

EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY
2 JUNE 2009

EXECUTIVE
16 JUNE 2009

CRIME AND DISORDER (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY) REGULATIONS 2009

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To advise members of the new Regulations under the Police and Justice Act 2006 establishing an overview and scrutiny of the work of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). Exeter's CDRP is called the Exeter Community Safety Partnership.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Exeter Community Safety Partnership was established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

2.2 The current membership comprises:

- Exeter City Council
- Devon and Cornwall Constabulary
- Devon County Council
- Devon and Cornwall Police Authority
- Devon Primary Care Trust
- Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service
- Devon and Cornwall Probation Area of the National Probation Service
- Exeter Business Forum
- Youth Offending Service
- Exeter Council for Voluntary Services
- HM Prison Exeter
- Exeter Drug and Alcohol District Implementation Group
- Devon Partnership NHS Trust
- Magistrate

2.3 Exeter City Council, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, Devon County Council, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Devon Primary Care Trust and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service are the Responsible Authorities under the Crime and Disorder Act, as amended. Probation are due to be added to the Responsible Authorities list.

2.4 The Responsible Authorities have a duty to prepare strategies to tackle crime, disorder, drugs misuse and "enviro-crime", and now "reducing re-offending" is to be added as a specific responsibility.

3. POLICY INTENTION AND SCOPE

3.1 The Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 come into force on 30th April 2009. One of the main points of relevance for this council is the

requirement to establish scrutiny arrangements via a Crime and Disorder Committee to oversee the work of CDRPs. The intention is to have 3 main roles for the scrutiny committee:

- Policy development
- Performance monitoring / challenging delivery
- Councillor calls for action on crime and disorder

3.2 There are 4 main areas in the regulations identifying the role of the scrutiny committee:

- Co-option
- Information
- Attendance
- Response

Co-option

The committee may co-opt additional members where it considers this appropriate for the exercise of its functions. This would allow for some “protection” of agencies being scrutinised – as above, the committee “should not be used as a vehicle to hold single agencies to account for individual agency activities and decisions”.

Information

Information must be provided to the committee, on request, unless such information would identify individuals or prejudice operational matters.

Attendance

The committee can require the attendance of any officer from any responsible authority or co-operating body.

Response

The committee may make recommendations, which should be responded to within 1 month, or as soon as possible thereafter. The committee shall “review such responses and monitor the action (if any) taken by the relevant responsible authority”.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1 It is clear that the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee does not have to be a new committee. Officers perceive that this responsibility sits comfortably within the remit of Community Scrutiny.
- 4.2 It is proposed that there be one occasion per year when the Scrutiny Committee focuses solely on the CDRP, perhaps to receive the annual report of the Partnership. This would constitute a special meeting in addition to the Committee’s normal cycle.
- 4.3 Thereafter, the committee may wish to have a timed slot on the agenda for crime and disorder business – on at least one other occasion during the year. Any Co-opted members would attend for that part of the meeting. One possibility would be that there is a ‘theme’ focus to the meeting, for example, Alcohol Abuse, Domestic Violence, Anti- Social Behaviour, where the Committee may wish to seek detail from the Partnership on plans and action being taken to address the issue being considered.

4.4 The Regulations suggest that the committee should meet “no less than twice in every twelve month period”, but it could be more frequent if required. Should the Committee consider it necessary, a special meeting could of course be convened.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising out of the report.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- i) The Committee is requested to agree its enhanced role to encompass scrutiny of the Exeter Community Safety Partnership.
- ii) The Committee is further requested to comment on the proposals that appear at section four of this report.
- iii) To request Executive to recommend to Council an addition to the terms of reference of the Scrutiny Committee - Community, enabling that Committee to discharge the functions of a Crime and Disorder Committee to oversee and scrutinise the work of the Exeter Community Safety Partnership.

BINDU ARJOON
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DIRECTORATE

Background papers

Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009

S:DSS/PA/LP/Cttee609SCC15
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