

COMMUNITY SAFETY and LEISURE SCRUTINY PANEL

AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Re

Investigation into Neighbourhood Policing

- 1 **Background** – Over the last decade there has been an increase in the number of Police Officers and the introduction of a raft of new measures to tackle Anti-Social behaviour and lawlessness. The youth justice system has been transformed and sentences for serious offences have been toughened. A recent initiative is the drive for Neighbourhood Policing, which is considered by Government as being at the heart of the Police reform programme and regarded as the future for local policing in England. This method of Policing requires a cultural change, which will govern the way communities are policed for the foreseeable future. To succeed the Government wants to ensure that the Police, the Local Authority and the Public are integrated and work in harmony to tackle the problems of anti social behaviour plaguing communities today.

- 2 **Scrutiny** - The aim of the Scrutiny was essentially to assess the progress for introducing Neighbourhood Policing into Middlesbrough. Consequently the Panel determined the following Terms of Reference:-
 - Assess the progress for introducing Neighbourhood Policing in Middlesbrough.
 - Determine the present and proposed stages for forming the partnership.
 - Assess how the Local Community is to be integrated.
 - Identify the anticipated benefits of neighbourhood Policing.

- 3 The Panel initially obtained information from the Community Protection Service and then from the Police responsible for introducing neighbourhood Policing

into Middlesbrough. From this background it was clear that for NP to be really effective it would be dependant upon an effective partnership based upon the local police, the local authority and local residents. The core principles of the initiative are to ensure local people determine local priorities for action. Recognising that many of these problems cannot be resolved by one agency the formation of an effective partnership is viewed as the mechanism for successful Policing.

- 4 The objectives of Neighbourhood Policing are
 - Reduction in Crime and worry about crime.
 - Reduction in anti social behaviour and perceptions of ASB
 - Increase Public Satisfaction and confidence.
 - Engagement, visibility, familiarity and problem solving
- 5 The Panel is aware that there are National guidelines for introducing Neighbourhood policing and also target dates for it to be operational. When receiving an outline programme for Middlesbrough from the Police it was clear that this programme would achieve those deadlines and also accommodate a Pilot scheme being introduced in East Middlesbrough. The Pilot scheme would also provide the opportunity to identify any issues, which may require reconsideration before the whole area is operational. However, the Panel was concerned that the timetable for the pilot area kept being delayed and eroding the ability to learn and change before the full programme was introduced.
- 6 The Panel also wanted to obtain some comparison with areas, which were operating Neighbourhood Policing both within Cleveland Police division and also outside of this Police, area. The Panel found that Hartlepool was the pilot area for Cleveland Police and that Sunderland was also classified as within the same family group (BCU) as Middlesbrough but operating under the Northumbria Police division. The Panel considered these comparisons to be valuable as the Government had issued guidelines and their interpretation and application could differ between Police divisions.
- 7 The Panel found that Hartlepool presented a very positive picture of Neighbourhood Policing and that the representatives of the community conveyed how the scheme had in practice exceeded the community expectations. It was very clear to the Panel that the Police, Local Authority and the Local community were working very closely together on this project and that the statistics for tackling crime and anti social behaviour had been very encouraging. The Panel then visited Sunderland to enquire as to how they had applied the principles of Neighbourhood Policing. Once again the Panel engaged with the operational Police and those of the Local Authority in addition to representatives from public and private Housing organisations. Members were appraised on How Sunderland structured its NP operation and that there were 7 Neighbourhood sectors. The Panel obtained a range of operational information and while it was apparent there were differences in the application of NP into the two areas visited. The comparisons ensured the Panel could consider the strengths from both Hartlepool and Sunderland and convey to Middlesbrough Police when constructing their own framework.

- 8 **Findings** - The Panel have addressed the Terms of Reference and deliberated their findings. The results of which are that the Panel considers that Middlesbrough Police are actively developing Neighbourhood Policing into the area . Although there appears to be some slippage in the initial timetable this is still well within the Government guidelines and should not cause any concerns.
- 9 The Panel was concerned at the apparent lack of development in the forming of the partnership and would encourage consideration for including member involvement at the partnership/steering group level. The Panel also believes that the Council should have had greater involvement in the development of NP as the principles are for the Police, Local Authority and the Community to come together for NP to be effective. The Council appears to be comfortable with letting this be driven by the Police and the Panel would encourage the Council to demonstrate some leadership and ensure greater involvement in the development of NP for Middlesbrough. The indications are, that at the time the Panel were undertaking their examination, there was little evidence that the Local Community had been involved or engaged on the issue of forming a Neighbourhood Police service. The Panel considers that establishing the steering group involving the community should be considered a priority.
- 10 The Panel recognised the potential for a range of benefits derived from the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing These would include directly allocated resources to each geographical area of Middlesbrough, the potential for greater community involvement and consequently greater community intelligence. The Panel was also presented with evidence from other Police divisions that the improved intelligence also increased detection rates and improved preventative measures increasing community confidence and reducing fear of crime and anti social behaviour locally.

