

## Report



Meeting	<b>County Council</b>
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Date	<b>29 March 2007</b>
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agenda item number
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### **REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

- 1 The County Council meeting gives me another opportunity to share with you issues, events and activities ongoing in the Community Safety and Partnerships portfolio. I hope all Councillors find the report of interest and will be very happy to provide further information on any subject it covers.

#### **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

##### **Business Crime**

- 2 The Nottinghamshire Safer Business Initiative was launched on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February, with Vernon Coaker MP opening the event.
- 3 I was also very pleased to speak at the Launch. This is a trailblazing business crime prevention scheme piloted by a specialist unit within Nottinghamshire Police and is strongly supported by Nottinghamshire County Council and the Nottinghamshire Chamber. A recent survey by the British Chamber of Commerce found that 64% of all businesses had experienced at least one crime in the previous twelve months, and 33% of businesses estimated that crime costs them more than £1,000 per year. This scheme will save businesses tens of thousands of pounds and help to improve the image of Nottinghamshire.
- 4 The scheme works with local businesses to offer advice and support to reduce business crime, focussing on reduced security costs and a structured security patrol system. Nottinghamshire County Council has made a financial contribution to this scheme, which will help to fund posts of Business Crime Advisors and Crime Analyst together with the development of a Police Messaging System and a toolkit for businesses.

##### **Neighbourhood Watch**

- 5 On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February, I attended the AGM of the Nottinghamshire Neighbourhood Watch at Sherwood Lodge. The funding support from the County Council has been of great help in establishing the countywide support network for our Neighbourhood Watch. As ever, I was impressed by the commitment of all involved and the help and support they give to our communities. Richard Hodge was also

present and gave a presentation outlining Community Safety, Regeneration and Protection in the County Council and gave details of potential and ongoing Community Safety and Trading Standards initiatives which would be enhanced by a Neighbourhood Watch input.

### **Video Suite at County Hall**

- 6 Through our partnership working with Nottinghamshire Police we have now agreed to establish a video suite at County Hall, directly linked to Nottinghamshire Police. This will enable staff from both organisations to have “face to face” meetings and discussions without having to leave the building. Joint working between agencies is recognised as the best way to tackle crime and disorder and this video suite will make this work both more effective and economical.

### **Sutton Lawns**

- 7 Our joint work with Ashfield DC and the Police on Sutton Lawns is progressing. We have now looked in detail at all the entry/exit points from the Lawns and are planning a phased approach to dealing with the areas of most concern. This will involve knocking a stretch of wall down, where youths are congregating and harassing local residents, together with engineering solutions for many of the exits to prevent easy escape (starburst) for motorbike/mini moto riders when Police enforcement activity takes place.

### **Operation Spectrum**

- 8 On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Chief Constable met with the Leader and myself to discuss a targeted approach to tackling the rise in volume crime (burglary, vehicle crime, violent crime) in Nottinghamshire and help us to get back on track with our LAA targets. Operation Spectrum is Police-led, but involves all partners, in running a series of weeks of action across the county. The Leader pledged £30,000 from the County Council in support of this initiative. Operation Spectrum will last from 22<sup>nd</sup> January to the end of April 2007 across the whole force area. Operational activity will be managed in themed phases to best support key media messages in line with the Police’s strategic assessment and the operation will be evaluated on its conclusion. We had an update report from the Police last week and over 600 offenders have been arrested already. These figures should have a real impact in reducing recorded crime levels over the coming months.

### **AGIS Seminar**

- 9 The first of the AGIS Seminars took place at the City Council House on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> March. AGIS is a European Union funded project to research into best practice on disrupting drug markets and keeping ex-drug users out of crime after treatment.
- 10 Nottinghamshire Police Authority is the lead partner from Nottinghamshire with European partners in this work coming from Assen in Holland, Poznan in Poland and the Maria Addiction centre in Stockholm. This first Seminar was opened by Cllr John

Clarke in his capacity as Chairman of the Police Authority. Deputy Mayors from Poznan and Assen attended with officers representing drug treatment services, the police, local authorities and a range of other agencies.

- 11 The research is being co-ordinated by the Jill Dando Institute which is based within University College London. Key findings from the research reports were the effectiveness of the Nottinghamshire based award winning Sherwood Project and the vital need to consider housing, employment and financial support and advice issues if ex-users were to stay clean after treatment. Already exchanges of good practice between partners – Rat on a Rat is now being used in Assen, and knowledge from Poznan on amphetamine markets – have shown how important this project will be in the fight against drugs.

