

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL



11 MARCH 2013 - 2.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor Chambers (Chairman), Councillor Miscandlon (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Booth, Mrs Bucknor, Cornwell, Hodgson, Miss Hoy, Stebbing, Sutton and Swan.

APOLOGIES: None

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Oliver, Inspector Robin Sissons and Richard Dykes

OBSERVING: Councillor Murphy

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jane Bailey, Anna Goodall, Dan Horn Aarron Locks and Alan Pain

OS34/12 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 28 January 2013 were agreed and signed.

*** FOR INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL ***

OS35/12 FENLAND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Councillor Oliver presented the Fenland Community Safety Partnership (FCSP) Report to the panel, supported by Alan Pain - Corporate Director, Dan Horn - Head of Housing and Community Support, Aarron Locks - Community Safety Manager, Inspector Robin Sissons - Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Richard Dykes - Community Risk Manager, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Members asked questions made comments and received responses as follows:

1. Councillor welcomed the guests to the meeting and thanked them for the report which contained a lot of detailed information;
2. Councillor Booth stated that with regards to quarterly reports, there appears to be no statistics from hospitals. Councillor Oliver confirmed that we are making progress with this. Dan Horn stated that we still do not have the level of information or detail required for the Cardiff Model, but we are making in-roads with Peterborough Hospitals and need to engage further with Hinchingbrooke and Kings Lynn Hospitals;
3. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that with regards to the priorities listed at point 3 of the report, are these priorities listed in an order or are you treating them all as your key priorities. Aarron Locks confirmed that these are all key priorities and are not in order of prioritisation;
4. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that she found the statistics confusing within the document as some issues are reported as numbers and some as percentages. She asked if the team were able to focus better now that they are reviewing on a quarterly basis. Councillor Oliver confirmed that they are able to focus on seasonal issues and react a lot quicker than with the yearly report;
5. Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked for clarification on page 15 of the report with regards to priorities. Councillor Oliver stated that the partnership are always looking at priorities for the future. Dan Horn stated that priorities used to be set from the National Indicators (NI's), but

since the abolishment of the NI's the partnership are able to set priorities on our own local needs;

6. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that this area is currently compared with Humberside and North Lincolnshire and asked if this is based on deprivation statistics. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that this information comes from the Home Office, we are grouped with the closest similar areas;
7. Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked if these areas also have police forces of a similar size to Fenland. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that the population in these areas will be similar, constabularies find a balance and resources are moved to where the demand is;
8. Councillor Cornwell stated that 1.2 of the report refers to statutory partners and includes Fenland District Council, he asked if licensing is included as a unit within this. Councillor Oliver confirmed that this includes licensing, but that the final set up has not been agreed;
9. Councillor Cornwell asked if the Primary Health Care Trust was ever a partner and if the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) are involved. Dan Horn confirmed that Val Thomas - Assistant Director of Public Health at NHS Cambridgeshire attends the FCSP meetings, but that there is nobody attending from the CCG, he agreed to feed this back to the team;
10. Councillor Cornwell stated that figures with regards to performance are recorded as a mixture of numbers and percentages on page 13 of the report and this is confusing, the numbers are more appropriate in this case, he asked that this comment is taken into consideration when preparing data in the future. Officers agreed;
11. Councillor Miscandlon asked that with regard to Fenland Business Against Crime (FenBAC), is this partnership working from town to town and are the villages involved. Aaron Locks confirmed that the partnership are sharing information and best practice from town to town, he explained that the forum meet quarterly so the information is building and coming together;
12. Councillor Miscandlon stated that with regards to domestic abuse there are no figures for the reduction in reported cases. Aaron Locks stated that when the report was compiled the domestic violence team were given the opportunity to include these figures, but to date the information has not been forthcoming. He agreed to follow this up;
13. Councillor Stebbing stated that looking at the report it would seem as though Whittlesey and Chatteris have been ignored or have no crime, he suggested that even a low crime rate should be reported. Councillor Oliver stated that whilst the majority of problems are in Wisbech and March there are also issues in Whittlesey and Chatteris, the partnership have asked for more details to be included on other towns and villages. Aaron Locks stated that projects successful in addressing crime in March and Wisbech are rolled out to other areas;
14. Councillor Booth stated that CCTV is based in the towns and most of the businesses are in the towns, he asked how we ensure that the views of all the people living in Fenland are heard especially as there are no longer neighbourhood panel meetings. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that the process involves PCSO's door knocking to complete surveys in all areas, he added that some areas have carried on the old format of neighbourhood meetings, and that the police continue to support this. He stated that once the information is gathered and a priority has been set the partnership need to undertake further work to publicise the agreed priority to ensure greater community engagement and transparency;
15. Councillor Booth stated that looking at the priorities set out on page 15, it does not look like there has been any engagement with rural areas;
16. Councillor Cornwell agreed that the priorities which are set are not being effectively communicated out, he asked where the priorities are coming from and stated that we seem to be missing the joined up process;
17. Councillor Chamber stated that from his point of view in Chatteris there is not a problem, there are good PCSO's, there are public forums and the priorities raised are actioned on;
18. Councillor Miss Hoy stated that page 14 of the report refers to Domestic Abuse, it says that the responsibility for domestic abuse lies with the Domestic Abuse Countywide Board, but this is sending out the wrong message as the responsibility should be with the District Council, we should be saying that we are keen to support the work of the Countywide Board. FDC as an authority should be taking this on as a priority, we need to be more

