

Runnymede Borough CouncilCRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE7 October 2021 at 7.30. p.m.

Members of the Committee present: Councillors J Furey (Chairman), A Alderson, M Adams, D Coen, R King, S Walsh and S Williams.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors S Dennett (Vice-Chairman), S Mackay.

Councillor I Mullens also attended.

245 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the Fire Precautions.

246 NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Group mentioned below had notified the Chief Executive of their wish that the change listed below be made to the membership of the Committee. The change was for a fixed period ending on the day after the meeting and thereafter the Councillor removed would be reappointed.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Remove From Membership</u>	<u>Appoint Instead</u>
Conservative	Councillor A Balkan	Councillor M Adams

The Chief Executive had given effect to this request in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

247 MINUTES

The Minutes of the combined meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee/ Crime and Disorder Committee on 8 July 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

In connection with various issues discussed at the combined meeting on 8 July 2021, it was agreed that an email would be sent to all Members providing information on redeployable cameras and on the Joint Action Group.

The information on redeployable cameras would cover how they were funded, how critical they were to police work, what financial contribution to them (if any) the police made and whether there was a case for the police paying for this service/increasing their financial contribution.

The information on the Joint Action Group (JAG) would provide detail on the terms of reference/constitution of the JAG, the difference between criminal behaviour and anti-social behaviour, enforcement action against various types of criminal and anti-social behaviours, the circumstances (if any) under which non Members of the JAG could attend the JAG for an item and the circumstances (if any) under which an item referred by Runnymede Members might not be included on a JAG agenda.

248 RUNNYMEDE POLICING UPDATE

The Committee received an update on policing in the borough provided by Inspector Wyatt, the Borough Commander.

It was noted that the five policing priorities for Runnymede were tackling anti-social behaviour, tackling violence against women and girls, disrupting County Lines, preventing burglaries and road safety. Rural crime was no longer one of the priorities although a rural crime officer was still employed by the police. It was noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Surrey, Lisa Townsend, was currently developing her Police and Crime Plan and was consulting with stakeholders and residents on their priorities. The Surrey public were invited to complete a survey on the priorities that they wished to see given prominence. This survey could be found on the Surrey PCC website. It was anticipated that the PCC priorities would align largely with the Runnymede priorities. While the PCC had no input to operational priorities, they were responsive to the policing priorities of residents.

There had been a 14.8% reduction in residential burglaries in Runnymede. The reduction which had resulted from the pandemic had continued and the police were aiming to stop the figures for residential burglary rising again. There had also been a 4.2% reduction in vehicle crime. However, the numbers of non-domestic related violence crimes were up by 18.9% (which was not entirely unexpected with the opening of more licensed premises as Covid restrictions eased) and non-residential burglaries had increased by 27%. It was noted that the police response to incidents would be proportionate based on the seriousness of the offence. For cases of residential burglary, a police officer and a specialist crime officer would attend the scene of the crime to gather evidence.

11.5% of crimes in Runnymede resulted in a solved outcome. It was noted that a solved outcome occurred when someone had been held accountable for a crime. Various types of action would be taken against the person that had been held accountable depending upon the seriousness of the offence. These types of action included a charge, a caution, a community resolution, or remedial action designed to prevent future offending, for example in cases of alcohol related offences.

The figure for solved outcomes for the whole Surrey police area was 11.3%, so Runnymede was performing slightly better on this performance measure than Surrey as a whole. The Committee agreed that it would wish to see the percentage of solved outcomes of crime in Runnymede increase from the current figure of 11.5%. It was noted that the results for solved outcomes varied according to the crime type. There were a number of reasons for crimes not being solved and the main reasons were no suspect being identified after investigation (41.2%), no victim support for further investigation (17.9%) and named suspect but evidential difficulties (13.4%). It was agreed that Inspector Wyatt would provide statistics on solved outcomes by crime type for the last three years and on residential burglaries for the last three years for circulation to Members. The Committee also suggested that for future updates on policing in the borough it would be useful to have some comparisons with other neighbouring Surrey districts.

Seven County Lines, (i.e. drugs networks using mobile phones originating in London where children and vulnerable people in adjoining counties were criminally exploited and increased weapons-related crimes resulted), had been disrupted in Runnymede since January 2021. Five warrants had been issued resulting in drugs and weapons seizures. There was currently only one County Line in Runnymede which was a very low figure. This County Line was in the south of the borough which tended to have more County Line activity than the north of the borough. Currently there were also not many County Lines operating in the Elmbridge and Spelthorne districts. Police in Runnymede worked with the Metropolitan Police to track the County Line back to its source in the Greater London area. Modern slavery and child exploitation were crimes against which the police were taking action which were also forms of crime which were linked closely to County Lines.

At the Committee's last meeting, a Member had asked whether it was possible to break down domestic violence figures into gender groups. It was noted that 71% of the victims of domestic abuse/violence were female and 29% were male. The age range which had the largest number of cases for both genders was 18-24 years. Intimate partner cases accounted for 69.1% of cases and non intimate partner cases formed 30.9% of the total. Domestic abuse cases were down by 8.9% and domestic violence cases had decreased by 12.4 %.

Although it was encouraging that there were fewer reported cases, the police were aware that domestic abuse and domestic violence were hidden crimes which were not always reported. 14 Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) had been issued in 2021 to give victims protection. These had begun as Domestic Violence Protection Notices and it had been necessary to convert them into DVPOs. A DVPO kept the perpetrator out of a home address and therefore prevented repeat offending. Refuge centres had been set up and civilian specialists had been employed to liaise with victims.

A new dedicated Domestic Abuse Team had been formed to provide greater specialism for domestic abuse and domestic violence cases. Previously the police had investigated cases further on the basis of level of risk. Now the Domestic Abuse Team would be investigating all the cases of domestic abuse.

A Member asked about the role of civilian specialists in connection with domestic abuse/violence. It was noted that these civilian specialists acted as advocates for victims of domestic abuse/violence and they were not involved in the evidential chain leading to a court case. They were an intermediary between the victim and the investigating officers who were pursuing the case. All of the detectives/ investigating officers would be able to engage with any of the domestic abuse/violence victims in order to prepare evidence.

The Committee noted numbers of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases in the various policing areas in Runnymede. A more detailed breakdown was provided for the Thorpe and Egham Hythe area which had been discussed at the Committee's last meeting. There had been 209 ASB reports in this area consisting of Egham Hythe (147), Thorpe (21), Thorpe Park (12), M25/M3 (12) and Sainsburys (17). The police sergeants for this area had looked in depth at possible reasons for increased youth ASB. By working in partnership with Runnymede Parks, the numbers of ASB reports had reduced. From April to June 2021 out of 100 ASB reports, 42 had been for rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour. From July to September 2021 there had been 89 ASB reports, 27 of which had been rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour. This was an encouraging drop in cases and this information fed into the JAG's continuing consideration of measures to combat ASB in Egham Hythe and Thorpe.

One of the five policing priorities for Runnymede was tackling violence against women and girls. This priority would centre on making women/girls feel safe as crime data for Runnymede did not show an increase in incidents for this crime. Public concern about this crime had increased as a result of high profile incidents which had been reported nationally. One of the measures which would be considered was increased lighting in certain locations. The Committee also noted that the police had completed a Violence Against Women and Girls survey across Surrey. It was suggested that Runnymede Members could have been asked for any input that they might have for the Violence Against Women and Girls Survey and that the police should consider whether there were any ways in which the Council's Communications could be used to assist the police in getting across policing messages to the public.

It was noted that StreetSafe was a pilot service for anyone to anonymously tell the police about public places where they had felt or currently felt unsafe because of environmental issues, e.g. street lighting, abandoned buildings or vandalism and/or because of some behaviours, e.g. being followed or verbally abused. StreetSafe was not to be used for

reporting crime or incidents. It was agreed that all Runnymede Borough Council Members would be informed of the StreetSafe initiative. StreetSafe could be accessed through an online search, through the Surrey Police website and also through social media.

At the last meeting the issue of lengthy waiting times for people ringing the police's 101 phone number had been discussed. It was noted that the average waiting time in September 2021 was 4 minutes and 20 seconds which was an increase in the overall average waiting time of 3 minutes, 20 seconds. The various ways in which the public could contact the police were noted. The more different contact routes were used, the less pressure there would be on the 101 service.

A Member inquired about ways of combatting ASB in the vicinity of Royal Holloway University of London (RHUL) in Egham. It was noted that the main ASB problem in this area was noise from parties and that designing out of crime did not have a large part to play in dealing with ASB at this location. Runnymede police officers liaised regularly with RHUL, used social media to communicate and advised RHUL students on staying safe in the oncoming darker days of the winter.

A Member asked about police action being taken following a recent murder in Heathervale Way. It was noted that 5 arrests had been made and one male person was in custody. It was not appropriate at this stage for any details of the investigation to be released. Measures to reassure the community were being put in place by the police by means of a community impact assessment.

At the last meeting, the Committee had been advised of an ASB car which moved around the borough. It was noted that the ASB car responded to the trends in crime. If a report of a crime was received by police and the ASB car was available it would go to the scene of that crime. Regarding police staffing, it was noted that Runnymede received a small intake of new officers every 3 or 4 months.

In terms of reporting crime, if the perpetrator(s) were still at the scene, the public were advised to ring 999 as there was a possibility of the police making arrest(s). If the perpetrator(s) was/were not still at the scene, the public were advised to report it via the 101 telephone number or Facebook. The Chairman advised Members that they should not get involved if they were at a crime scene as they were as vulnerable as any other person and they should report the incident to the police for action.

(The meeting ended at 8.25.p.m.)

Chairman