

Executive Report

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO

COUNCILLOR GEORGE CLEMENTS – PORTFOLIO HOLDER

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1. KEY ISSUES – PROGRESS REPORT

1.1 Community Safety

Violent Crime: A pub watch co-ordinator has been appointed; she is due to start in March. The post will be working across all of West Cumbria and will allow a consistent approach for all of the schemes.

The Nightsafe protocol booklet is soon to be revamped, which will include the new licensing information. The Nightsafe campaign is based on alcohol related violent crime, it has four elements, which are, Enforcement (inc. Pub watch), Education, Treatment and Environment. Each of these elements of Nightsafe has its own action plan.

Anti Social Behaviour: The Council is a partner in the newly formed ASB Intervention Panel. The multi agency group meets monthly to discuss individual cases of anti social behaviour. Each case is referred to the panel once all courses of action available to them have been tried. The panel then discusses with supporting agencies, what interventions/training sessions/support packages can be offered to the individual to prevent their behaviour from continuing. If the panel decides that enforcement action is the most appropriate option, then the lead agency will pursue that and the panel will continue to offer preventative and support packages for as long as required.

1.2 JOINT WORKING

As I discussed in my last report, Cumbria Sub Regional Housing Group are working on a Cumbria wide housing strategy. It is anticipated that consultation on the strategy will begin in April with a presentation to Government Office in July.

Officers from Copeland are members of the data collection group, the supported housing group and the decent homes group and are leading the homelessness section of the strategy.

1.4 RESPECT

The Government's 'RESPECT' action plan outlines sanctions that may be considered for households evicted for anti-social behaviour who refuse help. The sanction could include financial penalties or housing

benefit measures. This would provide a very strong incentive to encourage these households to undertake rehabilitation when they have refused other offers of help.

We know that the introduction of 'closing orders' for premises associated with class A drugs have already been used successfully in Copeland. As part of the RESPECT programme the government is now considering the introduction of 'closing orders' for premises associated with anti social behaviour.

1.5 HMO LICENCING

As you are all aware new legislation comes into force on 1 April for Houses of Multiple Occupation, those buildings three stories high or over which accommodate five or more people have to be licensed by the Council. A report will be made to Executive in March outlining our draft policy.

1.6 HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

A Cumbria wide housing needs survey will commence during March. The rural wards (those with less than 1000 households) will have a 100% survey. A 20% survey will be undertaken in the four South Whitehaven Wards the rest will be based on the number of households but will be no less than 20%. The information received will be used to inform the County wide housing strategy and our own housing development programme.

1.7 SUPPORTING PEOPLE

In August 2006 the Audit Commission will inspect the Cumbria Supporting People Programme. To prepare for this the Commission has released 'Key Lines of Enquiry' to identify the areas of inspection. Evidence is being collated which shows how Cumbria as a whole are meeting the key indicators. An officer from Copeland is on the team preparing for the inspection as the results will not only reflect how the County is graded but will also reflect on the local authorities in Cumbria.

2. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

None

3. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Subject: Crime & Disorder Act 1998 Section 17 – Implementation Plan

Date of Decision: 2 February 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/131

Context:

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (CDA 1998) seeks to ensure that all council departments (also the Police, Health Service and Fire Authorities) have community safety considerations embedded into their planning, their policy and their operational day to day activity. The report proposes the adoption of an Implementation Strategy and seeks support for the staging of workshops for staff and members.

Decision

That the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Section 17 Implementation Strategy be adopted and the staging of workshops for staff and members be supported.

Subject: Joint Working

Date of Decision: 2 February 2006

Decision Reference: EXE/05/133

Context:

This report outlines progress in developing joint services with Allerdale Borough Council and West Lakes Renaissance, with particular emphasis on a joint work programme on housing matters. The report requests that progress be noted and that the approach is endorsed

Decision

That a) progress on the development of joint services with Allerdale Borough Council and West Lakes Renaissance be noted; and

b) the further development of this work, by officers, be supported