

Minutes of the meeting of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 February 2006.

Present:

Councillor John Haynes (Chair)
" John Wells (Vice Chair)
" John Appleton
" David Booth
" Michael Doody
" Barry Longden
" Dave Shilton
" Heather Timms

Other Members Present:

Councillor Richard Hobbs, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety.
" Les Caborn
" Ann Forwood
" Marion Haywood
" Frank McCarney
" Helen McCarthy
" Raj Randev
" John Whitehouse

Officers:

Peter Blackburn, Chief Inspector, Programme Manager, Safer Neighbourhoods, Warwickshire Police
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Performance and Development Directorate
Kate Nash, Head of Community Safety, Community Protection Directorate
Jane Pollard, Assistant County Solicitor, Performance and Development Directorate
Balbir Singh, Policy and Planning Officer, Community Protection Directorate
Gereint Stoneman, Corporate Review Team, Performance and Development Directorate
Estyn Williams, Road Safety Unit, Environment and Economy Directorate.

Key note speaker: John Hedge Chair, Thomas Valley Partnership

Expert Panel:

Cheryl Bridges, CDRP Officer, North Warwickshire DC
Pete Cutts, Community Safety officer, Warwick District Council (CDRP Officer)
Dave Gormal, Head of Community Safety, Rugby DC (CDRP Officer)
Katherine Grasby, Senior Solicitor, Performance and Development Directorate
Rachael Jackson, Regeneration Officer, Nuneaton & Bedworth (CDRP Officer)
Diane Johnson, Head of Youth Offending Service
Paul Littler, Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, Community Protection Directorate
Andrew Lawrence, Head of Community Support, Community Protection Directorate

Mark Lynn, Crown Prosecution Service
Mike Maguire, Manager, Positive About Young People
Spencer Payne, Community Safety Information Analyst, Environment and Economy Directorate
Steve Newman, Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, Stratford District Council
Julie Sullivan, Community Safety Manager, Community Protection Directorate
Mike Slater, Chief Inspector Warwickshire Police
Mick Taylor, Chief Clerk to the Magistrates Courts (Warwickshire)

Observers

Rachael Jackson, Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Ruth Mountstephen, Head of Community Services, Stratford District Council
Robert Walsh, Community Safety Co-ordinator, Stratford DC

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bernard Kirton, Bryan Levy, Anita Macaulay, Mike Perry and ACC Andy Parker

(2) Members' Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

(1) The following Members declared personal interests arising by virtue of them serving as district/borough councillors as listed below:

Stratford-on Avon District Council – Councillor John Appleton

Warwick District Council - Councillors Michael Doody and Dave Shilton

Rugby Borough Council – Councillor Heather Timms

(2) Councillor Richard Hobbs – declared a personal interest as a Member of the Police Authority.

2. Anti-Social Behaviour in Warwickshire

The Chair welcomed, John Hedge, key-note speaker, and the Expert Panel members, to the meeting. He referred to the background to the day's event, which included previous Committee meetings that had taken place to consider the County Council's Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy and the departmental reports on the contributions to that Strategy and the action being taken to address drug and alcohol abuse.

Out of those meetings came strong feelings from Members that fuelled the debate on the value, appropriateness and effectiveness of the current approaches employed to tackle anti-social behaviour within the community. As a result the Committee agreed a full scrutiny exercise, involving all partner

agencies that would provide an opportunity for Members to understand how they could improve community safety in Warwickshire. The Chair referred to the County Council's debate the previous day and pointed out that top priority for the County Council's budget was Crime and Safety and the Fire & Rescue Service.

John Hedge, Thames Valley Partnership.

