



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)

Safer Guildford Partnership Update

13 December 2007

KEY ISSUE

To review progress made by the Safer Guildford Partnership and to consider the new arrangements for Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships following the Police & Justice Act 2006.

SUMMARY

Guildford borough continues to perform well in terms of measured crime types, but faces a number of challenges and opportunities as it enters a new strategic phase.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Guildford) is asked to:

- (i) note the contents of the report, and the performance of the partnership to date.
- (ii) note the legislative, structural, governance and financial challenges being faced
- (iii) comment on possible priorities for the 2008-2011 Community Safety Strategy
- (iv) consider pooling any future Local Committee Members revenue allocations e.g. 10% for community safety projects
- (v) agree that Cllr Fiona White continue to represent the Local Committee on the Safer Guildford Partnership Executive.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Safer Guildford Partnership is the statutory Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) for Guildford borough. The Partnership celebrated its 10th anniversary this year and has a proud history of maintaining relatively low levels of crime and antisocial behaviour in the borough even compared to Surrey, being one of the safest counties in the UK. The Partnership holds its own budget of £298,624 in 2007/8 made up from central government funding and partners' agency contributions.

2 ANALYSIS

- 2.1 During the period of the Partnership's current strategy it has operated 6 action groups against the following themes: Town centre issues, Domestic Abuse, Speeding Traffic, Safer Neighbourhoods, Crime Reduction and Substance Misuse. These groups have small budgets to help them deliver against targets for the strategy period.
- 2.2 Where appropriate, targets align with key agency or partnership targets. For example Speeding Traffic and Domestic Abuse targets align with road casualty reduction and domestic abuse Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets.
- 2.3 The Crime Reduction group aims to improve the 10 crime measures set by the Government Office for the South East, on which the overall performance of the Partnership is measured. As at October 07 overall levels of crime (i.e. across the 10 crime types) had reduced over the previous 12 month period by 15.3%. The target reduction by April 2008 is a 15% reduction. Guildford's performance is therefore good and expected to hit or exceed the target.
- 2.4 Within the 10 crime types, Common Assaults and Woundings are not reducing as hoped and the Crime Reduction and Town Centre groups are taking steps to reduce these crimes further e.g. by improved working with licensed premises and others making the night-time economy safer for all visitors and residents.
- 2.5 Partners are also working to reduce thefts of pedal cycles (an extensive bicycle tagging programme is well underway), domestic burglaries (Neighbourhood Watch volunteers are helping with an awareness-raising campaign about distraction burglaries) and criminal damage (groups are looking at environmental improvements and other measures at hotspot locations)
- 2.6 Reducing crime and disorder goes beyond the 10 crime types mentioned above, and the Partnership's other groups work to reduce casualties on the roads, hate crimes, incidents of domestic abuse,

problems related to drug and alcohol abuse and antisocial behaviour.

- 2.7 A significant element of the Partnership's budget is deployed in funding services that co-ordinate and deliver this work, including:
Domestic abuse outreach workers
Crime analyst work
Partnership Manager
Communications officer
Drugs outreach worker
Anti-social behaviour reduction workers
- 2.8 Surrey County Council's (SCC's) direct financial contribution to the Partnership is £24,000 per annum delegated from this Committee. £12,000 of this is ring-fenced for Domestic Abuse outreach services.
- 2.9 SCC currently allocates the same amount - £24,000 - to each CDRP. Officers continue to argue for a more equitable allocation to Guildford, being one of the largest boroughs in geography and population.
- 2.10 The Partnership has had a number of successes: well attended youth night-club events in Guildford, high levels of satisfaction with Domestic Abuse outreach service, good take-up of the bicycle marking scheme, and reducing levels of vehicle crime.
- 2.11 Many areas of community safety remain a challenge however, for example numbers of slight and serious road casualties, and incidents of repeat domestic abuse. (See comments on woundings and common assaults above.) The Partnership is not afraid to try new approaches to reducing crime and disorder, which are not always fairly reported or understood in the media e.g. a scheme to provide late-night revellers with lollipops to reduce levels of noise and disorder on Friday and Saturday nights in the town centre.
- 2.12 SCC's Local Partnerships Team (LPT) plays a significant role in the partnership. The Area Director currently chairs the Executive group and the Local Committee & Partnerships Officer assists with co-ordinating activities relating to Domestic Abuse and Speeding Traffic, as well as providing the link between the Partnership and its groups, and local SCC services e.g. the Youth Development Service, Children's Services, and Highways. The LPT is well placed to make improved links with preventive and early intervention work, due to its role in delivering self-reliance or social inclusion projects in Guildford. (See Item 9 on this agenda.)
- 2.13 Nationally, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) are now required to produce Strategic Assessments which highlight emerging crime and disorder issues and provide data on which to base future Community Safety Strategies. An executive summary of the Strategic Assessment recently undertaken by the Partnership is attached as ANNEXE A.

