

Committee: Community and Leisure Committee
Date: 28 May 2002
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: Community Safety Strategy 2002- 05
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Summary

- 1 At its last meeting the Committee was unable to endorse the draft strategy. The Community Safety Action Team has subsequently considered the Council's concerns and made changes to the Strategy. At the Council meeting on 23 April it was agreed that the matter be referred back to this Committee for further consideration. This report now invites the Committee to recommend endorsement of the revised Strategy.

Background

- 2 Historically crime reduction has always been seen as the sole responsibility of the Police service. However, experience has shown that a multi-agency problem solving approach is more likely to succeed. The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 was introduced by the Government to provide a statutory framework to bring together relevant agencies to bring down levels of crime and disorder and improve the quality of life within communities.
- 3 The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory duty on the Responsible Authority Group (RAG) [Chief Executive(s) – Uttlesford District Council and Essex County Council, Chief Superintendent – Commander Braintree Division – Essex Police], together with other agencies, to:-
 - Carry out a review of crime and disorder over a 3-year span
 - Prepare an analysis of the results
 - Consult with the Community in formulating a Strategy to reduce Crime and Disorder
 - Agree a strategy and implement it
- 4 The Uttlesford Community Safety Action Team (UCSAT) pre-dates the statutory requirements of the Act and has enabled the statutory partnership to build on established work to address the causes and fear of crime. The Community Safety Strategy is the result of a particular partnering arrangement as specified by an Act of Parliament. It is neither a Police Plan nor a District Council Plan. It has to consider the evidence and views of the community before a decision is taken. As a key partner the District Council is now being asked to endorse the amended Strategy.

Development of the Strategy

- 5 The Strategy's aims are formed from a review of the levels and trends of crime and disorder in Uttlesford and an analysis of the results of the review.

A professional research company, utilising appropriate survey methodologies across the District, then undertook a public consultation exercise. A copy of the revised Strategy is attached.

Response to this Committee's Concerns

- 6 At its last meeting Members commented that whilst the Strategy generally had laudable objectives, the Committee could not support it as presented. Key concerns raised were the focus on Saffron Walden, criticisms of current rural policing levels and the need for action on the ground.
- 7 Members will note that changes have been made to Key Aim 3 by changing the emphasis on the wording in response to this Committee's concerns. Whilst the particular problems in Saffron Walden have to be recognised and addressed it is clear that the need to reduce such crimes applies throughout the District. The survey and analysis were carried out in the Autumn of 2001 and, as a result, six key local areas of concern were identified. Set out below are the six aims with summaries of the audit data to justify their inclusion within the Strategy.

Aim One "To reduce the number of Crimes of Violence"

and

Aim Two, "To reduce the number of Hate Crimes"

These two aims primarily target Domestic Violence and Hate Crime, i.e. racist and homophobic incidents. The audit data shows that in the year ending April 2001 Uttlesford had 264 reported incidents of violent crime, 247 reports of Domestic violence across the district, and 13 incidents of Racial and Homophobic crime. These figures are high for an area with little deprivation – generally only 10% of domestic violence abuse is reported – a person is abused some 30 times before they report it. These two aims link into Government targets.

Aim Three "To reduce the number of offences of burglary, auto-crime, criminal damage and anti-social behaviour, with particular emphasis on the town of Saffron Walden"

Offences of burglary, auto-crime, criminal damage and anti-social behaviour have increased throughout the District. These issues are being addressed through the Action Plans of the Working Groups. However, there has been a disproportionate increase in these offences in the Saffron Walden beat over the past three years. An increase of 18% is considerably higher than any other beat area across Uttlesford and clearly defines Saffron Walden as Uttlesford's "hot-spot" thereby supporting the emphasis being placed on the town of Saffron Walden. This does not mean that there will be no action taken in other parts of the district consistent with normal standards of practice.

Aim Four, "To reduce the number of road accidents and anti-social driver behaviour"

This is based on evidence collected by Essex Police Northern Road Police Unit. Residents are twice as likely to be a victim of a road accident than to have their home burgled. Speeding traffic is a major cause of concern for many residents in Uttlesford.

