

Runnymede Borough Council

CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE

16 February 2017 at 7.30.p.m.

Members of the

Committee present : Councillors P B Tuley (Vice-Chairman in the Chair), I A Chaudhri, Mrs E Gill, Miss D Khalique, D J Knight, M J Maddox, A P Tollett and J J Wilson.

Member of the Committee absent: Councillor H A Butterfield (Chairman).

Councillors R J Edis and Mrs D V Clarke also attended.

521 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the Fire Precautions.

522 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 December 2016 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

523 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor H A Butterfield (Chairman).

524 PREVENT (COUNTER-TERRORISM) STRATEGY AND TRAINING SCHEDULE

The Committee noted a new borough Prevent Strategy 2016-18 which included a training strategy and Action Plan. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 stated that local authorities must, in the exercise of their functions, have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. A new borough Prevent Strategy had been developed therefore to set out the Council’s duty to prevent individuals being drawn into terrorism. The Prevent duties would be incorporated into Council policies and functions to ensure the Council was meeting its statutory responsibilities and the training schedule within the Prevent Strategy would ensure that all staff would obtain the knowledge and skill to be aware of potential extremist activity and how to refer these concerns to the relevant agencies. The Prevent Strategy had been considered at the Council’s Officer Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) meeting on 28 November 2016 and at the Council’s Community Services (CS) Committee on 5 January 2017. Both CLT and CS Committee had approved the Prevent Strategy. The comments of UNISON on the Strategy were noted.

Early intervention to divert children and adults away from being drawn into committing terrorist related activities was at the heart of the Prevent Strategy. Prevent was about recognising, supporting and protecting people who might be susceptible to radicalisation and or drawn into committing terrorist-related acts before illegality and crime occurred. If an individual was referred, a risk assessment was conducted at a multi-agency “Channel Panel” which was arranged by Runnymede Borough Council and chaired by an Officer representing Surrey County Council Community Safety.

The Prevent Strategy outlined the key elements of staff training, governance, risk assessment, the Channel Panel process and preventing the use of Council property for extremist activity. The Action Plan in the Strategy highlighted a number of the Council's functions that would be affected by the Prevent Strategy and these had been integrated into existing policies including a safeguarding policy, human resources, tendering processes, Grant Aid criteria and the procurement and use of Council halls and ICT facilities (both internal and external). There were no additional costs associated with the Prevent Strategy as Applied Resilience staff were certified by the Home Office to deliver Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) training and the Community Safety Officer would also be able to provide WRAP training. Training would be provided for Councillors as well as Officers. It was intended to train 70% of staff in 2017. No significant resource implications were envisaged for the future arising from the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

An Equality Screening Assessment had been completed for the current Prevent Strategy. An Equality Impact Assessment had been completed for the Home Office on the original 2007 Prevent Strategy. This original strategy had been perceived in that previous EIA to have had disproportionate impact on religion/belief and to some extent on race, specifically Muslims of South Asian/Middle Eastern/African descent. However, the current Prevent Strategy included a wider range of threats, had been expanded to include all forms of terrorism and had more robust monitoring arrangements in place all of which would mitigate the negative impact on Muslim communities or any other individual or group. Runnymede's Prevent Strategy did not discriminate against any of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It was acknowledged that discrimination against race and/or religion/belief had the potential to occur. However, this would be mitigated through training delivered to all staff ensuring this was managed proportionally. The Prevent training would also provide a positive opportunity to increase equality awareness within the Runnymede Borough.

A Member expressed the view that the training for the Strategy should emphasise that terrorism had no place within any religion.

525 VIOLENT CRIME INCIDENTS – POLICING UPDATE

The Committee noted an update which had been requested by the Committee at its last meeting from the Surrey Police Borough Inspector on action taken in respect of the three recent violent crime incidents in the Borough. The first was a knife incident in a barber's shop in Chertsey, the second incident related to disorder at the Red Lion Public House in Thorpe and the third incident concerned an attempted murder at a Salvation Army charity shop in Addlestone. It was noted that none of these incidents were linked. They had all received a prompt response to ensure public safety and in all three cases arrests had been made at the scene. These were serious and complex crimes which were being led by CID which involved detailed examination of forensic evidence and extensive enquiries to locate witnesses and secure evidence.

526 LATEST CRIME STATISTICS AND UPDATE ON POLICING IN RUNNYMEDE

Inspector Pinkerton, the Surrey Police Borough Inspector, who was present at the meeting, informed the Committee of the latest crime statistics for Runnymede and provided an update on policing in Runnymede.

