

MAYOR AND CABINET		
Report Title	Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) Taskforce	
Key Decision	Yes	Item No.8
Ward	All	
Contributors	Executive Director for Community Services	
Class	Open	Date: 15 July 2009

Reason for Urgency

This matter has not been included in the Council's Forward Plan. However, the decision must be taken by such a date that it is impracticable to defer it until after it has been included in the next Forward Plan due to be published on 12 July and until the start of the period to which the next Forward Plan relates. The reason for this is that we have been asked at very short notice by the Police to take part in a pilot programme due to start in July, providing additional dedicated resource for Borough safer Neighbourhood teams. Agreement to take part in this pilot is required urgently .

In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 15 Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000, written notice has been given to the Chair of the Business Panel in writing and made publicly available by posting at the Town Hall for 5 clear days.

1. Purpose of Report

To seek one off funding for a pilot initiative for a dedicated taskforce within Borough Safer Neighbourhood Teams, to support across the Borough. This taskforce will provide a flexible team to tackle Anti Social Behaviour and specific ward priorities which current dedicated resources are unable to address. At the end of the period a review will assess whether a more flexible approach with this dedicated resource will provide better capacity to tackle intermediate anti social behaviour concerns.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Mayor agree the one off funding of the proposed Taskforce for a period of 6 months commencing from July 2009.

3. Policy Context:

3.1 Public Service Agreements set out the Government's objectives for public service delivery and explain how success in delivering those objectives will be measured.

3.2 There is a single PSA for improving community safety: PSA 23 '*Make Communities Safer*'. It reflects the Government's vision that

- continuing to build on the significant reductions in crime achieved over recent years, fewer people are victims of crime, especially the most serious crime – violent, drug and alcohol-related crime – and the public are protected from the most harmful offenders; and
- local agencies are accountable and responsive to the needs and priorities of the local community, leading to increased public confidence in those agencies.

3.3 There are also a number of other PSAs that contribute to delivering community safety, and together these support delivery of the Safer Lewisham Strategy:

PSA 23, Priority Action 1: Reduce the most serious violence, including tackling serious sexual offences and domestic violence;

PSA 23, Priority Action 2: Continue to make progress on serious acquisitive crime through a focus on the issues of greatest priority in each locality and the most harmful offenders – particularly drug-misusing offenders;

PSA 23, Priority Action 3: Tackle the crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour issues of greatest importance in each locality, increasing public confidence in the local agencies involved in dealing with these issues;

PSA 26: Reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from international terrorism.

3.4 Sustainable Community objectives have been identified by the Local Strategic Partnership as measures for success.

- Ambitious and achieving
- Clean, green and liveable
- Empowered and responsible
- Healthy, active and enjoyable
- Safer
- Dynamic and prosperous.

3.5 The Local Area Agreement includes 10 specific targets that relate to crime reduction, with a number of others towards which this strategy will contribute to.

NI 15 - Serious violent crime rate

NI 16 - Serious Acquisitive crime

NI 19 - Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders
NI 21 - Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police
NI 32 - Repeat Incidents of domestic violence
NI 40 - Drug users in effective treatment <input type="checkbox"/>
NI 44 - Ethnic composition of offenders on Youth Justice System disposals <input type="checkbox"/>
NI 117 - 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET) <input type="checkbox"/>
NI 111 - First time entrants to Youth Justice System aged 10-17 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
NI 115 - Substance misuse by young people <input type="checkbox"/>
NI 47 – People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents

There are a number of other targets that will be measured in respect of key crime aspects.

3.6 The Safer Lewisham Strategy 2008 – 2011 agreed the following outcomes:

- Reducing crime in Lewisham;
- Reducing the level of Anti Social Behaviour in Lewisham;
- Improve interventions for those in the criminal justice system;
- Improve safety for residents of Lewisham;
- Increase reassurance about the criminal justice system through improved victim support, and community engagement.

In addition to the objectives, some principles / values including risk and needs led; restorative; inclusively; evidence based and personalised programming will follow throughout the delivery mechanisms.

4. Background and context

4.1 The Safer Neighbourhood programme began its phased roll out in April 2004. Safer Neighbourhoods teams are assigned, in most cases, according to the boundaries of each of London's 624 electoral ward.

