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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 my Community and Public Protection portfolio.

**Darlington Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership**

2. For the rolling 12 months up to 31 January 2009 total crime reduced by 6% compared to the same period in 2008. There were 9782 recorded crimes in Darlington between February 2007 and January 2008. For the same period in 2008/09 this fell to 9179, a reduction of 603 crimes (6%).
3. Between November 2008 and January 2009 there were 2240 crimes recorded by the Police in Darlington, which is a 4% increase on the previous three months (August-October 2008 – 2153 crimes).

**Community Safety Plan**

4. The refreshed Community Safety Plan was agreed at a meeting of the CDRP executive Board on 25 February 2009. The priorities included in the plan are:
  - (a) Anti Social Behaviour
  - (b) Reducing Offending
  - (c) Violent Crime and Disorder in the Night Time Economy
  - (d) Domestic Abuse
  - (e) Public Reassurance
5. Reducing the harm caused by Drugs and Alcohol forms a cross cutting theme across all priorities.
6. The Delivery Plans for each of the priority areas have been refreshed to meet local need, these have also agreed by the CDRP Executive Board.
7. The CDRP has considered the potential effect of the economic downturn of crime and disorder. In line with current practice partners will continue to develop their approach to crime prevention to reduce opportunities for crime to occur. In addition, work has been carried out through the Offender Management Unit (OMU) to ensure swift interventions are put in place to deal with those who offend, this includes the appointment of a dedicated Youth Offending Service Officer to work as part of the OMU.

## Crime and Disorder Performance Against Targets

8. The CDRP targets are:

Description	Ref	
Serious Acquisitive Crime	NI 16	Target of 1888 to March 2009
Perceptions of ASB	NI 17	New target of 14% to 2010
Assault with Injury	NI 20	Target to be renegotiated this year
Repeat Incidents of Domestic Abuse	NI 32	Target under negotiation (28%)
Alcohol Related Hospital Admission Rates	NI 39	Awaiting information from GONE
Drug Users in Effective Treatment	NI 40	2008 baseline of 416

9. Data collection remains an issue and is currently being progressed locally and nationally.

### Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC)

10. Serious Acquisitive Crime includes Burglary Dwelling, Robbery, Theft of Motor Vehicle and Theft from Motor Vehicle. The CDRP current target is to reduce SAC by 8.2% by 2010/11, although as part of the LAA refresh this target will be renegotiated.

11. The table below shows overall performance based on the **last rolling 12 months**:

2008 Baseline	2008/09 Target	12 Months to 31/01/2009	% Change
1933	1888	1729	-9%

12. Performance in regards to Serious Acquisitive Crime is positive although House Burglary and Vehicle Crime are key concerns for the CDRP. Between April and December 2008, performance in regards to Burglary was 23% above target, with 396 crimes against a target of 322. In January 2009, performance remained an issue, with 50 burglaries being recorded against a target of 39. Theft from Motor Vehicles is an emerging issue for the CDRP: although performance over the year to date is within target, figures for December were 17% above target (49 offences against a target of 42), and in January were 107% above target (122 offences against a target of 59). The CDRP delivery groups will continue to target these areas of concern.

### Perceptions of ASB – NI17

13. The Place Survey 2009 identified that 17.1% of residents perceive there to be a high level of anti-social behaviour in the local area. In the General Survey in 2008 this was 23%. Following publication of the survey results, the CDRP are working to the new baseline figure of 17%, with a target of 14% to 2010.
14. Between April and December 2008 there were 8353 incidents recorded by police compared to 8119 in the same period last year, an increase of 3%.
15. The number of alcohol related ASB incidents decreased by 11% with 1938 incidents being recorded between April and December 2008 compared to 2181 in the same period last year, although this data should be treated with caution.

16. The number of youth related ASB incidents decreased by 13%, with 2285 incidents being recorded between April and December 2008, compared to 2638 in the same period last year, though again, 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 had set a target to reduce AWI by 10% by 2010/11, but this is currently being renegotiated.
18. For the period April 2008 – January 2009 there were 493 assaults that fell within this indicator against a target of 505, a reduction of 2% 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.
20. The initial meeting of MARAC was held on 2 December 2008, and four cases were presented from the Police Domestic Abuse Unit. At a subsequent meeting on 16 December a further five cases were referred for consideration. All the victims were female, and all the referrals were from the police. Six children and two pregnant women were identified. Of these cases, none have been referred back to the MARAC as repeat victims.
21. Between April and December 2008 there were 1,564 domestic abuse incidents reported to the Police, equating to 374 more incidents than for the same period in 2007, a 31% increase. 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 47.1% for the period April-December 2007 to 39.1% for the same period in 2008, a reduction of 8%.