CONCLUSION

- 11 The Panel concludes that the development and introduction of Neighbourhood Policing is a step in the right direction, as it is believed NP will improve detection rates, reduce crime and improve public confidence. Middlesbrough is complying with government guidelines for establishing NP and has just recently introduced NP into a pilot area, while aiming to introduce this system area wide by April 2007.
- 12 The Panel had only received positive feedback from other Local Authority areas where NP was operational where Police Officers, PCSO's and the Local Authority are working together. The Panel does consider this Council should be demonstrating greater leadership in the formation of NP into Middlesbrough. The Panel also found that there was little evidence at the time of undertaking the Scrutiny that local people had been involved in determining local priorities. However, as Middlesbrough is at an early stage in developing NP and just introduced its pilot into East Middlesbrough, this may now be happening in that

area. Although, the Panel does consider there were benefits had this been undertaken at an earlier stage in the process.

- 13 The Panel recognises that the Council operates its own Street Warden service, which the Panel has addressed previously. The priorities and focus of Street Wardens does differ from the core priorities of NP, however, the intelligence that Wardens can provide can make a significant contribution to achieving those NP priorities. The Panel believes a mechanism for feeding through this knowledge should be established. However, it is important that the Wardens maintain their independence from Neighbourhood Policing while the Council targets a range of wider priorities for engaging with the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14 That the Community Safety and leisure Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive, that: -
- A A full review be undertaken in one years time to ascertain the achievements resulting from the Introduction of NP and this be presented to the CS&L Scrutiny Panel and Executive
 - B To undertake an audit of estates involving consulting the community and other agencies to assist in identifying areas for designing out crime (e.g. Remove hedges bushes, Improve lighting, reduce fear of crime etc.) It is recommended that this be undertaken within six months of the Executive decision
 - C To agree with the Police and local community a range of specific performance indicators targeted to individual neighbourhood areas, which measure the reduction in crime and antisocial behaviour. These targets to be established within six months of the Executive decision.
 - D Consideration is given for the allocation of enforcement officers specifically targeted to the town centre for the issue of penalty notices (re graffiti dog fouling, litter etc). Also for the provision of enforcement officers to be directed to hot spot areas outside of the town centre when needs arise. All actions to be set against targeted PI's and for the results of enforcement to be publicised.
 - E Consideration is given for Ward Councillors to be integrated with Neighbourhood Policing procedures, thereby giving greater opportunity for Councillors to engage with their local community. This to be operational within three months of NP being introduced.
 - F That Council officers engage immediately with the Police to assist in establishing an appropriate partnership/steering group for NP. This partnership to include political representation from the Council and to invite and involve the Community.

- G To ensure that issues of diversity are accounted for with particular emphasis on ensuring the resources applied to areas with high ethnic occupancy are multi lingual.
- H That the Executive address the issues of fragmentation within Public Protection Service to ensure the services dealing with community safety are operating efficiently.
- I Future funding of Neighbourhood Policing may fall on the Council. Consequently, the Panel recommends that attention is given at an early stage to ensure present Council services such, as Wardens are not eroded.

Middlesbrough
Council



AGENDA ITEM:

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

6th March 2007

**COMMUNITY SAFETY and LEISURE
SCRUTINY PANEL**

NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

FINAL REPORT

**A SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING**

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 15 The purpose of this report is to present the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel's assessment and proposals on the introduction of neighbourhood Policing into Middlesbrough in relation to the agreed Terms of Reference of the Scrutiny.

OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 16 The overall aim of the Scrutiny Investigation was to assess the progress for introducing Neighbourhood Policing into Middlesbrough and to advise on issues, which the panel considers, will improve its operation.
- 17 To present the findings of the Scrutiny Investigation to the Executive for their consideration.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 18 The Scrutiny Panel met on 25th July 2006 and determined that it would be addressing the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing into Middlesbrough as its next subject of enquiry. Consequently the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny investigation were established and are presented as follows: -
- Assess the progress for introducing Neighbourhood Policing in Middlesbrough.
 - Determine the present and proposed stages for forming the partnership.
 - Assess how the Local Community is to be integrated.

