

Warwickshire Police Authority – 21 May 2008

Report of the District Partnership Leads

Summary

This report provides an update for Members on issues affecting policing in the 5 Districts.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

1. North Warwickshire – Anne Forwood

North Warwickshire has seen a 25% reduction in the crime rate overall since 2003/4 and it is still going down. My only fear is that we will soon have gone as far as we can in some cases. In some crimes we have so little numbers that two extra ones can make the figures if done by percentages look as if we have had an enormous increase.

The joint agency PACT/Forum meetings are going well. They do not seem so antagonistic as they were when first started. People are now getting to know that the Police are having a surgery before the Forum and that they can see individual officers on a one to one basis without having to go public in the Forum. This is an important part of interacting with the public. It may still take a little time for the message to go round about the availability of the police but there is still a good turn out at the meetings which is the important thing.

Unlike other Areas we ask each Area PACT/Forum what they want as their policing priorities till the next meeting. This seems to work quite well as odd ones change each time. At our last meeting, there was a problem of speeding around a certain area so we were able to get a consensus from the attendees that this would be one of our priorities.

I have attended a number of meetings at North Warwickshire Borough Council that have addressed police issues. Overall there has been a very good attendance from other organisations. To get a safe community, everyone has to be involved and we all seem to be on the same wave length.

The Police are having PACT meetings at Hartshill School. These meetings have the pupils and the community together and the Police are hoping to build on the success.

We still have the fear of crime but the successes that have been achieved are gradually making an impact on the community.

2. Nuneaton and Bedworth – Bob Hicks

Since my last report, the scheduling of performance monitoring has continued, although April's meeting was cancelled on the day for operational reasons. So far, these meetings have been as forward-looking as backward-looking and have been, as a consequence, worthwhile.

A potentially challenging issue is unfolding in Nuneaton & Bedworth. The new Borough Council administration has pronounced very publicly its' intention to carry out the election promise of one CCTV camera in every ward of the Borough (17). The CDRP (which I chair) has always had a policy of allowing the local police command to determine where, for how long, and even how many mobile cameras (funded by the partnership) should be sited, in line with actual incidence of crime and disorder. Because the police command has set the criteria for placements, they have been understandably willing to manage the monitoring of these mobile installations. With a rapid expansion of cameras - whether fixed or mobile - the police role in establishing the most appropriate sitings could be sidelined in favour of politically popular spots.

Of course, the local authority is entitled to pursue an independant line if it so chooses, and to manage its' own cameras. However, the partnership approach which has been developed over many years could come under strain as police judgement gives way to political posturing.

I shall try to ensure that the pragmatic practices which have so far driven this resource allocation are not lost.

All partners will understand the limitations of the police in attempting to manage all and sundry installations.

3. Rugby – Katherine King

Rugby Policing and Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT)

As a major feature of the District Lead role I continue to keep in close contact with our Rugby District Commander, Chief Inspector Bob Musgrove, both to discuss Rugby policing and the CDRP, and also to further develop Rugby Police's role in the 6 Locality Panels.

I have been attending the Rugby Quarterly Review meetings, most recently in April, to discuss Rugby in relation to the force priorities. These meetings are extremely useful in gaining an overview of the operational performance of Rugby Police. I was particularly interested to note the good customer satisfaction feedback and also the focus on priority neighbourhoods.

Progress continues in the development of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams in Rugby and there have been significant improvements in the website; <http://www.safer-neighbourhoods.co.uk/your-neighbourhood/rugby-district> which is a useful tool in communicating with the public.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The LSP structure is now established with the board meeting on a monthly basis and theme groups meeting regularly. The LSP is currently working with the theme groups to refresh the Rugby Sustainable Communities Strategy. The purpose of this exercise is

to ensure that the Vision and Key Outcomes identified accurately reflect the needs of the Borough and are unique to Rugby. The SCS is being aligned to, and will be consulted on with the Borough Councils planning Core Strategy, giving a holistic view for the future of Rugby.

Localities

Since the last report, Locality Panels have met in all of the Rugby localities and minutes of all these meetings are available from the Rugby Area Office. In addition, the Police have organised a separate PACT (Police and Communities Together) meeting for the Rugby Town Centre area – this was held on 21 January 2008.

The following issues have been reoccurring themes across Rugby's localities; youth facilities / services, antisocial behaviour, fly-tipping and recycling, bus services, speeding and highways maintenance, mini motorbikes.

A timetable of meetings for 2008 has been circulated to all key partners including: Warwickshire County Council and Rugby Borough Council lead officers, Rugby Police, Extended Services Cluster Co-ordinators, Health workers and a number of community and voluntary groups (including Neighbourhood Watch and local resident groups).

The locality panels continue to benefit from excellent support from Rugby's Performance and Development Area Team of Warwickshire County Council

Rugby BID

I continue to represent the Authority as a Director of Rugby Business Improvement District (BID). The AGM is due to take place on Thursday 15th May. The BID has had an extremely positive impact on Rugby town centre, in terms of the environment and cleanliness, the welcoming presence of the BID Rangers, the CCTV, The marketing of the town and the partnership working with local agencies and traders.

A current campaign of the BID is the No Plastic Bags Campaign which will be running from 31st May in the town centre. The BID will be encouraging businesses and customers to use cotton bags or papers bags which will be supplied to all participating stores.

4. Stratford-on-Avon – Richard Hobbs

Stratford District Council and Warwickshire County Council have now agreed the detailed arrangements for the three joint area committees in the district and each of these committees will include two safer neighbourhood areas.

Speeding is still coming forward as an issue in the rural areas and confidence in the consultation process is increasing as action is seen to be taken.

The County Council has just completed the speed limit review of A&B roads and agreed some speed limit reductions. Hopefully the Force will agree the recommendations when they go out for consultation.

GOWM are now looking at the combination of the two South Warwickshire CDRPs favourably as performance is improving rapidly.

In the last quarter to March 2008, we have seen reductions in Violent Crime and Criminal Damage. Unfortunately we have seen rises in ASB and criminal damage with sanctions down. Some of this has been as a result of the extraction of resources due to Operation Westbere.

5. Warwick – Chris Davis

Crime performance figures in Warwick District to end of year 2007-8 have shown marked improvements in general and in some cases outstanding results. This includes serious violent crime down 9.5%, domestic burglary down 24.7%, a reduction in vehicle crime of 33.5% and also criminal damage down 10.1%. Good analysis and intelligence are key driving factors.

Concentration of foot patrols in Leamington town centre into and during the night-time economy has helped to head off problems but outbreaks of criminal damage to vehicles on the routes home remain challenging. The timely renewal of doorstep licences is required from the Securities Industry Authority. Limited road closures on Friday/Saturday nights in the vicinity of certain nightclubs would help to maintain order but so far WCC is unwilling to consider implementing this. The new five shift overlapping system seems to be working well though there are some capacity issues.

Safer Neighbourhood Panels (or PACTs) are being transformed into Locality Forums to widen engagement with the public. Leamington North Locality Forum had a very successful launch on 28 April with some 25 different issues being raised by concerned residents. A detailed half-page report describing and listing every item appeared in the next edition of the Leamington Courier. Splitting the more than 30 attendees into six small discussion groups of about six people with a police officer and ward councillor seemed to be the key to success.

However Warwick SNP feel they have not been properly consulted about the change-over and Leamington Town Centre SNP will likely remain unchanged as it deals mostly with business based crime.

Lastly I have taken advantage of the "Ride Along Scheme" to get a valuable snapshot of local tasking and activity of SNOs and PCSOs working in my own North Leamington Locality.