

MILTON KEYNES  
**Community Safety**  
 PARTNERSHIP  
 TACKLING CRIME AND SAFETY TOGETHER

Minutes of the meeting of the COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP held on  
 MONDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2006 at 10.00 AM

- Present:**
- Cllr I Henderson(Chair) - Milton Keynes Council
  - Cllr A Dransfield - Milton Keynes Council
  - J Best - Milton Keynes Council
  - R Flowers - Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust
  - Chief Superintendent J Liversidge - Thames Valley Police
  - Inspector J Fox - Thames Valley Police
  - C Westwood-Smith - Milton Keynes Drug Action Team
  - L Nicholas - Government Office South East
  - P Jones - Bucks Fire and Rescue Service
  - Cllr S Coventry - Milton Keynes Council
  - R Vitiello - Thames Valley Police
  - J Keating-Wilkes - Community Safety Partnership
  - T Ridgley - Bucks Fire and Rescue Service
  - Cllr S Crooks - Thames Valley Police Authority
  - D Butt - Thames Valley National Probation Service
  - B Dray - Milton Keynes Magistrates Court
  - P Nicholas - Milton Keynes Chamber of Commerce
  - M James - Thames Valley Police
  - J Alder - Director of Safety Centre (Hazard Alley)
  - K Williams - Victim Support Manager
  - Z Hayat - HMP Woodhill
  - Cllr E Long - Wolverton & Greenleys Town Council
- Officers:**
- N Atkinson - Reducing Violence Project Manager
  - M Toze - Committee Manager
  - J Keating-Wilkes - Communications Officer
  - S Marsh - Corporate Communications Manager
  - A Farr - Assistant Director Monitoring & Review
  - C Godfrey - Parish Liaison Officer
  - R Solly - Community Safety Manager
- Also Present:**
- Cllr B Carstens - Milton Keynes Council
  - Chief Insp A Standen - Thames Valley Police
- Apologies:**
- Superintendent S Blake - Thames Valley Police
  - Cllr I Fraser - Milton Keynes Council
  - J Croston - Milton Keynes Lighthouse
  - L Westlake - Milton Keynes Council

## **1.0 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2006 were received.

## **2.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Minute 8.0 – The Partnership noted that GOSE had in fact provided £6000 funding for the Crimestoppers Campaign.

## **3.0 BCS CRIME IN MILTON KEYNES**

Chief Superintendent J Liversidge presented data on British Crime Survey (BCS) crime statistics for April-September 2006. Recorded crime in Milton Keynes had risen by 22%. This was significantly worse than the performance of similar Basic Command Units (BCUs) across the country. The rate at which crime was rising was now reducing.

The level of crime in April 2005 had been unusually low, and this meant that the figures this year appeared even higher by comparison. Theft from cars had increased significantly during this period, especially of satellite navigation systems, and there was also a significant increase in violent crimes. Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary would be carrying out an inspection on 4 December to investigate the reasons for Milton Keynes' poor performance.

Inspector J Fox noted that there were a number of factors relating to the sharp increase of recorded crime in Milton Keynes. A new system of recording crime meant that there had been an increase in reported crime across Thames Valley. The speed of population growth in Milton Keynes had not been thoroughly taken on board when providing resources for Milton Keynes policing. Milton Keynes was a highly urban police area, and so rises in urban crime were more immediately apparent in Milton Keynes. There was also a trend of criminals coming from outside Milton Keynes to steal satellite-navigation devices.

There had been disturbance caused by changes in senior police management at this time. A refurbishment of custody suites had led to reduced cell capacity and a new custody computer system had had some problems in its initial introduction.

In addition, Milton Keynes' historically good crime figures meant it had not been given priority for resources, although this would hopefully now change. Milton Keynes had also been slow in becoming fully National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) compliant, meaning that its crime figures were based on the lower crime levels before it was NCRS compliant. Most BCUs had seen a rise in crime when they became NCRS compliant.

Partnership members noted that reorganisation of wardens and police community support officers could have had an effect on crime levels in some estates. In addition to its growing population, Milton Keynes also had a large number of people visiting the city. It was difficult to judge to what extent visitors to the city were affected by crime.

It was noted that part of the rise in crime figures was probably due to a rise in reporting of offences. Under the NCRS all incidents had to be reported unless it could be proved that no crime had taken place.

The Partnership members expressed concern that Milton Keynes was not receiving more resources, and that neighbourhood policing might have diverted resources away from where they were most needed.

The Partnership noted that Milton Keynes Police still had a very high percentage of prosecutions, which was placing a strain on the courts.

The Community Safety Manager presented a proposed response to the rise in recorded crime. He noted that the results of a recent survey would be circulated shortly and were expected to show a fall in fear of crime and a rise in fear of antisocial behaviour. Internal Audit had offered to analyse the reasons for the increase in recorded crime, and would also look at the resources given to the Community Safety Partnership.

Three categories of offence made up over half of the total volume of crimes, namely criminal damage, theft from vehicles and violence in public places. It was therefore suggested that particular attention be paid to reducing the number of these offences, although without neglecting other issues. This was a new focus, looking at crime thematically rather than geographically.

It was important to use the resources of all Partnership agencies when tackling crime. It was proposed that an Action Group meet weekly, identify crime hotspots and take action to resolve the issues. A robust evaluation system was also needed to set targets and check they were being met.

Some Partnership members expressed concern that moving resources to target one issue or area would simply shift the problem elsewhere. More resources were needed overall. However it was noted that targeting existing resources where they were most needed would allow for rapid action, whereas waiting for further resources could take some months.

Concern was expressed about the prioritisation of Police Community Support Officers in areas where Parish Councils could part-fund them.

The Partnership noted that there was a need to be proactive and predict future crime trends rather than react to them. There was also a need to identify potential offenders.

National schemes could help to involve everyone in community safety, including the voluntary sector and parishes. For example, a letter could be sent from the DVLA to warn vehicle owners of valuables in cars. The DVLA could be notified of this by anyone, not just by police. It was also more efficient to give public information and advice from several Partner agencies at once.

It was suggested that there was a need for more co-operation and forward planning on communications issues.

Cllr S Crooks noted that police resources were likely to remain tight. High profile cases elsewhere in Thames Valley had used a lot of resources. National Home Office spending would not increase significantly in the next three years. Milton Keynes would have to make its case competitively against other BCUs. Letters from Partnership members in support of Milton Keynes' case for more resources would be helpful. The Chief Superintendent noted that Milton Keynes was the only BCU in its group coded as "red" under the traffic light scheme for resources, and it might therefore get more roaming support from within Thames Valley.

L Nicholas noted that a consistent message was needed from all agencies, as the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) was also feeding in information on police resources.

The Partnership noted that violent robbery was a growing issue although the rate remained low in comparison with other areas. The Reducing Violence Delivery group would have to decide how to address this issue.

#### RESOLVED –

1. That the Audit Plan be approved by the Partnership, enabling Internal Audit to focus on data analysis. It will also compare resources committed to the CSP with those received by partnerships in other areas.
2. That the CSP agree the establishment of an Action Group as outlined in the report. The group will produce an EPIC operational plan to reduce criminal damage and theft from vehicles by 20%
3. That the existing delivery groups should focus on the three specific offences of theft from vehicles, criminal damage and violence in public places.
4. That the Chairs' and Vice Chairs' Delivery Group be transformed into a monthly performance group, holding the Task Force and existing delivery groups to account against targets. The performance group should report directly to the Partnership Management Group.
5. That additional police resources be sought for tackling crime in Milton Keynes.
6. That the Community Safety Manager present a report on Neighbourhood Policing to the next Community Safety Partnership meeting.

## **4.0 REDUCING VIOLENCE DELIVERY GROUP**

The Partnership received a report from the Chair of the Reducing Violence Delivery Group. The group had recorded a number of achievements, including development of information gathering around

alcohol and domestic violence related injuries, and the introduction of a pilot taxi-marshalling scheme at Xscape. However, shortage of resources placed barriers to achievement. There were also conflicting messages from national policy on alcohol strategy.

The Partnership noted that some of the night bus funding from GOSE had been spent on a survey, which had found that night buses were not viable. The remainder of the funding would be returned to GOSE. It was unclear whether funding might be available to support a taxi scheme instead. It was suggested that businesses would benefit from taxi marshals and should be approached to help fund the scheme.

The Partnership noted that although most Milton Keynes schools had an anti-bullying policy, there was a need for a more co-ordinated strategy, looking in particular at the issue of self-esteem. This would be developed in conjunction with Learning and Development.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That businesses be approached to help fund taxi marshals once the pilot scheme was complete.

## **5.0**

### **DEALING WITH PERSISTENT OFFENDERS.**

The Chair of the Dealing with Persistent Offenders Delivery Group tabled a report. The Partnership was funding a dedicated officer to liaise between the police and the probation service, and this was working well. Involvement of other partners was improving, although there was difficulty in achieving consensus on prioritisation of service delivery.

A large number of offenders are now registered on the Prolific and Priority Offenders scheme, and there was a need to act very responsively to identify priorities and work in the most effective way.

Detailed quarterly information had to be submitted to government. The collection of this information was very onerous, especially since there was no administrative support. The task was made even more challenging by the fact that the police and probation computer systems could not be made to work together. Feedback from the data submitted was limited and a change in the recording system made it difficult to compare recent data with data from before April 2006.

The Vulnerable Children's Panel had been set up, and increased co-operation with police and the youth offending team was planned in order to identify those at risk of becoming offenders. Milton Keynes College would now assess and deliver adult education for offenders.

Partnership members noted that it was important to identify children at risk of being excluded from schools, as this was linked to future risk of being an offender. Support should be provided for families.

Concern was expressed that the YMCA would no longer house individuals with substance abuse problems. Housing was an important part of helping offenders move away from crime and drugs. However, the Partnership noted that additional support was needed to ensure that tenancies worked.

It was suggested that Neighbourhood Services should send a representative to the Dealing with Persistent Offenders Delivery Group.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

## **6.0**

### **ENGAGING THE PUBLIC AND MEDIA DELIVERY GROUP**

The partnership received a report from the Chair of the Engaging the Public and Media Delivery Group. He noted that the Delivery Group was having a number of achievements in involving the public and tackling fear of crime. However, co-ordination with partners was difficult, with some media bodies losing interest. There was a strong need for more pro-active planning.

The Partnership noted that next year there would be a requirement for a police scrutiny committee, and the issues around this should be considered in advance.

It was suggested that there was perhaps a growing awareness of anti-social behaviour within Milton Keynes.

It was noted that some Milton Keynes estates were unadopted, and still the responsibility of developers. This made Council intervention more difficult. However, other Partners should be able to intervene.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the report be noted
- 2) That Cllr S Crooks and the Community Safety Manager liaise with the Antisocial Behaviour Delivery Group and present a report at a future meeting of the Community Safety Partnership on the issues around unadopted estates.
- 3) That S Marsh and J Keating-Wilkes agree what messages should be publicised as arising from this meeting of the Community Safety Partnership.

## **7.0**

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY WEBSITE**

J Keating-Wilkes, Communications Officer presented a report on improvements to the Community Safety Partnership website. The existing website was quite sparse, and difficult to find. It was hoped

that improvements to the website would bring the various Partners closer together. The new website would be hosted on MKWeb, as this would be most cost effective, but it would have a distinctive identity.

Members of the Partnership noted that members of the public could not be expected simply to access the website via links. It should contain keywords and be easy to find with search engines. It should be kept up-to-date and people should be positively directed there.

The Partnership noted that the Fire Authority should be included in the website proposals.

RESOLVED –

That the proposal to create an improved Community Safety website embedded within MKWeb be approved, together with the associated costs.

## **8.0 MULTI AGENCY RISK ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (MARAC)**

The Reducing Violence Project Manager presented a report on MARAC. This had been convened by the Thames Valley Police Domestic Violence Unit but involved many agencies, including the voluntary sector. It was a national scheme to identify victims and ensure they were being protected. So far it had met three times.

The Partnership noted that MARAC was only for violence within families or intimate relationships. Neighbour disputes were a separate issue. Equalities issues were fully considered by MARAC.

RESOLVED -

That the Partnership agrees to co-operate with the MARAC process and allocate representatives and resources from various directorates and agencies involved.

## **8.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Partnership members noted that Youth Services should be more heavily involved within the work of the Partnership. This would be discussed at a future meeting of the Community Safety Partnership.

The Partnership noted that representatives from English Partnerships should be invited to attend when issues arose concerning planning.

## **9.0 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

- Monday 15 January 2007
- Monday 12 March 2007
- Monday 14 May 2007
- Monday 16 July 2007
- Monday 17 September 2007
- Monday 12 November 2007

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12:40 PM