

Area West Committee – 21st May 2008

## **7. Update on the Work of the Area West Community Safety Action Panel**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

To update the Committee on the work of the Area West Community Safety Action Panel (AWCSAP) since October 2007.

### **Recommendation**

That members note the contents of the report.

### **Background**

AWCSAP is made up of representatives from a variety of public sector and voluntary agencies, which work together to improve safety, reduce crime and alleviate the fear of crime in the local area. Area West does not have a high crime rate and anti-social behaviour is relatively low, however on occasions there are local issues that affect people's quality of life, which the Panel is able to tackle. The issues surrounding safety, crime and anti-social behaviour often need a combined approach to resolve them. By working together and using enforcement, education and diversionary tactics the relevant organisations can pool their resources and work towards a common goal for the benefit of the community.

Concerns regarding safety and crime are raised at grassroots level through the three Local Action Groups operating in Chard, Crewkerne and Ilminster. The Chair of each of the LAGs attends the AWCSAP and reports upon the issues and subsequent actions concerning residents in Area West. Where appropriate representatives from AWCSAP highlight those issues at the South Somerset Steering Group meeting, which reports to the Mendip and South Somerset Community Safety Partnership. This structure allows information to be communicated in both directions, which ensures that a strategic approach across the agencies is taken when tackling community safety, crime and the fear of crime in Area West.

In addition to its strategic role the AWCSAP has been able to provide a small amount of funding to support projects highlighted by the Local Action Groups.

### **The Work of the Area West Community Safety Action Panel**

#### Revised Action Plan

Since October 2007, the Panel have continued meeting on a bi-monthly basis.

A workshop took place in December to review the purpose and the activities of the Panel and to refresh and update the Action Plan for 2008.

The workshop highlighted the extent of community safety work being carried out by the various partners across Area West and most importantly demonstrated how well the

Local Action Groups work within their communities tackling community safety at a grass roots level. The Action Plan workshop identified the following priorities for 2008:

- Working together with the community to improve safety and address the causes and impact of unacceptable levels of anti-social behaviour and crime.
- Reduce speeding and improve road safety
- Address the fear of crime

### Partners and Communities Together

Recently the Police have been tasked with organising and delivering PACT (Partners and Communities Together) meetings in the three market towns. The PACT meetings will be open to the public and will be held every three months. The aim of these meetings is to give the public the opportunity to highlight and prioritise issues of concern relating to crime and safety. A panel made up of representatives from a variety of public sector organisations will attend each meeting and they will be tasked to come up with actions to tackle the issues highlighted and report on progress at the next PACT meeting three months later.

It is recognised that the PACT meetings will replicate the role of the LAGs and to avoid duplication of meetings it has been decided to amalgamate each PACT meeting with its corresponding Local Action Group meeting. The police are taking the lead role in arranging the PACT meetings and are responsible for promoting those events to the public.

The dates of the first PACT / LAG meetings are as follows:

- Ilminster – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008
- Crewkerne – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2008
- Chard – 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008

AWCSAP is meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> June to hear the outcome of each PACT meeting and decide exactly how the Panel can support the PACT / LAGs to deliver solutions to the prioritised issues.

### Change of Chair

In April 2008 Dan Shortland stepped down as Chair of AWCSAP and the Panel elected Cathy Morrison as the new chair for the forthcoming year. Dan Shortland continues to sit on the Panel as the Area West Committee representative.

### Recent Work of the Local Action Groups

Issues of concern relating to safety and anti-social behaviour taking place in and around any of the three market towns are highlighted at the appropriate Local Action Group meeting. The agencies present decide on actions to help tackle the issues highlighted. These actions are reported back to the AWCSAP, which in turn provides support to the LAGS through funding projects or devising a strategic approach to intervention. An update of their most recent activities is detailed below:

### Chard

- Young people in Tatworth had no youth facilities, which resulted in incidents of anti-social behaviour. Over the past few months, diversionary work has been carried

out by Somerset Rural Youth Project, which successfully worked on a music project with the young people.

- Chard LAG organised a successful Community Safety Day at the Guildhall on the 20<sup>th</sup> October.
- Following complaints about poorly parked cars causing accessibility problems for large vehicles on some narrow streets in Tatworth, Chard LAG was able to arrange for the Fire Service to send out letters to all residents of the streets concerned, this has improved the situation.

### Crewkerne

- Currently in the process of setting up a Designated Public Places Order (DPPO) which will give the police powers to confiscate alcohol within the designated area.
- A community Speed Watch group has recently started operating in Misterton.
- A Community Safety Day is planned for 20<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at the Victoria Hall

### Iminster

- Iminster Community Speed Watch continues to conduct speed watches at various locations every four to five days. The Road Policing Unit accompany the volunteers on some of their sessions.
- Following graffiti and vandalism of the toilet block on Iminster recreation ground an artist was employed to work with young people on the Toilet Block Tiling project.
- A successful Community Safety Day took place on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications for Area West Committee.

## **Implications for Corporate Priorities**

- Maintain above 90 per cent of people who generally feel safe in their communities
- Maintain above 80 per cent the people satisfied with their neighbourhoods as a place to live.

**Background Papers:** *None.*

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