
COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2012-15

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Bill Dixon, Leader of the Council

Responsible Director – Murray Rose, Director of People

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of Report

1. To propose a Community Safety Plan for Darlington as part of the Council's policy framework.

Summary

2. A draft Community Safety Plan was considered by Cabinet on 1 May 2012.
3. The Community Safety Plan (**Appendix 1**) is built around these five priorities:-
 - (a) Reducing the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol;
 - (b) Tackling anti-social behaviour;
 - (c) Reducing offending and re-offending;
 - (d) Working with families with multiple problems;
 - (e) Supporting vulnerable people, (focus is upon domestic abuse, sexual violence and hate crime).
4. The Plan explains the achievements, context, issues and actions in relation to each priority to demonstrate an evidence-based approach.
5. Development of the Plan has occurred in a partnership environment and includes strong input from all key stakeholders. This has been complemented by public engagement work.

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Council agrees and publishes the Community Safety Plan for Darlington.

Reasons

7. The recommendation is supported by the following reason:-
- (a) The Community Safety Plan requires Council's support as it is part of the Council's policy framework.
 - (b) The Plan is based on robust evidence and places Darlington in a stronger position as we prepare for the election of a Police Commissioner in November 2012.

Murray Rose,
Director of Services for People

Background Papers

There are no background papers.

David Plews: Extension 2023

S17 Crime and Disorder	The Community Safety Plan plays a significant part in drawing together activity across the Council and other agencies in order to address both immediate and longer-term issues and solutions. The Plan sets out the Council's commitment to tackling crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour to make Darlington safer.
Health and Well Being	The Community Safety Plan contributes strongly to the health and well-being agenda in areas including drug and alcohol harm reduction and tackling domestic abuse and sexual violence. The Plan has been strongly influenced by health partners, including the NHS.
Carbon Impact	There is no direct impact arising from this report.
Diversity	The Plan will be progressed through a wide range of programmes, action plans and other activities implemented by the various partner agencies involved in the Community Safety Partnership. The plan provides the co-ordinating framework directing this wide-ranging activity towards shared outcomes and targets. It is essential that the strategy is implemented in ways such that any outcomes are fair and help advance equality. The Council carries out equalities impact assessments to identify the potential impact of strategies and proposals on these groups, and to fulfil its equality duty. Where appropriate, it will carry out impact assessment on the programmes and actions in this strategy, and it will encourage partners to carry out equalities impact assessments on their own proposals. All partners are subject to either the public sector equality duty or similar duties under the Equality Act 2010.
Wards Affected	The Plan affects all wards, with a particular emphasis on high impact locations.
Groups Affected	Vulnerable people and families with multiple problems will particularly benefit from planned activity.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report updates the Council's policy framework.
Key Decision	Yes – the Community Safety Plan will lead to proposals and programmes that will affect the whole borough and will impact positively on residents' quality of life.

Urgent Decision	No.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The Plan is a key contributor to the Sustainable Community Strategy, setting a direction for the “safer” strand of work.
Efficiency	A more effective use of volunteers is a recurring theme that this plan will facilitate. It is anticipated that this will lead to improved efficiency in a number of areas through the provision of community-based restorative justice work and a stronger co-ordination of volunteers by the Responsible Authorities Group.

MAIN REPORT

Context

8. Crime, anti-social behaviour, domestic and sexual violence and the impact of substance misuse destroy people lives, blight communities and reduce public confidence. The Community Safety Plan sets out how stakeholders in Darlington will work together to deliver on five priorities:
 - (a) Reducing the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol;
 - (b) Tackling anti-social behaviour;
 - (c) Reducing offending and re-offending;
 - (d) Working with families with multiple problems;
 - (e) Supporting vulnerable people, (focus is upon domestic abuse, sexual violence and hate crime).
9. The evidence-based priorities reflect current trends and issues. Specifically, the Community Safety Plan is based upon information included in the Single Needs Assessment and the Police Risk Document, which informs the annual Policing Plan and aims to inform residents and agencies of the key objectives set by the Darlington Community Safety Partnership. The Plan emerges in the middle of a changing landscape for community safety. Proposed changes to the Primary Care Trusts have implications for the commissioning of drug and alcohol services; and the introduction of elected Police and Crime Commissioners in November 2012 has significant implications for the way that community safety will be led and funded in the future. Added to these are the pressures affecting the public sector generally at a time of shrinking resources. This said, robust partnership arrangements mean that Darlington is well-placed to deal with the effects of changes as they occur and effective mechanisms are in place to target available resources to ensure that they are being used to deliver the Partnership priorities.

