

minutes



Meeting CRIME REDUCTION SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 21st May 2007 (commencing at 1.30 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Councillor John Knight (Chair)
Councillor Joe Lonergan MBE (Vice-Chair)

John Carter
Jen Cole
Alan Davison
Stan Heptinstall MBE

Pat Lally
Bruce Laughton
A Mark Spencer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 23rd April 2007 having been circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mark Spencer.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

CRIME REDUCTION: TASKING AND COORDINATION

Chris Walker, Community Safety Manager and Richard Hodge, Service Director, Community Safety, Regeneration and Protection, introduced the report on tasking and coordination. Mr Walker pointed out that while the model worked well in a compact unitary authority, such as Nottingham City, the model was less well developed in two tier areas. Mr Hodge pointed out that in Nottinghamshire each of the three Divisional Commanders pursued their own priorities. He believed that the countywide Community Safety Board, with its strategic role, was developing and maturing. He referred also to the tactical group, below the Board, chaired by Assistant Chief Constable Fish, which might be able to do tasking and coordination on some issues. Chief Superintendent Richard Johnson referred to recent

discussions about creating a countywide hub of officers from Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). Anne Halliday at Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) had offered Home Office staff to undertake a quick review of partnership working.

Councillor Heptinstall liked the idea of more, organised joint working, but was concerned about having one focus for the whole county, and questioned the value of involving people in meetings which might not impact on their own area. He suggested there be tasking and coordination groups based on the three divisional areas, with some other mechanism to deal with cross boundary issues. Councillor Laughton stated that he had found the Chief Executive to be a useful point of contact on difficult crime and disorder problems. Councillor Lally saw CDRPs as being owned by the district councils. Councillor Gilfoyle responded that the County Council was an equal partner in CDRPs, but did not have Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act embodied in its functions.

Councillor Gilfoyle perceived a need to consider how the County Council was represented at CDRP meetings, with officers coming from each service. The Police operated on the basis of divisions, so could not adopt an over-arching model. The tactical group looked at issues affecting all the districts. The County Council had funded work on anti social behaviour and domestic violence, but this funding needed to become mainstream. He suggested video conferencing as a way forward, or having one County Council officer at each CDRP who could answer for all departments. He referred to Chief Superintendent Johnson's work with the County on tactical and practical issues. He supported the GOEM suggestion of an external review.

Councillor Lonergan believed that the Chief Constable's aspiration for a single tasking and coordination body was not achievable. He saw the existing CDRPs as the engine for this work, but questioned whether they were working properly. He was doubtful about the effectiveness of video conferencing. He was of the view that a senior County Council officer should be involved in CDRP meetings, and that he or she should have the authority to decide on matters or to report back for permission. Councillor Knight felt that the previous select committee meeting's conclusion that one tasking and coordination group could cover the whole county sounded too simple. He was concerned that meetings would be a waste of time if the wrong people attended. Councillor Carter referred to the role Local Area Agreements and Neighbourhood Watch.

Mr Hodge reminded members of the Chief Constables challenge to the County Council regarding performance indicators. There was an onus on the County Council to cooperate with tasking and coordination, and some progress was being made. He believed that community safety should be put at the heart of County Council activities. Chief Superintendent Johnson thought the CDRPs' would have a tactical role, and the Community Safety Board a strategic role. His experience of video conferencing was very positive, and regarded it as essential that County Council participants in meetings should be authorised to take decisions. Councillor Lonergan referred to the requirements of the County Council's standing orders. Councillor Lally questioned what sort of delegation was needed. Chief Superintendent Johnson gave as an example someone who could decide to re-allocate youth workers for a period into a certain area. Councillor Lally referred to the different styles of management in the Police and County Council. Councillor

Carter believed the committee should support quicker ways of working, including making use of the delegation scheme. Councillor Heptinstall believed there should be better working relationships between the County and District Councils. Councillor Gilfoyle referred to using County Council resources in their widest sense, and to the direct benefits to County Council property from reducing crime. He reminded members that community safety was listed as the Council's top priority.

Councillor Knight saw merit in further scrutiny of Chief Superintendent Johnson's model. Councillor Carter suggested inviting Anne Halliday from GOEM to the next meeting. Councillor Lonergan referred to the difficulty in breaking down silos. Councillor Knight believed the Committee should encourage cutting across boundaries.

It was agreed to hold two further meetings (subject to approval from the Whips) :-

- Monday, 18 June at 10.30 am to receive evidence from Anne Halliday, make comparisons with other County Councils' participation in crime reduction meetings and draw together Select Committee's recommendations.
- Monday, 23 July at 1.30 pm to consider the draft final report.

The meeting closed at 14:55

CHAIR

Ref: crime reduction/m_21may07