### **Motorcycle Nuisance**

- 12 The Police Off Road Motorcycle Team began its targeted work to reduce anti social behaviour in February. The team of two riders have agreed hot-spot areas with the County Council and CDRP partners and will be focusing their work on seizing bikes, issuing FPNs (Fixed Penalty Notices) and in some cases arresting riders.
- 13 This work is linked to a media campaign to get the word out that motorcycle nuisance will not be tolerated and that communities have a right to peace and quiet as well as safety on open spaces. Central TV carried a 5 minute piece on the work in February which was extremely effective in pushing out this message. In all, six hot spots across the County have been identified and resourced. Elected Members in the selected areas have been offered a chance to meet the two police riders and to discuss their work. The project will run through the summer months.

### **Violent Crime and Young People**

- 14 Relevant Portfolio Holders and senior officers from the County Council and Nottingham City Council have met with ACC Sue Fish from Nottinghamshire Police to discuss issues related to Violent Crime and Young People.
- 15 The meetings identified a number of issues where closer working and better information sharing would improve outcomes for young people. A key driver for the meetings was that young people are the most likely victims of violent crime and the need to ensure strategies were in place to deliver the key Every Child Matters outcome of keeping children and young people safe. The meetings illustrated the very effective working between County and City agencies on many issues but also highlighted that some problems such as information sharing can always be improved.
- 16 The meeting will be repeated as and when it is considered necessary but a number of actions will be undertaken which will allow the 3 organisations to work more effectively together. These include sharing good practice to continue the reduction of crime in Children's Homes, better information sharing and the more effective use of the ASSETT Risk Assessment Tool for young people

## **Drugs and Young People**

- 17 The County Council plays an important role in reducing the harmful impact of drug and alcohol on young people. The DAAT (Drug and Alcohol Action Team) leads this work in the County but staff in Children's Services and Communities Departments play a key part in this harm reduction work. The DAAT, with help from the County Council's research team, has undertaken a survey of young people's use of drugs and alcohol in the County. The results are being analysed at present and will be pivotal in shaping service priorities into the future.
- 18 Reducing the impact of substance misuse is an important part of the developing Children and Young People's Plan in the County. Closer working between the DAAT and County Council is being planned at present with issues of drugs education in schools and the use of alcohol by young people that are directly related to anti social behaviour being high on the agenda.

## **M1 Junction 27**

- 19 The Safer Communities Team continue to work with colleagues in Highways to try and resolve the issues of antisocial behaviour and safety arising from the racing of cars on the public highway around Junction 27 of the M1. Resolution will be a complex issue as it is important we do not simply move the problem from one stretch of highway to another, which may even increase the risks posed by this behaviour.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Officer**

- 20 Following recent interviews I am very pleased to report that we have now recruited to the post of Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer. This is a new post for the Council and is crucial to develop work between agencies and the Gypsy and Traveller communities across Nottinghamshire. Gypsies and Travellers do not feel able to access services and are often alienated from the communities within which they live. This can cause local tensions and problems that can escalate into crime and disorder. This post will work to break down these barriers and develop a Code of Practice for everyone to follow.

### **Citizens Advice Bureaux**

- 21 In February I met with the Regional Manager of Citizens Advice. This was a good opportunity to update each other on joint partnership working and the progress we are making in helping to develop our Bureaux countywide. This meeting helped to emphasise to me, the role of the CAB's network has in helping the most vulnerable in our communities and the importance of ongoing County Council support to these activities.

### **Voluntary Sector Partnership Forum**

- 22 On Friday 16 March 2007 I chaired the Voluntary Sector Partnership Forum attended by 50 delegates from across the voluntary sector. Lively discussion took place on the voluntary sector targets within the LAA and the current infrastructure review, known as Change-Up. We also considered the future of this partnership meeting, which has positive support in the voluntary sector, but which we agreed should focus around the structure of the County Council and the LAA blocks in the future.

### **Mansfield Police**

- 23 I was very pleased to be able to attend a Team Building Day with the Police at Mansfield. In doing so, I hope to have improved understanding of our roles between the Police and the County Council and how we can better work with each other.

