

Cabinet - 13 April 2005

Crime, Disorder & Drugs Strategy 2005 - 2008

Portfolio: Councillor Melvin Pitt, Housing and Community Safety

Service Area: Community Regeneration & Housing

Wards: All

Forward Plan: Yes

Summary of report

This report presents the proposed new three year Crime, Disorder & Drugs Strategy for Walsall, as prepared by the Safer Walsall Borough Partnership.

Following a detailed Crime Audit during 2004 and consultation with a wide range of partner agencies and Local Neighbourhood Partnership, the strategy sets out the key objectives for preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and a co-ordinated programme of drug and alcohol treatment and prevention programmes. The Strategy is informed by local priorities and national Government policy and targets.

Walsall's record on tackling and preventing crime has been demonstrating improvements over the last few years. There is still progress which needs to be made specifically to reduce violent crime and domestic violence. The Strategy's key aim is to reduce overall crime in Walsall by 20% over the three year period.

It is a statutory requirement for the Council, other responsible authorities (Police, Fire Service and the PCT), to produce this Strategy. Hard copies of this significant document will be made available in the political group rooms and electronic copies are available to view on the Council's website at www.walsall.gov.uk/policingpublicsafety/pdf/draft_strategy.pdf.

Recommendation:

Cabinet approves the new Crime, Disorder & Drugs Strategy of the Safer Walsall Borough Partnership as the strategic framework for the Council and its partners to prioritise actions and programmes for tackling crime, drugs misuse and anti-social behaviour over the period 2005 – 2008. This Strategy is a statutory requirement and requires agreement by Council.

Resource and legal considerations

The programmes and actions highlighted in the Strategy will be delivered through a range of Partnership funding including the new Building Safer Stronger Communities Fund in addition to mainstream resources from the Council, Police, Fire Service, PCT and other partners.

Citizen impact

Tackling crime and the fear of crime is a major element in ensuring that the Council and its partners create confident communities and sustainable neighbourhoods. The successful delivery of the new three year Strategy will directly and positively impact on the quality of life of local people.

Community safety

The new Strategy will directly contribute to the delivery of improved safety for communities in tackling and preventing crime, drugs misuse and anti-social behaviour throughout the Borough.

A key element of the Strategy will be ensure that Section 17 responsibilities (from the Crime & Disorder Act 1998) are more fully embedded into the Council's and partner's business plans and service plans and that community safety considerations are taken into account in all key decisions.

The key objectives of the new three Strategy are:

- To ensure partnership support in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods
- To maximise the opportunities for reducing crime by ensuring the effective adoption of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 across all Council services
- To increase the proportion of offences brought to justice by the Criminal Justice System
- To focus on prolific offenders and directing problematic drug users in to treatment
- To support further improvements in police technology and performance
- To reduce re-offending
- To implement proven crime reduction initiatives
- To provide a focus on early intervention
- To provide a focus on tackling anti-social behaviour

Environmental impact

This Strategy will directly support other investment programmes to help build sustainable communities and address the liveability and fear of crime issues relating to. This includes programmes such as Alleygating schemes, and better co-ordination of enforcement on tackling litter, fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, dog fouling and graffiti.

Performance and risk management issues

Performance monitoring of delivery of the actions and programmes arising from the new Strategy will be overseen by the Board of the Safer Walsall Borough Partnership. Regular reports will also be made to the Commissioning Executive of Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership. A six monthly report on progress against targets and delivery of the objectives of the Strategy will be made to the Council's Scrutiny Panel responsible for community safety.

Equality implications

Crime and anti-social behaviour can disproportionately affect vulnerable individuals and communities. The Strategy includes specific proposed actions on preventing and tackling domestic violence and also includes a commitment to working closer with representatives from Black & Minority Ethnic communities including working groups to take work programmes forward. And access to translation and interpretation facilities and other support.

Consultation

The Crime Audit carried out during 2004 and matters relating to the emerging new Strategy have been discussed at each of the nine Local Neighbourhood Partnerships, in addition to a wide range of consultation with other stakeholders. The issues have also been discussed in detail following a presentation at the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel in February 2005. Crime Concern and Government Office West Midlands have been closely involved in the development of the Strategy. The Crime and Disorder Strategy will be a key vehicle for delivery and objectives in the Community Plan.

Vision 2008

Making Walsall a Safe and Secure place and one where people can feel proud to live in are key objectives for Walsall's Vision. The new Strategy supported by the range of practical programmes to be delivered by the Council and partner agencies to prevent and tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and drugs misuse will directly contribute to these aims.

Background papers

Crime Audit 2004/5.

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Signed:

Executive Director: Jamie Morris

Date: 4 April 2005



Signed:

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Melvin Pitt

Date: 4 April 2005