

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP TASK GROUP

22 JULY 2014

Present: Councillor K McLeod (Chair)
Councillors J Aron, S Bolton, M Mills and S Williams

Also present: Inspector Nick Lillitou (minute numbers 1 to 5)

Officers: Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator (minute numbers 1 to 5)
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (JK)

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Kelly McLeod be elected Chair for the municipal year 2014/15.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that Councillor Mehta had been added to the Task Group's membership.

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Martins and Mehta.

3 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2014 were submitted and signed.

5 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator introduced the presentation. He provided the Task Group with an overview of the structure and responsibilities of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in Watford.

The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator explained the work of the Antisocial Behaviour Action Group (ASBAG) and extended an invitation to councillors to attend a meeting to understand how it operated.

ACTION - Councillors to contact the Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator should they wish to attend a meeting.

The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator also covered the following areas:
the specific situation in Watford
types of antisocial behaviour that the partnership dealt with
the recent changes to antisocial behaviour legislation
the powers for victims of antisocial behaviour under the new regime

The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator highlighted his Action Plan for 2014-15. There had been a dramatic reduction of more than 35% in antisocial behaviour over the last seven years, but the number of incidents had now levelled off to a baseline.

Among his objectives were:

1. To mainstream the new Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act,
2. To work with the Home Office to trial one of the first Public Spaces Protection Orders.
3. To communicate key community safety messages.

Following a question from Councillor Williams, the Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator confirmed that 'neighbours' included anyone living or passing through the vicinity affected by the antisocial behaviour. This could include businesses as well as private homes.

Councillor Mills asked for more information about crime levels in West Watford which she felt had not decreased. The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator confirmed that the levels had gone down. There had been some challenging behaviour from a group of street drinkers and New Hope was working with them. The Council was looking to ban one of them from Watford completely.

The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator clarified, following a question from Councillor Aron, that the community trigger was available to people who had made complaints about three separate issues within the last six months or by three individuals reporting similar incidents within six months

Councillor Bolton asked about the procedure when antisocial behaviour was reported. The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator underlined the importance of calling 101 immediately so that the incident could be logged.

Inspector Lillitou introduced his presentation to Members. He gave an overview of the structure of the Police's Safer Neighbourhood Team. The Task Group asked if all councillors could be sent a copy of the structure including contact details.

ACTION – Inspector Lillitou

In response to a question from the Chair, Inspector Lillitou confirmed that the neighbourhood priorities were set separately from the action plan.

Inspector Lillitou presented the action plan for the Police. Last year there had been a fall in crime of over 10%. The changes in the national crime reporting standards would have an effect on levels recorded in Watford.

Inspector Lillitou reported on the following areas of crime which were key in the action plan:

- vehicle crime
- domestic burglary
- violent crime
- theft from person
- criminal damage

He provided information about the response to different types of crime and the prevention programmes which were in place.

There was also a focus on community engagement and communication of community safety messages. Inspector Lillitou advised that it was hoped that more positive messages about the reduction in crime in Watford would be communicated this year.

Inspector Lillitou suggested that councillors may wish to attend the Police's daily briefing. The Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer noted that the Chief Inspector had invited councillors to visit the station. She would recirculate the information.

ACTION – Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

Following a discussion about the Safer Streets campaign, Inspector Lillitou set out which areas had been covered already and advised that areas of North Watford would be visited next. Almost 7000 households had been visited since September 2013.

Councillor Mills commended her local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) who worked closely with her on ward surgeries.

The Chair asked about how offenders were supported after they had left prison. Inspector Lillitou explained how the support was provided. There was a discussion about bail hostels and how the Police responded to ex-offenders who were housed in Watford due to availability of bail hostels. The Police were consulted about offenders and objected to offenders with no ties to Watford being relocated to the town.

Inspector Lillitou outlined the Protection Plan for vulnerable people in the community. Most of the care homes in Watford had signed up to the Online Watch Link (OWL) programme. The Police also reviewed data from Meals on Wheels to help them identify vulnerable and elderly residents.

The Task Group agreed to help encourage care homes in their wards who had not signed up to OWL to do so.

ACTION - Inspector Lillitou to send the list of care homes to councillors

ACTION – the Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer to contact Meals on Wheels to see if there were further opportunities for councillors to accompany them on their deliveries.

Councillor Mills asked whether any funding was available to improve the security of certain alley gates in her ward. The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator advised that if she contacted him towards the end of the financial year, he may be able to assist.

In response to a question from the Chair, Inspector Lillitou advised that there was not yet sufficient data to prove the effectiveness of the PCSOs undertaking pre-loading patrols, but it did seem to be effective.

In response to a question from Councillor Bolton, Inspector Lillitou explained how the night time economy was policed.

Councillor Williams asked a number of questions about the Scan Net identification system used in licensed premises in the town centre. It was confirmed that it was a voluntary system; customers were not required to have their ID scanned but the premises reserved the right to refuse entry to anyone. There was a marketing element to the system and data could be used to highlight events at the premises. The system had had a positive effect on crime and disorder in the town. It was agreed that the Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer would circulate the details of data protection policies for Scan Net prepared by Sergeant Mason.

ACTION – Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

Inspector Lillitou updated Members on the recent work on domestic abuse. Councillor Williams noted that it would be useful for councillors to have training on this subject. Inspector Lillitou added that the Watford Responsible Authorities Group had provided further funding for Watford Women's Centre.

Inspector Lillitou highlighted the sporadic nature of criminal damage offences. Councillor Aron asked why some offenders had been caught and others had not. He replied that some incidents had been witnessed and the Police had been called.

Councillor Williams asked about the impact of the presence of football fans on levels of antisocial behaviour and criminal damage. Inspector Lillitou advised that the impact was minimal.

The Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator demonstrated the Safety Net system used by the ASBAG to the Task Group.

The Task Group expressed their thanks to the Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator and Inspector Lillitou for their input.

RESOLVED –

that the update and actions be noted.

6 **UPDATE ON ACTIONS**

The Task Group received a report of the Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer updating Members on outstanding actions from previous meetings.

It was agreed that a number of actions could be signed off.

The Task Group agreed it would be useful for the response of the Housing Section Head be re-circulated.

ACTION – Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

RESOLVED –

that the update report be noted and the completed actions be signed off.

7 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Task Group received a proposed work programme for consideration. The Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer presented the work programme and drew the Task Group's attention to the proposal for October and asked whether this should be a formal meeting or a briefing.

It was **AGREED** that the meeting in October should be a briefing for all councillors.

The Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer suggested that the Antisocial Behaviour Coordinator's previous presentation on the Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act be circulated.

ACTION – Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

Members felt it was important that the Task Group should receive an update on the Probation Service during 2014/15. If the new structure was not sufficiently embedded, councillors would like details of the interim arrangements.

The Task Group agreed it would be useful to have the topic suggestion form.

ACTION – Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

Councillor Williams suggested that it would be useful to add domestic abuse awareness to the programme in early 2015. There had been a briefing on this

topic in 2012, and an update would be useful. The Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer said she would circulate the documents from the last briefing.

ACTION – Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

RESOLVED –

That the updates to the work programme be noted.

Chair

The Meeting started at 6.30 pm
and finished at 8.40 pm