

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

5 February 2009

REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

**Housing & Community Safety - Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Steve Nelson
Adult Services & Health – Lead Cabinet Member - Councillor Mrs Ann McCoy**

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the proposed merger of the Safer Stockton Partnership and Stockton Drugs Action Team (DAT) Steering Group.

2. Recommendations

1. That the report be noted
2. That agreement of further detail be delegated to the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Social Care (CESC) and the Head of Community Protection, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Adult Services & Health and for Housing and Community Safety.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To ensure timely progress towards more efficient partnership arrangements.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;

- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the proposed merger of the Safer Stockton Partnership and Stockton Drugs Action Team (DAT) Steering Group.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the report be noted
2. That agreement of further detail be delegated to the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Social Care (CESC) and the Head of Community Protection, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Adult Services & Health and for Housing and Community Safety.

DETAIL

1. The Safer Stockton Partnership was established in 1998, and Stockton DAT Steering Group was established in 2000 (on the dissolution of the former Teesside DAT).
2. The two Partnerships have worked in close co-operation and since 2004 have had two joint meetings per year, meeting as the Safer Stockton Partnership / DAT Integration Group.
3. Following discussion at the meeting of the Integration Group in May 2008 an options paper on future working arrangements was presented to the meeting of the Integration Group on 4 November, and a decision in principle was made by members of the two Partnerships to merge the two governance bodies. The decision does not entail any changes to staffing structure or budget management at office level.
4. The Safer Stockton Partnership is led jointly by the Council, Cleveland Police, Cleveland Police Authority, Cleveland Fire Brigade and Stockton-on-Tees Teaching Primary Care Trust (PCT), and the Council is represented on this Partnership by the Cabinet Member for Housing & Community Safety, a representative of the Housing & Community Safety Select Committee (currently Cllr. Mrs Cherrett), the Head of Operations (Children & Young People) and the Head of Community Protection.
5. The Stockton DAT arrangements are led jointly by the Council and the PCT, via the Adult Strategy Team. Members will be aware that the Head of Adult Strategy is a joint appointment between the Council and the PCT. The DAT Steering Group is chaired by the Corporate Director of CESC and the Cabinet Member for Adult Services & Health is the Vice Chair. The Cabinet Member for Housing & Community Safety and a number of council officers are also members of the DAT Steering Group.

6. The prospective timescale for completion of full merger is April or May 2009. This will allow time for the preparation of a draft constitution for the merged Partnership and associated paperwork, and for more detailed consultation with the full membership of both bodies to take place.
7. The Council was awarded Beacon Status in support of Crime & Disorder Partnership work in 2004/05, and Stockton DAT has been consistently rated as 'green' by the Government Office for the North East (GONE) and the National Treatment Agency.
8. GONE is supportive of the merger proposal.
9. A separate study is taking place as to whether or not the Drugs Action Team takes on formal responsibility for alcohol misuse, becoming a Drugs and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), as is the position in some other areas. If this extension to the DAT role is confirmed, this will be taken into account in the detailed merger proposals.
10. In order to ensure timely progress, it is proposed to delegate agreement of the details to the key officers concerned, in consultation with the Cabinet Members involved in the Partnerships.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications. However, if it proves possible, as hoped, to achieve a net reduction in the number and/or duration of meetings, then time will be released from partnership governance and redirected into improving service delivery.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications. Neither of the existing partnerships is a legal entity and the new partnership will not be one. The proposed merger is in line with Government Guidance.

RISK ASSESSMENT

This is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Regeneration and Transport – there are many reciprocal relationships between crime and offending, misuse of drugs and worklessness / benefit dependency.

Safer Communities – The report is completely concerned with community safety issues.

Children and Young People – Children and Young People are over represented among both victims and perpetrators of crime. Misuse of Class A drugs among children and young people is now less common in Stockton-on-Tees but misuse of alcohol and Class B and C drugs is widespread.

Health and Wellbeing - Misuse of drugs is a key cause of poor health in itself and is associated with a range of other health problems, particularly for injecting drug users.

Environment and Housing – The new Partnership will continue to address issues of drug litter, vandalism and graffiti, to be concerned with the impact of drugs and crime in residential areas and with the provision of sustainable housing options for problem drug users and ex-offenders.

Stronger Communities – Crime and misuse of drugs erode community cohesion.

Older Adults – Older people are under represented among both victims and perpetrators of crime, and very unlikely to be in treatment for misuse of drugs, but experience high levels of fear of crime, including concerns about drug use and drug dealing.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This report is not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment because it makes no significant changes to the pattern of service delivery.

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Background Papers Options for the Future of the Integration Group 4 November 2008

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: All

Property: This report has no property implications.