

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Crime and Disorder Sub-Committee held as a Virtual - Online meeting on Wednesday, 25th November, 2020 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Tucker (Chair)

Councillors Tucker, Bulled, Cann, Gubb, Hunt, Mack, D. Spear, L. Spear and York

Officers:

Service Lead Housing Vulnerable Persons and Community Safety and Service Lead Community Safety Partnership and Harm Risk Officer

Also Present:

Councillors Leaver and Worden

1. VIRTUAL MEETING ETIQUETTE AND PROCEDURE

The Corporate and Community Services Officer outlined the virtual meeting procedure and etiquette as well as confirming who was in attendance from North Devon Council.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Henderson and Orange.

3. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31ST OCTOBER 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 2019 (circulated previously) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE MEETING AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.

The Chair allowed Councillor Mack to address the committee. Due to Covid-19 the normal ceremony to mark domestic abuse survivors was unable to proceed a white ribbon was worn to recognise domestic abuse violence and its survivors.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.

There were no declarations of interest made.

6. UPDATE ON THE NORTH DEVON AND TORRIDGE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Commander for North and West Devon Police and was the Chair of the Torridge and North Devon Crime Safety Partnership agency, presented the Update on the North Devon and Torridge Community Safety Partnership report (circulated previously).

The Sub-Committee received the following updates:

- The Crime and Disorder Act came into law in 1998 and its aim was to improve community safety
- Local Authorities administrated this law and made safety happen. Technically Torridge and North Devon were two Crime Safety Partnerships but were working together as one
- The Partnership met as a wider group quarterly. The other partners who met were the Police, Fire authority, Northern Devon Healthcare Trust, Local Authorities, elected Members, representatives from Domestic Abuse, drug and alcohol services
- The Partnership had a duty to consider national issues such as County Lines and Modern Day Slavery along with local issues
- Funding of the Partnership was due to change next year, 2021, whereby bids would have to be made for each area of concern to be tackled
- There had been many hurdles during the last year such as Covid-19, and relocating the police station but Crime levels were down by 13%, whereas nationally this figure was a 5% drop
- The number of drug trafficking and weapons crimes had increased. The positive of this was that more criminals were being caught and the Police were being more pro-active
- Hate crime had also increased and was a worrying trend
- The increased anti-social behaviour levels were due to the Covid-19 restrictions
- The Torridge and North Devon area remained one of the safest places to live

Dean Smith, Community Safety Lead Officer and Anti-Social Behaviour Lead for Torridge District Council (TDC) then addressed the Sub-Committee to give a Community Safety Partnership update.

The Sub-Committee received the following updates:

- TDC worked closely with its partners, 1-2 hour training sessions were given on any rising issues. Unfortunately since March 2020 these sessions had been suspended due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

- Online sessions were hoped to resume soon with a session having been successfully delivered recently on issues around cyber safety and scams
- 2021 would see the launch of a virtual platform programme
- Mediation services were used frequently by colleagues in the Environmental Health team who were dealing with increased neighbour disputes
- Crime prevention tools due to close working with the local Police
- Road safety was recognised as an emerging threat and attendance at regular meetings on Road Safety were ongoing
- Support of the operation SNAP, which allowed members of the public to upload dash cam footage to help tackle dangerous driving on the roads
- Contributed to the Honest Truth scheme which relayed road safety messages

The Sub-Committee then heard from Police Sergeant Noel Bourke, based at the North Devon Council (NDC) offices and who covered Torrridge and North Devon.

