

CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday 21 October 2021.

PRESENT: Councillors C McIntyre (Chair), G Wilson (Vice-Chair), S Dean, L Lewis, L Mason, D McCabe and J Rostrom

**PRESENT BY
INVITATION:**

**ALSO IN
ATTENDANCE:**

OFFICERS: S Blood, G Field, M Walker, C Breheny and D Metcalfe

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors R Arundale and C Dodds

21/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest received at this point in the meeting.

21/7 MINUTES- CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES- 21 SEPTEMBER 2021

The minutes from the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel held on 21 September 2021 were submitted and approved as a true record.

21/4 TOUGH ENOUGH? ENFORCEMENT IN MIDDLESBROUGH AND ITS IMPACT ON CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR : PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Chair welcomed the Head of Stronger Communities and the Operational Community Safety Manager to the meeting to provide information in relation to the Panel's review on Tough Enough? Enforcement in Middlesbrough and its impact on crime and anti-social behaviour.

The panel had requested officers to attend to provide information in relation to the first terms of reference of the review:

To examine the powers set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and how this has shaped Middlesbrough's partnership working to tackle crime and anti –social behaviour in the Town.

The Head of Stronger Communities provided a presentation on the following:
- Middlesbrough's community safety team (6 aspects to the team)

- **Neighbourhood Safety Wardens-** 43 wardens who deal with a whole host of things, including for example; support vulnerable people i.e. refer to and link them to specialist support services such as Homeless, Substance Misuse, Debt Management, Domestic Abuse, Routs to Employment/Work, Health services; Support victims of crime and antisocial behavior; Enforce parking contraventions Parking Fines; Issue Fixed Penalty Notices for littering /dog fouling ; Enforce PSPO in TS1;Carry Naloxone injections and use them to save lives; wardens are trained in first aid and basic life support (they can also administer CPR) and gather intelligence and information which is shared with Police and other key partners.
- **Neighbourhood Safety Wardens (Environmental)-** x 7 and Environmental Operatives x 5 (Flying Squad) . The Panel heard that the flying Squad were a newly formed Team developed on 1 March 2021 who identify and search through fly tipping, collect and remove all fly tipping from the particular site.

The Neighbourhood Safety Wardens further Enforce Fly Tipping, via fines and if necessary through the courts ; deal with stray dogs, deal with abandoned vehicles

and are trained to respond to wardens activities already mentioned.

The Operations Community Safety Manager further provided the panel with examples of best practice from the Team in relation to fly tipping. Since the introduction of the Team there have been positive results across the Town.

- **Neighbourhood Safety Officers** – 7 officers who deal with issues that require a multi-agency approach, who work directly with elected members and try and solve problems to community issues. These can be varied depending on the issue.

The officers Utilise a range of legal and non-legal measures to resolve antisocial behaviour, reduce crime and the fear of crime and bring respite to victims of crime and antisocial behaviour

The Team Investigate complaints of nuisance, antisocial behaviour and hate crime, working across all housing tenures, using advisory, counselling, negotiating / persuasive skills to convince others to take particular courses of action, where appropriate, this may result in for example, an anti-social behaviour contract

The Head of Stronger communities further outlined that where all other avenues fail, the officers will gather a portfolio of evidence and work with key stakeholders to produce a prosecution pack for House Closure; Civil Injunction, or Criminal Behaviour Order against persistent and unchanging offenders.

The panel were additionally presented with a slide which provided examples of where civil injunctions and house closures had been carried out to deal with persistent offenders in the Town.

The Head of Service advised that as a team, there were certain tools and powers which they hold, these include for example:

- Police accreditation- awarded in 2019- delegated to the Chief Constable to officers within the team. This gives the officers power to ask individuals for their name and address and if they fail to do so this is a criminal offence. Low level anti-social behaviour
- Public Space protection order – TS1 area
- Closure orders
- Civil injunctions
- Acceptable behaviour campaign (ABC)- a really useful tool which is affective to deal with certain individuals
- Environmental powers
- Parking enforcement
- Power of persuasion
- Partnership working – a key tool to our work. The team have daily briefings with the police/ Selective landlord licensing team/ community safety and the housing team to discuss key offenders and issues. Active intelligence mapping (AIM) which takes place every 3 weeks which analyse data and creates action plans to tackle hot spots and there is also the community safety partnership (statutory body)

The Operations Community Safety Manager provided the Panel with Activity data since 1 April 2021

Total number of service requests dealt with by the service April 2021-20/10/2021	13872
CCTV total number of cameras in the local authority network	400+ and more installs planned - Officers have actively installed cctv across the town and there are further plans to install more and improve the infrastructure within the control room
PSPO warning/positive interventions	244
PSPO Fines	19

Environmental enforcement actions/ care files and fixed penalty notices combined	145 (will increase significantly in the coming months as investigations are concluded)
Closure orders	9
Civil injunctions	7- the panel were provided with 3 examples of these these have been utilised.
Lives saved using Naloxone	2

Following the presentation of data, the Head of Stronger Communities provided the Panel with examples of support e.g. referrals to social workers , Temperature checks during Covid 19, wardens engage with LINX project, all of which have been excellent examples of support within the community.

Further examples were provided in relation to closure orders and partnership and community working. Within the warden service, the panel were made aware of "Gentle George" who speaks 5 different languages and is a great asset to the team. The Head of Stronger Community Communities gave further examples of partnership working: amazing alleys (9 already completed and a further 11 in progress) and bedding areas within community hubs.