### **SERVICE ISSUES**

#### **Health Inequalities**

- 24 The Team have been working collaboratively with partners including the new County Teaching PCT and Bassetlaw PCT to promote well-being and build greater capacity for encouraging healthier communities across Nottinghamshire. A range of activities and initiatives are being undertaken which will continue to provide leadership for health improvement
- 25 The Healthier Communities and Older People's Partnership hosted a very successful Mental health and emotional well being workshop which brought together a diverse range of partners across the health community to look at innovative ways to address mental health issues like depression, anxiety and stress. Outcomes included highlighting the importance of social prescriptions, GP referral schemes and books on prescription.
- 26 Smoke Free Nottinghamshire Tobacco Control Alliance [hosted by the County Council] is co-ordinating activity around the county and in the city to inform businesses and organisations, and the public, about the forthcoming smoke free legislation. The Alliance is producing a smoke free toolkit, which will include information on what organisations' legal obligations will be, how to implement a smoking policy and encouraging them to introduce tighter restrictions on smoking in the workplace to motivate more staff to give up smoking in line with the Council's own smoking policy. Two Project Workers have been recruited to work with organisations and support them to introduce smoking policies well ahead of the 1<sup>st</sup> July. A local media campaign is being worked up to promote the implementation date and support compliance. No Smoking Day has been used to launch this media campaign.
- 27 Nottinghamshire Avoidable Injury group are preparing to consult on a countywide avoidable injury partnership strategy 2007-2010. Alongside this will be a Nottinghamshire Falls Strategy both of these will include reference to delivery of the LAA targets - to reduce hospital admissions due to accidents for children and young people and older people over 65. A stakeholder's event, held in March, brought together for the first time key health, voluntary sector and social care partners

including the fire service to look at ways of developing a county wide integrated falls service through a combination of existing services, ongoing developments and new activities.

- 28 Obesity has become in recent years one of our most serious preventable public health problems. It is predicted that, if unchecked, obesity and the secondary health conditions that accompany it, will soon overtake smoking as the single greatest cause of premature death in England. This national trend is mirrored throughout the East Midlands with prevalence among females significantly higher than England as a whole. Recent National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence [NICE] guidelines have emphasised the crucial role local authorities have in tackling this issue. Nottinghamshire County Council Tackling Obesity group was formed in 2006/7. with the aim of coordinating and strengthening the input of Nottinghamshire County Council into tackling obesity across the county - working with service providers, health partners and the people of Nottinghamshire. The group has its own delivery and action plan and held a recent 'Sharing Day' to look at a collaborative ways of working and ways of capturing good practice

### **Emergency Planning**

- 29 I was pleased to join senior officers in representing the County Council at this year's Awards Ceremony for the Government's Beacon Scheme. Our presence was due to the shortlisting of our joint application with Newark & Sherwood District Council for Beacon Status in Emergency Planning. The results were announced during the Awards Ceremony, and I shall be pleased to announce the outcome during the meeting.
- 30 In February, our officers participated fully in the in regional and local aspects of the national influenza pandemic planning exercise "Winter Willow". The Chief Executive attended meetings of the Regional Civil Contingencies Committee, (representing all East Midland's County Councils), while Richard Hodge attended the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum's 'Strategic Coordinating Group'. Both officers were supported by members of the Emergency Planning Team.

### **Registration Service**

- 31 Recent weeks have seen two significant improvements in the accommodation provided for our Registration Service. In mid-February I was delighted to officiate at the re-opening of the refurbished Ceremony Room at Newark Register Office. The room had been fully refurbished (and security improved) following the fire last November. The facility hosts a wide range of important events marking significant milestones of life, including marriage and civil partnership ceremonies, plus citizenship ceremonies, naming ceremonies and re-affirmations of vows.
- 32 In early March I was pleased to perform the opening ceremony for the new Sutton-in-Ashfield Register Office, located within the newly refurbished library in the Idlewells Precinct. The local register office is an important amenity in any community. It is where a new life is recorded, and where the community records officially the passing of a life. The new office provides a suitable facility for these important registrations. The office is modern, bright and spacious, and is very accessible to the local

community. The new Register Office is part of the new 'Community Hub' and has come about as a result of successful collaboration between registration staff and library staff.

## **Trading Standards**

### **Contaminated Petrol**

- 33 Our Trading Standards Service kept a close eye on the national scene regarding contaminated petrol and its potential to have been sold at forecourts in the county. Pleasingly, no known contamination occurred but we responded well to the considerable media interest and to a considerable number of enquiries from concerned motorists, both directly and via Consumer direct: East Midlands.

### **LACORS Year Ahead**

- 34 In February, accompanied by Councillors Yvonne Davidson and Mark Spencer, I attended the LACORS/TSI Year Ahead Symposium for Trading Standards and Regulatory Services. The theme of the symposium was The Future's Bright?, The Future's Local? and focussed on the attention being given to the Trading Standards Service by central government reviews, such as Hampton, MaCrory and Rogers, the need to meet the needs and aspirations of reputable traders and consumers, whilst targeting rogue traders. Beyond all this there was the issue the Service needed to address in targeting the new agenda for local government. All in all, an interesting and challenging event.

