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CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 22 February 2024

Dear Councillor

CLIMATE CHANGE, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL - THURSDAY, 22ND FEBRUARY, 2024

I am now able to enclose, for consideration on Thursday, 22nd February, 2024 meeting of the Climate Change, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel, the following supplementary report.

Agenda No	Item
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| 6 | <u>Safer Wolverhampton Partnership and Community Safety response to Anti-Social Behaviour Complaints (Pages 3 - 14)</u> |
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[Simon Foster, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, presentation]

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Scrutiny Team:

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ASB - WMPCC

ASB Hotspot Patrolling pilot

- £1m funding provided by Home Office (same as Durham etc!)
- £100k being spent in Wolverhampton:
 - £50k Police Officer/PCSO overtime (40:60 split being seen)
 - £40k Youth Workers
 - £10k Local Authority Wardens overtime
- Covering the following areas: Consultation with CSPs
 - Heath Town/Bentley Bridge (2 Lower Super Output Areas)
 - Warstones (3 LSOAs)
 - The Scotlands (2 LSOAs)

ASB Hotspot Patrolling pilot

- Each hotspot to be visited by uniformed patrols at least once every 3 days for minimum of 15 minutes
- Patrols randomised in terms of time of day though still targeting highest risk periods
- Up until end of Q3 almost 300 patrols had taken place
- Wolverhampton Council also utilising wider funding at their disposal to ensure youth workers are able to signpost to meaningful diversionary activities to move young people onto
- Analysis being undertaken to understand impact on levels of ASB which can be shared in due course

ASB Hotspot Patrolling pilot

Some frustrations:

- Overlap with Grip areas not allowed so has required exclusion of some highest harm areas
- Home Office have listened to feedback on this for year 2 and merged the Grip and ASB hotspot funding so that it can be spent as one but...
- In doing so they have reduced the allocation to WMPCC by £321,292 – Still working out how to best deal with this reduction
- Lack of ability to provide meaningful diversionary activity with this money

Community Policing

Re-building community policing:

- Preventative, proactive, problem solving, visible policing
- Neighbourhood Policing Strategy 2023-2026
- 570 of uplift officers allocated to 7 local policing areas
- 4,092 officers dedicated to the 7 local policing areas
- CPD, professionalising, upskilling problem solving
- Helping Communities Fund: supporting diversionary activity

Operation Hercules?

- Operation Hercules is a West Midlands Police led initiative, working with partners such as West Midlands Fire Service and local councils to address street racing.
- Over the past few years, street racing has become a major anti-social behaviour issue and resulted in major collisions that have caused serious injury and fatalities.
- West Midlands Police gather intelligence identifying people who take part in these activities who are requested to participate in the diversionary course to better understand the risks involved.
- West Midlands Fire Service work with partners to educate those involved and tackle this issue through the diversionary course they have developed. Dedicated officers from the Fire department open the course and deliver the course with Police Officers from Operation Hercules and the Road Peace charity.
- Road Peace attend the courses to speak with the delegates about their personal stories in relation to bereavement due to road traffic collisions.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner contributed **£40,000** to this operation.

Timeline for Black Country High Court street cruising Injunction



02/05/2015 :- Initial Injunction granted for Black Country local authorities.

09/01/2018:- Renewal of Injunction.

01/02/2021 :- Injunction lapsed due to appeal.

24/12/2022 :- Interim injunction granted

- As of December 2023 the interim ban on street racing in the Black Country is to continue, after a High Court ruling.
- The injunction prohibits people driving or being a passenger or rider at a gathering where there is motor racing or motor stunts or other dangerous or obstructive driving.
- It covers the whole of the boroughs of Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall.
- Anyone breaching the ban will be in contempt of court and could face up to 2 years imprisonment, an unlimited fine and/or an order to have their assets seized.
- West Midlands Police will also be supporting the application, led by the City of Wolverhampton Council, for a full injunction which is due to be heard on Tuesday 27th February.
- The full injunction will be seeking to extend the scope of the injunction so that it covers spectators and organisers.

What has Operation Hercules achieved?

Wolverhampton Councillor Jasbir Jaspal said, "We are pleased that the High Court has seen fit to continue this interim injunction. It has ... achieved a substantial amount of success – both in helping to prevent instances of street racing from occurring in the first place, and in leading to the conviction of a number of individuals for contempt of court in recent months."

- 160 individuals have been identified and referred onto the diversionary/educational course.
- 10 Operation Hercules diversionary courses have been run so far by the Fire Service. The next course is due on Tuesday 27th February 2024.
- Money generated from the courses will be used by the local authorities to help pay for the cost of the injunctions and upkeep of the equipment.
- Since 24th December 2022 18 drivers have been arrested for breaching the High Court street racing injunctions in place for Birmingham and the Black Country. All either admitted breaching the injunction or were found to have breached the injunction. They have received fines and suspended sentences.
- West Midlands Police continue to directly target people who are breaching the street racing injunctions.

Safer Streets Funding – Round 4



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Wolverhampton City Centre – high rates of VAWG offences and youth ASB especially around the bus station. £366k:

- **Safe Haven** – 37 additional nights in July to March 2023 and 31 additional nights from April to September 2023. Trial of portable toilets located closely to the Safe Haven preventing women and girls seeking out secluded locations.
- **BID Night Guardians** - to provide 37 additional nights in July to March 2022 and 31 additional nightly street patrols to support businesses and be a point of contact and presence for all visitors to the NTE.
- **CCTV and Lighting** - CCTV and street lighting in secluded areas
- **Educational workshops** - in schools around ASB and continuation of expect respect workshops for females
- **Diversions activity** – for young people committing ASB
- **Campaigns** - raise awareness of ASB/VAWG and advertise interventions such as Safe Haven and Ask for Angela
- **Safety Women at Night Training** - delivered to operators within the NTE including licensed venue staff, door staff, taxi marshals and taxi providers. This will also include a Women’s Night Safety Charter.
- **Community Guardian Scheme** – to build community capacity and cohesion and encourage active upstanders.

Supporting Victims

- Victim Support service circa £1m p.a. where ASB is also crime providing phone and face to face support to enable victims to cope and recover
- Restorative Justice where ASB is also crime
- Restorative Justice where ASB is housing related
- Hate Crime support service where ASB is also crime
- Victims and Prisoners Bill sets out premise that persistent ASB meets threshold for victim support services funded by MoJ – Still advocating for strengthening of this, possibly through Criminal Justice Bill, to make this as wide as possible

Wider influencing work

Responded to the following consultations:

- Review of the Vagrancy Act (DLUHC)
- Review of the Vagrancy Act and ASB (Home Office)
- APCC ASB and Housing Consultation
- APPG ASB: Problem Solving Court
- APCC Conference: Chaired event: Homelessness/Rough Sleeping: Criminal Justice Bill

What we've asked for:

- Return of police officers and PCSOs taken from us by austerity to support community policing
- Investment in preventative services such as drug and alcohol treatment services, mental health services, youth services, school exclusions, social housing to prevent ASB
- Improved support for multi-agency working between local authorities and third sector
- Request for government to improve data collection concerning ASB, rough sleeping and begging
- Government to support a public health approach to ASB
- Support for increased provision of OOCs for people engaging in ASB

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