

Scrutiny Task and Finish Panel Agenda



Crime and Disorder Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel Thursday, 15th March, 2007

Place: Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 7.00 pm

Democratic Services Officer: A Hendry, Research and Democratic Services
Email: ahendry@eppingforestdc.gov.uk Tel: 01992 564246

Members:

Councillors M Cohen (Chairman), M Woollard (Vice-Chairman), D Bateman, P Gode, Mrs A Grigg, Mrs A Haigh, D Jacobs, R Law, R Morgan, Mrs C Pond, P Spencer, D Stallan and J Wyatt

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Head of Research and Democratic Services) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Head of Research and Democratic Services). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

4. MINUTES - 23 NOVEMBER 2006 (Pages 3 - 6)

To note and agree the minutes from the last meeting held on 23 November 2006.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE/ WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 7 - 20)

(Chairman/Lead Officer) To note the attached updated Terms of Reference and associated Work Programme. The Panel are asked at each meeting to review both documents.

Also attached are two background papers produced by the Local Government Information Unit, one on the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the other on the new Scrutiny Powers on Crime and Disorder.

6. PRESENTATION ON THE YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM (Pages 21 - 22)

To receive a presentation from Paulette Burrell from the Essex Youth Offending Team, one of the responsible authorities and partners in the Crime and Disorder Network. This Panel had agreed to meet with other responsible authorities in order to understand their part in the process and their views as to what the Council could or should do to help them achieve their objectives and what the Council can expect by way of return.

Attached is a brief background paper on the Essex Youth Offending Service for information.

7. PRESENTATION FROM THE PROBATION SERVICE (Pages 23 - 26)

To receive a presentation from Richards Meads from the Essex Probation Service, one of the responsible authorities and partners in the Crime and Disorder Network. This Panel had agreed it would like to meet with other responsible authorities in order to understand their part in the process and their views as to what the Council could or should do to help them achieve their objectives and what the Council can expect by way of return.

Attached is a brief background paper on the Essex Probation Service, for information.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

For the Panel to decide on a date for their next meeting.

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF CRIME AND DISORDER TASK AND FINISH SCRUTINY
PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2006
IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.30 - 9.25 PM**

Members Present:	M Cohen (Chairman), M Woollard (Vice-Chairman), Mrs A Grigg, Mrs A Haigh, D Jacobs, R Law, Mrs C Pond, P Spencer, D Stallan and J Wyatt
Other members present:	
Apologies for Absence:	D Bateman and R Morgan
Officers Present	S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer), C Overend (Policy & Research Officer) and Z Folley (Democratic Services Assistant)
Also in attendance:	A Cowie (West Essex PCT), M O'Keafe (West Essex PCT), S Cook (North Essex Mental Health Partnership Trust) and P Ashby (Essex Fire and Rescue Service)

15. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

No substitute Members were reported.

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

17. MINUTES - 12 OCTOBER 2006

Noted.

18. CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND OVERLAPS WITH MENTAL HEALTH

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Alison Cowie, the Director of Public Health, Mike O'Keafe, the Lead Commissioner for Mental Health from the West Essex Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Steve Cook an Associate Director from the North Essex Mental Health Partnership Trust and specialist in the criminal aspects of mental health.

It was noted that the representatives had been invited to report on the link between criminal activity and mental health. The issue stemmed from the Chairman of the Panels experience that there was a lack of support for people with mental health issues in the criminal justice system.

Alison Cowie opened the discussion by reporting on PCT involvement in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), how it benefited from this work and the key issues that would need to be picked up in the future.

She reported that the Epping Forest PCT had been a Responsible Authority for the CDRP since 2003. She advised that the services for crime and health worked closely together both directly for example in treating victims of crime admitted to A&E and indirectly to address the impact the fear of crime had on peoples willingness to go out and engage in activities such as Leisure Services which contributed to emotional wellbeing. She reported that PCT staff could be victims of violence and its buildings affected by vandalism. Certain issues had been defined as 'preventative health burdens' including alcoholism, drug use and the consequences of anti-social behaviour.

