



NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

SCRUTINY PANEL 1– SERIOUS ACQUISITIVE CRIME, VIOLENT CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

26th November 2012

Neighbourhood Wardens response to Scrutiny Panel 1 core questions

Serious acquisitive crime

1. The neighbourhood wardens undertake the following activities which contribute to addressing issues of serious acquisitive crime. Uniformed patrols within their designated areas, acting as a point of contact for the public, relaying any intelligence gathered to the Police.
2. The neighbourhood wardens undertake the following activities that assist in the prevention of serious acquisitive crime. Uniformed patrols within their designated areas, providing reassurance and basic crime prevention advice to residents, acting as a point of contact to refer enquiries to appropriate partner organisations including the Police, participating in various joint operations with partner organisations e.g pre-Christmas operations in town centre with police (Op Trojan etc), practical crime prevention work such as use of anti-climb paint, arranging for overgrown shrubbery to be cut back, joint work in schools including Junior Warden Scheme, have had some involvement in alley clearance and gating schemes. The warden's local knowledge and the fact that they provide a visible recognisable presence has a significant reassuring effect. In the town centre the Wardens work together with the Town Centre Rangers who have a strong focus on retail crime prevention.
3. The main issues and barriers to successfully addressing SAC are reductions in funding and its impact on the resources available in all partner organisations.
4. The majority of work mentioned in point 2 above involve working with partner organisations.

5. Northampton Borough Council can assist in tackling SAC by allowing the neighbourhood wardens to continue to work as at present to address the issues as outlined in item 2 above. They can also continue the programme of installation of security measures in communal areas of NBC owned residential accommodations e.g. CCTV in lifts in flats and ensure that suitable lighting is provided to areas of local authority owned land such as housing areas and parks.
6. It is considered that the Police Crime Commissioner can assist in dealing with the issues of SAC by facilitating the coordination of work undertaken by various partners. The aim should be that resources are targeted effectively to allow for prevention work to be undertaken. It is also recommended that systems for briefing partner organisations are improved to ensure a clear two way flow of information. It is also recommended that the systems for dealing with calls to the 101 number are improved – wardens received a significant amount of feedback about the length of time it takes for calls to this number to be answered.

Violent crime

1. It is considered that the high visibility patrols mentioned in the response above will have some deterrent effect on violent crime. Some of the intelligence gathered and passed on by wardens will relate to violent crime.
2. Some of the activities mentioned in 2 above will also have an impact on the prevention of violent crime, in particular, the frequent presence of a familiar, uniformed officer in an area can act as an effective deterrent to all types of crime. It is hoped that the long term impact of education schemes such as the Junior Warden scheme will also be effective in reducing all types of crime. In the town centre in particular the wardens deal with street drinkers and rough sleepers and it is anticipated that some of the actions taken have an impact on preventing violent crime.
3. Lack of funding is the main barrier to successfully addressing violent crime.
4. See response to no 2 above.
5. See response to no 5 above.