

CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday 16 December 2021.

PRESENT: Councillors C McIntyre (Chair), S Dean, C Dodds, L Lewis, D McCabe and J Rostron,

PRESENT BY INVITATION:

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Inspector D Tomlinson

OFFICERS: Susie Blood, Geoff Field, Marion Walker and Susan Lightwing

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: G Wilson and R Arundale

21/13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

21/14 **MINUTES - CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL - 18 NOVEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel held on 18 November 2021 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

21/15 **CHAIR'S OSB UPDATE**

The Chair provided a verbal update from the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 7 December 2021.

AGREED- That the update be noted.

21/16 **TOUGH ENOUGH? ENFORCEMENT IN MIDDLESBROUGH AND ITS IMPACT ON CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR.**

The Chair welcomed the Head of Stronger Communities and Chief Inspector Tomlinson, Cleveland Police 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.

Following on from a previous meeting, where the Panel had learnt about the Council's approach to enforcement, they were keen to establish an understand of community policing in Middlesbrough and gage a better understanding of the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour across the town. The information provided linked to terms of reference 2 of the report- To understand the nature and levels of anti-social behaviour and crime across the town. Has there been improvement or decline over the past 2 years?

The Head of Stronger Communities advised that she would provide the Panel with an overview of the crime and anti-social statistics. The data was Cleveland Police data and showed crime and anti-social behaviour rates for:

- Cleveland Local Authority rate comparisons
- Middlesbrough Wards total numbers
- Middlesbrough Wards rates

The first graph provided information for 100,000 population for Middlesbrough. The statistics showed that Crime rates for Middlesbrough in 2019 and 2020 remained close to the other Local authorities, however looking at the start of 2021 the crime rate had climbed further away

Thursday 16th December, 2021

from the other Local authorities as the year was progressing. It was encouraging to see a reduction of crime and anti-social behavior in October 2021/ November 2021, however the gap between local authorities was significantly wide.

The Head of Stronger Communities advised that there was a change in recording for Crime and anti-social behavior in April 2021, which was highlighted due to the significant drop in recording.

In terms of anti-social behavior, the statistics showed although Middlesbrough has higher anti-social behavior rates than other local authorities, it was encouraging that the rates in Middlesbrough were at their lowest in 3 years.

CRIME IN MIDDLESBROUGH- analysis and rates

In terms of crime across Middlesbrough, the Head Stronger Communities provided a ward analysis. The 2021-22 data was incomplete as this ran from 1 April 2021- 31 March 2022. Crime totals per ward shows that nearly all wards (excluding Brambles & Thorntree, Park end & Beckfield, and Ayresome) saw a decrease in crime from 2019-2020.

The statistics, also showed some wards such as Hemlington, Ladgate, Kader, and Central have already recorded more crimes, or were nearly higher than 2020. The highest crime rates still remain the Central ward, however this was not uncommon to Towns due to the Town center effect, as there was quite often an increase due to shop lifting in prime issues within this area. North Ormesby was second and Newport third.

In terms of crime rates, the 2021 figure was not fully complete so it was expected that they will be lower.

A decrease from 2019 to 2020 was evident. However looking from 2018-2020 ward such as Newport, Park End & Beckfield, Brambles & Thorntree, and Park either increase or remained at a similar rate.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR- analysis and rate

In terms of anti-social behavior analysis, the statistics showed an increase in 17 out of 20 wards from 2019-2020. This was expected due to an increase in Anti-social behavior during COVID and the breach of lockdown rules.

However the Head of Service advised that anti-social behavior in all wards so far in 2021 has remained lower than both 2019 and 2020.

In terms of rates, this does not change significantly except when looking at the Anti-social behavior rate, the only slight difference was that Park End & Beckfield comes higher than Park ward. This was due to less Anti-social behaviour occurring in the ward and a smaller population.

Neighbourhood Policing

The Chair welcomed Chief Inspector Tomlinson to the meeting who was in attendance to provide an overview of Middlesbrough Neighbourhood Police Team and Policing in Middlesbrough and how they are working with partners to tackle some of the issues within Middlesbrough.

The Chief Inspector began with an overview, advising that he had been in charge of Neighbourhood policing for 2 years (as Covid 19 hit). The panel were advised that strong relationships have been built with key partners including for example; Middlesbrough Council; Cleveland Fire Brigade; Thirteen Housing and Neighbourhood Policing Middlesbrough. Cleveland Police have also started to reach out to the community to help bridge the gap between the police and key groups.

Key meetings take place with these partners including:

- Daily partnership meeting where key partners will discuss key areas of concern relating to crime and anti-social behaviour. This meeting looks at trends and patterns to identify issues early.
- monthly meetings to deal with long term issues e.g. currently operating Hemlington

Thursday 16th December, 2021

Strategic Group.

- monthly problem solving meetings- identify long term problems
- 4-6 weekly organised crime group meetings (prevent, pursue, protect and prepare)
- Active intelligence group (run by the local authority)
- Tasking and coordinating group for Middlesbrough – focusing on community work
- Community safety partnership
- Local police and delivery group within Cleveland Police- who hold Cleveland Police to account.

In terms of the resourcing structure of Middlesbrough, Cleveland Police Neighbourhood Policing model was made up of the following:

Superintendent Marc Anderson (South Commander)
Chief Inspector Daryll Tomlinson
(dedicated to Neighbourhood policing in Middlesbrough)

Middlesbrough North Insp Darren Birkett / Middlesbrough South T/Insp Chris Turner

Each have 3 teams each- consisting of Sargent's PC's and PCSO's who cover all 20 wards in Middlesbrough.

On top of neighbourhood policing, the below teams listed are in place to help the delivery of Middlesbrough across Middlesbrough.

