

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Safe & Attractive Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
3.	Title:	Service Review – Community Safety Unit
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

### 5. Summary

On 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2012 Cabinet agreed the RMBC revenue budget for 2012/13. This included a £73,000.00 general fund revenue budget reduction for the Community Safety Unit.

This budget reduction will require revenue savings within the Community Safety Unit including the need for staff reductions within the establishment

A service review has been completed and consultation has taken place in accordance with the prescribed process with staff and unions.

This report describes the progress made in reviewing the structure and functions of the unit and recommends a new operating model.

A budgetary saving of £73,000 would be achieved by implementing the reviews findings.

### 6. Recommendations

**That Cabinet Member:**

- **Notes the content of the report, the staffing implications arising from the proposals and the timescale for implementation.**
- **Notes the structural changes set out in the report.**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

### **7.1 Background**

The need to undertake an organisational review relating to the Community Safety Unit is set against the background of the financial challenges faced by the Council. This review commenced on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2012 and concluded following a period of consultation and meeting with staff and Unions on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

The review had two main objectives:

- To reduce costs to a more sustainable level, and
- To develop proposals for a service fit for purpose in the light of current and future anticipated demands

The review has been undertaken against the policy and performance context of the service (see section 11 below) and recognises both the statutory need to enable the Council's effective management of the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) Rotherham's Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the discretionary elements relating to the co-ordination and support of the priorities of the SRP and partner agencies.

How the service works to address the above core elements can vary especially in the discretionary elements relating to the co-ordination and support of the priorities of the SRP. The balance of the review has been to enable reasonable resourcing of the maintained service to deliver the statutory responsibilities of the Council but also to maintain capacity to help develop and support partnership co-ordination against essential crime and disorder priorities.

Overall in the current financial position the current organisational arrangements are not financially sustainable, and the service needs to reduce its costs. The identified level of savings can only be achieved by reducing the number of posts within the service.

### **7.2 Principles**

The service has been reviewed and a new operating model proposed which is capable of:

- Management of the Safer Rotherham Partnership, and assuring delivery of statutory functions required of Community Safety Partnerships.
- Reducing administrative bureaucracy and addressing the "meetings" culture
- Providing a focus for partnership direction with regard to anti social behaviour
- Becoming a critical advisory element of integrated locality based services.
- Deliver Corporate Priorities - e.g. helping to create safe and healthy communities.
- Maintaining front line services and protecting the most vulnerable
- Effectively managing and addressing anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood crime.
- Embracing the introduction of, and forming positive links with Police & Crime Commissioners and Police & Crime Panels

Streamlining and producing more action focused partnership arrangements is a priority of Rotherham's Local Strategic Partnership and certainly reflects the direction made very clear by the Government.

What is clear is that the commitment for partnership working is not diminished, with Government commitment to CSPs remaining strong and set within national publications such as the Policing & the 21st Century and Community Safety Partnership Deregulation consultations, together with linked Local Government Association and HMIP documents<sup>5</sup>. The positive future for CSPs has also been provided by written parliamentary answer by the Minister of Justice who also recognised potential for CSPs to create efficiency savings by reducing duplication and fragmentation of services<sup>6</sup>.

Effective CSP's are also seen by Government as a key element in service delivery in support of Police & Crime Commissioners who will replace the existing Police Authorities in November this year.

### **7.3 Proposals**

The Safer Rotherham Partnership is held in high regard both at national, regional and sub-regional levels and it is essential that, as the statutory CSP for Rotherham, it continues to be effectively managed and supported if it is to build on its achievements and meet future national and local demands. It is viewed that this should not be taken as the Council just providing a "secretariat" role but one that allows co-ordination, effective sharing of information, maximising external funding opportunities and a direct steer on the delivery of both key local and Government crime and disorder priorities<sup>7</sup>. A critical priority requiring partnership focus (advised by the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment) continues to be anti-social behaviour (ASB) and how we manage and address ASB is a high priority for the SRP, RMBC and the residents of Rotherham.

