

PORTFOLIO:

COMMUNITIES & HOUSING

Report of
Portfolio Holder:

**COUNCILLOR
JESSICA RIDDLE**

**Councillor Jessica Riddle
Communities & Housing Portfolio Holder**

CRIME AND DISORDER UPDATE REPORT JULY 2012

The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 placed statutory obligations on Local Authorities and the Police to act in co-operation with Health Authorities and other relevant agencies, to work together to develop and implement a strategy for tackling crime and disorder in their area.

Carlisle and Eden CDRP (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) has, and continues to be a successful catalyst for the multi-agency working to address crime and disorder in North Cumbria. Since its inception, we have worked effectively to contribute to significant and sustained falls in crime and disorder.

Performance figures for the Carlisle area for the period of 01/01/12- 31/07/12

| Crime Category | Number of offences 2011 (YTD) | Number of offences 2012 (YTD) | Difference | % Change |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|----------|
| All Crime | 2,643 | 2,199 | -444 | -16.8% |
| Serious Acquisitive Crime | 212 | 225 | +13 | +6.1% |
| Assault with Injury | 225 | 196 | -29 | -12.9% |
| Burglary Dwelling | 63 | 80 | +17 | +27.0% |
| All Vehicle Crime | 142 | 141 | -1 | -0.7% |
| Robbery | 7 | 4 | -3 | -42.9% |
| Criminal Damage inc Arson | 567 | 435 | -132 | -23.3% |
| Damage to Dwellings | 156 | 150 | -6 | -3.8% |
| Damage to other Buildings | 63 | 53 | -10 | -15.9% |
| Damage to Vehicles | 215 | 142 | -73 | -34.0% |
| Other Damage | 112 | 77 | -35 | -31.3% |
| Arson | 20 | 13 | -7 | -20.0% |

There has been an increase in the number of incidents relating to acquisitive crime and burglary. All other offences across the board continue to reduce. Offences in burglary have continued to increase with almost 60% of them being the result of insecurities (unlocked doors and windows.) Police and partners are continuing to work together to tackle the issue through targeted media campaigns. The issue remains a city wide problem with the priority location area being City West, around the Newtown Road area.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Since 2008 incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour have reduced by more than 15,000 incidents per year. A targeted programme of activity continues to be delivered across North Cumbria to prevent and reduce incidents of anti social behaviour.

| Year | Number of ASB Incidents |
|------|-------------------------|
| 2008 | 41,951 |
| 2009 | 38,391 |
| 2010 | 34,281 |
| 2011 | 26,739 |

Problem Solving Groups

The Carlisle East and City West PSG's (Problem Solving Group) continues to work well and provide quick responses to community problems. Meetings are now held on a monthly basis.

| PSG Performance Monitoring | City West (March 2011 -) | Carlisle East (March 2012 -) |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Total number of actions dealt with | 114 | 32 |

The issues across Carlisle vary from area to area. The West of the City tends to focus more on the safety of vulnerable adults, neighbourhood disputes and deliberate fire setting. Across the East of the City there are a higher number of incidents relating to vehicle nuisance, noise nuisance, the state of the environment and littering.

Carlisle Community Neighbours

Funding has been successfully secured to appoint a Carlisle Community Neighbour Co-ordinator for a period of 18 months.

The Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating the provision of a Community Neighbours Scheme for vulnerable older people throughout Carlisle. The scheme uses volunteers to provide support to older people in a

number of ways. In addition they will make appropriate links with Carlisle City Council owned, Community Centres, health and social care teams, third sector and other agencies to develop appropriate activities for older people in line with the Mrs Carlisle agenda.

The scheme will set out to offer practical and emotional support to, and by, the people of Carlisle by being on hand to help with those small tasks that can make such a difference to everyone's lives, particularly those elderly, lonely or more vulnerable. The aim is to treat any requests for help on an individual basis as every person is unique and their situation and need is unique to them.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS SERVICE

Consultation has begun around the City Council's proposed draft scheme to administer Local Council Tax Support. Legislative changes come into place from April 2013 replacing Council Tax Benefit with a local Support scheme. Consultation letters will be sent to all those currently receiving Council Tax Benefit. An on-line survey asking for people's views will also be available via the City Councils website. The survey seeks views on the proposals which are to maintain existing benefit levels under the new scheme.

