

**CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL**

A meeting of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel was held on Thursday 17 November 2022.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Councillor Chris McIntyre, G Wilson (Vice-Chair), R Arundale, C Dodds, D McCabe, M Nugent, J Rostron and Z Uddin

**PRESENT BY INVITATION:** Councillors J Walker

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Hagan (Cleveland Police) and Tinkler (Cleveland Police)

**OFFICERS:** Susie Blood, Andrew Shippey and Marion Walker

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

22/15 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

22/16 **MINUTES - CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL - 20 OCTOBER 2022**

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

22/17 **OFF ROAD BIKES- FURTHER INFORMATION**

The Chair welcomed Chief Inspector Wendy Tinkler and Chief Inspector Jon Hagen, Cleveland Police to the meeting to provide further information in relation to off road bikes and Operation Endurance.

Following on from the last meeting, the Chief Inspector made reference to the incident on Sunday 7th August, when it was estimated over 100 persons gathered across various locations in Middlesbrough on off and on road bikes, cars and quads. The Chief inspector advised that there has been criticism towards the police, but wanted to reassure work is ongoing to identify and arrest those involved.

Of those identified, 20 arrests had been made , 19 bikes seized, 8 suspects who were further identified from the press appeal and they are looking at undertaking a day of action.

Following on from the incident on 7 August, there was intelligence that a further incident was planned in 2 weeks' time. Due to this intelligence significant work was completed between the Police and other partners (including Middlesbrough Council) to prepare. This included several press releases to deter offenders and the event didn't come to fruition.

In terms of the status of the investigation:

- When the incidence was made known to Cleveland Police, there had been no intelligence to suggest this would occur which hampered opportunity to prepare. At the time of the event the incident was risk assessed, weighing up factors against current demand, potential harm and risk to members of the public, Cleveland Police and Staff and the offenders themselves.
- The sheer number of people in attendance hampered any opportunity to consider pursuit tactics, as this would have increased the risk posed to members of the public.
- The deployment of stingers was an available tactic (spikes that can be laid across the road to burst tyres) however due to the quantity of bikes, this was neither suitable nor appropriate.
- Cleveland police requested assistance from air support, however as there was no significant threat to life this was not appropriate.
- Following risk assessing the situation the Silver Command decided that evidence gathering would be undertaken by officers on the ground, and management of the

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- event to ensure safety and minimize disruption to the community.
- Officers were deployed with CCTV capabilities and also our town cctv was utilized.
- The evidence gathered from the event has been reviewed.
- The investigation is extensive involving the backtracking of CCTV footage in order to identify those riders who were wearing helmets and face coverings. This enabled the identification of some due to cctv footage being obtained where riders had their face coverings/helmets removed.
- Those who have not been identified have been forward tracked, where officers have reviewed cctv and press coverage appealing for information e.g types of bikes/ quads and from 20 face recognition, there were 2 responses.
- There were positive comments on social media, as the public felt the incident was being dealt with.
- After the incident, and under the Preventative arm with partners, the route the bikes took was assessed and it was noted they have taken down a number of fences to gain access. Highways repaired these immediately and on the 2 days there was potential for another incident, there were Lorries on standby with boulders. The Police also conducted high visibility patrols to ensure no further damage was done.
- There was significant social media and press releases to highlight the dangers and warn riders what would happen if they undertook this type of activity again.

The panel had questioned the use of Smart water and the Chief inspector outlined that it was not suitable for this scenario. However Cleveland Police do use 'SelectaDNA tagging' which comes in 2 forms: the first a spray which can be directed towards suspects and their vehicles and the second is a bomb burst style, which can be used in large crowds e.g football crowds. In terms of further work, the Chief inspector outlined that they would link into SelectaDNA tagging spray under section 59 notices. There was currently a piece of work being undertaken to look at areas where off road bikes most affect communities.

