

Brighton & Hove City Council

Report to: Community Safety Forum

Date: 6th October 2003

Subject: Community Safety Forum:

Revised Terms of Reference and increasing its effectiveness to reduce crime and improve community safety

1.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Report

1.1 Following the review of the constitutional arrangements for Council committees undertaken earlier this year, the Police Consultation and Public Safety Partnership was established as the Community Safety Forum and a review of the Terms of Reference was initiated.

1.2 The review has taken account of the Best Value Review of consultation undertaken by Sussex Police Authority and with the objective of increasing the effectiveness and capacity of the Forum to contribute to the reduction of crime and improved safety. The review has also taken account of comments made at the last meeting of the Forum on 7th July, specifically these are:

- That the Forum should be a mechanism for sharing good practice and information sharing between partners.
- That a 'themed' approach would be useful for partners (one 'theme' which was suggested is to explore ways in which police community support officers could support the work of the Forum partners overall).
- That we should give further consideration as to how we should work in partnership to a greater extent and do far more in the name of the Community Safety Forum.
- That as a Forum, we should be more interactive on neighbourhoods.

The Community Safety Forum is therefore asked to approve the terms of reference, which will also be formally submitted to the Sussex Police Authority.

1.3 A verbal report will be given at the meeting about how the Community Safety Forum is strengthening its links with the 2020

Community Partnership (LSP), the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and the Community Strategy.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Community Safety Forum approves the Terms of Reference.

3.0 Information

3.1 The Community Safety Forum fulfils a number of important functions. These include:

- Providing a place where key voluntary, independent and statutory agencies who play a significant role in the City in reducing crime and disorder and improving safety and quality of life, can work together, and develop their shared expertise and good practice.
- Involving Members in that process (the Forum is chaired by a Councillor who is also chair of the Environment Committee) and ensuring that key decisions which effect the Council as a whole are referred to the appropriate Committee for discussion and approval.
- Enabling consultation between residents, the Police Authority and police and overseeing consultation arrangements which are required to take place every three years to develop the priorities for inclusion within the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy. Membership of the Community Safety Forum includes a number of organisations, each of whom represent and involve significant communities of interest or residents in neighbourhoods.
- Referring matters to the Environment Committee and Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate, either because they have significance for the Council's duties as a whole or for decision making.
- Profiling the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in order to assist in reducing crime and fear of crime.

3.2 The review of the terms of reference has recognised the importance of these and other functions which are fulfilled by the Forum, and has developed these as follows:

4.0 Proposed New Terms of Reference

- To be the Forum for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and enable the constituent members to jointly develop best practice to reduce crime and disorder and improve community and public safety (in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998).
- To support constituent members in their delivery of initiatives to reduce crime and improve community safety.
- To fulfil the requirements for consultation in relation to matters to and from the Police Authority for the purposes of section 96 of the Police Act 1996. The Act states that each Police Authority is required to make arrangements for consultation with the community in its area about policing issues. The actual arrangements to be agreed with the Police Authority.
- To receive reports from the Police Authority, in particular the reports of their regular meetings and subject specific meetings.
- To receive reports from the meetings of the Fire Authority for the purposes of information and to enable discussion and feedback on those items which effect the partners in the Community Safety Forum and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.
- To receive and consider the Crime and Disorder Audit (every three years) and to make recommendations on its findings for the purpose of identifying priorities for action.
- To oversee consultation arrangements with local communities and communities of interest with a view to being satisfied that consultation is inclusive, enables wide participation and that community priorities are reflected in the identification of priorities within the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategies and work programmes of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. The detailed arrangements to be agreed with the Police Authority.
- To approve the crime and safety priorities identified for action in the three year Strategy and the action plans which set out the work which will be implemented over the three years to achieve those priorities.
- To regularly receive information about the implementation and progress of the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy.
- To contribute to the development of the Youth Justice Plan and to receive reports from the Youth Offending Team about the delivery

of the Plan and progress against national and local performance measures.

- To make recommendations to the Environment Committee and if appropriate, to the Policy and Resources Committee, in relation to matters that require council decisions and where there are links with other strategic priorities of the Council.
- To publicise the work of the Forum and of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in order to help reduce crime and fear of crime and improve safety.

5.0 Review of Membership

5.1 A review of the existing membership of the Community Safety Forum is carried out at intervals. The current membership (including police and council services) is:

Age Concern

Area Housing Panels

Brighton & Hove Federation of the Disabled

Brighton & Hove Mediation Service

Brighton & Hove Primary Care Trust

Brighton City Centre Business Forum

British Transport Police

Coalition 4 Youth

Crime Reduction Initiatives

Domestic Violence Forum

Drug and Alcohol Action Team

Eb4U

Fire Authority

Hangleton & Knoll Project

Housing Association Partnership

Hove YMCA

Neighbourhood Watch

Older People's Council

Racial Harassment Forum

Representatives of Housing Association Tenants

Safety Forum for the LGBT Community

St. James's Street Community Safety Sub-Group

Sussex Police Authority

Sussex Probation

Victim Support

Voluntary Sector Forum

Women's Refuge Project

Youth Offending Team

The agencies listed above all fulfil an important role in reducing crime and improving safety and their partnership working is very much appreciated.

6.0 Processes for meeting

6.1 The review also looked at the management of the meetings as the means through which the effectiveness of the Forum could be increased. The following proposals are designed to help achieve that:

- An allocation of 15 minutes for public question time and publicising the opportunity.
- A reduced focus on formal reports and an increased focus on 'themed' agenda's (e.g. diverting young offenders, anti-social behaviour, safety of older people and extended police family). and presentations which maximise the opportunity for participation and input from the Forum partners.
- an opportunity for representative Forums and other significant projects (such as the Anti-Victimisation Initiative or Equinox) to report into the Community Safety Forum about their issues
- The development of ways in which participation is achieved by those who do not currently engage directly with the Forum or have an opportunity to influence its decision making. For example, there could be particular action, which is targeted towards achieving involvement by young people.

6.2 The actions described in the 'Safe in the City' Communications Strategy will also assist in the development of increased effectiveness and capacity for the Community Safety Forum.

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