Aim Five, "To reduce drug and alcohol abuse"

Although the district does not have a relatively high level of drug/alcohol related crime, abuse of these substances is on the increase within the district. It is considered that there is an under-recording of data, which may be due to the affluence of the area (users can purchase drugs rather than steal to feed their habit), and the different manner in which our partnering agencies record the associated information. In addition, the rural nature of the District, i.e. difficulties in both access and provision of advice/drop in/counselling centres.

Aim Six " To work to reduce crime and the fear of crime across the District"

Public concerns centred around –

Having their home burgled	61% surveyed worried
Having their vehicle broken into/vandalised	56% surveyed worried
Theft from garden/grounds/sheds	56% surveyed worried
Having their vehicle stolen	50% surveyed worried
Bogus callers	50% surveyed worried

To address these fears and concerns, this Aim seeks to ensure that Community Safety is everyone's responsibility, not just that of the local authorities. Many decisions about services can have an effect on the safety of the community. To this end, all Council departments, all of the Working Groups, Crime Prevention Panels and Neighbourhood Watch, parish councils etc. will work together to reduce crime and the fear of crime. A broad range of awareness raising and preventative action will be involved in addressing this aim.

- 8 The issue of policing levels has been taken up with the Police Authority by Members but that is not the only resource in terms of community safety. Targeting improvements to community safety have to be realistic in terms of what can be achieved and that includes the appropriate resources. The Strategy particularly addresses several areas of concern, including crime and the fear of crime, and broader issues of community safety. Essex Police have a separate Policing Plan, which sets out their operational objectives and priorities.
- 9 In the context of this Strategy it is now important to concentrate on actions that will deliver real benefits to the Uttlesford community. Subsequent reports to Members will then provide the opportunity to comment further on what is, or is not, being achieved. Members are reminded that there is a commitment to

provide reports twice a year on what is actually being achieved on the ground to show that real benefit is being achieved in terms of community safety.

- 10 USCAT has formed four Working Groups, to which it has specifically assigned responsibility for work to address the aims of the Strategy. The Working Groups have devised detailed Action Plans for the forthcoming years. Examples of some of the actions are set out in Appendix 1.

Conclusion

- 11 The Uttlesford Community Safety Strategy is a dynamic and all embracing document addressing the concerns, fears and factual evidence relating to crime and disorder in Uttlesford. The Strategy is intended to complement the other relevant and important plans and strategies appropriate to the District. It is not intended to replace specific plans, such as the Divisional Policing Plan, which will be implemented, monitored and reviewed by the relevant authority.
- 12 The Strategy is a working document and is flexible to evolve and react to the changing issues within the district. The Council is asked to endorse the Strategy as an acknowledgement of its role in addressing factual evidence and residents' real perceptions about crime and the fear of crime in Uttlesford. This will also give a framework to the Council's active involvement in activities to implement the Strategy.
- 13 The Committee's concerns have been recognised in the amended Strategy. This report has provided more information to explain the distinctive status of the Community Safety Strategy, to justify the Strategy itself and to illustrate actions that will be taken to reduce concerns about community safety. There is a commitment to provide hard information twice a year to the Council.

RECOMMENDED that the Community and Leisure Committee recommend that full Council endorse the amended Uttlesford Community Safety Strategy.

Background Papers:- Uttlesford Community Safety Strategy 2002-2005
Uttlesford Crime & Disorder Audit Data 2002
Uttlesford Community Safety Residents Survey -
September 2001 – Priority Research
Uttlesford Community Safety Survey of Hard to Reach
Groups – September 2001 – Priority Research
The Crime & Disorder Act 1998

Youth Initiative Working Group

- Provide support and assistance to develop diversionary measures and initiatives such as Basketball in the Community
- Explore the development of an anti-bullying campaign within schools & youth organisations
- Support the Essex Experience
- Develop crime prevention Initiatives for schools and youth groups i.e. Motorwise and Crucial Crew
- Hold youth networking seminars/Parish briefings
- Provide group transport scheme and event transport subsidy

Drugs Reference Group

- Hold regular workshops where best practice can be demonstrated and shared
- Provision of a Mobile Information service for Young People
- Raising awareness to reduce the fear of substance misuse related crime within the community
- Develop the scheme associated with the collection of drug debris
- Support the continuing process of arrest referral schemes & drug treatment & testing orders
- Promote Crimestoppers

