



## OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE Epsom and Ewell

### NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

10 September 2007

#### KEY ISSUE

For Information Only

#### SUMMARY

This report updates the committee on progress on the development of Neighbourhood Policing in the borough since the last presentation in September 2006. (For the benefit of members whom may not have been present in that meeting – the short (one page) briefing note presented then is attached as Appendix).

#### OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Epsom) is asked to agree that:

- (i) N/A

#### 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Surrey Police have continued to improve and develop Neighbourhood Policing in Epsom and Ewell. One of the first objectives was to define what exactly was meant by this term and what the essential ingredients were. These are shown below to assist in assessing progress:

##### The Purpose of Neighbourhood Policing

“Neighbourhood Policing is about building confidence in communities; confidence that the police understand and are dealing with the issues that matter to them, and confidence that they themselves can influence and, here appropriate, participate in addressing the issue. Confidence in policing is essential. It provides the legitimacy and public support needed to act in preventing crime and bringing offenders to justice.”

Neighbourhood policing has three requirements. These are:

- a) The consistent presence of dedicated neighbourhood teams capable of working with the community to establish and maintain control – to be visible, accessible, skilled, knowledgeable and familiar to the community;
- b) Intelligence-led identification of community concerns – prompt, effective, targeted action against those concerns;
- c) Joint action and problem solving with the community and other local partners – to improve the local environment and quality of life within the community.

When these requirements are met, the Police Service is able to address the expectations of the community to have:

**Access** – to policing or community safety services through a named point of contact;

**Influence** – over community safety priorities in their neighbourhood;

**Interventions** – joint action with communities and partners to solve problems;

**Answers** – sustainable solutions to problems and feedback on results.

## 2 ANALYSIS

### a) Dedicated teams

Epsom and Ewell has a dedicated neighbourhood team of 8 Neighbourhood Specialist Officers (NSO) and 13 Police Community Support Officers (PCSO). These are supported locally by an Epsom Tactical Team and Community Safety Team (licensing, youth, crime prevention, casualty reduction). They are of course further supported by divisionally based teams for emergency response, crime investigation etc.

The growth in the number of PCSO's has been slightly less than expected due to a reduction in the funding provided by central government (Neighbourhood Policing Fund 3). The original funding allowed for 22 PCSO's, but now it will be the current 13 plus 3 new 'co-ordinator' posts yet to be recruited.

The term 'Safer Neighbourhoods' has been adopted as an overall 'brand' and the officers are deployed in small groups to form 'Safer Neighbourhood Teams' (SNTs) – responsible for a cluster of local neighbourhoods. These each consist of one or two NSO's and one or two PCSO's. The neighbourhoods themselves were identified following consultation with the community. Maps of the areas, with contact details of all the officers are readily available and published widely.

A key performance indicator for the force and the teams is to ensure that they are known within their communities and their successes are publicised. A dedicated Neighbourhood Communications officer has been employed to support officers to do this and work closely with colleagues in other agencies.

### b) Identification of Community Concerns

All the Safer Neighbourhood Teams hold regular 'Neighbourhood Panels' where the public can meet them, discuss issues and raise concerns. The panels give the opportunity to 'vote' on priorities for the local team to tackle. The Division has also reorganised its intelligence unit to have a 'desk' (3 staff) dedicated to Epsom and Ewell. Communities can also contact their local officers by phone or email.

A database of key individuals within the borough has been created (Key Individual Network - KIN) so that there exists at least one 'contact' in every neighbourhood whom officers can consult and pass information to.

### **c) Joint Action to improve**

The Safer Neighbourhood Teams follow a formal problem solving process to tackle issue of local concern. This includes analysing the 'cause' of the problem and trying to build a sustainable solution. This often involves partner agencies, and joint problem solving training has just been completed with many representatives. The local officers will take action themselves, including patrol and enforcement activity, but also can call upon wider police resources to tackle significant problems.

Formal partnership activity is co-ordinated through groups such as the Nuisance Prevention Group (problem people) and Joint Action Group (problem places). This joint activity is supported and provided some resources by the Community Safety Group (formerly the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, CDRP) and the Local Strategic Partnership.

An example of a recent initiative is the 'Traffic Light' scheme for licensed premises which is a scheme using points to score level of disorderly/criminal behaviour within licensed premises in Epsom town centre. The points are accrued over a rolling 6 month period and they place licensed premise within one of three zones (red/amber/green) indicating a course of action required to enforce better management of the premises and thus reduce alcohol related offences within them. A reduction of offences within these premises has been seen and had a positive effect on overall town centre violence.

