

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET MEETING**

**27th APRIL 2006**

**Government Review Of Partnership Provision Of The Crime And Disorder Act 1998**

<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:</b>	Safer Communities
<b>CORPORATE PLAN THEME:</b>	Enabling Community Wellbeing
<b>KEY PRIORITY:</b>	Community Safety
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Cllr. Nathan Desmond
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	Chief Executive
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<b>APPENDICES</b>	A copy of the 'Review of the Partnership Provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – Report of Findings' (January 2006) has been placed in Members' Group Room, a copy is available electronically and a public inspection copy is available (see front cover for details).

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report the findings of and proposals from the Government's review of partnership provision of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND to Council that:**

- 2.1 The proposals arising from the Government's review of partnership provision of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 be noted.
- 2.2 The Council, in its role as a 'Responsible Authority', as defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, fully support the Wyre Forest Community Safety Partnership in the implementation of proposals arising from the Government's partnership review report.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In November 2004, the Government undertook a review of the partnership provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act (CDA) 1998.
- 3.2 The review was conducted with representative bodies of all the agencies with

responsible authority status on Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) and included input via regional workshops. Representatives of other key central Government departments were also involved.

- 3.3 A key area of the review was to explore the positioning of CDRPs in respect of:
- a) the introduction of Local Area Agreements (LAA);
  - b) changing role of Local Government;
  - c) changes in the Criminal Justice System; and
  - d) the delivery of the Police Reform Agenda.
- 3.4 The review, therefore, was a timely piece of work which should, in the medium to long term, support CDRPs to adapt to a changing partnership delivery landscape.

#### **4. PROPOSALS ARISING FROM REVIEW**

- 4.1 The proposals from the review, which were published in January 2006, have been broken down under four main headings: Structures, Delivery, Governance and Accountability, and Mainstreaming and National Standards.

#### **4.2 Structures**

- 4.2.1 The main issue arising from the review was that the geographical disconnection between CDRPs and other key partner agencies, such as Local Criminal Justice Boards and Drug Action Teams, in two-tier areas does not aid successful partnership working.

#### **4.2.2 In summary, the review proposed the following on the structures of CDRPs:**

- a) Splitting the strategic and operational decision making responsibilities of CDRPs, with the former sitting at county Local Strategic Partnership level (Worcestershire Partnership) and the latter to continue at the district CDRP level (Wyre Forest Community Safety Partnership). This proposal supports the important role that CDRPs will play in delivering the Safer Communities block of the LAA.
- b) CDRPs will be encouraged to assess the possibility of merging with other CDRPs in their area e.g. a North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership. This process will be facilitated by Government Office.
- c) Ensuring that those attending partnership meetings have the seniority to take decisions and commit resources on behalf of their organisation. National standards for partnership working will, therefore be developed and amongst other things, will outline the role and responsibilities of each partner in helping to deliver community safety.
- d) Better equipping CDRPs to deal with the rapidly changing partnership landscape by extending the list of responsible authorities by means of secondary legislation.

#### **4.3 Delivery**

4.3.1 The main issue arising from the review was that intelligence led decision making must lie at the heart of effective delivery for reducing crime and disorder.

4.3.2 **In summary, the review proposed the following on delivery matters of CDRPs:**

- a) That every CDRP must undertake an intelligence led, problem solving and outcome orientated approach to community safety, by using the principles and practices of the Police National Intelligence Model.
- b) Strategic intelligence assessments will have to be undertaken on at least a six monthly basis and must be used by all those discharging strategic and operational community safety functions. This will replace the three yearly audits and strategies currently being undertaken by CDRPs.
- c) The six monthly strategic intelligence assessments will inform the new requirement to produce annual rolling three year community safety plans.
- d) That Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 will be strengthened and will place a duty on responsible authorities to share depersonalised data which is relevant for community safety purposes. National standards will stress the importance of every partnership having an effective information sharing protocol in place to assist this process.

4.4 **Governance and Accountability**

4.4.1 The main issue arising from the review was that CDRPs should be both more visible to the communities they serve and more accountable to them.

4.4.2 **In summary, the review proposed the following on the governance and accountability of CDRPs:**

- a) CDRPs will no longer be required to provide the Home Secretary with annual reports on the implementation of their three year strategies, but instead they will be required to produce regular reports to their communities. This approach is aimed at enabling local people to help inform decisions over local community safety priorities and to see how the partnership is performing in order to hold it to account.
- b) Powers of local authority overview and scrutiny committees will be extended to encompass the work of CDRPs. A form of 'scrutiny plus' involving partner agencies will allow scrutiny committees to better reflect the multi-agency nature of community safety work.
- c) Where a member of the community believes that a particular community safety issue has not been adequately addressed, they will be able to request their local ward councillor to secure a response from the appropriate partner agency. The local authority scrutiny committee will be used to look at cases that cannot be easily resolved.

- d) National standards will be set to gain greater active involvement of elected community safety cabinet members in the strategic community safety decision making processes, which will take place at a county level.

#### **4.5 Mainstreaming and National Standards**

4.5.1 The main issue arising from the review was that better use of the Section 17 (s17) duty needs to be made, in both operational and strategic delivery decisions.

#### **4.5.2 In summary, the review proposed the following on mainstreaming and national standards:**

- a) To formally broaden the definition of s17 to require agencies to take account of anti-social behaviour, behaviour adversely affecting the environment and substance misuse.
- b) The Home Secretary intends to add to the list of agencies to which s17 applies, by means of secondary legislation.
- c) To develop a set of national standards that clearly set out what is expected of CDRPs and the roles and responsibilities of the individual partners, whilst at the same time not prescribing how they meet these standards. Compliance with these national standards will be compulsory.

### **5. NEXT STEPS**

5.1 A number of the proposals in this review will require new or amendments to existing legislation. The Police and Justice Bill (just introduced in Parliament) will be the vehicle for these changes. The Bill will support the delivery of the Police Reform Programme and the Prime Minister's Respect Agenda.

5.2 The legislative timetable will mean that Royal Assent is likely to be sought in the autumn of 2006, with implementation of the measures following thereafter.

5.3 In the meantime, the Home Office propose to work with stakeholders to develop the national standards that will allow for the legislative changes. The overall aim will be to develop the tools that partnerships will need to help them implement these proposals effectively and get the most from them.

### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 At this stage, it is too early to identify any specific financial implications for the Council, however, it is clear from the proposals outlined above that there will be resource implications.

### **7. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Legal and policy implications have been outlined in Section 4 of this report.

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

8.1 There are no risk management implications in connection with this report.

**9. CONCLUSION**

9.1 The proposals from this review should impact positively on the effectiveness of the Wyre Forest Community Safety Partnership at a time when police reform and changes to local government are helping to shape the delivery landscape.

**10. CONSULTEES**

- Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services
- CMT

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- A copy of the '*Review of the Partnership Provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – Report of Findings*' (January 2006) has been placed in Members' Group Rooms

*Last updated – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2006*