

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Community Safety and Public Protection Sub Committee

30th October 2018

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Digital Officer

Matter For Information

Wards Affected: All wards

Outcomes of Joint Public Services Board (PSB): Substance Misuse Issues NPT & Swansea

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise members of the outcomes of a recent joint Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Public Services Board (PSB), arranged in response to the serious risk, harm and threat posed by substance misuse issues in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea.

Executive Summary

2. Serious concerns have been raised regarding the risks, threat and harm associated with substance misuse issues, including an increase in violence and preventable deaths. In response to these concerns, this matter was escalated to a joint PSB meeting attended by senior leaders. This meeting received reports on the issue and provided an opportunity for open dialogue. Partners gave their commitment to working together and agreed the establishment of a Critical Incident Group, which will be chaired by Mr Steven Phillips. It was agreed that the current situation relating to substance misuse across the two local authority areas warranted a heightened level of response.

Background

3. Serious concerns have been raised at the Area Planning Board regarding the rate of drug related deaths, serious infections and increasing crime, violence and vulnerability in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.
4. Given the scale and seriousness of the issues, and the harm risk and threat posed to our communities, a decision was reached to call a special joint Swansea and NPT PSB meeting.
5. The joint meeting of the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot PSBs was held on Monday 10th September, and was attended by senior leaders, including Cllr. Anthony Taylor (Deputy Leader, NPTCBC); Councillor Clive Lloyd (Deputy Leader City & County Of Swansea); Councillor Des Davies (Cabinet Member NPTCBC); Andrew Davies and Tracy Myhill (Chair and CEO of ABMU respectively); Chief Constable Matt Jukes, and Chief Superintendent Martin Jones (SW Police); Alun Michael (Police & Crime Commissioner); Stephen Phillips and Karen Jones (Chief Executive & Assistant Chief Executive NPTCBC); and Alex Williams (Head of Adult Services City & County of Swansea).
6. Senior representatives from Welsh Government, Swansea University, Trinity St David's University; Public Health Wales, Tai Tarian, Probation, Neath Port Talbot CVS, NPT College; Department for Work and Pensions, G4S, Police & Crime Commissioner's Office,

Town & Community Councils and service providers (WCADA & Barod), were also in attendance. Colleagues from Bridgend County Borough Council were also invited to attend but the issues are not as acute in that area. The meeting was chaired by Roger Thomas Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Mid & West Wales Fire and Rescue Service

7. Chief Superintendent Martin Jones gave a presentation on the levels of harm, risk and threat posed in our communities including the criminal intelligence picture and health risks. This presentation was reinforced by information provided by Public Health Wales. Furthermore, Barod and WCADA (Specialist Substance Misuse Service Providers) spoke from an operational perspective, highlighting what is working well and what needs to change to bring about a reduction in the death rate and the level of harm to health.
8. It was concluded that the current situation related to substance misuse across the two local authority areas warranted a heightened level of response. The discussion highlighted that not one organisation could bring about the changes needed, and that solutions depended on all partners playing an active role and being accountable. Consequently, all partners committed to working together to address the serious risks, threats and harms identified in the two local authority areas.
9. Attendees were clear that the outcomes from this meeting needed to be action focused and to address the immediate issues. Consequently, it was further agreed that a Critical Incident Group would be established and would meet at the earliest opportunity. This will be chaired by Steven Phillips.
10. The overarching objective of the Critical Incident Group is to establish a consistent and co-ordinated approach to the situation across the two local authority areas and across agencies/partnerships. The proposed terms of reference for the Critical Incident Group are detailed in Appendix One.
11. Senior level representation from partner agencies has been sought to provide the leadership needed to respond to the situation. It will be expected that the persons nominated to sit on the Group will have sufficient seniority to be able to agree actions on behalf of their

agency and be able to drive change in their organisations. It is likely that input from service operations will also be needed to support the areas identified as in need of priority attention.

12. A follow up meeting of the two PSBs (and other key stakeholders) will be held around Christmas to report progress and agree next steps.

Financial Impact

13. There are no financial impacts associated with this report, in that any service developments or financial costs will be met from within the Regional Substance Misuse Expenditure Plan. This is funded by a specific grant from Welsh Government (Substance Misuse Action Fund), and partner contributions.

Equality Impact Assessment

14. There are no equality impacts associated with this report, although it is noted that Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken in respect of actions or service changes resulting from the work of the Critical Incident Group.
15. The actions of this group will have a positive impact on some of the most vulnerable persons in our communities.

Workforce Impacts

16. There are no direct workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

17. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

Risk Management

18. The threat and harm of substance misuse across the county borough and more people placed at significant harm / death, is recorded as a risk by NPTCBC.

Consultation

19. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Crime and Disorder Impact

20. It is anticipated that the actions arising from this report will have a major impact in respect of crime and disorder.

Appendices

21. Appendix One: Proposed terms of reference for the Critical Incident Group

List of Background Papers

22. None

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Appendix One: Proposed terms of reference for the Critical Incident Group

To establish a consistent and co-ordinated approach to the situation across the two local authority areas and across agencies/partnerships with a view to:

- Reducing the number of drug-related deaths across the two local authority areas;
- Assisting the Police to disrupt drug-related organised and serious crime and freeing up Police capacity to do so;
- Reducing incidents of crime, anti-social behaviour, drug litter, fear of crime, street begging and homelessness;
- Safeguarding local citizens and protecting communities particularly children and young people and those most vulnerable;
- Directing and co-ordinating community relations - providing consistent messages to be delivered by agreed spokespersons and ensuring effective communications with clients and their support networks; front-line staff and the wider community;
- Securing public confidence in PSB organisations;
- Considering changes to the pattern of service delivery across partnerships, removing silos and other barriers to effective working; and
- Identifying lessons learned to inform the longer term work of agencies.