

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXTERNAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH 2010
REPORT OF HEAD OF CHANGE AND SCRUTINY

Report prepared by Louise Smith

1. SAFER MAIDSTONE PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 To consider the work of the Safer Maidstone Partnership (SMP) in reducing anti-social behaviour in the Borough.

1.1.2 To consider the ways in which SMP targets are set.

1.1.3 To consider the ways in which the SMP communicates with Councillors.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Change and Scrutiny

1.2.1 That the External Overview and Scrutiny Committee interviews the representatives of the Safer Maidstone Partnership to:

- a) identify the role of each partner in tackling anti-social behaviour and how these roles compliment each other;
- b) establish how targets are set; and
- c) identify the methods of communication with councillors

and make recommendations for improvement if this is considered necessary.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 placed a responsibility on all local authorities to scrutinise the work of their local crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) at least once a year. Maidstone's CDRP is the Safer Maidstone Partnership (SMP).

1.3.2 Maidstone Borough Council carried out its first SMP scrutiny meeting on 7 September 2009; the minutes of this meeting are attached at Appendix A for information.

1.3.3 Home Office guidance on the scrutiny of CDRPs states:

"The introduction of crime and disorder scrutiny committees enhances existing partnership arrangements by developing a clear structure for overseeing and reviewing the delivery of joint responses on community safety and by creating a clearer link between partner agencies and the public on community safety.¹"

Following the initial SMP scrutiny meeting, discussions were held with representatives from each political group on the Committee and the Crime and Disorder co-optee to identify topics for consideration at the next SMP scrutiny meeting. It was felt that focussing discussion on specific topics would enable the Committee to more effectively review the delivery of joint responses on community safety.

1.3.4 It was agreed that the meeting would focus on anti-social behaviour, with two minor additional topics of target setting and communication with Councillors.

1.3.5 Anti-Social Behaviour

1.3.6 Key questions that Members wished to consider included:

- How does the partnership both prevent and tackle ASB?
- What resources are put into tackling ASB?
- How is ASB dealt with in both urban and rural areas?
- How is the local community engaged in tackling ASB?
- How are perpetrators of ASB worked with to discourage future offences?

1.3.7 Information on reported anti-social behaviour in the SMP area is attached at Appendix B, along with information on other CDRP areas in Kent for comparison at Appendix C.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Committee could decide not to consider anti-social behavior however it was agreed that committee meetings would focus on topics to ensure it remained effective and this topic was agreed at a pre-meeting of representatives of the committee.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 This discussion would meet the corporate objective for Maidstone to be a place that has strong, healthy and safe communities.

¹ Home Office *Guidance for the Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Matters – England; Implementing Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006*(May 2009)

1.6 Other Implications

1.6.1

1. Financial
2. Staffing
3. Legal
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development
6. Community Safety
7. Human Rights Act
8. Procurement
9. Asset Management

1.7 Relevant Documents

1.7.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Minutes of External Overview and Scrutiny Meeting, 7 September 2009

Appendix B – Information on anti-social behavior by ward

Appendix C – Information on other CDRP areas in Kent

1.7.2 Background Documents

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

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This is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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