2.14 Following the findings of the Strategic Assessments, possible new themes, priorities and structures for the Partnership are currently being developed to form the new Community Safety Strategy for Guildford from April 2008. These may include the following:

- Drugs and Alcohol related offences
- Priority locations
- Priority crimes
- Antisocial behaviour and Priority Offenders
- Transportation
- Domestic Abuse

2.15 ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

2.16 From April 2008 there will be a new Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Surrey which may include slightly changed priorities for Community Safety, in line with changing Home Office priorities (in relation to violent crime, acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour). The relation of CDRPs to the county-wide Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Board is already being reviewed, with representation from local CDRPs being agreed on a Police divisional boundary basis, i.e. one seat for Guildford and Waverley.

2.17 CDRPs will be expected to meet minimum standards in their operations and the effectiveness of their partnership working. These are identified as the hallmarks of good CDRPs:

- Empowered and Effective Leadership;
- Visible and Constructive Accountability;
- Intelligence-led Business Processes;
- Effective and Responsive Delivery Structures;
- Engaged Communities; and
- Appropriate Skills and Knowledge.

The test will now be that Partnerships meet all these factors to be fit for purpose.

A further change is the requirement to hold 'Meet the public' sessions and four different types of events are planned for 2008

2.18 Governance arrangements for CDRPs are likely to change with a new role for elected members on CDRP Executives and as community leaders. So the Guildford Borough Council Lead members for Community Safety will have a full seat on the Safer Guildford Executive. It is proposed that the SCC Member, Cllr Fiona White, also continues to represent the Local Committee on the Safer Guildford Executive.

3 OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Home Office is likely to set targets for CDRPs through the countywide LAA that will have significant influence on the local prioritising and resource deployment of the partnership. The Strategic Assessment and future Strategy of the Partnership will seek to use local discretion where possible to deploy resources to meet the specific local crime and disorder needs of the borough.

4 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 The Strategic Assessment included a significant survey of the perceptions of residents, businesses and young people in the borough. The forthcoming Strategy will be subject to consultation with Members residents and partners.

5 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are significant budgetary challenges ahead and uncertainty on whether key parts of the current budget will be sustained. This may bring a significant impact on worker posts which are funded through the Partnership.
- 5.2 For Surrey Police, the Basic Command Unit (BCU) funding has previously been deployed flexibly to complement the Safer Guildford funds. The BCU funding criteria is being changed and this flexibility may not remain.

6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Many community safety issues have an age-related dimension. Both older people and younger people are known to be more concerned about crime and antisocial behaviour and are sometimes more vulnerable to becoming victims. While Guildford has one of best records of young people coming into the criminal justice system, the Partnership strives to divert young people towards positive activities and reassure residents who perceive young people as dangerous and threatening.
- 6.2 Fear of, and actual experience of crime were found to be higher among the small numbers of Black and Minority Ethnic respondents to the recent survey.

7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report and the work of the Partnership involves the wide range of crime and disorder issues in the borough.

