

AGENDA ITEM: 8

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

3rd April 2007

**COMMUNITY SAFETY and LEISURE
SCRUTINY PANEL**

FINAL REPORT

**A SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO
RESPECT AGENDA**

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel's assessment and proposals on the delivery of the Respect Agenda into Middlesbrough.

OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 2 The overall aim of the Scrutiny Examination was to assess the progress and benefits of introducing the Respect Agenda into Middlesbrough.
- 3 To present the findings of the Scrutiny Investigation to the Executive for their consideration.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 4 The Scrutiny Panel met in June 2006 and determined that they would receive a presentation in July 2006 which would outline the Respect Agenda to enable the Panel to ascertain how this would link with the Mayor's Reduction Agenda.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5 **Work Programme.** As the Panel was determining its work programme for 2006 / 07 one of the areas the Panel wanted further information on was the Respect Agenda. Consequently on 4th July the Panel received an introduction on the Respect Agenda and how this was intended to be rolled out in Middlesbrough.
- 6 **Setting the Scene.** The Community Protection Service presented a report and gave a presentation on the Respect Agenda and Action Plan. This presentation outlined that this was part of the government's drive to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) by addressing the underlying causes and by early intervention in problem areas. The Respect Action Plan had evolved from the government's 'Respect' document and outlined the proposed measures to be implemented.
- 7 The Panel was appraised that causes of ASB had been recognised as poor parenting, truancy and exclusion from school. Environmental factors, such as living in a deprived area, peer involvement in anti-social behaviour and drug and alcohol abuse was also identified as contributory factors.
- 8 The Respect Action Plan had set out six Key Themes for addressing the underlying causes of ASB: -
1. Activities for Children and Young People
 - to implement proposals from *Youth Matters*, target disadvantaged young people through sport and art, introduce Britain's first national Youth Volunteering Service, expand the mentoring system, to offer role models to those without them and to review the effectiveness of youth activities.
 2. Schools – Improving behaviour and attendance
 - tackling poor behaviour with new legislation; introducing secondary school behaviour and truancy partnerships, taking action on persistent truancy, informal and unofficial exclusions, children missing education and improvement of provision for pupils out of school.
 3. Supporting Families

- to improve parenting provision nationally, including LA delivery, work force development and the establishment of a National Parenting Academy; also focussing on parents most in need of help, including teenage parents; and tackling irresponsible parents, using parenting orders and the inclusion of parents in Pre-Sentencing Reports for young offenders.
4. Dealing with the most challenging families
 - by establishing a network of intensive family support schemes, addressing the most challenging families and the consideration of sanctions for households evicted for anti-social behaviour, who refuse to co-operate with the agencies involved in helping them.
 5. Strengthening Communities
 - by adopting a consistent approach, inclusion of mandatory respect and ASB outcomes in Local Area Agreements, more involvement or residents, neighbourhood management and warden schemes, real accountability of police and local authorities, especially into deprived areas. The new non-emergency telephone number of '101' was to be launched, for the reporting of ASB and similar incidents,
 6. Effective Enforcement and Community Justice
 - this would involve adjustments to the legal system to allow the closure of ASB family homes, by serving an Exclusion Notice for 3 months to allow the neighbourhood to return to a more peaceful existence; ASB offenders serving their community punishment in the areas where they had caused the problems.
- 9 In July the Panel was informed that the Council's approach to the Respect Action Plan was to obtain strategic commitment from service areas and partner agencies to implement and progress the measures within the Action Plan. The Panel appreciated that the Respect Action Plan was in its early stages of implementation as the Respect Agenda had only been launched by Government in January 2006. However, the Panel considered the Plan must be applied at local level and that all responsible agencies must play their part. Consequently the Panel requested that an update on the Respect Agenda be brought back to the Panel in early 2007.

SCRUTINY EXAMINATION

- 10 As the Panel had received outline information on 4th July 2006 regarding the implementation of the Respect Agenda and the development of the Action Plan. The Panel considered it was prudent to engage with the service again in February 2007 to assess how this was being actioned in Middlesbrough and if benefits were apparent.
- 11 The Panel was informed that Middlesbrough had been selected as a Respect Action Area in response to their efforts in tackling Anti Social Behaviour. In addition to the funding already secured through NRF in relation to the Family intervention Programme a further £125K had been made available for a

parenting programme. In addition to the aforementioned, £50K had been allocated by the DfES to recruit a parenting practitioner. In considering the above the Panel recognised a co-ordinated approach had been taken to securing a range of funding which focused on initiatives to address Anti Social Behaviour.

- 12 The Panel recognised the strengths in modifying the Respect Action Plan to compliment the Partnerships priority themes and its support to the Mayors Reduction Agenda. The target date for having the Action Plan operational is April 2007. It was also considered a positive move by the Panel that mandatory performance indicators have been identified to measure Anti Social Behaviour.
- 13 A key theme of the Action Plan was effective parenting. Consequently the Respect Family Intervention programme had been introduced and the Panel received information of one family who were taken through the programme. The Panel recognised the positive affect this programme was having in supporting the family away from Anti Social Behaviour and drug addiction. The Panel also considered the comparatively low weekly cost to support the family was good value in relation to multi agency intervention. In addition to the example shown which illustrated the relocation of a family there were twelve other families being supported in their own homes at the time of these enquiries.

CONCLUSION

- 14 The Panel was encouraged by the success in securing Home Office funding which would support the Families Project and also the support workers within. It became evident that this project provided a positive approach to supporting families in their move away from Anti Social Behaviour and associated problems with drug addiction. One of the key issues with this approach was that it addressed the totality of the family and established a plan which directly targeted the families individual needs. The Panel considered that this support would assist families in regaining self esteem which would, contribute to sustaining the success achieved through the programme, improve employment opportunities for family members and help integrate the family into community.
- 15 The Panel appreciated that the Respect Agenda was launched in January 2006 and that such initiatives require a multi agency approach and funding. Funding for this initiative has been boosted with Middlesbrough being identified as one of the 40 Respect Zones, which consequently secured additional Home Office funding. As the core principle is to tackle Anti Social Behaviour the Panel considers it would be prudent that the Respect Action Plan becomes embedded within the Councils Agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- A To report back to the Panel in January 2008 and present how families had progressed over the preceding 18 months, to measure the sustainability and assess if the early success of the project is maintained.
- B That endeavours be undertaken to engage with Housing Associations and other private landlords within Middlesbrough to provide direct support to the Families project.
- C That the service explores the possibility of Trust status for the Families Project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

17 The Panel is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of this examination. We would like to place on record our appreciation to the following: -

J Nolan Community Safety Manager
M Walker Operations Manager
E Chicken Head of Community Protection

COUNCILLOR CHRIS ROBSON

CHAIR OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LEISURE SCRUTINY PANEL

April 2006

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (a) Publications on Respect Agenda and Respect Zones.

(b) Respect update to CMT February 2007.

(c) Minutes of the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panels of
4th July 2006, and 6th February 2007