

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

15 JUNE 2006

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

INFORMATION ITEM

Community Safety and Protection- Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Kirton

SAFER STOCKTON PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2005/06

SUMMARY

This report sets out the progress made by the Safer Stockton Partnership in 2005/06 against the six key issues on which the current Community Safety Plan for the Borough (covering the three year period 2005-2008) is based.

DETAIL

1. The Safer Stockton Partnership is the statutory crime and disorder reduction partnership for the Borough and discharges the duties placed on the Council and other key partnerships under Sections 5, 6 and 7 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, as well as operating as the community safety thematic partnership within the Stockton Renaissance structure.
2. In 2004/05 the Home Office undertook a review of the partnership provisions of the 1998 Act which recommended, among other points, that community safety partnerships put more effort into raising the awareness of local residents and other stakeholders of their performance. In order to address this issue, the Partnership has agreed that the attached one page summary of its achievements during 2005/06 (the first year of the third 3 year Community Safety Plan for the Borough) should be published in 'Stockton news' and on the Partnership's website (www.saferstockton.com) and circulated among the partner agencies.
3. At the same meeting where the draft programme report was agreed, the Partnership also considered a detailed review of progress in the year, setting out quarterly progress against the 46 targets in the Community Safety Plan, and rating each by a 'traffic light' system, accuracy to date 36 were classified as 'green', 3 as 'amber', and 7 as 'red'.
4. In respect of total crime, performance improved during the second half of 2005/06, with a reduction of 6.4% compared to the first half, and this was even more marked in relation to violent crime, with a reduction of 25.4% in the second half of the year compared to the first, and detailed comparison with the family group of 'most similar Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships' showing that Stockton has an above average level of recorded common assault, a below average level of woundings, and is second best in the group for more serious violent offences, thus corroborating the view that the increase in violent crime is due to more minor scuffles being 'crimed'.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial

5. The work of the Safer Stockton Partnership is resourced from three main groups of sources, as detailed below.
 - (i) the mainstream resources of all the partner organisations, including the Council;
 - (ii) specific Home Office allocations made to local agencies to support reductions in crime and disorder and improvements in community safety, currently the Police Basic Command Unit (BCU) Fund of approximately £157,000 and elements of the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund allocated to the Council as 'banker' for the Partnership, currently around £256,000.
 - (iii) other funding sources accessed by the Partnership e.g. NRF, EU funding etc.
6. In 2004/05 the Council spent £2.2 million on community safety, of which 80% was from external funding sources i.e. categories 'ii' and 'iii' above.

Legal

7. There are no legal implications arising from this report

RISK ASSESSMENT

8. Many of the factors affecting the performance of the Safer Stockton Partnership are beyond local control e.g. the risk to co-terminosity represented by re-organisation of PCTs, Police and other key agencies. Some of the key resourcing issues, e.g. whether or not the BCU Fund is retained beyond March 2007, are also dependent on national decisions. On balance, it is considered that the achievement of further progress should be categorised as low to medium risk, and that existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

9. Achievement of the targets continued in the Community Safety Plan has a reciprocal relationship with other aspects of the Community Strategy for the Borough – improvements in community safety support, and are supported by, better outcomes for children and young people, improved health, better local economic performance etc. Key targets from the Community Safety Plan are reproduced in the Community Strategy.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

10. Draft report agreed by the Safer Stockton Partnership 25 April 2006.

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Background Papers: N/A

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: ALL

Property There are no property implications arising from this report.

BURGLARY REDUCED TO NEW RECORD LOW!

The Safer Stockton Partnership is a multi-agency group dedicated to reducing crime and disorder in the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees. We are currently working on our third Community Safety Plan, covering the period April 2005 to March 2008, which is based on six key issues. This report sums up the progress we have achieved in the first year – 2005/06.

1. DWELLING BURGLARY

Last year we reported that burglaries in dwellings were down to the lowest level since the 1970s. This year we have achieved a further 31% reduction, to 943 in total – despite the fact that dwelling numbers are going up. Dwelling burglary is one of the crimes which have the highest impact on fear of crime.

2. ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

We have put extra staff into our ASB Team – it now includes Police Officers, Council staff, and a Firefighter. In the last 12 months the Team have issued more than 1600 warning letters, got 59 people to sign Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, and the Courts have granted 19 Anti Social Behaviour Orders. We check back with people who complain to us about ASB – 88% of the people who replied said that the service was ‘good’ or ‘excellent’.

3. DRUGS

We work closely with Stockton DAT (Drugs Action Team) to tackle drug-related crime, and its causes. We have achieved 10 of our 11 drug targets for the year, including a 29% increase in arrests for supplying class A drugs, to 179, the highest total since we started keeping these records.

4. VIOLENT CRIME

The ‘headline level’ of crimes of violence is up by 14%, but the numbers resulting in significant injury are down by 15%. We think that the overall increase is due to more police officers in town centres at night times, leading to more minor scuffles being recorded, and greater success in exposing the real level of domestic violence.

5. DELIBERATE FIRES

We achieved all seven of our targets for deliberate fires, with big reductions (23%) in both ‘primary deliberate fires’, in buildings and vehicles, ‘secondary deliberate fires’ (setting fire to rubbish, grassland etc), which were down by 18%.

6. TOTAL CRIME

Total crime was up by less than 1% on the previous year, but still down by 9.6% on the ‘baseline year’, 2003/04, which is the one the Government is measuring us against. We are aiming for a 20% reduction by the end of 2007/08. The rate of re-offending by young offenders keeps dropping, which is good news for the future. Our total crime rate is now the lowest of the five unitary councils in the Tees Valley (lower than Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Redcar & Cleveland, and Darlington).

For further information about our work, please see our website: www.saferstockton.com.