The following updates were given:

- There were four areas of work he was involved with and these were:
 - (1) County Lines
 - (2) Modern Slavery
 - (3) Safer Towns
 - (4) Mental Health
- There had been an increase in drug activity coming into the area and the Police relied on local intelligence from the Community as well as elected Members
- Intelligence gained from the gangs themselves was that North Devon was a really hard area to deliver drugs to and was not seen as an attractive option. This intelligence gained was then fed back to Liverpool and London Police forces
- Moving forward bite size training on County Lines was to be delivered in 2021 and all Members were encouraged to join a session
- Modern Day Slavery was a problem in North Devon. The businesses known for this type of activity were monitored, these included nail bars, car washes, and agricultural setting. The numbers were very small in the area
- Torrridge, Barnstaple and Ilfracombe had all been successful in a bid for funding to help tackle issues around homelessness. The £5,000 funding had been used for outreach services which were offering the homeless housing advice, and medical advice. The homeless were being encouraged to take up these services as if they chose not to and were to appear in court this could affect their court hearing
- Mental Health services had helped 12 people across North

Devon and Torridge. Medication was offered which resulted in reduced actions taken by the people suffering with mental health issues. A £60,000 saving had been achieved by working with the mental health services by reducing demand on Police time

Tim Birtwisle, Service Lead Community Safety Partnership Officer/Harm Risk Officer for North Devon Council (NDC) addressed the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee heard the following updates:

- The following three areas of work had been undertaken this past year:
 - (1) Safer Summer Scheme
 - (2) Adolescent Safety Framework
 - (3) Trauma Informed Conference
- The Office of the Police Crime Commissioner had offered funding to promote safety for visitors to the area over the summer months. The CSP had been successful in its bid for funding and were able to employ Marshalls at the beaches in Croyde, and Woolacombe for North Devon and at Westward Ho! for Torridge. This was a very positive experience and worked well
- The Adolescent Safety Framework was designed and run by the Child social services. It was aimed at protecting children at risks from external factors as identified by the social services team. Incidents that had occurred at certain areas in communities such as parks
- The Trauma Informed Conference was held in January 2020 at Filleigh Village Hall. It was a very well attended event with over 150 delegates
- The purpose of the event was to look at how traumatic events could affect young people and how help could be offered to those who had had a traumatic life
- A wide array of agencies were represented at the event
- Four outstanding presentations were given, one included the personal recount from someone who had experienced a traumatic childhood
- Unfortunately since the conference in January 2020 the work had come to a standstill due to the Covid-19 restrictions
- It was hoped Practitioners would be given training to help those affected by trauma

Toby Davies added that with the changes to funding coming next year 2021 it would be difficult to obtain funding. The trauma informed approach was a high intensity resource but to be able to address peoples underlying issues would result in them stop keep coming back for help. The CSP approach next year would focus more on positive talk and celebrate and promote the good work carried out by the partnership.

In response to various questions the CSP representatives gave the

following replies:

- Crime in rural areas was a known issue and there was a dedicated team working on prevention of crime and promoting the help available. An invite would be extended to Members to get involved helping provide local intelligence
- Funding was hoped to be available to extend the street Marshalls to other areas such as Braunton who had suffered rising levels of anti-social behaviours
- Education was the key to tackling scammers getting the message out to the members of the community was everyone's job. It was an international problem with the people doing the targeting not being based in the UK
- The new anti-social behaviour powers adopted by North Devon Council meant officers would have more powers to lower the levels of anti-social behaviours. Recent knife attacks in Barnstaple were drug related. The Anti-Social Behaviour steering group was still in its infancy but early findings suggested there was an increase in anti-social behaviours during the summer months
- Mental health issues did have a big impact on the work carried out by the CSP. Resources such as street cafes acting as safe havens for people who might be in distress helped but the impact of job losses and mental health issues this might increase demand for help. The CSP were working hard with partners
- Work was being carried out by the Suicidal Strategic Group to refresh the areas to get behind to help reduce risk areas
- If issues regarding youth anti-social behaviour was not being addressed then contacting the Local Authority to raise the concerns would enable them to divert the outreach programmes to the specified areas of concern
- A Police mini cadet programme was being rolled out in schools with a 6 week programme to start in January 2021. This was to the four schools who had responded
- The trauma informed programme would help understand the reasons people make the choices they do in regards to drug misuse. This would in turn lead to the reduction in numbers of people choosing this life path in the future

Chair

The meeting ended at 4.05 pm