



Barry Keel
Chief Executive

Plymouth City Council
Civic Centre
Plymouth PL1 2AA

www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy

Date: 13-10-2011

Please ask for: Helen Wright, Democratic Support Officer
T: 01752 304022 E: helen.wright@plymouth.gov.uk

CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Date: Monday 24 October 2011

Time: 4 pm

Venue: Council House, Next to the Civic Centre

Members:

Councillor Thompson, Chair

Councillor Peter Smith, Vice Chair

Councillors Mrs Beer, Mrs Bowyer, Churchill, Davey, Delbridge, Martin Leaves, Penberthy, Reynolds, John Smith and Vincent.

Co-opted Representative:

Dr A Jellings

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

Members and officers are requested to sign the attendance list at the meeting.

Please note that unless the chair of the meeting agrees, mobile phones should be switched off and speech, video and photographic equipment should not be used in meetings.

Barry Keel
Chief Executive

CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

AGENDA

PART I – PUBLIC MEETING

1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Panel Members.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)

The Panel will be asked to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2011.

4. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

5. TRACKING RESOLUTIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD (Pages 9 - 10)

The panel will monitor the progress of the previous resolutions and receive any relevant feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

6. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICES FRAMEWORK (Pages 11 - 18)

The panel will consider the strategic framework for information and advice services framework.

7. SERIOUS ACQUISITIVE CRIME FIGURES (Pages 19 - 24)

The panel will receive a report on the serious acquisitive crime figures.

8. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 25 - 26)

The panel will review its work programme 2011/12.

9. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

PART II (PRIVATE MEETING)

AGENDA

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO NOTE

that under the law, the Panel is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

NIL.

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Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Monday 12 September 2011

PRESENT:

Councillor Peter Smith, Vice Chair in the Chair.
Councillors Mrs Aspinall (Substitute for Councillor John Smith), Mrs Beer, Mrs Bowyer, Churchill, Davey, Delbridge, Dreaan (Substitute for Councillor Thompson), Martin Leaves, Penberthy, Reynolds and Vincent.

Apologies for absence: Councillors John Smith and Thompson and Co-opted Representative Dr A Jellings.

Also in attendance: Pete Aley – Assistant Director for Safer Communities, Councillor Bowyer – Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People, Carole Burgoyne – Director for Community Services, James Coulton – Assistant Director for Culture, Sport and Leisure, Tony Hopwood – Programmes Director, Tim Howes – Assistant Director for Democracy and Governance, Councillor Jordan – Cabinet Member for Community Services (Safer and Stronger Communities and Leisure, Culture and Sport) and Mr F E Sharpe – Petition Organiser.

The meeting started at 4pm and finished at 5.40pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the code of conduct, the following declarations of interest were made –

Name	Subject	Reason	Interest
Councillor Mrs Beer	Minute 25 Reporting of Police Authority Meetings (Chief Constable's Report)	Employed by Devon and Cornwall Police	Personal
Councillor Delbridge	Minute 25 Reporting of Police Authority Meetings (Chief Constable's Report)	Son is employed by the Devon and Cornwall Police	Personal

21. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2011 are confirmed as a correct record, subject to the following –

- (1) 'taxi driver' is added to Councillors Martin Leaves' and John Smith's declarations of interest set out in minute 12;
- (2) 'concerns regarding the accessibility of the Plymouth Life Centre for those people relying on the extremely limited bus services during the evening period' is added to minute 16.

22. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

23. **PLYMOUTH LIFE CENTRE AND LEISURE RELATED PROJECTS PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The panel agreed to consider the travel arrangements report under part I of the agenda and not under exempt business, as shown in the agenda pack.

