

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SUB COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

19 October 2017

Chairperson: Councillor S.K.Hunt

Vice Chairperson: Councillor L.Jones

Councillors: D.M.Peters, A.J.Richards, O.S.Davies and R.W.Wood

Officers In Attendance Miss.C.Davies, J. Davies, Mrs.K.Jones, P.Lewis, Mrs.N.Pearce and M. Thomas

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors D.W.Davies and A.Wingrave

1. **TO RESOLVE TO ACT AS THE CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN LINE WITH SECTION 19 OF THE POLICE AND JUSTICE ACT 2006**

Members resolved to act as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee.

2. **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PUBLIC PROTECTION SUB COMMITTEE 27 JULY 2017**

Members noted the minutes from the previous meeting.

3. **SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18**

Members noted the scrutiny forward programme for 2017/18.

4. **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR – PRESENTATION BY INSPECTOR DECLAN CAHILL / PAUL LEWIS**

Inspector Declan Cahill from South Wales Police gave a presentation to Members on Operation Grey Denver, which highlighted the partnership work that had been undertaken to tackle anti-social behaviour within the county borough. Inspector Cahill reported that between July and September 18 individuals had been identified in

Neath town centre as engaging in anti-social behaviour, and 12 in Port Talbot town centre. Where relevant, information regarding these individuals were shared with Housing Options and the Welsh Centre for Action on Dependency and Addiction (WCADA) to offer support.

Inspector Cahill listed the various locations where anti-social behaviour had frequently occurred. The areas that were identified were Victoria Gardens and Angel Square in Neath where instances of substance misuse had taken place, the Neath and Port Talbot town centre areas for begging, and the train stations in Neath and Port Talbot for begging and substance misuse incidents. Inspector Cahill informed Members of the preventative steps taken when attempting to tackle anti-social behaviour, such as intelligence and information sharing with 40 local businesses, effective CCTV analysis, and the presence of police officers, police community support officers and town rangers in various locations. Inspector Cahill added that maintaining the current level of police presence in the town centres was becoming challenging due to financial constraints.

Inspector Cahill informed Members that there had been reports of individuals begging in the town centres that were not considered destitute, and as a result could be committing fraudulent acts. Inspector Cahill continued by stating that it was difficult to prove if somebody was begging as it required a robust evidence base. Inspector Cahill added that the police would be unable to charge anybody who did not directly ask for money e.g. individuals sitting silently with receptacles for citizens to place money into. Members enquired whether a beggar could be charged if they were proven to be fraudulent and were witnessed by police requesting money from the public. Inspector Cahill confirmed that in this case they could be charged.

Inspector Cahill informed Members of the work that had been undertaken during Neath September Fair to address underage drinking. Inspector Cahill stated that police officers visited off licences in the town to ensure that they complied with licensing laws and found that there were no issues to report. Inspector Cahill informed the committee that despite numerous comments regarding anti-social behaviour on social media sites during Neath September Fair, the police only received one reported incident. Inspector Cahill added that the police were unable to act on comments made on social media and instead needed citizens to report incidents directly to the police. Inspector Cahill informed Members that South Wales Police were intending to purchase software in the near future that would allow citizens to report incidents via a mobile phone application.

Details of any incidents reported via this channel would then be received directly by police officers on patrol.

Inspector Cahill acknowledged that the 101 service for reporting crime had missed targets for answering calls, but 94.3% of those who used the service were satisfied with the experience. Inspector Cahill invited Members to visit the public service centre where the 101 calls were taken, and also offered Members the opportunity to join police officers on street patrols.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Case Co-ordinator for the council gave a presentation to Members on the function of the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and its processes. The officer gave an overview of the unit's structure which is part of the Community Safety Team based in Neath Police Station, and resourced by staff from South Wales Police, Tai Tarian and the council.

