

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Wednesday 15 March 2017

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage

Present: Members: S Mead (Chair), M Notley (Vice-Chair), J Brown,
E Connolly, E Harrington, J Mead, A Mitchell and
G Snell

In Attendance: Councillor Richard Henry Executive Portfolio Holder
Inspector Simon Tabert, Herts Police

Start/End Time: Start Time: 6:00 pm
End Time: 7.35 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Bainbridge and C Saunders.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. THE SOSAFE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 2016/17 AND EMERGING PRIORITIES FOR 2017/18

Sarah Pateman, the Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety Manager and Inspector Simon Tabert, Herts Constabulary gave a presentation on the SoSafe Community Safety Action Plan including the current key crime statistics and the emerging priorities for the 2017/18 Plan.

Members received an update on the progress of the agreed priorities and the various initiatives employed. The suggested priorities for 2017/18 discussed included anti-social behaviour, safeguarding, reassurance, violent crime, information/intelligence sharing and serious/organised crime (SOC) and drugs.

Members were pleased to note that in terms of the policing profile for Stevenage, the Safer Neighbourhood Team was operating at full strength for both PCSO's and PC's. It was noted that the Police would be reviewing resources across the whole of the force at some point.

In response to a question, the Chief Executive advised that the Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) received and compared data in relation to anti-social behaviour and criminal damage with other Hertfordshire districts along with other local authorities from the designated 'family group'. He informed the Committee that the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was focussing on understanding the drivers for this crime and was considering preventative measures.

In respect of domestic abuse, Members were advised that the issue was a Council priority. The reporting of all incidents of domestic abuse was encouraged. Officers informed the Committee that only one other CSP in the County had a lower increase of reported domestic abuse cases than Stevenage.

In relation to the figures for vehicle crime, Inspector Tabert agreed to clarify and advise Members of the most up to date figures in relation to theft of a motor vehicle, theft from a motor vehicle, motor vehicle crime and vehicle interference.

Members were pleased to note that of all Hertfordshire districts, Stevenage was at a low risk both for burglary dwellings and also for theft from a person. It was suggested that the SoSafe Logo could become more visible and used to both raise awareness and offer a sense of security. Advice could also be offered to vulnerable residents regarding the availability and use of crime deterrent products in the home such as camera doorbells and Call Guardian phone services.

In terms of thefts from shops, however, the risk level was high and had increased by 5% in 2016 when compared to the same period in 2015. Members were advised that this was partly to do with the high risk smaller neighbourhood shopping centres around the Town and also that the main town supermarkets were the target for thieves from outside of the Town who were stealing to order.

Following a discussion on anti-social behaviour, Councillor Richard Henry, Executive Portfolio Holder agreed to look into the possibility of introducing the use of body worn cameras for relevant Council staff. In response to a question, officers clarified the progress of Public Space Protection Orders and any fines that had been issued. The Committee was informed that regular patrols were taking place, signage was in place and that two fines had been issued.

In relation to the issue of drugs, Members were reassured that regular liaison with schools was happening on several levels including through the Crucial Crew Initiative with Year 7 pupils and also through Families First and children's safeguarding. Inspector Tabert advised that he was confident in the awareness of schools and the lesson planning that he had seen in schools throughout the Town.

Inspector Tabert then extended an invitation to any Member who was interested to join the Police on a drugs raid in the future. Members also expressed an interest in attending a future quarterly PSPO event.

Following a question from a Member of the Committee relating to dangerous driving and road traffic accidents, the Chief Executive advised that he would request the submission of data to the next Community Safety Partnership Meeting to enable the Partnership to identify location, volume and any other trends for these types of incidents

The Chief Executive reported that the CSP's bids for community safety funding had been unsuccessful this year and that alternative solutions would be investigated in order to ensure the continuation of the initiatives within the Plan. The ASB and Community Safety Manager advised Members that some external funding bids had been submitted. It was also noted that the team had recently secured a significant amount of funding to help address Domestic Abuse. Inspector Tabert gave assurances that the good work between the Police and the Council would continue with the resources available.

Members were pleased to note the strength of the Partnership and expressed a strong view that the Council's work with the SoSafe Partnership should continue, particularly in support of the issues identified and the drive to identify additional resources and funding streams to ensure continuation of the good work undertaken for the Town.

The Chair thanked the Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety Manager and Inspector Simon Tabert, Herts Constabulary for their presentation.

It was **RESOLVED** that (i) the performance of the various actions highlighted in the SoSafe Community Safety Action Plan 2016/17 is noted.

(ii) that the outcomes measured against the 2016/17 SoSafe Community Safety Action and inclusion of the priorities identified in this report for the forthcoming 2017/18 Action Plan be agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

5. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

None

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Not required

7. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR