

## 10. Promoting Community Safety in Area North

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### **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of the report is to provide the basis for a discussion, including an opportunity for questions to the Neighbourhood Policing team, or to refer issues for further discussion within SSDC or by the Community Safety Action Panel.

*If members require any clarification of information contained within this report, you are asked to contact either Sgt Bell or Les Collett, prior to the meeting.*

### **Public Interest**

Promoting safer communities is one of the nine top priorities identified by the Area Committee based on consultation with local communities.

This report includes an update on the recent work supported through and by the Area North Community Safety Action Panel, and a report from the Neighbourhood Policing team, including recent reported crime and anti-social behaviour incidents.

Sergeant Alan Bell, and the Community Development Officer will attend the Area Committee to take questions and support the discussion.

### **Recommendations**

- (1) Note and comment on the report
- (2) Identify any local issues affecting local crime and anti-social behaviour for consideration by the appropriate group or service.

### **Background**

Background information on the Area North Community Safety Action Panel and the Neighbourhood Policing team are included in Appendix A.

### **Area North Community Safety Priorities**

The following sections provides a brief overview of how community priorities are addressed in Area North, based on the current Action Plan, which includes four priority areas.

- The latest available crime and anti-social behaviour crime reports are included under Priority 1.
- Reports from the Neighbourhood Sergeant on current issues are included under Priority 1 and 2.

**Priority 1 - Address the causes and issues behind unacceptable levels of anti-social behaviour and crime, where it occurs.**

This priority is largely addressed through the Neighbourhood Police team, working at a very local level with parish councillors, other community volunteers and a range of public services. Sometimes a parish may form a Local Action Group, or use existing groups / forums to discuss and address issues of concern. A whole range of initiatives and actions may be supported through this process (also referred to as PACT – Partners and Communities Together).

The table below shows reported crime and anti-social behaviour figures for the period Oct – Dec 2009 compared with the same period 2008. These are indicative and subject to change and they can also be reclassified following investigation. Also recorded are local priorities identified by the PCSO and local communities. (Further information relating to these figures can be obtained on the Internet site on the Ward page).

Crime Type	Average number of crimes Oct-Dec 09	Average number of crimes Oct-Dec 08	Overall % change Oct-Dec 09	Local priorities (as reported by beat team)
<b>Burrow Hill – Beat Manager – Toni Lines</b>				
Overall	9.3	13.7	33% decrease	Speeding traffic through Kingsbury Episcopi
Burglary	1	5		
Vehicle Crime	0	2.3		
Violent crime	1.3	1.7		
ASB	7	4.7		
<b>Curry Rivel – Beat Manager – Toni Lines</b>				
Overall	8	7.6	5% increase	Main community issues speeding through the high street in Curry Rivel and criminal damage and thefts from sheds and other outbuildings
Burglary	2	2		
Vehicle Crime	0.3	0.3		
Violent crime	1.3	1		
ASB	4.3	4.3		
<b>Islemoor – Beat Manager – Toni Lines</b>				
Overall	6.3	12.7	50% decrease	Main Issues identified speeding through the villages and criminal damage and thefts from outbuildings
Burglary	5	1		
Vehicle Crime	0	2.3		
Violent crime	1.3	1.7		
ASB	7	4.7		
<b>Langport and Huish – Beat Manager – Toni Lines</b>				
Overall	17.3	14.3	20.9% increase	Main issues identified speeding through Langport, Mopeds in Whatley Car park and theft of lead.
Burglary	2.7	1.7		
Vehicle Crime	1.7	3.3		
Violent crime	3.7	0.7		
ASB	15.7	13.3		

