
COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2008-2011

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Bill Dixon, Deputy Leader

Responsible Director – Lorraine O’Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Council approval of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership’s Community Safety Plan 2008-2011 as appended at **Appendix 1**.

Background

2. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002) formalised the way in which the Council must work in partnership with other agencies to tackle crime and disorder within the Borough. The Act required the Council, Police, Police Authority, Primary Care Trust and Fire and Rescue Service to work in partnership to tackle crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol. These agencies are known as the “Responsible Authorities”.
3. In line with the 1998 Act, the Responsible Authorities were required to form a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) and every three years carry out an audit and produce a strategy to reduce crime and disorder.
4. The Police and Justice Act 2006 introduced significant changes to the way in which the CDRP must operate. One of these changes included the requirement that the CDRP produce an annual Strategic Assessment of crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and the harm caused by drugs and alcohol within the Borough. This assessment will be used to inform the development of a new three year Community Safety Plan, which must be refreshed annually. This is Darlington’s first Community Safety Plan, which has been developed in line with the new legislation and guidance from the Home Office.
5. The CDRP is a themed group of the Darlington Partnership and is part of the wider partnership family charged with delivering the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Developing the Community Safety Plan

6. In October 2007 the CDRP Responsible Authorities approved the project plan for the development of the Community Safety Plan. The project plan outlined the key tasks that were required to complete the Strategic Assessment and Community Safety Plan.
7. The development of the Strategic Assessment involved detailed analysis of crime, disorder and drugs and alcohol issues impacting upon the Borough. This information was sourced from a wide range of partner agencies.

8. In order to ensure a joined approach to strategic planning and priority setting the community's views were collected and analysed as part of a Borough-wide consultation exercise for the Sustainable Community Strategy.
9. In addition, the CDRP Executive Board commissioned further work through detailed community safety surveys with residents and diverse groups within the Borough. These included the BME and LGBT community. In addition, specific work was carried out with young people, those with learning difficulties and the disabled.
10. The Strategic Assessment was considered and agreed by the CDRP Executive Board in October 2008. The priorities identified within the assessment are:
 - (a) Anti-Social Behaviour (including environmental crime and criminal damage)
 - (b) Reducing Offending
 - (c) Violent Crime and Disorder in the Night Time Economy
 - (d) Domestic Abuse
 - (e) Public Reassurance
11. Reducing the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol cuts across all priorities.
12. The priorities are aligned with those in the Sustainable Community Strategy and support Policing and Local Criminal Justice Board priorities.
13. The Home Office have been prescriptive in terms of what they expect Community Safety Plans to include. Guidance issued has been fully considered when developing the plan. One of the requirements within the guidance is for the Plan to include detailed financial information. However, the Home Office have not yet confirmed what funding will be available to the CDRP in 2008/09 therefore this element of the Plan will be added as an appendix later.

Delivery Plans

14. The top actions for the CDRP have been included within the Community Safety Plan. For each of the priority themes the CDRP will develop detailed Delivery Plans in March/April 2008. Progress against these plans will be reported to the CDRP Executive Board and Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee.

Targets

15. The target setting process is currently being discussed as part of the development of the Borough's second Local Area Agreement. Once these have been finalised they will be included in the plan prior to publication.

Outcome of Consultation

16. To date consultation has taken place regarding the priorities within the Plan, as part of the Borough-wide consultation on the Sustainable Community Strategy. Anti-Social Behaviour being identified as a top priority. In addition, the plan has been considered by the CDRP Executive Board and the CDRP Full Board. The consultation feedback on both the priorities and Plan has been very positive.

17. The priorities within the Plan were considered and agreed by cabinet on 18th March 2008.

Legal Implications

18. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

19. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

20. This plan sets out how the CDRP will make Darlington safer. It sets the community safety priorities for the Borough and identifies some of the key activities that partners will deliver over the next three years.

Council Policy Framework

21. The issues contained within this report require approval by Council.

22. The Community Safety Plan replaces the Crime and Disorder reduction Strategy in the context of the Councils Policy Framework.

Conclusion

23. The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership has prepared a Community Safety Plan for the period 2008-2011. Cabinet has recommended to Council the attached Community Safety Plan for adoption.

Recommendation

24. Council are requested to: -

- (a) Approve the Community Safety Plan.
- (b) Note that the targets to be set within the plan will be developed as part of Darlington's LAA.

Reasons

25. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:

- (a) Community Safety is a local priority and a key theme within the Sustainable Community Strategy.

- (b) The strategy sets out the CDRP priorities for making Darlington even safer and fulfils our statutory responsibility as a responsible authority.

Lorraine O'Donnell
Assistant Chief Executive

Background Papers

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Police and Justice Act 2006

Home Office Guidance – Delivery Safer Communities: A Guide to Effective Partnership Working 2007

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