John Hedge explained that the Thames Valley Partnership included funding of a research pilot, which provided an information exchange on crime and safety across the Thames Valley (title of the Police Area), which included 16 CDRP's. The two tier areas covered Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Milton Keynes and Berkshire and included all types of communities. The argument for a balanced approach was important for many reasons. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) provided communities with an opportunity to agree on outcomes and pool resources. The top priority for the Government was Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) and was now a huge political issue. Neighbourhood Policing would radically change the way things looked on the ground and what people expected. He highlighted that -

- the future would involve engagement in Neighbourhood Action Groups and the possibility of elected representatives – presently being set up in Thames Valley.
- ASB, the importance of the family and parental responsibility was high on the Government's agenda.
- the community was expected to get more power – the Government was talking about community expectation – the need to involve all agencies in the community.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) were usually a symptom of a community not at ease in engaging with itself.
- The review of the Crime and Disorder Act and the importance of LAA and the County Council were a big issue and the subject of a recent Home Office Conference.

John Hedges then highlighted research funded by the Nuffield Foundation about early intervention methods which included –

- Prevention work
- Problem solving
- Proportionality

Other work with young people included –

- Intergenerational problems
- Fire Service/hoax calls
- Arts and Community development
- YOS and Children's Trust

With regard to mediation he explained about –

- The wider range and application than that generally known.
- High level positive outcomes
- Relevance to community resilience
- Referral and capacity issues
- Change Up –the role of VCS agencies in ASB
- Quality Assurance

With regard to Racial Tension and Mediation he explained that the mediation scheme in Thames Valley discovered what, potentially, there was that could be done e.g. in Southwark – to disarm young people with fire-arms. Intergeneration work was relevant to making the community more resilient. Mediation skills were important and were generally a voluntary sector skill. It was hoped that these skills would be part of the “change up” agenda and that those organisations would be at the front of the agenda in capacity building. It had been found that mediation had been creative and could do more to help address racism/tension and discord. Reference was made to two pilot schemes in Milton Keynes and Oxford where mediation had helped in dealing with seemingly intractable situations.

With regard to housing John Hedge referred to –

- The studies in Reading and West Berkshire - and explained the part played by ASBOs in addressing problems related to housing issues, environment health and noise, housing provision (provided there was a joined up approach (ASB Strategy)).
- Some of the cost benefits

With regard to what had been learnt he explained –

- The inadequacy of the toolkit approach
- The importance of good protocols and structures – ASB really test partnership
- Assessment and consistency were difficult without consistent methods and definitions
- Community engagement and resilience were central to the “change up” agenda

With regard to ASBOs –

- Its rightful place? – Warwickshire had only 75 ASBOS whereas in Manchester there were vast numbers.
- Proportionality - ASBOs should not be used as a badge of honour but only used for serious and persistent offenders – breaching was a problem and not addressed by means of a “scattergun” approach.
- Use and Abuses – ASBOs had been grossly abused and there was the need for a review - to establish what worked and did not work and improved.
- Criminal Justice Implications - A review of ASBOs should be done by calling in all partners including the Criminal Justice Agencies (breaches)

In conclusion John Hedge referred to other research that supported the above views (on what do communities really feel – to get a range of responses). He expressed support for a more cautious balanced approach, which he considered could be achieved in Warwickshire.

There then followed Questions from Members to John Hedge and the Expert Panel (see Appendix attached).

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting and participating in the debate. He also thanked John Hedge and the Expert Panel for their sharing their knowledge and information and hoped that they had also heard Members' concerns. He asked that the notes of the meeting and the recommendations for future action be reported to the Committee's next meeting on 28 February 2006.

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 1:10 p.m.