Delivery arrangements

10. The Community Safety Partnership Executive, under the chairmanship of the Leader of the Council, Cllr Dixon, endorsed the Community Safety Plan at its last formal meeting in March 2012. The Community Safety Responsible Authorities Group, under the leadership of Assistant Director: Development and Commissioning, Chris Sivers and Chief Superintendent Andy Reddick will be responsible for delivery arrangements. These arrangements may be subject to change under the new arrangements for Darlington Partnership but currently comprise theme groups working on each of the five overarching community safety priorities reporting back into the Responsible Authorities Group. Each theme group has its own detailed delivery plan. Details of how to access these plans are provided in the relevant section of the Community Safety Plan.
11. A meeting of the Responsible Authorities Group takes place every eight weeks to progress work around the community safety priorities, consider any budgetary issues and to approve proposals for funding from the Community Safety Fund. Any issues that cannot be resolved by the Responsible Authorities Group would be taken to the Public Sector Planning Group, who will also receive performance reports showing progress against the five priorities from the theme group chairs.

High Impact Locations

12. Recent work around High Impact Locations has shown that parts of Central, Northgate, Bank Top and North Road wards have disproportionately higher levels of ASB, domestic abuse, serious crime, substance misuse and vulnerability. Further analytical work has been commissioned to get a clearer picture of these issues in these Darlington locations. This work will inform a renewed focus to ensure that resources aimed at delivering the five community safety priorities are properly targeted.

Consultation

13. Engaging with the public about the development of the Community Safety Plan has been carried out online, via attendance at public meetings and through the annual Safer Communities Forum. Priorities have been set taking account of the results of this engagement.
14. Ongoing engagement takes place during the year via Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings and public confidence surveys carried out by the Police. This information is used to inform the Single Needs Assessment and in particular the Police Risk document. Increased use of facebook and twitter is being made to inform residents and encourage communication and engagement. New campaigns and consultations are included on the Council website. The Community Safety Plan encourages feedback from residents and provides those who want to become actively involved with contact details so they can get help to improve community safety in their neighbourhoods through volunteering and Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

Equalities

15. The Plan will be progressed through a wide range of programmes, action plans and other activities implemented by the various partner agencies involved in the Community Safety Partnership. The Plan provides the co-ordinating framework directing this wide-ranging activity towards shared outcomes and targets. It is essential that the strategy is implemented in such ways that any outcomes are fair and help advance equality. The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council and other public agencies to “have due regard” in their decisions, services and programmes to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; to advancing equality of opportunity; and to fostering good relations between people of different backgrounds. The duty applies specifically to age, disability, religion/fait, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.
16. It has been identified that there will be a particular equality impact under the Plan’s fifth priority, “supporting vulnerable people” because the work strand around hate crime is looking specifically at the needs of groups with what the Equality Act 2010 calls “protected characteristics”. To ensure the impact of the planned approach is fully understood the Responsible Authorities Group is collaborating with the Learning Disabled People’s Partnership Board to deliver a scoping event involving stakeholders who have a role to play in tackling hate crime as well as those with protected characteristics who may be able to bring a victim or potential victim’s perspective.

Conclusion

17. The coming months represent a time of significant change for the Community Safety Partnership. The new Darlington Partnership structures mean a new reporting framework, and the dissolving of the Community Safety Partnership Executive Board has brought with it a stronger role for the Responsible Authorities Group. The election of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in November 2012 will have a significant impact upon community safety partnerships; in particular the passing of community safety funds to the PCC and the fact that the PCC is elected for the whole force area and so has responsibility for both Durham and Darlington. This means that it is important that the Community Safety Plan is set out well in advance of the elections and that our key priorities and messages are clearly stated in order to ensure that the Community Safety Partnership is well placed to promote those priorities to the PCC and secure the levels of funding required to progress them.