

## **ITEM 8                      OSCOM Community Safety – Panel Review**

Response from the Head of Community and Leisure Services to the Panel's Community Safety Report

**This covering report is prepared by the Head of Community and Leisure Services and should be read in conjunction with the Panel's report to inform the Committee's view in determining how it wishes to proceed.**

### **SUMMARY**

- “Contribute to and be part of a Strong Community” is one of the four key themes of the 2015-19 Corporate Plan ‘Investing in Test Valley, and strategically the Council has been moving in a direction of supporting community led action, resilience and capacity building for some time.
- As part of the creation of the Community Team in 2012, it has always been the intention to fully integrate community safety with the Community Engagement function. This was a key requirement and outcome from the organisational restructure in 2011.
- At a time of major police reform an OSCOM panel endeavoured to review TVBC's community safety function and make recommendations as to how this ambition can be realised going forward.

### **1        Background**

- 1.1    OSCOM established a Task and Finish panel to review TVBC's community safety function and presented an interim report to OSCOM on 20 January 2016 (minute 252 refers).
- 1.2    Discussion was inevitably wide ranging, so one of the primary objectives of the interim review was to seek to narrow the scope of the review to;
  - (a)    explore the effectiveness of TVBC's Patrolling Neighbourhood Warden Scheme, and
  - (b)    ensure a good ‘fit’ in terms of contributing to the Test Valley partnership and TVBC Community Safety outcomes.
- 1.3    Following the interim report in January, senior officers from Hampshire Police attended OSCOM on 16 March 2016 to give a presentation on ‘local policing in Test Valley’ (minute 306 refers).

- 1.4 The OSCOM panel set to review the way in which TVBC allocated and prioritised resources to fulfil its community safety function in an efficient and effective manner as part of wider community support and engagement responsibilities, and in partnership with Police and other stakeholder organisations.
- 1.5 In addition to reviewing the community safety / wardens function, the panel make recommendations regarding the way in which the function is managed. Assuming the Panel recommendations go forward, it will be for Cabinet to consider how it wishes to respond.
- 1.6 Any form of management review will need to be considered in the context of wider resource planning.

## **2 Introduction (responding to Panel report)**

- 2.1 The following comments are made by the Head of Service as a direct response to the panel recommendations.
  - 2.1.1 **Recommendation 1** – The creation of the Community team in 2012 brought together staff from the former Community Safety team (in the Housing service) and Community Development staff from across the Council. The intention for this was to ensure the best use of resources and to help the Council make its community support functions more effective, flexible and sustainable, and to reduce duplication. As a result, recommendation 1 continues with this direction of travel and ensures a good fit and integration with broader community engagement activity.
  - 2.1.2 **Recommendation 2** – refers to having the ability to respond to community safety priorities of the Test Valley Partnership. In practise the approach is to endeavour to respond to and deal with issues as needed and as identified with and by local communities. This is a holistic approach that encompasses potentially all aspects of community support (including but not limited to) community safety.
  - 2.1.3 **Recommendation 3** – as per recommendation 2, community resilience can be considered as a part of the community engagement and support role already provided to help communities do more for themselves.

A community resilience forum has been established during the life of this OSCOM panel review, which is supported corporately and professionally from across the Council as well as from other organisations – as a coordinated multiagency forum.

- 2.1.4 **Recommendations 4 and 5** – Refer specifically to the skills, training and working practises of the Wardens. These can be addressed (and responded to) as appropriate and as part of the outcomes that emerge from the overall function review requested above.

### **3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities**

- 3.1 “Contribute to and be part of a Strong Community” is one of the four key themes of the 2015-19 Corporate Plan ‘Investing in Test Valley, and supporting community led action, resilience and capacity building has been the Council’s direction of travel for some time.

### **4 Consultations/Communications**

- 4.1 In addition to input from panel members and officers, views have been sought from the Police.

### **5 Options**

- 5.1 Consider Panel recommendations as identified in the report.

### **6 Risk Management**

- 6.1 This report is for information purposes so the Council’s Risk management process has not as yet been applied. (A full risk assessment will be completed if all / any of the proposals are recommended to Cabinet).

### **7 Resource Implications**

- 7.1 None at this stage

### **8 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 None at this stage

### **9 Other Issues**

- 9.1 Wards/Communities Affected - all

### **10 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation**

- 10.1 The recommendation is for OSCOM to consider the outcome presented by the Panel and determine its way forward.
- 10.2 If OSCOM decide to refer any / all recommendations to Cabinet, it will be for Cabinet to consider how it wishes to respond to OSCOM.

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexes:	1	File Ref:	
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Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Date:	3 August 2016