Accordingly, principal work activity proposed will include the following areas:

- SRP management/co-ordination
- SRP Performance management including performance clinics
- Linkage to Police & Crime Commissioner and Police & Crime Panels
- Anti-Social Behaviour co-ordination/enforcement
- SRP secretariat
- SRP external funding management
- SRP information, intelligence & data sharing
- Intelligence led business processes
- Customer focus, victim and volunteer support & coaching
- Crime & Disorder advice, support, best practice & local innovation
- Co- production of the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment
- Production and management of the Safer Rotherham Partnership plan to tackle crime, disorder and ASB

It is proposed that the Service will be redesigned to include the following full time equivalent posts:

- 1 SRP /ASB Unit Manager (Neighbourhood Crime & Justice Manager)
- 4 ASB Officers
- 2.2 Community Safety/SRP Administrators

The ASB function is also supported by a full time seconded Police Officer.

With the reduction in staffing numbers it will be important to prioritise those areas of the borough with the most significant problems. In part this prioritisation will be directed to traditional council estates, but with capacity for cross tenure response.

These proposals reduce the Community Safety Unit by 1.5fte Community Safety Officer posts.

The required budget reduction cannot be achieved only through the disestablishment of the Community Safety Officer posts. The following action is proposed in order to achieve full reduction:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Saving</b>
Disestablishment of 1.5fte Community Safety Officer Posts	£53,579.00
Reduction in team non-salary revenue costs	£12,360.00
Reduction in funding contribution to intelligence unit for analysis of off-road m/cycle ASB issues	£7,061.00
	<b>£73,000.00</b>

The proposals will be supported by the increased capacity of Housing Champions (through service re-alignment of issues such as lettings functions and proposed changes to neighbourhood office arrangements) to deal pro-actively as well as reactively to neighbourhood issues, directing more resource to front line service delivery and providing essential assurance to communities, through increased visibility and presence within the neighbourhoods.

The SNT's will continue to provide a focus for coordination of service activity on the ground between partners and the community.

A service improvement plan has also been developed to further improve and strengthen the anti-social behaviour management functions within the Council, which will include a training and development programme for front line staff. It is anticipated that training will commence in July, supported by Safer Rotherham Partnership SNT colleagues.

Consideration has been given to the integration of partnership and engagement elements of community safety work within the wider community partnership and engagement role of the Area Partnership Team. This is in the context of a refocusing of the work of the team towards more coordinated activity in areas of multiple deprivation, which will include action to tackle ASB and crime related issues. Critical to this approach will be development work to increase capacity within the community/voluntary sector to enable such organisations to lead on certain elements of community based activity. In doing so, more capacity can be created to enable partnership staff to address more complex and cross cutting issues etc.

## **8. Next Steps**

If these proposals are acceptable, it is proposed that

- The posts of SRP/ASB Unit Manager, Anti-Social Behaviour Officers and Community Safety/SRP Administrators be assimilated/job matched to the current post holders

- The current 1.5fte Community Safety Officer posts are disestablished.
- The current ASB Officer vacancy be 'ring fenced' to the holders of the disestablished posts, expressions of interest invited from them and a selection process commenced.
- A flexible approach will be applied to the selection process, i.e. work pattern, full time, part time, job share etc.
- Those who are unsuccessful in the recruitment process will be registered with the Talent Pool. At the end of the 90 days, if no alternative positions have been found, they will leave the Council through redundancy. It is expected that the new structure will be fully operational by the first week in September.

## **9. Finance**

In the 2011/12 financial year the Community Safety Unit budget was £250,692.00. The general fund provided £201,978.00 of this cost with the HRA contributing £48,714.00. This does not include for the ASB Officers who are funded through a separate budget. If the proposal is accepted, a net general fund saving of £73,000 would be achieved in 2012/13. The HRA contribution to the service for 2012/13 is £49,201.00.

The £73,000 reduction was agreed by Cabinet on the 22nd Feb and the figures have been embedded within the TM1 budget setting process for 2012/13 Budget Book.

The £73,000 reduction includes a £7k reduction in the contribution (via Community Safety) to partnership Off Road Motor Vehicle Intelligence (CIU). This is mainly because the CIU no longer, because of national ASB recording changes, provide specific ORMV intelligence analysis.

