
BEST VALUE - COMMUNITY SAFETY

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The aim of this report is to introduce the local Best Value review of Community Safety by providing an assessment of the current service provided by the District Council, and seeking Members' views on that current assessment.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Government has made it clear that crime reduction is not simply a matter for the police and as such Partnership working lies at the heart of the Crime and Disorder Act. The Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 formalised arrangements for partnership working between Rochford District Council, Essex Police and other agencies to develop and enhance local crime reduction.
- 2.2 A revised Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy for the period 2002 - 2005 has recently been agreed and a countywide Best Value Review focusing on Drugs and Alcohol has recently been completed. It is thus opportune to conduct a best value review locally as to how our approach to Crime and Disorder Reduction issues is being delivered.
- 2.3 The basic principle of the review is that the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act go beyond just the reduction of crime and disorder into a broader approach towards creating safer communities. This has been summed up by the Home Office:

"The term community safety is seen as having both situational and social aspects, as being concerned with people, communities and organisations, including families, victims and risk groups as well as attempting to reduce particular types of crime and the fear of crime. Community safety should be seen as the legitimate concern of all in the local community".

3 FINDINGS OF THE OFFICER REVIEW TEAM SO FAR

- 3.1 Rochford's Best Value Review of Community Safety therefore focuses on making a difference to the community in terms of outcomes. As a result, it is essential that the framework for the review takes into account the customers' perspective. Given the County-wide review has focused on Drugs and Alcohol, it is suggested that the Council's review should major on the other four main areas of Community Safety:
- ◆ Domestic Violence
 - ◆ Anti-social behaviour
 - ◆ Fear of crime
 - ◆ Actual crime
- 3.2 From these four elements the likely anticipated issues for customers have been considered by officers and the current ability of the service to adequately address each issue has been assessed by officers and given a rating out of 10.
- 3.3 The appendix to this report show the results of this exercise.
- 3.4 Areas rated 7 or below are considered to be the weaker aspects of the service and the intention is to review these in some detail to determine what improvements can be made.
- 3.5 Those rated 8 and above are classed as the stronger elements of the service and, as such are thought to have less potential for significant improvement. Consideration will only be given to these areas where it is thought that cost/quality improvements to the service can be made with minimal cost/effort to the authority.
- 3.6 Before proceeding further, and by reference to the appendix, Committee are asked for their views as to whether:
- ◆ the officer team has focussed on the most relevant issues
 - ◆ there are any queries in relation to the issues raised
 - ◆ there are any other areas which Members would like the officer team to consider
- 3.7 Subject to Members comments, the officer team will then begin a period of comparison, consultation and analysis. Options for improvement will then be presented to Members for consideration.

4 RECOMENDATION

- 4.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider this report on the Community safety Best Value Review and the issues identified, and comment accordingly. (CEX)

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SERVICE UNDER REVIEW

ELEMENT OF THE SERVICE BEING ASSESSED

Domestic violence

Anticipated issues for the customer	Assessment 1=negative, 10=positive		Evidence to support assessment
	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Roch'd</i>	
Raising awareness	8	8	Inf. Packs, talks, posters, leaflets, D.V Panel, RDC unit, Theatre Active in schools, staff training (to spot the signs)
Support for victims	7	7	999 mobile phones, direct line, home visits, strong agency links, staff counselling skills.
Action to prevent first time violence	7	8	Close ties with Relate, Police etc. Proactive education with youth
Dealing with offenders – to stop	8		(No RDC involvement) Close ties with Relate, Police etc.
Action to prevent reoccurrence	6	8	RDC re-housing policy for victim.

SERVICE UNDER REVIEW

ELEMENT OF THE SERVICE BEING ASSESSED

Anti-social behaviour

Anticipated issues for the customer	Assessment 1=negative, 10=positive		Evidence to support assessment
	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Roch'd</i>	
Effects on the environment:			
Graffiti, vandalism inc. flyposting		7	Low rate of expenditure for correction. (RDC property only)
Litter		8	Awaiting evidence (also question of new by-laws) 78% of comments made at the Planning for Real expressed concerns.
dog fouling		6	Awaiting evidence (also question of new by-laws) 78% of comments made at the Planning for Real expressed concerns.
Abandoned vehicles	5	7	Little evidence of occurrences. (being looked into)
Safety issues:			
Speeding and 'bad' parking.	4		(Minimal RDC involvement) Leaflets, networking, articles in RDM
Youth nuisance	5	7	Teen shelters, network with Youth Service bus, visits, corrective measures such as anti-climb fences, cctv, playspaces, holiday activities etc.
Hate crime	8		(Minimal RDC involvement) Immediate response, leaflets, racial harassment meetings.

SERVICE UNDER REVIEW

ELEMENT OF THE SERVICE BEING ASSESSED Fear of Crime

Anticipated issues for the customer	Assessment 1=negative, 10=positive		Evidence to support assessment
	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Roch'd</i>	
Neighbourhood watch activity		2	Responses on PCCG public consultation
Information on actual crime in locality		1	Not published
Perception by older people of youngsters, particularly in groups		4	
Vulnerability to bogus callers		4	
Media coverage		2	
Information on ways of reducing risk of crime		5	
Actual crime to minority groups		8	Evidence awaited
Lack of police presence in the community		3	Regular issue at public meetings

SERVICE UNDER REVIEW

ELEMENT OF THE SERVICE BEING ASSESSED

Actual Crime

Anticipated issues for the customer	Assessment 1=negative, 10=positive		Evidence to support assessment
	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Roch'd</i>	
Not responding to issues seen on the street	3	4	Poor stats from police do not promote timely initiatives
Support for victims	7	7	Support and funding for Victim Support. Visits to victims of crime/ anti-social behaviour
Information on how to reduce the risk of crime	8	8	Leaflets, articles, links with Neighbourhood Watch
Support to reduce the risk of crime	8	6	Request for repeat initiatives (Crucial Crew, Teenex), talks, door chains/viewers
Bogus callers	8	7	Talks, roadshows
Detection rates	3	No. inv.	Police activity