

Safer Stockton Partnership

A meeting of the Safer Stockton Partnership was held on Tuesday 25th September, 2007.

Present: Councillor Lewis, Councillor Nelson, Jane Humphreys, Claire Sills, Sue Maddison, Mike Batty, Dawn Welsh, Fiona Shayler (Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council), Dave Brunskill, Gary Gamesby (Stockton Police), A G Turner (Western Area Partnership), Tina Williams (Central Area Partnership Board), Chris Coombs, Joanne Hodgkinson (Cleveland Police Authority), John Bentley (Safe in Tees Valley), Ian Garrett (Eastern Area Partnership Board), Anne Howard (NHW), Geoff Lee (Tristar Homes), Joanne Gleeson (NPS – Teesside), Steve McCartney, Paul Kirton (Cleveland Fire Authority).

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mike Picknett, Miriam Robertson, Sue Cash, Marilyn Davies..

305 Election of Chairman 2007/2008

Geoff Lee was appointed as Chairman for 2007/08.

306 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th August 2007 were agreed as a correct record.

307 Matters Arising

Drug Dealing – Cash Seizures

Members were provided with a verbal update on seizures of cash linked to drug dealing. 50% of the seized monies go to the government and 50% go to the CPS, Courts and the Police. The Share provided to the Police is divided into different departments.

Cleveland Police Authority was one of the best police authorities at Asset Recovery with a target of £300,000 but achieved £1.2 million in confiscation orders.

The difficulties of retrieving goods when a confiscation order was issued were highlighted. A benefit in the region of £2.9 million had been calculated but around £0.5 million had been retrieved. The legalities made it difficult to achieve full recovery.

Tina Williams spoke on behalf of the community and stated that an 'Unexplained Wealth Law' was required and would be lobbying MP's to consider this. This law would be aimed at those that could not explain how they achieved a wealthy lifestyle and assets, who it was thought were dealing, identified by community members and the Police.

It was requested that the freedoms and flexibilities of retrieving goods/monies be considered within the Local Area Agreement and that it be requested that Stockton receive a percentage of what they retrieve. It was suggested that the Chairman together with Dave Brunskill and Mike Batty meet to discuss further and compile a letter on behalf of the SSP to the Minister.

Agency Contacts for Information Sharing

The Contacts were Paul Noddings, Sue Maddison and Jeff Hickins.

PIP

A reply had been received from GONE which was apologetic but no further action was detailed.

308 National Standards

In the work programme for the year it was agreed to hold an in-depth discussion on National Standards for community safety partnerships, on the basis that the Standards would be published in 'summer 2007' at this meeting. In the event, Government Office North East had advised that the National Standards were published on 17 September although they were not available on the Home Office website on the morning of 18 September. Partnership Chairs had been invited to an event in London on 16 October, and a regional seminar was to be held (at Hardwick Hall, Sedgefield) on 19 October.

This timetable has not provided for a full analysis of the impact of the Standards. However, one issue which was apparent from the report on 'Crime and Disorder Act Review Regulations' submitted to the last meeting of the Partnership, on 7 August 2007, was that we need to have explicit arrangements for removal of the Chair.

It was therefore suggested that we add to the Partnership Constitution the following new paragraph:

“ 5.3 Any representative of the partnership, including the Chair or Vice Chair, may be removed from that position by a simple majority of voting members of the Partnership, provided that notice of the proposal has been set out on the agenda papers, and that they have been sent out at least three working days before the meeting (i.e. Thursday for Tuesday). For avoidance of doubt all voting members, including the individuals in question, will be entitled to vote on any such issues”.

AGREED that the above paragraph be added to the SSP Constitution and that the document be discussed further at the next meeting.

309 Tackling Crime and Disorder Audit Responses

At present 3271 responses had been received, the target response rate was 4,000. Members of the Partnership were encouraged to send in as many completed forms as possible to ensure that the target was achieved. Some of the forms received may be void and this would need checking as they could not be included within the final figures. The closing date was 5th October 2007.

It was suggested that in the future it maybe preferable to grade the priorities rather than pick out three priorities as many respondents found it difficult to only pick three, and if more than three were chosen the form became void.

AGREED that the update and comments be noted.

310 Partnership Healthcheck

Stockton Council had recently drawn up a Partnership Strategy, incorporating the Partnership Healthcheck Questionnaire.

The Partnership Strategy was a broad document, covering a range of arrangements which may be described as partnerships, including short term joint venture projects between as few as two organisations, and so called partnerships which are essentially commercial contracts. Within the terminology used in this Strategy, the Safer Stockton Partnership would be described as a 'goals- based coalition'.

