

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT CRIME AND DISORDER OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY, 2017

A MEETING of the COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT CRIME & DISORDER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the 007 B - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on MONDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY, 2017 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Jane Kidd

Councillors Clive Stone and Jane Cox

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Karen Johnson, Assistant Director of Communities  
Superintendent Neil Thomas, South Yorkshire Police  
Bill Hotchkiss, Head of Service, Community Safety  
Pat Hagan, Head of Service, Communities  
Rachael Long, Crime and Safer Doncaster Theme Manager  
Andy Rutherford, Head of Street Scene and Highways Operation  
Carolina Borgstrom, Enforcement Manager Urban

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Susan Durant, Kenneth Keegan and Cynthia Ransome

		<u>ACTION</u>
5.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.</u>	
6.	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
7.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
8.	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS.</u> <u>[A PERIOD NOT EXCEEDING 20 MINUTES FOR STATEMENTS FROM UP TO 5 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS WITHIN THE PANEL'S REMIT, PROPOSING ACTION(S) WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERED OR CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE</u>	

	<u>FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PANEL'S WORK PROGRAMME.]</u>	
	There were no public statements.	
9.	<u>CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 3</u>	
	<p>The Committee received a presentation and considered a report providing an update on priorities and the level of crime and anti-social behaviour in Doncaster with figures based upon the previous 12 month period.</p> <p>Members noted that the overall level of crime in Doncaster was 15% higher than last year but that it was a similar position across South Yorkshire. Specific figures were highlighted with regard to anti-social behaviour, hate crime sexual abuse, domestic abuse and serious acquisitive crime. It was explained that a performance group meets bi-monthly to address the latest crime trends and issues arising from the data. Actions plans were then developed and delivered to ensure accountability and progress.</p> <p>The presentation covered the following areas:</p> <p><u>South Yorkshire Police</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doncaster’s Local Policing Structure – it had been recognised that some areas required local policing teams and would be reintroduced</li> <li>• Potential changes</li> <li>• 101 non emergency number – lengthy waiting times had been addressed</li> <li>• Hate crime trends – Members were of the opinion that this crime could be under-reported but noted that sometimes it could be reported as something else but was actually categorised as hate crime once further investigation had been undertaken</li> </ul> <p><u>Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed priorities for 2014 – 2017 – to be revisited as part of the 2017 review.</li> <li>• Review of the Community Safety Strategy – priorities likely to cover the same areas but amended to reflect new trends/challenges.</li> <li>• Structure of the Team Doncaster Strategic Partnership</li> <li>• CCTV new installation - including the use of tannoy systems with pre-recorded messages in targeted areas. The cameras</li> </ul>	

came at a high cost therefore investigation was being undertaken to identify whether such systems could be incorporated into existing lamp columns as costs would reduce significantly.

- Off road motor cycles – the Police centralised team have 4 off-road motorcycles for use in hotspot areas. Access to the bikes enabled the Police to undertake operations more easily and stop offending vehicles safely. It was noted that some people see off road motorcycling as a sport and pastime however without appropriate permissions, it is illegal. Reacting to illegal motorcycling requires intelligence, therefore communities need to feed any events to the police or local councillors. It was noted that illegal motorcyclists were most vulnerable when they were cleaning their bikes or refuelling, so information on where this takes place was invaluable. When motorcyclists were caught their equipment was seized.
- Operation Duxford – is a Police and Partnership 3 monthly operation addressing crime generally including antisocial behaviour, vulnerability and reassurance, which on the last occasion lead to 29 arrests, 5 report on summons, 12 cars seized, 19 other traffic offence, 17 taxi licensing offences and a kilo of cocaine recovered.
- Future planned activity

The Committee thanked South Yorkshire Police and officers for the information provided in the presentation and further addressed the following areas:

General increase in crime – it was stressed that anti-social behaviour was an issue that affected peoples day to day lives and the increase was worrying. It was noted that the crime recording process was now more ethical with crimes recorded at the first point of contact, rather than recording following a response. It was noted that South Yorkshire Police had also established a compliance team investigating whether crimes had been recorded, if not then it was being addressed, therefore figures may still increase. Professional call handlers were now taking calls, ensuring the information was recorded and passed to the correct areas. It was acknowledged that South Yorkshire Police no longer had the resources to send an officer to every crime reported.

