

Key Decision Required	No	In the Forward Plan	No
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CABINET

8 NOVEMBER 2019

REFERENCE REPORT FROM COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF 7 OCTOBER 2019

A.2 SCRUTINY OF ELEMENTS OF COMMUNITY SAFETY

(Report prepared by Keith Simmons and Richard Barrett)

BACKGROUND

Further to the concerns raised at the meeting of the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 July 2019 (Minute 55 refers), the Committee had sought to examine Community Safety issues at its meeting held on 7 October 2019. The Committee's work programme identified several elements of Community Safety that were to be scrutinised at this meeting as follows:

(a) An outline of the challenges and priorities over the coming period as identified by the new Divisional Police Commander. An assessment of the issue of County Lines/Cuckooing etc and the proliferation of drugs and the response to it.

(b) Anti-Social Behaviour – looking at data on this, hot spots in the District and changes over time. The outcome of the partnership funding of £10,000 by this Council/Essex Police for additional police patrols in July/August (did it work, how did it compare with 2018, what would be the impact if not repeated in 2020 etc), delivery of the new Anti-Social Patrol Officer (looking at the justification for the post and how it had operated, had it delivered against the rationale for being established), and the arrangements for and work involved in Community and Street Action Days – are their measures of their success?

With the agreement of the Committee, the relevant Portfolio Holder, Councillor McWilliams (Portfolio Holder for Partnerships) attended the meeting and expressed her appreciation for the Committee's interest in this matter and the collaborative work being undertaken.

The Committee had before it a Report of the Head of People, Performance and Projects – Speaker(s) With a Focus on Community Safety which requested that the Committee determined whether it had any comments or recommendations it wished to put forward to the relevant Portfolio Holder or Cabinet.

In addressing the elements identified for scrutiny at this meeting, Tendring Community Policing Team Inspector Darren Deex was present at the meeting. He provided the Committee with a presentation and outlined the four key challenges and priorities for the Force locally were:

- Reducing Serious Violence / Knife Crime,
- Tackling County Lines & Drug Supply,
- Protecting Vulnerable People,
- Community Engagement,

The presentation then addressed all of the above separately. In respect of community engagement it was noted that the Police would produce a regular briefing document that would be sent to all Councillors advising them of key facts and progress against the above key challenges/priorities. Community engagement by the Police in Jaywick Sands was specifically touched upon at the meeting.

Details of Operation Spider were provided to the Committee. This Operation was put in place with matched funding from this Council and Essex Police to provide £20k towards additional policing of Clacton Town Centre between 1st July and 3rd September 2019. Against the objective of Operation Spider, the Committee was advised that in 2018 there had been a decline in anti-social behaviour in Clacton Town Centre; this had risen in 2019 back to similar levels as there were in 2017. However, this was mainly originating with one individual. If that additional presence had not been provided, the response to that spike in criminal behaviour would have further impacted on visible policing across the District as officers sought to respond to it. In this case, the response of the Police would also not have been as effective as it was this year due to the Council's funding. The response of the Police to the spike in criminal behaviour appeared to have been well received by businesses in the Clacton Town Centre area.

The perception and fear of crime in Clacton Town Centre at night and the impact on the late evening and night time economy in that Town Centre remained an issue to be addressed.

The Council's Safer Communities Manager was in attendance and presented to the Committee information on; Community Safety Priorities, the Safer Communities Team, The Anti-Social Behaviour Patrol Officer, and Street Action Days.

The priorities of the Community Safety Team of the Council were:

- Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour and Acquisitive Crime
- To reduce harm to and safeguard vulnerable victims (including Children)
- Reducing Violence and Knife Crime

In respect of the new Ant-Social Behaviour Patrol Officer in Clacton Town Centre, the Committee was advised that the post holder had been in post for 30 days. The following were indicators of the work in that 30 day period:

- The work pattern was 3 day time shifts, 3 late shifts followed by 3 rest days – giving a 9 day shift pattern)
- 68.5 hrs - Foot Patrol Hours
- 30.5 hrs – Admin / Briefings / Intelligence Gathering
- 6 Verbal Warnings for ASB (cycling, flytipping, kicking street furniture, fire in rubbish bin on promenade – youths caught and taken home and advice given to parents)
- 21 PSPO Warnings (begging / street drinking / loitering)
- 19 knife sweeps in town centre and periphery
- 122 active engagements with members of public and businesses

The presentation also referenced the seven Street Action Days co-ordinated by the Community Safety Team this calendar year; in Jaywick Sands, Walton-on-the-Naze, Harwich and Clacton Town Centre (Pier Ward). The numbers of streets canvassed, agencies involved, forms completed and referrals made were reported to the Committee.

The positive early evidence from the deployment of the newly established Anti-Social Behaviour Patrol Officer post at the Council was welcomed and the Committee recorded that the Cabinet decision to approve the funds for this to be a permanent position appeared to be justified by this early evidence.

The Committee also noted the evidence that had been received from Operation Spider.

The Committee decided to amend its work programme to provide for scrutiny of the work of the new/revived Multi-Agency Coordination Panel (MACP); that has the remit of examining enforcement powers and protocols between various agencies locally to ensure that the most effective response possible is put in place to a range of criminal and anti-social behaviour. The scrutiny will be programmed for the Committee's meeting on 6 April 2020 when the Committee would envisage receiving a written report setting out the work of the MACP over the 6 months and the intentions for the following year. Indicators for success of the MCAP should be included with a commentary on progress towards those.

The Committee further welcomed the announcement by the Police of monthly written briefings that will be circulated to Councillors (amongst others) as a move in community engagement by the Police.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Having considered and discussed the presentation and report it was:-

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET that it looks favourably on any application received for achieving the same level of high visibility policing over the summer in 2020 in Clacton Town Centre as has been provided in 2018 and 2019. This level of high visibility Policing had been referenced as 'Operation Spider'.

Cabinet is now asked to consider the recommendation of the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Comments

The Portfolio Holder for Partnerships thanks the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its recommendations and comment as follows:-

"The scrutiny of the Cabinet's decisions around jointly funding the increased Police presence in Clacton Town Centre in the summer, given the operation name Spider, and to provide funding for a continuing post of Anti-Social Behaviour Patrol Officer is welcomed. From the evidence presented to the Committee, both decisions seem to have been fully justified. Going forward, we are as committed as ever to work with our partners to address anti-social behaviour and provide a safe environment for the communities we serve.

In terms of specific request around a repeat of operation spider in the summer of 2020, if an application for funding is received, it will definitely be reviewed in light of its success over recent years. However, the funding of such initiatives need to be considered in a more joined up way and measured against other items that help us meet the wide range of priorities set out within the emerging corporate plan. Therefore, I would like to see this item included in the action plan that will be developed early in 2020 to deliver against those priorities once the Corporate Plan is in place. This would also be consistent with the point set out in the financial performance report on today's agenda that seeks to bring together a range of items we would like to invest in across the whole Council that can then be considered together."

Recommendation to Cabinet

That Cabinet notes the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations and endorses the responses of the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships thereto.