The officer explained the role and purpose of the unit, which included the monitoring of reported incidents and the receipt of referrals. The officer stated that most referrals were received from South Wales Police, although a small quantity were also received directly by the unit itself and from other channels such as Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

The officer informed Members that the unit utilised software called ASBIT which identified anti-social behaviour "hot spots", repeat victims and provided an instant report which forecasted which streets were likely to encounter issues on certain days of the week based on historic information and trends. The officer added that the software could potentially be used as a management tool to ensure police officers on patrol were completing visits to properties and areas that they were called to.

The officer stated that the unit worked with other agencies to try to signpost individuals to relevant support services as a preventative step. The officer added that charging individuals for offences was a last resort and only done if necessary. The officer stated that there were various orders and notices to deal with anti-social behaviour such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC's), Injunctions, Criminal Behaviour Orders (ASBO's), Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO's) and Community Protection Orders. The officer informed Members that the team had regular multi agency meetings to discuss local issues.

Members acknowledged the good work and efforts made by South Wales Police and the Community Safety Team when dealing with anti-social behaviour in the county borough. Members enquired

whether any work had been undertaken to identify where homeless individuals within the county borough had originated from. Inspector Cahill stated that the vast majority were from the area and that there were only two recent cases from outside the area. Officers added that one individual had come from Cardiff as a result of an ASBO that was then extended to Neath and Port Talbot, and another individual had come from the Swansea area. Officers confirmed that both had moved on.

Members queried the course of action that would be taken if a business contravened licensing laws by selling alcohol to individuals under the age of 18. Inspector Cahill stated that the Police would monitor the premises and return 24 hours after the first incident to check that the business was complying with licencing laws. Inspector Cahill continued by confirming that if they were found to have breached licencing laws on three separate occasions the police would give a recommendation to the council to close the premises.

Members acknowledged that the majority of homeless people in the area were between 30-50 years of age, and queried whether the reason for this was because younger people were being identified at an earlier stage and sign posted to the relevant support services. Inspector Cahill stated that it was not clear why.

Members queried whether there were any schemes in force in other parts of the county borough similar to the drinking ban in Victoria Gardens. Officers confirmed that there were public orders in force in other areas and they were due to be reviewed. Officers added that orders were only put in place when absolutely necessary, as each order required a consultation with residents and resources to enforce the orders. Officers continued by clarifying that the orders would be reviewed at multi agency meetings.

Members acknowledged that the current approach for dealing with anti-social behaviour was an example of good partnership working. Members added that a lot of work was being carried out that was not always seen by the public.

Officers made Members aware of an event being held by Superintendent Martin Jones regarding anti-social behaviour in Neath Town Centre. Officers added that Superintendent Martin Jones was keen to talk to Members regarding the issues that had been encountered.

Members discussed the possibility of reviewing the instances of anti-social behaviour that had occurred during Halloween, Bonfire Night and the Christmas period at the next committee meeting in January.

This would provide Members with an opportunity to look at what had taken place during this period and what had been done to address any issues.

Members queried whether any lessons could be learnt from the policing practices in the Swansea area when dealing with bars and clubs. Members reported that in Pontardawe some bars and clubs closed at three o'clock in the morning, resulting in people still wandering the streets at five o'clock in the morning, which was causing frustration amongst residents who were complaining about noise and disturbances. Members added that Pontardawe was being affected disproportionately as it was mainly a residential area. Members enquired whether the licenses granted to bars and clubs in Swansea differed to those granted in Neath Port Talbot. Inspector Cahill stated that the licenses granted in Swansea were the same as for Neath Port Talbot, as they were subject to the same licensing laws.

Members raised concerns that the 101 service was being underutilised particularly when reporting incidents in the Neath Town Centre. Members felt that the current statistics on reported crimes were not a true reflection of the problems being encountered. Members stated that there were incidents that the police were unaware of that were being shared on social media but not reported to the police. Members stated that they were urging residents to report crimes and obtain crime reference numbers. Members reported that businesses in the Neath Town Centre were concerned with the negative impact that anti-social behaviour was having on their trade. Members raised concerns regarding individuals who appeared to be under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal substances and were congregating in Victoria Gardens near the playground. Inspector Royston Portlock requested for Members to sign post residents to the 101 service. Inspector Cahill added that Members could also forward any reports of incidents directly to Inspector Cahill and Inspector Ward, stating the time and date the incident was reported. Inspector Cahill reiterated that social media was not the correct channel for reporting crime. Members queried whether there were any data protection considerations when forwarding reported incidents from the public on to the police. Inspector Cahill stated that consent must be obtained before passing the information on to the police.

