

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Crime and Disorder Sub-Committee held at Barum Room - Brynsworthy on Monday, 8th November, 2021 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Tucker (Chair)

Councillors Biederman, Cann, Gubb, Hunt, D. Spear and L. Spear

Officers present via Teams link:

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

8. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bulled, Campbell, Chesters, Henderson, Orange, Pearson, Yabsley and York.

9. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2020 AND 19 OCTOBER 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 25 November 2020 and 19 October 2021 (circulated previously) be approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.

There were no declarations of interest made.

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

Superintendent Toby Davies gave Members an update on the North Devon and Torridge Community Safety Partnership over the last year. Unlike Cornwall, which was a unitary Council, Devon had both district and county level local government administrations. The Community Safety Partnership was a district level partnership as well as a County level safety partnership. This could prove challenging when bringing together different organisations.

Over the last year the partnership had focussed on the following priorities:

- Protecting the vulnerable

- Sexual violence and domestic abuse
- Substance misuse
- Emerging threats

The approach of the partnership had always been preventative, high intensity, and trauma informed. The partnership was unique in that it had very rural areas, urban and coastal, focus mustn't just be given to the urban areas.

There was still a prevalence of organised crime groups in the area with County lines and drug activities still a big area of concern. Drug activities was a common theme for most authorities nationally as well as locally. Bitesize training has provided front line workers with knowledge to spot signs of illicit behaviour.

Another priority that was concentrated on was sexual violence and domestic abuse. The most likely way a female would come to harm in this area was what often happened behind closed doors in the home. There is a sub group dedicated to victims of domestic sexual abuse.

Road safety was of considerable importance especially in light of the loss of three lives within the space of eight days in the Torridge area recently. It had been found that the cause of most of the road traffic accidents over the year could be attributed to locals in the area. The road safety initiative Operation Snap, whereby members of the public could upload their dash-cam footage to the police via their website, had proven to be very successful. There would be two speed detection officers in vans dedicated to the area and mostly located on the link road. The Community Speed Watch initiative saw communities working together and having an input which helped the police in local, rural areas. If communities were experiencing speeding issues advice and help could be given to set up a local Speed Watch group.

The final area that had a big impact on town centres was anti-social behaviour. The Home Office had launched an app called 'Street Aware' which allowed the public to anonymously log areas of concerns over personal safety in the town. Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) was an area of big concern for everyone and wasn't just for the partnership to resolve. An anti-social Behaviour steering group had been set up whose role was to identify and target individuals, who were street based, with the aim of helping them regain a role in society. The use of Public Spaces Protection Orders was a useful tool in tackling anti-social behaviour in public places and in Torridge was being widely extended. The use of Covid Marshalls patrolling the streets gave a sense of safety for visitors to the towns.

Toby was a senior response Officer for a group called High Flow working in collaboration with One Northern Devon. 13 individuals who were putting the most demand on services had a team around them helping to turn their lives around. A High Intensity Pilot was a collaboration between the Devon Partnership Trust, Police and other partners providing 10 individuals with mental health issues a team dedicated to their needs.

The partnership had strong links with the Exmoor Rural Alliance and the Rural Affairs team. The Office for the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC) were collaborating

with a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) at Ilfracombe Harbour, which would be the host location but would cover the coastal communities across the whole Devon area.

Via a virtual link, Janet Williams, Public Health and Housing Manager (TDC) then gave Members an update of the work carried out in the Torridge area of the partnership as follows:

- The Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Bideford town was reviewed and renewed in 2021
- Ahead of the introduction of the renewed order being implemented a consultation was carried out with the Police, residents and businesses in the town
- An awareness raising campaign was carried out advising individuals and businesses of the new provisions under the renewed PSPO
- A regular set up of joint patrols involving the police and council enforcement team reiterating the new provisions
- An anti-social behaviour steering group was set up to look at and understand issues and provide resources to tackle problems where necessary
- This steering group was open to Councillors as well as businesses to give their feedback and concerns on issues affecting them
- The feedback from the public and businesses in relation to the introduction of the new PSPO provisions had been very positive in Bideford

