

**NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER UPDATE****REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE****1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This purpose of this report is to update Scrutiny on the emerging relationship with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Vera Baird QC commenced in post of Police and Crime Commissioner on 22 November 2012. Subsequently she has appointed a Deputy Commissioner Mark Dennett and a small team of advisers. The PCC continues to use Gateshead Council staff support.
- 2.2 The Police and Crime Panel are now established to scrutinise key decisions by the Commissioner. Cllr Paul Watson and Cllr Henry Trueman represent Sunderland City Council on the Panel which has two representatives from each of the constituent Local Authorities in Northumbria together with two independent representatives who were selected by the Panel in accordance with Home Office guidelines.
- 2.3 The Panel have held a confirmation hearing for the post of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and approved the Policing precept increase of 3.5% for Northumbria Police for 2013/14.
- 2.4 The Commissioner and her Deputy have met with the City Council Leadership and Chief Executive and have scheduled meetings of the Partnership lead officers from each Community Safety Partnership across Northumbria to progress joint working.
- 2.5 The Commissioner must publish a five year Crime and Policing Plan by April 2013. This plan will contain national Policing objectives set by the Home Secretary for all Forces together with local priorities set by the Commissioner. These priorities must have regard to local Community Safety Partnership Priorities and vice versa.
- 2.6 The Safer Sunderland Board agreed to have two key priorities at its December Board meeting;
- To reduce crime and disorder and improve feelings of safety
  - Prevent and reduce harm to our most vulnerable people and places

To support the priorities a delivery plan will encompass actions to support a range of activity in varying levels of intervention around anti social behaviour, domestic violence, reoffending, substance misuse, cohesion, organised crime, feelings of safety and victims and

safeguarding. Whilst drafting is well underway until the priorities and funding that has transferred to the Commissioner are clarified it is proposed that the Safer Sunderland Board receive the Safer Sunderland plan for consideration at that stage.

2.7 The Commissioner has not at this stage shared the full draft Crime Plan however has circulated draft priorities via community safety partnership leads across Northumbria.

2.8 These draft priorities are reproduced as follows:-

### **Victims**

Ensure the most vulnerable victims of crime and anti-social behaviour are identified and they are provided with personal support and preventative action.

Involve the views of victims of crime and anti-social behaviour in shaping the response of the Police and Community Safety Partnerships.

Ensure victims of crime and anti-social behaviour are kept fully informed on the progress of their investigation.

Develop a specific tailored approach to victims of personal crimes like burglary, hate crime and also anti-social behaviour.

Provide victim led training to police officers and staff who have first contact with a victim so that the victim's experience is improved.

Work closely with the LCJB to improve the victim and witness experience and service at courts.

### **Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour.**

Every victim of Anti-Social Behaviour will be contacted personally and their concerns investigated.

Provide personal victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour with tailor-made support and real understanding.

Record every repeat incident of anti-social behaviour and develop a case history that can be provided to attending officers so they are better informed.

The local Neighbourhood Policing Team and Community Safety Partnership will work with repeat victims to tackle the source of the problem.

Vulnerable victims of ASB will receive extra priority and specialist support that will focus on both action and reassurance.

The Commissioner intends the Chief Constable to ensure that full use is made of the powers available to the police to tackle anti-social behaviour and will encourage Community Safety Partnerships to do the same.

### **Domestic and Sexual Abuse.**

Northumbria's Commissioner will take an active personal lead on this issue, locally regionally and nationally to develop an integrated strategy on all aspects of violence against women and girls within the first year. The Commissioner will personally oversee its implementation with partners.

Police will do all they can to make reporting of domestic and sexual abuse as straightforward as possible. All frontline and specialist officers will have training led by survivors to achieve this.

Police will listen to victims and take action to support them and to help make them safe, even when no crime has been committed or when no prosecution is wanted. This will include offering to connect them with a local independent specialist support group.

Offer an experienced Independent Domestic/Sexual Violence Adviser as a supporter and advocate to each high risk complainant.

All incidents of domestic and sexual abuse will be investigated, police systems will ensure that repeat victims and perpetrators are identified and response officers are fully informed of the history.

