
COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2015-20

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

Responsible Director – Murray Rose, Director of Commissioning

Purpose of Report

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

Summary

2. All local authorities have a responsibility to work with statutory partners on crime and disorder issues and to produce a joint plan covering an agreed number of years with an annual refresh. The Plan should outline the priorities for the local area in relation to crime and disorder and must have been consulted upon with the public and key stakeholders. Darlington Community Safety Partnership (CSP) takes on the responsibility for production of this Plan. The Plan explains the achievements, context, issues and actions in relation to each priority to demonstrate an evidence-based approach.
3. A draft of the refreshed Community Safety Plan was considered by Cabinet on 16th June 2015 and is recommended to Council for approval.
4. The Community Safety Plan (**Appendix 1**) is built around these five priorities:
 - (a) Reducing the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol and tobacco;
 - (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).
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. In the context of huge pressure on public finances, the plan is a summary of partner's aspirations but it is recognised that constraints during the next five years may impact upon capacity to deliver the entire plan.

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Council agrees and publishes the Community Safety Plan 2015-2020 for Darlington.

Reasons

7. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons:
- (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 to progress actions around community safety in the current changing climate.

Murray Rose
Director of Commissioning

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| 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 Public Health. |
| Carbon Impact | There is no direct impact arising from this report. |

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| 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 will make changes to the Council's current policy framework and therefore requires approval by full Council. |
| 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 the continued increase of Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinated through the CSP. |

MAIN REPORT

Context

8. Crime, anti-social behaviour, domestic and sexual violence, hate crime and the impact of substance misuse destroys 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 alcohol and tobacco;
 - (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. These are evidence-based priorities and they reflect current trends and issues. The Community Safety Plan is based upon information included in the Single Needs Assessment and the Police and Crime Commissioner's annual plan which informs the annual Policing Plan. The aim of the plan is to inform residents and agencies of the key objectives set by the Darlington CSP. The Plan has been written at a time of shrinking resources affecting the Public Sector generally and, at the time of writing, the final detail of future resources levels is not fully known. Therefore, while the CSP is committed to implementing the actions contained within the plan, it recognises that these are aspirational and may be restricted by reduced levels of funding. Changes brought about by the recent transformation of the Probation Service have implications for the way forward in working with offenders. However, robust partnership arrangements mean that Darlington is well-placed to deal with these changes 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 CSP Board, Chaired by Chief Superintendent Graham Hall endorsed the progress of the draft Community Safety Plan at its formal meeting in May 2015. The Community Safety Partnership under the leadership of Chief Superintendent Hall and the Director of Public Health, Miriam Davidson, will be responsible for delivery arrangements. These currently comprise theme groups on each of the five overarching community safety priorities reporting back into the Community Safety Partnership Board. 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 CSP Board takes place every eight weeks to progress work around the community safety priorities and consider any budgetary issues or emerging trends.

12. Engaging with the public about the development of the Community Safety Plan has been carried out online and via attendance at public meetings. Priorities have been set taking account of the results of this engagement.
13. 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

14. 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/faith, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.
15. 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 CSP Board is collaborating with the Hate Crime Stakeholder Group to ensure that all needs are fully understood

Conclusion

16. This Plan is written in a climate of continuing reduction in resources available for addressing community safety and the constant need to ensure that the CSP can effectively meet the needs of residents in Darlington. Commitments within the plan are aspirational and may be restricted by funding levels between now and 2020. This means that it is important that the Community Safety Partnership’s key priorities and messages are clearly stated in order to ensure that the CSP is well placed to promote those priorities to the PCC, local residents and stakeholders.