



Partnership Community Safety Team

(SRB 6 Community Safety Project)

Report to Community Safety Forum-1st March 2004

Core Focus of the Project:

To establish a high profile, multi-disciplinary Partnership Community Safety Team that will deliver direct services, achieve increased reporting, effective outcomes/solutions for victims and reductions in crime across all ten 'priority crime areas' - particularly focusing on the areas of racially motivated and homophobic crime.

The Project will aim to increase awareness, the engagement of and participation by the public, communities and agencies, in tackling crime and improving safety. There will be direct 'high street' access to services; invaluable for vulnerable victims.

In terms of casework services, the Project will become a 'Centre of Excellence', (we aim to achieve the Legal Services Commission 'Quality Mark'). One method by which we will mainstream case work services is by combining training and work with Neighbourhood Action groups (harnessing the achievements of the neighbourhood renewal process).

Aims of Project – Qualitative and Quantitative:

- Establish a visual identity and 'brand' for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and give that identity a high profile, throughout the life of the Project and beyond. (Though this is not an end in itself, it is one of the ways that we will increase the capacity and effectiveness of the Partnership to fulfil our joint objectives, outputs and outcomes);
- Put in place a multi-disciplinary team that is able to lead and respond as a partnership to strategic issues that effect crime and safety, and provide solutions to individual and/or community needs.

The Partnership, the police, council, Racial Harassment Forum and LGBT Community, will work to extend its multi-disciplinary services. For example, negotiations are now well advanced with the Citizens Advice Bureaux and Mediation Service.

Discussions with Victim Support are about to begin. There are 18 other organisations with which we are going to develop more effective/high profile joint working arrangements. These specialists in community safety work are already within the Partnership;

- Open a 'high street' direct access service: This service will provide 'high impact' information about crime trends, what 'works' and what are successful interventions that reduce crime and improve safety.

There will also be a 'general' community safety enquiry service for members of the public. Our comprehensive face-to-face or 'front-line' service will be supplemented by an 'access point' for general community services enquiries: 'City Direct'. This IT installation will enable members of the public to access information by using the software package and/or a 'direct' telephone system. We hope that this will maximise the provision of additional resources for members of the public whilst minimising any additional burden placed upon our expertise at a 'case specific' or 'priority' level(s).

The aim will be to increase reporting, provide co-ordinated, quicker and more effective responses, reduce crime and the fear of crime.

- The Project will be a resource, a 'centre of excellence' for communities, neighbourhood action teams, partners and others. This bank of information and evidence base will include practical solutions about the ways in which people can protect themselves, increase personal safety and thereby our community safety as a whole.
- The high street service will specialise in providing direct access to casework services for victims of racially motivated and homophobic crime and incidents. These services will be confidential and multi-disciplinary; delivered so that civil and criminal justice remedies are achieved effectively and as sustainable solutions.
- The Team will facilitate community leadership of the implementation of the action plans to tackle racially motivated and homophobic crime (Priority 8 and Priority 9 in the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy 2002 – 2005). The dedicated Policy Co-ordinator posts will support and facilitate effective participation within the Partnership.
- The Team will focus upon increasing trust and confidence in the civil and criminal justice agencies by the Black and minority ethnic and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) communities.

Our overall aim is to encourage increased reporting and enable an increased rate of prosecution and conviction.

- The introduction and administration of 'Outreach Services' for victims of hate crimes will be extended to appropriate local and 'interest' communities. These will include dedicated services and community safety services.

Mainstreaming expertise, proven solutions, and services, combined with work undertaken with three neighbourhood renewal areas and with the Citizens Advice Bureaux has already moved us forward in achieving this aim. A second site for services in Hove has been secured and is nearing completion of the development period.

- Provide training, particularly in the areas of dealing with racially motivated and homophobic crime and in dealing with anti-social behaviour, the aim is to mainstream expertise and knowledge with a view to achieving consistent good practice responses to victims throughout the City.

Mainstreaming is the 'exit strategy' that will bring about a 'sea change' in services awareness, particularly presenting a challenge to racism and homophobia, and enable the team to achieve the challenging targets set.

- Together with colleagues in our Public Safety Division (Council), risk assess information about 'hot-spot' crime areas and prioritise and assist in co-ordinating agency responses that provide comprehensive and sustainable solutions to crime and safety problems.

The aim is not only to stop criminal activity but also to increase the capacity to do so by involving local communities in achieving solutions. Community groups will be vital in this role and will be offered 'support to our capacity' to fulfil their responsibilities.

Outcomes: Strategic Added Value:

The added value (strategically) is

- Delivery of priorities within the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy 2002–2005 (these priorities will also be included in Strategy for 2005–2008). Particularly relevant are those priorities in respect of racially motivated and homophobic crime, reducing fear of crime and increasing public confidence. The three-year Strategy is a published document and has been approved and supported by the Home Office.
- Taking forward the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry.
- Neighbourhood Renewal Programme 2002 – 2010. Local Action Plans; the priorities of the Local Strategic Partnership. Residents in the neighbourhood action planning process have consistently stressed community safety as a priority. The Project will directly enable delivery of solutions to meet their priorities and those of the LSP.
- Annual Policing Plans (Police Division), Police Authority Plan, Plan of Sussex Criminal Justice Board. There is a direct correlation between the strategic objectives and work programmes in these plans and work programmes and the objectives and activities of this SRB Project.
- The project fits with and makes a contribution towards priority 11 of the Regional Economic Strategy (Vibrant Communities and Community Infrastructure and Support).
- Seeda Corporate Plan 2002 –2004. Community Needs and Social Inclusion.
- Community Cohesion frameworks.

'What the impact will be'

Through increased community participation and all citizens acceptance of their personal responsibilities, we seek to achieve a 'sea-change' improvement of safety within the City and a marked decrease in crime and related incidents.

We can expect to see a 'wholesale increase' in our service levels. Members of the public will have a higher number of ways to access information and services. Moreover, our team will

be able to facilitate a higher number of members of the public to take advantage of the services that we have to offer.

By mainstreaming expertise whilst maintaining excellent service quality and sustainability levels we will improve outcomes for victims; bringing perpetrators to justice and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

In addition to seeking to reduce racism and homophobia we aim to develop a common understanding of the relationship between hatred and prejudice and the incidence of crime and harassment.

Increasing the trust of, and confidence in, the criminal and civil justice agencies by and among the LGBT and Black and minority ethnic communities, will achieve the desired increases in levels of reporting and improved rates of attrition.

Linda Beanlands
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