4.2 Safer Neighbourhoods teams, in common with the London Model, usually consist of one sergeant, two constables and three police community support officers (PCSOs). where the population of a ward exceeds 14,000 an additional PC is deployed to the team. in Lewisham there are currently 3 wards that have an "additional enhanced " team which consists of a further 2 PCs. this is not within the London model nor central Met guidance requirements.

4.3 They are trained to communicate with a wide range of people, communities and partners, to tackle and solve community problems. Experience suggests these are most likely to be quality-of-life issues, such as anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, abandoned cars and graffiti. They provide a visible and sustained presence within

communities which research has shown increase community confidence that police and local authorities understand and are tackling problems which are important to them.

- 4.4 Safer Neighbourhoods teams are dedicated to the needs of each specific neighbourhood, with the policing priorities for that area decided in partnership with local stakeholders - the public, crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs), local authorities and other local organisations. They are not designed as a 'response' resource and cannot be assigned to these type of calls unless they relate to community based issues. This ensures that the majority of their time is dedicated to community based and problem solving areas which have been decided and agreed upon at Ward Panel level in conjunction with the SNT Police Sergeant.
- 4.5 The teams are permanent, not a 'quick fix' brought in to respond to local changes in crime and disorder. What's important and different about this neighbourhood policing model is the officers work at grass roots level in addition to London's other policing teams and specialist units. They are 'red-ringed' within policing resources and cannot be removed to perform duties elsewhere, either within the borough or to other areas of London.
- 4.6 What the current Safer Neighbourhood Structure does not allow for is a Proactive response to longer term issues such as Street drinking and Anti Social Behaviour by groups of people, which often have cross-ward implications.
- 4.7 The proposed "Taskforce" will be attached to the Town Centre Patrols, supporting the work of Transport for London, British Transport Police, Operation Tyrol (police on buses) and other policing partners. This Taskforce will help to introduce operational self sufficiency and self reliance into SNT working and ability to support SNT generated proactive policing initiatives, whilst also Employing a pan Borough, cross Ward approach to crime and disorder.
- 4.8 The work of the taskforce will be considered over the 6 months and a review and assessment made in relation to its impact on existing priorities and anti social behaviour hotspots. Any future redeployment of resources will be subject to consultation whilst retaining the overall neighbourhood police levels within the borough.
- 4.9 This resource will effect execution of "fast time" information / intelligence researched and developed by the Borough Intelligence Unit or Integrated Borough Operations, undertake intelligence-led proactive patrolling and Contribute to Borough intelligence-led policing.
- 4.10 The deployment will be intelligence led and linked to identified Problem Solving Plans which have been actioned and monitored through the Joint Action Group. This is the partnership arm of the existing National

Intelligence Model of tasking of police resources, and ensures that all aspects of the community safety partnership are involved in reducing crime and disorder. Employing this existing process for the tasking and deployment of the Taskforce ensures that all wards have their specific needs addressed in a fair and equitable way and the police taskings are specific to needs, which are regularly reassessed. It also enables effective review and the harnessing of best practice.

- 4.11 Taskforce will have the ability to attach additional resources to support enforcement of SNT and policing partner initiatives and projects. This enables best use to be made of the extended police family and will include Special Constable the LBL Wardens, Volunteer Cadet Corps as appropriate and constables currently undergoing training on the borough. It will provide reassurance and visibility in allocated hotspot areas, whilst working closely with other units in response to Ward priorities.
- 4.12 The Taskforce will consist of 3 PCs and 1 Sgt who will be dedicated to the team. They will be managed through the Safer Neighbourhood Teams current structures. Although their deployment will be managed via the Joint Action Group, which is a partnership board which monitors crime on the Borough on a fortnightly basis, and is able to identify the issues where this resource would be most needed.
- 4.13 This proposed model has been tested over several weekends in 2007 and 2008. Entitled "Operation Oshun" the deployment of an intelligence led "taskforce" on these occasions resulted in no anti social behaviour or robbery calls to police during the times of deployment, and within the sphere of operational deployment. Tactically a taskforce deployment deters criminal activity and the commission of anti social behaviour. It also equips supervisors with a fully warranted police resource that can be deployed in sufficient strength to locally deliver enforcement and presence. During this pilot for 6 months, there will be discussions and consultation with a number of pertinent stakeholders in relation to future staffing of such a team, whilst also considering the policing constraints by Central Met regarding budget and delivery of service across the areas of 24/7 patrol and neighbourhood policing.
- 4.14 A similar model worked in Lewisham periodically within the last 12 months involves cross-Ward initiatives whereby enhanced SNT teams have been placed within intelligence led 'hotspots'. During the recent Operation Kogi this resulted in a dramatic and marked reduction of Anti social behaviour and robbery related incidents.
- 4.15 These results have helped to set key outcomes for this team. The following show examples of what this might include:
 - Reduction in ASB in the areas the Taskforce are deployed to
 - Reduction in street crime in the areas the Taskforce are deployed
 - An increase in public confidence

