CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL Agenda Item

Report by: Liz Bisset Director of Community Services

> **To**:   Area committees   (South) 23 March 2006
> **Wards**:   All

Proposals to Develop In Partnership Neighbourhood Policing And Neighbourhood Management

1. **Introduction**

   The City Council have been asked by the police to consider a proposal for working together for mutual benefit through the new initiative of Neighbourhood Policing Teams.   This paper seeks the views of Area Committees on the proposal, particularly in regard to the role of the Committees and their capacity to deal with a standing agenda item on Neighbourhood Policing.

    Following this consultation the proposal will go to Strategy Scrutiny Committee in April. Details of the proposals are contained in the police report attached as Appendix A.

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2. Recommendation

2.1 To agree in principle to partnership working with the police on neighbourhood policing

2.2 To comment on the practicality of the proposals as they relate to Area Committees with regard to:

- Receiving regular reports on neighbourhood profiles
- Having a regular Neighbourhood Policing item on the agenda
- The role of the Area Committees in identifying and agreeing priorities
- Running a pilot
- The timescale for implementation of the initiative

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3. **Background**

   3.1 The police have been set government targets to implement neighbourhood policing and to make provision for a more citizen focused police service that responds to the needs of the community. The review of the partnership provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 published last week included requirements for Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to consult and engage with their local community on a regular and ongoing basis and to produce regular reports to their communities. It will also be made mandatory for portfolio holders with responsibility for community safety to participate in the CSP decision-making process.

   There is a general national agenda to steer local authorities and other key partners towards more focused community engagement and to empower citizens to influence local services.   The police proposals to develop in partnership the Neighbourhood Policing and Neighbourhood Management agendas fits well with the national drivers and statutory requirements and gives a timely opportunity for the City Council to become involved and influence the initiative at the planning stage.

3.2 In November last an outline proposal for the City Council to engage in the Neighbourhood Policing and Management agenda was put forward as part of the review of Area Committees. The Corporate Management Team (CMT) and elected members were supportive of the concept of closer partnership working in this way for mutual benefit. However, there were a number of concerns in particular with regard to resourcing implications and general practicalities. There were also concerns around transparency of decision making on priority areas involving elected members. Following detailed discussions between the police and some key City Council officers to address these concerns, an amended draft proposal has been submitted by the police (Appendix A).

3.3 This most recent proposal has been further considered by CMT and Service Managers and there remain a number of issues for further work around general consideration for the City Council and particular issues for Area Committees. These issues are set out below with some possible solutions:

General City Council considerations:
- **Resourcing implications for officer attendance at the Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) and Area Committees** – The City Council will need to be clear who is attending and how often. This could be managed through timely circulation of the neighbourhood profile to allow Departmental Managers to nominate the appropriate officers at each round.
- **Diversity issues around ensuring that minority group views are represented** – It will be essential to ensure that views of minority groups are represented at the intelligence and data gathering stage.
- **The accountability of the NAG** – It needs to be clear if the NAG are only actioning agreed priorities or also deciding what the priorities will be. There also needs to be clear procedures around reporting back on actions and progress to Area Committees and to Community Safety Partnerships for a strategic overview.
- **The development of protocols and boundaries around information sharing and data gathering** – There are already information sharing protocols in place. The government also has plans to extend the requirements around information sharing. However, it needs to be clear that only anoymised data will be shared and no case discussions will take place outside of the appropriate settings.
- **The organisational cultural differences between the Police and City Council** – Some training for police and officers will be needed to foster further understanding between the organisations.
- **Neighbourhood Policing and Neighbourhood Management were not considered to be synonymous** – Prioritising police resources in a neighbourhood is very different from neighbourhood management of all public services. Clarity around this area was seen as essential for managing expectations of the police and public. It is suggested that a process of closed surveying should be used to ensure issues are kept within the community safety arena.

Area Committee considerations:
- **The capacity of the Area Committees to deal with the business of neighbourhood profiles within the 20 minutes suggested** – Do Area Committees have enough space to give over 20 minutes at each meeting and if so will this be enough time to complete the business.
- **The role of the Area Committees in the decision making process** – It needs to be clear if they are making decisions on the priorities or just giving

their views for the NAG to consider. It also need to be clear who is meant by Area Committees is this intended to be just councillors or a show of hands by councillors and public.

- **Running a pilot** – It is suggested to run a pilot in North Area Committee for one cycle. It is felt that more than one cycle will be needed to address the above issues.   The timetable for rolling out to other areas will depend on issues arising from the pilot and ability to address them.

The Area Committee is asked to consider the Neighbourhood Policing and Neighbourhood Management proposal and to comment on the proposal having regard to the issues raised in this paper.