The Director for Community Services submitted an update report on the Plymouth Life Centre and leisure related projects programme. The update highlighted the following main areas –

- (a) Plymouth Life Centre –
 - work was progressing well, including the installation of the moveable floor booms in main pool hall, the fitting of the coloured glass on the external walls of the dive tower area and the installation of the columns at the main entrance; a large section of the new car park had been handed back and was currently being used by members of the public;
 - site visits would be controlled more effectively, following concerns raised by Balfour Beatty;
- (b) Leisure Management Update –
 - work was being undertaken with Everyone Active to develop their mobilisation proposals and meet with staff from the various organisations that would TUPE transfer to them; (Everyone Active had already taken over the facilities at Plympton pool and Brickfields);
 - the pricing structure was competitive and prices were fixed until 31 March 2013;

- extracts from the Everyone Active's draft travel plan were provided;
- (c) Brickfields –
- the transfer of Brickfields Sports Centre to Devonport Community Leisure Limited (DCLL) had been completed on 1 September 2011 (which had subsequently been sub leased to Everyone Active who had now taken over the building and was managing it on behalf of DCLL);
- (d) Events Field –
- the circus would be located on the Cottage Field between 24 August and 4 September 2011 (the site was accessible to the public and in particular to those with a disability);
 - a meeting with representatives from the circus would be held to discuss the entrance and egress from the site (avoiding the road between the Mayflower Centre and the Plymouth Life Centre;
- (e) Skateboard Park –
- work had commenced on site on 11 July 2011 and was programmed to be completed by 3 October 2011;
 - the planning authority had approved the drainage proposals (which formed part of the ground conditions) for the site.

Councillor Bowyer, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People and Councillor Jordan, Cabinet Member for Community Services (Safer and Stronger Communities and Leisure, Culture and Sport) advised that –

- (f) a site visit had been undertaken by some members of the panel and it was hoped that they now had a clear understanding of the facility;
- (g) the pricing structure for all the leisure facilities had been set at a competitive rate;
- (h) it was hoped that Everyone Active would put forward some innovative ideas to promote the use of Brickfields, as the facility was currently under used;
- (i) admission prices for both Brickfields and Plympton pool had been reduced and the number of child swimming lesson places had been increased (previously there had been a waiting list of 70 children).

The following responses were provided to questions raised by the panel –

- (j) the car park strategy was currently being developed by Everyone Active who would be responsible for managing the car park; the car park would be free of charge for the foreseeable future, except on Plymouth Argyle home matches (the charge would be redeemable at the Plymouth Life Centre);
- (k) the initial problems that had been encountered with Everyone Active's website would be followed up;
- (l) a suitable location for the taxi rank was currently being investigated;
- (m) the provision of direct bus services to the Plymouth Life Centre from across the city and the frequency of the services, particularly at weekends and evenings would be followed up with the transport department;
- (n) if a bus service had been identified which was commercially viable, proposals to run this service would be put forward by the bus operator;
- (o) there was currently a considerable level of interest from GP's (several visits had been undertaken with GPs in the city) who were now able to see the benefits of working together;
- (p) the issues raised by Councillor Penberthy which included the joining up of the cycle routes to allow people to cycle to the facility; the draft travel plan making no reference to Plymouth Argyle home matches; the unquantifiable car movement targets and the incentives on a reduction in the ticket price rather than a cup of coffee, would be followed up.

24. **APPEAL AGAINST COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO A PETITION**

A petition had been received by Mr F E Sharpe (the petition organiser) regarding 'please consult the residents of Plymstock and give them a vote on Plymstock swimming pool site'. The petition contained 200 signatures and as such fell short of the 2,500 required to enable the petition organiser to hold an 'officer to account' at a meeting of one of the Council's scrutiny panels.

In accordance with the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act, 2009 and the Council's own petition scheme, the petition organiser can ask the relevant scrutiny panel to review the Council's response, if they consider that the Council had not dealt with the petition properly.

In response to a question raised by Mr Sharpe at Full Council on 25 July 2011, it was agreed that the appeal would be considered by the Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Mr Sharpe presented his case, which included the following key points –

- (a) the response received from James Coulton, Assistant Director for Culture, Sport and Leisure had not made reference to consulting with the residents of Plymstock on the location of a swimming pool;
- (b) the petition was online which precluded those people without access to the internet from being able to sign it and requested that a public meeting was held in order to consult with the residents of Plymstock;
- (c) the proposal to provide a swimming pool in Plymstock had been discussed for a considerable number of years;
- (d) requested that the original Broadway site was reconsidered as this was a central location in Plymstock and was easily accessible;
- (e) the proposal for the provision of a swimming pool was part of the Sherford development but no date had been given as to when the facility would be provided.

