

Title of Report:	Audit of Crime, Disorder & Substance Misuse 2001-04	Item 8
Report to be considered by:	Executive	
Forward Plan Ref:	EX0857	

Corporate Plan Priority:	S7 - Promoting Safer Communities
<p>The Council and the Police have joint responsibility under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 to produce a review of the available information on levels of crime, disorder and substance misuse for the last 3 years. This then provides the basis for the Safer Communities Strategy 2005-2008 which sets targets for the partnership to reduce crime, anti social behaviour, drug misuse and youth offending in West Berkshire.</p>	

Purpose of Report:	To provide Members with information on the levels of crime, disorder and substance misuse in West Berkshire during the period 2001 to 2004, to enable them to feed into the consultation process outlined in Point 1.1 of this report.
Recommended Action:	To approve the Audit of Crime, Disorder & Substance Misuse. Please note that this is the first draft of the document, which is due to be completed in December.
Reason for decision to be taken:	To enable Members to take part in the consultation process on the audit findings in section 3. This will help to inform the development of the priorities within the Community Safety Strategy 2005-08, which will be included in section 4, the discussion section, yet to be finished.
List of other options considered:	None.
Key background documentation:	None.

Portfolio Member:	Councillor Billy Drummond
Tel. No.:	01635 552764
E-mail Address:	Bdrummond@westberks.gov.uk

Contact Officer Details	
Names:	Rachel Craggs. Community Safety Manager. Janet Ashfield. Drugs and Alcohol Action Team Manager.
Tel. No.:	01635 519235 01635 519849
E-mail Address:	Rcraggs@westberks.gov.uk Jashfield@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy:	The Council has a statutory responsibility to produce an audit and a strategy for crime, disorder and substance misuse.
Financial:	The impact of Councils becoming responsible for Alcohol Policy will be monitored.
Legal:	Local authorities and the police have joint responsibility under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 to produce an Audit and a Strategy of crime, disorder and substance misuse.
Environmental:	Promoting Safer Communities impacts positively on environmental, social and economic well-being.
Equalities:	The victims of crime, disorder and substance misuse may be socially excluded and/or from under-represented and hard-to-reach groups in society, and may require special measures in terms of the provision of public services in order to reduce those barriers.
Partnering:	The Safer Communities Partnership is a multi-agency partnership that includes the Police, Fire and Rescue Services and the Probation Service.
Risk Management:	The risks related to actions and targets are considered in the Safer Communities Strategy.

1. Background

- 1.1 Local authorities and the police have joint responsibility under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 to work together in partnership with other key agencies to carry out an audit of crime and disorder every three years and consult widely on the findings with the community and partners. They are then required to produce a strategy for addressing crime and disorder issues raised in the audit within Local Authority and Police Basic Command Unit areas and issues also raised during the consultation process. Drugs and Alcohol Action Teams (DAAT) are now tasked with carrying out a drugs audit. In two-tier authority areas this may be carried out separately from the crime audit. As a unitary authority area the two audits may be undertaken together.
- 1.2 There have been a number of amendments to these requirements under the Police Reform Act 2002 and Statutory Instrument 2004 No 118 as follows. The Crime and Disorder Act :-
- (i) designated 'Responsible Authorities' to include Local, Unitary & County Authorities/Councils and Police Forces. This has now been extended under the Police Reform Act to include Police Authorities, Fire Authorities and Primary Care Trusts.
 - (ii) required that there must be co-operation between responsible authorities, probation committees and health authorities. This has now been extended to include Probation Boards.
 - (iii) required responsible authorities to formulate and implement a strategy to reduce crime and disorder every 3 years. This has now been extended under the Police Reform Act to include a strategy for combating drug misuse and anti social behaviour. In addition, the requirement to carry out an audit into the levels and patterns of crime and disorder has now been expanded to include an audit of drug misuse.
 - (iv) required that the strategy must be kept under review with a view to monitoring its effectiveness and making any changes that appear necessary or expedient. Under the Police Reform Act there is now a requirement for an annual report to be submitted to the Government Office detailing the implementation of the Strategy.
 - (v) and under the Police Reform Act, the Secretary of State may now specify types of crime and/or disorder for inclusion in strategies, and may specify forms of substance misuse in addition to drugs.

2. Audit of Crime & Disorder 1998 - 2001

- 2.1 The last Audit of Crime & Disorder was published in January 2002 and was used to inform the priorities and actions contained in the West Berkshire Community Safety Strategy that runs from April 2002 – March 2005. The six priorities that the Safer Communities Partnership has been focussing on over the last 3 years are:

1. vehicle crime
2. domestic violence
3. violent crime
4. anti social behaviour
5. burglary
6. substance misuse and progress

3. Purpose and Objectives of the Audit

- 3.1 The main purpose of the Audit is to provide information on crime, disorder and substance misuse problems in the West Berkshire. The analysis of this information will inform the development of the Safer Communities Strategy 2005-2008. This will be the policy and strategy framework for the Council's priority: Promoting safer Communities and will enable targeted work to be undertaken by the West Berkshire Safer Communities Partnership over the next three years.

More specifically there is now a requirement on the responsible authorities (see 1.2 above) to produce a strategy which ensures that they are :

- (i) aware of the nature of crime and disorder, anti social behaviour and drug misuse in their area.
- (ii) able to identify the methods of developing and implementing effective action to reduce these problems and deploy resources accordingly.
- (iii) formulating and publishing a strategy that responds to the expressed needs of local communities, sets out the findings of the audit and the actions for addressing priority areas and targets.
- (iv) undertaking annual planning activity informed by a clear picture of where funds need to be allocated.

4. Development of the Safer Communities Strategy 2005-8

- 4.1 Consultation with the community and partner agencies is currently taking place and the results will be detailed in the Audit, once they have been analysed. Details of the consultation are provided in Appendix 1 of the Audit.
- 4.2 A Strategy Development Day is taking place in November 2004 to which senior representatives from partner agencies, West Berkshire Council Members, Heads of Service and Corporate Directors have been invited. The Audit findings and the feedback from the consultation process will be considered at this event and the priorities for the new Strategy will then be set.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 It should be noted that the Audit document is still in draft format, as it is not yet complete. This is because the analysis of the consultation process and draft priorities for the Community Safety Strategy 2005-8, which will be agreed at the Strategy Development Day in November, still need to be added. Therefore we apologise for the fact that it is not yet possible to provide an Executive Summary, however this will be included in the final document. In the meantime, section 3 of the document provides information relating to the key audit findings.

Appendices

Appendix 8 - DRAFT Audit of Crime, Disorder and Substance Misuse. *(Please note that due to the size of this document a copy is available on request from Anne Hunter on (01635) 519241. A copy will also be held in the Members' Room)*

Consultation Responses

Local Stakeholders:	See consultation – Appendix 1 of the Draft Audit.
Officers Consulted:	Corporate Directors, Heads of Service.
Trade Union:	Will be consulted on any relevant issues emerging in the Audit and Strategy.