5.   **IMPLICATIONS**
(a)   **Financial**
There will be a cost in terms of officer involvement in around 48 meetings per year.
(b)   **Staffing**.
Frontline staff will be involved in data gathering and information sharing and it is felt that there may be extra resources needed to address reported problems
(c)   **Equal Opportunities**
Diversity issues will have to be carefully considered and processes put in place to ensure that minority groups have opportunities to air their views.
(d)   **Environmental**
There may be an increase in reports of environmental issues such as fly- tipping, graffiti and vandalism and resources will have to be made available to manage this.
(e)   **Community Safety**
This fits with the Cambridge Community Safety Strategy objective to engage with the community.
BACKGROUND PAPERS
Police proposal
Notes from the Service Manager Workshop
Notes from CMT Meeting

To inspect these documents contact on 457045 or lynda.kilkelly@cambridge.gov.uk. who is also the author and contact officer for queries.

From: John Fuller, Southern Divisional Community Engagement Manager, Cambridgeshire Constabulary

To: Liz Bisset – Director of Community Services, Cambridge City Council

Date: 27th January 2006.

Proposals to Develop in Partnership Neighbourhood Policing and Neighbourhood Management Agendas

1. Introduction

1.1   The proposals in this report seek to offer a framework that will enable our respective services to work more collaboratively together whilst we both strive to implement challenges posed by the neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood management agendas.

2.   Background

2.1   Neighbourhood Policing is the implementation model developed and championed by the Association of Chief Police Officers in response to the Government's policing reform and citizen focus agendas and follows the publication of the white paper 'Building Communities, Beating Crime – A better police service for the 21st Century'.

2.2   The Home Office has set police forces a target to implement neighbourhood policing nation-wide by 2008 and this police division has been granted pathfinder status as one of 43 divisions nationally to lead the way on implementation.

2.3   Running in parallel with the police reform agenda are similar agendas for other public services e.g. the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's consultative paper ' Citizen Engagement and Public services: Why Neighbourhoods Matter.'

2.4   All services are being encouraged to developed improved collaborative partnerships but more challenging is the requirement for all public services to strengthen engagement with the communities they serve thus enabling them to have a real influence in the services that are delivered locally to them.

2.5   Experience has shown that when the police ask the public to identify their concerns many of the issues raised cannot be solved by the police alone. Similarly, when local authorities ask citizens similar questions policing issues can also dominate. Unless those responsible for problem resolution work together processes can become fragmented, elongated, ineffective and inefficient. The public perceives little accountability and thus public confidence in all services suffers.

2.5 It is therefore offered that neighbourhood policing becomes synonymous with neighbourhood management and we look to develop proposals whereby both agendas can be met in partnership.

3. Structures

3.1   Pivotal to the success of neighbourhood policing is the establishment of geographically based policing areas known as neighbourhoods in which there is a dedicated team of police staff who become known and accessible to them. Critically, they must engage not just consult and deliver interventions in partnership to problems that the public have helped to prioritise.

3.2   The best practice advice in terms of boundaries is to be as coterminous with partners as is possible and the recent structural changes that have occurred in policing the division have established our neighbourhood boundaries around ward boundaries. The effect of this in Cambridge is that there are four neighbourhood areas, each one mirroring the Area Committee structure.

3.3   Each neighbourhood team contains a number of constables and police community support officers and are supervised by a sergeant. The four neighbourhoods are managed by an inspector with a sergeant acting as deputy. Whilst each ward will continue to have a named and lead officer the emphasis is very much placed on a team approach to provide resilience.

The challenge to enable neighbourhoods to influence local policing priorities can now be progressed and with the policing structure being aligned to political boundaries allows for consideration of more joined up working at all levels across our organisations.

4. Processes

4.1   In order that communities can influence policing/neighbourhood priorities opportunities must be created to capture community concerns. It needs to be a regular process as issues can surface quickly and if not addressed, mutate into much larger problems.

4.2   Dialogue with the community is the start of the engagement process. It will identify the issues that can be acted upon today but more importantly to this process, the problems that fester away in communities that never quite get dealt with or resolved. Left unresolved they continue to pop up or some will increase in scale to the point they become alarmist and all partners then have to respond urgently and divert resources to resolve the problem.

4.3   The city council, the police and other partners have a range of measures in place to canvass public opinion and identify issues that concern the public. However, we do not always share the information or when we do it's not timely and the opportunity is missed to make a real impact on the problems.

4.4   The proposals in the remainder of this report offer a framework where through effective community engagement and robust business processes problems within communities are identified and resolved at the earliest opportunity.

4.5   Where there are competing or complex problems which cannot be resolved 'as part of the day job' they will be referred for prioritisation and resolution to an action group via a community panel.

5.   Practical Arrangements

5.1   There are three sources from which information can be obtained to

create intelligence upon which action can be taken. These are:

a) Our staff
b) The community
c) Data systems

5.2 Partnership Intelligence

5.2.1 The staff of partner agencies delivering services in the community have a wealth of information and intelligence. If shared it would not only help them in the daily responsibilities but would help create a true picture of what is happening in a neighbourhood. It is therefore suggested that those delivering services should be given the support and protocols to ensure they get to know each other better. This will build relationships and trust and enable them to share information and intelligence with confidence about their patches. The intelligence should be captured routinely through weekly contacts and forwarded to 'the intelligence unit'.

