

# **Report to Safer, Cleaner, Greener Scrutiny Standing Panel**

**Date of meeting: 6 January 2011**

**Subject: Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Meetings**

**Officer contact for further information: J Gilbert**

**Committee Secretary: A Hendry**

---



## **Recommendation(s):**

- (1) To note the outcomes of the three crime and disorder scrutiny panel meetings;**
- (2) To consider how best to ensure public and member engagement with the scrutiny process; and**
- (3) To note and consider any further topics for future scrutiny meetings.**

## **Report:**

1. The Council is required, as part of its formal scrutiny arrangements, to arrange at least one meeting a year at which the Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership can be held to account for its activities. This Council has decided that two such meetings shall be held during each municipal year, and these generally take place in October and February each year.

2. The crime and disorder scrutiny meetings held to date are as follows:

27 October 2009:	Protection of the vulnerable from anti social behaviour
25 February 2010:	CCTV
7 October 2010:	Cross border criminality and policing

3. Member feedback from these special meetings has been generally positive, with meetings being well attended and a lot of interest shown in the topics under discussion. All the meetings have had present representatives of most of the partners within the Safer Communities Partnership. In addition to the specific topic for the meeting, there has, time permitting, been a general question and answer session at the end, enabling a wide range of issues of concern to be raised.

4. There are two area of disappointment. The first is that we have been unable to attract the public to these special meetings. Whilst the first meeting was not extensively publicised, the last two have been, using the Council's web page and local advertising. This is an area where additional thought is required as to how best to get the public to come along and take part. Secondly, when Members have been requested to put forward topics for consideration, normally via the Members' Bulletin, the response has been extremely poor.

5. There have also been no "Councillor Calls for Action" (CCfA), whereby a ward councillor, having exhausted all normal avenues to deal with a crime & disorder matter, can refer the matter to scrutiny, albeit via the parent OS Committee.

6. At that first meeting in October 2009, a number of issues were raised for future consideration. All of these have been satisfactorily covered with the exception of crime and violence related to licensed premises. This is a topical area within the district and will be dealt with at the next scrutiny meeting in February 2011. Other future topics put forward by

Members include NAPs, Neighbourhood Watch, traffic policing and a review of progress against the partnership Strategic Assessment

7. The scrutiny of the working of the Partnership will become ever more important as resources become tighter, and all the Partnership members come under pressure to do more with less. It will also be increasingly important to ensure that the public engage with the process so that the partnership can be aware of what the public's priorities are and whether they feel that the partnership is delivering.

8. The next Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Panel meeting is scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2011.