Appendix

Community Safety O&S Committee

Anti Social Behaviour Single Issue meeting

8th February, 2006

Questions to John Hedge

	Question	Response
Cllr Appleton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management and resources for community mediation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mediation is a skill that can be learnt and applied across a range of fields. Often not raised, but very important and transferable skills – most mediation is carried out by volunteers charging small fees Needs Govn't resources and needs to be formed as a critical mass, rather than a 'little secret' – needs to establish its place
Cllr Booth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parenting training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to establish fit with the Children's Trust Early intervention in dealing with young people does help
Cllr Longdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of punishment Communities have lost faith in the police, courts etc Threats of vigilante action Society rather than a community problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certainly there is place and important role for sanctions and punishments as part of a balanced approach. Agree that the support and help to victims of ASB is not what it could be. Highly emotional matter – but a strategic approach is needed. The strategic approach is about being tough about what conditions are applied to ASB0s. Acknowledge the lack of confidence in the CJS and the feeling across the country that faith has been lost in the police, courts etc Neighbourhood Policing is important as a response to these concerns. In Thames Valley where Neighbourhood Policing has been introduced things have levelled out. Community conference approach does give a chance for people to have their say Danger that we despair that nothing can be done, but some things do work (baby and bathwater)
Cllr Wells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change up agenda – what progress has been made on involving the voluntary sector with CDRP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He took a cynical approach of the Change-Up agenda – he was aware that much money had been spent in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire without any outcome – it had got lost in its own intricacies. The question needed asking about the results of the programme. Experience showed that it was not moving fast and could get lost Would be helpful if Council's could agree what they want out of it.

Cllr Shilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How far can we take parental responsibility – to help tackle racial problems/bullying in schools • ASBO proportionality male/female split • Do you feel that the magistrates are not strong enough in punishment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huge amounts could be done in schools e.g. Anti bullying etc – joined up approach – many examples of good practice. • Don't know about the proportionality – very little solid data on ASBOs •
Cllr Randjev	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the reaction of the community on Manchester, Merseyside to the rise in ASBOs? • Cllrs have not been approached by Police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't know about the reaction in Merseyside and Manchester to the number of ASBOs. He supported ASBOs if they are used well. Publicly naming people who were the subject of ASBOs needed to be part of an integrated Strategy - and only worked at local level. There was need for more research in this area. • Definite need for communication strategy relating to ASBOs etc NB. The majority of feedback only works at local/ward level. The CJS and Youth Offending Services had been better lately at communicating what they were doing and involving young people in the community.

