

	<p>REPORT TO CENTRAL URBAN AREA COMMITTEE</p> <p>TO BE HELD ON 25 JULY 2013</p>
	<p>Key Decision No</p> <p>Forward Plan Ref No N/A</p>
<p>Corporate Priority Safe and Healthy Quality Environments</p>	<p>Cabinet Portfolio Holder Cllr. Brian Simpson</p>

REPORT OF: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE – 13/277

WARDS AFFECTED: CASTLE AND NORTH BAY

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTI AGENCY PREVENTION AND ENFORCEMENT TEAM FOR CASTLE/NORTH BAY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report outlines proposals for the development of a multi-agency prevention and enforcement team, which would focus on a proactive, joint approach to tackling identified issues within Castle and North Bay wards. This proposal forms part of a wider plan for the Castle/North Bay area, currently being developed by the Council and its partners through the Public Service Executive.

2. CORPORATE AIMS/PRIORITIES AND THE COMMUNITY PLAN

- 2.1 The proposal supports delivery of the Safe and Healthy and Quality Environments priorities of the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan.

3. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 3.1 The focus for this proposal and the wider partnership plan for the area currently being developed through the Public Service Executive is Castle Ward and the adjacent area of North Bay Ward (lower super output area 006D) as shown on the map attached as Appendix One. Castle ward does include the town centre area, however, the focus of this work is on the issues

relating to the residential and public space. Issues relating to the Night Time Economy are currently the subject of a separate plan.

- 3.2 The proposal forms part of a wider partnership plan for the area, currently being developed through the Public Service Executive. As part of this work a detailed profile and analysis of the issues in the area has been developed and this has highlighted some long standing and complex issues.
- 3.3 The area includes significant concentrations of disadvantage and deprivation, with all three lower super output areas in Castle and 006D in North Bay in the worst 10% nationally for overall deprivation. Crime and anti-social behaviour are key concerns for local residents, along with concerns about issues such as flytipping, litter, dog fouling and the appearance of the area.
- 3.4 The area includes a high concentration of private rented accommodation and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). Recent analysis undertaken as part of the discretionary licensing proposals ranked areas with high concentrations of HMOs based on stock profile, crime and anti social behaviour and deprivation rankings. The areas that stood out as having high concentrations of HMOs, poorer quality housing and higher levels of crime and deprivation were 006D (North Bay) and 006B and 010A in Castle ward. Linked to this, currently the greatest levels of housing enforcement activity takes place with Castle and North Bay (as well as parts of Ramshill).
- 3.5 The proposal for the joint prevention and enforcement team forms part of a wider partnership plan for the Castle/North Bay and this will be developed around four key themes:
 - Physical regeneration, in particular to encourage a higher quality rental market and address some of the design issues with some of the existing Registered Social Landlord (RSL) stock.
 - Effective prevention and enforcement
 - Support for vulnerable people
 - Environmental improvements in terms of open and public space and individual properties and gardens.
- 3.6 The approach of the team will be focused on creatively resolving issues in partnership, rather than as single organisations, shifting responsibility between agencies. In particular through this approach the aim is to:
 - Tackle anti-social behaviour, including disruptive families and individuals. This will include effective use of tenancy conditions and other powers, investigation of anti-social behaviour and victim support.
 - Improve the visible appearance of the area, both individual properties and public space.
 - Encourage personal responsibility and encourage residents and landlords to take responsibility for their property, gardens and personal behaviour.
 - Improve the quality of the housing in the area, in particular to encourage effective management and regulation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
 - To provide support for vulnerable residents.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 This proposal has been developed in partnership, through the Public Service Executive with the support of the North Yorkshire Coast Community Partnership.
- 4.2 Consultation undertaken with residents in the area through the Place Survey (2011/12) shows that:
- Crime and anti-social behaviour is the area identified by residents in Castle ward as what most needs improving. Road and pavement repairs were second followed by clean streets.
 - The % of Castle ward residents satisfied with their area as a place to live has dropped in the last few years and at 57% is significantly lower than the Borough average.
- 4.3 The Yorkshire Coast Homes STAR survey (2012) gives overall satisfaction with the area as 66%, the lowest score for all YCH estates. Residents reported significant concerns about rubbish/litter, noisy neighbours and dog fouling.

5. ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The proposed model is to have a co-located, multi-agency team, based initially within the Town hall. Commitments have been made by North Yorkshire Police and Yorkshire Coast Homes to provide staff for the team, along with a member of staff from the Council's Environmental Health (housing enforcement) team and the Safer Communities Team. In addition the new Community Safety Officer from the Fire and Rescue Service will also spend part of the time located with the new team and Castle/North Bay is a priority area for the Fire Service.
- 5.2 Staff will be co-located, at least for some of the time, but will remain employed by and accountable to their own organisation. However, there will be a joint management arrangement and day to day co-ordination will be provided by the Safer Communities Partnership Manager.
- 5.3 The approach of the team is to proactively identify the target areas where action is required. This will include properties that are poorly maintained and an eyesore, properties where there are concerns about management standards, condition or the behaviour of occupants and individuals who are causing disruption and concern to other residents in the area. Alongside this, proactive work will be undertaken to improve the condition of open space, communal areas and standards of maintenance and cleanliness. The team will take a proactive, problem solving approach to issues, working together to make effective and creative use of the full range of legislative and other tools available.
- 5.4 As well as effective enforcement, the team will also take an integrated approach to prevention and support for vulnerable residents. This will include liaising with other partners and ensuring residents are signposted and

supported to access help that may be required. As part of the Government's Troubled Families programme, workers will be employed locally to manage and co-ordinate support for the Troubled Families identified through the programme and the feasibility of basing the new worker within the team, for at least part of the time is currently being explored. Similarly, discussions are also taking place with the new Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) about co-location and again this would reinforce the integrated approach to ensuring residents that have complex, challenging needs can receive the right support.

- 5.5 In addition to the core team, the approach will require the commitment of a wider range of services and organisations to support the work of the team. For example, this type of approach will require a proactive response from the Council's Planning enforcement team and is likely to generate additional legal work for the Council (and potentially other organisations). Sanctuary Housing own housing stock in the area and have been part of detailed discussions to develop the proposal, whilst not currently in a position to commit dedicated staffing resources, they have committed to supporting the work of the multi-agency team and to work collaboratively on joint issues where required.
- 5.6 It is anticipated that the team will be operational by the end of September 2013 and then run as an initial 12 month pilot, with evaluation and review of outcomes reported at the end of the period. At this point further decisions will need to be made about the long term future and direction of the team, as well as operational matters such as the location and management arrangements for the team.
- 5.7 Funding will be required to support the delivery of open space improvements and costs incurred such as undertaking works in default. Allocation has already been made as part of the council's capital programme (Neighbourhoods and Communities programme) of £50, 000 for the Castle/North Bay area, it is a condition of this funding that match funding is secured and Yorkshire Coast Homes have committed a further £50,000 to support environmental improvements within the area. This does not represent a new financial commitment for the Council but it is proposed that this money be used specifically to fund works in default and small scale environmental improvements. Furthermore, it is anticipated, as has been the case with other partnership plans developed in Barrowcliff and elsewhere, that external funding can be secured for specific projects that will improve the area.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy

The multi-agency approach outlined fits well with current policy and good practice guidelines from central government regarding shared public service delivery.

6.2 Legal

The proactive enforcement approach outlined in this report is likely to generate additional demand for legal services.

6.3 Financial

There will be a financial implication to the Council by the use of office space within the town hall to accommodate the team. This proposal will lever in additional funding for the Castle/North Bay area, Yorkshire Coast Homes have committed £50k for environmental improvements. There is already funding committed by the Council of £50k through a previous capital programme allocation and it is proposed that this be used to fund works in default and small scale enhancements.

6.4 Equalities and Diversity

The team will operate in accordance with equalities legislation and good practice. This work focuses on some of the most disadvantaged areas of the Borough and aims to improve the quality of life for local residents.

6.5 Staffing Implications

The team will include Borough Council staffing resources, specifically an Environmental Health Officer (Housing enforcement) and staff from the Community Safety Partnership Team. Overall co-ordination will be provided by the Safer Communities Partnership Manager.

The new approach will impact on other services within the Council, in particular, planning enforcement and the proactive approach is likely to generate additional demand for legal services.

6.6 Planning Implications

The proactive approach is likely to involve planning enforcement action, where this is appropriate. Specific proposals may require planning permissions, which will be sought as required.

6.7 Crime and Disorder Implications

This work aims to take a proactive, partnership approach to tackling complex problems of crime and anti-social behaviour in this area.

6.8 Health and Safety Implications

No identified implication.

6.9 Environmental Implications

The work of the team aims to improve the visible appearance of the area in terms of individual properties and public space.

7. ACTION PLAN

- 7.1 Joint working by the team on specific priorities will start during August 2013 and it is proposed that the new team become fully operational the end of September 2013.



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Background Papers:
None

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT OR WISH TO INSPECT ANY OF THE BACKGROUND PAPERS, PLEASE CONTACT Jo Ireland ON 01723 384315, e-mail jo.ireland@scarborough.gov.uk