

Area North Committee – 27 October 2010

## 8. Area North Community Safety and Neighbourhood Policing

*Portfolio Holder:* Cllr Tony Fife, Community Safety  
*Strategic Director:* Rina Singh, Place and Performance  
*Assistant Director:* Helen Rutter, Communities  
*Service Manager:* Charlotte Jones, Area Development Manager (North)  
*Lead Officer:* Les Collett, Community Development Officer (North)  
*Contact Details:* [leslie.collett@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:leslie.collett@southsomerset.gov.uk) or (01458) 257427  
 Steve Brewer Community Safety Co-ordinator  
[Steve.brewer@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.brewer@southsomerset.gov.uk) or (01935) 462390  
*Avon and Somerset Constabulary:* Sgt. Alan Bell, Neighbourhood Police Team Sergeant (North)  
 0845 456 7000 or [alan.bell@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:alan.bell@avonandsomerset.police.uk)

### Purpose of the Report

To provide the basis of a short discussion, including an opportunity for questions to the Neighbourhood Policing team, or to refer issues for further discussion within SSDC or by the Area North Community Safety Action Panel.

Sergeant Alan Bell - Avon & Somerset Police, Steve Brewer - SSDC Community Safety Co-ordinator and Les Collett - SSDC Community Development Officer (North), will attend the Area Committee to take questions and support the discussion.

*If councillors' require any clarification of information contained within this report, you are asked to contact either Sgt Bell or the Community Development Officer (North), prior to the meeting.*

### Public Interest

Promoting safer communities, through reducing crime and the fear of crime is a vital aspect of work by most public services in Somerset.

### 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 is included in Appendix A.

#### 1. Neighbourhood Police Report from Sgt Alan Bell:

Avon and Somerset Constabulary (ASC) has recently reviewed how the Neighbourhood Policing team conducts its business, which includes the areas we should focus on. It has been described as a change from neighbourhood policing to policing the neighbourhood.

Priorities and areas of weakness in respect of crime trends will be the primary focus and staff are tasked to deal with issues as they arise. Whilst this is not new to Area North, we will continue to use staff from across the area, if required, to assist in tackling particular problems.

### **Structure**

There has been movement within the Neighbourhood team since the last report. PC Brand has unfortunately been redeployed due to illness. PC Selley has transferred over to PC Brand's wards to provide some stability and for a while was responsible for a significant portion of the area. I am pleased to say we have secured PC Watson, an experienced Beat Manager from Crewkerne. He has previous experience of managing South Petherton and will now be responsible for that area as well as the Martock and Hamdon wards.

PCSO Olly Hammonds left the organisation and PCSO Rachel Napper who moves from the Hamdons ward has filled his position. PCSO Charlie Rogers moves from the outlying villages of South Petherton to the Hamdons and Rachel will take on those villages.

### **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. The current figures released by the Constabulary are held on individual ward pages on our internet site and can be accessed through the crime mapping section <http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/information/CrimeStats/>. (It should be noted that as allegations are investigated they may subsequently be reclassified). Parish Councils are issued with crime figures for their parishes on a monthly basis. These are accessible to the public as part of the PC minutes. Should councillors have a specific issue, they can raise this with their Beat Manager or myself.

During the summer as the price of scrap metal increased, we saw a large increase in metal thefts especially around the Langport/South Petherton/Martock triangle. Work was undertaken in building better relationships with local scrap dealers within South Somerset and a number of suspects were identified as being potentially responsible. Following some hard work by not only the Safer Stronger neighbourhood team but other officers and PCSOs across the policing district, a young male, local to Area North, was arrested and has been charged with 3 burglaries, 7 lead thefts and he has asked for 64 other offences to be taken into consideration. He has been remanded in custody to appear before the court.

### **Police Posts**

We continue to have access to the two posts currently at Martock and South Petherton. Martock remains at the Fire Station and is by the neighbourhood team and by others within the policing district. It is acknowledged that the installation of IT and Security at the South Petherton Community Centre has been slower than anticipated or desired. It is still the intention that the neighbourhood team to utilise the centre at every opportunity. This is something the new Beat Manager PC Watson has been tasked with. 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.

### **Neighbourhood Watch (NHW)**

I have been given the portfolio of Neighbourhood Watch for the whole of the southern part of the policing District. There is currently work in progress to establish how many

schemes are still active and whether the co-ordinators are still those shown on our records. The content and number of "Ringmaster" messages has been reviewed. There should now be a consistent approach to what is sent out to Co-ordinators, it should be in plain language and more importantly there will be feedback on the messages we do send to update Co-ordinators. All schemes will be encouraged to participate in the creation of Cold Calling Aware Zones should they feel a need for one and there will be also lead initiatives such as the Nominated Neighbour Scheme. The process to start up new schemes is currently being reviewed so that future schemes, from the start are aware of roles/responsibilities and expectations of both them and the local neighbourhood team.

### **Farm Watch and Horse Watch Schemes**

The Horse Watch scheme continues to be administered on Area North by PCSO Support Officer Tess Smith. Currently there are 192 members registered over the South Somerset Policing Area. Free tack marking and signs are available as well as crime prevention advice for those owners with horses who sign up to the scheme. Those wishing to become members can contact Tess either through 0845 456 7000 or by the In Your Area page on the force website:

<http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/LocalPages/PersonProfile.aspx?pid=1082&t=3&lid=310>

Farm Watch on Area North currently has 79 members. As we are mainly a rural area with a significant number of farms, each Beat Manager has been tasked with increasing the amount of holdings participating in the scheme. PC Selley has become the point of contact for Area North and can be contacted on the force website under the "My Area" pages or again on 0845 456 7000.