She advised that the PCT contributed resources, funding, staffing support to the CDRP and attended and chaired the network meetings. It also supported the 'Crucial Crew' initiative and participated in the scenarios for crime awareness. As a result, the trust obtained information on health trends and support for their own projects and had taken steps to address Hate Crime in the Heath Service. As a result of the restructuring of the PCT, a new public health lead would be appointed to take forward health issues on the CDRP and the LSP. The PCT ran projects with NACRO to reduce obesity.

The Panel noted the PCTs intention to continue with existing work and information sharing having regard to patient confidentiality. The Panel noted current work between the Princes Alexander Hospital and the Police to gather evidence on alcohol related crime to identify action. The Panel noted that this was a key priority area and that the National Treatment Agency for Drugs had driven some of their targets.

In response to the presentation, the Panel expressed concern about alcohol related low level antisocial behaviour and questioned whether such incidences could be related to the closure of hospital wards in the area? The Panel asked about the care that would be available for those patients moved back into the community as a result of the closures and the resources and future plans to support CDRPs with this work?

The Panel asked about the support that would be available to assist Members facilitate the 'community call for action' through raising local concerns with key agencies such as health.

In response, Mr Cook of the North Essex Mental Health Partnership Trust reported that the team provided specialist services including psychiatric care for people with mental health issues in the criminal justice system and also received information from the Essex Drug Action Team which the PCT sat on and was a sub group of the CDRP. He advised that a Criminal Justice Liaison Service had been established to, amongst other things, deliver training for parole officers and share information. Strong links had also been established between the service, the police and magistrate courts.

Mr Cook reported that the Criminal Justice Mental Health Teams had a strong relationship with the Police. Their role was to identify offenders with mental health issues in the prison system and undertake measures to link them back to into mainstream services. The process for this was explained. There was communication between the team and the prison services to facilitate care. There was also a close relationship between the Mental Health Team and Whipps Cross Hospital A&E and Princess Alexander A&E who shared information about patients with criminal behaviour and covered the totality of the District in terms of mental health provision.

The Panel asked if any cases could be called untreatable and if so how such cases were dealt with? It was noted that only those who had expressed an unwillingness to engage in the services fell into this category.

The Panel noted treatment for offenders with a personality disorder and non alcohol and drug related issues. A Member expressed concern that there was no representation on the CDRP or mechanisms within it for gathering information on such wider mental health issues. The Panel asked how this perceived gap in representation could be addressed and about plans to integrate the local Mental Health services into the work?

The Panel noted the process for setting priority areas which determined where attention was focused and information sought. The PCT was committed to engaging at every level and would be willing to sign up to new forums.

The representatives undertook to liaise with the CDRP to consider the concerns raised by the meeting about the involvement of mental health services in the CDRP and report back to the Panel. It was also reported that a wider discussion would take place between the agencies on the implications of the white paper which would also be reported back to the Panel. The Panel thanked the PCT representatives for their presentation.

ACTION:

PCT to report back to the Panel on the outstanding issues.

19. CONSULTATION WITH OTHER RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES WHO ARE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998.

The Panel received a presentation from Assistant Divisional Officer, Peter Ashby of Essex Fire and Rescue on the work his service in the Epping Forest District and how this was enriched by its relationship with the CDRP.

The Essex Fire and Rescue Service had been a partner of the CDRP since 2003. The service operated a mix of part manned and fully manned stations in the District and had a prevention and early intervention role with the CDRP to turn young people away from crime. A briefing paper on this was before Members.

In relation to specific schemes, it was reported that the service ran local 'Fire Break' weeks twice a year for 12 young offenders and potential young offenders. The scheme provided training on equipment and demonstrated the importance of team work. It also involved a 'card system' for controlling behaviour which carried a penalty of exclusion from activities and an end of course presentation to mark progress which was monitored over the longer term indicating very encouraging results. Usually only about 1-2 students failed to complete the course.

