

**REPORT TO:** Safer Halton Policy & Performance Board  
**DATE:** 20 September 2011  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Communities  
**SUBJECT:** Community Safety  
**WARDS:** Borough Wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To update members of the Board on a range of community safety issues.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be received and noted.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Future Funding (2012/2013)**

3.1.1 The future for funding from Central Government for community safety is still not clear, we have been advised that the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund allocation for 2012/2013 will be paid directly to the new Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and not the Local Authority.

3.1.2 The PCC will then control this element of the budget for the four Local Authorities in Cheshire. This could then be used to commission service across Cheshire at the discretion of the elected PCC.

3.1.3 At this present time there will be no external funds from Central Government being paid to Local Authorities for Community Safety priorities. This means that there will be a significant deficit in the funding streams.

3.1.4 This reduction will have a significant affect on the Safer Halton Partnerships ability to deliver projects to combat quality of life issues such as Anti Social Behaviour.

3.1.5 The Community Safety Team are currently working on a revised business plan and team structure for 2012, which will enable key work streams to continue and meetings are being held with key partners to explore these issues.

3.1.6 The major risk to the Authority will be identifying main stream funding where none has existed before and the implications for the partnership should this work cease.

### **3.2 Government Approach to Community Safety and Policing**

### 3.2.1 **ASB Tools and Powers review**

3.2.2 We have been advised that publication of the Government's consultation on '**ASB tools and powers review**' would be delayed by a couple of weeks and we are not sure when this will now be published. What we know is in the review, is summarised below:

- the term, asbo will be dropped but aspects of the 'asbo regime' will be continued
- the number of anti-social behaviour offences (categories) will be cut from 19 to 5 as part of the process of rationalising/simplifying the available tools and powers

3.2.3 The five reported measures designed to simplify the system are outlined as:

- A "criminal behaviour order" that could, for instance, see someone who is convicted of being drunk and disorderly banned from a town centre for two years.
- A civil "crime prevention injunction" which could be obtained within "hours rather than months".
- Court orders to close a property where there has been persistent disorder.
- Fines for people who have been a persistent nuisance and harmed the quality of life in an area.
- A "direction to leave" which will see any individual causing or likely to cause crime directed away from a particular place and "related items" confiscated.

3.2.4 Additionally, Police Officers will be given more discretion to deal with offenders such as forcing them to make amends, rather than pursuing formal legal interventions.

### 3.3 **New powers to tackle gang problems**

3.3.1 New civil injunctions to prevent gang-related violence by adults came into effect on 31 January 2011.

3.3.2 The 'gang injunctions' are designed to break down gang culture and prevent further incidents of gang-related violence by imposing certain prohibitions and requirements on the recipient.

3.3.3 These could include:

- Not entering a certain geographical area
- Not being in public with a particular species of animal, for example a dog which had previously been used as a weapon
- Not wearing certain 'gang colours' in public

- Participating in positive activities such as entering a mentoring programme.
- 3.3.4 The police and local authorities will be able to apply for the injunctions which will be issued by a county court (or the High Court). The injunctions will last for up to two years and will be for adults who have been proven to have engaged in, encouraged or assisted gang-related violence.
- 3.3.5 The injunctions differ from anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) as they target a higher level of criminality. There is no minimum term for a gang injunction, no criminal record for breach and positive requirements can be attached to the injunction. However, the Government is clear that those involved in gang-related violence should be prosecuted under criminal law if there is sufficient evidence and it is in the public interest to do so.
- 3.3.6 The statutory provision for gang related injunctions against adults can be found at Part 4 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009.

#### **3.4 New “RESPECT” Standard for Housing Providers**

- 3.4.1 The new Respect Charter was launched in Harrogate on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011 by the Chartered Institute of Housing, the Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Group and House Mark.
- 3.4.2 The new Charter is the sector-owned replacement for the former Respect Standard for Housing Management. It has been developed through wide consultation, led by CIH, SLCNG and House mark, and is endorsed by two key national tenant organisations – TPAS and TAROE. It is essentially an updating of the earlier Standard. Indeed, the consultation process demonstrated that the ‘Respect’ name is well recognised and valued by landlords and tenants across the sector.
- 3.4.3 The Charter continues to be voluntary, and is a key part of the new, co-regulatory approach within housing. It is not intended to be a wider community safety charter – it is about landlords’ ASB services. However, the importance of partnership working in improving outcomes for service users is acknowledged throughout the Charter.
- 3.4.4 The Charter is outcome-focused and not prescriptive or process-driven. Its purpose is to improve ASB services, and consists of a series of commitments and building blocks based on sector good practice.
- 3.4.5 Landlords signing up to the Charter, are making public their commitment to provide a high quality ASB service and their accountability to tenants for its delivery.

3.4.6 The Charter will continue to be based on a self-assessment approach and can be used as a framework for improvement, tailored to local needs and priorities.

### **3.5 Cutting Crime Together (key points)**

3.5.1 This section outlines the government's reform agenda and future funding.

### **3.6 Partnerships**

3.6.1 Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) will continue to be statutory and Government want them to be partnership focused on taking actions and achieving outcomes – cutting crime and reducing harm – not process and bureaucracy. We are freeing partnerships from central reporting burdens and prescriptions.

### **3.7 Police Crime Commissioners**

3.7.1 The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners from May 2012 will give the public direct influence over crime in their local area. Crime mapping down to neighbourhood level in the New Year will provide the public with the information to hold partners to account..

3.7.2 Once Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) are introduced they will be responsible and democratically accountable for tackling crime at a local level, working alongside local partners. The public will be able to raise any concerns directly with them, and PCCs will have the power to respond.

3.7.3 As such, once PCCs are in a position to commission services locally, the majority of Central Government funding for crime and community safety programmes will be devolved to them and they will work with CSPs and others to prioritise the issues that matter most to local residents.

3.7.4 Work is ongoing through the Sub National Crime and Justice Commission to ensure that there are plans in place for March 2012.

3.7.5 Currently there are a number of procedural issues being dealt with in relation to the new bill and this could mean that there is a delay to the PCC's being elected in May 2012.

3.7.6 The issue is being debated in the House of Lords, and implications of this when known, will be updated to the Board.

3.7.8 A further briefing/presentation can be presented specifically focusing on the new role of the PCC's and its impact as the position becomes clearer.

## **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None at present until consultation findings have been published.

## **5.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

5.1 The future funding implications for non mainstreamed services may seriously impact on the partnerships ability to deliver community safety services and safeguarding issues. Further Briefings will be provided as we receive notification of the final changes to legislation.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

The clear links between the priorities of community safety and children and young people service means that any reduction in our funding streams will have a direct impact in delivery of our prevention and intervention schemes.

### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

None identified.

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

The clear links between the priorities of community safety and alcohol and drug services means that any reduction in service will have a direct impact in delivery of our prevention and intervention schemes. The ability to deal with the serious issues around excessive alcohol consumption would be at risk.

### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

Community safety issues continue to be a main priority for the communities of Halton; there are many themes that cut across the Council's services and priorities. The lack of mainstream funding and possible changes in legislation could have an extremely detrimental effect on our ability to deliver our current level of service.

### **6.5 Urban Renewal**

None identified.

## **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

7.1 The possible impact on delivery of services to some of our more diverse communities.

**8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

8.1 None under the meaning of the Act