MINUTES OF CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE
22 JUNE 2011

PRESENT:

Members of the Committee:

Councillors Shera (Vice Chairman in the Chair), Mrs Parker, Mrs Peach, Sandison, Mrs Walton and Miss Watts

Officers:

Sean Lawson (Head of Environmental Services), Keith Newell (Community Safety Partnership Manager), Paul Ansell (Scrutiny and Policy Officer), Claire Waleczek (Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer) and Veronika Beckova (Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer)

In attendance:

Councillors Tom Mahoney and Mrs New

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2011 were approved and signed by the Chairman subject to the penultimate sentence of minute 33 being replaced by: “Officers working on Incident Resolution and Safer Neighbourhood teams would deploy from Rugby Police Station after the restructure.”

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2011 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence from the meeting was received from Councillor Stokes (Chairman).

5. QUESTION TIME

A question was submitted by Cllrs Sandison and Mrs New on behalf of a local resident regarding the removal of a ‘no ball games’ sign on from an area of council housing. The issue had been dealt with through the Customer Feedback Procedure and was currently under investigation by the Local Government Ombudsman. The committee could therefore only discuss this as a general issue rather than the particular case.

Members of the Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group who were present advised that the council could not enforce the sign as it was only advisory. Such signs were removed because responses to complaints about contravention of the signs took up officer time. The members who brought the question to the committee argued that, even if they were unenforceable in law, the signs had a demonstrable effect. If signs were removed, alternative
deterrents such as defensive planting should be considered. Officers undertook to liaise with the Head of Housing on the matter and a statement would be made to the committee's next meeting.

6. REVIEW OF THE HOUSING SERVICES ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

The committee considered the findings and recommendations of the Housing Services Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Task Group (Part 1 – Agenda item 6).

It was emphasised that the Housing Services Anti-Social Behaviour Policy only applied to council tenants. A separate protocol managed anti-social behaviour throughout the borough.

The committee raised its concern about the risks arising from funding cuts to partners, as expressed by the second recommendation of the task group. The implications of any reduced funding would be considered as part of the review of the impact of reduced capacity following the Comprehensive Spending Review (Part 1 – Agenda item 9).

RESOLVED THAT -

(1) the task group membership be thanked for their work; and

(2) the review's recommendations be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Cabinet.

7. CRIME AND DISORDER PARTNERSHIP REPORT

The committee considered a report (Part 1 – agenda item 7) concerning the performance of the Community Safety Partnership for 2010/11, its update of 2011/12 priorities and the partnership plan 2011/14.

Further points were made as part of the report:

- The Community Safety Partnership achieved all of its performance targets for 2010/11.
- Domestic burglary was currently the main impact crime in the borough.
- Prolific and persistent offender (PPOs) in the community had increased within the last few months due to releases from prison. Most of the borough’s PPO cases were previously proactively managed by the then Offender Management Unit which was disbanded on 9 May with the police reorganisation. Last year on average there were 11 PPOs in the community on a month by month basis but the numbers had risen to 18 now. This required a tightly managed offender management initiative that was currently being enhanced.
- The Chief Constable had been made aware of the Partnership’s concerns about the increasing number of burglaries, and a burglary protection squad had been assembled in response to this, but without the degree of local knowledge that had previously existed.
- Communication with the public to raise awareness was imperative. However, it was also considered important to send a positive message to residents about reduced levels of some types of crime.
- The police press relations team would be producing a press release on the latest spate of burglaries in Warwickshire.
• Action was taken where a burglary hotspot occurred. A Tag deployment team issued leaflets on crime awareness to houses in the hotspot area and offered advice on crime prevention. Mobile police stations were also deployed to the area for a period of time. This was about to happen in a town centre ward.
• The committee asked that ward councillors be informed of burglary hotspots in order that they could assist with raising awareness of the issue. Officers suggested that a positive method of assisting with crime prevention was the promotion of Neighbourhood Watch schemes and an audit was now underway to ensure that all schemes were operationally active. Recruit to new schemes would take place where the audit revealed gaps in cover in time for the Christmas upturn in domestic burglary.

RESOLVED THAT – Keith Newell be thanked for the report.