proactive about this issue. Dan Horn agreed that this is a good suggestion, and agreed to take the comments forward. Aarron Locks stated that there is awareness training taking place, and that Fenland are moving forward with this issue, this is a specialised area and we prefer the professionals who are experts in this field to come forward with the suggestions;

19. Councillor Mrs Bucknor referring to page 17 stated that the document was prepared in May last year, domestic abuse is increasing, but it is not clear what the approach is at this moment as the document is out dated. Dan Horn explained that the action plan for this year can be found at page 91;
20. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that if the report is based on figures from last May, how are the partnership creating an action plan from this information. Dan Horn stated that the action plan shows the actions and work that has been prioritised. Aarron Locks stated that there has been a reduction of 18.2% of violent crime to date and that this shows that we are on the right path;
21. Councillor Swan stated that section 4 of the report refers to the fact that March and Wisbech Pub Managers have been encouraged to use the new Fenland information tool, he suggested that this should state that information is shared with all areas. Councillor Oliver stated that this is taken from the Secure Incidents Reporting and Community System (SIRCS);
22. Councillor Swan stated that Whittlesey have a very active pubwatch scheme and this should be mentioned too. Councillor Oliver stated that we are looking to include more information in future reports from all areas;
23. Councillor Swan stated that page 29 refers to the volume of offences in March Town, but the report is not clear and does not show any comparison with other areas which could potentially reflect badly on March. Dan Horn agreed that the moving over from yearly to quarterly reporting does not make this clear, this is good feedback. He agreed to take this back to the team. Dan Horn agreed to circulate figures to compare this data with;
24. Councillor Swan stated that the public want to know why police are being taken off to other areas. Inspector Robin Sissons explained that officers go to other areas of Fenland where they are needed in terms of priorities;
25. Councillor Swan stated that Councillors could feed this explanation back to residents if we were given it, we should have been able to inform residents that this is the reason that the police are going to a different area;
26. Councillor Swan stated that Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) happens everywhere, but according to this report there are no problems in some areas. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that the FCSP are looking at the data for the whole of the area, and at the partnership meeting there is limited time to cover everything, the partnership focus on key issues. Aarron Locks added that the work and best practice that come out of these meetings will be rolled out across Fenland. Councillor Oliver stated that it has been said, and we have agreed that there must be more information about other areas, this has been identified, and the partnership will include this in future reports;
27. Councillor Cornwell stated that it is a question of communication, we can see from your figures that crime has fallen, but do the population of Fenland know that crime has fallen, and as a result are not as fearful of crime as they once were? Inspector Robin Sissons confirmed that the fear of crime has not gone down despite publicity that tells people that the crime rate has decreased, we can only do our best to inform people. The fact is that you are probably less likely to have your car broken into than you would have been 10 years ago due to technology, but that does not mean that your fear of this is going to be any less. We will continue to communicate with people to try to ensure that they feel less fearful of crime;
28. Councillor Cornwell stated that there does not appear to be the same information coming out in the press. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that it is because it is not news worthy, there is a new media distribution of information that the partnership are involved with including social media sites like Facebook and Twitter;
29. Councillor Miscandlon stated that most of the statistics that are connected with domestic abuse are combined with alcohol related incidents, but that this is not always the case. This is misleading and gives a false outcome as domestic violence statistics have increased but

the data grouped together with alcohol related incidents shows a decrease;

