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**OVERVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY  
PORTFOLIO**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. The following were the main areas of work under The Portfolio Holder for Community and Public Protection.

**Darlington Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership**

2. For the rolling 12 months up to 31 October 2008 crime reduced by 11% compared to the same period in 2007. There were 10,395 recorded crimes in Darlington between November 2006 and October 2007. For the same months in 2007/08 this fell to 9209 a reduction of 1186 crimes (11%).
3. Between August and October 2008 there were 2,153 crimes recorded by the Police in Darlington, which is a 11% reduction on the previous quarter (May to July 2008 - 2407 crimes).
4. The DAAT has been successful in a bid to become an Early Implementation site around NI39 (reducing alcohol related admissions to hospital), drawing an additional £150k into Darlington. This will fund a pilot project to put a paramedic on the streets at key times with the police and other agencies, as well as a Matron Management post to co-ordinate and implement an alcohol action plan in hospital settings and large scale training of GPs and other generic staff in adult services to screen, assess and deliver Alcohol Brief Interventions at Tiers 1 and 2.
5. Provision is planned for 2009-10 (subject to confirmation of additional PCT AOP funding) for additional services for the roll out of Alcohol Treatment Requirements for adult offenders with alcohol issues and a rolling alcohol programme for non-offenders alongside.

**Community Safety Plan and Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment**

6. The CDRP has recently published its Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment (JSIA) which it is required to produce on an annual basis to inform the Borough's three year Community Safety Plan.
7. The priorities identified within the current JSIA remain unchanged from the previous year, these being:
  - (a) Anti Social Behaviour
  - (b) Reducing Offending
  - (c) Violent Crime and Disorder in the Night Time Economy
  - (d) Domestic Abuse

(e) Public Reassurance

8. Reducing the harm caused by Drugs and Alcohol forms a cross cutting theme across all priorities. For each of the priority themes specific delivery plans have been developed, each plan being progressed through an identified plan owner. These plans will be refreshed in the coming months to ensure current risks are addressed.

### Crime and Disorder Performance Against Targets

9. The CDRP targets are:

Description	Ref	
Serious Acquisitive Crime	NI 16	
Perceptions of ASB	NI 17	
Assault with Injury	NI 20	
Repeat Incidents of Domestic Abuse	NI 32	
Alcohol Related Hospital Admission Rates	NI 39	Awaiting Data
Drug Users in Effective Treatment	NI 40	Awaiting Data

10. There are a number of data collection issues that are currently being progressed locally and nationally. In addition, some indicators will not be in place until 2009/10.

### Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC)

11. Serious Acquisitive Crime includes Burglary Dwelling, Robbery, Theft of Motor Vehicle and Theft from Motor Vehicle. The CDRP target is to reduce SAC by 8.2% by 2010/11.
12. The table below shows overall performance based on the **last rolling 12 months**:

2008 Baseline	2008/09 Target	12 Months to 31/10/08	% Change
1933	1888	1671	- 13%

13. Performance in regards to Serious Acquisitive Crime is positive although House Burglary remains a key concern for the CDRP. Between April –September 2008 performance in regards to burglary was 36% above target, with 284 crimes against a target of 209. However, in October 2008 performance improved with 21 burglaries being recorded against an upper threshold of 42.

### Perceptions of ASB – NI17

14. This is currently measured through the General Survey and will form part of the new Place Survey results from 2009. The indicator tracks people’s perceived level of ASB in the area in which they live.
15. Between April and October 2008 there were 6569 incidents recorded by police compared to 6404 in the same period last year, an increase of 3%.

16. The number of alcohol related ASB incidents has decreased slightly with 1634 incidents being recorded between April and October 2008 compared to 1654 in the same period last year, although this data should be treated with caution.

#### **Assault with Injury (AWI) – NI 20**

17. This includes Actual Bodily Harm and Other Injury and racially/religiously aggravated actual bodily harm. The CDRP have set a target to reduce AWI by 10% by 2010/11.
18. For the period April – October 2008 there were 346 assaults that fall within this indicator against a target of 436, a reduction of 21% against the target.

#### **Repeat Incidents of Domestic Abuse – NI 32**

19. This measure comes into place in 2009/10 and relates to the repeat victimisation rate of those individuals supported through the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). The MARAC went live in December 2008 supporting those victims at most risk of Domestic Abuse. Performance data and outcomes will be provided in future reports.
20. Between April and October 2008 there were 952 domestic abuse incidents recorded by Police compared to 797 in the same period for the previous year. This should be viewed as a positive result, with more people coming forward to report incidents. The percentage of repeat incidents as a proportion of total domestic abuse incidents recorded fell from 47.5% for the period April-October 2007 to 43.8% for the same period in 2008, a reduction of 3.7%.

