

Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 15 July 2019

Safer, Fairer, United Communities Strategy Update

Report of the Staffordshire Commissioner

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report is to update the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on the delivery of Safer, Fairer, United Communities Strategy for Staffordshire (the strategy).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Panel note the update on the delivery of the strategy and make comment as appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1. In May 2017, the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire and Rescue, and Crime (Staffordshire Commissioner) published an updated Safer, Fairer, United Communities strategy for 2017–2020. The strategy is about making a sustained difference to tackling crime, harm and anti-social behaviour by improving community safety across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. The updated strategy takes account of and reflects changes that have occurred since the Commissioner came into office in November 2012.
- 3.2. Policing and community safety face different challenges now to those that existed only five years ago. Crime levels locally are steady but the nature of crime has shifted towards more complex cases which require different, more sophisticated responses. The environment has also changed. Most public sector organisations have less money and have, or are, redesigning services to manage with less, whilst aiming to maintain good outcomes. There have been improvements in what gets delivered in some areas, for instance, more victims of crime are now better supported.
- 3.3. The operating environment for the Fire and Rescue service is no less challenging. Societal, environmental and policy changes are impacting on service demand in terms of prevention work and responding to more incidents. The service is continually reviewing and testing plans for dealing with a new range of major threats, from severe weather events to waste crime and terrorism. At the same time, the service will face a financial challenge in the next few years. Dealing with these combined pressures will require some difficult choices to be made.
- 3.4. The Commissioner is concerned that the challenges in the wider public sector and the changing environment means efforts towards greater collaboration

will be increasingly difficult to maintain. There is a risk that organisations under pressure retreat into delivering only what has to be delivered statutorily. The strategy reflects that but also reinforces the greater need to work in a joined up way with earlier intervention a priority.

- 3.5. A necessity is more effective information sharing between agencies and this will require investment in technology. Work to develop the Commissioner's strategy towards a multi-agency approach via the 'Connected Staffordshire' solution progresses, but the capacity of some agencies to identify the necessary funding is a challenge.
- 3.6. The Commissioner has established five key priorities in his updated strategy:
 - Modern Policing: A police force that is fit for a changing future
 - Early Intervention: Identifying and tackling root cause issues at the earliest opportunity
 - Supporting Victims and Witnesses: Making it easier for victims and witnesses to get the support they need, when they need it
 - Managing Offenders: Preventing offending in the first place and reducing reoffending
 - Public Confidence: Creating opportunities for communities to shape policing, with greater transparency and openness to increase confidence in policing
- 3.7. Alongside local authorities and other key partners, there is significant work being undertaken to improve the delivery of public services, support continuous improvement and public safety, and ensure funding supports more efficient and effective service delivery. The 'whole system' approach to making people and places safer continues to support the on-going achievement of the Commissioner's ambition for a safer Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.
- 3.8. Opportunities for the Police and Fire and Rescue services to collaborate more and to share some support functions, as well as some buildings, are progressing. This will mean that, in time, more of the money available can be used operationally, in the heart of our communities.

4. Progress to Date

- 4.1. Highlight reports are attached at Appendix A (i) to (v) for each of the five priorities.

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