Road Safety Working Group

- Promote and provide Drink Drive campaigns in conjunction with the Police, Community Safety & Community Development Officer
- Promote and provide Eye Testing campaigns in conjunction with the Police & Community Safety
- Promote and provide Brake Reaction Testing campaigns
- Provision of Pre/Young Drivers Awareness courses
- Support & development of Motorwise and Crucial Crew

Community Support Group

- Create a support network with initiatives for Victims of Domestic Violence (and non-violence) and Hate Crimes
- Develop regular meetings where best practice can be demonstrated and shared and confidential information can be shared to develop a multi agency solution

Committee: Community and Leisure Committee

Date: 28 May 2002

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

UTTLESFORD COMMUNITY SPORTS FORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 17 APRIL 2002 - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Uttlesford Community Sports Forum, formerly Uttlesford Sports Association, has now completed its first year. I am very pleased to report that it has been a very positive year with very enthusiastic Committee Members.

One of the first tasks was to draw up a Constitution along with a formally agreed criteria for the allocation of grants. This has been completed. The Forum has also drawn up a Business Plan which enabled us to gain a grant from Uttlesford District Council.

We have been fortunate enough to welcome guest speakers at some of our meetings over the past year. These were representatives from the Federation of Eastern Sport, The Wederall Memorial Fund and Sports Coach UK. The speakers were able to give us an insight into the work of their respective organisations and this was very useful and interesting to Members of the Forum.

The Forum has been invited to send a representative, and thereby have an input, to meetings/seminars for the Cultural Strategy for Essex being formulated by Essex County Council, the Braintree District Sports Development Network and, more recently, Uttlesford District Council's Best Value programme for Leisure. There is no doubt that Uttlesford Community Sports Forum is being recognised as a body of representatives of local sports clubs.

The Forum has had two meetings now with the Disabled Sports Forum which have been beneficial to both parties and a Sports Festival Day, primarily for people with disabilities, has been arranged for Sunday, 19 May 2002.

An evening's First Aid Course was organised specifically with Sports Clubs in mind. This was run by the St John's Ambulance Service and was subsidised by the Forum so that it was free of charge to delegates. It was extremely successful and was oversubscribed.

Other events which are being considered are:

Building a Forum Web Page

Magazine for local club news, events and information

More speakers on specific subjects to be invited to meetings

An information evening on the legal aspects of running sports clubs

I sincerely hope that the Forum will go from strength to strength. It is a body which belongs to the Sports Clubs of Uttlesford and perhaps I can remind everyone that every Club in the District is, not only entitled to have representation on the Forum, but is actively encouraged to join.

Committee: Community and Leisure Committee

Date: 28 May 2002

Agenda Item No: 7

Title: Voluntary Sector Compact

Author: Alex Stewart (01799) 510555

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with details of a “Compact Agreement”, which sets out the relationship and partnership arrangements between the statutory and voluntary sector. It recommends approval.

Background

- 2 The Government launched its Compact on relations with the voluntary and community sector in 1998. The Compact is seen as a starting point for developing the partnership, based on shared values and mutual respect and aims to develop codes of good practice in key areas, such as consultation and funding at a local level.
- 3 The underlying philosophy of any Compact is that voluntary and community activity is fundamental to the development of a democratic, socially inclusive society. Voluntary organisations are seen as bringing distinctive value to society to fulfil a role that is distinct from both the state and the private sector. They enable individuals to contribute to public life and the development of their local community by providing the opportunity for voluntary action.
- 4 The Council is being requested to sign up to a Compact Agreement with both partnering statutory agencies and the voluntary sector to enable a consistent approach to relationships and partnerships between them. This will fulfil a Government request to formalise existing arrangements.
- 5 In order to address this request, the Council, in conjunction with the Primary Care Trust, Essex County Council and the Council for Voluntary Services Uttlesford, hosted a conference at Felsted School in 2001. A variety of voluntary organisations were invited to participate. The aims of the day were to:
 - Share information and views about a local Compact so that delegates could make an informed decision about proceeding with the idea
 - Elect a Steering Committee to move the process forward
 - Begin the formation of sub-groups who could be accessed for specific areas of consultation
- 6 The meeting was attended by 91 delegates, representing 52 voluntary organisations. The meeting agreed that there was a spirit of goodwill from the statutory bodies and that it would be appropriate to move towards the formal adoption of an Uttlesford Compact. To this end, a small Steering Committee

was established, consisting of representatives from the voluntary sector, the Council, the PCT and ECC, to draft the parameters of a realistic approach to partnership working.

