

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>11 FEBRUARY 2011</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>SAFER HEREFORDSHIRE SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2010</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>Partnership Manager for Safer Herefordshire</b>

**CLASSIFICATION:** Open

## **Purpose**

To provide a summary of the activity of the Crime and Disorder Review Group during 2010 and to set out the considered findings and recommendations from the Group.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT the Committee note the contents of the report.**

## **Key Points Summary**

- The scrutiny process invited comments and views from the Committee on Safer Herefordshire's performance;
- It ensured Safer Herefordshire is contributing to the outcomes in the Safer Communities elements of the Corporate Plan; and
- The strategic direction and performance of Safer Herefordshire was noted.
- Those areas of activity pertinent to the partnership were used as the basis of reporting to the Committee.
- The process for arriving at the priorities, via the strategic assessment, was deemed appropriate.
- Community consultation and engagement is carried out on a regular, on-going basis and fed into the strategic assessment process.
- The Scrutiny Review Group examined a number of selected performance indicators.
- The Review group considered that there was generally an improving picture regarding anti-social behaviour.
- That with the economic climate, it is expected that an increase in drug related criminality is likely.
- The Review Group supported the concept of the wrap around agenda for drug users.
- The Review group recognised that whilst there were a high number of GP surgeries supporting drug treatment, every effort should be made to ensure that all GP practises in the county were part of the programme.

- The Review group felt that the indicator NI30 (re-offending of PPO's) was well understood by Safer Herefordshire and performance against the indicator was good and that positive progress was being made.

## Alternative Options

- 1 None.

## Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 This is a summary of the areas of work within Safer Herefordshire that the Review Group have focused on, over the last year. These areas have been examined and findings and recommendations previously reported to Committee.

## Introduction and Background

- 3 Safer Herefordshire (formerly Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership) was formed as a result of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, which was later amended by the 2002 Police Reform Act. The partnership has undertaken regular reviews to identify concerns and local priorities and monitors performance against local and government targets. The Partnership also facilitates multi-agency working groups to ensure a joined up approach for tackling crime and disorder issues across Herefordshire. Operationally, the Partnership translates its strategic priorities into action plans that are implemented through the Partnership and its groups. Some of this work is delivered directly by the Partnership whilst some is commissioned out to other organisations.
- 4 A duty was placed on the Council to scrutinise crime and disorder matters, with an emphasis on holding the Partnership to account, rather than individual partners. The main issues that needed to be considered were the co-option of members on to the committee, the development of both a protocol with Safer Herefordshire and a work programme for the Committee. Guidance stated one member of the Committee should be a member of the Police Authority; both the council's current representatives on the Police Authority serve on the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, so it was felt this met the expectation. A protocol was developed that outlined the mutual expectations of the Committee and Safer Herefordshire. It was also felt that the Committee should include in its work programme a list of issues which it needed to cover during the year and this would be agreed in consultation with partners of the Community Safety Partnership.
- 5 The guidance states that the role of the Committee would be "as a critical friend of the Community Safety Partnership, providing it with constructive challenge at a strategic level rather than fault finding at an operational level."

## Key Considerations

- 6 The Committee received a report providing an introduction to the Safer Herefordshire Strategic Assessment process and performance for 2009 and presented the priorities for 2010-11, as agreed by the Safer Herefordshire Strategy Group. The list of priorities that emerged from the 2009 strategic assessment as presented to the Safer Herefordshire Strategy group were:
 

Alcohol misuse; Anti social behaviour; Drug misuse; Road safety; Domestic abuse; and Offender management.
- 7 The Safer Herefordshire Local Area Agreement (LAA) priorities for 2008-11 were laid out for

the Committee and linked to a number of indicators in the Corporate Plan. These were:

NI19 – To reduce the rate of proven re-offending by young offenders

NI21 – Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police

NI30 – To reduce the re-offending rate of prolific and other priority offenders

NI39 – To reduce alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates (local target)

NI40 – To increase the numbers of people in effective drug treatment

NI47 – To reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents.

8 It was agreed that it was more efficient that the work programme for crime and disorder should be carried forward by small sub group of the main Committee. A regular agenda item to update the Committee on progress would be included on future Committee Agendas. The group developed a proposed work programme, focusing on the NI's that Safer Herefordshire was responsible for addressing. It was agreed that the group would be supported by the Safer Herefordshire Manager and Democratic Services.

9 The work programme was agreed, in consultation with Safer Herefordshire, to ensure that matters listed for future consideration are appropriate subjects for scrutiny. It was agreed that the work programme would cover:

Review Strategic Documentation and Strategic Assessment process – to include Safer Herefordshire Annual Strategic Assessment, Partnership Plan, Community Consultation and Engagement and Information sharing arrangements within the partnership.

Review Partnership Priorities – to include NI39 (Rate and number of alcohol harm related hospital admissions), NI21 (Percentage of people satisfied with how the council and the police deal with concerns about anti-social behaviour) and NI40 (Drug users in effective treatment).

10 The Safer Herefordshire constitution and terms of reference were also being reviewed and rewritten by the Partnership. Copies were provided to Members of the Committee.

11 The Review group met with Dr Arif Mahmood, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, to discuss alcohol issues and performance against NI39. The group was reassured that the Alcohol Harm Reduction Group was working to put in place a strategic plan to address this issue and that co-ordination of the activity would be key to its success. The use of proxy indicators was well supported, together with the suggestion that all funding streams should be centralised.

12 The Alcohol Harm Reduction Group is currently working to further operationalise the plan by identifying key actions partners need to take and then feedback to the Safer Herefordshire Strategy group. Alcohol treatment commissioning was occurring on an ad hoc basis within a variety of agencies.

