MINUTES OF CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

28 SEPTEMBER 2010

PRESENT:

Members of the Committee: Cllrs Shera (Chairman), O'Rourke, Roberts, Roodhouse, Helen Walton (substituting for Councillor Spiers) and Miss Watts

Officers: Keith Newell, Community Safety Manager; Joanne Birkin, Assistant Scrutiny Officer; Elizabeth Routledge, Democratic Services Officer

In attendance: Paul Collett, Community Safety Project Officer, WCC

Observer: Mr Edward Palusinski

12. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2010 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

13. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Spiers (Councillor Helen Walton substituted)

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15. QUESTION TIME

No questions had been received.

16. CALL-INS

There were no call-ins.

17. CHAIR OF SAFER FUTURES PAG

At the meeting of the Committee held on 23 June 2010, (Minute No 8iv refers), it had been resolved that: ‘The chairs of the CSP’s priority action groups (PAGs) be asked to report to the committee in rotation’.

Details of the three PAGs are shown in the table overleaf.
The Safer Futures theme focused on early intervention and prevention directed at those persons who were the next potential victim or offender. The PAG was a multiagency strategy group. A key strand of its work was with young people who were known to be at risk of being both victims and offenders. The group provided the strategic lead to ensure a positive future for young people. The group also aimed to reduce re-offending rates amongst priority offenders by using diversionary activities and treatment for drugs and alcohol. To tackle the most hardened persistent individuals who commit crime and anti-social behaviour the Safer Futures theme oversees two management groups. These manage Priority Prolific Offenders and individuals persistent in causing anti-social behaviour.

There were currently 30 persistent prolific offenders (PPOs) in the Rugby area, 16 of which were in custody. They encountered problems on release from custody – uncertainty about accommodation, employment, health issues, etc. Those released with licensed conditions were forced to attend relevant support sessions.

A new initiative – Futures Unlocked – would be starting in October. Twelve months’ funding had been made available and a Co-ordinator had been employed to recruit mentors and volunteers to support PPOs released without conditions. This initiative is in conjunction with HMP Onley.

The work relied heavily on partnership work involving many statutory and voluntary bodies.

Members asked how potential funding cuts might affect the service. Mr Newell responded that there was a statutory requirement to reduce the level of re-offending. However, if agencies involved in the service had their funding cut, it was likely that this would impact in some way on the service.

Members were heartened to hear of the positive work being undertaken by the service and thanked Mr Newell for his report.

RESOLVED THAT – Mr Newell be thanked for his report.
18. CURRENT PERFORMANCE – REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP MANAGER

A copy of the performance indicators for the Community Safety Partnership had been circulated. This showed actual performance figures from April to August 2010 and monthly targets for the remainder of 2010/11.

The following points were highlighted:

- **NI15 Most Serious Violence** – Rugby Borough. It was anticipated that the service would be within target this year.
- **NI15 Most Serious Violence** – Rugby Police Priority Area. The target was 38 but had already reached 39. 35-40% of that violence was domestic abuse. It was envisaged that the establishment of the Domestic Abuse Forum would enable some reduction work to be carried out.
- **NI16 Serious Acquisitive Crime** – This was well under target and it was predicted that the numbers of thefts from vehicles would be down, although there had been a ‘peak’ in June due to a particular individual.
- **NI147 People Killed or Seriously Injured in Road Traffic Accidents** – The national indicator for the whole of Warwickshire was red. Campaigns were underway to try and reduce the figures.
  - The Bikeability Scheme was working well.
  - In Rugby, injuries to children in cars had risen, caused by not wearing seatbelts or a child not being in an appropriate seat. An initiative would be commencing in November whereby fire officers would be going into schools to check car seats and restraints to ensure that they were the correct ones and that they had been properly installed.
- **Local Indicator - Anti Social Behaviour Incidents – Rowdy/Nuisance** – The number of incidents so far this year was down. A very structured approach had been adopted. Warning letters to offenders were delivered personally, serving a dual purpose – the guaranteed receipt of the letter, and the first attempt at early intervention.

Overall, the Community Safety Partnership was performing well.

The Community Safety Manager was thanked for his report.

19. HALLMARKS, ACCESSIBILITY OF THE PARTNERSHIP AND WEBSITE DEVELOPMENTS

The Committee welcomed Paul Collett, Community Safety Project Officer, WCC to the meeting. Paul made a brief presentation (copy attached as Appendix 1 to the Minutes).

Publishing a summary of the Partnership’s structure, priorities and activities was a good way to strengthen community engagement through ensuring that the community had access to good quality information about what was happening in their local area. It also helped raise the profile of the Community Safety Partnership in the community, and supported increased confidence in the Partnership.

The CSP Website had been considerably enhanced. There was a simple front page with four choices:
- Your local team
- What you can do
- News
- About the Partnership
Its intent was to be accessible by all, with more detailed information available if required. The key message was ‘what can you do to keep safe?’

There had been a few issues with the structure of the website:
- It had been hoped to have an online Calendar but this could not be achieved because of security.
- There had been a major delay caused by the archiving of the Home Office Crime Reduction website.
- The refresh of the ‘ZONE’ to support younger people was still awaited.
- A refresh of the RBC website to allow for a link to the CSP site was still to be added.
- Constant updates would be required.
- The link to the website was www.rugby.gov.uk/communitysafety

The Community Safety Project Officer was thanked for his presentation.

20. GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS ON COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP REGULATIONS

The new government had already stated how effective CSPs had been in preventing crime. It was felt, however, that partnerships needed more freedom and flexibility and there was a move to reduce the regulations which prescribed the way CSPs operated.

The proposed changes were noted. It was anticipated that the new regulations would be available by the end of 2010.

RESOLVED THAT – The report be noted.

21. HOUSING SERVICES ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY – ONE PAGE STRATEGY

At the last meeting of the Crime and Disorder Committee it had been agreed that there should be a task group established to review the Housing Service’s Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and assess whether it was achieving its goals and being effective.

A draft one page strategy was considered by the Committee – no additional comments were made.

RESOLVED THAT – the draft one page strategy be approved.

22. COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

The Committee received a report reminding members of existing practice on communicating with and involving the public and to encourage high quality community engagement practice in the carrying out of scrutiny work.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be noted.
23. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Assistant Scrutiny Officer led a discussion about potential topics for the Committee’s Work Programme.

The following were suggested:

- National Indicators for the Community Safety Partnership (showing red). Update for January meeting.
- Domestic Violence – for a meeting in approximately 6 months time. It was suggested that a representative from the Domestic Violence Forum be invited to attend a meeting.
- National Pilot Site – Gang work.
- Family Intervention Programme.

24. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC UNDER SECTION 100 (A) (4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED THAT - under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involves the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that in all of the circumstances of the cases, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

25. CASE STUDY STREET GANGS – SERIOUS VIOLENT CRIMES

The Committee received a report from the Community Safety Manager regarding serious violent crimes associated with street gangs and noted the following:

- The Rugby Initiative had adopted a three tiered approach – Catch and Convict; Prevent and Deter; and Early Intervention.
- The Partnership had commissioned a programme tailored to the needs of gang members in order to, amongst other things, offer some solutions to their major challenges.
- The programme had proven to be very successful and another initiative was already in the planning stages.

Members congratulated officers on their work which they found to be very encouraging and a positive initiative.

CHAIRMAN