

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY SUB OSC MEETING

Tuesday, 17 October 2017

PRESENT: Councillor N Weatherley (Chair)

Councillor(s): T Graham, K Dodds, J Turnbull and
S Hawkins

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): H Haran, J McClurey and A Wheeler

CSS33 APOLOGIES

CSS34 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the last meeting held on 27 June 2017 were
agreed as a correct record.

CSS35 DELIBERATE SECONDARY FIRES

The committee received a presentation from David Leach, Tyne and Wear Fire and
Rescue Service on deliberate secondary fires.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted.

CSS36 PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME AND DISORDER AND FEELINGS OF SAFETY

The Committee received a presentation from Peter Wright, Gateshead Council and
Chief Inspector Karl Wilson, Northumbria Police on perceptions of crime and
disorder and feelings of safety.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted

**CSS37 IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFER GATESHEAD PRIORITIES - 6 MONTH
PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report on the Community Safety Board's six monthly
progress update on activities that have been undertaken to address its strategic
priorities (as set out in the statutory Partnership Plan for 2017/18)

The Committee were reminded that the Partnership Plan brings together the
analytical findings from the Strategic Assessment, along with the key activities
undertaken by the Board on the previous 12 months to set out the strategic priorities
that will be delivered in the forthcoming year. The priorities confirmed for 2017/18
are:

- 1) Tackling Violence
- 2) Combatting Anti-Social Behaviour
- 3) Addressing Substance Misuse
- 4) Improving Public Confidence

The table appended to the report shows performance of crime and disorder within Gateshead from April 2017 until 31 August 2017. It must be noted at the outset changes to National Crime Recording Standards has significantly altered the way in which crime is recorded and has subsequently inflated performance figures and makes it difficult to compare to previous years. Discussions held at the Police and Crime Panel suggests that inflated figures will continue until the end of the financial year – with Corporate Development in Northumbria Police projecting increases of between 9% and 18% at year end.

The Committee received details of some of the work carried out by partners and Council services involved in Community Safety in the last six months against the objectives identified within the Partnership Plan. For reassurance, work has taken place against all priority areas, most of which are progressing well and/or has already been completed.

The Board advised that they will continue to progress work in relation to all of the objectives, however, some of the areas that will be prioritised or be developed further over the next six-months are:

- Continue to review the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Domestic Abuse functions and identify a new operating/delivery model for Gateshead.
- Undertake a systems-thinking review of how we tackle ASB to ensure we have the right approach for supporting victims.
- Continue to roll out training and awareness around ASB Tools and Powers and to further embed a problem solving culture within Gateshead in relation to Community Safety issues.
- Further develop our communications/engagement approaches to ensure we continue to proactively tackle perceptions of crime and disorder and feelings of safety with local residents.
- Produce the statutory Strategic Assessment (and explore options for a joint assessment with Safe Newcastle) as well as undertaking public consultation on the draft priorities.
- Finalise the Domestic Homicide Review into Adult D and implement any of the recommendations identified.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the information be noted
 - ii) To continue to receive six-monthly Community Safety updates
 - iii) To identify any issues/areas that OSC want to scrutinise in greater details at a future Committee meeting

The Committee received an additional update on the progress made in the last six months against the outcomes set out in the Council Plan 2015-2020. Of the 6 indicators reported to this committee, 3 have 6-month data available. The number of reported incidents of ASB has improved compared to last year whilst the number of referrals to ARCH has declined. The number of recorded crimes has increased and

this has been discussed in depth earlier on the agenda.

- RESOLVED - i) Committee agreed that the activities undertaken during April to September 2017 are achieving the desired outcomes in the Council Plan 2015-2020

CSS38 IMPACT OF THE PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS - 6 MONTH PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the six month evaluation of the Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) for Gateshead. Gateshead Council's Cabinet requested a review of the PSPOs once they had been enforceable for six months.

The orders have now been enforceable for six months with varying degrees of success:

Borough wide

There are two measures in the borough wide PSPO which were intended to help the council deal with an increase in complaints regarding dog fouling:

- The requirement to carry the means to clean up after your dog
- To dispose of bagged dog waste in a bin or by taking it home

There is also an additional requirement to help police deal with on street drinking which makes it an offence in Gateshead not to surrender any open alcohol container when asked to do so by an authorised officer.

The measures around dog fouling were put in place as a response to reduced resources and recognising the difficulties of catching people "in the act". They allow officers to proactively challenge dog owners to ensure they have the means to clear up which completely changes the situation from being reactive to enable a more direct, intelligence led approach. The second element was around dog waste being hung in trees, as this is not covered by littering legislation.

However, there has been little activity around implementing this as there is currently no on street enforcement function. Without an on street environmental enforcement team the only place the work could sit would be with the enforcement team – however, unless they stopped doing existing areas of work there is no capacity to pick up this additional demand. A report to Cabinet in July explored the options for delivering on street enforcement. Discussions continue about an on street enforcement team with the aim of having one in place by the end of the year.

Northumbria Police value the measure around disposing of alcohol as it is a useful tool, particularly in relation to youth ASB – alcohol is often found and confiscated. Northumbria Police do not routinely record the number of times alcohol is disposed of but have noticed an increase in the use as the legislation is available to use across the whole of the borough rather than the discreet areas that were previously subject to a Designated Public Place Order (DPPO).

Metro Centre

This PSPO has been very effective and has worked in preventing the number of car meets in the retail park of the Metro Centre, as a result there have been no fixed penalty notices issued. Since its implementation there have been no issues and the meets have ceased to exist.