- 4.16 This initiative will test out a more flexible deployment model. The ability to deploy PCs via this taskforce should enable greater flexibility than is currently available to tackling issues identified above. Overall staffing levels will be increased for the duration of the pilot. Consideration will be given to the redeployment of some existing resources which will be subject to consultation after the pilot period.

5. Financial Implications

This report seeks approval for funding for 3 PCs to be attached to the Safer Neighbourhood Team for 6 months. This will be funded through a one-off allocation of £85,000 from the Communities Fund.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 Under Section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by Section 97 & Section 98 Police Reform Act 2002 and Section 1, Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005, 'Responsible Authorities' have a statutory duty to work with other local agencies and organisations to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment as well as the misuse of drugs in their area.
- 6.2 'Responsible Authorities' as set out in s 5(1) Crime and Disorder Act 1998 include the police and local authorities.
- 6.3 The Anti Social Behaviour 2003 requires the Council as a local housing authority to have policies and procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places the Council under a duty to have, when carrying out its functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between persons of different racial groups.
- 6.4 The Local Government Act 1999 places a duty on the local authorities to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised having regard to the combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 6.5 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 empowers the local authority to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of all or any persons within the local authority's area.
- 6.6 These statutory duties amongst others feed into the Council's Safer Lewisham Strategy.
- 6.7 Lewisham Council is a Public Authority for the purposes of the Human Rights Act 1998. (HRA) Section 6 of the HRA makes it unlawful for Public Authorities to act in a way which is incompatible with a

Convention right.

- 6.8 Article 6(1) of the Convention provides that everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial hearing established by law.
- 6.9 Article 8(1) of the Convention provides that everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life.
- 6.10 Both Articles 6 and 8 are “qualified rights”, in that there shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of these rights except such as in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the Country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

7. Crime and disorder implications

- 7.1 This strategy links directly to the delivery of S17 of the Crime and Disorder Act. Section 17 of the Act recognises that there are key stakeholder groups who have responsibility for the provision of a wide and varied range of services to and within the community. In carrying out these functions, section 17 places a duty on partners to do all they can to reasonably prevent crime and disorder in their area.
- 7.2 The purpose of section 17 is simple: the level of crime and its impact is influenced by the decisions and activities taken in the day-to-day of local bodies and organisations. The responsible authorities are required to provide a range of services in their community from policing, fire protection, planning, consumer and environmental protection, transport and highways. They each have a key statutory role in providing these services and, in carrying out their core activities, can significantly contribute to reducing crime and improving the quality of life in their area. Section 17 is aimed at giving the vital work of crime and disorder reduction a focus across the wide range of local services and putting it at the heart of local decision-making.

8. Equalities implications

- 8.1 A key priority for the Partnership, identified through the strategic assessment is that of dealing with the disproportionate number of BME people in the criminal justice system.
- 8.2 The strategy has implications in relation to equalities in relation to this issue and how the partnership will strategically tackle this issue.

9. Environmental implications

The strategic assessment has identified a number of areas by ward in

relation to trends. This will help to target appropriate services into the areas based on intelligence and need.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 The provision of a taskforce will enhance the current service to residents and will have a dedicated team to tackle issues of Anti Social Behaviour over the summer period
- 10.2 It is planned that during this trial period that a consultation will take place with appropriate stakeholders in order to plan for a longer term provision of this nature for Lewisham.

Background Papers

There are none

For further information please contact Geeta Subramanian, Head of Crime Reduction and Supporting People on 8314 6304