Questions to Expert Panel

	Question	Response
Cllr Randev	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the community find out about what ASBOs have been issued in their area? If Cllrs had been informed they could keep an eye on what was happening – when is the community going to be involved? Could shopkeepers be sent photographs and details of ASBOs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul Littler – undertook to take way for further consideration what Cllrs can do to help. Mike Slater – Neighbourhood Policing – Strategy has agreed position on media coverage. The Government agreed that photographs of people the subject of ASBOs can be released in the area – photos and conditions go into all the local newspapers following the ASBO Neighbourhood policing will address this to an extent – local solutions/networking in addition can consider e-mailing Councillors – he will take this away for further consideration. Proportionality test for publication and display of photos Sending photographs etc. to shopkeepers, logistically, will be difficult.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michael Maguire- prevention strategies are the way forward, we have confirmation of this from evidence gathered from over 1000 parents but when you are in the face of ASB you need to know how to deal with it there and then –it is not enough to say what is being done because that is not useful at that time – there is need to address fear in our communities and how to take the fear away. Positive About Young People is doing excellent work but at the time ASB is “in your face” it is a real problem which requires on going work.
Cllr Appleton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mediation services – who should resource or deliver this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Lynn - Crime has fallen and the number of prosecution has risen – the conviction rate in Warks is the highest in the country Steve Newman – just completed mediation exercise in Stratford – extremely successful – included both young and older people Dave Gormal – Personal view – has been using Whitefriars, Rugby that is an offshoot from Coventry CC Housing Dept. – mediation is largely about personal relationships. Relate had the expertise and do a lot of work. A personal view is that there is the need for a countywide service, expensive, but county level will rationalise that cost. Mike Slater – there are different levels of mediation – Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC) needed negotiation using officers, but there is need for expert mediators Paul Littler - £6,000 funding for mediation services through County CDRPs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicising ASBOs – how effective is the publicity in preventing recurrence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diane Johnson – YOT take on the young people following an ASBO being made. There is potentially some role for communities in knowing/publicising ASBOs but the manner in which it is done is critical.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YOT bring offenders face to face with those who they have offended against – as part of their restorative justice strategy.
Cllr Timms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaddressed issues – how do identify the potential trouble makers in small community areas to ensure early intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael McGuire – Early intervention through CHARM works across all districts (early intervention). The work done with 237 families identified at risk of early offending – produced remarkable results 90% did not go on to offend • Diane Johnson – Ryogens allows agencies, particularly schools to raise concerns and inform – Positive About Young People who take this information forward (real bonus in Warks). Ryogenes agencies raise those concerns not reaching the agreed threshold for intervention by agencies – when a number of low level concerns about an individual are put onto the system and this trigger round table discussions. • Paul Littler – FLAIR – case management system, starts to highlight before warning letters for older youths and adults
Cllr McCarney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern expressed around the long-term effect of drugs and alcohol abuse on health, particularly for young people – concerned with the lack of link up to Mental Health. Concern also about using up acute hospital services because there is no access to treatment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Lawrence –at a countywide level the DAAT has developed a strategy for alcohol, which is out for consultation. (Alcohol and its impact on crime and domestic violence equates to 25% of the crime bill). There is also a Drug Strategy delivered through commissioning services through the SWPCT (the aim is to increase treatment, reduce the number of deaths and waiting times for treatment). The links with ASBO have been well recognised in each strategy. Each CDRP has a Tackling Drugs and Alcohol Together Sub group. • Mike Slater – A separate Strategy has been written on how to monitor licensed premises –officers working in partnership with Trading Standards to carry out test purchases. With regard to the nighttime economy extra police officers were working to reduce alcohol related violence. Criminal related ASBO is tackled through a separate strand of policing. Respond to intelligence gathered relating to drugs. • Drug arrest referral – for it to work – need to fill the gap in the mental health provision – alcohol related arrest – but when they are referred there is a need to make sure that they can be treated. • Michael McGuire – need for prevention for very young people (9-10-12 year olds drinking)– need to be tougher on the sale of alcohol
Cllr Longdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test purchasing (Trading Standards) doesn't work very well as shopkeepers only sell to the people they know. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted by Cllr Hobbs
Cllr Booth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we identify at the very early stage (0 to 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Maguire - Pre-preventative work – prevention in its broadest sense – early pilots will pick up on exactly the point raised – early recognition and provision of support mechanisms. Pilot scheme started in Rugby, which recognises families in difficulty (pre birth).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Lawrence – Studies have shown that poor parenting is a common theme to ASB – part of the very long term approach, but does not take away from the need for the immediate response.
Cllr Booth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception in the public as to why youths are let off when it gets to courts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mick Taylor – will feedback strength of feeling to Magistrates. There are other considerations which the Magistrates are obliged to take into account - reduction of crime, protecting the public, rehabilitation, reparation in addition to punishment, in no particular order • Magistrates are members of the community themselves so know the issues and understand the feeling. Magistrates are now aware of the CDRP role and have forged links with WCC through the Community Safety Team. Julie Sullivan and Paul Littler are talking to the Magistrates in April and Members feeling will be made known. Magistrates training included ASB, domestic violence and bail. • Diane Johnson – YOT have details of 44 young people who are subject to ASBOs and CRASBOS of which 40 were breached. Enforcement procedures are robust and Warwickshire has seen a 100% increase in custodial sentences issued to young people. This information can be provided routinely by YOT.
Cllr Booth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the police address the balance of rural and urban solutions to ASB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Slater -On a weekly basis at least Area Commanders will look at incidents of ASBO and deploy their resources accordingly (hot spots). Members should bring their individual area problems to the attention of District Commanders. • Mobile CCTV cameras can be used and cost approximately £8,000 and can be attached to certain lampposts. Rugby has 5 in operation • Test purchases – 50 are carried out a year with a 20% success rate – the Police need to be told if off-licensees only sell to young people that are know to them.

