

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Community Protection Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 15 January 2008.**

### Present:

Councillor John Appleton  
" David Booth  
" Richard Chattaway (Chair)  
" Gordon Collett  
" Chris Davis  
" Bob Hicks  
" Katherine King  
" Heather Timms  
" John Vereker  
" Barry Longden  
" Mike Perry

Also Present: Councillor Richard Hobbs, Portfolio Holder for Community Protection.

### Officers:

Emma Curtis, Political Group Assistant, Performance and Development Directorate.  
Kate Nash, Head of Community Safety, Community Protection Directorate.  
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Performance and Development Directorate.  
Jeremy Lee, Manager, Emergency Planning Unit, Community Protection Directorate  
Michelle McHugh, Scrutiny Officer, Performance and Development Directorate.  
Nick Gower-Johnson, County Partnership Manager, Performance and Development Directorate.  
Glen Ranger, Deputy County Fire Officer, Community Protection Directorate.  
Louise Richard, Policy and Partnership Co-ordinator, Performance and Development Directorate.  
Mark Ryder, Head of Trading Standards, Adult, Health and Community Services Directorate.  
Julie Sullivan, Corporate Safety Manager, Community Protection Directorate.

Also Present: DCC Andy Parker, Warwickshire Police.

## **1. General**

### Welcome

The Chair welcomed Councillor Katherine King to her first meeting of the Committee and explained that she would be replacing Councillor John Wells from now on. He referred to Councillor King's membership on the Police

Authority, which would be beneficial to the work of this Committee. The Chair also welcomed DCC Andy Parker to the meeting.

**(1) Apologies for absence**

None

**(2) Members' Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

None

**(3) (a) Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2008**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2008 were agreed as a correct record.

**(b) Matters Arising**

None

**2. Public Questions**

None

**3. Presentation by DCC Andy Parker – “Protecting our Communities Together” – An Overview of the Force Reorganisation and Performance.**

DCC Parker presented an overview of the Force reorganisation and performance (presentation material to be circulated to Members) and highlighted –

Drivers for Change

- Gaps in Protective Services - he referred to Dennis O'Connor's report, which identified that the Force was not doing well and Warwickshire was not equipped to deal with serious crimes.
- The Collapse of Regional Forces and Strategic Alliance
- A deterioration of Performance
- HMIC Baseline 2006 – Warwickshire performance was poor in Managing critical incidents/major crime and improving forensic performance
- A challenging budgetary position - £2.5m overspent on an annual £85m budget.

150 Forward

The 150 Forward Programme – over the previous 12 months the Force had embarked on setting up a team to carry out a risk assessment and reallocation of resources. This team had produced a “Vision”.

### The Vision –

- Protecting our Community Together
- Protecting means reducing harm
- Harm means: death/injury, loss and distress.
- Affordable/acceptable/sustainable - “The best protection that can be given for £85m”

### Local Policing Directorate - “Improved Quality of Local Services for our Communities” and -

- Had involved the removal of Basic Command Units (BCA).
- The model now involved neighbourhoods, boroughs and districts supported by County provided services.
- Had operated for six months without adverse effect.

### Protective Services Directorate (The new model) – “Improved Quality of Protection Services for our Communities” included -

- New shift patterns that enabled 24/7 intelligence for incident and command and control.
- Resilience: to deal with serious and organised crime, major inquiries, counter terrorism, forensics and CID.
- Targeted services to Protect Vulnerable People – one single point of contact.
- Task Force to target prolific, offending and offenders

### Resources Directorate – Savings had been made by -

- Removal of BCU and Sector duplication of services
- Single directorate delivers corporate standards
- Design services for future efficiencies (necessity/consolidation/collaboration/outsourcing – utilising the services of civilian staff)

### Summary of New Force -

- No BCU Structure – First in the Country (to be replicated by Norfolk Police Force)
- Significant Enhanced Protective Services
- New Service Delivery Model
- Single Workforce
- 24/7 Culture

### HMIC Baseline 2007 – Warwickshire’s performance was now “Acceptable” in the following areas -

- Managing critical incidents/major crime
- Tackling serious and organised crime
- Improving forensic performance

DCC Parker highlighted the following facts relating to Warwickshire -

(1) 45,250 recorded crimes in 06/07, 240 emergency (999) calls a day, a total 2,500 calls a day, 46 road deaths a year (one child death on the roads) which reflected the good work being done in schools, 352 serious road injuries a year.