30. Councillor Mrs Bucknor made reference to page 77 of the report where it states that a case study is to follow at the meeting. Dan Horn explained that the document was taken from the FCSP meeting, and a presentation had been made at that meeting;
31. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that with regards to page 82 of the report looking at feedback from Children and Young People's Services. There is a very large team that work at Wisbech and she is disappointed at the lack of information that has been provided, there is not enough detail about the work that they are doing. Aarron Locks stated that this section of the report is written by 3 different locality officers. Councillor Oliver stated that a new locality officer has just been appointed at Wisbech and this explains the lack of detail in this report on this occasion;
32. Councillor Booth stated that the statistics in this document are taken from reported crime, but wonders how much unreported crime there is. He asked if there are any barriers to reporting crime, and how successful the 101 reporting telephone number has been. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that the 101 non-emergency number had some teething problems, but is working well now. There are many ways that crime can be reported including online, telephone and face to face in the police station. The police are trying to establish as many ways as possible for people to be able to report crime. There is still some un-reported crime, the biggest motivation to report a crime is for the purpose of insurance claims;
33. Councillor Booth asked when was the last time that ways of reporting was looked at. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that this is an ongoing process, telephone canvassing reports are fed back each month. Telephone calls are made to people who have reported crime and to people who have had no contact with the police, if there is a common theme then a project will be developed to address this;
34. Councillor Booth asked if it is only after feedback that a project will be set up to address an issue. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that a project will be set up to address common issues, but if members are hearing of other issues that we are not aware of, please let us know;
35. Councillor Booth stated that there are comments from Young People's Services that the lack of funding will affect the services that they are providing, he asked how the FCSP are supporting these services. Dan Horn stated that over the past few years we have supported projects such as Youth Arenas and Safety Zones, there has been a focus on working with children and young people. Richard Dykes stated that the Fire and Rescue Service also work with children and young people in the area including working closely with local schools;
36. Councillor Booth stated that in the village that he lives in there was a problem with ASB, a lot of work has been put into to the young people in the area including a skate park and the ASB is no longer an issue. He asked what provisions are being put into place in other areas. Councillor Oliver stated that if something is identified the partnership will support people, direct them and help them to make an application for funding, the partnership has a small budget and this does not allow us to help directly with funding but we will assist where we can;
37. Councillor Cornwell asked what is Fenland's budget for Community Safety. Alan Pain stated that historically it is approximately £40,000 from the Police Panel and there has been a verbal indication not to expect a reduction. That budget is used across the work of the partnership;
38. Councillor Cornwell stated that the heading on page 63 should read 2013 and not 2012. Dan Horn agreed;
39. Councillor Cornwell stated that page 84 of the report refers to an issue in Whittlesey where the locality worker is concerned about the closure of youth clubs and asked how the partnership deals with this type of issue. Aarron Locks stated that the partnership have a bidding allocation where partners can bid for funding towards projects. Councillor Cornwell asked if this detail would be picked up from the report and acted on or if they had to come forward to ask for assistance. Aarron Locks stated that issues that were going to have a direct impact on crime would be picked up, otherwise we would expect partners to come

forward;

