

## **Item 12**

**The Standing Citizens' Panel for Surrey Heath**  
**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S LOCAL COMMITTEE IN**  
**SURREY HEATH**  
**18<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

### **KEY ISSUE:**

The report updates Members on the last meeting of the Standing Citizens' Panel for Surrey Heath.

### **SUMMARY:**

The Citizens' Panel met on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2004 and discussed issues of crime and disorder.

### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Surrey Heath Local Committee discusses the report and refers the views to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

### **INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND**

1. At the Local Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2003, the Committee agreed to the setting up of a Standing Citizens' Panel for Surrey Heath.
2. The Panel consists of 30 individuals have been invited to be participants in the Standing Citizens' Panel for Surrey Heath. Members are:

Dianne Carroll	Local resident
Shirley Coveney	Deepcut Representative
Tim Price	Windlesham Parish Council Bisley Parish Council
Chris Chaney	Chobham Parish Council
Jill Bidden	West End Parish Council
Eric Pain	Watchetts Chair of Governors & PCT Board
Luthfull Karim	Bengali Welfare Association
Pauline Hedges	Chamber of Commerce
Tony Ewer	Yorktown Business Association
Glen Fulton,	Main Square Centre
John Looby	Old Dean Resident's Association

Anne Greenstreet	Southwell Park Residents Association
Bob Hayes	Camberley Society
Susan Cartwright	Mytchett, Frimley Green & Deepcut Society
Chris Furneaux,	Voluntary services
Joy Allison	Local resident
Judith Roberts	Carers Support
Marjorie Saywood	Age Concern
Revd. Chris Russell	Church Rep
Carol Brook-Read,	MOD Deepcut
David Gradwell	Collingwood College Chair of Governors
Col. Keith Steel	Tomlinscote School Chair of Governors
	Kings International College Chair of Governors
Four young people	Collingwood School
Tony Camfield	PCPG Camberley and Frimley Chair
Edward Boaden	PCPG Lightwater Chair

3. A further 10 people will be invited to join the Panel in the next few weeks. Details of new members will be brought to the Committee in the next Panel report.
4. The next Panel meeting will be on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2004.

### **ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY**

At the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February the Panel considered crime and disorder issues in Surrey Heath.

#### **General Crime and Disorder**

- Criminal damage is common but the Police are not always interested.
- Older people and women have a high fear of crime but young men are the most likely to be victims.
- Camberley High Street / Town Centre are cause for concern. There are too many pubs and clubs.
- Need a greater Police presence at night.
- The town centre is not overlooked by residential properties in the town.
- Alcohol related vandalism is an issue, especially when the pubs all turn out at the same time.
- There are too few taxis.
- Pub watch operates in the town though.
- Closing times should be staggered and each pub should have a no re-admittance policy.
- The Borough Council becomes the licensing authority soon.
- In the US bar staff are liable for the actions of intoxicated persons – should be the same here.

- Borough Councillors need training in order to be able to deal with applications.
- Need to prosecute licensees, three strikes are you're out.
- Staggering closing times does not always work. People just go from one bar to another. But, it works in Staines.
- History of poor control in Surrey Heath.
- Sudden boom in pubs and clubs across the UK.
- Underage drinking is a problem – linked to anti-social behaviour (ASB). Police presence on the streets needed.
- Police funding has dropped and they aren't able to respond to all calls.
- Some NSOs (Neighbourhood Specialist Officers) and PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers) are visible, some are not.
- Lack of parental control so young people do what they want.
- Need to address the difference between recorded and actual crime levels.
- Need greater information / communication about successes. But, can't always publicise Police work, especially if court cases are pending.
- Police don't always see the need to promote good news.
- Statistics need to reflect real life.
- Papers not interested in good news.
- Regular Police surgeries can be held but are not always well attended.
- Police priority seems to be drugs but this is not always local people's priority. Local people worry more about ASB, alcohol and burglary.
- If young people get away with ASB at an early age they carry on with it.
- Local people are not really touched by drugs. But drug users commit crimes to pay for drugs.
- Some crimes are reported, not recorded.
- Police say there is nothing that can be done so people do not report things.
- The approach in St Michael's is that people should report everything. But, Police sometimes say not to report trivial things (Telephone call centre)
- People have to wait a long time on hold to report things and this puts them off.

### Consensus

Anti-social behaviour is a major issue in Surrey Heath. This is compounded by problems caused by alcohol consumption – especially underage drinking. The town centre is the main area of concern but this could be addressed in part by staggering closing times. The Police need to be more visible and good news stories need to be promoted. Anti-social behaviour, alcohol and burglary are more important issues to local people than drugs. People are put off reporting crimes by the length of time taken to answer the phone and by the lack of action after reporting.

### Older People

- Older people feel threatened and they don't go out at night.
- Young people are seen as threatening even when they are not doing anything. Media has a lot to do with it. Bad news sells.
- Young people are not all bad, most are very nice but a group of young people are seen as threatening.
- Older people are those aged 50+.
- Pubs and clubs put older people off the town centre at night.

- There is a difference between fear of things happening outside and inside your home.
- Older people are not frightened of the right thing. They won't go out at night but will open the door to people.
- A prevention scheme is needed and greater communication is also needed.
- Companies need to give advance warning of when they are going to call and have proper ID cards ready.
- Young people have fear of crime as well.

### Consensus

Older people are concerned about going out at night but not about opening their door to strangers. Young people are often unfairly accused of causing fear and disorder.

### Young People

- Society is divided into young and old, in other countries it is more integrated.
- Young people want / need to be involved.
- Lack of family cohesion.
- Ownership of projects for them is the key.
- There are many things for young people to do but they choose to go out drinking. This is a dangerous assumption though, not all young people do this.
- Underage drinking causes many problems, peer pressure is also a huge problem but how do you change it?
- Media glorifies drinking.
- ASB is facilitated by alcohol.
- Need to distinguish between alcohol related and non-alcohol related crime. Burglary is not usually alcohol related.
- Drink driving is still an issue in the Borough.
- Young people are victims as well as perpetrators.
- Anti Social Behaviour is one of the major issues in this area.
- Why can't we have curfews, alcohol free zones, parenting orders, anti social behaviour orders and have young people moved on by Police when they are causing a nuisance.

### Consensus

Young people need to be involved by society. Not all young people engage in anti-social behaviour. Underage drinking causes problems. Young people are often the victims of crime as well.

### Business Crime

- Thefts from restaurants (e.g. vases, pictures) are common.
- Doesn't harm people but insurance goes up.
- Loss of property is reported but intimidation and vandalism are not usually reported.
- There is a Business Watch in Surrey Heath.
- Thefts from businesses are a hidden crime and not a big press story.
- Most are pre-planned, not opportunistic.

- Business crime does not cause people to be afraid. Police need to concentrate on things that are important to local people.
- Is there a case for separate community policing? It is already separate.
- Things that are important to local people are the things that will be cut if funding is cut.
- Low crime rates are rewarded with less money.
- Society sees business crime as OK as it is a victimless crime.
- Need to publicise the fact that business crime affects council tax rises.

### Consensus

Business crime is common but is not always reported and is often seen as victimless.

### **CONSULTATION**

5. The Panel is a consultative group of local representatives. The consultation from this meeting has been sent to the Borough Inspector and the Borough Community Safety Officer. It will also be used in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and in a future Local Committee report on Community safety.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6. None

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

7. None

### **CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

8. The views of the Panel will inform the Community Safety report coming to the Local Committee in June 2004.
9. The views of the Panel will also inform the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in working on the 05 – 08 Community Safety Strategy in the Autumn.

### **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10. The Panel is representative of the Surrey Heath Community.

### **CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

**It is recommended that the Committee discuss the report.**

**LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER:** Jane Biscombe

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** 01276 702504

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** None