- Identify the anticipated benefits of neighbourhood Policing.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 19 **Work Programme** At the Overview and Scrutiny Boards meeting of 27th June 2006 the board approved the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panels Work Programme. This programme identified the Respect Agenda as a subject for the Panel to undertake an awareness session, as it is a Government initiative to tackle Anti-social behaviour. Following this the Panel was programmed to explore Neighbourhood Policing as being the first subject area for the Panels consideration. A driver for this is that NP is considered a key enabler in delivering elements of the Respect Agenda. Consequently, the Panel has explored the operation, development and intention to implement Neighbourhood Policing in Middlesbrough.
- 20 **Background to Neighbourhood Policing** Since 1997 there has been an increase in the number of Police and the introduction of a raft of new measures to tackle Anti-Social behaviour and lawlessness. The youth justice system has been transformed and sentences for serious offences have been toughened.
- 21 One initiative is the drive for Neighbourhood Policing. This action is considered by Government as being at the heart of the Police reform programme and regarded as the future for local policing in England. Considered a major cultural change, which will govern the way communities are policed for the foreseeable future. Therefore, having established neighbourhood teams the task is about engaging with the community and understanding the dynamics of people who live in the area. Reassuring the public is a key part of the system which can also provide a direct flow of information and intelligence. While this may ensure partnerships flourish it can have a direct impact on tackling crime and anti social behaviour in the area in which it operates.
- 22 In operation, Neighbourhood Policing is a partnership. This partnership is based upon the local police, the local authority and local residents. The core principles of the initiative are to ensure local people determine local priorities for action. Recognising that many of these problems cannot be resolved by one agency the formation of an effective partnership is viewed as the mechanism for successful Policing.
- 23 The objectives of Neighbourhood Policing are
- Reduction in Crime and worry about crime.
 - Reduction in anti social behaviour and perceptions of ASB
 - Increase Public Satisfaction and confidence.
 - Engagement, visibility, familiarity and problem solving
- 24 The Government set up command units across the country with the objective that Neighbourhood Policing will be rolled out and operational by 2008. Every Police force had to nominate a local authority as a pilot and Cleveland Police nominated Hartlepool and consequently, Neighbourhood Policing has been

operational in Cleveland (Hartlepool) for some time while Middlesbrough was targeted for introduction, via a pilot scheme, in October 2006

PANELS SCRUTINY EXAMINATION

25 **Setting the Scene** The Community Protection Service provided the Panel with an outline of how Neighbourhood Policing was to be developed for Middlesbrough. The White Paper *Building Communities Beating Crime (Nov 2004)* committed Government to delivering NP into every community area by 2008. The Prime Minister tasked members of the cabinet to ensure that Local Government plays its full part in delivering NP. The Government has indicated that NP is a key enabler in delivering elements of their "Respect Agenda". The Panel was informed that the Police were leading on the introduction of NP into Middlesbrough and not the Local Authority and that funding would be received directly from Central Government via the Neighbourhood Policing Fund. The Public Protection Service conveyed some of the core principles of Neighbourhood Policing to be

- Allowing local people to determine local priorities
- Tailoring the service to reflect local circumstances
- Ensure a strong partnership is formed to tackle community concerns
- Involve local people at every stage.
- Tackle community issues and feed back the results

The National Reassurance Policing Programme had indicated that a Neighbourhood Policing approach to tackling local issues could have a direct impact on public confidence, the levels of crime and perception of tackling disorder.

26 **The Panels visit to Hartlepool**

The Panel was informed that Hartlepool had been selected as the pilot area for Cleveland Police to introduce Neighbourhood Policing. Consequently the Panel considered it would be beneficial if they had the opportunity to visit Hartlepool and discuss with the Police and Local Authority, the issues they experienced in introducing NP. In addition the Panel requested that representatives of the local community be invited in order that members could engage with people who have direct experience of the changes and impact NP has had in their area.

27 The meeting was facilitated by Hartlepool's Head of Community Safety, who outlined the history of NP in relation to Hartlepool and explained the role of the individual partners. At this meeting the Police, Local Authority, Operational officers, and representatives of the local community were present. The support the Panel received from the Community Safety unit at Hartlepool was very good and the detail presented targeted to the needs of the Panel. The Panel obtained a balanced view of the impact NP has had in the Hartlepool area. Also, how the local community was integrated into the new Policing methods.

Hartlepool based their scheme on four key principles

- Access
- Influence

- Interventions
- Answers

Each principle was outlined to the Panel and how a range of actions are in force to support them.

