

## **Item 13**

### **The Standing Citizens' Panel for Surrey Heath**

#### **SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)**

**19<sup>th</sup> October 2006**

#### **KEY ISSUE:**

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

#### **SUMMARY:**

On 21<sup>st</sup> September the Citizens' Panel met to discuss community safety in Surrey Heath.

#### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Local Committee notes the report, in particular the next meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm to which Members are invited.

#### **INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND**

1. The Standing Citizens Panel for Surrey Heath was set up following a meeting of the Local Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2003. At this meeting, Members agreed that the Panel would be an innovative way to engage and consult with local people on local issues.

#### **Notes from the Panel meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2006.**

Present: Sue Cartwright      Bob Hayes      Anne Greenstreet  
Ray Bates      Tim Price      Chris Chaney  
Diane Carol

Surrey County Council - Carolyn Rowe and Jane Biscombe

Surrey Police – Inspector Mark Adams.

Surrey Heath Borough Council – Kate Rowlandson

#### **LOCAL ISSUES**

##### **Feedback from the last meeting**

2. The Local Transportation Team will be moving from Woking to Guildford in the next month. The Bagshot Depot will still be used for road maintenance and as the depot for Ringway, Surrey County Council's west area highways contractor.
3. Feedback regarding the SCC contact centre was passed on and the Panel were asked to continue to give feedback on customer service.

### Community safety

4. PCSO and NSO phone numbers will now stay the same if staff change. This means that phone numbers that the public have will still be valid for that locality even if new staff come into post. Mobile phone numbers are now available to the public and are listed on the website. [www.surrey.police.uk](http://www.surrey.police.uk)
5. Crimes should still be reported to 0845 125 2222, or on 999 if an emergency.
6. Surrey Police received approximately 1.5 million calls per year. In Surrey there is a ratio of 550:1 of public to police officers, this compares to a 200:1 ratio in the Metropolitan Police  
There are 10 neighbourhood beat officers and 12 PCSOs in Surrey Heath, plus specialist teams eg fraud investigation.  
There are an average of 10 officers available, 24 hours a day across the NW division (Surrey Heath, Woking and Runnymede)  
Crime in Surrey Heath is going down. Inspector Adams stressed the need for people to report all crime and to talk to the Police about local issues.

### Local Concerns of the Panel

7. **Distraction burglary** is a local concern and a national issue. Specific areas are targeted by the Police and Robin Wood (Crime Reduction Advisor 07967 986670) will survey people's property if they contact him. The public are getting the message but it continues to be an issue.
8. **Violent crime** is also a concern of the Panel. The Police are unable to object to all licensing applications and cannot object on the grounds that the Police do not have enough staff or that there is the potential for problems. The Police are consulted but only on road safety, not for the potential for violent crime or disorder, however, they can object if they feel the premises is in the wrong place or will be poorly run. The Police are also able to stipulate conditions for door staff and all door staff must now be trained and registered.  
The new licensing laws have not had the negative impact that was feared, and there has been a gradual decrease of problems within the town centre. The rises that have been seen are primarily due to the issuing of fixed penalty notices for anti-social behaviour. People issued with these notices are asked where they have been drinking and the Police can take action on those establishments. Environmental Health is also able to take action. Staggered closing times have helped ease congestion.  
Test purchases are carried out for underage drinking and the Police work closely with Environmental Health from the Borough Council and with Surrey Fire and Rescue on safety issues.
9. **Police funding** was also a concern to the Panel. The Panel felt that the Police do an excellent job but if crime rates fall then the level of funding is reduced so there are concerns that good performance is penalised, not rewarded.
10. **Camberley Train Station** is a local concern as the Panel felt that people did not feel safe using it at night. This is the responsibility of the British Transport Police and all incidents should be reported to them (0800 405040 or 999 in an emergency)
11. **Theft of number plates** is a growing local issue and the Police are working with car manufacturers on better security for number plates.
12. **Car Parks** across the borough are a concern but are getting better as people are learning to conceal valuables including phones and satellite navigation equipment.
13. **Drugs** are also of concern to the Panel, there have been a few high profile drug busts but the majority of work in this area is undercover and so the public do not

see it. This can lead to concerns over a perceived lack of activity but work is ongoing in this area.

14. **Anti-social behaviour.** There are 6 ASBOs in place across Surrey Heath and the Community Incident Action Group (CIAG) looks at different ways to engage individuals who are causing problems, it is a measure of success that there are less than elsewhere, ASBOs are not always the answer.
15. **Community Integration.** The Panel felt that it was everyone's responsibility to build bridges with different sections of the community, including ethnic and religious groups.

#### **Next Meeting**

16. The next meeting of the Panel will be on 13<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm at St Mary's Church in Camberley. Members are invited to attend to discuss local issues including budgetary matters with the Panel.

#### **CONSULTATION**

17. The Panel is a consultative group of local representatives. The notes in this report reflect the views of Panel members. Steps are being taken to increase the numbers and diversity of Panel Members.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

18. None

#### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

19. None.

#### **CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

20. As detailed above.

#### **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

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

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Local Committee notes the report, in particular the next meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm to which Members are invited.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** None