

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20 September 2016



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| Title | Review of Community Safety | | |
| Purpose of the report | To note | | |
| Report Author | Keith McGroary | | |
| Cabinet Member | Councillor Tony Mitchell | Confidential | No |
| Corporate Priority | Delivering quality of life services | | |
| Cabinet Values | Community | | |
| Recommendations | To note the report of the Community Safety Manager on the review of community safety. | | |

1. Key issues

- 1.1 In 2012 Community Safety Partnerships throughout the country ceased to receive a grant from the government to support interventions and activities to help reduce the instances of crime and anti-social behaviour within our communities. This coincided with the election of the Police & Crime Commissioner who had that limited funding for all Surrey Boroughs and Districts passed to his budget. Funding was then made available to Community Safety Partnerships and other community groups upon application.
- 1.2 Spelthorne have been pro-active with regards to raising funding to help deliver Community Safety, and over the last 6 years as budgets dwindled we have approached local businesses in the Borough for financial contributions which has resulted in Spelthorne Community Safety Partnership receiving over £30k a year from A2 Dominion and BP, for which we have been very grateful. Surrey County Council have contributed just over £3,000 per year in the same period.
- 1.3 In 2015 the Community Safety Team (CST) was re-structured in order to provide greater flexibility and resilience, costs were also saved by reducing 2 full-time posts into part-time roles at 30 hours a week for each of the 2 officers. The job descriptions were re-written which provided for 2 officers who are equally responsible for all areas of public-facing delivery of services. The Manager of the Team is employed in this capacity as 50% of his role with the other 50% on Economic Development. His function is one of a strategic level chairing various Partnership groups, delivering key projects,

representing the Council across the County, helping develop the Community Safety Strategy and quality controlling the delivery of work.

- 1.4 In the last 6 months Surrey Police have re-structured their own staff, this has resulted in a reduction of dedicated Police / PCSO officers to respond to neighbourhood issues. The impact of this has seen a stark rise in residents contacting the community Safety Team, particularly around disputes with neighbours. A similar story can be told by the Joint Enforcement Team.
- 1.5 The impact of reduced police resources has been amplified by the decision to vacate the tenancy at Knowle Green which has resulted in a significant drop in communication and mutual exchange of information.
- 1.6 These changes have been brought about by a need by Surrey Police to identify savings and still deliver core policing to the communities of Surrey. This new model, called Policing in Your Neighbourhood (PIYN) is currently being reviewed and evaluated as to its effectiveness and fitness of purpose.
- 1.7 Feedback from Spelthorne to the police consultation around PIYN has highlighted a deterioration in the service police provide to the low-level non-urgent calls made by the public, and long delays in the answering of the 101 non-emergency number.

2. Community Safety Activities

- 2.1 Over the last 12 months, the Community Safety Team have organised and delivered with partner agencies the Junior Citizen Scheme to 1,100 children, almost every child aged 10 years old in the Borough. The Senior Citizen event was delivered for almost 100 elderly local people at the British Airways Learning Centre. The Community Safety Team has dealt with over 100 neighbourhood disputes and anti-social behaviour reported directly to the Community Safety Team via the public. It has been successful in raising funds of over £10k from the Police & Crime Commissioner to support events and deliver projects within the Borough. It has organised and ran 3 Partnership Action Days with our Partner agencies, organised and Chaired 8 Community Incident Action Group meetings that deal on a multi-agency basis with the key offenders who affect the community through their behaviour, and also the repeat victims. The Team has been a key player in helping to deal with the complaints raised by the Stanwell community with regards to the abuse of the roads by private hire vehicles serving Heathrow. Managing the CCTV has also been a time-consuming responsibility for the Team, this has also involved arranging for the conversion of the fibre-optic connections to the Runnymede monitored CCTV cameras to a wireless network.
- 2.2 The Community Safety Team meet on a regular basis with the Joint Enforcement Team which has proved to be extremely useful with regard to emerging issues.

3. Performance

- 3.1 Details of performance are included within this report as an appendix. In summary, there has been an increase of 3.6% in reported crime a rise from 1,972 offences between April and July 2015 to 2,043 offences between the same periods in 2016.
- 3.2 Violent crime has risen by 13% or by a total of 70 offences over the previous year. Police recording methods have changed and a rise in recorded violent crime has seen similar rises across the country, this equates to less than 1 ½

additional reports a week in our Borough. The main spike in August 2015 highlights the time period when recording practices for violent crime impacted on recorded crime figures.

- 3.3 Vehicle crime has seen an increase of 22% from 520 to 633 offences, with Spelthorne placed in the upper band average of our most similar local authority areas, however this still represents a low number of vehicles attacked in our Borough, equivalent to less than 2 a day; this is not suggesting complacency, and the Partnership needs to focus on interventions to reduce the increase in crime in both the above areas.
- 3.4 Burglary within our resident's homes has seen a reduction of 12%, this means that out of the 45,000 homes in Spelthorne, there have been 254 burglaries, which is less than 5 burglaries committed a week.
- 3.5 Incidents of anti-social behaviour has dropped by 451 reports between 1.4.16 – 30.6.16 compared to the same period last year with every single ward experiencing a reduction in ASB. In hard numbers, this means a reduction from 1,304 reports to 853, just under a -30% drop. The reason for this is not known, it could be attributable to the change in the policing model, positive Partnership activities, people losing patience waiting to get through to the 101 non-emergency number and hanging up the phone, or indeed a mixture of all of the above.

4. Financial considerations

- 4.1 At the start of the 2016 financial year, the budget for Community Safety Partnership stood at £96k. Spelthorne Council contribute £27k to that total, the cost of salaries for staff is £43,600. This consists of the cost of one Community Safety Officer Post and a contribution towards the half post of Community Safety Manager.
- 4.2 There is now a new Police and Crime Commissioner who was elected in May, although there has not been an official announcement, early indications suggest that funding for specific projects will still be available subject to application and linkage with his priorities.
- 4.3 Discussions will need to take place with A2D and BP to consider the renewal of the 3 year agreements with regards to funding contributions to the Partnership starting in April 2017.

5. Other Considerations

- 5.1 Surrey Police have indicated that they are keen to retain a small presence of around 4 officers within Knowle Green. If this is the case, it will greatly benefit communications and joint responses and interventions.

Background papers: Performance data

Appendices:

Appendix 1