8. REPORT OF THE SAFE AND CLEAN PRIORITY ACTION GROUP
CHAIRMAN

The Committee considered a report from Sean Lawson, Chairman of the Safe and Clean Priority Action Group, relating to its work on reducing levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the borough. A copy of the report is attached at Annex 1 to the minutes.

There had been a significant reduction in ASB incidents during the last four years as a result of positive partnership working. The ASB Management Group met monthly to consider current cases. If individuals were identified, resources were deployed quickly to deal with ASB incidents.

Three levels of solving ASB had been introduced:

• Warning to parents (if the ASB involved children) or adults (if ASB was caused by adults)
• Issuing of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
• Issuing of ASB Order or issuing of Criminal ASB Order

RESOLVED THAT – Sean Lawson be thanked for the report.

9. IMPACT OF REDUCED CAPACITY FOLLOWING THE COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW – DRAFT ONE PAGE STRATEGY

The Committee considered the draft one page strategy (Part 1 – Agenda item 9 – Appendix 1) for the review on the impact of reduce capacity following the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The committee considered that the membership of the task group needed broader representation and requested that officers seek further nominations for two more members including at least one Liberal Democrat. The second representative would be appointed by the Chairman of the committee.

The committee approved the draft one page strategy.
10. WORK PROGRAMME

The committee considered items for its future meetings.

It was suggested that the committee undertake reviews on different levels of reduction of burglaries including the impact of the closure of the Offender Management Unit and the promotion of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

The committee also considered it should keep a watching brief on recommendations arising from the serious case review of the death of Gemma Hayter in Rugby.

The Committee requested that Chief Inspector Bob Musgrove be invited to attend the meeting for items which required his input.

CHAIRMAN
RUGBY COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

Defining what ASB actually is has been an art form in itself since the Anti-Social Behaviour Act of 2003 contained more than twenty specific activities that could constitute ASB.

For 2009/10 and 2010/11 the Rugby CSP focussed on incidents classed as "Rowdy Nuisance" as they accounted for nearly 70% of reported ASB incidents across the Borough. In 2009/10 the number of incidents were reduced by almost 15 per cent. In 2010/11 Rugby CSP was the only CSP in the County to achieve all of its targets including further reductions in ASB rowdy nuisance incidents. The final Borough total of 2667 was 8.5% down at a Borough level and the reduction in the Police Priority Area was over 12%.

In summary the levels of reported rowdy nuisance ASB incidents in the last two years has fallen by a quarter.

Our robust action plans which focussed on early intervention and diversion up to and including enforcement appeared to be the main contributors to the success story.

However, the very sad Pilkington case in nearby Leicestershire prompted us to review the performance of the CSP from the victim's perspective. We undertook a quick time review of three cases where there was evidence or knowledge of repeat victim issues to a few agencies. We concluded that we were vulnerable to scrutiny around the case management dimension of our processes. We found a lot of information was in the "head" of some agency staff but not recorded and available to the wider partnership.

An additional review of our case management administrative system identified that over a quarter (28%) of all live cases had data missing that was vital to the effective management of the case. We could not even calculate breach levels. In a nut-shell success to us was about the levels of reductions in reported cases via a geographic hot spot and offender led approach with little in the way of evidence that we were a victim centred partnership. As a result of the review a year ago the following recommendations were implemented:-

1. Improve case management template by introducing case numbering, better recording of interventions and to make case tracking easier.

2. To improve Victim Support activity*

3. To provide earlier and stronger interventions.

4. A more rigid escalation process

* We have purchased Repeat Victim cameras.
April 2011 – Changes in National ASB Recording

The previous number of activities that could be determined as ASB were reduced to three in April 2011. The new categories are:-

1. ASB – General Community Impact
2. ASB – Environmental Impact
3. ASB – Personal

The rationale for the national recording changes was an emphasis to move away from merely recording and responding to incidents, to identifying the levels of individual vulnerability.

"Personal" ASB is where the CALLER, CALL HANDLER OR ANYONE ELSE perceives the ASB is either deliberately targeted at them as an individual, or them as a group, rather than the community at large. The CSP Board in May determined that the CSP should focus on these incidents as it supports and demonstrates a victim centred approach.

Clearly this is a base-line setting year.