Inspector Pinkerton reported that in January 2017, the National Crime Statistics for England and Wales had been released and showed that Surrey was one of the safest counties in the country. There had been an increase in the National Crime

statistics in Surrey for violent crime (up 21%) public order offences (up 65%), and victims and survivors of sexual offences (up 5%). This followed the national trend with the increases largely driven by changes in the recording processes and the inclusion of additional harassment offences. The types of crimes committed were changing which was evidenced by decreases in non-dwelling burglaries (down 15%), drugs offences (down 28%), theft (down 3%) and shop lifting (down 4%).

Surrey Police had improved their performance regarding the speed of answering 101 phone calls. In November 2016, 75% of 101 calls had been answered in 30 seconds (95% of them in 4 minutes and 20 seconds) and in December 2016 75% of 101 calls had been answered in 4 seconds (95% of them in 3 and a half minutes). On 9 February 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary had published their findings on Surrey Police's progress in providing a better service to protect vulnerable children. The report, which was based on an inspection conducted in August 2016, recognised an improvement in Surrey Police understanding and identifying potential risk to children at an early stage to ensure they were protected. Surrey Police had operated a knife amnesty from 16 to 30 January 2017. Knife owners had been encouraged to 'save a life, surrender your knife' anonymously as part of a national initiative to tackle knife crime. In order to enable knife owners to give up their weapons safely and without fear of prosecution, knife bins had been located at police stations. The British Ironwork Centre planned to use the knives handed in to create a guardian angel sculpture in memory of those who had lost their lives to knife crime.

A nationwide campaign to highlight tougher penalties for motorists using handheld mobile phones when driving had been supported by Surrey Police officers from 23 to 29 January 2017. It was the first part of an initiative using the headline "It Can Wait" to encourage drivers to not use their phone while driving. Across the UK there had been 492 mobile phone related incidents on the road in which 21 people had lost their lives. A change in the law, which would be effective from 1 March 2017, would introduce tougher penalties for drivers – the Fixed Penalty fine for using a phone while driving would double from £100 to £200 and the driver penalty points would increase from three points to six points.

The Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr David Munro, had visited Runnymede on 9 December 2016. He had spoken of the problem of retention of police officers, his drive to tackle rural crime (a new rural crime delivery plan and a Rural Crime Coordinator had been introduced), and the need for extra funding for Surrey Police to achieve the objectives of his Police and Crime Plan. His proposal for a 1.99% Council Tax increase for policing had been approved by Surrey's Police and Crime Panel on 6 February 2017. The policing element of the Council Tax for the financial year 2017/18 had now been set at £224.57 for a Band D property which amounted to an extra £4.38 on last year's figure, or 8p a week. A public consultation had been carried out between November 2016 and January 2017 in which over 2,100 people had answered a survey on their views on the proposed rise in precept for policing. Of those who responded, 65% had supported the increase. The cost of Surrey Police was 50p per Council Tax payer per day.

There had been four assaults on police officers in Runnymede since December 2016. In the first incident a man had spat at an officer, in the second a man who had hung himself been revived by a police officer and then assaulted that officer, in the third a police officer had intervened in an altercation and had been assaulted and in the fourth a man had attempted to flee a domestic incident, had been stopped by police officers, became aggressive and had punched a police officer to the left side of the head.

The Committee noted two comparisons of crime across the three northern Surrey boroughs (i.e. Runnymede, Elmbridge, and Spelthorne) over the period April to December 2015 compared to the period April 2016 to December 2016 which was provided by the Surrey Police Borough Inspector and which had been requested by the Committee at its last meeting. One comparison presented recorded crimes by crime types (burglary, criminal damage, drugs, violence with injury and total notifiable offences) (a score of over 100 represented an increase in crime, a score of under 100 represented a decrease in crime and a score of 100 indicated no change). The other comparison showed the share of crime type by percentage across those boroughs. Inspector Pinkerton provided an update on the figures presented in the agenda report. Runnymede's share of crime across those three northern boroughs was roughly stable representing 29% of total crimes across those three areas.

Total notifiable offences in Runnymede from April to December 2016 were slightly above those of April to December 2015 showing an increase of 4% in all three northern Surrey boroughs. Violence without injury had increased by 3%. Domestic violence figures were 15% lower. There had been an increased level of domestic burglary in Runnymede especially in December 2016 and January 2017. Burglary levels had increased from the end of November 2016 where there were 27 fewer incidents compared to the same period last year (down 17%), but by the end of December this had deteriorated to 4 fewer incidents (only down by 2.3%). Over a 30 day period to 21 December 2016, there had been fifteen dwelling burglaries in the New Haw and Woodham area with fourteen occurring in the period 21 November to 9 December. In February 2017 in Runnymede to date there had been 24 domestic burglaries, an increase of 14 over the same period last year. Woking, Elmbridge, Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead and Kingston had all reported higher than expected domestic burglary levels in January 2017.

In response to this sudden increase of dwelling burglaries in Runnymede, Surrey Police had instigated a plan to deter and apprehend burglars. Surrey Police were in the process of putting together a forensic marking campaign across Runnymede, Elmbridge and Spelthorne. Packs would be purchased to be provided to residents in identified and contained hotspots to cocoon an area with forensics marking as a deterrent to burglary to include street signs. Most of the Runnymede burglaries had been committed by repeat offenders who had not operated in a particularly sophisticated way. While burglaries could occur at any time, most of them took place in the late afternoon or early evening or after people went to work in the mornings. While this information was available on the internet via Facebook, the Committee considered that the police should consider ways of making the public that did not use the internet aware of this information and aware of how they could put in place measures to deter burglars.

As a result of action taken by the police to arrest offenders, a 27 year old man from Addlestone had been arrested on suspicion of burglary at the end of January and was currently on remand in prison awaiting trial. A 33 year old man from Chertsey had been taken back to court on 30 January for non-compliance with his prison release order and had been sent back to prison – this individual was a prolific dwelling burglar. A 26 year old man from Egham had been arrested on 3 February 2017 charged with several dwelling burglaries in the local area and wider Surrey areas – he had been remanded in prison awaiting trial. A 23 year old man from Ashford had been arrested on 3 February 2017 and charged with several dwelling burglary offences and conspiracy to burgle – he had been released by the courts under strict monitored bail conditions pending a trial in March.

It was agreed that the Committee would receive an update from the Borough Inspector at the next meeting on action taken in respect of the recent increase in burglaries in Runnymede.

Reported levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Runnymede (most of which was reported as being perpetrated by youths) to the end of January 2017 were currently 29% lower than last year. Runnymede had the lowest levels of ASB of the three northern Surrey Boroughs. The police were using Criminal Behaviour Orders to deal with a wide range of ASB following a person's conviction for a criminal offence. Closure notices could be issued by local Councils or the police to protect victims and communities by quickly closing premises that were associated with nuisance or disorder. At court a magistrate could convert a closure notice to a closure order which would see the property closed for a maximum of six months. The closure order could specify which person or persons were allowed to have access to premises while other persons were excluded.

Following feedback at the Neighbourhood Watch annual meeting and at the Crime and Disorder Committee, the police had now supplemented the on line Facebook panel meetings with regular "Meet the Beat" clinics, where the public could meet the police in person. The Committee suggested that Brook Hall, Ottershaw and Chertsey library would be suitable venues for future clinics and a Thorpe Ward Member would inform Inspector Pinkerton of a suitable location for a clinic in Thorpe.

Inspector Pinkerton responded to various questions from Members. Surrey County Council had discussed with Surrey Police the County Council's proposal to reduce costs by turning off street lights in some residential areas in Surrey from midnight to 5.00a.m on each day. In response, Surrey Police had asked Surrey County Council not to implement this policy for certain roads and to keep certain roads lit. Inspector Pinkerton had been informed by other police areas that turning off the lights in this way in those places had not resulted in an increase in burglaries in those locations. However, there was a need to provide the public with reassurance if their road was one of those in which the lights would be turned off for this temporary period. It was noted that the police had been contacted by a resident in connection with young people playing loud music at an open space but this location was not one of the police's main areas of concern in terms of any evidence of drug abuse. The police did not have any evidence at present of any illegal immigration activity at another location referred to by a Member. However, if any Members had any further information on either of these matters they were invited to contact the police. If any members of the public wished to make reports of crime anonymously it was noted that they should ring Crimestoppers. The police would investigate details of suspected drug crime in another location as advised by a Member.

In response to other Member questions, Inspector Pinkerton outlined the various types of on line crime including deception fraud (where the public were deceived into giving money to what they thought were good causes) and the sabotage of IT systems in schools and reported that nitrous oxide canisters had been seized by the police in some park locations as people could use them to asphyxiate themselves. He also reported that the Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency and not the police were the lead agency regarding motorists not insuring their motor vehicles.

The Committee thanked Inspector Pinkerton for the information that he had provided.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.22 p.m.)