



Overview & Scrutiny Committee 27th May 2009

Report from the Director of Policy & Regeneration

Wards Affected: ALL

Introduction to Brent Crime Prevention Strategy Group

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report introduces the work of Brent's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), the Crime Prevention Strategy Group (CPSG) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Police and Justice Act 2006 introduces new powers to overview and scrutiny in relation to the scrutiny of CDRPs and the terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have been changed to reflect this.
- 1.2 This is the first time that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has considered crime and disorder issues since the new legislation was enacted. Therefore, this report summarises the new legislation and also presents to members the draft Crime Prevention Strategy Group Action Plan for 2009/10 so that the Committee is aware of the main priorities of the group. Genny Renard, the interim Head of Community Safety will attend the meeting to present the report to members and talk through the CPSGs main priorities for reducing crime and disorder in Brent.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider the legislation relating to the scrutiny of crime and disorder reduction partnerships and the priorities for the CPSG and decide what elements of this work it wants to focus on in 2009/10.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Sections 19-21 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 extended the role of overview and scrutiny to include scrutiny of crime and disorder reduction partnerships. In Brent, the CDRP is known as the Crime Prevention Strategy Group (CPSG). The provisions in the 2006 Act came into force on 30th April 2009.
- 3.2 Each local authority has to have in place a committee with the power to review, scrutinise and make reports or recommendations regarding the functioning of crime and disorder reduction partnerships. The partners in the CDRP must respond to scrutiny as a result of this legislation if members request information or attendance at a committee meeting. They also have to respond in writing to a report or recommendations from overview and scrutiny within 28 days of the date of the report.

In Brent, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will carry out this role and its terms of reference have been amended accordingly.

- 3.3 The Act also contained provisions which introduced the concept of Councillor Call for Action for crime and disorder issues. These powers are similar to those for Councillor Call for Action for local government matters, introduced in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. A protocol for dealing with Councillor Call for Action has been prepared and circulated to all members.
- 3.4 Because the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is taking on these new responsibilities, it was felt important to give members an overview of the work that the Crime Prevention Strategy Group is focussing on at present. As a result, the CPSG draft Action Plan for 2009/10 is included as an appendix to this report. Genny Renard, interim Head of Community Safety will attend the meeting to give an overview of the plan to members and also talk through the implications of the new legislation.
- 3.5 It would be helpful if the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give some consideration as to how it wishes to take forward its role in scrutinising the CPSG. There will be opportunity during the year to call partners to account, but it would be helpful for work programme planning to know what members' priorities are. The Action Plan included as an appendix to this report will be of assistance in this regard. Guidance on crime and disorder scrutiny states that the committee responsible for scrutiny of crime and disorder matters shall meet to review or scrutinise decisions made, or any other action taken in connection with crime and disorder functions, no less than once in every 12 month period. Given this, at least one crime and disorder related issue will be scheduled in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme each year.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 None

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 None

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

7.1 None

Background Papers

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