28 The Panel found that there was a lot of direct engagement and joint working between the Police and the Council at Hartlepool to achieve good integration. This was enhanced through the involvement of community representatives, councillors and the public at a local level and also at partnership meetings.

29 It was presented that Councillors had taken an active role in merging ward surgeries with NP surgeries so the local community could see the achievement of a united effort, consequently, the integrated surgeries are now attracting up to 50 – 60 people. The Panel appreciated that for NP to be successful it required genuine community support and engagement. In this respect resident representatives informed the Panel that the communities expectation was actually lower than what has actually been delivered through NP.

Some key factors, which contribute to the success of NP in Hartlepool, are :-

- Hartlepool have placed an emphasis on PCSO's and now employs around 37
- There are also 37 Police constables allocated directly to NP
- There are 24 Wardens with specific areas and responsibilities
- There are 51 resident groups in the 15 wards forming a strong community network
- Hartlepool employ 6 enforcement officers operating in the town that have issued a substantial number of fixed penalty notices for anti social behaviour.
- The Local Authority represents the local community in issues involving estate design to limit acts of Anti social behaviour
- The Hartlepool representatives considered it Important to establish some PI's for NP to measure the impact (e.g. number attending street surgeries, no of ASB forms issued etc)

30 The Panel was concerned that the Steering Group at Hartlepool did not include a local Councillor and that this input may enhance the Group. Hartlepool Police and Council officers, expressed that it was a Steering Group and the results from the steering group are presented to the wider partnership, which includes Members.

31 The Panel recognised that each allocated Neighbourhood Policing area in Hartlepool was noticeably smaller than the current outline proposals for Middlesbrough. Therefore, the impressive level of community involvement and general integration may be conducive to having smaller NP operational areas.

The Panels visit to Sunderland

32 The Panel considered that while there was national guidance on the overall framework for introducing Neighbourhood Policing. There may be some noticeable variations between different Police forces across the country

regarding the actual application and operation. Consequently the Panel determined that they wanted to engage with a Police force outside of the Cleveland Police area but one which was classified within the same Basic Command Unit (BCU) group. A number of Police Forces were identified and for proximity Sunderland was considered to be an appropriate comparator. Therefore the Panel agreed that they would visit Sunderland and be appraised about how their NP system operates.

33 The Panel visited Sunderland in October and were guided through the operation by Sunderland Police with the assistance of the Local authority. The Panel was informed that NP has been operational in Sunderland for 2 years. And the key issues of their system are:-

- Sunderland comprises of 7 Neighbourhood sectors. Each area has a section inspector responsible for the performance in that area.
- Each area has a shift inspector, a sergeant, 7 police constables and 5 PCSO's covering a population of approximately 1,500 people
- PCSO's would occasionally travel on school busses to create a higher profile and improve local confidence.
- Sunderland has formed a steering group to determine agreed priorities for the delivery of NP. This group comprises of, Police, Local Councillors, Senior Teaching staff, Landlords, Housing representatives, Enforcement Officers, Anti Social behaviour officers, and Youth Representatives.
- There are community engagement meetings, which provide intelligence to target action against those involved with anti social behaviour.
- Sunderland has a Neighbourhood Nuisance Tenants scheme, which feeds into the NP system. The teams were inclined to use Anti Social Behaviour Injunctions as these tended to be actioned quicker than Anti Social behaviour Orders.
- Improved access for residents has been established where they can report incidents via a NP direct dial telephone number, the Web site, e-mail, answer machine or personal contact.
- A separate team has been established which specifically deals with City Centre, to inhibit disorder and ensure a swift response when required.

Engagement with Middlesbrough Partners

34 As mentioned previously in this report, the Panel considers that the basis of effective Neighbourhood Policing is through the co-ordinated efforts of three key partners. The partners being, the Police, the Local Authority and the Community. The Panel had previously undertaken a Scrutiny into the AIM process and had been impressed with the cohesion between partner organisations on that occasion. The Panel believed it was important to engage with the partners involved with introducing Neighbourhood Policing and assess the level of contribution and engagement each partner was making towards introducing a successful system.