The Panel drew attention to the 'Crucial Crew' scheme. The Panel thought that the scheme had been very effective and thanked those officers involved for supporting it.

In terms of everyday work, reference was made to a case where there was a need for multi agency work and how the CDRP had facilitated such provision. The service was far more able to coordinate work in this area through working with the CDRP.

Attention was drawn to measures to deal with 'Fire Setting'. This involved the provision of awareness sessions, talking to fire starters families and referring them on to other agencies as required. The aim was provide early prevention to stop problems escalating and young people going on to commit offences in their late teens. A Members referred to press articles suggesting that that the service had become a target for violence. Mr Ashby reported that he was not aware of such incidences and that this was not a problem locally. A Members asked about the number of hoax calls received by the service? This was not a prevalent issue although there had been a campaign to raise awareness of this in view of the incidences of false alarms caused by malfunctioning electrical equipment.

The Panel thanked Mr Ashby for participating in the discussion.

20. COMMUNITY SAFETY SECTION OF THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER

Members noted a summary of the white paper and the duty to be placed on Members in relation to the 'Community Call for Action'. Consideration would need to be given to the document and the final report of the Panel and who would be tasked with this. Members might wish to write the report themselves. Caroline Wiggins the new Crime and Disorder Reduction Officer would be taking up duties on 4 December 2006 and would be attending future meetings of the Panel.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed that representatives from the Youth Offenders Services and Drugs Intervention Team should be invited to the next meeting which was to be arranged for the new year.

Term of Reference:

1. To consider the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) and its effect on Scrutiny in EFDC and how it could be improved.
2. To consider the involvement of Overview and Scrutiny in the new 'Scrutiny Plus' arrangements to be conducted with other partner agencies.
3. To consider the proposal for a 'Community Call for Action' and its implications for EFDC Scrutiny.
4. To consider the role of EFDCs Crime Reduction Team and the resources available to it.

Aims and Objectives of Review:

- 1) A meeting of the panel would be set aside to question the Police, where using the National Intelligence Model they would hope to pinpoint areas causing concerns;
- 2) A meeting should be devoted to the PCT with a view to questioning about the link between mental health and crime;
- 3) A joint meeting should be held with the Probation Service and the Fire Brigade and Transport for London;
- 4) A separate meeting should also be devoted to EFDC specialist officers such as the Anti Social Behaviour Officer and the officer responsible for CCTV coverage and the Youth Services Officer.
- 5) The Task and Finish Panel will also consider the role of EFDC Crime Reduction Team and the resources available to it.

Following these meeting the Panel will need to collate the information gathered and relate it to the CDRP and how EFDC could help improve on it.

Key Issues:

TIMESCALE	ESTIMATED	ACTUAL
Commencement		27 June 2006
Finish	December 2006	
Report	January 2007	

CRIME AND DISORDER TASK AND FINISH PANEL: WORK PROGRAMME

Proposed Date	Item	Current Position
Tuesday, 27 June 2006	Scoping and Terms of Reference setting.	A draft terms of reference was considered by the panel.
Thursday, 12 October 2006	The Panel to question the Police, where using the National Intelligence Model they would hope to pinpoint areas causing concerns.	
	The Panel should devoted a meeting to the PCT with a view to questioning about the link between mental health and crime.	
	The Panel to host a joint meeting with the Probation Service and the Fire Brigade and Transport for London	
	A separate meeting should also be devoted to EFDC specialist officers such as the Anti Social Behaviour Officer and the officer responsible for CCTV coverage and the Youth Services Officer.	
	The Task and Finish Panel will also consider the role of EFDC Crime Reduction Team and the resources available to it.	

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Police and Justice Act 2006 (LGiU)

23/1/2007

Author: Gemma Roberts

Reference No: PB 1335/07L

This covers: England and Wales

Overview

The Police and Justice Act gained Royal Assent in November 2006. The Act contains a range of measures to further the police reform process. There are also specific areas that will have implications for local authorities.

- Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) in England or Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) in Wales.
- Developing the scope of crime and disorder reduction strategies.
- A new process - Community Call for Action - to respond to concerns about crime and disorder through.
- Developing parenting contracts to deal with anti-social behaviour.