The Assistant Director for Culture, Sport and Leisure presented the Council's case, which included the following key points –

- (f) the potential for Section 106 monies from the development of Sherford and other developments in the area would contribute towards the building of a swimming pool (approximately £1m); without this funding the Council would be unable to fund such a facility;
- (g) it would not be financially viable to operate two swimming pools in such close proximity to each other, one being in Plymstock and the other in Sherford;
- (h) the Council had published relevant strategies, clearly outlining its position on the this matter; extensive research had been undertaken to draft both the Plymouth Swimming Facilities Strategy and Plymouth Sport Facilities Strategy; the Swimming Facilities Strategy had identified the need to provide facilities in the north and east of the city, as well as the Plymouth Life Centre (the leisure development at Marjons had met this need in the north of the city); the provision of a pool in the east of the city was a priority;
- (i) consultation with external organisations had taken place and a strategic analysis of the data had been undertaken by Sport England; there had also been extensive consultation via the relevant area action plan.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by members of the panel to officers –

- (j) discussions would be held with the Plymstock and District Swimming Pool Association nearer to the delivery date for the pool, to ascertain if the Association would be willing to contribute towards the facility;
- (k) due to the current economic situation, a date could not be provided as to when works would commence on the swimming pool; although the facility would be delivered in the first phase of the Sherford development;
- (l) due to lack of funding, it was not an option, at this stage to seek a contribution from Sport England towards the pool;
- (m) the need had been identified for swimming facilities in the east of the city; the most feasible option of providing these facilities was to use the Section 106 funding from Sherford and other developments in the area.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by members of the panel to the petition organiser –

- (m) no date had been given for the provision of the swimming pool which formed part of the Sherford development;
- (n) a public meeting was needed to fully discuss the potential sites within Plymstock for the swimming pool; the original Broadway site which had previously been refused needed to be relooked at;
- (o) swimming facilities would improve the health of Plymstock residents.

The following key points arose from the panel's discussion on this issue –

- (p) whether the letter to Mr Sharpe should have evidenced that consultation had taken place;
- (q) whether a special localities/neighbourhood meeting should take place in order to consult with the residents of Plymstock on a site for the pool;

Having taken into account all the information provided, the panel agreed to recommend to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that the Council's response to the petition was satisfactory.

25. **REPORTING OF POLICE AUTHORITY MEETINGS (CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT)**

The panel considered the June 2011 Chief Constable's report to the Police Authority and noted that there had been an increase in the number of reported incidents of burglaries.

The panel agreed that a report on the crime figures, including the increase in burglaries is provided at its next meeting and that the information needed to be specific to neighbourhoods.

26. **ANNUAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORT 2010/11**

The panel noted the annual Overview and Scrutiny report 2010/11.

27. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The panel noted its tracking resolutions.

28. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Assistant Director for Safer Communities submitted a report on items for update on the work programme. The report outlined the following –

- (a) the process to be used for items that had been identified for updates only;
- (b) issues that had been raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, regarding the panel's work programme.

The panel agreed that –

- (1) the revenues and benefits service item is removed from the Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny panel's work programme and any issues concerning benefits make-up are considered within the universal credit and/or financial inclusion service on the programme;
- (2) updates on locality working and police and crime commissioner/panel follow the process and scope outlined in the report.

The panel agreed to recommend that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is asked to endorse a task and finish group on social media, to be undertaken by the Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

The panel agreed to look at the red, amber and green (RAG) score cards (from the joint finance and performance monitoring report) at its meeting in November.

29. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

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TRACKING RESOLUTIONS
Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date/Minute Number	Resolution	Explanation/Minute	Officer	Progress	Target Date
Min. 8 Draft Work Programme 2011/12	the panel <u>agreed</u> the membership of the Task and Finish Group for the anti social behaviour in Compton Vale –		Lead Officer (Sue Warren) DSO	The membership of the Task and Finish Group has been confirmed as – Councillor Thompson (Chair) Councillor Martin Leaves Councillor John Smith Councillor Penberthy	November 2011