- 35 A brief indication of the Panels engagement with each partner is reflected below:-
- 36 **Middlesbrough Police.** The Police operating in Middlesbrough were found to be committed to the introduction of NP and demonstrated an eagerness to join with the Scrutiny Panel when visiting other Police divisions to gain knowledge and not be insular in their approach. The Police had attended every Panel meeting they were invited to and provided a full update on the present position when requested.
- 37 The Police had indicated that their model for Neighbourhood Policing would be to allocate resources to every ward with a total resource of 55 Police Officers dedicated to NP and, at this stage of understanding, probably 24 PCSO's for Middlesbrough. This would give Middlesbrough the highest level of resource allocation in Cleveland. The Panel was initially informed that NP would be operational as a pilot in September; however, this has slowly moved from that date through each month and is now understood to have been implemented in December 06. The Panel had not received any indication that the target of April 07 for all of Middlesbrough to be covered by NP has changed.
- 38 While the Panel appreciates it is still very early days for Middlesbrough in introducing their NP programme, and that the involvement and drive of the Police was very positive. The Panel was concerned at the apparent limited involvement of the Local Authority with the Police and the Panel would have expected more even at this stage.
- 39 **Local Authority.** The Panel endeavoured to engage with the Councils Public Protection division as the central point of contact and provider of information regarding NP. However, the Panel did not derive that the Local Authority was really integrated with NP at this stage and it was conveyed by the service that NP was a Police driven initiative. The Panel had hoped that the local Authority had been more actively involved even at this early stage to jointly direct the development of the initiative. The Panel was also concerned at the lack of engagement with the Local community especially as the Council service had indicated previously that one of the core principles to be involving local people at every stage.
- 40 It was becoming apparent that there were a number of factors, which would assist the Neighbourhood Policing initiative in tackling crime and anti social behaviour. The Panel was becoming increasingly concerned at their lack of awareness regarding what was currently happening across the Council, which would contribute, to assisting NP in its success. The public protection service offered to identify what initiatives were presently being pursued to assist NP such as programmes to design out crime, programmes to enhance street lighting to deter crime etc. However, this report was not forthcoming as requested, consequently the Panel continued with its enquiries in the absence of knowledge of contributory initiatives until a limited update was provided at the closing stage of the Scrutiny.

41 **Local Community.** The Panel is aware that engaging with the local community regarding their involvement with Neighbourhood Policing had not been undertaken during this early stage. While the Panel was appraised that some innovative work was being undertaken through STEM in the pilot area, this was not directly relating to NP. The Panel did enquire with the Police as to the level of intended engagement they were planning to have with the local community. However, as the partnership had not been formed at the time of this enquiry, it was explained that while there would be full engagement with the community this would commence once the partnership was operational. Again, the Panel are concerned at the lack of Community engagement even at this early stage and continues to believe this is an area the Local Authority could have demonstrated greater activity.

42 **Funding** was not contained within the Terms of Reference of this Scrutiny. However, some brief enquiries regarding the level of funding or anticipated allocation for Neighbourhood Policing was raised by the Panel. In response, the Police express that the cost associated with realigning this service is primarily being incorporated into the Police's main budget. This is however; being supported in the early stage by short term funding from Central Government as referenced previously in this report. Consequently the Panel considers other factors may emerge, as there is only approximately 15 months remaining of the additional funding. The Panel would advise the Council to pay particular attention to this area as the NP partnership develops, the initiative is deployed and the demands on resources clarified. Especially as public expectation will be raised for increased Police presence and swifter response times when the issue of sustainability may not yet be clear.

43 **ADDRESSING THE "Terms of Reference"**

1. Assess the progress for introducing Neighbourhood Policing in Middlesbrough.

The Panel has assessed the progress to date. The Panel considers that there has been some slippage on the initial target for introducing the pilot into East Middlesbrough. However, there is no indication that this will impact on achieving the overall target of introducing NP into Middlesbrough by April 2007. It is also important to recognise that this programme is well within the National timetable. Consequently the Panel is comfortable that introducing Neighbourhood Policing into Middlesbrough is progressing well.

2. Determine the present and proposed stages for forming the partnership.

The Panel found this area difficult to ascertain regarding the forming of a partnership in Middlesbrough. It was apparent that there are a range of partnerships and that simple duplication needs to be avoided and also that Middlesbrough has an AIM partnership which could assist in determining the appropriate partners for Neighbourhood Policing.

In visiting other Local Authority areas, which operate Neighbourhood Policing it is apparent, the Local Authority is actively involved in developing and introducing NP. While Middlesbrough Council is well aware of what is happening regarding the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing, at the time of the Panels enquiries, the Panel did not consider this Councils involvement was as integrated as the other areas visited.

3. Assess how the Local Community is to be integrated.

The Panel could find little evidence at this stage that the Community had been approached or engaged in the proposed operation of Neighbourhood Policing. The Panel does consider that benefits would have been derived had engagement with the local Community commenced at an earlier stage. Also, it is considered that, as the partnership for NP has not been established to date that the Council's public protection service should engage with the Police at the earliest opportunity to develop a partnership and ensure the representatives of the Local community are incorporated.