Further guidance on these areas is expected throughout 2007. However, local authorities need to be considering how they will develop systems and partnerships to tackle these areas.

Briefing in full

The Police and Justice Act gained Royal Assent on 8 November 2006. The Act brings forward measures to continue the path of police reform and develop the role of local authorities to tackle crime and disorder.

The Act contains many of the proposals in the original Police and Justice Bill. The headline changes are outlined here.

- New powers for local authorities to scrutinise Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) in England or Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) in Wales.
- The scope of crime and disorder reduction strategies, developed by a CDRP or CSP, has been amended to emphasise the inclusion of anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment.
- Ward councillors have a new duty to respond to community concerns about crime and disorder through a Community Call for Action.
- Sets out the circumstances under which local authorities and registered social landlords can enter into a parenting contract to deal with anti-social behaviour.
- The powers of Trading Standard Officers have been extended to issue fixed penalty notices.
- Creation of the National Police Improvement Agency to develop and improve good policing practice in England and Wales.
- A requirement for police authorities to consult residents and engage them in preventing crime.
- Standardisation of the powers and duties of community support officers, with a specific role to deal with truants.

- The Secretary of State has the power to intervene in police authorities that are underperforming.
- There are also additional powers for the police regarding bail, travel, immigration and computer misuse.

For further detail and comment on these areas see related briefings.

There are two areas that have changed significantly from the Bill stage. Firstly the Secretary of State will not have the power to determine the size of police authorities. Secondly, the Act does not merge the responsibilities covered by five different inspectorates as suggested in the Bill. It does however, give additional powers and duties on the Chief Inspector of Prisons to assist and promote joint work with other public sector inspectorates.

Comment

There are specific areas where local authorities will need to take action and develop processes to meet the requirements of the Act.

In particular local authorities will now need to implement the new scrutiny powers and community call for action, which are outlined in the LGiU briefing *New Scrutiny Powers for Crime and Disorder* (see related briefings). The Home Office is currently developing guidance, which is unlikely to be available before late 2007. The implementation date is currently set for April 2008.

This is an opportunity for reviewing the focus of the CDRP (or CSP in Wales), while also ensuring it is meeting the wider scope of anti-social behaviour. These partnerships are also expected to create a more intelligence-led approach, sharing data and involving the community. Consulting and engaging the community in decision making has become an important tool for many local services. Partnerships should be looking wider than the community safety field to develop their consultation process, perhaps creating an integrated approach across organisations to maximise information and reduce consultation fatigue. See related briefing *Future role of police authorities in community engagement*.

CDRPs should also look at their role in supporting the new powers for local authorities and registered social landlords to enter into parenting contracts. Learning from the lessons of anti-social behaviour orders, they need to develop the capability of organisations to use this measure effectively (see link to *Review of the Uptake by Social Landlords of Legislative Powers to tackle anti-social behaviour*).

Additional Information

The LGiU will be holding a seminar related to this agenda on the topic 'Community involvement in scrutiny' on the 13th February 2007. For more information call 0207 554 2800.

Covers

- Wales
- Democracy, Governance, Councillor issues, Standards board, Neighbourhood governance, Regional governance, Local government information
- Crime and Community Safety
- Community involvement, Partnerships and LSPs, Voluntary sector

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New Scrutiny Powers on Crime and Disorder: amended version (LGiU)

23/1/2007

Author: Jo Dungey

Reference No: PB 1311/07L

This covers: England and Wales

Overview

New powers and responsibilities for local government overview and scrutiny are brought in by the Police and Justice Act 2006. These will be introduced during 2008 (subject to confirmation). This briefing gives an introduction to the new roles for scrutiny introduced by the Act, so councils can start to prepare, and contribute to the debate about how the new roles are defined.

This paper does not aim to cover the whole of the implications for councils of the Police and Justice Act, only the scrutiny issues.

