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COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP TASK GROUP

23 FEBRUARY 2015

Present: Councillor K McLeod (Chair)
Councillors S Bolton, R Martins (for minute numbers 18 to 20),
B Mehta, M Mills and S Williams

Also present: Mr Tom Moreton, The Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire,
Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Community Rehabilitation
Company (minute numbers 15 to 18)

Officers: Community Safety Manager
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (JK)

15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Aron.

Councillor Martins had sent apologies that he would be delayed.

16 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

17 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2014 were submitted and signed.

18 PROBATION SERVICE

The Chair welcomed Mr Tom Moreton, a manager for the Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Community Rehabilitation Company (BeNCH CRC). Mr Moreton made a presentation to the Task Group.

During the presentation he covered the following areas:

- The changes which had taken place in the structure of the probation service, which had been split into the National Probation Service (NPS) and a number of Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs).
- The roles of the different organisations in managing high-risk offenders (who were the responsibility of the NPS, and low to medium risk offenders, who were the responsibility of the CRCs).

- Details of the programmes run by the BeNCH CRC.
- The timeline of the changes to the service.
- How the risk levels for different offenders were determined. The risk factors taken into account included age, substance misuse and offending history.
- The changes brought in by the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014 which included the extension of rehabilitation provision to offenders released from custodial sentences of less than 12 months.

Councillor Mills asked about the youth offending team. Mr Moreton explained that this was still in existence but was a separate entity.

Mr Moreton explained that BeNCH CRC was now owned by Sodexo who would be running the service. However this was a very recent development. In the long-term, there would be an element of performance related payment. Councillor Bolton asked about Sodexo's background. Mr Moreton explained that they were a French outsourcing company and they ran Peterborough prison.

The Chair asked how the terms of reference were different for the NPS and the CRCs. Mr Moreton advised that the scope for each organisation was different as they worked with different types of offenders. He explained that the tendering process had been considered by the National Offender Management Service and the contract had been won by Sodexo.

The Chair and asked for more details about the supervision of offenders by the service. Mr Moreton explained that conditions were set for the offender, such as not being permitted to leave the country. Failure to comply with these conditions during the licence period, were more strict than during the period of post-sentence supervision.

The Chair noted that the increased supervision of offenders who had served short sentences would place heavy demands on the service. She asked about the impact on staffing. Mr Moreton responded that that there had not be an increase in resources but the changes were just coming in. It was anticipated that there could be approximately 600 additional cases to manage in the County each year as a result of the changes. He noted that there was scope for the more parties to be involved in rehabilitation programmes.

In response to a question from the Chair about training, Mr Moreton explained that qualifying as a Probation Officer took some time. The training function lay with the NPS. He highlighted the different skills involved with the rehabilitation work and the risk management work undertaken by the NPS to supervise high-risk cases.

Following a question from Councillor Mills about mental health, Mr Moreton outlined the mental-health pathways in probation.

The Chair asked about the relationship with the Housing service, Mr Moreton explained that the CRC had a contract with St Mungo's and housing advisers

were based in their offices. Although there were some offenders who came from London to Watford, he was not aware that this was due to housing issues

Councillor Bolton asked how antisocial behaviour by offenders was managed. Mr Moreton replied that the Police responded in the first instance and reported to Probation. Probation would take a view about whether any breach of the licence had occurred. Probation had a duty to ensure public safety.

Mr Moreton explained what kinds of programmes were typically included in rehabilitation activity requirements. He confirmed that if an offender was in employment this would be taken into consideration at sentencing.

The Chair asked how councillors could support the probation service. Mr Moreton suggested that he could circulate the Interventions newsletter to councillors. The service was always looking for new projects which offenders could be involved in. He suggested that it was also important to show an interest in people as many offenders suffered from low self-esteem.

Following a question from Councillor Mehta, he outlined a project at the Hare Krishna temple where vegetables were grown and food prepared for the homeless. Other projects were less development-based but it was difficult to find good opportunities. The service tried to give offenders a mix of projects.

ACTION – Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer to circulate the newsletter

The Task group discussed the roles of punishment and development in probation work.

Councillor Martins asked how offenders' needs were assessed. Mr Moreton responded that offender managers were skilled in talking to offenders, discussing their background and offending history and identifying their needs. They asked the offenders what their areas of risk were.

Councillor Williams asked for more details about the basic skills training. Mr Moreton explained that many offenders had literacy and numeracy needs. Training had been provided in-house in the past, however this was no longer available and offenders were signposted to other organisations.

The Task Group thanked Mr Moreton for his time and input.

RESOLVED –

that the update and actions be noted.

19

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.

ACTION - Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer

RESOLVED –

that the action sheet be updated.

20

DRAFT COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

The Community Safety Manager introduced the draft Community Safety Plan. She explained that the Responsible Authorities Group had been merged with One Watford as a trial to encourage creative solutions from a wider range of partners. Partnership working on community safety in Watford had been well mainstreamed and the focus was now on creative solutions in the longer term.

She explained that there were three priorities proposed for the Community Safety Partnership from 1 April. These were: updating crime, protect our communities and reassure and inform. She explained that updating crime related to how crime figures were reported and understood following the changes to the way incidents were reported. Protecting our communities related to focusing on the victim and vulnerability and ensuring that the authorities understood the make-up of the community. Reassure and inform involved the development of a communication strategy looking at targeted campaigns and case studies to illustrate successes and to be more interactive. She summarised that a new approach was being taken alongside the usual approaches to tackling criminality.