5.3 Community Intelligence

5.3.1 Regular and routine contact with the community is essential in identifying the real issues that affect the confidence of those living and working in communities.

5.3.2 Police staff are required to establish their own networks of key individual people (KINS) who they must contact at least monthly. These include councillors, resident and tenant associations, community groups, schools, clergy, hard to reach groups etc. They ask them to identify issues of concern and forward this intelligence to the intelligence unit.

5.3.3 They will use a range of interventions to capture this intelligence to include meetings, surgeries, card drops, street questionnaire, and street roll calls.

5.3.4 Other partner agencies may well have their own mechanism in place to elicit community concerns and these should be explored and shared.

5.4 Data Systems

5.4.1 Recorded police crime and incident data can be retrieved to determined the levels of recorded crime etc in a neighbourhood area. When this information is put alongside partnership and community intelligence an informed picture (a community profile) will emerge of what is happening in that neighbourhood. The key issues identified in the profile will enable that neighbourhood to prioritise problems and agree actions informed by an objective assessment.

5.4.2 Outputs will only be as good as the inputs and the opportunity to include data from different sources will make assessments in the future more reliable and useful to all partners.

5.4.2 To maximise the opportunity to create accurate and meaningful profiles partners should explore how information exchange can be improved and processed.

5.4.3 The opportunity to establish in the future a shared 'community intelligence unit' should be explored.

5.5   Community Accountability

5.5.1   The process of determining neighbourhood priorities and agreeing follow up action must be accountable to retain public confidence. It will need to be transparent and open to public scrutiny.

5.5.2   It is proposed to meet this requirement using existing public forums and not create a new layer of consultation procedures. It is suggested that Area Committees could provide this essential element. An agenda item at each meeting where the 'Neighbourhood Profile' can be shared and the public and councillors can question and challenge would provide the necessary scrutiny and accountability.

5.5.3   This process should take no longer than 20 minutes. The area committee will be expected to give an opinion on the priorities it would like to see actioned. Where new issues are raised the profile will be referred back to the intelligence unit for further assessment.

5.5.4   When the cycle is repeated the area committee not only receives the new profile but also reports on the actions taken and outcomes achieved during the previous process thus completing the problem solving cycle.

5.5.5   It is vitally important to ensure that the problems identified by the community but not prioritised appear not to have been ignored. Feedback on such items will be given to contextualise the decision and offer other interventions to help resolve them.

5.6   Prioritisation and Action Planning

5.6.1   The next stage of the process requires assessment, prioritisation and action planning. It is proposed that this be achieved through a business meeting of partner representatives to be known as the Neighbourhood Action Group (**NAG**). Representation on that group should be at a level whereby they can agree on behalf of their service to implement actions.

5.6.2   The NAG would be would be an action focussed meeting, minuted and accountable. It is anticipated that business would be achieved with one hour.

5.6.3   The priorities agreed and actions decided would be communicated back to the community through partnership networks. These will include the same processes that captured the information to determine the assessments as well as making best use of internal and external media opportunities.

5.6.4   Each problem would have actions around **E**nforcement, **P**revention, **I**ntelligence and **C**ommunication (EPIC) and the task of resolving the problem will be remitted to those with responsibility for delivering services in the neighbourhood.

5.7   Strategic Accountability

5.7.4   In order that neighbourhoods do not work in isolation and priorities are considered against overarching organisational priorities it is proposed that a partner group meets at six monthly intervals and reviews progress across the neighbourhoods as well as setting the strategic agenda for the next period.

5.7.5   This partner group to be know as the Joint Action Group (**JAG**) would be represented at a senior partner level and in effect determine a Neighbourhood Control Strategy in line with the police's requirement to ensure neighbourhood policing remain compliant with the national intelligence model.

5.7.5   It is suggested that the JAG reports to the CDRP thereby all processes are linked and become accountable in a timely fashion.

5.7.6   It may be considered that this group will carry out functions that the CDRP will be required to do in the future. The white paper suggests that this role will be remitted to CDRPs and the CDRP should be invited to consider whether it should take on this accountability at an early stage.

6.0 Resources and Costs

6.1   It is proffered that these proposals do not substantially increase bureaucracy but there will be costs associated with the processes. For the model to work successfully will require additional resources in the intelligence unit and administrative support at NAG and JAG levels. It will be appreciated that these processes need to be extended to other districts and the police are currently determining the impact of these proposals.

6.2   Whilst the neighbourhood policing agenda does not come with new money to implement it will nevertheless be incumbent upon the force to find the resources needed to support it. It is hope that as the proposals develop and become a reality the benefits will be seen across the range of service providers and open up more opportunities to share the resourcing commitments.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1.   It is recommended that the principles contained in this report are accepted.

7.2.   It is recommended that the working proposals are developed further To implement a trial in one neighbourhood in the city as soon as is practicable.

7.3   It is recommended that this area should be North City. Once a cycle has been completed the processes should be reviewed and consideration given to extending it to other areas.