4. Identify the anticipated benefits of neighbourhood Policing.

The Panel identified a range of benefits from introducing Neighbourhood Policing. It was clear from residents living in areas where NP was operational that they felt substantially more secure. This may be due to a perception of increased security but the Panel considers that the intelligence provided contributed to tackling crime and also the interception of Anti Social Behaviour. It is considered that tangible actions such as these are major factors in people's confidence and feeling secure. There are also operational benefits as the Police officer and the PCSO's become more familiar with their "patch" they know the area and become more acutely aware of who or what to look out for. This provides greater opportunity for the preventing of crime.

It was also found in other areas that NP had identified additional issues which residents and the enforcement services would illustrate as improving the local area. These may be issues of design, and layout of the area, or type and number of street lighting etc. all factors, which contribute to tackling crime and making people, feel more secure. The Panel also considers that the increase of targeted enforcement especially in the town centre conveys the correct image and illustrates the commitment of policing the area.

Most importantly, the Panel recognised the reaction from representatives of the community when they could see that they were really being involved in their area and that their actions were influencing the actions for the area. Expressions from the community, which indicated that the achievements were beyond the community expectations, can only convey a success. However, subsequent information from the public protection service has suggested that even in these other authority areas the issues involving local residents are not as positive as presented to the Panel. The Panel does concede this is always going to be a challenging and evolving area.

NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING IN MIDDLESBROUGH

- 44 The Panel was informed that Police resources are presently structured in a manner which facilitates Police officers being withdrawn from their area to respond to incidents or demands in other areas of Middlesbrough as circumstances dictate. One of the principles of Neighbourhood Policing is to have dedicated resources to specific geographical areas. This results in improving response times to local issues and improved local intelligence. The Panel was informed that the national guidance proposed that 25% of Police resource should be directed to NP. In Hartlepool the allocation was 30% of resource while only 22% was currently programmed for Middlesbrough.
- 45 At the time the Panel undertook this Scrutiny examination, the intention was that the Police would be providing dedicated Neighbourhood Police resources to the targeted 8.0 am to midnight period. This will be a priority time for cover while response teams would be available to cover from midnight to 8.0 AM across Middlesbrough. The Police response team would not be dedicated to any specific area and will provide support at a local level when requested.
- 46 Community Intelligence is of vital importance to ensure good prevention and also subsequent detection. To ensure the local communities are integrated into the process there is an intention to introduce local meetings with the community in new locations within ward areas (schools, community centres, etc) and provide a new focus for local community involvement. Consideration is currently being given to incorporating neighbourhood co ordination meetings, which will fit in with the Councils Aim process, and provide a positive link with more operational issues. The Police consider that NP would encourage more people to interact with the local Police officer and the resulting intelligence would contribute towards a targeted 20% reduction in crime and anti social behaviour by 2008
- 47 The Panel was informed initially that the intention was to introduce a pilot Neighbourhood Policing scheme into East Middlesbrough in September 06. This target date then became early Oct, then late Oct and then November. The Panel was also informed that the whole area will be going live with NP in April 07 and any problems identified in the pilot could be resolved before the full programme is launched. However, the delayed introduction of the Pilot has eaten into the period of time to resolve any issues which become apparent prior to the full system becoming operational. The Panel is hopeful that there will still be sufficient time to learn from the experiences of the Pilot when establishing the system for the remainder of Middlesbrough.
- 48 The Panel was informed that the Home office was not being prescriptive on how many Police officers are placed into NP, and that this is for local determination within the guidelines and principles set by Government. Initially the Police informed the Panel that NP would be targeted to every ward with dedicated officers. However, during the Scrutiny, the Panel was subsequently informed that Middlesbrough was to have five main zones for this function, although it is

understood the intention will be to bring Neighbourhood Policing down towards ward level forming the 23 wards into 18 neighbourhoods. It was expressed that each neighbourhood is to have a dedicated Police Officer, a Special Police Constable, a PCSO a Warden, and volunteer, which will form a team for each area, managed by a police sergeant. (The pilot area of East Middlesbrough is to have two teams of two officers). Each NP team will have its own 6-month action plan covering 3 priorities to be achieved within the year. However, the Panels enquiries revealed that NP officers would be allocated on the basis of criminal statistics and situations relevant to that area. Consequently areas such as the town centre would have different priorities to outskirts areas, although it is anticipated that there will be a high degree of commonality of priorities between neighbourhoods. The Panel was concerned that there had not been any consideration for ensuring that the officer resources allocated to areas had taken into account the need to be reflective of areas with high ethnic population and where language etc may be an issue.