Via a virtual link, Natasha Rowland, Service Lead, Housing Equality, NDC gave Members an update on the work carried out in North Devon as follows:

- The Public Space Protection Orders in Barnstaple and Ilfracombe had been reviewed and renewed during 2021
- Barnstaple was currently experiencing high anti-social behaviour issues
- Alongside the ASB steering group an action plan was being drafted to address the problems currently being experienced. This would include a zero tolerance approach to some of the behaviours that were taking place
- The plan showed recognition that there were issues but also balanced with the desire to understand what was triggering the behaviours in certain individuals and how to address those issues

Via virtual link, Tim Birtwisle, Service Lead - Community Safety Partnership Officer/Harm Risk, NDC, provided Members with a Bitesize update on the Trauma Informed approach as follows:

- Over the last year the trauma informed approach had helped individuals turn their lives around
- In 2020 a Trauma Informed Conference was held and it had been hoped to run more events like that but with the Covid situation these meetings had to be stopped so the events had to move online
- A training organisation had been co-opted providing training online to more than 200 delegates from various backgrounds. These included statutory

partners of the CSP as well as individuals from agencies involved in health and social care

- The feedback from the training sessions had been very positive, with delegates saying they had been able to put into practice what they had learned on the course

Emma Butler-Jones, Devon and Cornwall Police gave Members an update on road safety as follows:

- The Forum that met to discuss road safety issues ceased at the beginning of lockdown due to the Covid pandemic
- The work dealing with road safety had continued with the input from local communities and liaising with Highways and local authorities
- The community speed watch project was being used successfully as an approach to dealing with speeding issues in rural towns and villages
- Anyone interested in the issue of road safety was invited to get in touch

Emma Butler-Jones went on to give Members an update on the Sexual violence and Domestic Abuse Forum as follows:

- The Forum continued to meet online during lock down and were able to introduce measures to help victims of abuse such as the Safe Spaces campaign and the Ask for Angela scheme
- Bitesize sessions on spotting abuse in the workplace had been run for businesses
- The focus of the Forum was early intervention and prevention and the awareness of violence against women and girls was being taken into schools
- As the biggest risk behind closed doors the Forum would still treat domestic abuse as a top priority

Toby concluded by saying that unless there were to be no crime things would never be perfect but that the partnership was working hard. Attendance at CSP meetings was intermittent by some partners and a concern. He reminded Members that the responsibility was not just the Police's but everyone needed to be involved. The area remains the safest place to live in terms of levels of crime. Safe Devon Partnership would be restructuring. The OPCC's office was changing the way funding would be given out, projects had to be specific and show where the money was going to be spent.

The following responses were given to questions asked:

- The Ask Angela scheme was nationally recognised and licensed premises in the area were all aware of what to do
- The partners whose attendance was intermittent at CSP meetings were representatives from health, the probation service and the fire service, not all partners were statutory some were volunteers. Covid had affected the ability for people to attend

- The issues with 101 and not being able to get through on the phone was not a CSP priority but historically the problem of retaining call handlers had left the service with gaps
- Police stats not showing incidents of criminal activity suggests that the reporting of those incidents was not being made through the correct channels and so not getting to the police. Anything reported was logged and there would be a record
- There were youth engagement officers who visited schools in Torridge and they had received really good funding to put outreach workers on the street educating the young people
- The increase in public offence numbers was seen as a positive as it meant the police were being far more pro-active
- The road safety sub group welcomed attendance from Councillors and would be a good way to get involved
- The Street Safe app was a Home Office app and anonymous it was not the same as reporting to the Police. The CSP promoted the Street Safe app on its social media platforms as well as Devon Live whose audience numbers were significant
- There were Bitesize sessions that dealt with Safety Online, these could be delivered at parish level to reach the elderly
- There was a dedicated rural affairs team dealing with poaching of livestock from agricultural land

Chair

The meeting ended at 11.33 am