

**Report to:** Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012

**Lead Member/Officer:** Head of Business Planning & Performance

**Report Author:** Head of Business Planning & Performance

**Title:** Safer Communities Regional Board

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**1. What is the report about?**

The report outlines progress towards the formation of the Safer Communities Regional Partnership Board.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

- 2.1 To update Scrutiny on progress to forming a Regional Safer Communities Board.
- 2.2 To present the amended Partnership Agreement for the Board.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

That Scrutiny:

- 3.1 comments on the revised Partnership Agreement; and
- 3.2 supports the amended arrangements as detailed in the Agreement.

**4. Report details.**

- 4.1 In December 2010 it was agreed that as part of the North Wales Partnership Review a Regional Safer Communities Board for North Wales would be established by 2012.
- 4.2 It was proposed that this Board would take responsibility for the governance, regional commissioning and oversight of operational delivery arrangements of Community Safety Partnerships and Youth Justice Services. It would also influence Criminal Justice service provision and development.
- 4.3 The Board would be supported by sub-regional operational arrangements. These less formal partnerships would be operational with the county areas working in couplets, building on existing or developing partnership arrangements. They are as follows:
  - Anglesey/ Gwynedd
  - Conwy/ Denbighshire

- Flintshire/ Wrexham

4.4 Sub-regional differences will be recognised and respected by the Board. There will be scope for different ways of working within each sub-region e.g. the extent of formal merging of the current operational teams. The priorities of the sub-regional groups would be guided by the Board to ensure greater consistency in the achievement of standards of performance and outcomes.

4.5. Initial proposals were that the Board should be a formal arrangement based on the Joint Committee model, with responsibility for the statutory functions of the partnerships, and an increasing role in commissioning services across the region. However the idea of a formal Joint Committee was not supported across the North Wales Councils, and instead a less formal arrangement is proposed in its place. Additionally, there were reservations about the proposed regional commissioning model, and this too has been removed from the proposal. An amended Partnership Agreement is included that reflects these changes (See Appendix). The main elements of the new agreement are described below.

#### 4.6 Strategic Role of the North Wales Safer Communities Board

The Board will assume the regional strategic responsibilities currently held by local strategic or executive groups. It will:

- Develop and agree the vision for North Wales for Community Safety and Youth Justice.
- Establish the broad strategic aims for the sub-regional operational partnerships to achieve the goals of the Community Safety Plan.
- Oversee and develop strategic planning with initial impacts in specific policy areas where performance across the region is inconsistent.
- Monitor performance, capture and commend good practice, and encourage continuous improvement and ensure compliance with the 'hallmarks of effective practice' as identified by statute.
- Direct and undertake needs assessments and public consultation as required.
- Promote the mainstreaming of community safety at a strategic level with partner organisations.
- Promote collaboration in the design and provision of local public services.
- Reduce the scale and cost of underpinning partnership arrangements at sub-regional and local level.

#### 4.7 Membership

This is proposed to be the Lead Elected Member for Community Safety from each Local Authority, as well as representatives from the Police, Health, Probation and Fire Service. There will also be a supporting

'expert' group of officers, with experience in Community Safety and Youth Justice.

4.8 Commissioning and resource allocation

In the short term the Board will be tasked with policy, strategic direction and overall priorities. Ultimately the Board could still assume responsibility for the commissioning of services funded through Home Office and Welsh Government grants and allocate resources to support the function of the sub-regional Community Safety and Youth Justice operational partnerships, but only if there was agreement on this.

4.9 Forward work programme

The Board would have a formal work programme with priorities set for making an early impact. Priorities include a youth offending prevention strategy, a consistent approach to anti-social behaviour policy and a joint approach to addressing domestic homicide reviews.

4.10 The first meeting of the Safer Communities Board is planned for 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012.

**5. Associated developments**

5.1 The development of the Safer Communities Board is shadowed by other important developments in the area of community safety, in particular, the appointment of the new Police Commissioner for North Wales due in November 2012.

5.2. This will be preceded by the establishment of the Police and Crime Panel, which will be responsible for the scrutiny of the new post. DCC Membership of this is likely to include the Lead Cabinet member and a Scrutiny nominee. Conwy County Borough Council are leading the development of the P&CP on behalf of the North Wales region and the panel should be in place by September 2012.

**6. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

Community Safety delivered through partnership is a key element in the Big Plan, and improving partnership effectiveness through rationalisation a key objective of the Council and Local Service Board.

**7. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

There are potential savings in the cost of sub-regional and local partnership arrangements.

**8. What consultations have been carried out?**

Consultations have been carried out with the Conwy & Denbighshire Community Safety Partnership and Youth Justice Board, with Partnership Scrutiny and with the Council's Senior Leadership Team.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

There are no obvious major financial implications arising from the proposals, although there may be some savings due to administrative efficiencies. Should the Board want to take a wider remit in future then there could be implications from regional commissioning and pooled financial resources.

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

There are no significant risks at this stage

**11. Power to make the Decision**

No decision is required.

Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Article 6 of the Council's Constitution sets out Scrutiny's powers and role

**Contact Officer:**

Head of Business Planning & Performance

Tel: 01824 706246