The panel were pleased to hear that across Teesside, Middlesbrough had the lowest amount. Section 59 notices allow a uniformed officer, who may see an off road bike whose driver is causing anti-social behavior and nuisance, to serve a section 59 notice, and this MUST be done in order to seize the bike. If they haven't been served a notice, the police have no power to seize the bike.

Section 59 warning Signage prevents the requirement to provide a warning notice to offenders. In effect the signage acts as the warning notice. Partnership work is being conducted to have appropriate signage created and put in those areas most affected.

The Chief Inspector also outlined that she would be working with the Council to have section 59 orders included in any further Public space protection orders.

In terms of police powers, the Chief Inspector outlined that there is the following:

- Driving offences
- Section 59 warnings
- Section 165 under the road traffic act
- Those who are arrested, the police have the power to seize anything in relation to the incident. If it is identified that a bike is being kept in a lock up, a section 18 can be requested from their Inspector to search the property.

The investigation was still ongoing and Cleveland Police had established a Preventative Plan to reduce any further incidents- known as Operation Edmondson. Chief Inspector for Redcar and Cleveland Jon Hagen provided further details to the Panel.

The Chief Inspector outlined that similar to Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland have their local difficulties with off road bikes and there are no borders so often riders cross through both areas. Therefore joint working with Middlesbrough has been crucial.

The panel were advised that the Chief Inspector had been given the authority to look at off road bikes for the force. His tactic was looking at it like organised crime and drugs, whereby establishing where the bikes are coming from, break the networks , establish where the bikes are and where they are stored.

The Chief Inspector was also looking at introducing governance within the police, and now every police area has the lead e.g. in Middlesbrough , Inspector Steve Pattison. It was important to have leadership on the problem and that this is replicated across the force.

In terms of the overall plan, the Chief Inspector was using the template from the Home Office organised crime strategy, in relation to the 4 P's:

- PURSUE: prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in serious and organised criminality

- PREVENT: preventing people from engaging in serious and organised crime;
- PROTECT: increasing protection against serious and organised crime;
- PREPARE: reducing the impact of this criminality where it takes place.

Each owner will have a 4 P plan and will come up with a tactical option e.g. educational packages for schools to combat generational problems.

It is important to education parents but also education teachers that if they hear of young people driving off road bikes, this is a safeguarding issue and should be reported to children's services and the police.

In terms of pursue, in order to prosecute people for this offence, they also wish to gain holistic approach and prepare a profile around repeat offenders e.g. their full background and why they may be reoffending.

In terms of criminal behaviour orders, the panel were made aware that currently the police have to appeal with the magistrates court and ask for certain restraints on an individuals e.g. not allowed to own a quad bike or be seen in public wearing a balaclava. If they are caught breaching these conditions, this gives the police power of arrest.

The force is keen to advertise this within the communities through local councillors (only over 18 years of age) as often 'naming' is the best way to catch perpetrators.

The Inspector advised he was keen to work alongside the council to issue community protection orders which would allow PSCOs to issue warning letters, and if caught again they would be issued with a notice, where they are issued with a fine and if not paid, they can be taking to court.

- Further action would be as follows:
- community intelligence and utilise crime stoppers
- days of action,
- standard reporting mechanism for housing providers
- call backs and report back to the community on what is being done.
- Internally launching front line training to inform officers of their powers
- Key initiatives- link in with garages to ensure they do not serve riders who wear helmets in the forecourt/ shop.
- Posters will be recirculated in the garages and circulated in ward areas.
- Inspector Steve Pattison is also looking at a multi -agency response for off road bikes which will include Cleveland Police, housing, the council fire brigade etc. This will allow for a structured approach and there will be monthly actions on a local level.

Following the presentation, the Chair asked whether the force used drones and the panel were advised that these were using during the incident in August, and that the force was in the forefront of preventative measures.