Some members of the Partnership would recall that we have on two occasions been through a process of intensive self-assessment, using tools developed by the Home Office for the specific purpose of self-assessment by community safety partnerships. The first of these processes took place in January 2004, and the second in September/October 2006, in each case based on a self-assessment process in which all members of the Partnership were invited to score each factor, using electronic voting systems, with the aggregated scores then used to develop a Partnership Improvement Plan to address perceived areas of weakness. The second Partnership Improvement Plan was still being implemented (target completion date March 2008).

There may be some added value to be gained from using the new Healthcheck Questionnaire, bearing in mind that it covered a much broader range of cases, but it was considered that this could be done on a 'desktop' basis, in the first instance, without making a substantial investment of time from all members of the Partnership.

AGREED that the Council's Head of Community Protection and Community Safety Manager, together with the Chairman, Anne Howard, Sue Maddison and Dave Brunskill, prepare an initial set of responses, together with brief supporting evidence, for the next meeting of the Partnership.

311 Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2021, Local Area Agreement Priorities 2008-2011

Members were provided with the emerging draft Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), and Local Area Agreement 2008-11(LAA) priorities following the first phase of consultation, along with consultation on its delivery plans, the Local Development Framework and the Local Area Agreement priorities.

Each consultation session involved running through the key themes and ambitions proposed for the long term Sustainable Community Strategy for comments and discussion around "were they the right ones" and which of the ambitions we should focus on first which will form the priorities for the Sustainable Community Strategy's first 3 year delivery plan (the LAA). All comments from the engagement process have been formally logged and have been used to inform the attached draft of the SCS.

These comments would now be fed back to Renaissance, Thematic and Area Partnerships in September 07, as part of the second phase of consultation. The comments and a text summary had been sent to service providers and thematic areas for their input and to ensure that these comments could inform the various thematic plans and strategies.

The consultation sessions also covered which of the ambitions we should focus on, to form the priorities for the Sustainable Community Strategy's first 3-year delivery plan (the LAA). Emerging priorities to date included greater provision and access to local services, improved local transport networks, financial inclusion and improved Town Centres.

The next stages of developing the SCS strategy were as follows:

- 2nd phase consultation of draft SCS 08-21/ LAA priorities 08-11 (September 07)
- Final draft of SCS to Renaissance for approval (October 07)
- Published strategy in early 2008

The 'place shaper' government guidance, (anticipated in the autumn of 2007) on LSPs, Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreement statutory elements, would also be considered and any required changes made.

Members discussed employability and how this featured within the strategy. Tackling Crime was the top priority for the Borough and Members asked whether funding would match priorities. Support for Families was another issue raised by the partnership to be included within the thematic areas.

AGREED that the emerging draft Sustainable Community Strategy and priorities for the Local Area Agreement from 2008 be noted.

312 Drug Strategy Consultation

Members were provided with a copy of the Governments Consultation Paper - Drugs: Our Community, Your Say for comments. It was suggested that a Working Group be established to provide a response from the Partnership.

AGREED that Sue Maddison, Dave Brunskill/Darren Best, John Bentley, Mike Batty/Marilyn Davies, Joanne Gleeson and Paul Kirton form a Working Group to provide a response from the Partnership on the paper.

313 Communications

Members were provided with the list of press releases for the period from 21st July to 7th September 2007.

AGREED that the press releases be noted.

314 Recorded Crime and Disorder Update – June 2007-10-15

Members were provided with the recorded crime figures for April 2007 – August 2007 compared with April 2006 – August 2006.

Members discussed 'other thefts' such as shop lifting, theft of metals, which were affecting the figures. Darren Best had produced an action plan for this area and the first meeting had been held to discuss this on 24th September.

AGREED that the recorded crime figures for April 2007 – August 2007 compared with April 2006 – August 2006 be noted.

315 Reports Back

Children's Fund

The Government has announced a further three years of funding. Indications showed that there would be a focus on children with disabilities and young carers. The Board had met and agreed that subject to guidelines the Children's Trust Management Team would be likely to be the group that decided on how funding would be spent. Adequate notice needed to be provided for existing projects that may need to be wound down and contracts ended.

Neil Pocklington and Jill Anderson had been appointed as Integrated Service (ISA) Managers and two further appointments would be made. Susan Jackson would be overseeing safeguarding and safeguarding staffing issues.

Stockton Renaissance Community Cohesion Sub Group

The minutes of the 23rd July 2007 and 3rd September 2007 were provided for Members information.

316 Any other Business

Domestic Violence

Members discussed the performance of the North Tees Women's Aid CHRYSALIS perpetrator programme for male perpetrators of domestic violence. A number of queries were raised and Mike Batty would clarify and report back to Members.

DAT

The Young Peoples Drug Services budget would be subject to cuts.

Terrorism

It was requested that Terrorism be put on the SSP agenda as a standing item for each meeting.