

AT A MEETING of the SAFE AND HEALTHY PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Tuesday, 30 November 2010.

PRESENT

Chairman:
p Councillor Pat West

Vice-Chairman
p Councillor Roger Kimber

Councillors:

a Ann Buckley	p Andrew Joy
p Brian Collin	p Mark Kemp-Gee
p Alan Dowden	p Pam Mutton
p Liz Fairhurst	p Eric Neal
a Jane Frankum	p Jackie Porter
a Michael Geddes	

Also in attendance:

- Colin Donnelly, Crew Manager – Cosham Fire Station, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority
- Jenni Douglas-Todd, Chief Executive, Hampshire Police Authority
- Dr Christine Jackson, Deputy Director of Public Health, NHS Hampshire
- Councillor Keith Mans, Chairman, Hampshire County Strategy Group
- Chris Mitchell, Director of Offender Management, Hampshire Probation Trust
- Assistant Chief Constable Laura Nicholson, Hampshire Constabulary
- Kevin Oxlade, Service Delivery Group Manager, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Lou Parker-Jones, Policy and Engagement Manager, Hampshire Police Authority
- Councillor Jacqui Rayment, Chair, Hampshire Police Authority
- Jude Ruddock-Atcherley, Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager, Hampshire County Council
- Inspector Nigel Scott, Hampshire Constabulary
- Jon Whale, Assistant Head – Regulatory Services, Hampshire County Council
- Bob Wythe, Service Delivery Area Manager, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service

49. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Jane Frankum gave her apologies.

50. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that, where they believed they

had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should normally at the time of the debate declare their interest, and having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 12 of the Code.

51. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chairman welcomed Members, guests and speakers to the 'Annual Crime and Disorder Scrutiny' meeting of the Safe & Healthy People Select Committee. The aim of the meeting was for Members to hear specific examples of how effectively the range of statutory partners were working together to reduce crime and disorder. The meeting would focus on two priority areas set out in the development plan of the Hampshire County Strategy Group for Crime and Disorder, namely 'Domestic Abuse', and 'Anti-Social Behaviour'.

The Chairman took the opportunity to remind members and officers that the committee, as part of its statutory duty, would be scrutinising the crime & disorder reduction partnership as a whole, and any recommendations made would be directed toward the County Strategy Group, rather than one individual responsible authority, as per the Police & Justice Act 2006.

52. **ANNUAL CRIME & DISORDER SCRUTINY MEETING**

The Chairman invited the Hampshire County Strategy Group Chair, Councillor Keith Mans, to give an overview of the Group's direction over the next year, and to introduce the presenters to the Committee.

Councillor Mans began by stating that the County Strategy Group was a statutory, county-level partnership which operated alongside the community safety partnerships in each of the districts. The role of this County partnership was look at the common priorities across Hampshire and to attempt to co-ordinate activity which can best be undertaken county wide, engaging all the statutory and wider partners.

The direction of travel, endorsed by the Audit Commission, had been to commission work jointly on a county-wide basis for services around alcohol, offender management, domestic abuse, public information and youth justice, but also to

recognise that commissioning work around anti-social behaviour and local problem solving is often best done at a local level.

Councillor Mans expressed that in the current climate, the Group will need to be clear about priorities and make the case for protecting those activities that make the biggest impact on community safety. He also emphasised the need to continue close working relationships, especially with the NHS, in the current period of change, in order to address some of the key causes of crime.

Domestic Abuse

Councillor Mans introduced Jude Ruddock-Atcherley, the Hampshire County Council lead on Domestic Abuse, and Inspector Nigel Scott, from Hampshire Constabulary, to speak on the topic of Domestic Abuse.