- 7 As a result, the voluntary sector made a formal approach to the Council to request that it adopts a Compact Agreement. The PCT has already adopted the principles and ECC are in the process of adopting a County-wide policy.

What the Council Is Being Asked To Undertake

- 8 In recognising the principles that underlie the Compact, the Council would be recognising that it has a distinctive role to play and the Compact will enable it to acknowledge the many different roles and strengths. In addition, the Compact will play a significant part in the development and implementation of the Community Strategy for Uttlesford. It is proposed that the statutory sector undertakings mirror the voluntary sector undertakings as practicably as possible. They are as follows:-

- Enable the voluntary sector to have an organised voice by:
 - allowing adequate time for consultation
 - arranging and/or facilitating meetings, as and when required
 - attending consultation meetings as appropriate
- Be willing to listen to and value the views and contribution that the voluntary sector affords Uttlesford.
- Avoid duplication of any services and be willing to learn from each other – encourage organisations with common aims and objectives to work together and share good practice, thereby ensuring continuous improvement and high standards.
- Provide and promote information, if available, of Council and voluntary sector services. Monitor and review their usefulness in conjunction with the voluntary sector.
- Provide appropriate notice of proposed Council agenda items that will affect the work of specific voluntary sector groups.
- Provide information as to dates of Council/Board meetings on an annual basis.
- Not be afraid to both give and receive criticism.
- Learn from good practice and each other. Recognise that some projects/concepts may fail.

What the Voluntary Sector Are Agreeing to Undertake

- 9 The voluntary sector proposes to operate in the following manner:
- Championing the needs of voluntary groups to offer an organised voice
 - Be willing to adapt to change of circumstances and information
 - Avoid duplication of services and learn from each other – encourage organisations with common aims and objectives to work together and share good practice
 - Commitment to quality standards relevant to each group
 - Support the concept of best value whilst acknowledging constraint of resources
 - Provide and promote information on the services available
 - Work with statutory organisations in developing codes of good practice

- Contribute actively by attending relevant meetings in order to represent and communicate with the broader voluntary sector

Next Steps

- 10 The Compact, as a framework document, is a starting point, not an end product in itself. The Council is committed to working together to develop services and, as part of the process, codes of good practice are essential in order to best achieve joint end goals of providing the best possible services to the Community.
- 11 Once all parties have adopted the “Compact Agreement”, it should enable a transparent approach to working relationships between all signatories.

RECOMMENDED that the compact as set out in the report be approved.

Background Papers: Compact – Getting It Right Together (November 1998);
Report of the Uttlesford Community Partnership
Compact Meeting held at
Felsted School (March 2001); Minutes of the Uttlesford
Compact Steering Group

Committee: Community and Leisure Committee

Date: 28 May 2002

Agenda Item No: 8

Title: Applications for Ad Hoc Grants

Author: Alex Stewart (01799) 510555

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with details of the Ad Hoc grant request received by the Council and recommends that it be determined.

Background

- 2 There is £5,000 allocated towards the Ad Hoc grants budget. In order to qualify for consideration, the applicant must fulfil the following criteria:
 - Must not be a National Organisation
 - Must not be a local branch of a National Organisation
 - Must have been resident in Uttlesford for over six months
 - Must not be for on-going costs
 - Not more than £500 can be requested
 - Must have been fund raising
 - Must be a local organisation

- Purpose of the grant should assist either the arts, sports, disabled or elderly

Name, Description of Project and Amount Requested

- 3 The Fry Art Gallery have requested £500 towards the advertising costs associated with mounting a centenary exhibition of work by Edward Bawden and Eric Ravilious. The Gallery has managed to secure substantial funding in kind by engaging the voluntary services of a leading national design firm – Trickett & Webb Design Consultants.
- 4 The total cost of this project is estimated to be £17,000, funds of £3,000 have already been raised towards the advertising costs. The gallery fulfils all the criteria and has not requested grant funding hitherto.

RECOMMENDED that the application by the Fry Art Gallery be determined.

Background Papers: Application form dated 7 May 2002