Key points:

- In England, a new council scrutiny duty over Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, from Spring 2008
- Changes to arrangements for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships by summer 2007
- A Community Call for Action for communities and ward councillors, from spring 2008
- Welsh Assembly Government to decide in the context of their proposals on extending scrutiny, as part of their response to the Beecham Review whether to introduce these arrangements or alternative arrangements in Wales.

England and Wales

The Police and Justice Act 2006 applies to both England and Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government can decide whether to bring the new scrutiny powers discussed here into force in Wales. This will be done in the context of the *Making the Connections: Delivering Beyond Boundaries* local government policy statement from the Welsh Assembly Government, which sets out proposals for an expanded scrutiny role for Welsh councils. The information in this briefing relates to England, unless Wales is specifically mentioned.

Briefing in full

Scrutiny powers in the Police and Justice Act 2006

Background

Since the Local Government Act 2000 introduced the executive/scrutiny split, councils have had the power to investigate community concerns beyond the council and its services. The Act says scrutiny arrangements should include the power to report 'on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area'. Many useful scrutiny reviews have been done on these wider issues. However, when this Act was passed, it required only members of the council executive and

staff to respond to scrutiny activities. Scrutiny bodies could invite others to attend or provide information, but not compel them.

Since then, the Health and Social Care Act 2001 (applying to England only) has included powers in relation to NHS scrutiny. Information and participation can be required from local NHS bodies, and a response to council scrutiny recommendations must be made.

The Local Government White Paper, *Strong and prosperous communities*, published in October 2006 proposes a further extended role for council scrutiny in England. This includes a Community Call for Action (CCfA,) explained later. Public agencies involved in the Local Area Agreement will be required to provide information to council scrutiny, and have regard to its recommendations. This will require new legislation: the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill had its First Reading in December 2006.

Alongside this, the Police and Justice Act 2006 brings new powers to scrutinise Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. New statutory roles for scrutiny committees to look at crime and disorder issues are being introduced. Behind these changes lies the desire to increase the visibility and accountability of partnerships locally, as well as ensure community redress if community safety issues have not been dealt with.

This expands the importance of council scrutiny as one of the means to exercise democratic power over a wider range of services and issues affecting the area. It creates new dynamics between overview and scrutiny, the Council as a whole, and its Executive. Councils need to work through the implications of these new policy developments, and plan for the new roles.

Effective partnerships to tackle crime and disorder

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in England (CDRPs), or Community Safety Partnerships in Wales, were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Agencies required to take part are the council, police, Primary Care Trust, Fire Authority and Police Authority. CDRPs are required to review the levels and patterns of crime and disorder in the area, and develop and implement strategies to tackle these problems. In two tier areas partnerships operate at a district level. These arrangements are now changing with the Crime and Disorder Act Review and the Police and Justice Act 2006.

The CDRP reform policies are part of a range of changes originating in the 2004 White Paper, *Building Communities, Beating Crime*.

What is changing and why?

The Home Office's intentions in implementing the CDRP Reform Programme is to make CDRPs more effective in tackling crime and disorder. Partnerships need to be:

Effectively led: Roles and responsibilities of partners will be defined to ensure all partners play an equal part in leading the partnership. There will be a new requirement to involve the cabinet member (portfolio holder) with responsibility for crime and community safety in the CDRP strategic planning.

Responsive and accountable to their communities: Making local partnerships more engaged with their communities, for example by:

- requiring Face the People sessions (open to the public and media)
- formalising local scrutiny powers over CDRPs
- introducing the Community Call for Action (CCfA)
- extending the role of the community safety portfolio holder
- requiring CDRPs to engage and communicate with their communities.

Intelligence led: Ensuring partnerships are more focussed on intelligence available about the incidence of crime and disorder, and that they allocate resources appropriately, by:

- adapting the National Intelligence Model, used by the police, to CDRP working
- improving intelligence sharing between partner organisations, and requiring intelligence sharing protocols to be in place
- enhancing community engagement so that local intelligence is fed into local decision-making
- replacing the current requirement for a three year Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy, with a rolling three year plan which is updated annually, and therefore kept in line with up-to-date information
- requiring CDRPs to undertake regular strategic intelligence assessments to identify local crime and disorder issues and target resources accordingly.

Timetable

The Police and Justice Act 2006 became law in November 2006. However, the timetable for implementation of its various clauses will be spread over several years. This will be dependent on the publication and approval of Regulations and Guidance. It is likely that the new arrangements for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships will be subject to staggered commencement from April 2007. This is subject to confirmation by the Home Office.

The Community Call for Action and the wider scrutiny power to look at the partnership in the round are likely to be developed in regulations in 2008. This work will be taken forward alongside DCLG proposals in the *Strong and prosperous communities* White Paper.

Councils are already empowered to scrutinise or review any local issue, however, and so can develop or continue scrutiny work on crime and disorder issues now, inviting the involvement of partner agencies on a voluntary basis.

Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships – what is required?

Alongside the changes to CDRPs described above, the CDRP Reform programme also includes a new scrutiny role for local overview and scrutiny committees. Responsibility to scrutinise CDRPs should be identified within the council's overview and scrutiny arrangements. This can be within an existing committee: it does not have to mean establishing a new or stand-alone committee.

The general duty to look at partnership activity and community safety issues in a local area will apply to districts, metropolitan authorities, unitary authorities and counties (unlike the CCfA for community safety issues that will apply, in two-tier areas, to districts only).

This role, like the health scrutiny role, can involve contributions to strategy development, review of performance of the partnership in implementing the Crime and Disorder Reduction Reform programme, and in-depth select committee type enquiries into particular issues of local concern which need partnership solutions.

The Home Office has suggested that members of the police authority should be co-opted onto the overview and scrutiny committee. These proposals will be developed in Regulations and Guidance.

Community Call for Action

The Community Call for Action (CCfA) provisions (contained within the Police and Justice Act 2006) will give people a way to trigger action on particular issues of community safety or local concern that have not been adequately addressed by the police or their partners, especially those that require a multi-agency response. The Local Government White Paper, *Strong and prosperous communities*, October 2006 has proposed a parallel Community Call for Action to address local government concerns.

For crime and disorder issues, the CCfA is designed to give local communities a means to secure action from those agencies responsible for community safety (CDRP partners) if they have failed to address a persistent problem. It is designed to complement existing methods of complaint, not to replace them. The referral of a CCfA to a council overview and scrutiny committee is intended to be a last resort, with the majority of cases being resolved by the ward councillor.

Whilst the procedure for the CCfA is set out in the Police and Justice Act, more detail will be provided through guidance, which will be published by the Home Office in late 2007, with implementation set for April 2008. The implementation of the CCfA will be made in conjunction with the roll out of neighbourhood policing, and with the proposed local government CCfA announced in the October 2006 White Paper.

The strengthening of the ward councillor's role is central to the process because they will effectively act as a gatekeeper to the process. Members of the public will first contact their local ward councillor with an issue of community safety or local concern and they will determine the appropriate course of action.

The ward councillor will be expected to take up the concern with the appropriate agencies within the CDRP partnership. This could be through current formal arrangements for liaison or through informal means established by the ward councillor. If action is not taken by the CDRPs, the councillor will be able to refer the CCfA to the appropriate scrutiny committee. The scrutiny committee will be able to request the compulsory attendance of CDRP partner(s) at a scrutiny meeting, to answer questions and explain any action taken. The role of the scrutiny committee will be to gather evidence, question agencies, and potentially decide what action is needed, in dialogue with partner agencies.

The CDRP partners will have a duty to attend scrutiny meetings, and to respond to scrutiny reports and recommendations. They should give reasons for their response, particularly if recommended action is rejected.

The ward councillor is not obliged to accept a CCfA raised by a member of the community. If they feel the person is pursuing a persistent, trivial or vexatious complaint they are able to reject the CCfA. However, if the community member feels

their concern has not been adequately addressed they are able to raise the issue with the council executive. The executive will have the same power to deal with the CCfA as the ward councillor and can, where necessary, refer the matter to the relevant scrutiny committee.

Of course, taking up local complaints and issues, and securing action from responsible agencies is what councillors do now. The intention is formalise this best practice providing a stronger framework for action, thereby strengthening the role of the ward councillor. The Home Office has said they will support a training programme to assist ward councillors' understand their fundamental role within the process

Additional Information

Spreading the Word: Developing effective communications for community safety partnerships is a very useful LGiU publication supported by the Home Office. It can be ordered through the LGiU website or direct through Central Books mo@centralbooks.com It is priced at £10 (or £5 for LGiU affiliates).

Covers

- Wales
- Health
- Equalities, Social inclusion, Community cohesion
- Democracy, Governance, Councillor issues, Standards board, Neighbourhood governance, Regional governance, Local government information
- Crime and Community Safety
- Community planning and well-being
- Community involvement, Partnerships and LSPs, Voluntary sector

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Question: What is the Youth Offending Service?

Answer:

The Essex Youth Offending Service is a partnership between Essex County Council (Social Services, Learning Services and Community Safety) Essex Probation and Police Service and South Essex Health Authorities.

There are four teams which cover the County of Essex, but exclude Southend and Thurrock who have their own separate teams.

The Service is staffed by a combination of core staff, employed by Corporate Services. These include all managers, Administrative staff and Assistant Youth Offending Team workers (including Reparation workers). All other staff are on a secondment basis. There are specialist Team members who perform in specialist areas e.g. Education Welfare and Substance Misuse.

The team

The Youth Offending Team provides a wide range of services for young offenders and those at risk of offending in the 10-17 year age group, including:-

- Services to parents on voluntary basis or as part of a Parenting Order.
- Preventative services to those young people identified as at risk of offending or anti social behaviour.
- Final Warning interventions, in partnership with the Police, at the pre court stage.
- An accredited Volunteer Appropriate Adult scheme to support young people during questioning by the Police.
- Services to the Youth Court, including the preparation of a range of quality reports to assist sentencers.
- Bail and remand support services, to assist young people at risk of further offending prior to sentence by the court.
- Implementation of all Court Orders, including Action Plan Orders, Supervision Orders, Community Rehabilitation Orders, Referral Orders and Reparation Orders.
- Working in partnership with DAT, primary Care Trusts, to provide Substance Misuse and health services.
- The delivery of Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programmes for high-risk persistent offenders.
- Working in partnership with colleagues in the secure estate to supervise Detention and Training orders.

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Probation in Essex
Working to make people safer



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The Probation Service:
the thread running all the way through the Criminal Justice System

- Advising on sentencing in court
We're there
- Managing a community sentence
We're there
- During sentences of imprisonment
We're there
- Post release, on return into the community
We're there
- Dealing with the causes of crime
We're there



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Community Payback



Community Payback

Community Payback is a scheme run by the National Probation Service, which enables offenders to do **Unpaid Work** done by offenders in Essex to receive public recognition, and allows the public to have their ideas as to which work projects are undertaken.

Offenders in Essex were sentenced by the courts to well over 200,000 hours of Unpaid Work in the last year. This equates to a million pounds worth of available labour, if you consider these hours at minimum wage rates.

It is critical that these hours are used effectively both as a punishment, and to help rehabilitate offenders. It is also critical that the public recognises the value of the work undertaken by offenders in their communities.

Unpaid Work is the new name given to the community sentence many people recognise as *Community Service*.

Community Service was first introduced in the 1970s but has come a long way since then. The key components are still the same. Offenders are required to give up their free time to do Unpaid Work within their local communities to pay back for the crimes they have committed. This equates to a day's work once a week.



What work do they do ?

Over the years staff working in the Unpaid Work Team have developed a wide range of projects and placements to meet the needs of offenders. These include projects undertaken by groups [usually 6-8 offenders] or individual placements. Examples of Community Payback

Hard work is key feature in this particular court sentence. However, all projects aim to use the opportunities the work provides to improve attitudes, set good examples of the right behaviour, and where appropriate, teach new skills.

A recent study shows that 55% of the offenders under the supervision of the Probation Service have employment, training or education. This increases to over 80% for repeat offenders who commit the most crime. Unpaid Work presents an ideal opportunity for offenders to complete a task being completed as the framework to teach new skills and is an effective way to enhance the employability prospects of offenders.

An example of this is the work done in the Witham Workshop, where garden furniture and other items are produced to an extremely high standard. A young man had been sentenced to a good number of hours' Unpaid Work as a result of various offences. Although he had had a job in a kitchen, he was not going to return to it. In the workshop he took the first steps towards a new career. He learned the necessity for patient, accurate working, and accumulated some of the woodworking skills which led him on to taking National Vocational Qualifications. He has every prospect of obtaining a good job with his newfound skills.



Learning Basic Skills on-site

As a component of the hours ordered by the court, offenders can be removed from their work task to spend time with a tutor learning the basics of numeracy and literacy. Provision is made on-site for individual sessions to take offenders through the vital step on the employment ladder.

Who decides what work is done ?

Essex Probation Area's Unpaid Work Team has the ultimate decision on what projects or placements are suitable. We are aware that at present we have enough work to meet demand, although we are always looking for projects to consider for the future. Faith groups, voluntary organisations, local authorities and Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships are encouraged to put forward suggestions for potential work.



Group Projects – A good project is one that meets the following criteria:

- Provides work for up to 6 – 8 offenders for at least a day
- Provides a range of tasks
- Provides opportunities to learn new skills

<http://www.essexprobation.org.uk/communitypaybackgeneral.htm>

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- Provides constructive and worthwhile work, which can give offenders new skills
- Provides benefit to the local community
- May reduce the fear of crime by making the community feel safer

Long term projects that take a number of weeks to complete are always useful as these can help teach planning skills and work, which may include clearing a site at the start to painting and decorating at the end. Group projects are always supervised by a Work Supervisor or on-site project manager.

Individual Placements

Individual placements can provide a wide range of opportunities to offenders, who may have particular needs including care. The hours of delivery can be more flexible, including evening work and work in smaller blocks over two or three days with Individual Placements occasionally give us the opportunity to match specific skills the offender has to help in agencies with those skills. However, mostly it will be work the offender is unused to doing.

Paying back to Local Communities

Whatever the project or placement the aim of the Unpaid Work Team is to ensure that work undertaken reflects the priorities and make-up of local communities is aimed at improving them, protecting them and, where appropriate, reducing crime. As a result Essex Probation Area offered each of the 14 Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships [CDRPs] in Essex a specified number of hours of Unpaid Work group activity in 2004/05, to be used in meeting their targets to reduce crime and protect communities.



We have also targeted minority ethnic community groups this year to ensure that all aspects of our local communities benefit from Unpaid Work activity.

The Community Payback campaign aims to ensure that the work undertaken is highlighted. This is achieved by displaying a certificate on the project in recognition of the work done by offenders.

Can I have say in what is done in my Community ?

YES, this is what Community Payback is all about. Whether you are a community group or an individual you can have the suggest projects or placements in your local community that might benefit from Unpaid Work hours.

What do I need to do ?

Firstly, it is helpful to consider the issues outlined above, for example, the kind of projects we are looking for and secondly remember that Unpaid Work should not be used as a way of replacing people's paid jobs with free labour. The examples, newsletter/on this web-site can also be a helpful guide.

If you have an idea then please Email us:

Colchester.SEM@essex.probation.gsx.gov.uk

Or you can write to us at:

Community Payback
Essex Probation
Cullen Mill
49 Braintree Road
Witham,
Essex CM8 2DD

Make sure your suggestion provides the following details:

- An outline of the project/placement or task to be undertaken including its location
- A contact person and their contact details (See form)

We will reply to all suggestions and then assess each project for its suitability. Whatever, the outcome we will let you know a project we can do then we will let you know when we aim to begin. If we can not do it then we will let you know our reasons.