(Take in Report and Presentation)

Members heard:

- That there was a need to focus on prevention to stop the cycle of abuse and that this could only be effectively achieved with a strong co-ordinated partnership approach including agencies from across the community.
- That the use of MARACs (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and IDVAs (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor/Advocates) within the Hampshire 'risk model' was proving invaluable in tackling the cycle of abuse and keeping safe victims at high risk of serious harm or murder.
- That the future of the Hampshire 'risk model' for tackling domestic abuse was reliant not only on partnership working but also continued local investment.
- That at least 90% of all referrals to MARACs currently come from the police. This may mean that many cases (unreported to the police) are being missed. In order for more cases to be dealt with, referrals need to increase from other agencies within the partnership.
- That there are currently nine MARACs in Hampshire covering the 11 Borough and District areas. These have been in operation for up to five years.
- That three MARAC co-ordinators are full time positions. Currently Hampshire Constabulary take responsibility for providing staff to these posts. The MARACs are chaired by the Public Protection Unit inspectors.
- That 90% of referrals to MARAC by the police is a very high proportion - it would be useful to see more from GPs, considering their work includes treating whole families, and as such they are in a position to encounter domestic abuse cases. Some practices have already started training courses for GPs which sets out the referral pathway for suspected domestic abuse cases.

However, this responsibility is now to be handed over with the onset of GP commissioning. It is also important that the link with alcohol is recognised and the two issues are worked on together.

- That investment is needed to increase the number of IDVAs in Hampshire, in order to provide a consistent and sustained service. An approximate figure of 19 IDVAs is given for Hampshire to provide a fully staffed service, but from April 2011 the total number of IDVAs will number four.
- That the target figure for National Indicator 32 is 20%, but it is felt that 30% is a more realistic target.
- That Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service regularly come into contact with vulnerable people in the course of their work, and as a result have set up a Safeguarding Team which is available to work in partnership with other agencies.
- That community safety is a high priority for the police in Hampshire, as well as nationally. The challenge in future is how repeat offending can be decreased, and to fine tune a practical plan to stop domestic abuse.

In response to questions, Members heard:

- That in the 2009 Domestic Abuse Snapshot Survey those cases not recorded by the police mainly came from the NHS, Refuge, Outreach Services and Children's Services. Of the 24,000 cases reported in 2008/09, approximately 8,000 were recorded as criminal offences. This could be due to a high number of cases involving emotional and financial abuse, which are currently not stipulated as criminal offences. A multi-agency approach is crucial in supplying evidence when dealing with a criminal case. The MARAC is supported by a risk assessment (DASH) which covers all forms of abuse.
- That a consultant has been employed to carry out a review and look into the disparities in performance on National Indicator 32, and ensure the work of MARACs is consistent. Currently, the criteria for the success of MARACs is based on the rate of repeat victimisation i.e. those that return to a MARAC within a 12 month period.
- That the varying performance on National Indicator 32 is impacted by many other performance indicators, due to the nature of domestic abuse and the factors behind it.
- That the culture of the police not attending homes experiencing domestic abuse, because it was seen as a problem to be dealt with by the family, has changed.
- That the rate of prosecution for domestic abuse is still fairly low as it is difficult to gather evidence. Of an 80% arrest rate, approximately 30-40% of individuals go on to face criminal charges.
- That the Data Protection Act has not been found to have an adverse affect on the sharing of information relating to domestic abuse between different agencies. If there is

a lack of data sharing, this is likely to be due to lack of awareness on referral pathways for domestic abuse. All MARACs have a clause read at the beginning of each meeting which states that the discussions held within them are confidential.