(2) Crime Performance – End of December 07 (detailed statistics contained within the presentation material) -

- Showed significant improved performance except for “All Violent Crime Sanction Detection Rate”.
- Domestic abuse arrests as a Percentage of Incidents had shown an positive increase as a result of encouraging reporting of incidents and change in Police strategy of protecting people in their homes,
- Road Death Performance – had shown a reduction in all key areas as a result of effort by all partners
- Domestic burglary was reducing
- Vehicle Crime had shown a 25.5% reduction but the previous year had been very high.
- Theft of vehicles was reducing

DCC Parker, in conclusion, said overall crime was reducing as a result of much hard work by the Force, its partners and the new Local Area Agreements which was making Warwickshire a much better place to live and, whilst he was confident that this could be maintained, said that there was much more work to be done.

During discussion the following comments were noted –

- (1) That DCC Parker should be thanked for his presentation and the Force commended for its improved performance and positive outcome of the re-organisation.
- (2) That despite the improved overall performance by the Police there were local issues that remained unresolved, for example, dispersal orders that were not being enforced and Community Safety Teams not having sufficient resources to cover large rural areas.
- (3) That some Community Safety Teams were not up to full complement. Concern was expressed about the failure of Inspectors to attend PACT meetings and the impact that had on sustainability and maintaining community confidence. The turnover of senior officers as they progressed in their career was also having a detrimental impact on the sustainability of Community Safety Teams.
- (4) Other Members commented on the success and benefits of PACT meetings, of the good public attendance and that it was not necessary for Inspectors to be present at every meeting.
- (5) Concern was expressed -

- that despite improved Police performance, public perception of the Police response was such that incidents of criminal damage went unreported.
- that the public repeatedly complained about being re-buffed by the Police telephonists and if this was addressed could improve poor public perception of Police response to reporting incidents.
- about the lack of support from the Magistrates

(6) DCC Parker was asked to comment on what the County Council could do to assist the Police.

In response to Members' comments DCC Parker –

- (1) Noted the concerns expressed about the Community Safety Teams and gave reassurance that the numbers of PCSO had not reduced, currently totally 109 (105 plus 4 recruited for the Nuneaton area). Additionally, special payments had been made as an incentive to officers to remain in their Community Teams rather than taking the option of moving to other work areas.
- (2) Said the Magistrates were given guidance on sentencing and that that the CPS, whilst top in the country for successful prosecutions, only pursued cases that were “watertight”. He considered that the CPS should allow more cases to go to court where a jury could determine the outcome.
- (3) Said with regard to Police resources, overall numbers had increased slightly, and the Force was making the best use of civilian staff, PCSOs and partners' resources through the LAA, for example. The Force was being as efficient as it could be with the existing resources.
- (4) Noted Members' concerns about the public not reporting incidents because of the perception that the Police would not respond to calls.
- (5) Gave assurances about Police commitment to Neighbourhood Policing and said he would investigate why some Inspectors were not attending PACT meetings.
- (6) Said that the County Council's investment and progression of the LAA's had significantly contributed to Police work over the last 18 months but considered that there was still much more work to be done to ensure that all services were joined up and that there was no overlap of provision. The Police was well supported by the County Council and he hoped that focussing on delivery of LAA resources would help improve performance.
- (7) Offered to arrange for Bill Holland to attend a future meeting of the Committee to update Members on progress of the Safer Neighbourhood Team. Kate Nash added that an evaluation exercise had recently been carried out on public perception of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and she would arrange for the results to be brought to Members.

- (8) Offered to attend a future meeting of the Committee to present Police performance outcomes at the year-end.

In conclusion, the Chair thanked DCC Andy Parker for his very useful and informative presentation and commended the improved performance, which was welcomed. The main issue, that still needed to be addressed, was public perception of police response and customer satisfaction.

The Committee—

- (1) Thanked DCC Andy Parker for his presentation.
- (2) Noted that DCC Parker would ask Bill Holland to present a progress update on the work of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams.
- (3) Agreed to schedule a further presentation by DCC Parker of Police performance at the year-end.

(These minutes reflect the order of the items as set out on the agenda and not the order in which they were considered).

#### **4. Trading Standards Half-Year Performance Report 2007/08**

Mark Ryder presented the report of the Strategic Director of Adult Health and Community Services summarising the performance of Trading Standards for the period 1 April to 30 September 2007.

In reply to questions he confirmed that –

- (1) in relation to the sale of second hand vehicles, two garages had been successful prosecuted but one case successfully defended.
- (2) In relation to under-age sales of alcohol, 18 off-licence renewals were currently being reviewed by the Licensing Authority. The Trading Standards Service and the Police had put in place a mechanism to feed details of licence infringements into the Licensing Authority when renewals were being considered. A report would be brought to the Committee's April that would provide greater detail on the under age sales of alcohol and to address the issues raised by the Alcohol and Young People Review.
- (3) The CPA statutory indicators would be reported again at the year-end.