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Date/min number	Resolution /recommendation	Explanation / Minute	Response	Explanation
Min 25 Appeal Against Council's Response to a Petition	the panel <u>agreed</u> to <u>recommend</u> to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that the Council's response to the petition was satisfactory.	<p>A petition (an appeal to Plymouth City Council – please consult the residents of Plymstock and give them a vote on a Plymstock swimming pool site) containing 200 signatories was received from Mr F E Sharpe. In accordance with the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act, 2009 and the Council's own Petition Scheme the petition fell short of the 2,500 signatories which would have enabled the petition organiser (Mr Sharpe) to hold an 'office to account' (a senior council officer would be required to attend a meeting of one of the council's scrutiny panels to answer questions and explain how they were delivering public services).</p> <p>There is provision within both the Act and the Council's own Petition Scheme for the petition organiser to ask the relevant scrutiny panel to review the council's response, if they consider the Council has not dealt with the petition properly. Mr Sharpe requested that the Customers and Communities OSP consider his appeal against the Council's response to the petition.</p>		<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board <u>agreed</u> the panel's recommendation that the Council's response to the petition was satisfactory, at its meeting on 21 September 2011.</p> <p>Completed</p>
Min 29 Work Programme	<p>the panel <u>agreed</u> to <u>recommend</u> to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board –</p> <p>1. the revenue and benefits service item is removed from the Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny panel's work programme and any issues concerning benefits make-up are considered within the universal credit and/or financial inclusion service items on the programme;</p> <p>2. the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is asked to endorse a task and finish group on social media, to be undertaken by the Customers and Communities OSP.</p>			<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board <u>agreed</u> that the revenue and benefits is removed from the Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel's work programme and any issues concerning benefits make-up are considered within the universal credit and/or financial inclusion service items on the programme;</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board requested that a PID is drafted on social media prior to endorsing a task and finish group.</p>

Grey = Completed (once completed resolutions have been noted by the panel they will be removed from this document)

Red = Urgent – item not considered at last meeting or requires an urgent response

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject:	Strategic Framework for Information and Advice Services Framework
Committee:	Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date:	24 October 2011
Cabinet Member:	The Leader and Cllr Monahan
CMT Member:	Director for Community Services
Author:	Jo Hambly – Financial and Social Inclusion Officer
Contact:	Tel: 01752 304321 Email: jo.hambly@plymouth.gov.uk
Ref:	
Key Decision:	Yes
Part:	I

Executive Summary:

Good quality information and advice services are a central element of support for our customers. This is particularly true at the current time because of the scale of change, in particular reform of welfare benefits and the delivery of adult social care services. Providing the right information and advice in the right way can make a huge difference to customers' experience of these changes and associated services. This ranges from dealing with simple routine enquiries, to intense services for those whose needs are more complex or require very technical support.

The council delivers a range of information and advice services, relating to financial inclusion and adult social care, many of which are commissioned separately and relate to different strategies. This has been reviewed with the view to taking a more holistic and joined up approach to provision.

To guide future provision and update the Financial Inclusion Strategy 2009-12, it is proposed that the council adopts an Information and Advice Services Strategic Framework. This will guide future commissioning and better align financial information and advice with adult social care advice-giving services.

Corporate Plan 2011-2014:

The proposals support our priorities as follows:-

- Reducing inequality: by providing meaningful advice and support to help people make the most of their income, reduce poverty (including child poverty), avoid debt problems and prevent an escalation of healthcare crises.
 - Providing value for communities: by better aligning services to maximise efficiency and ensure the right level of resources go to customers according to need.
 - Raising aspiration: by providing advice on an individual, needs-led basis, and encouraging customers to aspire to manage their finances and care themselves where possible.
 - Growth: by integrating services with the volunteering/work agenda and engaging people in the DWP work-programme and pre Work Programme based on their needs, abilities and aspirations.
-

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:
Including finance, human, IT and land**

The proposals are consistent with the medium term financial plan which includes provision for commissioning advice and information services.

The joining up of services in the proposed way provides opportunities to avoid overlap and increase efficiencies.

Other Implications: e.g. Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion:

Ensuring people are getting all the income and support they are entitled to is beneficial in terms of community safety eg preventing rises in acquisitive crime.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:

It is recommended that cabinet

- Adopts the Strategic Framework for Information and Advice Services (2012-15) contained in this report

Reason: a more holistic and joined up approach to provision, better alignment of financial information and advice with adult social care advice-giving services, and ensures there is a clear, efficient, framework to guide future commissioning.

Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:

Continue to commission disparate information and advice services that do not maximise opportunities to join up provision, improve services for customers, based on need, and deliver in the most efficient way.