The Community Cohesion, Resilience and Migration Team additional add excellent community partnership to Middlesbrough, examples of which have been talent shows; supporting Refugee week and positive work with various communities to increase cultural awareness. The team work across the whole of Middlesbrough and at present are working with intergenerational work.

The Head of Stronger Communities also provided a brief update in relation to the Community Safety partnership.

The Panel have previously received update on this but were reminded that the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was a statutory partnership made up of key 'Responsible Authorities' who have equal responsibility for reducing crime and antisocial behaviour under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (As amended by the Antisocial Behaviour Act 2014 and the Policing and Crime Act 2017) .

The responsible authorities are:

- Police
- Local Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authority
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These agencies work in collaboration with other statutory and non-statutory organisations as well as voluntary services and local people.

The CSP produces a Strategic Intelligence Assessment and a Community Safety Plan every 2 years and is up for review in 2022.

The CSP is required to produce a Community Safety Plan, detailing how it intends to tackle crime and disorder and develop strategies to tackle short, medium and long term priorities. Middlesbrough's latest Community Safety Plan will run until the end of March 2022 and the priorities were: The priorities and objectives for each objective were discussed.

Priority 1- Perceptions and feeling Safe (e.g. Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour)
 Priority 2-Tacking the root causes (e.g. tacking adverse experiences)
 Priority 3- Locality working, including the Town Centre (e.g. working with our communities)

The Head of Stronger Communities further advised that there was a 23 page delivery plan which looks at the objectives; these are RAG rated and ensure each objective is on target and if failing, actions will be put in place.

In terms of the success stories from the Community Safety Partnership, the panel were provided with 2 examples:

Example 1:

Pallister Park and Norfolk shops were targeted by groups of youths throwing missiles and causing harassment, alarm and distress to shoppers. Through multiagency

working partners raised £8K to purchase, erect and monitor a rapid deployment camera, partners met on a weekly basis and addressed individuals causing the nuisance and feedback to residents on a weekly basis ensuring they were kept informed of all the work that was being done.

Example 2:

Thirteen Group raised an issue with an increase in empty properties in Eden Road area of Grove Hill, although police, MBC and Thirteen Group were not receiving any complaints from residents. We worked closely with residents gaining their trust and supporting them to report drug dealing and intimidation by 2 households that were dealt with.

Partnership working:

- Town Centre Team – Funding from Tees Valley combined Authority (TVCA). Increased Warden team, funded 2x Police Officers and work with Town Centre businesses
- Introduced a Public Space Protection Order in TS1 area
- Gained Police Accreditation from the Chief Constable of Cleveland Police (Wardens)
- COVID Marshal – Wardens, Park Rangers and library/Community Hub staff
- Part of the Locality Working Model
- Working closely with Selective Landlord Licensing
- Work with Schools and community groups to raise awareness, improve crime, antisocial behavior, environmental crime and community cohesion

Following the presentation, members made a number of questions:

1. Whether locality working and selective landlord licensing would be extended? In response, the Head of Stronger Communities advised that Selective Landlord Licensing now sat within community safety and they had recently redesigned North Ormesby. In terms of Locality working, fantastic progress had been made, however there were no plans as yet to extend into further areas, however once an evaluation of the pilot areas had been completed, and a report would be submitted to Executive (within the next 6 months), and recommendations would be made to potentially roll out across Middlesbrough.
2. Has the pandemic affected the performance indicators of locality working? The Director of Environment and Communities outlined that although Covid has had some delay on locality working, the Council was on track with performance.
3. In terms of the Community Safety Team- a panel member queried that there were 43 officers, but how many were on shift at any one time. In response, the Board were advised that taking into account leave, sickness, there was 21-22 wardens on duty out of the 43 (Community safety wardens) and the Environmental wardens are on duty Monday-Friday (team of 7) so combined was 29 officers on shift. Shifts were set on early and late shifts. In terms of calls for anti-social behavior, the Panel were advised that calls drop off between 8pm and 10pm, however the team were constantly reviewing data to establish how many officers were required. These are also discussed at the daily meetings and AIM meetings.
4. Alley makeovers – a Panel member asked for the names of the alleys to be circulated to the panel.
5. Wardens- a Panel Member outlined that they were led to believe that a warden would be allocated to each ward and queried why this was not the case. In response, the Head of Stronger Communities advised that there were Neighbourhood teams for North, East, South and West Middlesbrough, however there was not a warden dedicated to a specific ward. Intelligence was gathered through foot patrols; CCTV and drive throughs, however the Head of Service advised that if members were concerned
6. Flying squad- information to be provided to the Panel regarding complaints and issues dealt with.
7. CCTV- members queried whether any of the CCTV were out of order. In response, the officers advised that a number in Hemlington were out of action, however no CCTV were out of order. Officers also advised that Members were welcome to visit the control room for a demonstration. There was smart technology in place to look

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at patterns and officers monitor cameras 24/7 and the panel were interested to learn that there was a full time officer from Cleveland Police based in the surveillance centre who undertakes the police reviews and there have been a number of arrests and prosecutions.

The officers were thanked for their presentation.

AGREED:

- That the presentation be noted
- That the information be included within the development of the final report of the Panel in due course.

21/5

CHAIR'S OSB UPDATE

The Chair provide a verbal update in respect to the topics discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 20 October 2021.

AGREED- That the update be noted.

21/6

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.

No items.