- Response Teams 24/7
- CID
- Safeguarding Teams
- Sex Offender Management
- Complex Exploitation Team
- Community Safety
- Homicide and Major Enquiry Team
- Cyber Crime
- Fraud
- Organised Crime Unit
- Intelligence

Their goal was to:



The Panel were advised that the Neighborhood Strategy operates and is in line with the National Neighbourhood Strategy. The aim of Neighbourhood policing hits within three

headings; Engagement; Problem Solving and Targeted activity.

The Chief Inspector outlined some of the activities undertaken under the 3 headings:

- Engagement
 - Community Engagement Ward Pledge
 - Ward priorities, Ward Newsletters, Ward meetings
 - Visibility – Right People, Right Places, Right Times
 - Ring backs, Revisits – Victims Code of practice – meaningful communication
 - Schools, Youth Clubs, Youth provisions – Linx, Youth Focus North East.
- Problem Solving
 - Problem Solving OEL (Police)
 - Problem Solving Plans (Partnership Working)
 - Repeat Callers, Repeat Victims, Repeat Locations
- Targeted Activity
 - TCG Targets
 - Who is causing our communities the issues.

The Chief Inspector advised that visible policing works, which has been demonstrated by a week of action in North Ormesby and a week of action in Hemlington.

Issues in fulfilling this need was demand, and although demand in some areas since covid restrictions have eased slightly, there has been significant demands and challenging in other areas e.g. 999 calls and sometimes neighbourhood policing teams need to support these calls if they fall within their areas.

Other key areas of Government investment were through the Hard to Hope – Middlesbrough have invested as part of project adder (tackling drugs- support individuals and treatment- investing in staff and working on reducing violence and firefighting culture). There was also value in working with communities especially with MFC, by organizing football with young people to bridge the gap (Hemlington and park end). The Chief Inspector further outlined that regular updates are sent out on performance, however there was a real push on an engagement framework to understand the communities and their issues.

Following the presentation, the Chief Inspector was asked further about the Neighbourhood Policing model and whether this was under resourced, and if so , what impact this had on the community.

The Chief Inspector outlined that over the past 2 years, a resourcing model was identified by the force as to what was required to operate Neighbourhood policing, however to date they have not established the numbers that were envisaged.

The numbers anticipated were as follows:

34 police officers

30 PCSOs

6 Sergeants

2 Inspectors

At present, the numbers are in the high 20s, and along with sickness levels and absence and other demands, reaching the desired number of officers has been quite challenging. However the Panel were reassured that new officers (4-5) would be joining the force in early 2022 to increase the model and there was a feeling across our partnerships that the model would be fulfilled effectively. The Chief Inspector admitted more could be done, however without a full resource model this proved difficult.

It was expected that each ward should have one designated PC and PCSO to discuss and raise issues with, however due to demand this quite often is not the case. In an ideal world,

Thursday 16th December, 2021

the force would like 5 PCs and 5 PSCOs in one ward, however at present this is unrealistic. Cleveland Police are recruiting officers, however it takes time to come through the 3 year training programme, however they hope results will be made once officers are in place.

The panel queries, the high crime rates in Middlesbrough and the reasons behind this. In response, the Chief Inspector advised that there regular meetings to discuss this, however compared to other local authorities, Middlesbrough has a high level of social housing, it has economic issues and demographics plays a huge part into crime levels. There is one custody suite in Middlesbrough and this adds to Middlesbrough being the central point.

Another Panel Member advises that they felt Visible policing was not the case. The Chief Inspector agreed that having police in cars is not visible, however depending on resources, we are trying to ensure we have police officers being visible. He has now objection for a request for a ward walk, but we need to manage the demands which come into the force. The High visibility does work as seen from the street wardens, however Middlesbrough is the only Local Authority in the North East who have a dedicated policing team working in the town centre, which was funded by partnership working. This is an excellent resource to have in an area where there is the highest levels of crime and anti-social behavior.

Local authorities work as a partnership with the police; this has been displayed by the weeks of action e.g. in Hemlington, which have been excellent and are multi agency- targeting specific groups, support for victims, environmental issues. In terms of future engagement, the Chief Inspector was unaware of future engagement strategy, however weeks of action were being communicated through the organisation. In terms of relying on other departments, neighbourhood policing was unable to be supplied 24hr policing and therefore support from other departments was required.

Visible policing can also be displayed through CCTV- no doubt that is a deterrent for crime. In November 2021, Cleveland police reviewed 130 pieces of CCTV - 81 pieces of CCTV have been used to take forward for prosecutions.

- What Police cover do we have after 10pm and through the night?

Neighbourhood shift patterns 8pm/11pm or midnight but staffs have responsibility to change their shifts depending on issues in their ward.

During the night, they are dealt with within the response teams, but they are discussed on a daily basis and they put taskings in place. Chief Inspector is also dependent on other teams when Neighbourhood policing is not available. Everyone should be there to support community policing. We can't do this without the support from partners.

- Covid lockdown- impact on domestic violence

Whilst the Chief Inspector did not have the figures, there has been a lot of investment, and slightly more demand since covid, however the police were now seeing the financial effects of covid e.g. mental health issues.

The Head of Stronger Communities further discussed some of the partnership activities the Local authority, which had been discussed at previous meeting, these included:

- House closures
- Civil injunctions
- Accredited powers designed by Cleveland Police
- Public space protection order
- Thirteen/ partnership
- CCTV

The Chair thanked the Chief Inspector and Head of Stronger communities for their presentations.

AGREED- That the information be noted and incorporated within the Panel's final report.

21/17

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

Thursday 16th December, 2021