Town Centre

There are nine measures to combat anti-social behaviour in the town centre PSPO.

Touting for business and pitching stalls on the highway

Since the order was introduced and the enforcement team carried out some planned activity this is now greatly reduced, if not eliminated.

However, the Institute of Fundraising has raised concerns that the current situation is too restrictive. They remain unhappy that two members of staff from one of their charities were issued with fixed penalty notices. They await with interest the outcome of this review, and are hoping that collecting by charities in the town centre may be permitted through a site management agreement limiting their number of collectors and the days on which they can collect.

Any arrangement to manage and approve collectors would require additional staffing resources, together with a policy statement, fee and charging arrangements. Provisions already exist for charitable cash collections to receive a Street Collection Permit, and it is not recommended at this stage that alternative arrangements are put in place to accommodate the groups who collect for charities by taking bank details from the public.

Begging/Street drinking/Taking intoxicating substances/Being intoxicated and incapable/Urinating and defecating

There have been a large number of breaches of these provisions, and due to a lack of resource to enforce the order a limited amount of fixed penalty notices have been issued. As a result intelligence has been gathered around this, and a cohort of perpetrators has been identified in conjunction with partners including Northumbria Police, The Gateshead Housing Company, Evolve and Basis. Some of these breaches may also be as a result of increased regulation and associated enforcement activity in Newcastle.

This client group are extremely difficult to engage and cause numerous problems for businesses, residents and visitors to the town centre. As a result the more mainstream enforcement toolkit does not generally work. For example, of the 22 fixed penalty notices issued, not one payment has been received and in many cases multiple notices have been issued to the same people.

The approach with this group needs to be one of two options, when a breach occurs:

- A summons file produced by Northumbria Police so we can get it in to court

- quickly with the option of requesting a Criminal Behaviour Order; or
- Proactively compiling a file of evidence to make an application for an injunction to tackle specific aspects of perpetrators behaviour.

Both of these options require additional resource including time by council officers to do background checks with partners and agencies to ascertain who may be working with the offender and consult around the proposed conditions of any order we want to request. It is important that we do not criminalise people who genuinely need support services and work extensively with partners to ensure this is not the case.

The latter approach was recently adopted to deal with one prolific offender: however it was met with some difficulty because of the approach taken by the judiciary. This case was council led however, without a dedicated resource impacted on delivery of other services.

Regular complaints are made by visitors to the town centre, by retailers and other partners including Trinity Square Management and Nexus regarding individuals' behaviour, in particular around breaches of the PSPO. The neighbourhood policing team aren't always on shift, or are often working on another issue, and so the complaint isn't responded to in the timely manner people would expect. The 'Necessity to Arrest Test' adopted by Northumbria Police has also caused some difficulties in dealing with perpetrators, in that on occasions perpetrators aren't detained which means it is likely that they will continue to breach the order.

The council is only allocated one half day slot every two weeks to present cases in court. As of early August hearings were already listed through to October. This means action in late August is likely not to go to court until November. This delay allows offences to continue, without any opportunity to take action earlier to stop the activity. This causes a concern around people's perceptions about the ability of the council and police taking timely action to address problematic behaviour.

Feeding pigeons and anti-social riding

Since the order came into force we have had one complaint about feeding pigeons which was subsequently dealt with and there have been no further issues.

Trinity Square routinely warn cyclists about anti-socially, no further complaints have been received.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That Cabinet note the report
 - ii) That Cabinet retain the current arrangements concerning charity collections, and do not seek to amend the current order to introduce any new arrangements to facilitate collections outside of the existing provisions for Street Collection Permits under the Police, Factories etc (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916

CSS39 PREVENT - PROGRESS UPDATE (SELF-ASSESSMENT)

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the work/activity that has taken place to address the recommendations outlined within the Final Report (of the review of Preventing Violent Extremism that was carried out in 2015/16) and builds upon the previous progress reports submitted to Committee back in October 2016 and April 2017.

The Committee were reminded that the Final Report concluded that there were multi-agency arrangements in place to meet the statutory responsibilities set out in the national Prevent Duty Guidance.

The review identified no significant gaps but felt that a self-assessment should be undertaken on a regular basis to ensure that strong and robust processes are in place to safeguard those at risk of being drawn into extremism (and to help demonstrate that, as a Council, proactive work is underway to address future challenges).

There were a total of 13 recommendations were identified as part of the review and were appended to the report for information. The recommendations were aligned to the 3 x themes identified in the national Prevent guidance:

- (1) Leadership
- (2) Working in Partnership; and
- (3) Capabilities

A wide range of actions have been carried out in relation to the recommendations and examples of the work undertaken were appended to the report for information.

In relation to the future focus/gaps identified – which needs to be progressed in the next six months are:

- Community Safety is to re-establish PPP (Prevent, Protect and Prepare) Sub-Group and Contest Board by the end of the year.
- Strengthen our internal data collection and identification method to ensure that all referrals are captured.
- Practice Guidance Note produced to help officers understand the processes involved in referring an individual to Prevent remains still relevant – but may need to be amended to reflect ongoing changes to the Early Help and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub Models
- A Members Seminar will be arranged with Special Branch to share findings of the Local Counter Terrorism Profile and to provide an updated picture of local/national threat.
- Further work to be undertaken with key services to ensure the Council utilises its full authority and legitimacy to increase awareness and understanding of the Prevent agenda.
- Commission and deliver further training sessions in relation to WRAP – targeting those areas of greatest need.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the information be noted
 - ii) That the Committee agreed to receive a progress update in relation to the progress made against delivering the recommendations at a future meeting (March 2018)

Chair.....