



Policing- Woking Borough

Local Committee for Woking

1 February 2006

KEY ISSUE:

To report on the crime figures for Woking Borough from April- November 2005 (compared to April-November 2004) using Police statistics supplied at local level.

SUMMARY:

This report sets out the crime figures for April – November 2005 with associated, relevant comments.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report is submitted for information but the Committee is asked to recognise that the multi-agency partnership approach is the key to success in reducing crime and the fear of crime.

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 Woking is policed by the North West Surrey Division of Surrey Police, which also covers the boroughs of Surrey Heath and Runnymede. The policing boundaries of the boroughs are coterminous with those of the local authority. This paper, alongside the presentation at the Committee, sets out recent crime figures for Woking Borough.

2 Analysis and Commentary

- 2.1 The table below sets out the crime figures for Woking Borough for the period April – November 2005, compared to the same period last year.

OFFENCE	FYTD (financial year to date)	% CHANGE	NOS.
Total Notifiable	4821	+6.6	+299
Violent Crime	872	+19.1	+140
Robbery	55	+71.9	+23
Racially Aggravated	93	+86.0	+43
Theft of Motor Vehicle	83	-29.1	-34
Theft from Motor Vehicle	397	+30.6	+93
Burglary Dwelling	193	-35.9	-108
Drugs	74	-35.7	-41

- 2.2 There are two main issues to be considered within the figures above; crimes of violence, and thefts from motor vehicles.
- 2.3 Crimes of violence have risen significantly, and particularly around robberies and racially aggravated offences, but all three crime types are now decreasing following a sharp rise over the summer period. The increase in robberies was as a result of a series of robberies in the Wheatsheaf Common and Horsell areas, which were committed by a small group of youths, predominantly against other youths. Five males were arrested and as a result the series was stopped. The increase in racially aggravated offences also peaked during the summer period, partly as a result of increased tensions following the 7th July, and partly as a result of tensions between white and asian youths. The increase in tensions between groups of youths appears also to be linked to the robberies in the Horsell area, and a number of people feature as suspects for offences of both robbery and racially aggravated crime. Again, a number of youths have been arrested in connection with these

racially aggravated incidents, and the frequency of such incidents is decreasing.

It is also worthy of note, and reassuring, that people from vulnerable communities feel sufficiently confident in Surrey Police's attitude to hate crime for them to report such crimes to us.

- 2.4 In order to further reduce crimes of violence, the issue is being tackled in two distinct areas; in and outside of the town centre. The town centre continues to be patrolled by a sergeant and six constables, led by an inspector, every Friday and Saturday evening. Multi-agency licensing checks are conducted by Surrey Police, Woking Borough Council and the Fire Service, and doorstaff are regularly checked for the proper accreditation. Pubwatch continues to work well within the town, and the work to enable the temporary closure of Chertsey Road by means of rising bollards on Friday and Saturday evenings is nearly complete. This has been an excellent partnership approach by Surrey Police, Surrey County Council, and Woking Borough Council, and is expected to greatly improve control of the area at times of peak demand. Outside of the town centre, the NSOs and PCSOs target their patrols to the areas of most concern, with increased patrols from the response teams and the Neighbourhood Support Team. Offwatch (an equivalent of pubwatch for off-licenses) will start operating in the new year, and SCC Trading Standards target off-licenses of concern regarding under-age sales of alcohol.
- 2.5 The other area of concern is that of thefts from motor vehicle. Again this was due to a sharp increase over the summer following a series of offences for which three males were arrested and charged. Since their arrests, the incidence of thefts from motor vehicles has decreased sharply. Crime reduction initiatives continue, however, to educate people about safeguarding their property, and Automatic Number Plate Recognition equipment is used to identify and target suspect vehicles.
- 2.6 Crime types which have seen improvement are theft of motor vehicles which is down by 29%, burglary of dwellings which is down by 36%, and drug offences which are also down by 36%. These are all significant improvements on last year's figures, and represent the result of some excellent partnership work.
- 2.7 Police neighbourhood panel meetings continue to provide an excellent way for the public to make their concerns known to their local officers, and to influence the local policing priorities. Work is ongoing to improve the contact with the public via panel meetings, surgeries, leaflets, posters and the local officers' webpages.

3 Financial implications

- 3.1 There are ongoing financial implications with regards to the continuing resourcing of the weekend town centre patrols detailed above.

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