The panel were keen to assist with promoting the dangers of off road bikes and the following suggestions were made:

- Crimestoppers/ off road bike posters to be put in lovemiddlesbrough magazine/ community buildings and copies provided to ward councillors.
- information to be placed on Middlesbrough council on social media/ through communication channels.

The councilors were very complimentary of the preventative measures and felt the information provided had been clear and precise.

AGREED- That the information be noted and that evidence provided be utilized within the final report of the panel

22/18

## **PREVENT AND CHANNEL- UPDATE**

The Chair welcomed Andy Shippey, Community Safety Officer PREVENT/reducing Reoffending and Marion Walker, Head of Stronger Communities and CHANNEL Chair to the meeting.

The Community Safety officer provided the following information:

- Prevent is part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST and is designed to safeguard vulnerable people and communities from the threat of radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism. There are different types of terrorism and Prevent deals with all of them. The most common types of terrorism in the UK are Islamist terrorism and extreme right-wing terrorism.

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- PREVENT and the safeguarding component CHANNEL is voluntary and only works with consent of the vulnerable person at risk and takes a person centred approach in helping the individual address vulnerabilities and increase their resilience against the hateful extremist influence.
- The Middlesbrough Operational Prevent group work together with partnership agencies to stop people becoming involved in or supporting terrorist activity. Under the Prevent Duty all public sector agencies have a responsibility to ensure their staff and volunteers have a good understanding of Prevent and their responsibilities towards individuals, groups, or families they are working with.
- The Operational Prevent group prepares Action plans designed to reduce the risk by increasing communities' resilience and awareness, Training and awareness raising and Promotion of the safeguarding nature of PREVENT.
- In addition to Scrutiny, the work and actions of PREVENT are also overseen by the CQC, Ofsted, Office of the Policing and Crime Commissioner and Community safety partnership.

The Community Safety Officer provided the Panel with information on recent action carried out within the community, these included for example:

- Safer giving campaign
- Working with a Local College around community cohesion conversations and work using the Lets Discuss campaign material
- Promotion of the Act early campaign in different languages
- Joint social media campaign to promote prevent and online resilience with Newcastle Council
- Continued support to national campaign Real Stories

The Community Safety Officer provided further information on contributions to the Cleveland Police approach and further examples of training and support and awareness sharing.

The Head of Stronger Communities and Channel Chair provided the Panel with some information on Channel advising of the following:

- CHANNEL across Cleveland is bespoke as our regional figures are low in comparison to other areas.
- The CHANNEL panel is a safeguarding meeting of multi disciplinary professionals whom all work towards assisting the vulnerable young person or adult build their resilience against the extremist narrative whilst addressing any vulnerabilities they may have
- CHANNEL operates on a consensual basis and consent must be sought from the individual
- The type of support available through CHANNEL is wide-ranging, and can include help with education or careers advice, dealing with mental or emotional health issues, or digital safety training for parents; it all depends on the individual's needs.

The panel were very complimentary of the work undertaken by Prevent/ Channel and acknowledge the modules which are on the council's elearning. A panel member queried how employees who do not have access to a computer receive information and the Community

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safety officer advised he would circulate this information to the panel. It was also recommended that a member briefing session should be established to provide up to date information to councilors.

AGREED

That the information be noted.

22/19

**MUSEUMS- WORK PLAN**

The Democratic Services officer provided an update on the work plan in relation to the panel's upcoming topic on museums.

The work plan had been circulated to members' details some draft terms of reference for the topic as well as key questions for officers.

The panel were made aware that the initial meeting for the topic would take place on 15 December 2022.

AGREED

That the position be noted.

22/20

**CHAIR'S OSB UPDATE**

The Chair provided a verbal update on the discussions at the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 25 October 2022.

AGREED

That the update be noted.

22/21

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

Northern school of Art- Tour

The Chair reminded the panel that a tour of the Northern school of Arts had been arranged for 24 November 2022 commencing 1.30pm.

Any members wishing to join the tour should meet u the reception area.