Following a question from Councillor Martins, the Community Safety Manager explained that work was being undertaken to ensure that the authorities had a good understanding of the demographics of the community.

The Chair asked about the increase in partnership working. The Community Safety Manager explained that the partnership was always looking for ways to develop their work with new groups. She gave an example that an A&E triage had been funded for the town centre over Christmas and they were hopeful that the Health Authority would fund this in future now the benefits had been proven.

Councillor Williams asked whether communities would be involved in the work on the Prevent Strategy. The Community Safety Manager explained that a plan would be developed and training would be provided to raise awareness. It was hoped that as many people as possible could contribute to the process.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Community Safety Manager provided more details of the aims of the updating crime priority.

The Task Group asked for more details of forthcoming meetings of the Antisocial Behaviour Action Group.

ACTION – Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer to circulate the dates

RESOLVED –

that the update be noted.

Chair

The Meeting started at 6.30 pm
and finished at 7.55 pm

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One Watford 24 February 2015 Seeking Endorsement of Safer Watford Priorities April 2015 – 16

Background

At the Watford Community Safety Priority Review Workshop on 18 December 2014, Chaired by Manny Lewis, officers from partner agencies gave an overview of community safety in Watford over the previous year. Last year a similar partnership meeting had helped provide collective wisdom and raise issues to be addressed, part of the meeting reviewed what was identified last year in terms of progress achieved but the significant focus was on assessing priorities for April 2015 onwards:

Members of One Watford and Safer Watford heard updates on the current overview of the community safety picture in Watford and recommendations on what the priorities should be looking ahead for the community safety plan to be further developed for April 2015 to March 16.

Further work has been carried out to develop actions under the priorities below, a brief overview will be presented

One Watford Endorsement of Watford Community Safety Plan

As the Watford Responsible Authorities Group currently is part of One Watford, there is a requirement to seek One Watford endorsement of the proposed Three Strategic priorities that make up the Watford Community Safety Plan 2015 - 16, which are in no particular order are;

1. **Updating crime**; during 2014, crime increased across the country. This reflected the picture in Watford, which had enjoyed 7 consecutive years of falling crime (as had Hertfordshire as a whole). The rise in crime is a result of the change in which incidents are reported. Hertfordshire is following the new reporting guidance and, therefore, being 'honest' about the figures. It is important that this is understood and reassurance given that there has not been an absolute increase in crime. An example of the change in reporting guidance is that crime is now recorded not where it happened but where it is reported.

It is key that there is an understanding of community safety issues by stakeholders, whilst the mainstream work of the partners continue to address the issues

2. **Protect our communities**; The key issues are ensuring there is a focus on the victim and vulnerability and ensuring we understand what Watford is going to look like as a community in the next 5 years and how that will affect the community safety agenda
3. **Reassure and Inform**; WBC and Police communications team develop a communications strategy for community safety to look at ensuring that best use is made of all channels available utilising partners resources. The communications strategy would look at targeted campaigns, use case studies to illustrate successes and be more interactive, ensuring that messages are targeted and relevant throughout the 12 month period.

Agenda Item 4

Next Steps for Watford Community Safety Plan April 2015 – March 2016

One Watford / Community Safety partners to consider draft action plan proposals	Partners	24 Feb 2015
Comments from Stakeholders to be incorporated into action plan development	JTB	1 Mar 2015
Developing action plan to be tabled at JAG and incorporated as an agenda item every month for updates	JTB	10 Mar 2015
Sign off by Manny Lewis as Chair of Safer Watford	ML	24 Mar 2015
Circulation to One Watford & stakeholders	JTB	25 Mar 2015
Published in the public domain	JTB	1 Apr 2015

Safer Watford Priority 2015 -16

2. Protect Our Communities

Following the annual review of Safer Watford Community Safety priorities a new approach was agreed with stakeholders to address emerging challenges we are facing as outlined in the plan below.

Safer Watford (the borough's community safety partnership) has effectively mainstreamed responses to issues such as anti social behaviour (ASB) which remain important to the partnership, our town and our residents. Our multi-agency response has been embedded into daily business through the Anti Social Behaviour Action Group (ASBAG), incorporating a successful case management system SafetyNet (SN), which enables stakeholders to effectively monitor and respond to ASB. Monitoring of Watford ASB figures will be incorporated into the 'Updating Crime' report reviewed at the monthly Joint Action Group (JAG) and regularly through the year at the One Watford Board meeting (now incorporating the community safety and relevant partners).

A single plan will be developed, which will collate partners actions delivering against a 'Protect our Communities' approach. This will focus on victims and vulnerability, specifically for the needs of Watford whilst addressing national statutory requirements on the Community Safety Partnerships and the Watford Community Safety Partnership Protection Plan.

For April 2015 to March 2016 our shared focus will be on;

- Developing an understanding of the needs of existing and emerging communities in Watford now and over the next 5 years
- Developing multi-agency actions focusing on the protection of the most vulnerable in our community includes children, women, the elderly, sex workers, disability, ethnicity and sexuality
- Extending the remit of ASBAG to focus on re-offenders particularly in relation to hate crimes, improving the co-ordination with key agencies such as Multi Agency Risk Assessment (MARAC) and Multi Agency Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- Developing a multi-agency plan to deliver the Prevent Strategy, including preventing vulnerable people being drawn in to or supporting terrorism
- Work with partners at ASBAG to identify and address issues of vulnerability due to homelessness or mental health

