

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 May 2008.

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.

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 a strategic approach across the agencies is taken when tackling community safety, crime and the fear of crime in Area West.

Recent Community Safety Work carried out in Area West

PACT / LAG Meetings

In May 2008 the report to Area West on the Community Safety Action Panel explained that the Police were tasked with organising and delivering PACT (Partners and Communities Together) meetings across Avon & Somerset and that three would take place in Area West in Crewkerne, Chard and Ilminster. The three meetings have now taken place but as they closely replicated the work of the already existing Local Action Group meetings it has been decided that in South Somerset the PACT and LAG meetings will be amalgamated and retain the name LAG. At least one LAG meeting a year will be open to the public for them to raise concerns relating to community safety.

Area West Youth Network

The Area West Community Regeneration Officer is working with the Somerset County Youth Service to set up an Area West Youth Network. Youth Networks are aimed at staff and volunteers in organisations, whether statutory or voluntary, that work with young people, this includes youth workers, PCSOs and relevant housing staff. The purpose of the network is to give those who work with young people the opportunity to get together and discuss common issues and share best practice on how to address them. Participants will also be kept informed of relevant training and funding streams. The first meeting takes place on Wednesday 14th January 2009.

Area West Community Safety Newsletter

Denise Dunford, of the South Somerset Community Safety Partnership, has produced the first newsletter for the Area West Community Safety Partnership Panel. The first edition included the following articles:

- The role of a PCSO in a rural community.
- Community Speedwatch update.
- Update from Andy Lloyd on the work of the Area West Safer, Stronger Neighbourhoods Team.

The newsletter has been sent to all the Parish Councils in Area West.

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. An update of their most recent activities is detailed below:

Chard

- The Community Safety Team at South Somerset District Council have been working with Chard Local Action Group and Yeovil Town Football Club to set up a project in Chard aimed at encouraging good behaviour through sport. Starting in the New Year, Yeovil Town Football Club, Police Community Support Officers, local football clubs and youth workers will be engaging young people in community football training sessions in Chard. Yeovil Town Football Club are also working with relevant groups and people in both Crewkerne and Ilminster to engage young people in training sessions.

Crewkerne

- The Crewkerne LAG is working with the police and SSDC to set up a Designated Public Places Order (DPPO), which will give the police powers to confiscate alcohol within the designated area. A public notice informing residents and relevant licensees was posted in November 2008 and people were given until 29th December to make comments.
- Crewkerne LAG held a very successful Community Safety Day on the 20th September 2008 at the Victoria Hall. Over 80 people attended. The presence of a police car and fire engine outside the event helped draw people in.

Ilminster

- The Ilminster Local Action Group has had a change of Chair. Carol Goodall has stood down as the Chair and Richard Beardon has now taken over the role.
- Ilminster Community Speed Watch is carrying out speed watches once a week at various locations in the town. On 16 September, the Ilminster Community Speedwatch team joined Speedwatch teams across South Somerset for a Speed Awareness For Everyone (SAFE) Day. 23 Community Speed Watch schemes held 57 sessions and monitored 13,189 vehicles. Some 500 (3.8%) speeders were detected and the police dealt with 30 at the roadside. Ilminster mounted 4 sessions supported by PCSO John Martin.

- A Community Safety Day was held in conjunction with the Ilminster Forum on Saturday 13th September 2008. Nearly 60 people attended the event, another is already planned for Friday 8th May 2009.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for the 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.*
