

## **LEICESTERSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD**

**1 DECEMBER 2017**

### **LSCSB UPDATE: NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND**

#### **Purpose**

1. This report outlines the current strategic aims and governance arrangements for Neighbourhood Watch Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (NHW LLR) and seeks formal support from partners through adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU, Appendix A).

#### **Background**

2. Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) is a partnership between local communities, Police and Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's). It is a service which is completely free and its aims are to help people to protect themselves and their property, to reduce the fear of crime, improve the safety of communities and develop community spirit and cohesion. Governance of NHW both nationally and locally has undergone substantial change and a great deal of work has been undertaken to restructure and reinvigorate the business model.

#### **Notable developments and challenges:**

##### **Past Year**

3. Key work-streams have included:
  - a. Ongoing work to develop a robust NHW Committee. The NHW Committee is made up of volunteers. The recruitment and retention of Committee members with the time and suitable skills is an ongoing challenge.
  - b. A notable achievement has been the successful introduction and development of an information mobile phone application in Rutland.
  - c. NHW LLR has been selected by National NHW for a pilot scheme for an awareness initiative, promoting NHW which is taking place in South Leicester Neighbourhood Policing Area (NPA).
  - d. The NHW LLR Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed and signed by Leicestershire Police, Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council. The document is also supported by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

- e. NHW has ongoing issues common to many charities. Two issues of particular note include:
  - i. Funding which in-turn impacts other aspects of NHW development.
  - ii. The recruitment and retention of volunteers to achieve overall objectives.

### Coming Year

- 4. Unsurprisingly work-streams will focus on addressing the issues outlined above. NHW will:
  - a. Recruit additional members with the required skills and experience to enhance and augment the NHW Committee;
  - b. Obtain additional funding from a range of sources to support the development of more NHW schemes throughout the areas of geographical responsibility;
  - c. Development and introduction of the information mobile phone application within selected areas in Leicester and Leicestershire;
  - d. Develop new partnerships with like-minded organisations for mutual benefit, including CSP's, (with whom NHW would like to have very close working relationships), Rural Community Council and Royal Voluntary Service and Parish Councils, working closely with their individual initiatives such as Good Neighbour Schemes;
  - e. Continue to develop and expand existing relationships with such organisations as Voluntary Action Leicestershire;
  - f. Build upon the schemes which are being developed in such areas as Barwell where a community led initiative is proving to be a positive step forward.

### **Key issues for partnership working or affecting partners:**

- 5. NHW would like to establish very close working relationships across LLR which would enable NHW to expand its work and help NHW to network and establish positive partnerships with local organisations. In so doing NHW will:
  - a. Help local communities to gain relevant awareness about other schemes in their locality to support self-resilience;
  - b. Help to instigate greater co-responsibility and trust amongst local residents;
  - c. Help to improve communication with Police, including PCSOs and Special Constables;

- d. Support the gathering of relevant intelligence that helps to prevent crime, and makes communities feel safer.
6. The development and implementation of NHW schemes across the county will help achieve NHW core objectives and support individuals living in communities across Leicestershire. A core aim is to promote a better quality of life; derived from an increase on social capital and a decrease on the fear of crime. NHW will seek to do this by:
- a. Sharing relevant information (information about existing schemes, potential interested areas, etc.) that helps to develop resilient and sustainable communities;
  - b. Ensuring the right contact with CSPs is established and by communicating when personnel/members leave their role, ensuring a seamless process of development that helps NHW to be more effective and efficient;
  - c. By including NHW on relevant meetings where community participation, development of new schemes or relevant intelligence is shared that can support and strengthen the NHW network.

**Issues and challenges in localities:**

7. There are a range of issues which are not limited geographically. These are detailed as follows;
- a. Access to potential partnerships and developing new partnerships – both of which may be affected by a misconception about NHW;
  - b. Difficulty in recruiting volunteers at all levels;
  - c. Accessing and acquiring funding to support overall NHW development;
  - d. Inaccurate and outdated information about local NHW schemes.

**Recommendations for the Board:**

8. That the Board:
- a. Notes the content of the report;
  - b. Formally considers and signs up to the NHW Memorandum of Understanding.

**Richard Clarke**  
**Chairman, Neighbourhood Watch Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland**  
**Tel: 0754 1133683**  
**Email: richc63@ymail.com**

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