

## Minutes of the meeting of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 September 2005.

### Present:

Councillor	John Haynes (Chair)
"	John Wells (Vice Chair)
"	John Appleton
"	David Booth
"	Michael Doody
"	Bryan Levy
"	Barry Longden
"	Anita Macaulay
"	Mike Perry
"	Dave Shilton

Also Present: Richard Hobbs, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety.  
Tom Spragg, Member of the Warwickshire Youth Parliament

### Officers:

William Brown, County Fire Officer.  
Trevor Brice, Deputy County Fire Officer  
Elaine Bettgner, Group Assistant, Chief Executive's Dept.  
Victoria Cook, Group Assistant, Chief Executive's Dept.  
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Dept.  
Kit Leck, Warwickshire Drug Action Team, Chief Executive's Dept.  
Ian Marriott, Principal Solicitor, Chief Executive's Dept.  
Andy Parker, Assistant Chief Constable, Warwickshire Police.  
Gereint Stoneman, Corporate Review Team, Chief Executive's Dept.

## **1. General**

### **(1) Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bernard Kirton and Heather Timms.

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

None

### **(3) (a) Minutes of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 19 July 2005 and Matters Arising.**

Resolved –

That the minutes of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting held on 19 July 2005 be approved and signed by the Chair.

## **(b) Matters Arising**

### **Minute 4 - Report of Departmental Contributions to WCC Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy.**

In reply to a question regarding the discussion on anti social behaviour, paragraph 4, Councillor Richard Hobbs clarified that he had said that prevention was the real solution to anti social behaviour rather than increasing the number of Anti Social Behaviour Orders.

## **2. Public Question Time**

None.

## **3. Action on Drugs and Alcohol and the Contribution to the Achievement of the Strategic Plan for Warwickshire Targets.**

Kit Leck presented the report of the Drug Action Team. The report's main focus was on the work undertaken by Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership and Drug Action Team (WCSP & DAT) and how joint working across agreed priorities was being undertaken to reduce crime, the fear of crime and health inequalities.

Kit Keck highlighted minor income and expenditure discrepancies and undertook to circulate a briefing note to Members with revised figures.

During a wide ranging discussion Members referred to problems which persisted and remained unresolved in their communities and highlighted their concerns about the –

- need to address the perception of the fear of crime in the community and the need for greater police presence and action on the streets;
- importance of getting drugs off the streets rather than focus on treatment;
- problem of underage drinking and its link to crime;
- problem of alcohol fuelled violence;
- need for greater parental responsibility in controlling the behaviours of young people;
- link between underage drinking and crime and the impact of the extension of licensing hours;
- the need for Licensees/Breweries to be more accountable and for Magistrates to give stronger sentences.
- The need for Member representation on WCSP & DAT and on the CDRPs.

Members said that they would welcome -

- Member involvement in the WCSP & DAT;
- Further information from the WCSP & DAT on performance measures, targets and achievements;
- Hearing the views of Magistrates about sentencing and penalties and of them being represented on the Partnership;
- Clarification of the role of the Alcohol and Drugs policy Group;
- Further information on the education provided for young people on the dangers of drink and drugs;

ACC Andy Parker in responding to Members' comments highlighted the work undertaken by the Partnership in preventing re-offending and education. He reported on a recent successful Police operation, which had resulted in a triple increase in the number of arrests leading to convictions for supplying drugs as compared to the previous year. With regard to Members' concerns about the impact the relaxation in licensing hours would have in encouraging sales of alcohol he could not envisage any massive change. The main issue with regard to alcohol sales was binge drinking and alcohol fuelled crime.

ACC Andy Parker drew Members' attention to one aspect of the Government's proposal to merge police forces, which would enable the police force to respond to national emergencies without depleting local resources.

Kit Leck in response to Members' comments explained that the main drivers for the work of WCSP & DAT were the National Drugs Strategy and the National Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England. WCSP & DAT agreed that the primary drivers for the Partnership's work programme should be drawn from the County and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) objectives and focus on those issues that could benefit from joint work at countywide level.

