



To: The Leader and Executive Councillor for Strategy:  
Councillor Tim Bick

Report by: Liz Bisset

Relevant scrutiny committee: Strategy & Resources 17/3/2014  
Scrutiny  
Committee

Wards affected: All wards

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD RESOLUTION PANEL SCHEME Progress Report**

### **Not a Key Decision**

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#### **1. Executive summary**

1.1 A report was presented to the committee on 7 July 2012 which set out the initial steps taken to establish the Neighbourhood Resolution Panel Scheme (NRPS). The report was noted and approved by the Leader.

1.2 Considerable further progress has been made to date which is outlined in this report and detailed in Appendix One. Key points are summarised below:

- A framework to manage, train and support NRPS volunteer facilitators was established in March 2013 in line with good practice.
- Following a period of consultation with partner agencies, an effective method of processing referrals was completed in June 2013.
- The scheme co-ordinator made a presentation to the Cambridgeshire Constabulary Senior Management Team which was well received.
- Weekly presentations were delivered to the reactive and neighbourhood policing teams in order to promote the scheme and to inform staff of the relevant processes and procedures.
- Referrals began to be processed by the scheme in July and to date, ten have been received.

- A successful panel meeting took place in December 2013 with very positive feedback. Extracts are included below:

*Victim ‘...even after the process was over there was further progress with my neighbour, which would not have happened without the panel.....’*

*Wrong doer .....’I found the panel meeting helpful and to realise how upset and agitated my neighbour was, due to the incident involved. The meeting has made me look at my neighbours needs more...’*

Both parties said that they would highly recommend the process to others in a similar situation.

1.3 This report also set out recommendations for the future development of the scheme in the short term to include:

- Increasing the number of NRPS volunteers.
- Broadening the scheme to encompass other partner agencies and to ensure a co-ordinated approach to restorative practice across the city.
- Establishing a board of governance.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended:

1. to note the report attached as Appendix One which sets out progress since July 2012 with regard to the establishment of the NRPS and
2. to endorse progress made and the recommendations for further development of the scheme.

## **3. Background**

3.1 A detailed account of the progress to date is attached at Appendix One. The NRPS is a new ‘restorative justice’ initiative, working collaboratively with the police and anti-social behaviour (ASB) team, to address crime and non-crime incidents, including anti-social behaviour and disputes between neighbours, in a positive and constructive way.

3.2 The NRPS focuses on bringing parties together in a restorative justice (RJ) meeting, known as a ‘panel’, which is facilitated by volunteers who have completed RJ practitioner training. The parties agree the outcomes which are then recorded in a written agreement. Compliance with the

agreement is monitored by the scheme co-ordinator and any non-compliance is referred back to the original referring agency to decide how best to deal with the matter thereafter.

3.3 Considerable progress has been made with regard to establishing the scheme in conjunction with partner agencies, in particular with the police. A framework to manage, train and support volunteer facilitators has been established along with an effective method of processing referrals received by the scheme.

3.4 The NRPS started to process referrals in July 2013 and to date over half of those referrals have been received from the police. Experience elsewhere shows that the referral process is slow to take off, however, with one or two successes the referrals begin to come in greater volume. The process has to be carefully managed ensuring capacity within the volunteers to take on the referred cases. We are seeing more interest from the police since the outcome on the common assault. We would expect a steady flow from now on and in expectation are running a volunteer campaign for new volunteers, focusing particularly on the universities.

3.5 The first panel meeting took place at the end of 2013 with a very positive outcome and work is continuing to ensure that current live referrals achieve the same outcome.

#### **4. Implications**

(a) **Financial Implications**

As noted in Appendix One the volunteer pool needs to be quite extensive and is resource intensive in management terms. The hours of the co-ordinator post have for this reason been increased. Training of the newly recruited volunteers will also have a cost attached.

(b) **Staffing Implications**

See above

(c) **Equal Opportunities Implications**

An Equality Impact Assessment was conducted in 2012. It is currently being reviewed and will be revised accordingly.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

Nil

(e) **Procurement**

None

(f) **Consultation and communication**

The campaign to recruit volunteers has included the Cambridge Volunteer Centre, Cambridge University Students Union, Anglia Ruskin Students Union, Cambridgeshire.net, ShapeYourPlace, Cambridge Student Community Action and the Cambridge Hub, as well as internal sources.

(g) **Community Safety**

As reported

## 5. **Background papers**

See below.

## 6. **Appendices**

Appendix One: Neighbourhood Resolution Panel Scheme Progress Report

Appendix Two: Referral Process Map

## 7. **Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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