Alan Bell

Neighbourhood Sergeant

Area North, South Somerset Rural

Phone: 0845 456 7000

E-mail: [alan.bell@avonandsomerset.police.uk](mailto:alan.bell@avonandsomerset.police.uk)

Mail: Somerton Police Station, 11 Kirkham Street, Somerton, TA11 7NN

[www.avonandsomerset.police.uk](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk)

## **2. Community Speedwatch (CSW)**

Local communities often cite excessive speeding through towns and villages as a high priority for action. The Community Safety Action Panel receives regular reports on the effectiveness of Community Speedwatch.

The latest report is attached in Appendix B.

**Further information: 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/community-safety/speed-watch-and-road-safety/speed-watch-schemes->

### 3. Community Justice Panel

The Community Justice Panel has 6 volunteers across Area North all of whom are now fully trained and taking cases. There are a further two volunteers awaiting training in November. The panel has handled 16 cases in Area North, in Langport, Somerton, South Petherton, Martock and Stoke-sub Hamdon.

Julia Cook has been appointed the part-time coordinator for the Area North Panel and will combine that with Area West. Julia will be spending at least one day per week in the area and will hot desk within the council premises in order to have access to the computer system. Coordinators are now in place for all the new panels covering South Somerset and Mendip.

The Community Justice Management Group will meet again in November and it is hoped to combine that with a visit from the Ministry of Justice.

Val Keitch, Manager of South Somerset Community Justice Panel  
Tel: 01460 260341  
Email: [julia.cook@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:julia.cook@southsomerset.gov.uk)

### 4. Community Safety Partnership – Review

Changes to the way special funding for Community Safety is administered have prompted a review of the current arrangements for partnership working in Somerset. This is ongoing, with reports made to the District Executive. The most recent report was considered by District Executive in October 2010:

<http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/13058/6.%20Outcome%20of%20Community%20Safety%20Review%20Panel.pdf>

At the present time, the District Executive has deferred a decision whether to join a single County-wide Community Safety Partnership, given the pace of change at a national level and uncertainty on future funding.

### 5. Area North Community Safety Action Panel

Details of the panels meetings can be found on the SSDC website. Recent items have included a presentation from the Dorset and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service, monitoring the effectiveness of Community Speedwatch and reviewing the outcomes of the Local Action Groups and PACT meetings.

<http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/community-safety/our-community-safety-partnership/area-action-panels-/area-north/an-notes-and-agendas>

### 6. Football Programme

The Community Safety Partnership via Local Action Groups is currently running successful weekly sessions in South Petherton and Martock where young people can take part in skills training with Yeovil Town Community Sport Trust coaches. In June, Yarlington Housing Group sponsored a tournament between all eight football schemes in South Somerset. Terry Skiverton presented all the young people with a medal and South Petherton won a team award.

## 7. Martock Fire Station Community Event

Local residents enjoyed an action packed evening at Martock Fire Station in July.

All three Emergency Services involving Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and South West Ambulance Service Trust attended this event. It was supported by the Mendip & South Somerset Community Safety Partnership to promote Road Safety Education, community safety advice and the work of the partner agencies.

Rob Mitchell, Chairman of Long Load Parish Council, put himself forward to take the part of a trapped “casualty” in the Road Traffic Collision display and was cut from the vehicle by the Fire Service aided by the Ambulance crew. He added that “it was a very sobering experience, and brought home just how much expertise, care and teamwork is involved on such occasions, and demonstrated the skill and dedication of the officers and paramedics involved from the emergency services.”

Watch Manager Alan Potter & Crew Manager John Knight of Martock Fire Station helped plan the event. John said “community safety and community engagement is a big part of the Fire & Rescue Services role and we all enjoy working with partners and communities to make them safer. We all enjoyed the evening and hope to do a similar event soon.”

## 8. Local Action Groups / PACT meetings

### Local Action Group Updates:

#### Martock –20th May

Police update –reported reducing crime trends.

Investigation of lead thefts taking place

No Cold Calling – PCSO to arrange for more leaflets, stickers and robust signs.

SMARTER action plan update

Drug Proof Your Kids – being arranged by church group

Improvement to recreation ground. – being led by parish council

Increased police visibility

Increased monitoring of licensed premises

#### South Petherton – PACT meeting 15th June / LAG meeting 14th September

The PACT meeting was well attended although some residents had not received information about the event.

Top issues were:

Anti-social behaviour – St James’ Street / David Hall area

Parking – St James Street. Lines are being redone.

Police Post / NHW – Lack of communication and verification of co-ordinators.

The ‘Enforcement Aide Memoir’ leaflet was well received by those unsure of how to make contact with agencies.

## Financial Implications

None from this report.

### **Corporate Priority Implications**

- 4.4 Increase understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police.
- 4.5 Improve perceptions of anti-social behaviour
- 4.8 Improve dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police.
- 4.9 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**

Addressing causes of crime can help promote community cohesion.

**Background Papers:** *Area North Community Safety Action Panel – Agenda and Minutes and action plan*

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