#### **Youth Crime Action Plan**

21. In July 2008 the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) published its Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP) outlining how the Government intend to support local partners and communities in tackling youth crime. The plan sets out a range of measures through a triple track approach of tough enforcement, non negotiable support and prevention.
22. At a local level the Government has identified 7 key strands which need to be considered by CDRPs and Children's Trusts. These are:
  - (a) Using child protection legislation to remove young people from the streets at night (Op Stay Safe);
  - (b) Using street- based teams of workers to tackle groups of young people involved in crime and disorder;
  - (c) Increasing after-school police patrols where needed;
  - (d) Placing Youth Offending workers in custody suites;
  - (e) Expanding YOS reparation schemes during young people's leisure time;
  - (f) Developing Family Intervention Projects; and
  - (g) Implementing the "think family" reforms.
23. To support the delivery of these strands the DCSF has made available £90K this year and up to £350K next year and the year after. The use of these funds has to be agreed locally between the Children's Trust and CDRP.

## **Year 1 Funding (2008/09)**

24. Following discussion with Partners, Lead Members and negotiation with the DCSF the following projects have been agreed for 2008/09:

### **Safer Streets Initiative**

25. The Safer Streets initiative draws together a number of strands from the Youth Crime Action Plan including; Street Based Teams; Op Stay Safe; and addressing anti-social behaviour at school closing time.
26. A highly visible mobile unit will be purchased to provide a base for the deployment of resources at the heart of local communities experiencing problems. A range of partners will be invited work from the unit on an intelligence/needs led basis.
27. The deployment of the unit will be determined through the CDRP Problem Solving Group. It is intended that staff will work out of the unit most days of the week and especially at peak times when anti-social behaviour occurs.
28. The unit will provide a highly visible presence in communities which staff will work out of and from which appropriate interventions can be determined and deployed. When required the unit will provide a place of safety for those young people removed from the streets. In areas where there are problems with children leaving school work will be undertaken with Head Teachers to see if locating the unit nearby would be of benefit, linking to the work currently being done to roll out “Safer Schools” across the Borough.
29. In order to ensure the right people are deployed at the right time within local communities a “Street Safe Officer” will be employed as part of the Council’s ASB Team. This officer will deliver the project within communities, ensuring the right people are in the right place at the right time. For example, on occasions the unit may be entirely manned by Police in order to provide immediate responses in the most problematic areas, whereas on other occasions a multi-agency approach will be required. The officer will carry a broad range of duties whilst on site in communities, acting as Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for both agencies and residents, ensuring effective sign posting takes place and offering a range of advice and support to communities.
30. It is intended that this role will engage directly with young people involved in ASB in terms of proving information, guidance and signposting to other agencies.
31. The DCSF have agreed to part fund (£32K) the capital costs to purchase the unit, the remaining capital requirement of £42K will be met through Safer Stronger Communities Funding. The ongoing revenue costs are estimated to be in the region of £5K per annum and will be met via savings within the ASB Team and Uniformed Wardens budget.
32. The cost of the Street Safe Officer will be £9500 this year and £35K per year thereafter, the DCSF has agreed these costs up to March 2011.

## **Social Worker Post – ASB Service and Youth Offending**

33. Linked to the above initiative a dedicated Social Worker will be appointed to work out of the mobile unit to enable young people at risk on the streets during the evening to be removed to a place of safety. The Social Worker will provide immediate intervention/support whilst based in communities and ensure the appropriate follow action is taken to support individual young people and families.
34. This post will be based within the Youth Offending Service, the DCSF have agreed funding up to March 2011. The cost of the post will be £11,250 for this year and £45K per year thereafter.

## **Youth Offending Officer in Custody**

35. A Youth Offending Officer will be appointed and seconded to work as part of the multi-agency Offender Management Unit. The post holder will play a key role in working with young people coming into custody and will also provide intervention and support to young people identified as prolific offenders.
36. The cost of this post will be £12,250 for this year and £35k per year thereafter, likewise, the DCSF have agreed funding until March 2008.

