

**Meeting:** Safer Communities Executive Board

**Date:** 10 September 2009

**Report Title:** Overview and Scrutiny – Response to Home Office Guidance on Scrutiny of CDRPs/Work Programme Relating to Safer Communities

**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Manager

**Purpose**

To report on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's response to new Home Office guidance on scrutiny of CDRPs and the Committee's work programme relating to safer communities issues.

**Summary**

The report outlines the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's response to new Home Office guidance on scrutiny of CDRPs and the Committee's work programme relating to safer communities issues.

**Legal/Financial Implications**

Relevant legal issues are referred to within the body of the report. There are no direct financial implications.

**Recommendations**

That the report be noted and the Board comment on the issues raised, as appropriate.

**For more information contact:**

Name: Rob Mack  
Title: Principal Scrutiny Support Officer  
Tel: 020 8489 2921  
E-mail address: [rob.mack@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:rob.mack@haringey.gov.uk)

**Background***Scrutiny of CDRPs*

The Home Office recently issued guidance on the scrutiny of crime and disorder. Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the local implications of this at its meeting on 27 July. The legislation, regulations and guidance provide a framework for the development of a closer relationship between CDRPs and

scrutiny. Scrutiny of community safety is not new - overview and scrutiny committees have had the power to report on any matters which affect the authority's area since 2000. The use of this power by local authorities has been uneven though, particularly in relation to community safety. However, Haringey has already undertaken a large amount of scrutiny work on community safety issues. There was a standing Crime and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel for two years, between 2002 and 2004. In addition, there have been a number of well received in-depth reviews on specific community safety topics including youth re-offending, anti social behaviour and CCTV. As a result of this, Haringey is cited as an example of good practice within the guidance.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be the designated scrutiny body in Haringey that deals with scrutiny of crime and disorder matters. There will also be "task and finish" review panels which will undertake parts of the work with the main committee retaining ultimate responsibility.

The terms of reference of the designated committee are intended to be to scrutinise the work of the CDRP and the partners who comprise it *insofar as their activities relate to the partnership itself*. The role of the committee is to:

- Consider Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA) that arise through the Council's CCfA process.
- Consider actions undertaken by the "responsible authorities" on the CDRP
- Make reports or recommendations to the Cabinet or full Council where appropriate.

The guidance strongly encourages scrutiny committees to engage with police authorities on the basis that they have a clear, statutory role to hold the police to account. It recommends two options for involving police authorities in their work that are applicable to Haringey:

- *Option 1* - A member of the police authority can be issued with a standing invitation to attend the committee to act as an "expert adviser".
- *Option 2*: Committees can co-opt a police authority member onto them

The Committee concluded that the most effective way forward would be to adopt option one and issue a standing invitation to the MPA link member for the borough. When there are issues on committee agendas where it is felt that the MPA could or should make a contribution, input will be actively sought so that they are involved when it is most beneficial.

The Committee also agreed that it would seek to develop closer links to Haringey CPCG. It was considered that their involvement would assist the Committee due to their strong links with the Police Service, the MPA. In addition, they already have a clear role in holding the Police Service to account as well as a specific role in community engagement, with links into ward panels.

CDRPs are now obliged to respond to requests from scrutiny committees within a reasonable time. The guidance states that the information provided by them must be depersonalised, unless the identification of an individual is necessary or appropriate in order for the committee to properly exercise its powers. The information should also not include information that would be reasonably likely to prejudice legal proceedings or current or future operations.

The Committee agreed to continue with the current Haringey practice of a joint and collective response to scrutiny recommendations on community safety issues being considered by SCEB, via the Cabinet, and co-ordinated by the Council's community safety team.

The guidance suggests that OSCs may wish to develop protocols that lay down the expectations of scrutiny and CDRP partners. However, the CDRP will normally be an integral part of the local strategic partnership and it would seem logical to include it within the general protocols relating to the scrutiny of them and local improvement targets. It would also be inconsistent and potentially confusing to have different arrangements for CDRP issues. In the light of this, it is not considered that a separate protocol is required for CDRP matters.

### *Scrutiny Work Plan 2009/10 on Community Safety Issues*

The Committee has agreed the following pieces of work relating to community safety as part of its programme of work:

*Scrutiny review:* Support for victims of crime. The scope and terms of terms of reference of the review are still in the process of being finalised but the intention is to consider what can be done to improve partnership working between organisations supporting the victims of crime. It is currently proposed to look at the totality of support for victims from the initial reporting of a crime to the judicial process. It will aim to obtain an understanding, from the victims point of view, of how easy it is to access support, its effectiveness and where improvements could be made. The review will be chaired by Councillor Ron Aitken.

It has been noted that overall responsibility for increasing the satisfaction of victims and witnesses is the responsibility of local criminal justice boards (LCJBs) and engagement is being arranged with the Haringey board about the review and their role within it. Several of the key agencies represented on the LCJB are nevertheless also represented on SCEB and key local partners with a responsibility for commissioning and providing relevant services.

*Committee items:* The following items have been identified for future Committee meetings:

- Safer Communities Action Plan 2009/10 (14 September)
- Crime Figures ½ year update report (26 October)
- Resourcing Safer and Stronger Communities (update on progress with the implementation of previous scrutiny review) (4 January)
- Crime and Disorder Partnership – Annual Report (29 March)

In addition, Councillor Canver, the Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Safer Communities, will be attending the Committee on 23 November and 29 March to answer questions relating to her portfolio.