

CABINET MEMBER - CCOMMUNITIES

CABINET – 15 APRIL 2010

Sefton Equalities Partnership

Hate Crime Week 2010

A successful Hate Crime Week 2010 was held in February with a wide range of events taking place across our communities. The hate crime conference was attended by Superintendent Paul Giannasi, Office for Criminal Justice Reform, who highlighted the need to focus on the under-reporting of hate incidents and hate crime by some under-represented communities such as those with disabilities. The week culminated in a Hate Crime Football Tournament at Litherland Sports Centre which Everton Foundation won against our Leisure Services Department.

Equality Framework for Local Government

The Council continues to make good progress on the Equality Framework for Local Government currently self assessing as being at 67% of working towards excellence. Work is underway to refresh our approach to equality and diversity with a focus on mainstreaming back into the corporate workings of the council both equality and diversity and public engagement and consultation.

Community Safety Department

Offender Employment Review (announced 12 March, 2010)

Understanding why re-offending makes place is not to excuse it in the first place. Offenders must take responsibility for their actions.

It is widely established that employment, training and education 'pathway' are key to address some of the critical needs that can, and do, drive recidivism. In general offenders have very low levels of numeracy and literacy skills, and have often never know any form of structured employment. Nationally between 30-50% of offenders have this 'pathway' identified as a critical need. In Sefton the 'employment and skills' pathway is one of the main pathways identified by offender managers as being critical if long-term re-offending is to be addressed in Sefton.

Linking PSA 16, (Socially excluded adults) and PSA 23 (Safer Communities) within Sefton is the responsibility of the Safer, Stronger Partnership (see below). However nationally the Department for Work and Pensions, National Offender Management Service and Jobcentre Plus will, following a review, offer every offender:

- On entering prison have the opportunity to talk to an employment and benefits advisor from Jobcentre Plus to help sort out any outstanding benefits issues
- Whilst in prison be offered a skills assessment and careers advice
- When preparing for release, an opportunity to meet an employment and benefit advisor to help assist looking for a job, looking at vacancies
- On release, advise on appropriate employment/skills training as well as employment help and advice

It is hoped that these measures will address one of the key drivers associated with re-offending and thus make communities safer in the longer term.

Reducing Re-offending, Cutting Crime and Changing Lives (New Duties for Community Safety Partnerships)

Section 108 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009 came into effect on April 1 2010. This has

- Placed a new duty on Community Safety Partnerships to formulate and implement a strategy to reduce offending by adult and young offenders
- Established Probation as the 6th 'responsible authority' on Community Safety Partnerships

The changes have been introduced so as to improve outcomes for local communities, by addressing some of the longer term reasons behind re-offending such as the co-ordination of actions to address issues such as offender housing, health and employment, with one clear and consistent aim; to make communities safer and reduce the harm caused by offending behaviour by addressing the behaviour not just the crime.

Safe and Confident Neighbourhoods Strategy (The Next Steps in Neighbourhood Policing 2010)

The strategy outlines a cross government vision for delivering safe and confident neighbourhoods. The strategy and guidance is based on extending and building on the success of Neighbourhood Policing and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) which will now be referred to nationally as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs)

The guidance gives CSPs (supported by LSPs) a clear strategic role in ensuring that suitable and effective neighbourhood partnerships are in place specifically to address local concerns of crime and disorder by:

- Understanding their local communities using the CSPs partners information as well as through information from the local community
- Working with the right mix of operational practitioners, and not just the 'responsible authorities' to address local priorities
- Strengthen the accountability of CSP chairs
- Delivering an Integrated offender management model
- Ensuring that in driving local operational benefit it also adds currency to the broader LSP plans and strategies
- Escalates issues/blockages through the CSP to the LSP.

Naturally the aim of the new guidance is to ensure that vulnerable communities and victims are not let down, and that the accountability of the CSP is transparent to local communities who see 'partnerships' not just 'partners' working effectively together to address the communities local 'community safety' concerns.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Standards

Tackling antisocial behaviour, addressing local crime priorities, demonstrating that criminals do face tough consequences as well as improving the support given to victims of crime, especially those victims of antisocial behaviour are key issues that Community Safety Partnerships are expected to lead upon.

Making sure that victims, witnesses and the public are aware of their entitlements, the standards of service they can expect to receive and how they will be treated and kept informed are all now known to be critical if Community Safety Partnerships are to increase and to improve victim, witness and public satisfaction.

Community Safety Partnerships have been set some challenges nationally and perhaps more importantly locally to address the community's real concerns in relation to anti-social behaviour.

- Improving the consistency and support available to victims of antisocial behaviour, including feedback on case progression and outcomes of investigations.
- Ensuring that anti-social behaviour victims are aware of the support available and how it is accessed.

- Promote and publicise the services that are available to victims, witnesses and the wider community so local people feel confident that services are 'on the side' of victims, witnesses and their families.

The Police and the Community Safety Division (have within the Division the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit) have constructed a draft set of ASB minimum standards that the victim/witness can expect to receive that has been agreed by the Police and was presented at the to 31 March meeting of Cabinet Member – Communities.

Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Event (5th arch 2010)

The event was developed to launch the Partnerships Plan (2009-12). Overall feedback from the day was good, for example 97% of the respondents in the survey said the presentations were good/excellent; 97% found the event informative, with a further 94% learning something new.

Community Payback 2009-10

The partnership has just collated some information about the work streams undertaken by offenders, supervised by colleagues in the Probation Service, as part of a community disposal from Court.

The offenders are directed to grot spots that local communities feel generally unsafe, and the work of the payback programme is to address 'environmental crime' in these areas. In all, across Sefton, more than 900 bin bags of dumped and discarded material/ dog fouled material has been removed along with a further 40 tonnes of fly-tipped material. In addition offenders have also removed graffiti using a high-pressure sand-blaster as well as painted out material when this has been the preferred option.

This work was supported by Officers from Environmental Services.

Councillor Porter
Cabinet Member - Communities