## **10. Risks and Uncertainties**

The impact of the proposal will reduce the Community Safety Unit's capacity in some aspects of partnership working, whilst retaining a focus on tackling neighbourhood ASB. This will result in a facilitation, enabling and empowering approach to working with both statutory and non-statutory partners.

The Community Safety Officer post is a neighbourhood focused role and reducing resources will have the potential to impact on communities, especially those which have been identified as benefiting from partnership interventions to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. The scale of impact in reducing staffing resources is currently difficult to gauge but the co-ordination of other member agencies involved in the Safer Rotherham Partnership will be critical to sustain necessary works currently undertaken by Community Safety Officers.

The Community Safety Officers provide a universal service to the residents of Rotherham. However, some crime prevention/diversionary work by its nature is aimed towards younger people, such as holiday clubs and other diversionary activities as well as contributing to the provision of youth shelters and multi-use games areas. The same principles apply in respect of older residents, particularly in respect of crime prevention and personal safety advice. Through facilitation and co-ordination of service demand by the reduced team and with the support of internal and external partners, it is anticipated that the impact to service delivery can be managed at an acceptable level.

However, the ability to maintain an acceptable level of engagement capacity going forward will be dependent upon a number of factors. For example:

The work of the Community Safety Unit remains central to the aims of the Safer Rotherham Partnership across the Partnership network. The activity ranges from practical on the ground work in our localities, working with our Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Neighbourhood Action Groups in tackling local issues around crime and disorder, through to more strategic activity in the form of approaches to reducing crime and disorder. In addition, participation on local committees, task groups and community groups have been used as an underlying approach to help advise on how crime and disorder can be tackled in a problem solving partnership setting. It will be critical for partners to realise that the new service will not be able to provide the same level of capacity and there will need to be a greater need of self facilitation for the future.

## **11. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The current role played by the Community Safety Unit brings both co-ordination and capacity to ensure the delivery of both the statutory functions<sup>1</sup> of the Council with respect to the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) i.e. Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP) and functions focused to the delivery of the SRP's crime and disorder strategic priorities provided by the Partnership Plan<sup>2</sup>. This Plan is informed by an annual Strategic Assessment both of which are legally required and must be produced with community involvement and engagement<sup>3</sup>.

The strength of the SRP, which is recognised within the local arena, and more widely within regional and national government departments, has drawn positive commentary in several service inspections. In addition, self assessment, utilising the value for money six Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships<sup>4</sup> has showed the SRP to be positively positioned. These Hallmarks embed statutory requirements.

The Service contributes to the Corporate Plan's objectives of;

- Helping to create safe and healthy communities, and
- Improving the environment

In particularly the service helps maintain the current overall low crime rate in Rotherham, as well as continuing to address people's concerns about anti-social behaviour and their fear of crime.

Dealing with issues related to contaminated land has clear linkages to the seven outcomes of the Outcomes Framework for Social Care, and importantly includes:

- Improved Health and Emotional Well-being, by promoting and facilitating the health and emotional well-being of people who use the services.

## **12. Background Papers and Consultation**

The proposals have been subject to consultation with affected staff and unions. The formal one month period of consultation commenced with staff on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2012 and ended on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2012. **A further meeting was held with staff, HR and the Unions on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012.**

## References

1. Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Sections 6 & & as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002
2. Safer Rotherham Partnership; Partnership Plan 2010-11 (draft)
3. Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007
4. Delivering Safer Communities: A guide to effective partnership working'; September 2007
5. - Policing in the 21st century: reconnecting police and the people; Home Office, July 2010  
- "Conditional Offer" and Deregulation Consultation; Home Office Partnership Performance and Support Unit  
- Anti Social Behaviour, Stop the Rot & Inspection Findings; Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Police, September 2010  
- Local Government Association's response to the Government's Policing in the 21st century consultation; 17 September 2010
6. Written Answer, 11<sup>th</sup> October by Nick Herbert (Minister of State, Justice) Hansard
7. Home Office Structural Reform

**Contact Name:** Paul Walsh, Housing & Communities Manager,  
[paul.walsh@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:paul.walsh@rotherham.gov.uk), x34954