Referring to Table 1 of page 6 of the report he drew attention the reduction in 'comparator' crimes between 2003/4 and 2004/5. He said that the change in the licensing legislation was only part of the problem and that there was a need to build up a relationship with the Licensing Committee and the availability of advice and education for young people about alcohol. The Partnership was looking at increasing the investment in education and advice to young people on the harmful effects of drink

Councillor Richard Hobbs reminded Members that the report had been presented in order for them to identify areas for further investigation. He had raised with David Carter the issue of County Council representation on the CDRPs and this was currently being addressed.

The Chair thanked Kit Leck for his report and asked for further reports and action to be taken on the issues identified during discussion as follows –

(1) Future reports –

- (a) Performance measures, targets and achievements on the work of the WCSP & DAT;
- (b) Clarification of the role of the Alcohol and Drugs Policy Group;

(2) Action to be taken –

- (a) The Chairman of the Magistrates to be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss sentencing policies;
- (b) Kit Leck to be asked to circulate a briefing note to Members with revised income and expenditure figures.
- (c) Andrew Lawrence to convey to the WCSP & DAT Members' request for political representation on that body.

**4. Presentation by Assistant Chief Constable Andy Parker, Warwickshire Police – Citizens Focus Programme with emphasis on Neighbourhood Policing**

ACC Andy Parker outlined the proposals for a Citizens Focus Programme with emphasis on neighbourhood policing. The Citizen Focus was aimed at –

**Citizens Focus (1)**

- Improving the experience of policing for those who came into contact with the Police, including victims and witnesses;
- Effective engagement with the public

**Citizens Focus (2)**

- A say for the public on how they were policed and a statutory minimum requirement for what information each house could expect to receive;
- Organisational and cultural change to bring about increasingly response services where feedback from front line staff and the public was used to continuously improve them.

The aim of neighbourhood policing was to embed greater citizen perspective into all aspects of policing in order to increase the public's confidence and satisfaction in the police.

Discussion followed during which some Members welcomed the Citizens Programme and neighbourhood policing initiative. A Member expressed reservations because a similar initiative had previously been unsuccessful and consequently the confidence of the public had been lost. Members also

expressed concern about the lack of transport for community support officers and that they had no power of arrest.

ACC Andy Parker in response said that the Government was currently consulting on community support officers' powers, which might address Members' concerns.

The Chair thanked ACC Andy Parker for his presentation and said that Members would welcome Police attendance at future meetings. ACC Andy Parker undertook to arrange for Police representation at future meeting as appropriate dependent upon the items on the agenda. He also undertook to arrange for a copy of the presentation material to be circulated to Members of the Committee.

## **5. Fire and Rescue Services Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)**

CFO William Brown presented his report which outlined progress and work undertaken by the Fire and Rescue Authority since the announcement of the national Fire CPA results by the Audit Commission on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2005.

Members noted the report and commended the County Fire Officer and his Team on achieving a "Good" CPA score.

## **6. Fire and Rescue Service Regional Control Centre (RCC) for the West Midlands**

CFO William Brown presented his report, which confirmed the location of the Fire and Rescue Service Regional Control Centre for the West Midlands. It also identified a number of issues that Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Authority would need to consider for the future.

During discussion concern was expressed about the way in which the decision had been made by the ODPM about the location of the RCC, which was considered to be regionalisation "by the back door". Other concerns were expressed relating to cost, national security, the importance of retaining local knowledge, staffing issues and network failure.

In response CFO William Brown explained that the decision on the location had been imposed by the ODPM. He explained the benefits of the RCC as outlined in paragraph 3 of the report, gave assurances about how staff migration to the RCC and closure of the control centre at Leamington would be dealt with and explained the benefits of regional control centres in dealing with national disasters and emergencies.

Members noted the report.

**7. Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan – Draft Year 3 Action Plan [2006/2007] Consultation**

Members noted the report of the County Fire Officer which informed them about the draft IRMP Year 3 Action Plan consultation process that was approved by members of the IRMP Policy Panel at its meeting held on 26 August 2005.

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

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

Members noted the provisional items for future meetings. The Chair drew attention to the Member Seminar to be held on 13 October 2005 on Anti Social Behaviour.

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

Members noted the Forward Plan items relevant to this Committee as follows –

**Cabinet – 17 November 2005**

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Fire Control – Sustainability and Resilience (EXEMPT)

**County Council – 13 December 2005**

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Fire Control – Sustainability and Resilience EXEMPT)

**9. Any Other Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 5:05 p.m.