- 49 A local partnership board is to be established which will be programmed to meet monthly. This board will consist of Police, council staff, local people and that the first meeting of this board was targeted for September 06 to ensure the resources were in place to commence the pilot in East Middlesbrough. However the Panel was informed that the Partnership is not likely to be established until January for East Middlesbrough and April for the rest of Middlesbrough. To assist the board in determining action to address issues there will be PSG's (area based problem solving groups)
- 50 The Panel also considered that the appearance of an area can add substantially to peoples perception of crime and almost to the acceptance that it will continue if the area continues to be neglected. Consequently, the Panel would encourage the Council to approach Erimus to address the number of untidy and neglected gardens in the area to improve the general ambience of Middlesbrough.

COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT

- 51 In considering the objectives of Neighbourhood Policing it was clear to the Panel that it is essential to have a genuine commitment from the Council to achieve a successful NP scheme. The Panel considered that there is currently a lot of fragmentation between services such as Police, community support workers, enforcement officers, social services, education, Erimus housing etc and that the whole Neighbourhood Policing system should contribute to bringing these together. The Panel identified some points for note
- It was considered by the Panel that the services involved with tackling Crime and Anti Social behaviour should be working in harmony at a local level and not just at a strategic level.
 - The Panel was informed that a meeting was to be held to discuss the future of AIM and how it would work with NP as some flexibility was essential to respond to problems. The Panel considers this to be an important ingredient in supporting an effective NP scheme.

- The Panel considered that as the Council employs a 'Secure by design officer' who works with planning officers etc, then it is envisaged that the opportunity to design out crime would be a key factor for future proposals
- The Panel was informed that problem families were also a source of ASB and that there is currently a Middlesbrough Families project funded by NRF, which is aimed at changing family lifestyles and consequently impacting on ASB. The Panel considers that tackling the root cause of Anti Social behaviour is an important move and that these initiatives have the potential to make a positive contribution.
- That greater links with enforcement need to be established and that their needs to be a close working relationship to the officers involved with NP.
- A key issue was the view that too many people are attending meetings and ticking boxes without anything actually being achieved. The Panel considers greater emphasis should be placed on the actual monitoring and questioning of such actions.

COMPARISONS WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES

52 In comparison with the other Local Authorities visited, Middlesbrough could be considered as running slightly behind pace. However, the Panel is not critical of this as Middlesbrough is running within the national timetable and that this has provided the opportunity for Middlesbrough to observe the experiences of these other Local Authorities and thereby shape the proposed system for Middlesbrough more accurately to reflect the local issues.

SERVICE ENGAGEMENT

53 The Panel appreciated that Neighbourhood Policing with the direct engagement of the Local Authority was going to be introduced into Middlesbrough during 2006/07 and the Panels examination of this service was going to be in the form of Policy formulation. Consequently the Panel wanted to gain information and engage with the Police, the Councils Public Protection service and also discover the intentions for community involvement.

54 The Panel considered that Middlesbrough Police demonstrated a positive engagement with the Panel and also accompanied the Panel during their visits to both Hartlepool and Sunderland. The Police demonstrated an eagerness to attend meetings and understand the practices etc being applied in neighbouring Local Authority areas. During the Panels visits to other Local Authorities they found that the Police, the local Authority and representatives of partnerships and the community all demonstrated a positive engagement with this Panel. Against this working environment, the Panel considered it unfortunate that the Chair had to make representation during the course of the Panels enquiries as it was considered that this Councils Public Protection service had not engaged with the spirit, for the Panels Scrutiny examination members would have desired.

- 55 This was evidenced by the service not attending meetings with the Chair and Vice chair as requested. The limited response to requests for information regarding who would be representing the service at meetings / visits and the none submission of reports as requested by the Panel.
- 56 The Panel considered that there was little evidence of leadership by the Service and would encourage the Executive to assess if the Public Protection Service is operating effectively as it is essential that the Council demonstrate a positive lead in the development of an effective Neighbourhood Policing service.

