

## Crime and Disorder Select Committee

### Overview Meeting 2018

8 February 2018

### Community Services

#### Context

Members are well aware that as a Council we have had to adapt to funding reductions of £52 million over the last five years and that we are still confronted with having to find further savings.

Whilst we acknowledge that we have a strong track record of sound financial management and we have been dealing with these problems successfully for many years, it will not be easy to address the additional loss of government funding of over £20 million by 2019/20. Moving forward, expectations will need to be realistic as many more difficult decisions will need to be made.

The challenge for all Members is to ensure that decisions about the basis on which services will be delivered are within the resources available, taking account of a number of factors such as reduced budget allocation, changing demographics, increasing demand, new national legislation and policy direction. Members are reminded of the four policy principles that support our decision-making:

- **Protecting the vulnerable through targeted intervention**, particularly those people in our communities who are subject to, or at risk of harm, people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and those who are financially excluded or whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- **Promoting equality of opportunity through targeted intervention**, specifically in relation to tackling health inequalities, meeting the skills gap and improving access to job opportunities, tackling fuel poverty, improving education and training opportunities, access to affordable housing and financial and digital inclusion.
- **Developing strong and healthy communities** through the provision of mainstream and preventive services that are available to all those who choose to access them.
- **Creating economic prosperity** across the Borough

It is within this context that the Select Committee is invited to undertake their overview duties.

## Performance Reporting

Performance across the Council Plan has been reported on a six-monthly basis. This is reported to Executive Scrutiny Committee and then forwarded to members of each Select Committee with key issues highlighted by the Chair at their next meeting.

In addition, the Police and Justice Act 2006 brought in powers for Local Authority overview and scrutiny committees to investigate work being undertaken by Community Safety Partnerships. At Stockton the designated committee to carry out this role is the Crime and Disorder Select Committee and it is therefore proposed that this Committee also received additional information relating to the performance of the Partnership (including the Annual Partnership Strategic Assessment) as part of their overview.

## Community Services – Director - Jamie McCann

Relevant services include:

- Community Safety
- Community Safety Strategy (Martin Gray)

## Council Plan 2017-18

The Council Plan sets out the aims and objectives for all services and is refreshed on an annual basis.

The 2017-18 objectives for the Community Safety themes are attached at **Appendix 1**.

## Emerging Issues

Service delivery is influenced by a range of internal and external factors that develop over time. Emerging challenges and opportunities across Community Services are summarised as follows:

- **Crime and ASB:** Between April 2017 and December 2017, total crime consists of 12,074 offences which is an increase of 1,026 crimes (9.3%) on the previous year. Comparison within our neighbouring authorities shows higher rise in publicly reported crime in Hartlepool (+1,478 crimes/+24.8%) and Middlesbrough (+1,626 crimes/+14.3%) however only a minimal rise in Redcar & Cleveland (98 crimes/+1.3%). Despite the rise in Crime, Stockton continues to have the lowest rate per 1000 population within the Tees Valley.

To gain a national comparison on how Stockton is performing against other partnerships, data has been obtained from IQuanta. IQuanta is a web-based system that presents statistical information about police and partnership performance across a wide number of measures. The data is very detailed and allows partnerships and police to be ranked and compared in league tables regarding crime types. These league tables are called the 'Most Similar Group' (MSG), compiled using various data such as population figures and deprivation levels with 1st position being the best performing. The most up to date data relates to the end of November 2017 and shows that **Stockton is performing above average** within its most similar group and

ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of 15, with one being the best performing. Darlington is the only other local authority in our most similar group from the Tees Valley area and ranked towards the bottom at 14<sup>th</sup> (out of 15). We also have the highest ranking (5<sup>th</sup>) compared to our neighbouring authorities of Middlesbrough (13<sup>th</sup>), Hartlepool (10<sup>th</sup>) however same positioning as Redcar & Cleveland (5<sup>th</sup>). IQUANTA data also shows that Stockton is performing above average for the majority of crime categories with the exception of shoplifting (14<sup>th</sup>) and Criminal Damage (9<sup>th</sup>).

In terms of Anti-Social Behaviour, between April 2017 and December 2017 Police recorded incidents have reduced by 446 incidents and continue to follow a downward trend. Assuming the current 'daily average' is maintained, an annual decrease of 0.9% is anticipated. Requests for services recorded by SBC Community Services team linked to ASB have also reduced. Cleveland Fire Brigade data shows that Stockton has the lowest rate per 1000 population for arson/deliberate fires.

- **Hate Crime:** Through the Safer Stockton Partnership there remains a commitment to raise awareness of Hate Crime and the impact it has on communities. Work continues to increase the reporting of hate crime as well as support individuals and organisations to identify hate related incidents. There is now a Tees Strategic Hate Crime Group which aims to develop and agree consistent approaches hate crime reporting and awareness raising across the four local authority areas. At a local Level the Stockton Hate Crime Group continues to review activity at a local level as well as improve engagement with community and minority groups across the borough.
- **Domestic Abuse:** Tackling Domestic Abuse continues to be a key priority. During July 2016 to June 2017 there were 6,956 domestic related crimes in Cleveland which is a rise of 1,301 crimes – UP 23% on the previous year. In England and Wales, offences rose by 18.4% placing Cleveland above the national average. The number of domestic related crimes in Cleveland accounted for 13.1% of total crime. This is higher than the national rate of 11%. The revised Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan was launched in April 2017. This outlines the key areas of work for the next three years aimed at reducing the prevalence of Domestic Abuse across Stockton, with a particular focus on reducing the repeat victimisation rate as well as increasing the reporting of issues at the earliest opportunity.. To support the progression of this strategy a Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator has recently been appointed.
- **Prevent:** The roll out of Prevent awareness raising training has continued throughout SBC. In the last 12 months 630 staff have received training. In addition to this a programme of engagement continues within schools and additional briefings have been carried out at Riverside College and Durham University. Following the high profile terror attacks last year and the increase in vehicle based attacks, a number of safety measures have been implemented including the purchase of vehicle mitigation equipment to provide added security at major public events. Stockton continues to be represented at a Tees level on both the Gold Contest Strategic group as well as the Prevent Silver Group. There is also an established Prevent Operational group in place for officers within SBC to discuss emerging issues. We continue to promote the online resource page on the SBC website as well as the Channel referral process which is used to support individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism. On a national level the Home Office is in the process of consulting on a revised approach to managing Channel cases at a local and regional level. 'Operation Dovetail' seeks to transfer additional responsibilities and resources to local authorities to manage the safeguarding risk and improving the multi-agency response to dealing with vulnerable people. Further information will be provided in due course although it is expected

that Operation Dovetail will be implemented in the North East early 2019. The Government is also looking to publish its revised Contest Strategy this spring. It is likely that there will be additional implications for local authorities.

- **Asylum and Migration:** Stockton continues to act as a dispersal area for asylum seekers, over the past 12 months the number of asylum seekers being located in Stockton has fallen due to the commitment to widen dispersal to others parts of the region to reduce the risk of exceeding agreed Home Office thresholds. In June 2017 Stockton Borough Council was also successful in securing £471,386 from the Controlling Migration Fund. Funding is to be spent over a two year period and aims to mitigate against the impact of increased migration on the established community. It was agreed that the project would focus on addressing issues in the Town Centre ward and it aims to provide additional language support in schools, increase opportunities for individuals to access ESOL, youth engagement as well as dedicated work to raise standards within the private rented sector.
- **Modern Slavery/Trafficking:** The risk of modern slavery continues to be an emerging issue. Outside of London the Home Office definition of the North East Region (including Yorkshire) has the highest recorded levels of Modern Slavery. It is clear that there is a need to raise awareness across the Tees and agree a process for responding to identified issues. To date two information briefings have been arrangement for staff, delivered by 'Hope for Justice'. An additional round of briefings are to be arranged for March/April 2018. In addition to this an SBC approach will be developed linking in to existing arrangements, in particular the Tees and local VEMT groups to ensure that we have the correct support processes in place to address the needs of victims.
- **Prison reform:** In November 2016 the Government published its White Paper outlining proposals for prison reform in the UK. The proposals set out a commitment to significantly change the culture, structure and approach to offender management in prisons. Throughout the White paper there is a clear focus on rehabilitation, support and mentoring with the aim of reducing reoffending and improving community integration of offenders back into the community. The reform White Paper places a greater emphasis on the ability of Prison Governors to shape and influence the development of services to meet the needs of their individual prison populations.

As part of the reform a commitment has been made to invest in the recruitment of new staff as well £1.3 billion investment to develop new facilities designed to support the wider rehabilitation process. By 2020 it is hoped that a range of support measures and interventions will be established across all prisons to provide support for language, literacy and basic skills as well as treatment services to reduce substance dependence.

As a result of Prison Reform the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has been replaced with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) which will oversee the transition.

Prison reform has also led to a smaller cluster of prisons for the region. This is seen as an improvement making the functional management of the prisons easier, improving the offender journey as well as providing greater opportunities for partnership working at a local level. The revised Tees and Wear Reform Prisons structure is made up of Kirklevington, Holme House, Durham and Northumberland.