Organised crime – it was noted that some areas across the Borough had been linked to organised gang crime and that antisocial behaviour tended to happen on the coat tail of such behaviour, with younger people undertaking copy cat crimes. It was noted that South Yorkshire Police and partners were working hard to divert people away from being involved in this kind of activity.

Non reporting of crime – Members expressed concern that there was a general apathy towards reporting low level crime, but regularly

complaining within communities. It was stressed that an improved engagement strategy with communities was required to ensure improved confidence and spread the message to report crime no matter how small, to assist the Police with evidence gathering.

Modern Slavery – Members raised if there had been many incidences of modern slavery in the area and the need to ensure all agencies were trained and able to identify when this was happening and how to speedily report it. It was noted that this crime was a priority with partnership training workshops being undertaken.

Shoplifting – the underlying causes were addressed but it was noted that there was no specific root of the problem. Substance misuse was always a contributing factor and the towns vibrant shopping centre was an easy target.

Tent City – the congregation of homeless and people who were claiming to be homeless before Christmas, focused and brought together the problems people needed help with. It was noted that more people were highlighted as being drug and substance misuse dependent highlighting that the complex dependency work being undertaken was vital.

Psychoactive substances – It was noted that Spice (psychoactive substance) was a serious issue currently being addressed nationwide.

#### Fly tipping action and enforcement

The Committee learnt that:

- Fly tipping is a criminal offence under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- Doncaster Council had received nearly 13,000 complaints in 2016
- In the last 12 months the Council had spent nearly £450,000 on removing fly tipping from public land in addition to the costs of waste education, enforcement and cost to private landowners to keep their land clear
- The hardest challenge for the Enforcement Team was finding sufficient evidence to catch and convict offenders

Members addressed the following areas:

This is my Doncaster – a new initiative to boost Doncaster as a cleaner and greener place to live, work and visit. Encouraging everyone to take pride in their local environment, taking a zero tolerance policy on offenders. Waste collated in back alleys was being opened and sifted within the community, to try and prevent such future tipping. With regard to waste identified in gardens, residents were approached to

ensure safe disposal before it was left in alleyways.

Collating evidence – the Enforcement team was able to use CCTV and small wildlife cameras to gather evidence of fly tipping but it was important that any person witnessing this crime, report it, no matter how small.

Keep Britain Tidy award – this had been received for work undertaken as part of the Hexthorpe Selective Licensing Scheme. Landlords in this area had signed up to provide tenants with waste disposal education, and has resulted in waste bins being used much better.

Bin it to win it – this scheme identifies people who have done something positive within their community. If they are noticed, they are issued with a card to enter into a monthly draw where a £50 shopping voucher can be won.

Fair sentences for criminals – the Team was looking to meet with partners and Magistrates to address fair sentencing and ensuring they were proportionate to consequences in the neighbourhood. When people attend court they sometimes portray poverty and it was therefore difficult to give an appropriate fine. Officers were investigating whether a bid for funding to employ a Financial Investigator when poverty is claimed by an offender, to assist the local authority with cases.

Why do people fly tip – within the urban area it tends to be a lack of knowledge therefore education was a key way to address the situation. If people have chaotic lifestyles then waste collection tends to be very low on their priorities, particularly when they have to travel to a recycling centre. It was also noted that a lot of fly tipping was due to trade waste and actions taken to address this.

RECOMMENDED that:

1. The Hate Crime Strategy be considered by the Panel;
2. Support the reintroduction of neighbourhood policing in identified areas; and
3. Support possible bid for funding to employ Financial Investigators to support prosecutions of fly tipping when presented to Court.