Background papers:

- 'Strategic Framework for Information and Advice Services 2012-15' proposal
- Financial Inclusion Strategy (2009-12)
- Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2011
- Feedback from meetings/consultation/events
- Equality Impact Assessment

Sign off:

Fin	SRA /CO SF SCI 112 003- 22/9 /201 1	Leg	TH 31	HR		Corp Prop		IT		Strat Proc	JK/S PU/ CP/2 57/0 911
Originating SMT Member: Pete Aley & Pam Marsden											

1. Introduction

1.1 This report considers how the council provides advice and information services relating to financial inclusion and adult social care, and makes proposals for improvements.

2. Background

2.1 Good quality information and advice services are a central element of support for our customers. This is particularly true at the current time because of the scale of change, in particular reform of welfare benefits and the delivery of adult social care services. Providing the right information and advice in the right way can make a huge difference to customers' experience of these changes and associated services. This ranges from dealing with simple routine enquiries, to intense services for those whose needs are more complex or require very technical support.

2.2 The council delivers a range of information and advice services, relating to financial inclusion and adult social care, many of which are commissioned separately and relate to different strategies including the Financial Inclusion Strategy 2009-12, Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2011 and other agendas such as worklessness, homelessness and child poverty.

2.3 The provision of these services has been reviewed against current need and in consultation with stakeholders. This review suggests that there are benefits for our customers if we take a more holistic and joined up approach to future provision.

3. Framework

3.1 To guide future provision, build on and update the Financial Inclusion Strategy 2009-12, it is proposed that the council adopts a Strategic Framework for Information and Advice Services. This will guide future commissioning and better align financial information and advice with adult social care advice-giving services. The proposed Framework, which provides more information, is attached.

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STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICES (2012-15)



1. Introduction

1.1 We have a history of commissioning financial inclusion and adult social care-related information and advice and services in Plymouth, driven by the [Income Maximisation Strategy \(2006-9\)](#), the [Financial Inclusion Strategy \(2009-12\)](#) (FIS) and the Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2011.

This Strategic Framework builds on this work and replaces the FIS from April 2012. It outlines our priorities for the delivery of financial inclusion and adult social care-related information and advice services for the city.

2. Our vision/purpose

2.1 To deliver accessible, consistent and quality information and advice for everyone, enabling them to manage their money, increase their wellbeing, capability, and improve their resilience to future changes

3. Context

3.1 Information and advice services are an essential part of local authority business and contributes to:

- our city vision of the finest, most vibrant waterfront city where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone
- our corporate priorities of reducing inequality, raising aspiration, providing value for communities and promoting growth.

3.2 Rapid changes in the welfare state and the impact of the economic climate on income and health means that many more people will be needing one touch information and advice so they can 'help themselves' and become resilient to social and economic change. Against the background of welfare reform, Plymouth's agendas for dealing with child poverty, housing, financial inclusion and worklessness clearly identify universal advice and information as central to making sustainable changes in the lives of those who are most in need of support and guidance. For example the changes in Welfare Benefits that will impact on anyone claiming housing benefit, families with children, older people, young people, and workless people.

3.3 The introduction of Universal Credit means the migration of everyone on Working Tax Credit, Income Support, Housing Benefit/LHA, Child Tax Credit, income based Job Seekers Allowance and income based Employment Support Allowance. These changes are likely to affect more than 51,000 local people and this may increase the number of general enquiries that can be dealt with at the first contact.

This initial response needs to be supported with the option of more intense support for those whose needs are more complex or technical. “There should be help and support at every stage to narrow the gaps and provide second chances”¹.

3.4 An ageing population and increasing numbers of people with disabilities means that the demand for social care information and advice is also likely to increase. National and local policy discusses the importance of advice and information as a key part of local authorities’ universal offer to its citizens. This work also provides an opportunity to investigate the alignment of information and advice commissioning priorities across Adult Social Care, Plymouth City Council and NHS Plymouth.

3.5 The Strategic Framework offers us the opportunity to align disparate information and advice contracts, to align them with the information ‘duty’ as delivered by Children and Young People’s services (Family Information Service) and to make best use of national providers where appropriate. It would also offer a reference point for Plymouth City Council commissioners, providing recommendations about the commissioning and delivery of any information and advice services in the city.

