

CABINET – 9th DECEMBER 2003

YOUTH CRIME PREVENTION AND REDUCTION

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the spending decisions made to date from the additional revenue budget and capital programme provisions for youth crime prevention and reduction initiatives in 2003/04 and to set out proposals for spending in 2004/05.

Recommendation

2. The Cabinet is recommended:
 - (i) To note the spending decisions for 2003/04
 - (ii) To approve the proposals for 2004/05

Reason for Recommendation

3. The additional budget provisions arise out of the commitments in the Medium Term Corporate Strategy to achieve the objective of “Seeking a Safer County”.

Timetable for Decisions and Scrutiny

4. At the Scrutiny Commission on 5 November when community safety was discussed, it was advised that a further report on the Youth Crime Prevention and Reduction budget would be submitted to a future meeting of the Commission. The next meeting of the Commission is on 7 January 2004.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

5. The County Council has a statutory duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act in exercising its functions to have “due regard to the likely effect of those functions on, and the need to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.” Under the Act the County

Council is a partner in each of the seven district based crime and disorder reduction partnerships.

6. The centrality of the Medium Term Corporate Strategy has already been highlighted in paragraph 3 above and Cabinet also approved a new corporate Community Safety Plan on 11 November 2003. This budget provision will therefore support the implementation of the Plan.

Resource Implications

7. Provision in 2003/04 is £250,000 revenue and £100,000 capital. Spending in 2003/04 has not been fully utilised, in part due to the time needed to develop the proposals. No capital proposals have been brought forward and, following discussion with the Director of Resources, the capital element will therefore be treated as savings.
8. The provision for 2004/05 was initially £350,000. Following discussion with the Director of Resources, it is proposed that the underspend in 2003/04 be carried forward, resulting in a total of £403,950 in 2004/05 and with an overall budget of £600,000 over the 2 years. The spending proposals are set out in Appendix 1.

Circulation Under Sensitive Issues Procedures

9. None

PART B

Background

10. The Medium Term Corporate Strategy emphasises that Leicestershire people should feel safe at home and safe within their local communities and that meeting the needs of young people can, in many instances, lead to residents feeling safer in their communities. In order to meet these objectives and commitments, the youth crime prevention budget is divided between measures that are broadly preventive measures and those that are crime reduction and enforcement measures.

Policy Development

11. Much of the action currently taken and proposed is through partnerships because the County Council has few powers to act alone. The Community Safety Plan sets out the approach to crime prevention and addresses the action in hand to meet the crime related PSA targets.
12. The County Council is also a member of the district based Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships usually known in Leicestershire as Community Safety Partnerships. The Cabinet Lead Member for Safer Communities has begun, and intends to continue, to attend meetings of these partnerships in order to build up relationships and demonstrate the County Council's commitment to playing a full part in meeting their local objectives and priorities.
13. The Police will obviously take the lead in enforcement but they recognise that other agencies must play a part, especially in the management of persistent and prolific offenders and in dealing with anti-social behaviour.
14. The Chief Constable has confirmed that a few hundred persistent offenders commit more than two thirds of the crime in Leicestershire. Many of them have social and/or drug abuse problems. Neither of these provide an excuse for criminal behaviour but experience shows that unless specialist support and help is provided they are more likely to continue with their criminal activities. Proposals within this report focus specifically on reducing the level of offending by the most prolific young offenders in Leicestershire.
15. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is currently receiving more attention. The Police and Local Authorities – District Councils but not County Councils - have significant powers to deal with ASB through anti-social behaviour orders. These measures are being used more often but are difficult and expensive. Again proposals within this report support this area of work.

16. Co-ordinated action with all the agencies through the establishment of a proposed new Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Community Safety Programme Board will help to improve performance in both of these areas. The Board will enable greater coherence between criminal justice objectives and community safety objectives, especially in relation to offender management and tackling anti-social behaviour. As debated at the recent County Council meeting, further consultation is taking place on the composition of the Board.

Proposals

17. Appendix 1 provides a schedule of the current spending commitments for the youth crime prevention budget in 2003/04 and additional proposals for 2004/05.

18. Within the preventive measures there is a range of diversionary activities, including extending existing youth work provision, the development of a youth café based in Loughborough, and sports projects which use sport to engage with disaffected young people. In addition, prevention officers within the Youth Offending Service provide more targeted preventive work with individual young people and their families aged 14 – 16. The Community Safety Officer post is a more strategic development to ensure more effective involvement of the Youth Offending Service in the work of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.

19. The crime reduction and enforcement measures include a post in the voluntary sector to assist in the provision and co-ordination of work with parents to enable them to manage problematic behaviour more effectively, either on a voluntary basis or under a parenting order. There is also a contribution to the work of Crimestoppers.

20. As indicated earlier in this report in paragraphs 14 and 15 an additional contribution is proposed to the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme. This programme is targeted at the most prolific offenders in the county and city and is a joint programme with Leicester City. Funded mainly by the Youth Justice Board it provides a rigorous community based programme of education and offence focussed work of 25 hours per week, including electronic tagging and use of police intelligence. The proposal enables up to 12 additional county young people to be provided with a place on the programme.

21. A contribution (in conjunction with District partners) to the provision of ASBOs is also proposed, which might include supporting the provision of specialist legal advice. The work of the new Community Safety Programme Board through its Community Re-assurance and Anti-social Behaviour delivery group will be well placed to make more detailed proposals for the use of partnership funding, along with the County Council's contribution, to tackle anti-social behaviour.

22. Monitoring and evaluation will be an integral part of each initiative in order to ensure what is effective, particularly in relation to the preventive diversionary measures.

Equal Opportunities Implications

23. None

Background Papers

Medium Term Corporate Strategy
Community Safety Plan.

Officer to Contact

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Appendix 1

Youth Crime Prevention and Reduction Budget

<i>Preventive Measures</i>	2003/04 £	2004/05 £
1. Extending Youth Work Service <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leicestershire Youth Service• Mobile Projects• Voluntary Sector	21,200 6,000 0	30,000 12,000 10,000
2. Additional Facilities and One-Off Equipment	40,000	57,950
3. Youth Council	3,000	3,000
4. Charnwood Youth Café	25,000	60,000
5. Sports Projects	15,000	15,000
6. Crimebeat	8,000	8,000
7. Youth Offending Service <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prevention Officers (X2)• Community Safety Officer (youth crime reduction)	28,000 11,600	61,000 33,000
<i>Crime Reduction and Enforcement Measures</i>		
8. Parenting Work (including Parenting Orders)	10,250	41,000
9. Youth Offending Service <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (targeted at prolific young offenders)	15,000	40,000
10. Crimestoppers	3,000	3,000
11. Contribution to provision of ASBOs	10,000	30,000
Total	196,050	403,950
Total over 2 years: £600,000		