

**Brighton & Hove City Council**

**For general release**

**Meeting: Community Safety Forum**

**Date: 5<sup>th</sup> July 2004**

**Report of: Community Safety Manager**

**Subject: Building the capacity of the CDRP to reduce crime & Improve Safety: a review of membership of the Community Safety Forum:**

**Wards affected: All.**

## **1.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Report**

1.1 This report sets out the role, purpose and membership of the Community Safety Forum in order to allow the Forum to consider how it can help improve the capacity of partnership working to reduce crime and improve safety. The report also provides the opportunity to consider extending the membership of the Forum and ways in which existing partners can be given greater support than is currently provided. This will enable us to deliver against the Improvement Plan for 2004/05.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 That the Community Safety Forum consider ways in which it can increase the capacity of the Forum to achieve its objectives and in particular, consider which organisations could be invited to become co-opted members of the Forum to assist in that process.

## **3.0 Information**

3.1 The Community Safety Forum fulfils a number of important functions. These are reflected in their formal terms of reference and 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 share information, expertise and good practice. This is to include the Forum being proactive in helping to take forward safety work in neighbourhoods including helping to deliver and respond to the priorities of local people as set out in neighbourhood action plans and by Local Action Teams.

- Supporting members in their delivery of initiatives to reduce crime and improve safety
- Involving Members in that process (the Forum is chaired by Councillor Gill Mitchell 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, ensuring it is inclusive/participative and overseeing the 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.
- Maintaining an overview of the implementation and progress of the Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy
- Referring matters and feedback to the Responsible Authorities Partnership/Drug & Alcohol Action Team in order that the priorities and expertise of partners and communities are considered within the strategic decision making of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Contributing to the development of the Youth Justice Plan and receiving information from the Youth Offending Team about the delivery of the Plan and progress against national and local performance measures
- Profiling and publicising the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in order to assist in reducing crime and fear of crime.

The Terms of Reference also sets out some key roles in relation to the Police and Fire Authorities which are -

- 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.

#### **4.0 An Improvement Plan for the Forum**

4.1 The Home Office have required (for the first time) that all CDRP's and DAAT's carry out a self-assessment of activities against prescribed standards and draw up an Improvement Plan for delivery in 2004/5. The emphasis of the standards are -

- the effectiveness of leadership and partnership working, the level and type of support which is in place for partners and an assessment of the extent to which that will achieve 'long term success'
- the level of expertise which is engaged in delivering the three yearly, crime and disorder audit, in setting crime reduction priorities and in monitoring their delivery and evaluating their effectiveness
- the extent to which the skills of its officers (throughout the partnership) are developed and sustained
- the extent to which resources - people and project money - are in place to deliver against the priorities
- the effectiveness of how the partnership plans, manages and improves its processes in order to develop and deliver its strategies

#### **5.0 Findings of the Self-Assessment - How can we improve?**

5.1 The findings of the self-assessment are positive: the Crime and Disorder Partnership has scored well in relation to its leadership, partnership working so far, levels of expertise and analysis which are applied to problem solving and development of crime reduction solutions, resource management, prioritisation and strategic development.

5.2 However, areas for improvement are also identified. Amongst those, the following are of particular relevance to the Forum -

- that although very good progress has been made - the potential for partnership working has not yet been fully utilised
- that 'added value' can be gained from improved partnership working, sharing of expertise and implementing action plans which are aimed at achieving shared priorities and common goals
- that the potential and added value can be 'unlocked' by providing increased clarity of role and greater support for the contribution made by partners and offering opportunities for increased involvement
- that there are particular benefits yet to be explored, from partners who have a core of expertise (such as the Business Crime Reduction

Partnership) extending their activities into neighbourhoods – and further support may enable partners to do so.

5.3 While the Responsible Authorities Partnership/DAAT will maintain an overview of the implementation of the Improvement Plan, the Community Safety Forum is in a key position to implement the improvements in relation to partnership working. The Improvement Plan sets out some specific actions which will assist the achievement of the improvements described above and the Partnership Support Officer, Amanda Davie will assist the Community Safety Manager and Sergeant Peter Castleton in delivering those actions. Other actions, such as the partnership arrangement with Victim Support, Mediation Service and the CAB (to be discussed later at this meeting) will also assist.

5.4 The Community Safety Forum will also wish to take this opportunity to review its membership with a view to further extending its partnership working – and achieving the aims set out in the Improvement Plan.

The current membership is –

## **6.0 Review of Membership**

6.1 The current membership of the Community Safety Forum is set out below (membership also includes the police, Police Authority and council services):

Age Concern	Area Housing Panels
Federation of the Disabled	Mediation Service
Primary Care Trust	Business Crime Reduction Partnership
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
St. James's Street Safety Sub-Group	Sussex Probation
Victim Support	Voluntary Sector Forum
Women's Refuge Project	Youth Offending Team

6.2 The Forum may wish to consider particularly –

- increasing the involvement of the courts and criminal justice agencies through inviting representatives from the Magistrates, the Sussex Criminal Justice Board and Crown Prosecution Service; this could help the CPS to take out their services to the community as well as improving the effectiveness of the CDRP
- inviting the Citizens Advice Bureaux to be a member of the Forum

- inviting the Neighbourhood Action Teams to become members of the Forum

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