Another example of action earlier this year was when acting on concerns raised at Neighbourhood Panel meetings, the local team undertook a day of action aimed at cracking down on anti-social social behaviour on the Longmead Estate. Organised in conjunction with partners from Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Trading Standards and Rosebery Housing Association the operation saw one person arrested, 17 people stopped and two alcohol seizures made. Five Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) were issued to residents, three of them in conjunction with other agencies. In addition, one vehicle was reported for defects and one Penalty Notice for disorder (PND) was issued. Trading Standards also undertook 13 'test purchases' on licensed premises in the area, all were found to be complying with the law.

## **3 OPTIONS**

N/A

## **4 CONSULTATIONS**

Surrey Police continues to consult widely on both the development of neighbourhood policing and the 'tactical implementation of it. Community engagement is an integral part of the process and will be further developed.

## **5 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications for SCC.

## **6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no equality or diversity implications for SCC.

## 7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

It is intended that Neighbourhood Policing is the bedrock of local policing and supports crime and disorder reduction as well as making communities more cohesive and less fearful of crime. It is designed to mobilise community support (and action) behind common objectives – from dealing with anti-social behaviour to tackling terrorism.

## 8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee is asked to note the report.

## 9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

## 10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Surrey Police will continue to develop and expand neighbourhood policing. One particular project (joint police/ SCC) of note for members is the extension of the concept of Neighbourhood Panels, to potentially make them more accessible to a range of services, not just policing. This is effectively developing the area of 'Neighbourhood Management' as much as 'Neighbourhood Policing'.

'Success' in neighbourhood policing will be assessed across a range of factors. This includes the reduction in crime and disorder, but importantly, public perception is also measured by quarterly survey. Two key targets set this year are:

Survey Question	Target 07/08	Current Performance <sup>1</sup>
Are you aware of your local neighbourhood policing team?	'yes' - 30%	26.3%
Taking everything into account I have confidence in the police in this neighbourhood	'agree' – 74%	69.7%

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Neighbourhood Policing Briefing Document 18 Sep 2006

Version No.1      Date:                      Time:                      Initials:                      No of annexes: 1

<sup>1</sup> This is data for second quarter 07/08 and based on a sample size of 156.

## **Neighbourhood Policing Epsom & Ewell Briefing Document 18<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

### **Introduction/Setting the Scene:**

In every British Crime Survey for the last ten years, overall crime has fallen, but over 70% of the public think that crime has risen. This phenomenon exists in Surrey – the area with the lowest recorded crime in England. The divergence of achievement and recognition is called the ‘reassurance gap’. Research has identified factors which increase people’s fear of crime, these are;

- Signal crimes (e.g abandoned vehicles, criminal damage, anti-social behaviour - incidents which affect people’s perception of crime),
- The environment that they live in
- The lack of visible authority figures in their communities.

Neighbourhood Policing is set to tackle this ‘gap’ by making the policing service accessible and responsive to the needs of the public.

### **What is Neighbourhood Policing?**

Neighbourhood Policing is an approach, which allows police, partners (e.g Local Authorities, Resident’s Associations) and the public to work together to solve the problems of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. The principle of Neighbourhood Policing is that the police and their partners work directly with local people to identify the problems that are most important to them, giving them the opportunity to have their say in the local policing of their community/neighbourhood. A by-product of this process is that neighbourhood conditions improve thus promoting a feeling of security and safety.

### **What does it mean for policing in Surrey?**

‘Neighbourhood Policing’ already exists in Surrey to a large degree, but the principle of it is being fully rolled out nationally and will become ‘a way of life’ for all Forces. Neighbourhood Policing will require continued involvement from police, partners and the public as a key measure of whether it is working effectively will be through the results of joint problem-solving. Some local authorities are now considering how their geographic operations mirror police neighbourhoods and are considering co-locating and/or mixed teams. More will be known as the Government agenda is rolled out. From now on any Surrey Police work tackling neighbourhood policing activities will now come under a ‘Safer Neighbourhoods’ banner.

### **What are the timescales?**

Borough Policing teams are currently identifying natural neighbourhoods and deciding where police staff will go. The neighbourhood policing rollout involves many activities, but the key to success is the introduction of increased numbers of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO’s) working in communities. At present there are 151 in Surrey, when the rollout is concluded this number will rise to 329 in March 2008. The numbers for North Surrey are 36 now and approximately 82 by 2008.

The next stage is that new products, policies and procedures are under development and the structure of Safer Neighbourhoods should be active on the pathfinder (North West Surrey) division by the end of January 2007. This will mean that Neighbourhood Policing on North Surrey will happen simultaneously by the end of February 2007.