<b>Martock – Beat Manager – Iain Selley</b>				
Overall	23.7	22.7	5.6% decrease	Main issues are ASB in a number of locations. A number of actions agreed through Local Action Team. Feedback from public and amount of calls to service centre show a good reduction of ASB related calls.
Burglary	2.3	3.3		
Vehicle Crime	3	3.7		
Violent crime	5	5		
ASB	26.3	17		
<b>South Petherton – Beat Manager – Iain Selley</b>				
Overall	18	18	No change	Maintain low level of ASB in South Petherton and speeding through Seavington and Lopen
Burglary	3.3	2.7		
Vehicle Crime	1	2.3		
Violent crime	2.7	1.3		
ASB	13.7	14		
<b>Hamdons – Beat Manager – Iain Selley</b>				
Overall	8.3	12.3	32.4 % reduction	Main issue ASB Memorial Hall Stoke-sub-Hamdon. Currently work is being done with one youth who has agreed and signed an Acceptable Behaviour Contract.
Burglary	1	1		
Vehicle Crime	1	3		
Violent crime	1	2		
ASB	11.7	5.3		
<b>St Michael's – Beat Manager – Stewart Brand</b>				
Overall	10.3	11.3	8.8% decrease	Speeding through Montacute and ASB Hyde and Lower Hyde Rd, Montacute. Work continues with Somerset rural youth who now visit on a regular basis and this has reduced the number of calls relating to ASB
Burglary	0.3	2		
Vehicle Crime	1	0.7		
Violent crime	2	2.3		
ASB	6.3	12		
<b>Turn Hill – Beat Manager – Stewart Brand</b>				
Overall	11	8	37.5% increase	Main Issues identified tools and diesel theft from farms/outbuildings 30mph stickers on wheeled bins launched in Aller in October. This was supported by a grant from SSDC.
Burglary	1.7	2.7		
Vehicle Crime	No change			
Violent crime	1	1.3		
ASB	2	4.3		
<b>Wessex – Beat Manager – Stewart Brand</b>				
Overall	14	15	6.7% decrease	Main issues identified speeding in Langport Road Somerton.
Burglary	1.4	1.7		
Vehicle Crime	1.3	1		
Violent crime	3	4.3		
ASB	10	12.3		

## **Neighbourhood Police Report from Sgt Alan Bell:**

### **Crime reports and trends**

Area North continues to remain a safe place for our communities to live and work. Reported crime (which now includes Anti-social behaviour (ASB)) remains average for our geographical type of area.

Whilst robbery (using violence to steal property) may be prevalent in some areas, none of the wards in Area North have had any of these offences recorded during the period these figures relate to.

Increases in relation to ASB can be attributed to the peak one would expect over the Halloween period which is now the busiest time of the year for the Constabulary.

One main issue to be aware of and one, which we are looking at, is there has been an increase in the theft of lead and other metals. This has not been confined to one area but across all the wards. The price of lead has risen lately. Work is currently being done to try and identify the main offender/s and we are working with the scrap dealers on this and surrounding police districts. These figures will be recorded when the constabulary updates its website.

### **Neighbourhood Watch**

The target remains for the Beat Managers to increase the coverage of houses in an active NHW scheme. During the summer a number of seminars were held with NHW co-ordinators. I would like to see the schemes become a focal point in bringing communities together. This could be done by organising themselves so that different schemes can communicate with one another and this needn't just be adjoining schemes. A group of coordinators have agreed to form a steering group and the first meeting of the new group takes place on 20<sup>th</sup> January.

### **South Petherton Community Office and Police Post**

Thanks to a lot of hard work done by individuals, the community of South Petherton opened its Community Shop and Police Post on the 4<sup>th</sup> December. This is a great example of the community having an idea and having the conviction to see it through.

The Beat Team will eventually start and finish their tour of duty from the post. This will increase the neighbourhood team's visibility and reinforce the beat team's presence in the village and surrounding area. In the long term there could also be benefits to those communities who live in Islemoor; Burrow Hill and Hamdon as the teams covering those areas will be encouraged to use the facilities at South Petherton rather than travel back and forth from Somerton.

### **Burglary**

We continue to aim to reduce the level of both domestic and non-dwelling burglaries. During the Not in My neighbourhood week in November a number of events were held giving advice and also targeting elderly housing schemes where crime prevention bingo was played.

During Operation Relentless in December vulnerable premises were identified and visited and crime prevention advice was given to residents.

In March there will be 2 events in Area North aimed at educating elderly members of the community against rogue and bogus traders. This will take the form of a play and leaflets have been distributed inviting members of the public. They are being held at the Edgar Hall Somerton at 11am on 2<sup>nd</sup> March and at 2pm on the same day in the David Hall, South Petherton. If you are aware of anyone you feel would benefit then you are encouraged to refer them to the beat team.

