

Notes of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee
Crime and Disorder Working Group
30th January 2013

Present: Councillors: David Coldwell, Duncan England, Jim Goddard, Frances Haigh, Kate Rowbottom, Jim Sanson

Also present: Councillor George Cockman

Apologies: Councillor Christine Costin

Officers: Greg Charman, Community Safety Manager
Neil Worth, Community Safety Officer

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Kate Rowbottom was elected as Chairman of the Working Group.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Coldwell declared that he was the substitute Member for the Council's representative on the Police and Crime Panel.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM CHAIRMAN OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There were no announcements.

4. TO SCOPE THE REVIEW OF THE WORKING GROUP

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee, at its meeting on 5th November 2012, had noted how legislation required every local authority to have a committee with the power to review and scrutinise, and make reports or recommendations, regarding the functioning of the local Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The Committee had approved the establishment of the Crime and Disorder Working Group.

The Working Group approved the following terms of reference, incorporating an amendment to clarify that recommendations could be made to any of the Responsible Authorities within the CSP.

Terms of Reference

- (1) To scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership and the partners who comprise it, insofar as their activities relate to the Partnership itself;
- (2) To make reports and/or recommendations to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee/Council or any of the Responsible Authorities within the CSP with respect to the discharge by the CSP of its crime and disorder functions;
- (3) To act as a 'critical friend' of the CSP, providing it with constructive challenge at a strategic level rather than adversarial fault-finding at an operational level; and
- (4) To consider Councillor Call for Actions (CCfAs) that arise through the Council's CCfA process and which relate to crime and disorder matters.

The Working Group agreed to generally meet on a quarterly basis which would work well with the Horsham District CSP Board which also held quarterly meetings.

5. TRAINING SESSION IN RELATION TO THE SCRUTINY OF CRIME AND DISORDER MATTERS

The Community Safety Manager and Community Safety Officer gave a presentation that provided details of the relevant legislation and the role and duties of the Working Group; the presentation slides would be circulated.

The Working Group Members received the following documents: Home Office guidance titled 'National Support Framework: Delivering Safer and Confident Communities, Guidance for the Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Matters – England Implementing Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006'; 'A Councillor's Guide to Community Safety and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998'; and 'Community Safety Partnership – Statutory Duties (amended January 2013)'.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended) placed a statutory duty on Responsible Authorities to work in partnership to reduce crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, behaviour affecting the local environment, misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and to reduce re-offending in their area. The Responsible Authorities were Sussex Police, Horsham District Council, West Sussex County Council, West Sussex Fire &

Rescue Service, NHS West Sussex and Surrey and Sussex Probation Service Trust.

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 had introduced new duties. It stated that all Responsible Authorities and the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panel must have regard to each others priorities when carrying out all of their respective functions and to co-operate when discharging their duties under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The CSP must prepare strategic assessments, prepare and implement a partnership plan for the area (as from 1st April 2013), have in place arrangements governing the expenditure of partnership monies and assess value for money (and HDC would act as the Treasurer), and achieve community engagement.

The CSP Board would act as the strategy group (and its terms of reference were tabled at the meeting); reporting to it was the Joint Action Group acting as an operational group (and its terms of reference would be sent to the Working Group Members); reporting to it would be a number of groups which would each deal with a specific priority area such as anti-social behaviour, safer roads, repeat and vulnerable victims, violence against the person, engagement and reassurance, and burglary at private addresses (and their terms of reference would be circulated). The CSP Plan would commence on 1st April 2013 and would identify its performance indicators which the Working Group could use to check against the progress of the action plans.

The Working Group noted that it had powers under the Crime and Disorder (Overview & Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 to require information to be provided by the Responsible Authorities and Co-operating Bodies, to require the attendance at meetings of officers or employees of those organisations, and to make reports or recommendations to those organisations.

The Working Group also noted additional powers under the Local Government Involvement in Public Health Act 2007 which conveyed to it the authority to receive referrals from HDC Members relating to crime and disorder matters in their areas, to make reports or recommendations to the Council on crime and disorder matters relating to HDC Members, and to provide copies of reports or recommendations to the appropriate Responsible Authority or Co-ordinating Body.

The key areas for scrutiny would be policy development, contribution to Strategy Development, holding to account at formal meetings, performance management, and Councillor Call for Action (to raise other matters of local concern that may be outside of the Council's remit).

Members acknowledged that community safety was a fundamental quality of life issue and that the duty to reduce crime and disorder should be considered by the Council when making policy or planning decisions.

Members asked whether Sussex Police was required to comment on proposed planning developments and to highlight any potential crime and disorder issues; the Council's Planning Department would be asked to provide an answer.

The Working Group accepted its role to be a 'critical friend' but also recognised its ability to highlight examples of where good practice existed.

The Working Group requested the following actions to be progressed:

- that contact be made with its equivalent at West Sussex County Council;
- that a timetable be prepared and themes identified for it to consider at its quarterly meetings;
- that the Chairman request to attend the meetings of the Joint Action Group (monthly meetings, the next being held on 21st February at 2:00 p.m.) and Working Group Members to request to attend specific priority group meetings;
- that the draft CSP Plan be circulated when available for consideration at the next Working Group meeting (following its presentation to the Community Safety Advisory Group on 28th February and prior to its commencement on 1st April 2013); and
- to invite the Cabinet Member for a Safer and Healthier District to attend Working Group meetings as an observer.

6. FUTURE MEETING DATE

The Working Group would meet on 13th March 2013 at 3:00 p.m.

The meeting finished at 5.05 p.m. having commenced at 3.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN