

Information/Discussion Paper

Social & Community Overview & Scrutiny - 28th February 2011

Community Safety Update

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed.

1. Why has this come to scrutiny?

1.1 At the request of elected members.

2. Summary of the issue

This paper provides a brief overview from Cheltenham Community Safety Partnership and Cheltenham Borough Council of activity relating to community safety over the last 12 months and future plans given the financial pressures the public sector is facing.

3. Background information

It is a statutory obligation for all Local Authorities and other agencies to work together to reduce crime and disorder under the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998. The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) were created as a result and there is one for each of the 6 districts in Gloucestershire. The Cheltenham Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership has been in existence since April 1999 but underwent a major restructuring and was relaunched as the Cheltenham Community Safety Partnership on 1 April 2007 and sits as one of the six thematic partnerships under Cheltenham Strategic Partnership.

The work of the 6 CDRPs has been linked to and funded through the Local Area Agreement and they have been part of Gloucestershire Safer & Stronger Communities Partnership (GSSCP). GSSCP has recently merged with the Gloucestershire Criminal Justice Board to form a new partnership at the county level, which is called the Gloucestershire Stronger Safer Justice Commission. The priority for the partnership is to reduce harm to communities and individuals.

Cheltenham Community Safety Partnership, like the other 5 district community safety partnerships, has 7 statutory partners which are Cheltenham Borough Council, Gloucestershire County Council, the Constabulary, the Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Gloucestershire, the Police Authority and since April 2010, Gloucestershire Probation Trust. The partnership is co-ordinated by Cheltenham Borough Council.

Community safety is consistently a high priority for local residents. The Community Safety Partnership has developed a joint strategic assessment and work plan with the Stronger Communities Partnership which is based on 5 priorities. The Community Safety Partnership is responsible for 2 of these and has joint responsibility for 1.

- Build safer stronger communities and increase community ownership and influence over local service provision (joint responsibility with the Stronger Communities Partnership).
- Reduce offending
- Reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drug misuse

4. Summary of partnership activity over the last 12 months

4.1 Levels of crime in Cheltenham have continued to steadily drop in Cheltenham since 2007. The latest statistics show that levels of all crime have dropped by 8% compared to the previous year to date. The main issue over the last 12 months has been domestic burglary, which has risen significantly and has been the focus for the partnership. The stretch target to reach a 10% reduction in anti social behaviour incidents by April 2010 was met. These reductions can be attributed to a strong working relationship between partners, including the voluntary and community sector, to deliver safer communities and to respond to local concerns.

4.2 Action groups

The partnership members are from a senior level within their organisations and can ensure the right support and resources are channelled into the multi agency action groups which work on specific issues and which are overseen by the partnership. The action groups are:

- **The Anti Social Behaviour Working Group.** Through this group, the partnership has adopted the minimum standards for dealing with anti social behaviour and deals with interventions for individuals and to target hot spot areas. The Prolific and Priority Offender Unit reports to these meetings. The group has also allocated Anti Social Behaviour funding – please see below.
- **The Cruiser Working Group.** This group now includes representation from Swindon Parish Council and develops interventions to reduce the negative impact of cruising in Kingsditch and Gallagher Retail Park as well as the town centre inner ring road. Ongoing work includes engagement with the Cruisers; enforcement operations carried out by police, council, trading standards and Department of Transport officers to implement and enforce Road Traffic and other relevant pieces of legislation and consideration is being given to other legal powers available.
- **A new Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Forum** was set up in December 2010 so that practitioners have a forum for regularly sharing information, which will help to address the rising number of domestic abuse incidents reported.
- **Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Hate Crime Group** monitors incidents of hate crime based on prejudice against all of the equality strands.
- **Cheltenham Substance Action Group** delivered the Don't Buy for Under 18s campaign in all off licenses in Cheltenham in 2009 and was present at a number of summer events in 2010 to raise awareness of under age drinking and the dangers of proxy purchasing as well as support services available. It also provided a report to the Cheltenham Strategic Partnership on key alcohol issues

in Cheltenham in October 2010.

- The **Communications sub group** is working on a personal safety leaflet for older people and making better links with the local media around fear of crime and crime prevention.
- The **Reducing Alcohol Related Violence Project** (managed by the Council's Community Protection Team) has secured more take up of the Best Bar None Scheme, with Mitchells and Butlers Brewers who operate 6 premises coming on board in 2010. The scheme assesses standards including whether premises have policies on disorder, drugs and safety. An 'Awards Ceremony' for those who are successful in their application is likely to take place in early March of this year. The RARV Project secured financial and practical support from brewers Diageo to reduce the impact of increased drinking during Race Week 2010 and this will be repeated this year. The RARV Project was also responsible for the creation of the Taxi Marshalls, who were recently given new jackets with inbuilt CCTV cameras, as the town centre coverage doesn't extend to the taxi rank. Footage from these cameras was used in their first week of operation as evidence to prosecute 3 people for assaults.

The RARV Project is integral to the Community Protection Unit and links into Nightsafe, which is part of **Cheltenham Safe**, a member of the Community Safety Partnership.

- The 14 **Neighbourhood Co-ordination Groups** underpin the partnership and bring together partners to address community safety issues raised by local communities. The CCSP has supported moves to increase community ownership over NCGs and will continue to work with the Police over the coming months to improve local partnership arrangements in the light of new guidance etc.

Please see Appendix A for a list of action groups, who provides the co-ordination and who acts as the chair.

4.3 Projects and funding

- 4.3.1 The partnership has received funding from the Area Based Grant through the Local Area Agreement over the last few years. The table below shows the sums received and the match funding levered in from partners as a result of this funding.

Type of funding	Amount	Used for	Match funding it brought in
2009/10 revenue funding	£30,029	Projects that: - reduce crime and fear of crime - build stronger communities - reduce domestic abuse - reduce harm caused by drugs and alcohol	£4192 (NB this does not include in kind contributions or the rest of the funds raised for Fiesta in the Park).
2009/10 anti social behaviour funding	£25,000	Projects to tackle ASB through: - parenting support - preventative work	£2750 (NB does not include in kind contributions)

		- enforcement	
2009/10 capital funding	£25,000	Securing and restricting access to the rear of Scott and Edward Wilson House	Managed by CBH.
2010/11 revenue funding	£20,914	£12,914 to projects that meet current priorities. £8k to projects that: - develop local talent and capacity of residents to get more involved in their communities - Support people who are out of work to access volunteering and learning.	£5648 (NB this doesn't include other funds raised for the Inspiring Families Project, Midsummer Fiesta or the Cheltenham Countdown or in kind contributions)
2010/11 ASB funding	£19,766	Projects to tackle ASB (same as 2009/10)	£800 (NB this doesn't include other funding for Inspiring Families)

Please see Appendix B for a list of grant recipients in 2010/11.

In addition to this, CCSP supported Cheltenham YMCA to submit a successful bid from Cheltenham for capital funding from the Area Based Grant for a mobile football pitch which can be taken to hotspot areas to provide a diversionary activity.

Some highlights from the projects funded include:

- Providing training for Street Pastors, who are now operating on Friday and Saturday nights and making a significant impact.
- Providing security hardware via Care and Repair to repeat victims of burglary.
- Theatre work with young people about the impact of anti social behaviour on the local community.
- A domestic abuse support programme for young people who have witnessed or experienced domestic abuse.
- Enabling the establishment of the St Pauls Mini Bike project at the Race Course.
- Providing a motivational course by Young Gloucestershire for young people not in education, training or employment in Cheltenham.
- Supporting detached youth work provision in Naunton Park.
- Enabling Gaptime projects to take place at Oasis and Whaddon Youth Centres where young people engage in positive community activities in exchange for credits to do something fun.
- Enabling the Friends of Naunton Park to work with the Moors Action Group on a common ground project to celebrate both communities.
- Offering individualised support from People and Places for people who are out of work, including offenders, to access volunteering and learning opportunities.
- Supporting Midsummer Fiesta in Montpellier, the Cheltenham Countdown and the Inspiring Families Project.
- Setting up a Junior Warden scheme in Oakley.
- Match funding lighting improvements at Prestbury Pavilion and Charlton Kings MUGA to enable their use by young people in the evenings and supporting youth clubs for 8 – 12 year olds at Brizen Young People's Centre.

5. Cheltenham Borough Council's contribution to community safety

5.1 Cheltenham Borough Council (specifically the Community Protection Team) is an integral part of Cheltenham Community Safety Partnership and without it, a number of the action groups and projects listed above would not be in place. Examples of this are the Reducing Alcohol Related Violence Project, Cruiser Working Group, Anti Social Behaviour Working Group, which are directly led by the Community Protection Team on behalf of the partnership. Examples of operational work carried out by the Community Protection Team and colleagues are:

- Work managed by the Anti Social Behaviour Team – issuing warning letters, acceptable behaviour contracts and anti social behaviour orders.
- Managing licensing applications and enforcement. This will soon include the Late Night Levy, which will empower local authorities to charge premises with an alcohol license beyond midnight.
- Following a recent re-structure within Public Protection, Street Scene enforcement now sits within the remit of the Community Protection Manager, which apart from licensing enforcement now includes dealing with basic quality of life issues such as fly tipping, dog fouling and littering.
- Working to prevent violent extremism by responding to the recommendations in the Counter Terrorism Local Profile for Cheltenham and by raising awareness of Prevent with staff.
- CCTV cameras, of which there are 61 in the town centre system, which are maintained by the Borough Council and monitored by Police at Lansdown Road station. On average, the cameras are used on 150 occasions per month and lead to 50 arrests or detentions of people whose crimes may otherwise go undetected.
- The production of the Community Safety Handbook, which will be repeated in November 2011.
- A town centre dispersal order application by Police was agreed by the Council following several complaints from local businesses in the Lower High Street of a gang of young people causing anti social behaviour and distress. As a result of the dispersal order, 3 of the young people involved were encouraged to access a course run by Young Gloucestershire. As a result of the course, 1 of the young people has since turned his life around and accessed further training which has led to employment.
- The Council is currently involved in addressing 11 community priorities identified by the Neighbourhood Co-ordination Groups through their latest round of meetings. These priorities include parking, traffic issues, the appearance of certain areas, litter, anti social behaviour and boy racers.
- The Council has a very good working relationship with the Police, with a Police Constable being based in the Anti Social Behaviour Unit for the past 9 years and with senior officers working closely with us. Work is in hand for an even closer working partnership with police especially in the town centre linking into the night time economy.

6. Future plans

6.1 Funding

- The area based grant which has funded the partnership over the last few years has been withdrawn. This means that that the partnership will no longer be able to fund local projects to support local priorities. In previous years, the funding has

been used to support a wide range of preventative projects with young people, and the partnership is aware that the loss of the ABG comes at a time when the county is reviewing how it provides universal youth services. In addition, the Trading Standards service is being reduced.

- The withdrawal of the area based grant also means that a number of countywide posts are also at risk, such as the Community Safety Analyst at Maiden who currently supplies our performance information. Discussions are ongoing about how to manage this risk.
- The latest news however is that Gloucestershire County Council will receive unringfenced money of £587,247 in 2011/12 and £297,091 in 2012/13 for community safety from the Home Office. Several years ago, this money came to district CDRPs to fund local partnership activity but since the county council became the accountable body, there has been a trend to use the money to fund county wide community safety projects. There would appear to be a risk now that the county council could decide - as the lack of ringfencing entitles them to - not to spend the money on community safety. At district level, we believe we have effective structures which could use these resources effectively to address local community safety priorities and would like to see the support of this committee to make an approach to the County Council to ensure that the funding is used for community safety and that some of this is allocated through district partnerships.
- In addition, the Community Protection Manager, as Chair of the Gloucestershire Anti-Social Behaviour Strategic Partnership has been instrumental in leading the 6 county districts in achieving a 'stretched target' included in the last Local Area Agreement of reducing anti-social behaviour across the county by 10%. Although this is still a little bit unclear, a reward grant for achieving this success, likely to be in the region of £45k per district (reduced from an initial figure of £95k as a result of spending cuts by central government) will be paid into the County Council and then hopefully onto district councils. It must be emphasised that this funding stream is not 'ring fenced' to community safety/anti-social behaviour so will not necessarily be allocated to these issues.
- A Late Night Levy is also proposed on licensed premises that stay open beyond midnight, with the income from this being channelled through the Council and Police and this is being actively pursued by the Community Protection Manager.

6.2 Activity

Despite the changing context within which the partnership operates, partners have agreed a series of actions for 2011-12:

- Changes to tools and powers to deal with anti social behaviour will be introduced this year and our procedures will need to be adapted as a result.
- Andrew North through working with the Police via the Community Protection Manager, will ensure the delivery of the recommendations in the Counter Terrorism Local Profile.
- Work is planned with NHS Gloucestershire to implement the Cardiff A & E model for violence prevention in Cheltenham. This was discussed at the Community Safety Partnership in November and is being taken forward by a working group as it affects Gloucester Hospital as well.
- We will continue to provide support to the 14 Neighbourhood Co-ordination

Groups to address local issues and work with the Police to support these groups to best effect in Cheltenham.

- We will develop strong links with the new Gloucestershire Stronger Safer Justice Commission and support the development and delivery of a countywide strategic assessment.
- The Reducing Alcohol Related Violence Project has secured support from Diageo to provide measures to reduce the impact of alcohol consumption during Race Week.
- We will need to work better together within mainstream funding to target resources towards potential rising crime and anti social behaviour and our relationship with the voluntary and community sector will be crucial, particularly in the delivery of general youth services for young people in Cheltenham.

Recommendation:

- **That this Committee considers an approach by Cheltenham Community Safety Partnership to the County Council to advocate for the use of the unringfenced funds from the Home Office being used to support local community safety projects, including anti-social behaviour.**

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**Accountability
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