The Committee –

- (1) noted the performance of the Trading Standards Service for the first 6 months of the year 2007/08.
- (2) asked that a briefing note be circulated on the impact of the Foot and Mouth and Blue Tongue outbreaks on Trading Standards Service.

## **5. First Draft Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Strategy for Warwickshire**

Kate Nash presented the report of the Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer outlining a draft of a new Anti-Social Strategy, which was brought to Members for early consideration and comment before further development took place. The draft strategy identified issues and priorities for the communities of Warwickshire.

Members were reminded that a recent shift in national policy had meant that the Respect Task Force had been disbanded and moved from the Home Office to the Department for Children, Schools and Families under the new 'Youth Taskforce'.

During discussion Members commented that –

- (1) The Committee's representation on the Task and Finish Group should be one Member from each party.
- (2) ASB by young people was an issue that was difficult to resolve and it was suggested that this could be attributed to greater liberation of attitude and behaviour and the need for greater parental direction and guidance.
- (3) truancy was an importance issue that needed to be addressed if ASB in young people was to be addressed.
- (4) ASB was the top priority identified by most PACTs.

The Chair expressed support for the draft Strategy and looked forward to receiving an action plan in due course.

The Committee –

- (1) endorsed the first Draft Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy for Warwickshire and asked that its comments relating to the importance it places on addressing ASB by young people and truancy be noted and for the inclusion of a cross-reference to the work of the Children, Young People and Families Directorate in the draft Strategy.
- (2) Agreed its representation on the Task and Finish Group should be one Member from each party.
- (3) Notes that an action plan will be brought back to the Committee in due course.

## **6. Emergency Response to Summer Floods in Warwickshire**

Jeremy Lee presented the report of the Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer which provided an overview of the emergency response arrangements put in place during the summer 2007 floods, key lessons learnt and how these would be addressed.

He added that Sir Michael Pitt had produced a very detailed interim report on the summer floods, which contained 15 urgent recommendations some of which related directly to the Fire and Rescue Service and Local Authorities. The report also contained 72 recommendations relating to changes to regulations, building flood plains and the warnings issues by the Environment Agency. The County Council and the district and borough councils were looking at the consultation document with a view to preparing a joint response and this would be brought to Committee in due course with the recommendations.

Members suggested that this issue should be included in the Committee's work programme for scrutiny. In response, the Chair said that Warwick District Council and Warwick Area Committee were carrying out a scrutiny exercise and suggested that this work should not be duplicated but the results brought to this Committee for consideration. He said that he was impressed by all Warwickshire's services' response to this emergency situation.

In reply to comments and concerns Jeremy Lee said that –

- (1) the need for a joined up policy on sand bag provision had been highlighted and this was being addressed with the district/borough/parish councils.
- (2) most Parish Councils produced their own emergency planning booklets and they contained telephone and emergency contact details. He acknowledged that there was an issue, however, in Nuneaton and Bedworth where there were no parish or town councils.

The Committee –

- (1) endorses the proposals for addressing key lessons learnt following an overview of the emergency response arrangements to the summer floods in Warwickshire and how this will be addressed.
- (2) notes that a response to the consultation on Sir Michael Pitt's report will be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.
- (3) asks that a report be presented to the Nuneaton and Bedworth Area Committee drawing their attention to the parish/town council's emergency planning booklets and asking them to consider their position with regard to the provision of information about emergency planning in their area.

## **7. Domestic Abuse – A Strategy for Warwickshire**

Kate Nash presented the report of the Strategic Director of Community Protection and County Fire Officer that outlined a 3-year draft strategy for Warwickshire to tackle Domestic Abuse which had been developed following a multi-agency consultation exercise. Members' comments were invited before final agreement with partners and presentation to Cabinet for approval.

During discussion the following comments were noted –

- (1) That the Strategy should be supported and a Task Group established to monitor progress.
- (2) That there should be greater publicity to advertise access to services to help those people subjected to domestic abuse.
- (3) That it would be of interest to know how many refuges existed in order to assess the adequacy of provision.
- (4) That the increase in reported incidents was as a result of greater publicity and a change in Police policy about dealing with incidents.
- (5) That mental health issues were often the cause of domestic abuse and, whilst it was mostly commonly perceived that the abusers were men, this was not always the case.

DCC Andy Parker reminded Members of the Police's positive intervention policy which meant that the perpetrator could be arrested and taken out of the home and then released on bail on a condition not to return to the property. The inquest into the death in Rugby as a result of domestic abuse would be held shortly and because systemic failure by the Police had been identified officers would be called to give evidence.