13 Members of the Police Authority, Police and Community Protection Team met with the review group to discuss anti-social behaviour (ASB). Attention is being focused on ASB, as this is distressing to victims. Repeat victimisation is reducing, although there are pockets of

problems. Perceptions of ASB are complex, and a communications strategy has been put in place to assist. The work of the Community Protection Team is promoted at every opportunity, however it is often not recognised that the team address ASB; people recognise dog fouling and fly tipping as wrong, but do not see it as ASB.

- 14 A monthly multi-agency meeting, known as MATAC (Multi-agency Tasking and Co-ordination), is held to look at priorities and how they should be tackled. A representative from the Review Group observed this meeting, which discussed strategy, tactics and case management. Despite being wide ranging, it was well chaired and very focused.
- 15 The Review Group met with the Chair of the Joint Commissioning Group for drugs and the Safer Herefordshire Commissioner to review progress in this area. There was a lack of confidence from the Review Group concerning the number of drug users in the county, as the figures produced by the University of Glasgow were national calculations, and had a 20% margin for error.
- 16 Few users are sent out of county for residential rehabilitation, as this is not the most effective way of treating people. Greater emphasis was being put on the community based wrap around approach to rehabilitation, through support and education. Most users want to do a community detox in this way, supported by DASH (local drug service).
- 17 The following points were also made:
  - a. With the increase in financial pressures, it was important that the Children's Trusts drug prevention educational work in schools should not be lost.
  - b. The criminal justice system is not effective for chaotic drug users; treatment regimes would be more appropriate.
  - c. Grants from central government are linked to performance; the NI40 is rated green and the National Treatment Agency (NTA) is happy with local progress.
- 18 The Review Group met to examine NI30 (To reduce the re-offending rate of prolific and other priority offenders). The group felt the indicator was well understood and performance and activity was well under control. In terms of the indicator, the Review Group felt well assured that positive progress was being made. The group applauded the success of the SHIFT Care Farm and were impressed to receive clear evidence of its results.
- 19 The discussions around re-offending were useful and informative. It was recognised that Safer Herefordshire had tangible information and intelligence which it used to direct activity and thereby reducing the impact on the county of prolific offenders. Progress was being made in this area, which dealt with the needs of a specific number of offenders.

## Conclusions

- 20 The Review Group wished to observe the Safer Herefordshire priority setting process, so a Member attended the Safer Herefordshire Strategy Group workshop event. The findings from the strategic assessment were presented and then Members discussed and agreed priorities, based upon the information provided. It was agreed that the process was suitable.
- 21 The Review Group felt that work was on going against the alcohol indicator and that the co-ordination of the activity would be the key to its successes. The use of proxy indicators was well supported, together with the suggestion that all funding streams and all alcohol commissioning should be centralised, with the commissioning of services by the Alcohol Harm Reduction Group directed through the Joint Commissioning Group.

- 22 With regards to anti social behaviour, it was noted that the way matters were being reported was being looked at. The police were aware that people reported issues of concern to their Ward and Parish Councillors. It was agreed that it was appropriate for Councillors to contact the police with their concerns.
- 23 In-patient detox and rehabilitation programmes are not as effective as other treatment programmes, as they are costly and it is very hard to measure specific outcomes. The drug and alcohol treatment services deal with the physical aspects of addiction, but a more effective model would be wrap around support, which would also address the underlying causes of addiction. Housing is an issue, as it is difficult to access reasonable housing for recovering drug users. Registered Social Landlords should be encouraged to set some housing stock aside for users, as part of the wrap around agenda.
- 24 Safer Herefordshire has a statutory responsibility to deliver on the reducing reoffending agenda. The Integrated Offender Management (IOM) group will use the information from the service mapping work to develop its Reducing Reoffending Strategy, to be in place by April 2011.

## **Community Impact**

- 25 Effective Crime and Disorder Scrutiny should have a beneficial community impact and contribute to effective partnership arrangements.
- 26 The impact of crime, disorder and substance misuse to the local and wider community is substantial. Therefore the use and analysis of current, relevant quality data is crucial to identifying and understanding current and emerging issues.
- 27 Engagement with drug users shows that effective wrap-around services are needed.
- 28 IOM encourages communities to engage with offenders in a positive manner and be part of their rehabilitation process and so increase the effectiveness of their re-integration into society.
- 29 Engagement with offenders in this structured way significantly reduces the impact on communities, as their criminal behaviour lessens.

## **Financial Implications**

- 30 The work plan for the scrutiny of crime and disorder matters has been managed with regards to the resources available.
- 31 Safer Herefordshire is funded direct from government funds, partner contributions and via the Area Based Grant pot. Funding is currently agreed on a year-by-year basis, with overall budgets decreasing. Specific activities are drawn up by the strategic leads for each of the priority areas. These are incorporated into the annual work plans. Resources are allocated appropriately and within the available budget.

## **Legal Implications**

- 32 The council needs to comply with the statutory duty to scrutinise crime and disorder matters.
- 33 Safer Herefordshire is a statutory partnership, following statutory procedures.

## **Risk Management**

34 Risks to a successful partnership include:

Partner engagement;

Finance – year on year decreasing budgets;

Lack of choice of providers

Mitigation measures for these principal risks are included in the annual plans.

## **Consultees**

35 Safer Herefordshire partners are consulted as projects are progressed.

36 Drug treatment providers and service users are consulted and involved in service development work.

## **Appendices**

- None.

## **Background Papers**

- None identified.