The committee made a recommendation to the representatives of South Wales Police to develop a clear and accessible method of

incident reporting and information sharing that met the needs of the public and businesses.

The committee also made a recommendation to the representatives of South Wales Police to develop an effective means of providing timely updates to inform the public and businesses of progress being made.

5. **PREVENT PLAN**

Officers updated Members on the new legal duties and responsibilities placed on the local authority to prevent people from being drawn into extremist activities following the introduction of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Officers informed Members of the counter terrorism strategy CONTEST, which had four elements; pursue, prevent, protect and prepare. Officers informed Members of the Council's participation on the Western Bay CONTEST Board which aimed to prevent extremism threats. Officers reported that 800 members of staff and councillors from the current and previous administration had attended the Workshop Raising Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) training which highlighted potential signs to look out for if somebody was being drawn into extremist activity. Officers added that there were eight accredited trainers in place to deliver the WRAP training, and the next phase of the training would be carried out in the schools.

Officers presented the Prevent action plan to Members which outlined the work completed to date and the work to be undertaken next to deal with extremism and terrorist threats. Officers stated that the work was being carried out by the local multi agency Prevent action group. Officers reported positive feedback following a peer review and added that Neath Port Talbot were the first group in the UK to have the review. The review confirmed that the action group's approach was correct. Members noted the Prevent action plan.

Officers stated that they were seeking endorsement from the Regeneration and Sustainable Development Cabinet Board for delegated authority to be passed to relevant officers to implement the Venue Hire Policy. Officers informed Members that the policy would place responsibility on officers who take venue hire bookings to be vigilant and to take the relevant course of action if an enquiry raised suspicion. Members stated that it was important for town and community councils to be aware of the Venue Hire Policy. Members were supportive of the proposal to be considered by Cabinet Board.

6. **FOOD AND FEED LAW ENFORCEMENT PERFORMANCE**

Officers informed Members of their intention to inspect 100% of the premises for 2017-18. Officers reported that in 2016-17 the department did not achieve 100% inspections on premises classified as category D and E. Officers stated that the Food Standard Agency (FSA) were notified of this, and resources had been re-distributed in order to ensure that the target was met in 2017-18. Officers informed Members that they were considering charging new businesses for advice and coaching from the team. This service had been provided free of charge previously.

Members queried whether businesses were still fined if a food item was found out of date during an inspection. Officers stated that any businesses using items found to be passed their use by date would be committing an offence and would be dealt with accordingly. Officers added that businesses found to be using items that had exceeded their best before date would be advised that it was not good practice. Members queried whether the council received the money generated from the fines. Officers confirmed that the Home Office received the money from the fines. Officers added that if a business is taken to court and found guilty, the council will be reimbursed for the time spent on the case by the Trading Standards Officer and Legal Officer.

Members enquired whether there was information available which explained why a business had received a certain hygiene star rating. Officers informed Members that this information could be obtained on the FSA website.

Members queried whether it was a legal requirement for businesses to display the hygiene rating at all times. Officers stated that it was a legal requirement; however some businesses had been known to display incorrect hygiene ratings. Members enquired whether officers carried out unplanned visits to business premises. Officers confirmed that unplanned visits were carried out especially if complaints were received regarding a particular business premises.

Members queried whether new businesses were automatically inspected or did they need to submit an application to receive the inspection. Officers confirmed that the onus was on the new businesses to apply for their initial inspection.

Members acknowledged the good working carried out by the section. Members noted the report on Food And Feed Service Delivery Plan

2017-2018 And The Food And Feed Law Enforcement Review 2016-2017.

CHAIRPERSON