

PART 5.8 - PROTOCOL FOR CARMARTHENSHIRE SCRUTINY OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Protocol has been agreed between Carmarthenshire County Council, the Environmental & Public Protection Scrutiny Committee and the respective partners comprising the Community Safety Partnership as identified in the attached schedule.
- 1.2 Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 require Local Authorities to have a crime and disorder committee with power to scrutinise the Community Safety Partnership in their area and to make reports and recommendations to the Local Authority and the Partnership. In Carmarthenshire these functions are undertaken by the Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee, referred to in the remainder of this Protocol as the Committee.
- 1.3 In order for the exercise of these new powers to be effective, it is vital that all partners and stakeholders are engaged in the process and share a common understanding of the aims of scrutiny.
- 1.4 This Protocol sets out the rights and responsibilities of the parties concerned and in accordance with the relevant legislation, Welsh Assembly Government guidance and good working practice. This document may be revised by agreement between all the parties in order to continually improve the scrutiny process.

2. Principles of Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire

- 2.1 Scrutiny in Carmarthenshire is positive, objective and constructive. It acknowledges good practice and recommends improvements where it feels that these would be of benefit. Scrutiny concentrates on service outcomes and seeks to add value to each service that it considers.
- 2.2 Improving community safety and reducing the fear of crime and disorder for the people of Carmarthenshire is dependent upon many factors, including the services provided in partnership by partners in the Community Safety Partnership. This shared responsibility is acknowledged by the Committee and has featured in previous relevant scrutiny reviews.
- 2.3 The following underlying principles of scrutiny will assist in securing effective outcomes and adding value:
 - * Improvement in service delivery can best be achieved through partnerships between the Council and other service providers. This shared responsibility should be acknowledged in any scrutiny activity undertaken. Scrutiny activities should also reflect shared priorities, find shared solutions and be of mutual benefit.
 - * It is vital that scrutiny brings something new to reviews of local service provision and does not duplicate the many other forms of performance management and inspection that exist for public service providers.

- * Scrutiny activities should make a distinct and positive impact and only be carried out where objective review by elected representatives will help progress to be made. The scrutiny process should be proactive in seeking out issues to examine that will add most value.
 - * Scrutiny reports must be evidence-based in order to provide credible conclusions and recommendations. The scrutiny process should also be impartial, in the sense that it should be driven by the evidence rather than by a particular standpoint.
 - * Constructive engagement and clear lines of communication should enable a two-way flow of information between scrutiny and all those involved, including feedback of results.
- 2.4 Scrutiny of the reduction of crime and disorder will only be truly successful if key organisations work and co-operate together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust with an understanding and commitment to its aims.
 - 2.5 The key organisations involved in scrutiny of crime and disorder must be willing to share information, knowledge and reports which relate to the delivery of services in Carmarthenshire and carry out duties that would be reasonably expected of them to enable crime and disorder scrutiny to be successfully undertaken.
 - 2.6 Officers and members of the organisations involved in crime and disorder scrutiny, representatives and members of the public will be treated with respect and courtesy at all times. Matters of confidentiality will also be treated with respect.
 - 2.7 Crime and disorder scrutiny will be open and transparent and encourage open and honest discussion. Any person involved in crime and disorder scrutiny will always declare any personal interest that they have either in a scrutiny exercise or during a meeting of the Committee in accordance with any code of conduct to which they are required to adhere.
 - 2.8 Whilst working in partnership, the Committee is independent of the respective partners comprising the Community Safety Partnership.
 - 2.9 Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder will be focused on improving services and service provision for the people of Carmarthenshire and will concentrate on outcomes that are intended to help improve community safety and reduce the fear of crime in Carmarthenshire.

3. Administrative Arrangements

- 3.1 Agendas, minutes and reports for meetings of the Committee will be circulated to members of the Community Safety Partnership in accordance with the Council's legal requirements in relation to the circulation of such documents to members of the Committee. The Committee will meet at least twice per year.
- 3.2 The Community Safety Partnership will be consulted on the crime and disorder scrutiny forward work programme and will be informed in advance of scrutiny local crime and disorder reviews that the Committee is intending

to undertake. They will also be informed of the scope of all scrutiny local crime and disorder reviews and will be given adequate notice of invitations to attend meetings of the Committee and be provided with any required information.

- 3.3 The Community Safety Partnership will be consulted on any draft local crime and disorder reports before they are published. Final reports will be published on the Council's website and circulated in accordance with statutory requirements.
- 3.4 Crime and disorder scrutiny is not to be used as a complaints procedure. Case studies may however be used as part of supporting information for scrutiny reviews.
- 3.5 The Community Safety Partnership will be informed of any Council press releases relating to local crime and disorder, prior to publication.
- 3.6 Meetings of the Committee are normally held in public. However, the press and public may be excluded from a meeting or part of a meeting in order for the Committee to consider exempt or confidential information. Advice is available from the Scrutiny and Consultancy Team if all or some of the evidence to be submitted to the Committee might fall into either of these categories.

4. Community Safety Partnership

- 4.1 The Community Safety Partnership will work together to provide objective and effective scrutiny of crime and disorder.
- 4.2 The Community Safety Partnership will provide information to the Committee relating to the planning and operation of crime and disorder reduction activities and strategies to enable the Committee to undertake its required scrutiny reviews.
- 4.3 However, this does not include confidential information that might impinge upon actual police operations and nor does it include personal information, unless the individual concerned gives consent for such information to be released. Requests for information from the Committee will clearly identify why the information is needed and what it is to be used for to enable the recipient(s) to identify the appropriate information to be provided.
- 4.4 The Community Safety Partners will respond to local crime and disorder scrutiny reviews within 28 days of receipt. The Committee may send copies of responses to individuals who have contributed to or need to know about the review.
- 4.5 A separate protocol and procedure has been agreed to cover local crime and disorder referrals to the Committee from local county councillors.
- 4.6 The Community Safety Partners will nominate a main contact person for each local crime and disorder scrutiny review and maintain regular contact with the Committee, attending in person when invited.

- 4.7 The Community Safety Partnership will ensure that officers attending Committee meetings are able to answer questions openly and are given appropriate support by their line managers. Those attending scrutiny meetings will be given an indication of the likely time they will be asked to participate and the duration of their involvement in the meeting. Committee members will ensure that this is honoured as far as possible.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CARMARTHENSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The current membership of the Community Safety Partnership consists of representatives from the following organisations:

Carmarthenshire County Council#

- + Chief Executive (Chair)
- + Assistant Chief Executive
- + Cabinet Member
- + Community Safety Manager
- + Youth Offending and Prevention Service Manager

Dyfed-Powys Police#

- + Chief Superintendent Carmarthenshire Division
- + Crime & Disorder Co-ordinator

Dyfed-Powys Police Authority#

- + Representative of the Police Authority

Mid & West Wales Fire Service#

- + Head of County Command

Dyfed-Powys Probation Service*

- + Assistant Chief Officer

Carmarthenshire Local Health Board#

- + Head of Partnerships and Integrated Commissioning

Local Criminal Justice Board*

- + Chief Constable

Responsible authorities for the purposes of Section 5(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

- + Co-operating persons and bodies for the purposes of Section 5(2) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998