

Notes of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee
Crime and Disorder Working Group
19th June 2013

Present: Councillors: Kate Rowbottom (Chairman), Duncan England, Jim Goddard, Frances Haigh, Jim Sanson

Also present: Councillor: George Cockman

Apologies: Councillors: David Coldwell, Christine Costin

Officers: Greg Charman, Community Safety Manager
Rod Brown, Head of Planning & Environmental Services

1. **TO APPROVE AS CORRECT THE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH MARCH 2013**

The notes of the meeting held on 13th March 2013 were approved as a correct record.

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

There were no announcements.

4. **ANALYTICAL SUPPORT TO HORSHAM DISTRICT CSP BY WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

Following concerns expressed at the last meeting, the Community Safety Manager gave an update on the level of analytical support the County Council would provide in the future indicating that, whilst they would not be providing such a wide range of in-depth analysis, they would continue to provide broad top line statistics. The exact level of service to be provided was continuing to be developed.

The Working Group then discussed the level of traffic incidents and possible causes and influences, with particular reference to the facts that:

- the District had the highest number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads than anywhere else in West Sussex, and
- the risk to young drivers was also the highest in West Sussex.

The Community Safety Manager indicated that road safety was a priority in the 2013/14 Community Safety Partnership Plan and Action Plan and suggested that the Working Group might like to invite the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership to attend the next meeting to give an overview of their work in this respect.

The Working Group **agreed** that representatives of the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership should be invited to attend the next meeting of the Working Group.

5. PLANNING APPLICATION PROCESS AND OBTAINING COMMENTS ABOUT CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION

The Head of Planning & Environmental Services advised the Working Group that Sussex Police were automatically consulted in respect of applications submitted for developments of ten residential units or more, with a view to 'designing out' to the crime and disorder implications of such developments as much as possible. There was also a policy context within the Council's Core Strategy relating to 'designing out' crime.

On other applications there was no automatic consultation, with the officer dealing with the application selecting relevant consultees from a potential list of 200.

The Working Group suggested that it would be useful to include the Community Safety Partnership as a potential consultee (and an automatic consultee on major applications) to enable all partners with an interest in the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour to have an input on relevant planning applications. The Head of Planning & Environmental Services and the Community Safety Manager would investigate this possibility and report back to the Working Group.

In response to a specific query, the Head of Planning & Environmental Services indicated that he would ascertain who had been consulted on an application for the installation of high ropes in Horsham Park.

6. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2013/14 AND ACTION PLANS

(a) Use of S106/Community Infrastructure Levy monies for CCTV and community safety features

The Head of Planning & Environmental Services advised that he was not aware of any reason, in principle, why such monies could not be used for community safety improvements such as CCTV cameras, provided that

this was expressly specified in the S106/CIL agreement. However, the preference was, as much as possible, to 'design out' possible community safety issues as part of the application process. It was also acknowledged that money could only be required for capital outlay (e.g. purchase and installation of CCTV equipment) but that agreements could also include a requirement for the developer to put in place arrangements for future maintenance.

Where problems arose after the commencement or completion of a development, it was not possible to retrospectively require a developer to install such measures. However, generally, it would be in the interests of the developer to address any problems as they could impact on the desirability of the development to potential buyers/lessees.

(b) General

The Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2013/14 and action plans had now been published, highlighting six key priorities for the year: reduce anti-social behaviour, improve road safety, reduce domestic burglaries, reduce violence against the person, reduce repeat and vulnerable victims, and improve engagement and reassurance.

It was noted that there had been a 22% increase in burglaries within the District in 2011/12, compared to the previous year. However, the Community Safety Manager explained that much of this activity was the result of certain individuals from outside the District seeking out specific types of properties/people and that the police were actively targeting these individuals. The Community Safety Manager also referred to the proposed setting up of a 'Home Watch' scheme so that the police were advised when owners would be away and to the effectiveness of local Neighbourhood Watch schemes in some areas.

It was noted that the repeat and vulnerable victims section of the Plan did not refer to the problems of people with learning difficulties being signed up by legitimate businesses for goods or services they did not necessarily need or want, not through any wrongdoing by the business but due to the lack of understanding of the vulnerable individual. The Community Safety Manager indicated that whilst only the larger, more widespread issues were covered by the document, the Community Safety Partnership was also aware of other less common problems.

It was agreed that the Plan was a useful tool for the Working Group to work from and that it would pick one aspect each quarter to see how the action plan was being progressed. In this respect the Working Group had earlier agreed to focus on Safer Roads at its next meeting (see 4 above).

(c) Policing and recording crime statistics

The Community Safety Manager reported that it was his understanding that Sussex Police was not reducing the numbers of police but that they were not always replacing officers who left, resulting in a net reduction in overall hours and resources spread more thinly. Councillor George Cockman advised the Working Group that this was an issue that was being taken up by West Sussex Joint Scrutiny. The Working Group therefore **agreed** that the Chairman of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee should be asked to keep them updated on any developments in this respect.

It was also **agreed** that Councillor Brian Donnelly, the Council's representative on the Sussex Police and Crime Panel, should be asked to attend the next meeting of the Working Group to update on the current position regarding policing resources.

7. HORSHAM CSP FINANCE REPORT – MAY 2013

The Working Group noted the report.

The Community Safety Manager advised the Working Group that the 'Handyvan legacy' in the ring-fenced funds and commitments for 2013/14 referred to unspent funds earmarked for the 'Handyvan' service which had been provided by Saxon Weald but was no longer operating. Talks were currently taking place with other organisations who might be interested in taking on this role and, if successful, some or all of the funds remaining would be available to support the service. Linked to this, the Working Group discussed the possibility of certain projects being undertaken by either ex-offenders, through the probation service, or young offenders. Details of any suitable projects should be passed to the Community Safety Manager, who would endeavour to pass them on to the most appropriate team. It was noted with concern that the Community Safety Officer post was currently only funded until December 2013.

8. AUDIT COMMISSION BRIEFING DOCUMENTS AND SUSSEX POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER: POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2013/17

Noted.

9. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The next meeting would be at 3:00 p.m. on 25th September 2013. Items on the agenda would include:

- Sussex Safer Roads Partnership representatives to be invited to attend and give a presentation/answer questions on their work

- Councillor Brian Donnelly, the Council's representative on the Sussex Police and Crime Panel, to be invited to attend to give an update on the current position regarding policing resources and for the Working Group to suggest issues they would like him to raise at the Police and Crime Panel.

The meeting finished at 4.28 p.m. having commenced at 3.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN