

Meeting: Housing Sub-Committee

Date: 22 February 2016

Title: Crime and Disorder Priorities

Author: Emma Fagan

Service: Law and Governance

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

To inform the sub-committee of its role in relation to scrutinising crime and disorder issues and to remind of the areas highlighted for discussion at the previous meeting of the sub-committee.

2. Recommendations

The sub-committee is recommended to note the report and, where appropriate, highlight any areas that arise from the discussion that would benefit from further scrutiny input.

3. Details

- 3.1 The Housing sub-committee has been designated as the Council's crime and disorder committee. This has been part of the sub-committee's terms of reference since it was established in June 2014. The requirement for the Council to have a scrutiny committee designated to scrutinise crime and disorder originates from the Police and Justice Act 2006. The committee must meet at least once a year to consider crime and disorder issues. This meeting of the sub-committee has been designated to considering crime and disorder issues.
- 3.2 The Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria, Vera Baird, will be in attendance at the meeting, alongside Superintendent Paterson. The sub-committee will be provided with an update on the delivery of the main police and crime objectives contained within the Police and Crime Plan. There will also be a discussion around the key issues that Members highlighted at the previous meeting. These were:
- Parking enforcement – Members raised several instances where problems had occurred from caravans or large vans parking on footpaths blocking access to homes. It seemed to be unclear who was responsible for dealing with this issue – Highways Agency, Police or the Local Authority and the approach to resolving the problem seemed inconsistent.
 - Burglary – the sub-committee raised the issue of capacity to respond to crime and whether the police attended all reported cases of burglary. Members thought it was important to look at current burglary statistics and the police response to them.

- Police Community Support Officers and neighbourhood policing – to discuss whether the same level of community support officers will be retained and if this will have an impact on neighbourhood policing.

Police and Crime Commissioners

3.3 For background information for Members, Police and Crime Commissioners are elected to make sure that local police meet the needs of the community. The PCC is the voice of the people and holds the police to account. Their aim is to cut crime and deliver an effective and efficient police service within their force area. The main role of the PCC is to:

- Secure an efficient and effective police for their area;
- Appoint the Chief Constable, hold them to account for running the force, and if necessary dismiss them;
- Set the police and crime objectives for the area through a police and crime plan;
- Set the force budget and determine the precept;
- Contribute to the national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary; and
- Bring together community safety and criminal justice partners, to make sure local priorities are joined up.

3.4 Northumbria Police and Crime Panel (the Panel) scrutinises the work of the PCC by acting as a critical friend – assisting through independent challenge. The Panel has a number of powers and responsibilities, including:

- Reviewing the draft Police and Crime Plan to ensure local priorities have been considered;
- Scrutinising the Commissioner's annual report;
- Reviewing and scrutinising decisions and actions of the PCC;
- Reviewing, and potentially vetoing, the Commissioner's proposed policing precept (the part of Council Tax collected for policing);
- Holding confirmation hearings for the proposed appointment of a Chief Constable, and
- Reviewing PCC's proposed appointment for Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Panel consists of 2 councillors from each of the 6 local authorities in the Northumbria area plus 2 independent members. Meetings take place in public on a bi-monthly basis.

3.5 Following the discussion on the Police and Crime Plan and the topics highlighted in paragraph 3.2, the sub-committee are invited, where appropriate, to identify any further work where scrutiny could contribute to a particular crime and disorder issue. Any suggestions would be put forward as part of the 2016/17 work programme setting process.

5. Background Information

Police and Crime Plan 2013-2018

Minutes of Housing sub-committee – 25 January 2016