40. Councillor Cornwell asked how proactive the partnership are. Councillor Oliver stated that the membership of the partnership is widespread, so there are many agencies looking at the information coming forward, and someone will pick up issues;
41. Councillor Miscandlon stated that the report refers to the fact that there has been a reduction in the number of deliberate fires Richard Dykes stated that they have focussed on a detailed reporting mechanism, as a result this provides more accurate data;
42. Councillor Miscandlon asked how the police are monitoring criminals who come into Fenland from other areas. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that officers are being trained to react to automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) data. There are cameras in place on main routes and also in all of the traffic cars, as technology improves the cost of this equipment reduces and we will buy more. The information taken from this builds up intelligence systems and we can look at patterns;
43. Councillor Miscandlon asked if surrounding areas also feed into this intelligence to enable the police to build up a bigger picture. Inspector Robin Sissons confirmed that all the information is input into the police national computer (PNC) database;
44. Councillor Miscandlon asked if feedback suggested that cold calling local people was the best way to engage with them. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that there have been no complaints about this, the calls are dealt with by a team who carry out their job very sensitively and who explain that they are trying to find out what the community think about the services they provide;
45. Councillor Miscandlon asked if Police Forum Meetings are well attended. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that the attendance at these meetings is not the most important factor, due to feedback from surveys the police are not relying on the forums as a way of having contact with the community;
46. Councillor Miss Hoy stated that looking at calls outs within the pub cluster is not always a fair reflection on the premises that the call outs are attributed to;
47. Councillor Miss Hoy stated that she did not see much in the plan that concentrated on arson reduction. Richard Dykes stated that the fire service and police are working more closely and this is enabling them to carry out more joined up working and to spot trends much more quickly. Councillor Miss Hoy agreed that this is good to hear but that she is concerned that the report does not reflect this;
48. Councillor Miss Hoy stated that there is not enough information in the report about speeding traffic, we are not looking at this as an offence as people breaking the law. Inspector Robin Sissons informed members that page 93 of the report refers to road safety awareness, and this is something that we promote. He stated that the reports are not going to be able to cover everything, and so there has to be some type of prioritisation. It is not a case that we are trying to deal with easy subjects but that we are looking at what has an impact on the individual;
49. Councillor Swan asked how much pressure is there on the police when dealing with offences that people who are new to the UK commit without knowing that they are illegal, as they are acceptable in their home country. Councillor Oliver stated that this is a big issue, and a big burden on resources, we frequently look at projects and campaigns as a partnership to address this. Inspector Robin Sissons stated that issues such as street drinking are a particular problem in Wisbech. A project called Operation Pheasant has been launched which aims to treat street drinkers as victims and not automatically as criminals. There are lots of background issues that we are looking to help people to address using a multi-agency approach. The Designated Public Places Order (DPPO) is set up in most of the market towns, and we are reliant on people reporting issues in those areas so that the DPPO can be reinforced;
50. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that she understands that although overall arson has decreased in Fenland, this has increased in the Waterlees area. She asked what is being done specifically to look at the seriousness of arson in this area. Richard Dykes confirmed that reported arson has increased in Waterlees as a result of raised awareness of the issue in the area. The Fire Service are working with students at Thomas Clarkson Academy to

raise awareness of the danger of arson;

51. Councillor Booth stated that with regards to the issues of speeding the report refers to Road Safety Awareness Week, but it does not say what is being done to reduce speeding. A more comprehensive action plan needs to be put in place to tackle this issue, there need to be police out there with speed guns as people will only stop speeding if they get fined and receive penalty points. Robin Sissons stated that he can put the police out there, but this is a partnership and the issue needs to be looked at by everybody, starting with education. Councillor Oliver confirmed that work is going on with schools to educate young people about the effects of dangerous driving;
52. Councillor Booth stated that he is concerned that this issue is far worse than it has been presented to be in this report;
53. Councillor Stebbing stated that road traffic accidents are different from road traffic collisions, and the difference needs to be made clear, many are avoidable.

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel noted the Fenland Community Safety Partnership Report and recommended that the Partnership take note of the feedback from this meeting when preparing future reports and setting future priorities

(Councillor Miss Hoy declared her non-pecuniary interest in this item, by virtue of the fact that she is the Domestic Abuse Implementation Chairman)

OS36/12 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the Future Work Programme 2012/13 for the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Following a discussion the panel suggested that they would like set up a 3 member working group to look at the issue of street drinking. Councillors Miss Hoy, Booth and Swan agreed to make up this working group.

4.30pm

Chairman