station, as flooding in particular is an issue in Cookham.
Answer: PJ answered that in reply to the flooding issue, there is only one boat available and it is based in Reading because this is a central location. The service looks at the incidents and how well they can attend areas, to ensure the best location is picking for both the fire resources. Olaf Baars commented on the Cookham Fire Station and explained that the Fire Authority had not made a decision on whether to permanently move the assets to Maidenhead. However, the move was done to ensure availability and because Cookham could not find a crew for the station. Maidenhead Fire Station is close to Cookham and every incident that occurred in Cookham, the Maidenhead crew have been at the fire before the Cookham crew, so in effect Cookham are getting a better service by keeping the resources in Maidenhead.
- 7.4 Question by Barry Mair: Mr Mair thanked the partnership for the presentation, but commented that partnership working with regards to ASB was not as successful as was made out. From his experience, Mr Mair has not seen the partners working together and would like to encourage closer working. There was also no mention of the public in the partnership and it would be good to see them being represented.
Answer: IT answered that the community do see the public as important partners along with the work of the Neighbourhood Action Groups.
- 7.5 Question: Why is road safety not part of the partnership?
Answer: Brian Martin answered on behalf of community safety. Road safety is one part of the targets we measure and can be included in the next meeting we have. IT added that the agenda had to be limited and was designed to address people's main concerns. The idea of the stalls was to allow people to ask specific questions to departments or areas not included in the presentations.
- 7.6 Question: Dog mess is still an issue and only a part-time dog warden is employed across the Borough. Is the dog warden the only person who can impose fines? Are the community wardens empowered to impose fines too?
Answer: IT replied that the council are looking into training the community wardens and parking wardens to do more and broaden their remit. BM added that community wardens are all trained in litter fines, graffiti and fly-tipping but not dog fouling fines yet. Community safety is also working on some new bags to pick up dog mess, with a message about the fine written on it. These can be handed out to members of the public by community wardens and PCSOs.
- 7.7 Question: There are still a lot of people driving whilst on their mobile phone. Is there any target to decrease the number?
Answer: TDM answered that there is no specific local target for this but if the police witness someone driving whilst on their mobile phone, they will intervene. Roads policing is dealt with centrally through the force and Windsor and Maidenhead can bid for resources. However, the police have limited resources so generally only fund and concentrate on the crime related matters.
- 7.8 Supportive remark from Catherine McLinden, Age Concern Windsor: Mrs McLinden praised the work of the Dedworth NAG and how successful the work with the fire service has been in the

local community centre. Mrs McLinden also thanked the work of the community wardens and PCSOs in the area for the difference they have made around ASB, in particular reassuring the older and more vulnerable members of the community.

- 7.9 Question: Why are members of the public doing community speed watch instead of the police?
Answer: TDM answered for the police. Whilst the police have general priorities, each Neighbourhood Action Group has their own priorities and speeding is a popular priority. Community speed watch is a preventative measure to encourage people to see what speed they are driving. Ken McRae from Oldfield and Bray Neighbourhood Action Group explained that it was their NAG who asked the community safety team to provide the community speed watch equipment so that they could use it in the area and other neighbourhoods across the Borough. If someone has been caught going over the speed limit they will be written to and told that they were caught, but there is no enforcement attached to it. Cllr Burbage added that when people are interested in tackling speeding and keen to help solve issues that should be embraced. Having members of the community doing community speed watch has a positive affect, showing the public that the partnership are listening to the public's concerns and helping to solve some of the problems.

8. IAN TRENHOLM AND CLOSE

IT thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and encouraged people to look at the stands for further information.