8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 While the level of crime and antisocial behaviour in Guildford borough is relatively low, and the Safer Guildford Partnership is proactively engaged in reducing levels further, there are some significant challenges now and in the future to maintain current low levels of crime.
- 8.2 The previous work of the Partnership allows no comfort that we will be as successful in the future and a step change is required to ensure that we stay ahead of the game.

9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To ensure that Surrey County Council is engaged locally and strategically at a political level.

10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 10.1 The new Community Safety Strategy for Guildford will be drafted for consultation in the new year for implementation from April 2008.

LEAD OFFICER: Dave Johnson, Area Director South West
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01483 517 301
E-MAIL: Dave.Johnson@surreycc.gov.uk
CONTACT OFFICER: Diccon Bright, Local Committee and Partnership Officer (Guildford)
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01483 517 336
E-MAIL: Diccon.bright@surreycc.gov.uk
BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Safer Guildford Partnership
Draft Strategic Assessment November 2007

Executive Summary

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships are required to produce Strategic Assessments (SAs) to provide a snapshot of real and perceived crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour and to inform the next Community Safety Strategy. Data has been gathered from a wide range of partners' services concerning actual crime, perceptions of crime and other data that indicates risks of crime or measures of community strength and cohesion.

Current performance of Safer Guildford and its partner agencies has been relatively successful in the current Strategy period (2005-08) in achieving a 12% reduction in (a set of 10) crimes (with the target to achieve a 15% reduction by March 08). The national reductions in most crime types have been seen also in Surrey and Guildford, although the rise in violent crime in Surrey has been steeper than the national average. West Surrey Police Division is currently top of its 'family' of similar Police areas.

Crime data from Oct 06 – Mar 07 showed a slight increase in overall crime, with the Town Centre, North Guildford and Ash Wharf being the significant crime locations. Crime types that showed increases were:

- Criminal Damage by under 18s
- Theft of tools
- Make-off without payments
- Theft of Pedal Cycles
- Shoplifting by under 18s including offences committed by under 18s and groups of 3+ offenders
- Public place and alcohol related violence
- Theft-from motor vehicle (including satellite navigation thefts)
- Domestic Burglary (including related vehicle thefts)

The SA contains detailed analysis of each crime type including geographic areas for particular attention. Victims and Offenders are profiled including repeat victims and repeat offenders.

The results of the Residents, Youth and Business surveys on perceptions of crime carried out in June 2007 show that Guildford is seen generally as a safe place to live and to work. The results show improvements in the general confidence of residents and businesses regarding the experience of crime and the ability of the Police and partner agencies. The Town Centre remains an area of concern for residents and the results show that businesses with the Town Centre have differing issues to those businesses elsewhere in the borough. The Residents and Youth surveys also indicate the different concerns and experiences that young people and non-white residents have compared with the majority of white, mature residents. For example young people were far more likely to have experienced or think themselves likely to experience each of the crimes and incivilities listed in the survey over the last twelve months compared with other residents.

The most common crimes experienced by residents were deliberate damage to a car and credit card fraud. The three biggest incivilities experienced were Speeding traffic, Rubbish/litter and Loud/fast cars/bikes. Other issues affecting residents in certain wards within Guildford included parking problems, traffic noise pollution, young people congregating and dog related issues. Data from Parish councils and Neighbourhood Panels compliments the survey data.

The SA also details current trends in

- Domestic Abuse – reported incidents fluctuating, repeat incidents steady
- Drug and Alcohol misuse – alcohol being the predominant problem substance
- Young Offending – less than in other parts of Surrey due to improved partnership working
- Truancy and Schools Exclusions – very low levels.
- Environmental issues such as littering and graffiti - no notable trends identified.
- Homelessness –an increase in homeless young women and a reduction in the availability of private rented properties

Other data indicates wards of Stoke, Westborough and Ash Wharf as having significant challenges and needs in terms of income, employment, health and educational inequalities.

The SA identifies the following key priorities to be addressed in a forthcoming Community Safety Strategy:

- Priority crimes
- Priority incivilities
- Crimes of ongoing concern i.e. violent crime and vehicle crime
- High crime /incivility areas of Westborough ward and the centre of Guildford town