## **Friday and Saturday Night Activities**

37. £25K has been provided this year to provide dedicated resources to support the delivery of initiatives on a Friday and Saturday evening.
38. The proposals for this funding are:
  - (a) *“The Weekend Alternative” – Six Key Strands:*
    - (i) Build on existing activity – to extend or move successful projects to Friday/Saturday nights, e.g. Chill Out Café, boxing/martial arts groups, arts projects
    - (ii) One-off ‘big hits’ – repeat successful high profile events at regular intervals in locations throughout the Borough, e.g. Adrenaline Overload, Skate Jams, young people-organised Raves, football competitions
    - (iii) Targeted street-based – dialogue with young people and possibly activity delivered in ‘unorthodox’ places
    - (iv) Extend network of safe places to socialise, e.g. Arts Centre, Dolphin Centre café
    - (v) Promotional campaign to raise awareness with young people, making key use of the Click and Review web sites
    - (vi) Purchase of key pieces of equipment/resource which can sustain activity in the medium to long term
39. The DCSF have agreed £25K for this year to deliver this programme.
40. Projects agreed by the DCSF have been advised to proceed to implementation and delivery stage, with a financial commitment to March 2011 for those projects with posts attached.

41. Taking account of the agreed commitments from year one there is £235K available per year to deliver against each of the remaining key strands identified within the Youth Crime Action Plan. In accordance with the guidance, at least £175K of this needs to be spent on the “think families” reforms each year. Proposals will be developed for this funding during the coming months.

### **Youth Offending**

42. The number of first time entrants (FTE) to the youth justice system is on target i.e. reduce by 5% by 2009 the number of (FTE) into the criminal justice system, compared to the baseline figure of 280 in 2005/2006. In the period 1 April to 30 September 2008 a total of 103 young people were referred to the YOS for the first time. This is also a stretch PSA target for the local authority and the YOS to reduce by 10% the number of FTE by 2009 against the 2004 - 2005 baseline of 311. Performance against this target is consistently strong and continues to improve further.
43. The introduction in April 2008 of the new Pre Reprimand Disposal (PRD) in collaboration with the Police service offers the YOS the opportunity to work with any young person who is on the verge of entering the criminal justice system for the first time. At this point the Police bail the young person for 28 days and refer them to the YOS. A risk assessment is carried out which identifies any risk or vulnerability issues, and the most appropriate interventions that can be undertaken or support that can be provided at this point to prevent any escalation into an offending career. The offence is not then discharged. If a young person does not accept a PRD or fails to comply, they are charged and dealt with through the normal process and the offence is then recorded on their criminal record. From 1 April to 30 September 2008, 26 young people received a PRD, none have reoffended to date.

### **Mortgage Rescue Scheme**

44. The Council’s Housing Options Team is participating in the Government’s £200m Mortgage Rescue Scheme to help people in financial difficulty. The scheme comes into effect on the 1 January 2009 but we have opted to pilot the scheme from 1 December 2008. Anyone approaching the Council is in the first instance signposted to financial advice, usually the Citizen’s Advice Bureau, who will work with the homeowner to see if arrangements can be put in place with their lender.
45. The Lenders have been directed to offer practical assistance such as mortgage holidays converting to interest only mortgages and revising payment plans. If none of these are successful the homeowner returns to Housing Options Team and a Mortgage Rescue eligibility assessment is made.
46. Applicants need to be in priority need on the grounds of homelessness which means they either need to have dependent children, be over 60 years of age, or have a medical need that renders them vulnerable. They cannot have earned income of more than £60k, must not be in negative equity and the property must not be valued above £115k. Organisations have lobbied for the property value to be increased and it is hoped this will be revised before the scheme is fully operational. If applicants are accepted onto the scheme there is the option of Shared Equity where the mortgage is no more than 75% of the value of the property and a new Buy Back to Rent Scheme which allows for a mortgage up to 97% of the value and they rent back at around 80% of normal value. The Registered Social Landlord partner for

the North East region is NOMAD.

### **National Homeless Advice Services**

47. The National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS) a partnership between Citizens Advice and Shelter have developed a model for joint working between local authorities and independent advice agencies on the prevention of homelessness.
48. Darlington Borough Council are the first to sign up to this model of joint working with the Citizens Advice Bureau and local housing charity First Stop Darlington, setting out ways in which they will work together to resolve people's housing issues. Under the terms of the agreement the agencies will provide early advice, assistance and support to those at risk of homelessness, pre-crisis intervention for those at imminent risk of becoming homeless, as well as advice and support for those who are homeless. The agreement also covers how the Council and its partners will work together to prevent recurring homelessness by helping people secure sustainable accommodation.