- That the shortage of IDVAs is finance related, with each post costing approximately £40,000 each. It has so far been difficult to obtain further funding for posts. It is possible, but extremely difficult, for MARACs to work without IDVA support, as there are other agencies involved, but such individuals are felt to provide the key to the success rate of MARACs.
- That Hampshire Probation Trust is currently involved in vital work with perpetrators of domestic abuse. A thirty week comprehensive high risk programme is available to offenders, which is called the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP). The future plan is to offer the option to perpetrators who are not processed through the Criminal Prosecution Service as well as those who are.
- That there is no proven correlation between domestic abuse and areas of deprivation. National research shows that the incidence of abuse can occur across all sectors of society.
- That there is a need to ensure that funding is effectively directed as the police and other partner agencies face cuts.
- That the County Strategy Group are undertaking a risk assessment of all development plan themes in light of central government budget cuts. Currently all responsible authority partners are awaiting final announcements on grant funding.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Hampshire County Strategy Group further investigates possible sources of funding for Independent Domestic Violence Advisors / Advocates in the County.
- (b) That the Hampshire County Strategy Group ensures that each responsible authority adopts the Domestic Abuse, Stalking & Harassment, and Honour Based Violence (DASH) risk assessment procedure, and commits to and engages with the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process, ensuring that all assessed high risk cases are referred to the local MARAC coordinator.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Councillor Mans introduced Jon Whale, the Hampshire County Council lead on Anti-Social Behaviour, and Colin Donnelly, from Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service, to speak on the topic

of Anti-Social Behaviour.

(Take in Report and Presentation)

Members heard:

- That whilst crime rates were relatively low in Hampshire, incidences of anti-social behaviour were still a concern to many of local communities.
- That the aim of the Hampshire Accredited Community Safety Officer (ACSO) service is to provide reassurance and encourage community engagement rather than stigmatise offenders.
- That three quarters of the work of ACSOs already involves partnership working with other agencies. An example of this includes a partnership between Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Constabulary for reports of anti-social behaviour to be taken via the 101 call service.
- That there is a drive to coordinate information within the community, with a shared case management system currently being developed. 'Safety Net' is a simple to use programme and joins up issues on a single cases/families. Data is recorded and mapped via Crime Reports and can be printed for use in public meetings.
- That Hampshire has benefitted from a coordinated approach by a variety of partners, particularly with regard to alcohol-related anti-social behaviour. An example of this has been the shared service arrangements with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Hythe and Dibden Parish Council and Totton and Eling Town Council. This has enabled greater cover to be provided on shifts and patrols and means that the partnership can take a dual approach to controlling anti-social behaviour, such as having the capability to set up youth activities as well as acting as an enforcer.
- That Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) have identified patterns of anti-social behaviour in the course of their work and are engaged in partnership working to try and stop this at source, such as asking the police to target areas where it is believed fires are being started deliberately. They are also working with Fareham and Gosport Borough Councils on preventing fires in derelict buildings.
- That HFRS has, in partnership with other agencies, operated a successful joint strategy over Halloween and Bonfire Night with patrol units engaging with young people and warning of the dangers of fire. This campaign helped to achieve the lowest level of anti-social behaviour in Fareham at Halloween for several years.
- That the key is to sustain the investments all agencies have made in partnership working. There is now a need to look at Hampshire's night-time economy and licensing laws and ensure that a balance is struck between commercial enterprise and community safety.

- That work on alcohol abuse is crucial as three quarters of those who end up in Accident and Emergency departments on Friday and Saturday nights are there due to alcohol. The Public Health White Paper, due to be published by central government at the time of meeting, is expected to include the government's response regarding tackling alcohol-related incidences. It is believed that 60% of all crimes are alcohol-related
- That if the alcohol problem can be tackled effectively, the partnership would be free to focus on other areas.

In response to questions, Members heard:

- That Hampshire Constabulary are currently focused on agreed crime prevention goals, the majority of which are based on anti-social behaviour. The area of anti-social behaviour has been the best example of good joined-up working, which has been consistent and effective.
- That currently all public sector agencies are under huge financial pressure, and partnerships need to ensure that money is not just being spent on meetings rather than action.
- That Hampshire County Council are exploring the possibility of pooling resources with Test Valley Borough Council to maximise ACSO cover in the area, and could look to other distribute and borough councils (such as Rushmoor) to make similar arrangements.
- That the experiences of anti-social behaviour in Valley Park have demonstrated the success of Hampshire's ACSOs in working in a relatively affluent area.