4. Strategic Framework for Information and Advice Services

4.1 Plymouth City Council (Social Inclusion Unit) will:

- a) Review current service provision in light of recent policy and legislation changes
- b) Explore opportunities for better co-ordination of future advice and information services across Plymouth City Council (PCC) departments and NHS Plymouth
- c) PCC will re-model information and advice provision to ensure services meet desired outcomes, as stated below.

5. Outcomes

- Provide timely information and advice to anybody who needs it.
- Identify each individual’s information and advice needs.
- Enable people who ‘can’ to help themselves to national and local services/tools that offer light-touch support to change their situation.
- Provide a central information resource that is easily accessible to all customers and local professionals that offers high quality information and basic levels of advice (Plymouth Online Directory).
- Provide some in-depth support for those who are assessed as ‘in need’ to support them to make positive changes; increasing their capability, confidence and independence.
- Provide reactive services that respond to national changes e.g. welfare benefit changes and changes to care, to prevent people from reaching a crisis.
- Link information and advice services to local innovative projects that will support customers to be socially mobile and contribute to the wider community via, e.g. volunteering and paid work.
- Ensure that resources are targeted to meet the specific needs around demographic and geographical need.

¹ Social Mobility Strategy: opening doors, breaking barriers (2011)

5. Considerations

5.1 We will work collaboratively (internally and across key partners including Health) to shape the future of information and advice, and to ensure the provision of holistic service that is easily accessible to everyone and available both centrally and via outreach into our deprived neighbourhoods. We will remodel provision across all client groups to ensure information and advice is universally accessible, consistent and comprehensive.

5.2 The services commissioned are dependent on need and may be adjusted as needs change.

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Plymouth City Council

Subject: Serious Acquisitive Crime Figures
Committee: Customers and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date: 24 October 2011
Cabinet Member: Councillor Jordan
CMT Member: Director for Community Services
Author: Sarah Hopkins, Community Safety Partnership Manager
Contact: Tel: 305542
Email: sarah.hopkins@plymouth.gov.uk
Ref: SH/C&COSP/Oct 11
Key Decision: No
Part: 1

Executive Summary:

At its last meeting held on 12 September 2011, the Customer and Communities Scrutiny Panel requested a report on crime figures for this meeting, having noted that burglary was up. The panel also requested neighbourhood specific information.

Home Office figures released in January 2011 showed Devon and Cornwall as the third safest force area in England and Wales, showing 53 crimes per 1000 population, compared to 76 nationally.

Whilst crimes of 'assault with injury' and 'criminal damage' (which are city indicators and targets) are reducing and are virtually on target, recently serious acquisitive crime has shown an increase – which is the focus of this report.

This report lists the activities and interventions that are in place to specifically address serious acquisitive crime, in particular dwelling burglary and theft from motor vehicles.

Corporate Plan 2011 – 2014:

City Priority – Reduce Inequalities.

Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Including finance, human, IT and land

None.

Other Implications: e.g. Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion:

Key community safety issues are discussed.

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

This report is for information.

Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:

N/A

Background papers:

None.

Sign off:

Fin		Leg		HR		Corp Prop		IT		Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member: Peter Aley											

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 At its last meeting held on 12 September 2011, the Customer and Communities Scrutiny Panel requested a report on crime figures for this meeting, having noted that burglary was up. The panel also requested neighbourhood specific information.

1.2 Home Office figures released in January 2011¹ showed Devon and Cornwall as the third safest force area in England and Wales, showing 53 crimes per 1000 population, compared to 76 nationally. Similarly, over a 12 month period up to the end of August 2011 Plymouth continues to hold a steady position of being ranked fourth best (of 15) in its family group of similar cities (iQuanta) for 'All Crime'.

1.3 Between 1 April and week ending 18 September 2011 levels of overall crime in Plymouth have increased by 2.4% (+234 crimes) compared to the same period the year before, which is largely attributed to the increases in levels of 'serious acquisitive crime', especially levels of burglary dwelling and theft from motor vehicle. At the end of August there has been an increase within priority neighbourhoods of 71 recorded crimes, and a citywide increase of 114 crimes. Currently five priority neighbourhoods have recorded an increase in overall crime; these are Mutley/ Greenbank, Whitleigh, East End, Devonport and Morice Town.

