

CABINET

2 March 2005

COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2005-2008

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

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RECENT REFERENCES:

CAS36 'Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003' – 18th January 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The report seeks Cabinet approval for the relevant content of the Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008 which is attached to the report in its most recent draft. The strategy and action plan are currently subject to consultation with other partners. Final consideration of the strategy will be undertaken at the next meeting of the Winchester Community Safety Partnership later in the month.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet recommends Council to accept the draft Community Safety Strategy 2005-2008, to endorse its key aims and objectives, and to agree to take these into account when agreeing future strategies, business plans and budgets, subject to the submission of a further report setting out the Action Plan in late March/April.

CABINET2 MARCH 2005COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2005-2008REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICESDETAIL:1 Introduction

- 1.1 Under the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 local authorities are required to join with other agencies, including the police and the voluntary sector, to form what are formally known as 'crime and disorder reduction partnerships'. In Winchester, as elsewhere, the style 'community safety partnership' has been adopted as a slightly more user friendly variation.
- 1.2 The partnerships are required to produce crime reduction strategies which show how the partners will work together and individually to reduce crime and improve public confidence in matters relating to community safety. Each partnership is set specific targets by the Home Office and must have regard to national as well as local priorities in drawing up its strategy. It is also important that the new strategy is in conformity with the Community Strategy which has been produced by the Local Strategic Partnership. It is important to emphasise that although the City Council is a partner in the strategy, it does not 'own' the strategy and cannot independently determine its contents. It must, however, agree to its aims and objectives since its implementation depends on the City Council's active engagement.
- 1.3 New strategies are due from every crime reduction partnership in April 2005 and these will run until March 2008.

2 Winchester Community Safety Strategy

- 2.1 Over the last few months officers of the City Council and the police community safety team have been working on the new strategy.
- 2.2 In accordance with Home Office guidance an audit of crime statistics, public attitudes and partners' views has been conducted. The University of Portsmouth Institute of Criminal Justice carried out the audit in this district. A self-assessment of their own work by partnership members was also undertaken, and the findings of all of these processes have helped to inform the new strategy. The Portfolio Holder for Healthy and Inclusive Communities has also been consulted extensively on the emerging content of the strategy, as have members of the Local Strategic Partnership. A working group established by the Community, Arts and Social Performance Improvement Committee has examined a previous draft of the strategy and made very useful comments on content and presentation. The Community, Arts and Social Improvement Committee will undertake a further review of the action plan and the final document in due course.
- 2.3 The overall Home Office target areas such as Winchester is for a reduction in crime (as measured by the annual British Crime Survey) of between 12.5% and 15%. This

is particularly challenging in areas which crime is already very low. The Home Office has determined which crimes will “count” when measuring performance and these are identified within the strategy along with the reduction targets which have been calculated from Home Office statistics.

- 2.4 Although local consultation has not necessarily identified all of the crimes being targeted as priorities, there is no fundamental mismatch between what has been identified locally and the central government targets.

3 Strategy Priorities

- 3.1 The draft strategy (which is attached as Appendix 1) identifies five primary “themes” under which the work of the partnership will be guided. These have been extensively discussed within the partnership.
- 3.2 The themes recognise the issues of concern to the local community, particularly in relation to anti-social behaviour and the management of the evening economy. These are concerns that are shared across the partnership and at central government. This focus has recently been strengthened by new legislation, such as the provisions in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Licensing Act 2003.
- 3.3 The draft strategy explains why each theme is important and gives considerable background on how the partnership will address them.
- 3.4 One of the major innovations of the strategy is to introduce a new structure for the partnership which gives a much stronger role to parish councils, elected Members, neighbourhood watch and resident groups. This recognises the importance of local projects and initiatives in reducing crime, and aims to build stronger local relationships between statutory agencies and communities themselves.

4. Action Plan

- 4.1 The strategy will eventually be underpinned by an action plan setting out the specific measures to be taken by partners individually and collectively to achieve the strategic objectives.
- 4.2 At the time of writing this report consultations and discussions are taking place with partners to agree their various contributions to the action plan which is not, as yet, complete. The City Council will be leading in a number of key areas such as driving forward improvements to the Community Safety Partnership, implementing the new Licensing Policy, co-ordinating the relocation of the CCTV control room, developing the Neighbourhood Warden scheme, and tackling streetscene and open spaces issues from the community safety angle. Members will be fully appraised and consulted during the action planning process, and a further report will be submitted to Cabinet in late March/April outlining the City Council’s role in the delivery of the Action Plan.
- 4.3 At this stage Cabinet is asked to consider and endorse the key aims and objectives in the draft strategy. Members should note that the strategy is ‘owned’ by the Community Safety Partnership which will approve the finished version later in the month and agree an action plan. Some minor amendments to the text are therefore likely between now and publication but these will not change any of the fundamental principles.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:6 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 6.1 The revised Corporate Priorities for 2005 – 2008 identify Community Safety as one of the six strategic priorities. Active participation in the Community Safety Partnership is the primary mechanism by which the City Council can achieve the objective.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The implementation of the new strategy and the action plan for the City Council does not assume the availability of any additional resources over and above those already contained in the proposed 2005/06 budget. The primary source of funding for the Community Safety Partnership is a direct grant from the Home Office via the Government Office for the South East. The partnership creates an annual budget utilising the grant for a range of projects which includes funding for the voluntary sector as well as projects by partners. In 2004/05 this amounted to £135,000. The level of activity in future years will be determined by the level of this grant.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Draft Community Safety Strategy 2005 - 2008