#### **Private Sector Stock Condition Survey**

22. A new Private Sector Stock Condition Survey has been commissioned with a company called Capital Project Consultancy (CPC). The survey has been commissioned in partnership with Tees Valley local authority partners Stockton Borough Council and Hartlepool Borough Council. The survey work commenced in Darlington in February 2009 and work is expected to be complete by May 2009. The survey will be based upon a select sample survey of a cross section of Darlington's private owned housing stock. The results of the survey will be analysed and used to inform the future strategic housing priorities of the Authority.

## **Energy Efficiency improvements in Private Housing**

23. An Energy Efficiency Scheme has just been launched in February 2009 to provide energy efficiency improvements to privately owned homes in the priority wards of North Road, Northgate, Central and Bank Top. Energy efficiency measures include loft and cavity wall insulation and are targeted at both the “able to pay” residents and those who are unable to contribute anything to these measures following means testing assessment. Residents in these priority wards will be able to access attractive discounts on energy efficiency measures or obtain the installation free of charge depending upon their circumstances.

## **Affordable Housing at West Park**

24. A new affordable housing development with Railway Housing Association has just received Homes and Communities Agency financial support. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) were established on 2nd December 2008 following an amalgamation of the roles and responsibilities of English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation. The successful funding application (which recognizes over £1M of housing investment) will deliver 13 new affordable dwellings for rent comprising of 8 x 3 and 5 x 4 bedroomed family homes. The development is expected to commence in May 2009 and be completed in February 2010.

## **Appointment of Health and Energy Advisor**

25. The Health and Energy Affordability Team (HEAT) was established in August 2008 and evolved as a result of work being undertaken through the Older Persons Partnership Board. The membership of the HEAT group includes Darlington Borough Council, Age Concern, Darlington CAB, Energy Savings Trust, Darlington Primary Care Trust and Darlington Association on Disability (DAD). In January 2009, HEAT were able to confirm the successful appointment of a new Health and Energy Advisor, Niamh O’Toole, funded jointly by both Darlington BC and Darlington Primary Care Trust initially for a one year term. The appointment was made to provide specific advice to vulnerable fuel poor households in the Borough, and, advise how best they may be able to reduce their energy consumption and access appropriate and affordable energy. The new Health and Energy Advisor will be located within Age Concern, employed by Age Concern but line managed jointly by Age Concern and Darlington CAB providing periodic progress reports to HEAT.

## **Anti Social Behaviour**

26. Three full ASBOs have been served in this period to:
  - (a) A 14 year old girl who persistently caused anti social behaviour in and around the North Road area, persistently caused a nuisance in premises in the town centre, refusing to leave when requested to do so, often resulting in a Police presence being required. She has also been regularly abusive to members of the public and shop staff within commercial premises in Darlington, shop lifted and assaulted several people whilst attempting to mug them, verbally abused teaching staff whilst at school and was regularly drunk and disorderly in public, despite numerous warnings, agreements and attempts to engage her in alternative activity.