1.4 It should be noted that levels of crime are very fluid and sometimes subject to seasonal increases/decreases, and a number of crimes can often be down to one or two known, targeted, prolific offenders. Therefore, this report should be viewed as a 'snapshot' at the time of writing it. A verbal update will be provided at the Customer and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel of any updates or significant changes.

1.5 Of the indicators the city has set for tackling crime (see 2.1), three out of the four are reducing and are virtually on target, so the focus of this report will be on serious acquisitive crime which is currently not on target. Work is under way to address this, and those activities are covered in this report.

1.6 By way of an example of a target that is reducing/virtually on target - 'assault with injury' - at the end of week ending 18th September levels of violence with injury have reduced by 2.4% (-30). Levels of violence that fall beneath the threshold of violence with injury (e.g. common assault) have also reduced meaning total violence has fallen significantly. (9.9% and 296 fewer crimes at end of w/ending 18th Sept). In general across the city levels of violence with injury remain static or have reduced when compared to 2010/11, however Mutley and Greenbank neighbourhood is a concern, as the only neighbourhood to have recorded significant increase in crime levels.

1.7 A further example of a target that is reducing - 'reduce the rate in criminal damage' - at the end of week ending 18 September levels of criminal damage have reduced by 1.2% (-23).

2.0 TARGETS

2.1 As a reminder, the indicators and targets that have been set specifically to tackle crime are:

Level 2 indicator and target:

Closing the gap in overall crime rate between priority neighbourhoods² and the City average. The target is to reduce the gap by 4% which equates to a reduction of approximately 300 crimes across the priority areas in year one.

¹ <http://neighbourhoodpolicing.devon-cornwall.police.uk/BCU-1663/Sector-1772/NB-1773/Pages/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=18>

² Stonehouse, City Centre, Honicknowle, Devonport, Whitleigh, Morice Town, East End, Mutley & Greenbank, Barne Barton, North Prospect.

Level 3 Indicators and targets :

Reduce the rate in Serious Acquisitive Crime. Target to reduce the rate per 1000 population by 2% from the 2010/11 baseline.

Reduce the rate in Assault with Injury. Target to reduce the rate per 1000 population by 2% from the 2010/11 baseline.

Reduce the rate in Criminal Damage. Target to reduce the rate per 1000 population by 4% from the 2010/11 baseline.

3.0 WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT SERIOUS ACQUISITIVE CRIME

3.1 Between 1 April and week ending 18 September 2011 levels of serious acquisitive³ crime have risen by 16% (188 more offences) than for the same period the year before. Over a 12 month period up to the end of August 2011 Plymouth was ranked first (best of 15) in its family group of similar cities for 'Serious Acquisitive Crime'. However, over a three month period up to end of August 2011 we have slipped to third. In the main, the increases are attributed to two main crime types which are dwelling burglary and theft from motor vehicle. Numbers of burglary in dwelling have risen by 19% (+85) and theft from a vehicle by 19.7% (+90). The Police have commissioned a Problem Profile into all serious acquisitive crime which when complete will help fill some gaps in our understanding of this recent increase, and in particular the types of offender.

3.2 Over a 12 month period up to the end of August 2011 Plymouth was ranked first best (of 15) in its family group of similar cities for levels of dwelling burglary. However, over a 3 month period up to end of August we were ranked 4th. With regards dwelling burglary, the biggest increases are in Mutley/Greenbank (+38), Stonehouse (+15) and the East End (+13) areas, which are all neighbourhoods that fall within South and Central local policing area. Currently the intelligence regarding the offenders is somewhat limited, and therefore the rise cannot at this stage be necessarily attributed to known prolific offenders or those offenders currently supported through the Integrated Offender Management programme.

3.2 The type of burglary currently being committed matches previous historical trends with volume offences, particularly in Mutley/Greenbank, which are mainly break-ins into insecure premises, and are likely to be committed by opportunist thieves. This recent rise in domestic burglary in the Mutley/Greenbank area has occurred whilst students have been on their summer break.

3.3 We know that burglary tends to be committed by offenders to fuel drug habits. Plymouth City Council invests through the Community Safety Partnership a considerable sum into a drug treatment contract with Public Health to particularly target known offenders with drug habits and ensure they are fast-tracked into drug treatment. At the time of writing this report, there is no waiting list for drug treatment.