We will initiate work with the public and other authorities to make early intervention the norm and to change attitudes and behaviour.

Pilot preventative projects to promote active police monitoring of perpetrators.

### **Reducing Crime**

Promote crime prevention to reduce the impact and cost of crime

Work for more crime reduction and thereby less victims of crime

Enhance the investigation and victim support for specified crime types of most serious violence, burglary, hate crime and rural crime.

Ensure most crimes are detected thereby providing satisfaction and justice to victims of crime.

Bring Community Safety Partnerships closer together to reduce and prevent crime.

Target Alcohol related crime and disorder because of its prevalence in this region and the impact upon communities

### **Community Confidence**

The police will engage with communities and build relationships.

They will be highly visible in communities; contact with the police will be a positive experience for the public.

Improve confidence and satisfaction in how complaints against the police are handled

Regularly consult with the public in communities about the service they receive from the police and councils and to understand their policing and community safety concerns.

Implement a Neighbourhood Management Model with police and Community Safety Partnerships that demonstrates real activity in relation to anti-social behaviour and reducing re-offending.

- 2.9 It is noted that the proposed priorities have a very strong resonance with our own priorities and proposed areas of development. There are however a small number of issues that require potential further clarification.
- 2.10 There is no specific reference to the issues concerning drugs. Whilst we are seeing a reduction in opiate use we acknowledge continued use of non opiates and so called legal highs in addition to our long held view that removal of distribution networks and prevention of markets being established are significantly important in maintaining our crime performance. It may be however that the priority of reducing crime may well encompass these issues for the Commissioner.
- 2.11 Under the proposed Community Confidence priority the Commissioner specifically highlights the implementation of a Neighbourhood Management Model with Police and Community Safety Partnerships. As we already have strong neighbourhood and area delivery via LMAPS and organisation of Neighbourhood Policing and frontline services from the Council and other partners perhaps this proposal needs some further clarification of intent from the Commissioners Office.
- 2.12 The priorities indicate that all high risk victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence will receive support of an independent adviser. The Safer

Sunderland Partnership currently supports Wearside Women In need to deliver this service with a grant contribution of £40,000. The transfer of Home Office funds to the Commissioner will require clarification on the Commissioner picking up the funding for this service.

- 2.13 The Community Confidence section highlights that the Commissioner will regularly consult on the public in relation to service they receive from Police and Councils. Whilst the Police Commissioner has a clear mandate to scrutinise Police performance the scrutiny of Council contribution may need clarification as this is currently a function of the Councils Overview and Scrutiny arrangements. It is proposed in the draft Anti Social Behaviour Bill that there may be a function of the Commissioner created whereby they can investigate complaints made against police and councils response to persistent anti-social behaviour however this has not formally been laid before Parliament as a formal Bill.
- 2.14 The Policing and Crime Panel will consider the full plan of the Police and Crime Commissioner at their meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March.

### **3.0 THE COMMUNITY SAFETY FUND**

- 3.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner has a one year Community Safety Fund which for Northumbria is around £2.1 million. This fund is made up of a number of previous sources of funding. For Sunderland for example it includes the current Home Office Grant to the Partnership of £104,580 and the Drug Intervention Programme Home Office contribution of £192,643. There is also a Youth Offending Service allocation of around £40,000 however the Commissioner is working separately with the YOS managers in Northumbria with regard to this.
- 3.2 The Commissioner has indicated that these funds have been reduced by the Home Office for 2013/14 by around 17% from current year levels. The Commissioner is keen to passport the bulk of the funding to Community Safety Partnerships to meet mutual priorities. However for this to happen there has been a request that each partnership clarifies previous funding allocations and how that they have been allocated including impact and outcomes. In addition the Commissioner is also asking for proposals on what we would propose to fund. It should be noted that the ring fence on this funding by the Home Office will be removed in 12 months and thereafter be subsumed into the main policing grant therefore any future allocation will be at the discretion of the Commissioner from 2014/15 onwards.

### **4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 Scrutiny Committee are requested to:

- a) Note the content of the report in relation to emerging relationship and communication with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

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