Cllr Shilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need figures on ASBOS, where offending, re-offending rates etc? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FLARE project in Rugby will address this
Cllr Shilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do some CDRPs not have WCC elected members on them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Hobbs – Currently reviewing representation on CDRPs will address this.
Cllr Longdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warwickshire Community Justice Board – Where are the figures on the leaflet coming from? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Lynn – figures between 2001 and 2004 – relating to offences and offenders come from YOT. Refers to 88 young people who were diverted from further offences
Cllr Longdon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do the CPS bring cases that they are not 90% chance of winning – how do public find out why a case is not progressed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Lynn – appreciate that confidence in CJS is not high. Confidence figures are measured across the country and come up with a national figure. Figures for Warwickshire are 47%, which is approx 6th highest in the country. Mark Lynn –Need sufficient evidence to prove beyond reasonable doubt to be able to prosecute. The evidence in Warwickshire is that we have had the highest conviction rate in the country since 1999. Warwickshire has also had the lowest dis-continuation cases in the country. Can do nothing without witnesses – cannot help if public do not feel comfortable coming forward. Some of the results are very good, but we are not doing so well at getting the message across. Open days, schools, neighbourhood watch visits, Communication officer, publicity on successful cases. Diane Johnson – since 2002 there is a reduction in the number of young people entering the CJS (55%) which represented 88 young people who are diverted from the Magistrates Court through PAYP and other preventative schemes – the aim is to reduce this target by a further 5%.
Cllr Wells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it the roll of the CDRP to coordinate all the ASB agencies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Lawrence – responsibility cuts across a range of different agencies – Statutory responsibility is at CDRP level, requirement on each of the CDRPs to deliver solutions. Some work is done on a county level to take advantage of economies of scale. Julie Sullivan – the LAA agenda will change these roles – Community Safety team is undertaking work in this area already. The Crime and Disorder Act and the Respect Agenda will be part of this change and will need to sort how to respond. Mark Lynn - Warwickshire Community Justice Board brings together CJ agencies
Cllr Appleton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disappointed to hear the failure rate of ASBOS – should we rethink why we are using them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mike Slater - A breach could be seen as a failure or a success in that it has created a mechanism to enforce/monitor behaviour. E.g. a person may breach an Order but that breach will then take the person out of the community and solve the problem.
Cllr Appleton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime statistics – astonished at the no. of minor crimes which occur in 	

	the neighbourhood watch newsletter, which the police do not report back on the outcome – lack of intelligence on number of prosecutions	
Cllr Appleton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detection rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently approx 23% on average, but this will vary depending upon the offence
Cllr Forwood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are ASBOs really the answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kathryn Grasby – Courts when making an ASBO for young people are now required to consider an individual support order. These are undertaken by the Youth Justice Board Diane Johnson – YOT also receiving funding to deliver Parenting orders to support parents
Cllr Timms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is responsible for communicating the work of the CDRPs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peter Blackburn - Safer neighbourhood – Neighbourhood policing scheme working closely with CDRPs to define Neighbourhoods. Warwickshire Police moving from police beats to wards. Every elected Member will be notified about how this will work – 105 Police beats and 105 beat workers. Julie Sullivan – WCC press officer part funded by CDRPS and WCC to publicise achievements etc – perhaps this has not been done as effectively as it could be. John Hedge – What appears to be coming out of the meeting is that elected Members have limited knowledge of CDRPs and what is going on in the CJS – similar to situation in Thames Valley. This is not all disaster – LCJB needs to be aware of what’s going on.
Cllr Hobbs	Request – Summary of the points raised today is well publicised within CDRPs and within WCC – wider publication	Report to O&S to be circulated to all members before going to O&S