HOUSING

Low Harker Dene

This is a fifteen pitch site for the residents from the Gypsy and Traveller community. Government funding was provided to build the site and it opened in 2010. It has been managed since opening by Homespace CIC on behalf of the Council. A 15 year lease and management contract is now in place. The contract will be overseen by the Strategy and Private Sector Housing Team.

Landlord Accreditation

The Council continues to operate a successful landlord accreditation service, with new take up by new landlords monthly. The Council now accredits 151 landlords, covering just over 800 properties in the private rented sector. The scheme ensures landlords comply with a code of conduct and the properties which they manage meet a minimum safety standard. In order to advertise with the University of Cumbria for student accommodation the landlord must be accredited with the Council.

Landlord and Tenant Advice Surgery

As part of promoting housing standards in the private rented sector, a monthly Landlord and Tenant surgery operates on the first Wednesday of the month in the customer contact centre. Since October 2011, 38 people have received advice.

Homelessness Accommodation and Support Services

The accommodation and support services team have arranged and facilitated a number of events and activities at both the men and women and family accommodation schemes including:

- ⇒ Delivery of Summer holiday activities for the families and children including teddy bears picnics, and swimming
- ⇒ Zumba classes
- ⇒ Fishing trips
- ⇒ Voluntary work placements collecting and delivering furniture and donations for Carlisle OP shops
- ⇒ Carlisle cooks cookery groups
- ⇒ Staff and residents volunteering and assisting with co-ordinating the Olympic Torch procession along Shaddongate / Castle Way
- ⇒ Olympics celebration events including mini sports day events for residents followed by a picnic made by the baking and cooking group members supported by staff – enjoyed by all!

Homelessness Services

From 1st April 2012 to 31st July 2012:

- ⇒ 91 decisions were made on homeless applications of which 36 were accepted as being owed a homeless duty. 86 households in total approached for housing advice in this period and 50 households were prevented from becoming homeless.

This compares to the same period in 2011:

- ⇒ 138 decisions were made, 68 were accepted; 96 households in total approached for housing advice and 20 were prevented from becoming homeless.

We are focusing our approach and initiatives to Homeless Prevention and with the aid of the dedicated officer are mapping out provision within the district in order to maximise opportunities and initiatives to prevent homelessness working towards our target of increasing the number of reported prevention cases in 2012/13 to 167, an increase of 50%.

Replacement family women and family accommodation

We are pleased that work has started on site and is on schedule and progressing well:

| Key Steps | Anticipated timescales |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Start on site at Water street | Begun |
| Anticipated completion | End of February 2013 |

Shaddon Gateway Centre & Dispersed Foyer Services

The YMCA's Inspira funded youth programme is now being delivered from the Centre. Adult Education in partnership with Job Centre Plus are delivering a number of courses aimed at providing support to long term Job Seeker's Allowance clients, including people resident in the men's accommodation in John Street. Courses delivered in July/August include Office Skills, Employability and Customer Care.

Welfare Advice Service

The Welfare Advice Service works with officers and partners to ensure that the impact of change to Welfare Reform can be reduced.

In the period 1st April 2012 to 30 June 2012, the Welfare Advice service increased income within Carlisle and District by £383,008.63.92.

The Welfare Advice Service will be running a mini advice surgery in Heysham Park Gardens on the 11th October 2012 and are attending the Penton Exchange, an initiative to tackle rural isolation, on the 29th August 2012.

Homeless Project

Officers from the Wellbeing Team have been carrying out activities at the Staffield House family hostel, working with young parents and their babies/children. Their focus has been leading a healthier lifestyle, offering advice and guidance on healthy eating and cooking on a budget. They have also been offering some play provision over the summer holidays.

Hostel Work

Officers from the Wellbeing Team are continuing with the cookery and nutrition work which they deliver at the John Street hostel. This will be taking place on alternative Wednesdays and will give the residents the skills and knowledge to make healthy meals for themselves both in the hostel and when

they find accommodation. Three Healthy Eating workshops have been delivered and included; looking at the Eatwell Plate, label reading, hidden sugars and supporting mothers with fussy eaters.