3.4 With regards the crime of theft from motor vehicle, over a 12 month period up to the end of August 2011 Plymouth was ranked fourth best (of 15) in its family group of similar cities. Over a three month period up to the end of August we have remained steady, ranked fourth. We know that the increase is spread wider across the city, with the biggest increases being recorded in northern areas of the city, although Stonehouse, City Centre and Mutley/ Greenbank (in South/Central) neighbourhoods remain the areas recording highest actual crime numbers.

3.5 Some theft from motor vehicle has included theft of metal objects (eg from vans) being stolen, but the Problem Profile will help us understand this better. These are opportunist 'smash and grab' offences and the most targeted individual item stolen continues to be Sat Navs. It appears offenders are a mixture of prolific offenders, but also those with lower level offending history.

³ Domestic Burglary, Theft of/unauthorised taking of Motor Vehicle, Theft From Motor Vehicle, Personal Robbery, Business Robbery, Aggravated Domestic Burglary, Aggravated Theft of Motor Vehicle.

3.6 As at end of August 2011, we are second best in our most similar family group For Theft of motor vehicle and also for robbery. Levels of theft of vehicle remain steady; so far this year recorded a slight fall in the number of offences. Levels of robbery have increased slightly but this equates to very small numbers, but we continue to monitor these closely and take necessary action when appropriate.

4.0 WHAT WE ARE DOING

4.1 A great deal of work is already under way, or is about to commence, to address the increases in serious acquisitive crime, including the following:

- Community Focus Week – w/c 26 September in Mutley/Greenbank – which has led to arrests of offenders for vehicle crime and burglary, some of whom were known targets. Together, Students, Fire Service, Trading Standards and Police visited a mix of 2,200 student/non-student homes, raising awareness of, and providing preventative advice on home security and community safety.
- We have set up Serious Acquisitive Crime Task & Finish Group, chaired by Plymouth City Council.
- The Safe and Strong Theme Group have agreed to look at the wider issues of the Mutley/Greenbank area.
- The Police and Community Safety Team have delivered a targeted safety and crime awareness raising campaign at the University's and Marjons 'Welcome Week' for students.
- Police are running an operation to deal with metal theft with British Transport Police.
- The Police are preparing a Problem Profile on the hotspot areas for domestic burglary which will help further identify and target offenders and determine times for additional patrols and interventions.
- The Police and Integrated Offender Management Scheme will be looking to link offending trends with current prolific offenders and targeting them and their offending activity.
- We are doing further work with University and Marjons volunteers and Student Presidents who are working with the Police to target hotspot areas, in particular where there are houses in multiple occupation, to raise awareness of home security.
- We have set up a "Student Watch Campaign" which will enable students to identify and report crime within the student population and increase intelligence.
- The Police are continuing with a programme of Operation Vocal (overt engagement campaign) with an emphasis in the south central policing area, which is a proactive and direct engagement within the community to raise awareness of community safety issues and provides advice on crime prevention – particularly burglary and vehicle crime.
- Plymouth University is supporting the Police and partners with interventions to engage students in the local community by funding three 'nights of action' over the remainder of the academic year, involving engagement with students on a range of crime issues and offering preventative advice.
- The University and Marjons have set up a 'Student Steering Group' which looks at addressing both the perceived impact of students in the City but also focuses on aspects of their safety and the positive contributions they make to the city.
- The police are also running a number of 'covert' operations and activities.

Recommendation:

- That Customer and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel note this report.

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Work programme	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A
Review into role of Community Infrastructure and Community Anchor <i>(referred to the Panel from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board 27 July 2011)</i>											
Review of Communications Methods around Neighbourhood Working <i>(referred to the Panel from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board 27 July 2011)</i>											
Task and Finish Group											
Councillor Call for Action – Anti Social Behaviour in Compton Vale											
Social Media											
Other											
Bi Annual Scrutiny Reports						21				12	
Appeal Against Council's Response to Petition				12							
Joint Finance and Performance Monitoring (subject to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board referring issues to the Panel)						21					
City and Council Priorities											
Reduce Inequalities											
Value for Communities											

* This/These items appear on the Work Programme for the first time.