The structure consists of one overarching Director (Ian Blakeman) and a Governor in each prison.

Local funding arrangements remain unchanged and all funding movements/allocations are controlled by the Director. As a result of a national focus and commitment to prison reform, it is likely that resources will increase to meet the needs. For example It is expected that prison officer numbers within Holme House will increase from 170 to 210 as part of the reform changes.

## Operational Response

The majority of front line service delivery is now undertaken by Care for your Area Services and in particular staff deployed in both Civic Enforcement, Security and Surveillance.

- **Civic Enforcement Service:** The area has recently undergone a full review of services provided by the former Neighbourhood Enforcement Service. This review included an in-depth review of staffing, operating hours, access to the service by the public and the types of issues that the service responds to as an integral part of the Safer Stockton Partnership.

The changes, which came into effect in October 2017 has seen the area re-profiled to better tackle the issues that are important to the public and Members, which are separated into parking, environmental crime and anti-social behaviour. Whilst the overall number of staff in the service has reduced due to budgetary reductions, the total number of staff on the ground has increased through prioritisation of front line services. A total of 24 Civic Enforcement Officers, supported by a further 2 Case Management Officers now make up the profile of the service split into 2 Senior Officers, 18 Civic Enforcement Officers and a further 4 deployed to the Town Centre Operations Team in support of the Stockton Business Improvement District (BID). One particular success of this review is the introduction of the case management team which take on the more complex and longer term cases which in turn gives vulnerable customers consistency as well as allowing Civic Enforcement Officers to spend more time in the communities in which they serve.

Further changes to the profile of the service include operating hours and the way in which the Civic Enforcement Service works alongside strategic partners such as Cleveland Police, Cleveland Fire Brigade and governmental departments such as DVLA, DSA and Environment Agency. The operating hours of the service have been reduced from 24 hour cover to a more focused window of operations to maximise the number of staff available during the core times of demand from the public and partners.

- **Security and Surveillance Service:** This section largely operates in the shadows of the main front line services, but none the less performs a critical role on behalf of the Council. At present, we don't overtly promote our surveillance services for a number of reasons linked to public perception of surveillance and the need to keep sensitive operational data restricted to avoid gaps in coverage being exploited. Furthermore despite being involved in some excellent work, reporting on this is controlled in law due to the ongoing nature of investigations conducted by the regulatory authorities.

Whilst primarily charged with conducting surveillance operations using over 170 public space CCTV cameras in Stockton on Tees, the team are also responsible for all security requirements, monitoring intruder and fire alarms as well as responding to such activations. The control room is also called on to act as the main communications centre for the Council out of office hours for services such as social

care (Emergency Duty Team), Environmental Health, Registration and Bereavement as well as taking emergency calls for Care for your Area and tradesmen.

The control room deal with over 15,000 telephone calls per year and handle on average 4,000 live incidents on behalf of strategic partners such as Cleveland Police. In 2017, the control room were implicate in over 500 arrests made by the Police for offences ranging from murder and rape through to wanted persons, shoplifting, violent assaults, car crime and drug dealing. Aside from this, operators have assisted in a number of nationally significant operations in relation to organised crime as well as assisting internal department in executing the Councils statutory duties.

The technology and infrastructure within the building has been updated in the last twelve months, which includes a significant investment in CCTV cameras across the borough, including a largescale replacement of cameras in Stockton High Street. Furthermore, works are ongoing within the Security Centre at present to not only improve the working conditions for staff working in the building, but also to refit the control room which will ensure that the layout and functionality is fit for purpose for years to come.

Aside from the public realm duties undertaken by this service, it should be noted that in order to fund operations, the team also undertake a large proportion of work for the private sector on a contractual basis. This includes alarm monitoring, lone worker tracking and CCTV monitoring for locations such as industrial sites, industrial estates and academies around the United Kingdom.

### **Potential Areas for In-Depth Review**

Members are reminded that topics are being sought for the Scrutiny Work Programme 2018-19. Using the information provided as part of the performance updates and this Overview meeting, the Committee is invited to identify potential topics for review within this theme.

Potential topics will be considered at Executive Scrutiny Committee on 27 March.

Some potential topics for review are as follows:

- Members may wish to take a deeper dive into the work of SBC and partners in relation to Hate Crimes and what provision / options exists to effectively combat this national issue.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Council Plan 2017-18 – Community Safety**

Our vision is to make the borough a place where levels of crime and fear of crime are low and people feel safe and secure.

Key objectives and activities

Objective: **Deliver effective community safety services**