## **Priority 2 – Address speeding through our towns and villages**

### **Community Speedwatch (CSW)**

One key initiative to support this priority is Community Speedwatch. The Community Safety Action Panel receives regular reports on the effectiveness of Community Speedwatch and has included the promotion of the benefits of CSW at a variety of workshops. There are 10 currently active schemes in: Aller, Ash, Fivehead, Hambridge, Long Load, Somerton, Stoke Sub Hamdon, Tintinhull, Westport and Wearne.

The CSW Co-ordinator has reported that during 2009 the overall percentage of speeding vehicles across CSW schemes in South Somerset fell by 41%. During 2009, there were 1496 CSW sessions across South Somerset, of which 645 (43%) were in Area North. 3% of passing vehicles were reported, which was also the district wide average.

**Report from Sergeant Alan Bell:** “Speedwatch remains well-supported by all parties in Area North. We have set a target of 25% site attendance by the police at the start of the year. To date we have achieved a 28% attendance. In the New Year the Beat teams will become more proactive in relation to enforcement, working with the Community Speedwatch volunteers at sites at problem areas.”

### **Further information on Community Speedwatch is on both the SSDC and Avon and Somerset Constabulary websites:**

[http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/units\\_and\\_departments/operations/rpu/speedwatch/index.aspx](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/units_and_departments/operations/rpu/speedwatch/index.aspx)

<http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=9835>

### **Support for other forms of traffic calming / speed reduction**

For some years, SSDC and SCC have supported a range of local schemes to install traffic calming structures or other devices. The Area North Action Panel is not able to directly support the development of such schemes, other than through advising on the support available and existing schemes undertaken in different parishes.

### **Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs)**

One example of a traffic-calming scheme is a vehicle activated sign with an LED display. They show speed or an approaching hazard, and may have an accompanying message. The display is activated once a vehicle has been detected travelling in excess of the speed limit set within the sign. They may help address problems of inappropriate speed where conventional signing has proved to be ineffective.

These signs are subject to the approval of the Highway Authority (Somerset County Council) and require local funding. Further information from the SCC Roads and Transport team 0845 345 9155 [roadsandtransport@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:roadsandtransport@somerset.gov.uk)

## **Speed restrictions and other traffic regulation**

The Somerset County Council website provides information on traffic regulation orders and speed restrictions. Further discussion of these could be provided to a future meeting by agreement with the relevant SCC service team.

Following representations from the local community, the 40 mph buffer zone in Aller has been replaced by extending the 30 mph zone by Somerset County Council. (November 2009).

## **Priority 3 – Keep streets and countryside free from flytipping, litter, noise and nuisance.**

This priority is largely addressing through SSDC Streetscene and Environmental Protection services, which both report to the Area Committee at different times during the year.

In October 2009 SSDC hosted an event themed around environmental enforcement and education services. The feedback from the meeting was very positive: 100% of the people attending assessed the content of the evening as Good to Very Good and 96% thought it was a 'Good to Very Good' use of their time. Other comments were that it was 'a very productive evening' and a 'useful meeting for information and updates'.

As part of the development of the Restorative Justice Programme within Area North, a protocol for referrals from the SSDC Streetscene service is in place.

## **Priority 4 – Publicise services that can help improve community safety and share examples of successful local action.**

For a rural area especially, finding out who can help, and what works can be an effective way to prevent further problems, or at least help to tackle them. We are fortunate to live in a largely low crime area, however where it occurs crime has as much impact upon the victim as elsewhere.

One way to assist with promoting local action and to help bring services direct to the community in need, has been through community workshops, another is through providing ready access to information. The summary of how the Area North Action Panel addresses this priority is given in Appendix A

## **Financial Implications**

None from this report

The work of the panel is supported financially by SSDC in a number of ways and further information can be provided on request.

## **Corporate Priority Implications**

4.9 Develop a range of approaches and initiatives that build confidence and reduce fear of crime by maintaining a level of 92% of the population that feels safe in their community by 2012.

## **Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)**

None from this report

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

The needs of different groups are considered through the work of the Community and Safety Action Panel, for example the use of accessible venues for events, making published material available in different formats and languages.

The forthcoming Scamwise plays will target older people as a group known to be vulnerable to bogus callers. SSDC funding has supported projects aimed at supporting the involvement of young people in their community.

**Background Papers:** See Appendix A