

Scrutiny Protocol

Crime and Disorder



2008-2009
*Transforming Services:
Citizen Engagement
and Empowerment*



2009-2010
Cohesive and resilient communities



2009-2010
Better outcomes for people and places

Introduction

The Police and Justice Act 2006, as amended by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, requires every local authority to have a crime and disorder committee with the power to scrutinise the arrangement for preparing and implementing the crime and disorder strategy. The committee must also have the power to scrutinise local crime and disorder matters.

In Chorley the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) will carry out this function.

This Protocol has been produced by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and agreed by the Chair of the Responsible Authorities Group. The membership of this group includes those “Responsible Authorities” set out in legislation who have the shared responsibility for developing the crime and disorder strategy together with those bodies with whom the responsible authorities have a duty to co-operate. The “Responsible Authorities” are:

Chorley Council
Lancashire Constabulary
NHS Central Lancashire

South Ribble Council
Lancashire Police Authority

Lancashire County Council
Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service

The protocol sets out the mutual expectations of scrutiny members and the Responsible Authorities Group in relation to the community safety scrutiny process. It aims to ensure that good relationships between the scrutiny members and Responsible Authorities Group are maintained throughout the scrutiny process. The protocol may be revised by agreement between all the interested parties to enable continual improvement of the scrutiny process.

It should be noted that the Responsible Authorities Group covers both Chorley and South Ribble. There is potential in the future for joint scrutiny of the Responsible Authorities Group. The role of the Police Authority and Lancashire County Council in scrutiny will also evolve going forward.

Purpose

Scrutiny 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.

The key organisations involved in scrutiny of crime and disorder will be willing to share information, knowledge and reports which relate to the delivery and success of services in Chorley and carry out duties that would be reasonably expected of them to enable crime and disorder scrutiny to be successfully undertaken.

Organisations will work and co-operate together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust with an understanding and commitment to its aims. Crime and disorder scrutiny will be open and transparent.

Working together

The RAG will work in partnership with the Chorley Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide objective and effective scrutiny of crime and disorder matters.

All dates and times of meetings of the Committee, agendas, minutes and reports will be circulated to nominated representatives of the Responsible Authorities Group. The Responsible Authorities Group will provide a representative for scrutiny inquiries and will nominate a main contact person for each crime and disorder scrutiny exercise.

The Responsible Authorities Group will be consulted on annual work programmes and informed in advance of scrutiny exercises that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is intending to undertake. They will also be informed of the scope of relevant scrutiny exercises and will be given at least 21 days notice of invitations to attend meetings and to provide any required information.

The Responsible Authorities Group will provide information relating to the planning and operation of crime and disorder reduction activities and strategies that is required by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee so that it can undertake its required scrutiny reviews. This will not however, include confidential information that might impinge upon actual police operations or individuals, unless an individual gives consent for such information to be released.

The Responsible Authorities Group will be consulted on any draft reports before they are published. Final reports will be presented to Executive Cabinet, the Responsible Authorities Group, be published on the Council's website and circulated in accordance with the regulations on scrutiny of crime and disorder.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Responsible Authorities Group will make arrangements for monitoring the implementation or relevant recommendations produced by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and for reporting progress back.

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 exercises. Individual crime and disorder issues in Members' wards will generally be best tackled at an operational level with local police officers. Scrutiny should only be used as a last resort to address issues which have not been resolved through other means.