
REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 3 DECEMBER 2014**PORTFOLIO: COMMUNITY****REPORT FROM HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES****SUBJECT: COMMUNITY SAFETY HUB****1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That a Rochford District Community Safety Hub is implemented at Rayleigh Police Station for a trial period of 6 months, involving the relocation of the Council's Antisocial Behaviour Officer and Domestic Abuse Officer.
- 1.2 That authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for the Community to review the outcomes of the pilot and to approve the long-term arrangements.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is intended that the Council's Community Safety Team, comprising of two officers, is relocated to the Police Station in Rayleigh and that the team also build closer working relationships with other partners such as local Housing Associations, other agencies and local groups. A review of these working arrangements will be undertaken within 6 months.
- 2.2 Hubs are working effectively and delivering on Community Safety Partnership (CSP) priorities at a variety of locations throughout the UK. They commonly involve partners such as the Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Housing Associations and Community Groups. The co-location of services is enabling a more collaborative approach towards achieving the outcomes of the CSP. This is leading to identifying issues earlier and before they escalate to more serious crimes and improving the response to such issues.
- 2.3 It is considered that, ultimately, the Hub approach should lead to more effective use of resources. For example, identifying the partners that are engaging with a particular individual or family and the actions taken is far simpler and quicker. This joint approach is enabling to new techniques to be developed for addressing the issues posed.
- 2.2 A Hub would assist with the up skilling of Police and Council Officers. It would encourage colleagues to think laterally, and develop more innovative ways of working though utilising a broader set of skills, knowledge and experience. Staff would be better placed to draw on each agencies skills and resources. The staff affected by these changes have been consulted and are in agreement with the proposed arrangements.

3 SALIENT INFORMATION

- 3.1 The creation of a Hub would not detract from the importance of networking with all partners and maintaining regular contact. It should be that the

Council's Officers within the Hub would maintain their own identity and continue to be directly managed by a Senior Council Officer.

- 3.2 Similarly, while a Hub would enable closer working with the Police, Rochford District Council (RDC) staff based within the Hub would need to ensure they do not lose contact with other RDC colleagues, such as those in Licencing, Street Scene and Housing. Currently, a good working relationship exists between Community Safety Officers and other RDC staff and this would need to be maintained and developed further.
- 3.3 The working pattern of the Antisocial Behaviour Officer would be amended to enable closer working with the Police on shift at evenings and weekends. The scope of the Domestic Violence Officer will be broadened to include aspects of Antisocial Behaviour work. The scope of both roles would be further varied to include the wider work of the Community Safety Partnership.
- 3.4 RDC staff within the Hub would be vetted by the Police to enable data sharing and access to Police buildings.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 To continue with the current arrangements resulting in limited opportunities to further develop the service.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 While Hubs are a step forward in closer partnership working, the current models are not a whole system approach as some key agencies are not fully engaged.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council and Essex Police as partners on the Community Safety Partnership have shared priorities in regard to crime and disorder.
- 6.2 Other considerations include how the Essex Police Evolve programme (restructuring) will affect the Hub and Essex Police will become a smaller force as part of the Evolve strategy. There is also a proposal for the Police and Crime Commissioner to move solely to a commissioning model with no core funding being provided. With similar pressure on Council budgets, it would seem sensible to trial a Hub and record and evaluate its work, in order that an informed decision about future partnership working can be made.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Access to IT and the Council's data sharing software from the Hub would need to be arranged. In addition, access to various police systems and data should also be considered for the Hub to be as effective as possible. On the basis of assurances already provided by the Police, these arrangements have been assumed to be cost neutral.

7.2 Changes to staffing arrangements arising from the implementation of these proposals can be contained within existing budgets.

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.

SMT Lead Officer Signature: 

Head of Environmental Services

Background Papers:-

None.

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