### **Food Awareness Week**

- 35 On 14<sup>th</sup> February I joined officers from Trading Standards at the Sainsbury's Superstore in Worksop for the launch of this year's Food Awareness Week. The event ran for 6 days with food related displays at a number of supermarket locations throughout the County. Trading Standards across the East Midlands joined forces to give consumers the opportunity to learn how to read food labels correctly and understand what they really mean.
- 36 The aims of Food Awareness Week are to raise consumer knowledge with regard to food labelling in relation to its safety, quality and composition and to highlight the outcomes of investigations and projects that the Service have undertaken. One in four people admit that they find it difficult to understand information on food labels, so trading standards teams across the East Midlands are joining forces to assist consumers. We are currently supporting the Food Standards Agency's 'eat less salt' campaign and one of the week's messages was for consumers to cut down on salt intake by comparing food labels and choosing the lower salt options available.
- 37 This campaign aimed to educate Nottinghamshire people so they can make the right choices for themselves and their children when choosing which food to eat. During the event our food experts were on hand to help consumers pick their way through the labelling information and to answer any questions in relation to food matters or the

work of trading standards. On the day that I joined the officers the display was generating a lot of interest from consumers.

### **Newark Livestock Market**

- 38 On Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February I attended the Newark Livestock Market with officers from Trading Standards. The Service is responsible for the enforcement of the ever-changing legislation controlling the health and welfare of farmed stock. We will all be familiar with the recent outbreak of avian flu in Suffolk which has further served to highlight the importance of the work this team undertakes.
- 39 In a challenging environment, I was impressed with the Officers' professionalism in what can often be difficult circumstances. I was interested to witness the wide range of duties that these officers carry out on a weekly basis at the market. All animals entering the market are identified and together with a visual check and reconciliation with documents and various databases the officers are able to trace an individual animal's movement. These systems ensure traceability should there be a disease outbreak. These checks are carried out to ensure that none of the movement restrictions that have been imposed since foot and mouth have been breached.
- 40 The officers are also responsible for checking the welfare of animals in the market. They will look for any signs of injury that may cause suffering. They work in partnership with Vets from the State Veterinary Service to ensure that animal health standards are maintained. I was able to inspect a number of vehicles that animals were transported to the market in. Here legislation stipulates the requirements for vehicles conveying livestock. It is essential to ensure that standards relating to the bio-security of vehicles at markets are adhered to, if we want to reduce the risk of spreading disease.

### **Cold Calling Control Zones**

- 41 By the end of March 07 there will be a total of 8 cold calling control zones operating in the county. A new zone at Garside Street, Worksop launched in February will be followed by three new zones in the West Bridgford area later this month at Holme Road, Adbolton Grove and Greythorne Drive.
- 42 The new zones build on the success of the previous zones at Ravenshead (Vernon Crescent, Milton Drive, Milton Crescent); Mansfield Woodhouse (Morven Avenue, Crow Hill Drive) Nuthall (Birch Close, Rowan Court) and Worksop (Bracebridge, Bracebridge Avenue). Eight more zones are planned in the county for 2007/8, as part of a co-ordinated roll out by Trading Standards across the East Midlands region to target the localities and communities identified by intelligence as being most vulnerable to doorstep criminals.

### **Anti-Counterfeiting**

- 43 On 28 January and 4 February 2007 I accompanied Trading Standards officers and police officers on raids at Hucknall and Botany Car Boots Sales to witness first hand



the excellent work done to tackle product counterfeiting in the county. The operations resulted in a total of 12 arrests, a number of house searches and the seizure of several thousand counterfeit DVDs, computer games and software. Titles seized included new cinema releases “The Last King of Scotland” and “Hot Fuzz” and unclassified porn. At one house there was evidence of a large scale copying with the facility to copy 10 DVDs simultaneously. The teams were accompanied by television crews and the Hucknall raid received excellent coverage on Central News. It is anticipated that 8 of those arrested will be charged when they answer bail; this new “fast tracking” of defendants in certain cases being more expedient and less resource intensive than the traditional method of reporting for summons.

### **MEDIA INTEREST**

44 Activities across the Portfolio continue to attract positive media interest and items covered have included:

- Contaminated petrol
- Illegal cattle moves near Newark
- Trading Standards Good Trader Scheme
- Motorcycle nuisance
- Underage Alcohol Sales
- Underage Knife Sales
- Sunday Market raids
- Rogue Trader Warnings
- Cold Calling Control Zones

**Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle**  
**CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PARTNERSHIPS**