### **Ongoing Capital Investment**

49. Major improvement works recently completed in respect of the Council's housing stock include:

- (a) Heating Replacement Programme

A number of properties have benefited from heating replacement works as part of the annual capital programme. To date 20 Properties at Harrowgate Hill, 100 properties at Skerne Park, 6 miscellaneous properties and 70 back boilers have been replaced. In addition, a pilot scheme has been completed at 4 bungalows at Piercebridge installing air source heat pumps to four properties off the gas network. Further evaluation of these 4 properties will be undertaken to determine the benefits of installing and rolling out any future energy efficiency heating works.

- (b) Internal Planned Maintenance

Internal planned maintenance works including new bathrooms, kitchens, rewire and loft insulation works (where applicable) have been completed to 241 properties in Park Place, Bank Top, Piercebridge and Red Hall. Of the 241 properties completed, 113 (47%) of these properties were completed by our Framework Partners appointed through a formal tendering and procurement process. Where appropriate and applicable to the specific tenant needs, flat floor showers have been installed as part of bathroom improvement works.

- (c) Footpath improvements

Footpath improvements and dropped kerbs to Killinghall Street have been completed providing incurtilage front garden parking spaces to reduce highway congestion and improve road safety. In addition, improvements to the external landscaping to Rise Carr (south of Westmoreland Street) have been completed.

(d) Environmental improvement works

Environmental works including verge hardening and external boundary treatments have been completed at Estoril Road South, Holgate Moor Green, Westminster Road, Kildale Moor Place, Marston Moor Road, and, Lanethorpe Road.

(e) Windsor Court

Officers met with tenants at Windsor Court on 3 December and explained that Windsor Court had been identified for a major refurbishment that would see the flats remodelled so that the new layout was much more disability friendly, new kitchens and bathrooms would be installed, the building would benefit from rewiring, new heating and lifts would be installed to make all flats accessible. The entrance is to be remodelled to provide improved facilities, the laundry and guest room will be relocated. This was the first of a number of meetings and tenants have been asked to comment on the proposals and feedback their views.

### **Affordable Homes**

50. A scheme of nine two bedroomed apartments by Endeavour Housing Association has started on site off Haughton Road and is due to completion in July 2009. The same organisation has recently purchased without grant five, 3 and 4 bedroomed houses at The Pastures (formerly Snipe House Farm) and these were let immediately to applicants on the Council's waiting list. They are also bidding for a grant from the Homes and Communities Agency (formerly the Housing Corporation) for a further 15 affordable homes on the same site.

### **Anti Social Behaviour**

51. The 'Summer Nights' campaign has now concluded and multi-agency attention is now focused on the Borough-wide 'Nightsafe' operation. Tackling violence in the night time economy, alcohol related hospital admissions, underage alcohol, sale and consumption and general youth and disorder, Nightsafe is a multi-agency initiative managed via the CDRP Problem Solving Group (PSG) between Police, Fire Services, Youth Services, Anti Social Behaviour Team and the DAAT and will run throughout as an ongoing campaign. This initiative includes a multi-agency media campaign incorporating the use of bus backs advertising; local press coverage and a radio advertising campaign.
52. A 15 year old girl from the North Road area of Darlington has been served with a two-year ASBO due to her persistent anti social and intimidating behaviour in groups of youths whilst under the influence of alcohol. This girl had caused misery to residents living in the North Road area, resulting in a huge amount of calls to Police teams and Anti Social Behaviour Uniformed Wardens regarding her conduct.
53. The two-year ASBO was served in November 2008 and prevents her from consuming intoxicating liquor in any public street or open space, be under the influence of intoxicating liquor in any public street or open space, throwing any missile in a public place, behave in a rowdy or intimidating manner in a public place or to incite or encourage others to commit any act prohibited by this Order.



54. The girl faces a £5000 fine; up to five years in prison or both if she breaches the Order.
55. Other gang members are also being targeted with ASBOs with Court dates pending in December 2008 and January 2009.

### **Public Reassurance**

56. Weekly bulletins promoting the activity and results of the Summer Nights and Night Safe plans have been provided by DBC Communications unit to the media, gaining regular half and full page slots in the Northern Echo, Darlington Advertiser and Herald and Post, as well as the Town Crier.

### **Street Scene**

57. Members will recall that significant changes were introduced into the refuse and recycling collection rounds in October 2008.
58. A review is currently being undertaken in relation to the Clinical Waste Service offered by the Council as this service has been identified as a possible source of efficiency gains. Members will be updated as to the result of the review in the next Portfolio report.
59. Street Scene is also reviewing its current arrangements for weed spraying of all adopted highways. There is the potential for the Council to be involved in a joint contract operated for the Tees Valley Authorities.

**Councillor Bill Dixon**  
**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for**  
**Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety**