

REPORT OF CRIME AND DISORDER REVIEW PANEL

(Meeting held 17 November 2009)

1. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (REPORT A) (MINUTE NO. 32)

The Police and Justice Act 2006 imposes a duty on principal councils to appoint an overview and scrutiny committee to scrutinise the decisions and actions of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) operating in their areas. Regulations governing how these Scrutiny Committees should operate came into force earlier in the year and statutory guidance has been issued by the Home Office. There is no need for a separate scrutiny committee to be established but there must be a formal place where community safety matters can be discussed.

The powers of principal councils to scrutinise the partnerships extend only to the actions of the partnership as a whole, or to the individual partners insofar as their contribution to the CDRP is concerned. There is flexibility on the manner in which, and the frequency with which, the scrutiny committee undertakes scrutiny of the CDRP, but the minimum requirement is for the committee to review partnership matters at least once a year. The new powers to principal authorities are not intended to replace the existing scrutiny arrangements of the individual partner organisations.

The Panel is very keen to ensure that the Council's new statutory duty is undertaken with the assistance and co-operation of the members of the CDRP, and without undue demands on them. Members of the CDRP Strategy Group were invited to the Panel's meeting on 17 November to participate in the discussion on how the Council should fulfil its new statutory duties and exercise its new powers.

The Crime & Disorder Review Panel has in the past considered CDRP issues and the Panel considers it a logical step for the Council to designate the Panel as the committee to fulfil the new duty. A recommendation to this effect appears below. If this recommendation is adopted, the Panel does not foresee that, in practice, there will be a significant difference in the current operating arrangements although the focus of the Panel's work programme is likely to change.

The Panel is very keen to ensure that the Council's new duties are fulfilled with the co-operation of, and without placing unnecessary demands on, partners, while at the same time ensuring effective scrutiny. The Panel recognises that the proposed new arrangements will take some time to bed down, and during this period it will be important for the partners and District Council members and officers to work together to establish good working practices.

The new legislation allows the designated scrutiny committee to co-opt representatives of members of the Partnership. The terms of any co-option may be flexible. The guidance highlights the unique position of Police Authorities within the landscape of CDRPs and suggests that local authorities should, in all instances, presume that the Police Authority should play an active part at committee when community safety matters are being discussed. The Panel recommends that it be given power to co-opt representatives of partner organisations onto the Panel as and when the need arises, and to agree the terms of any co-option. However, the Panel does not consider that co-opted members should have power to vote.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That the Crime and Disorder Review Panel be formally designated as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006; and**
- (b) That authority to co-opt representatives of the CDRP to the Panel when it reviews Partnership matters, and to agree terms of the co-option, be delegated to the Panel.**

**Cllr Mrs A E McEvoy
CHAIRMAN**