CONCLUSION

- 57 The Panel was informed that the pilot scheme being introduced into East Middlesbrough was scheduled for September and then gradually this became October and then eventually November. Also that a Partnership Board or Steering Group had not been established and the intention was that this may be formed after the pilot was introduced. While no doubt for legitimate reasons, the Panel was concerned regarding the planning, management and implementation of Neighbourhood policing into Middlesbrough. This slippage not only reduces the opportunity to shape the full programme from lessons learnt from the pilot area. It could also impact on the delivery of the NP programme and could easily have raised community expectations unnecessarily.
- 58 The Panel is aware that measuring improvement is a difficult issue as so many factors can increase or reduce the incidents of crime or indeed people's perception of crime. Crime figures and disorder incidents identified for all wards in Middlesbrough through records and surveys is one way of making a broad judgement. The reduction in these statistics and positive responses to people's perception provides a collective judgement that the partners employed to undertake this task are actually achieving their goals. The Panel was informed that in Hartlepool, crime is down 10% while detection rates up 40%. The benefits of Middlesbrough having a Street Warden service, is that it secures local information, tackles peoples poor perceptions and contributes to reducing the fear of crime locally. Clearly, as the demands are different in different areas within Middlesbrough. Neighbourhood Policing will be able to use the appropriate intelligence, co ordinate the appropriate partners and deal with the issues as they arise. The Panel considers that collectively the increase of dedicated Police officers in wards, the improved intelligence, and the active involvement of the local community are all positive ingredients to ensure the effectiveness of neighbourhood Policing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 59 The Panel's key recommendations to the Executive are as outlined below.

- A A full review be undertaken in one years time to ascertain the achievements resulting from the Introduction of NP and this be presented to the CS&L Scrutiny Panel and Executive
- B To undertake an audit of estates involving consulting the community and other agencies to assist in identifying areas for designing out crime (e.g. Remove hedges bushes, Improve lighting, reduce fear of crime etc.) It is recommended that this be undertaken within six months of the Executive decision
- C To agree with the Police and local community a range of specific performance indicators targeted to individual neighbourhood areas, which measure the reduction in crime and antisocial behaviour. These targets to be established within six months of the Executive decision.
- D Consideration be given for the allocation of enforcement officers specifically targeted to the town centre for the issue of penalty notices (re graffiti dog fouling, litter etc). Also for the provision of enforcement officers to be directed to hot spot areas outside of the town centre when needs arise. All actions to be set against targeted PI's and for the results of enforcement to be publicised.
- E Consideration is given for Ward Councillors to be integrated with Neighbourhood Policing procedures, thereby giving greater opportunity for Councillors to engage with their local community. This to be operational within three months of NP being introduced.
- F That Council officers engage immediately with the Police to assist in establishing an appropriate partnership/steering group for NP. This partnership to include political representation from the Council and to invite and involve the Community.
- G To ensure that issues of diversity are accounted for with particular emphasis on ensuring the resources applied to areas with high ethnic occupancy are multi lingual.
- H That the Executive address the issues of fragmentation within Public Protection Service to ensure the services dealing with community safety are operating efficiently.
- I Future funding of Neighbourhood Policing may fall on the Council. Consequently, the Panel recommends that attention is given at an early stage to ensure present Council services such, as Wardens are not eroded.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

60 The Panel is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular the co-operation we have received from the following: -

D Smith	Police – Inspector (Middlesbrough)
G Bass	Police - Acting Inspector (Middlesbrough)
J Nolan	Community Protection
A Simpson	Police – (Hartlepool)
A Mawston	Community Protection (Hartlepool)
B Neale	Safer partnership (Hartlepool)
Representatives	members of the Local Community (Hartlepool)
J Hill	Community Protection
A Patterson	Police - Inspector (Sunderland)
D Dawson	Housing Group (Sunderland)
S Kell	Anti Social behaviour (Private sector group)
Cllr B Coppinger	Executive Member for Community Safety and Leisure

COUNCILLOR CHRIS ROBSON

CHAIR OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LEISURE SCRUTINY PANEL

April 2006

Contact Peter Clark
Senior Scrutiny Officer
Performance and Policy Directorate
Telephone 01642 729708 (DDI)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were consulted or referenced to during this Scrutiny and in the compilation of this report:

- (a) Government Papers on Neighbourhood Policing
- (b) Minutes of the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panels of
4th July, 25th July, 15th August, 5th Sept, 4th Oct, 17th Oct, 7th Nov,
28th Nov, 19th Dec - 2006

ABBREVIATIONS

Used within the Report, Minutes or Presentations

AIM	Active Intelligence mapping
ASB	Anti Social Behaviour
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
BCU	Basic Command Unit
NP	Neighbourhood Policing
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
SPC	Special Police Constable
PSO	Police Support Officer
PC	Police Constable
STEM	Strong Together in East Middlesbrough
PI's	Performance Indicators
NPPT	Neighbourhood Policing programme Team
NRF	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
PSG	Problem Solving Group