



**8 January 2013**

**Agenda Item: 13**

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR,  
POLICY, PLANNING AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

**WORKING WITH VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for funding, from the Community Safety budget, for a programme, "Working with Vulnerable Communities", which is designed to work with, protect and strengthen, some of the most vulnerable communities within the County.

**Information and Advice**

2. In 2012/2013 community safety activity has been focused around 15 "Partnership Plus" areas of the county. These areas were identified not only as experiencing high levels of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, but also exhibiting elements of social deprivation. From a community safety perspective they were deemed to be our most vulnerable communities.
3. This locality approach has been very successful, with each of the Partnership Plus areas reporting significant reductions of 21% in crime and disorder and 33% in anti-social behaviour incidents compared to this time last year. In view of this success it is intended to repeat this locality approach in 2013/2014, with a refreshed group of 15 Partnership Plus areas. These 15 areas will be identified over the next few weeks, using the most up to date information on crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour together with information on youth crime, substance misuse, domestic abuse and hate crime.
4. In order to maximise the achievements to date, and to maintain and improve performance, it is proposed to enhance work in the 15 Partnership Plus areas in 2013/2014 with a programme specifically designed to work with, protect and strengthen these vulnerable communities and that offers sustainable improvements to local life. The programme will have three main elements:

**(i) Community Action & Empowerment**

This element of the programme will empower local communities to be "part of the solution" and will offer volunteering opportunities for local people, increasing their skill base and give a better chance of employment. Work will be undertaken within the Partnership Plus areas with Nottinghamshire Police to tackle crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. Nottinghamshire Police will run a campaign to recruit 32 additional

Special Constables whose work will be targeted in and around the 15 Partnership Plus areas. Their duties will be closely linked to the issues affecting each of the 15 areas. One off funding of £32,000 from the Community Safety budget will contribute to the training and equipment costs of these posts.

### **(ii) Support for Victims and Witnesses**

Two key elements to any successful community focused community safety initiative are to support the victims of crime and to give local people the confidence to act as a witness when required. Both of these elements result in a stronger and more empowered community. Victim Support, a national charity operating in Nottinghamshire, will work with local communities to improve the support to victims of crime, especially those that suffer repeat offences, and to give people the confidence to report crime and act as a witness at court if required. This will be especially beneficial in cases involving domestic violence where often the victim knows the perpetrator, but simply does not have the confidence to report the crime. This element of the programme will also offer the opportunity for the involvement of local volunteers. One off funding of £19,750 from the Community Safety Budget will contribute to staffing and expense costs to provide this service for four days per week, at peak times and locations.

### **(iii) Supporting Vulnerable Older People**

With an ageing population it is essential that the most vulnerable older people are made as safe and secure in their homes as possible. An emerging problem is that of vulnerable older people at risk of house fires. To reduce this risk, this element of the programme will be undertaken by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. They will identify the older people most “at risk” from house fire and install a multi-function alarm. These differ from the standard fire alarms fitted in homes in that the householder can have a “pendant” alarm, which they can wear while at home, and when alerted automatically by the alarm, the operator can speak to the older person directly. One off funding of £2,000 from the Community Safety Budget will contribute to the purchase of the alarms.

### **Other Options Considered**

5. Not to provide this funding for the programme, in which case it will not be possible to provide this level of support and protection to vulnerable communities and individuals.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

6. To maximise the impact of targeted locality work, and to foster safe and secure communities it is essential to work with, empower and protect the most vulnerable people and communities in our County. This programme, whilst only requiring a “one off” contribution from the Community Safety budget will provide a lasting legacy in terms of stronger, safer and more successful communities.
7. The £53,750 contribution from the Community Safety budget to this programme represents a contribution of 17% of the total cost of the programme, which is £300,000. The balance the funding, £246,250, plus ongoing costs, have been committed by partner agencies.
8. On current information, indications are that the Partnership Plus areas for 2013/14 will

include wards within Worksop, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Mansfield, Newark, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Hucknall, Netherfield, Colwick, and Eastwood.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Recommendation**

10. It is recommended that:
- i) the sum of £53,750 is allocated from the Community Safety Budget as a contribution to the programme, "Working with Vulnerable Communities"
  - ii) This funding is met from a temporary transfer from the underspend in the staffing element of the Community Safety budget 2012/2013

**Martin Done, Service Director Communications and Marketing**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Tony Shardlow, Community Safety Officer, Safer and Engaged Communities x73846.**

### **Constitutional Comments**

11. Community Safety Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report; it is responsible for the Council's statutory duties in relation to community safety.

### **Financial Comments**

12. The cost of the additional projects can be funded by the temporary virement of budget from staff costs to the project budget within community safety. (DD/19/12/12)

### **Background Papers**

13. Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

14. All.