The Committee agrees –

- (1) to endorse the draft Domestic Abuse Strategy for Warwickshire.
- (2) that a Task Group be set up to monitor progress of the Strategy and asks that details of the proposed Group be circulated to the Committee before nominations are made.

## **8. Local Area Agreement (LAA) – Six Monthly Performance**

Nick Gower-Johnson presented the report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development, which outlined performance of the LAA over the first six months. He reported a positive response from the Government Office on the six months review of the LAA. He invited Members' suggestion for improvement and said that he would be reporting to the Committee's next meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter performance and also provide an update on the new LAA.

During discussion the following comments were noted -

- (1) Members questioned -
  - The implications on the reward grant and funding shortfall if targets were not met and the reason why targets had not been met.
  - The added value of LAAs and the Public Service Board as compared to what would have been achieved had they not been in place.

(2) Concern was expressed -

- That Members had not been engaged, able to influence or have an input into the LAA process and priorities.
- about the extent of central Government direction and the cost of accommodating the bureaucratic process in setting up LAAs.
- that the Health Authority was not involved in the LAA process.

(3) It was suggested that further consideration should be given to the comments on page 19, Appendix 3 of the report, N1 15 2) and 5) and on page 23 N1 30 2) and that they should be revised.

(4) That protecting young people (8-10 years of age) from alcohol and drug abuse was of significant importance.

In response to comments and questions –

(1) Nick Gower-Johnson explained that £1m was the initial investment from the Government and that £500k was also received from the County Council's 'virtual bank' to pump prime projects and this would need to be repaid from the anticipated £9.6m reward grants. The Public Service Board at its next meeting would allocate the £9.6m reward grant.

(2) DCC Andy Parker explained that the overall crime target was unlikely to be met because the number of offences brought to justice and incidents of domestic abuse had increased as a result of improved reporting and recording by the Police. Kate Nash acknowledged that these stretch targets could not be met but said this would not be an issue in the future once an overall pooled budget replaced the reward grant.

(3) Nick Gower-Johnson explained that the County Council was under a statutory duty to produce LAAs and the benefit of this initiative was that it had provided the County Council with the opportunity to engage with partners in a way that it had not engaged before. Members' views and comments would be fed into the meeting that was being held the following day to agree a process for the new LAA. DCC Parker added that he too shared Members' frustrations about the Government imposing mandatory target areas which did not leave much scope for development of other areas. The requirements of the new LAA, however, would allow greater flexibility and ownership of the delivery plan.

(4) Nick Gower-Johnson said that the added value of LAAs included improved working relationships with partners, better use of public resources and identification of duplication.

Following discussion the Committee –

- (1) agrees to welcome the comprehensive performance management information contained in this report.
- (2) asks that its comments on the progress made to date in relation to the Safer Communities block of the LAA be fed into the discussions on the new LAA.
- (3) agrees to receive further reports to its 26 February 2008 meeting on the -
  - (a) priorities for the new LAA Community Safety Block indicators and to include a statement of how the Health Authority fits into the process.
  - (b) performance for Quarter 3 of the current LAA.

## **9. Provisional Items for Future Meetings and Forward Plan Items Relevant to this Committee**

### **(a) Provisional Items for Future Meetings**

The Char invited comments on the future work programme.

The Committee considered the future work programme and asked that –

- (1) That two reports be added to the 28<sup>th</sup> February meeting following the outcome of discussions above –
  - A presentation from the Police (Bill Holland) on progress of the Safer Neighbourhood Team. (minute 3 resolution (2) above)
  - Priorities for the new LAA Community Safety Block. (minute 8 resolution (3) (a) above).
- (2) An additional meeting be arranged in March to consider a progress report on Older Peoples' Safety Review.
- (3) The report on Animal Health/Welfare enforcement be deferred from the February meeting to the 2<sup>nd</sup> April meeting.
- (4) Schedule under items to be timetabled – Presentation by Police Performance at year-end (minute 3 resolution (3)).

### **(b) Forward Plan – Items Relevant to this Committee**

The Committee noted the Forward Plan items relevant to the work of this Committee.

**10. Any Other Items**

Operational Assessment of the Fire and Rescue Service Action Plan

The Chair asked Members to confirm that they no longer wished to receive regular e-mailed updates on the Fire and Rescue Service Operational Assessment, as had been requested by them at a previous meeting. He reminded Members that all targets were moving in the right direction and suggested that the updates ceased and the situation reviewed again in three to four month's time.

The Committee agreed to this course of action.

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 4:45 p.m.