

To: Police and Crime Partnership Working Group
From: Mike Davey, Chair of Governance Group
Date: 14 March 2013

GOVERNANCE GROUP - UPDATE

Proposed Community Safety structure

1. Background

Following the meeting of the Partnership Working Group in December, the Governance Group was asked to continue to meet to consider a possible structure for the Community Safety networks in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This work was to be undertaken in the light of the appointment of the Police and Crime Commissioner and with a view to streamlining the bureaucracy surrounding this area of activity.

The Governance Group has met on two occasions in a slightly extended form to discuss the structures. It was recognised that the Partnership Working Group can only influence the debate on structures and that any formal decisions would have to be agreed by the statutory bodies, most obviously the Community Safety Partnerships and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

2. Proposals

The proposals are best seen in the attached diagrammatic structure.

The work that has been undertaken was commenced on a bottom-up perspective with a view to supporting activity as it takes place in local communities to prevent crime. As such, we would argue that the most significant area is the local partnership groups whereby practitioners meet to deliver operational outcomes. We hope these proposals reinforce existing activity. The one comment the Group would make is that work at all levels should be driven by evidence, hence the importance given to the role of Research within Community Safety.

At District level, we strongly supported the continuation of local Community Safety Partnerships (CSP). These groups have a statutory responsibility. We would, however, suggest some review of the number of times the CSPs meet, with a particular focus on action, eg the South Cambridgeshire model. The Group felt it would be inappropriate to consider mergers of CSPs at this time.

Despite the focus at local solutions, we believed that there was benefit in county-wide groups being maintained and supported. The groups we would propose should exist are as follows:

- Integrated Offender Management
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Domestic Violence
- Road Safety
- Troubled Families

We believed that these county-wide groups could all include Peterborough, although some further debate will be required with regards to Drugs and Alcohol and Troubled Families.

The Governance Group felt that a new county-wide officers' group should be introduced. This, in essence, could be the Police and Crime Partnership Working Group, albeit with slightly enhanced membership. The core members would come from the statutory partners, representatives from the CSPs and representatives of the county-wide theme groups. We would anticipate the Group would not be as large as might appear due to duplication of roles. This group would also link to other partnerships, including the County Criminal Justice Operations Group and the Health and Wellbeing Partnership. There would have to be some negotiation over lead responsibility for certain areas of work, eg Domestic Violence.

The county-wide theme groups would be required to ensure their own appropriate governance arrangements were in place, which has not always been the case to date.

The current Officer Support Group works effectively at an operational level with members exchanging good practice. It would therefore be foolish to suggest this group finishes if it continued to deliver good outcomes for communities.

We believe the county-wide Community Safety Board should continue although there was considerable debate about the effectiveness of the Board over the years. The Governance Group believe that there is benefit in bringing together CSP Chairs, statutory partners and relevant portfolio holders, however the agenda needs to be tighter and the meetings less frequent. We would suggest that the Board meets twice a year, once in September to set the strategic county-wide goals, including Peterborough, and again in March to review progress. The focus would be county-wide themes and would link back to the thematic priorities outlined above. The county-wide Board should add value to the local partnerships.

It is proposed that the Police and Crime Commissioner, and his staff, should have access to these groups as appropriate.

3. Conclusion

The Partnership Working Group is asked to consider these proposals so that they can be adapted in advance of the county-side Community Safety Board meeting later in the month.

PROPOSED COMMUNITY SAFETY STRUCTURE

