

Crime and Disorder Select Committee

A meeting of Crime and Disorder Select Committee was held on Thursday, 8th February, 2018.

Present: Cllr David Wilburn (Chair), Cllr Paul Rowling (Vice-Chair), Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Chris Barlow, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Barry Woodhouse

Officers: Reuben Kench, Sara Fortune (CLE); Jamie McCann, Marc Stephenson, Steven Hume (Community Services); Judy Trainer, Annette Sotheby (DCE)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Julia Whitehill

CAD 40/17 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CAD 41/17 Minutes of the Meetings held on 7th December 2017 and 11th January 2018 - For Approval/Signature

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings held on 7th December 2017 and 11th January 2018.

AGREED that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

CAD 42/17 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest noted.

CAD 43/17 Scrutiny Review of Security at Preston Park

Consideration was given to the draft report for Security at Preston Park.

Members asked the figure for boarding up/replacing windows following vandalism in the Winter Garden be checked prior to the report being finalised.

AGREED that the final report be approved for submission to Cabinet.

CAD 44/17 Overview of Community Services

Overview of Community Services

Members were presented with an overview of Community Services. The key issues for the service were highlighted, together with emerging issues as follows:

Crime and ASB

- Stockton had seen a modest increase in crime compared to other areas, but continues to have the lowest crime rate per 1000 population within the Tees Valley.
- Changes in police recording had been made with greater scrutiny on forces to

record all incidents accurately.

- Incidents of anti-social behaviour had reduced following a spike last year, and responding and tackling ASB in Stockton was the best in the region.

Hate Crime

- Safer Stockton Partnership are committed to raising awareness of Hate Crime, looking at ways to identify and promote its reporting and subsequent response. Identifying incidents could be difficult, for example if someone with SEN suffered abuse on a bus, they would probably change their bus rather than report it.

- Stockton Hate Crime Group has been further developed over the last 12 months, improving engagement with community and minority groups. Many incidents are race-related, often associated with taxi drivers who feel confident enough to report such issues.

- Work ongoing with LGBT community around transgender awareness and related issues. There is a network of 3rd party reporting centres in Stockton where individuals who feel targeted can go to a place of safety to report this, which then gets fed to relevant agencies to provide support.

Domestic Abuse

- Domestic abuse continues to be a significant challenge, forming a large proportion of violent crime in Stockton (36 - 38%). Often victims do not report until they have suffered 30/40 incidents of abuse. Although a small reduction has been seen which is a positive step, this is a huge under reporting and work is ongoing to reduce repeat incidents.

- A Domestic Abuse Action Plan is in place, and to support the progression of this a Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator has recently been appointed, tasked to raise awareness and work with more partners to tackle the key priorities.

- Harbour have been re-commissioned to provide support services in Stockton. Work is continuing with other partners to raise awareness - for example GPs, midwives and health visitors, to encourage more reporting, help get support to victims and work with perpetrators when safe to do so.

Prevent

- From 2015, local authorities have statutory responsibility to have due regard to reduce the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism or extremist activities.

- Stockton has a low number of Prevent referrals, with networks and systems in place to help identify individuals of concern at an early stage.

- Prevent awareness training continues to be rolled out throughout SBC, with additional sessions at Durham University and Riverside College.

- Following the Manchester attack last year, there was a positive display within the Stockton community when a Thornaby mosque opened its doors to invite multiple faiths to visit after it was daubed with graffiti. Stockton has strong values and work is ongoing to look at how that can be built on over the next 12 months.

- In light of last year's attacks the government are reviewing their strategies, with changes to security and safeguarding arrangements which will impact on local authorities and other statutory agencies and their duties to respond. Further information will be provided in due course.

Asylum and Migration

- The number of asylum seekers coming to Stockton has remained manageable with no major issues identified regarding community integration. Work ongoing on further improving links and relationships to ensure clear pathways are in

place to access advice and support.

Modern slavery and trafficking

- Looking to develop measures with partners to ensure we can effectively respond and tackle any issues that may arise within Stockton and across the Tees, with safeguarding advice and support.
- Learn from Newcastle and other partners to have a manageable policy with the correct support processes in place.

Prison Reform

- A wider project around prison reform is taking place in Holmehouse, looking at improving security, additional staff recruitment to support management of prisons, and health including how to reduce the impact of drugs.
- Holmehouse are keen to work with SBC to become more of a community partner which is a good opportunity to better support prisoners and to manage the transition of offenders back into the community, hopefully reducing reoffending.

Operational Response

- Following a major review last year, front line services are now undertaken by Care for your Area (Civic Enforcement, Security and Surveillance).
- Although overall numbers have reduced, Civic Enforcement still maintains a sizeable service, which is one of the largest in the North East, England and Wales.
- 24-hour working was withdrawn and hours now condensed to core operated hours and periods denoted by Intelligence.
- Core staffing – using some funding obtained through Stockton Business Improvement District (BID) there are now 4 dedicated support officers to support the regeneration of the town.
- Security and Surveillance largely operates within the shadows and the services are not overtly advertised or promoted.
- CCTV operates 24 hours/365 days with 170 cameras across our area. The operation model is funded essentially through private business, which allows operation in support of council objectives. Thousands of private security systems are monitored on behalf of industry and businesses across the country, taking 15,000 calls a year.
- Technology and infrastructure have been updated in the last 12 months and Stockton now has one of the largest wireless networks outside of London.

Members comments and questions could be summarised as follows:

- Concern was expressed at the national increase in crime rate and the probable link to austerity, benefit reductions and police understaffing. However, it was recognised that the reduction in ASB incidents in the borough was a direct result of the team focussing on what Members and the public asked for, and their subsequent efforts to achieve this, for which Members expressed their appreciation.
- Councillor Woodhouse thanked the team for the work they had done in reducing anti-social behaviour in John Whitehead Park.
- This financial year £100,000 had been funded by Members Community Participation Budget (twice as much as the last few years). If this was no longer available how would this impact on CCTV and surveillance? It was noted that the service was heavily reliant on that funding plus the 90% of income

generated from services provided to external organisations. CCTV was accountable for 600 arrests, and without the funding existing cameras would remain in situ but there would be no budget for new ones.

- Discussion took place on the improved technology, high quality and lower price of current CCTV cameras.

- How effectively do we work with Cleveland Police regarding ASB? It was noted that police response and prioritisation had been lacking historically, something which had been recognised by the police. However, meetings were held, at which the police were given a dossier of unsatisfactory responses, and those issues have significantly improved. Regular meetings continue and there is a willingness to work together and maintain a positive relationship, which is a testament to the importance of the partnership between SBC and Cleveland Police.

- Discussion took place on monitored and unmonitored cameras and the relevance of leaving unmonitored cameras in situ as a deterrent, if no future funding was forthcoming. However, the importance of monitoring cameras was considered to be crucial.

- The challenge of social media in relation to the reporting of incidents was discussed. It was recognised that one negative report could have a disproportionate effect on the positive ones.

- The rise in social media Hate Crime was concerning, particularly nasty and intimidating comments on Facebook. It was noted that this was a national as well as local problem and asylum seekers were regularly targeted in this way. Work had been carried out in schools to raise awareness and highlight internet safety.

AGREED – that the information be noted.

CAD **Work Programme**
45/17

AGREED – that the work programme be noted.