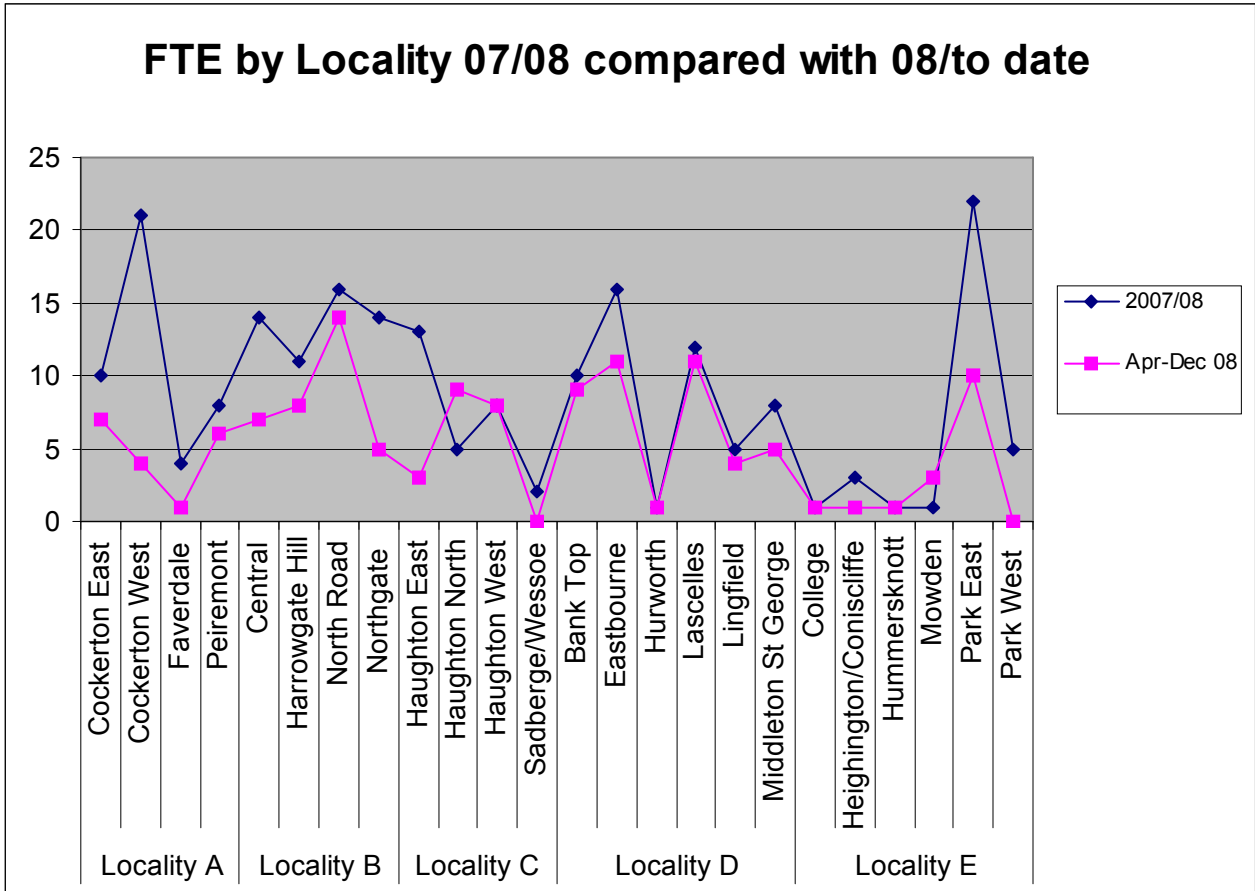
- (b) A 15 year old girl who regularly participated as part of a rowdy group causing intimidation, noise nuisance and disturbance, particularly in the North Road area and was also regularly under the influence of alcohol. Various interventions were offered, such as parenting support, early intervention, drug and alcohol support and Acceptable Behaviour agreements, all of which failed.
- (c) A 15 year old boy who was part of the same rowdy group causing intimidation, noise nuisance and disturbance in the North Road area of the town and who was also regularly under the influence of alcohol. Evidence was gathered relating to him throwing missiles at cars and members of the public, riding his bicycle to cause a nuisance to road users, running in and out of the road to the annoyance of road users and using foul and abusive language in public. Again, various interventions were offered but all failed.
- (d) An Interim ASBO was also served on a male, pending full trial in April 2009, for persistently causing annoyance and nuisance to members of the public by presenting himself as a member of the local authority to enforce licence provisions and gain entry to various on-licence premises; on one occasion stealing items from an establishment during a false visit. He has also been accused of wasting police time, posing as a security guard in a number of outlets, carrying false ID and wearing a radio and ear piece and claiming to be investigating covert matters that would allow him access to staffing areas.

### **Street Scene**

- 27. Members will recall that changes were made to refuse and recycling rounds in October 2008. As the vast majority of changes were successful, a few adjustments were required to the routes to allow for all to be completed in the working day. In particular, this revolved around recycling routes where large participation rates were prevalent. These minor alterations were made in January and all rounds are now working satisfactorily.
- 28. A review is currently being undertaken into the back office function of Street Scene, in particular the role of the Coordinators in relation to possible efficiencies in this area of service. Upon completion of the review, Members will be updated accordingly.
- 29. Street Scene, as part of Environmental Services as a whole, recently successfully passed the latest OHSAS inspection (Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series). This included inspection of the Crematorium, which was new to the OHSAS regime.

### **Darlington Youth Offending Service**

- 30. The number of first time entrants (FTE) to the youth justice system is on target, ie 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 31 December 2008 a total of 120 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.



31. During the period 1 April 2008 to 31 December 2008 there was a total of 492 offences committed by young people in Darlington against a total of 686 for the same period in 2007-2008. During this period 20 young people received a custodial sentence ie 7.2% against an annual target of no more than 5%. This was due to five young people sentenced to custody for one offence in the early part of the year.

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