

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMUNITY SAFETY (EVALUATION OF DISPERSAL ORDERS)
TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

Tuesday, 23 January 2007

PRESENT:

Councillor Brian Hoare Chair
Councillor Elizabeth Tavener

Debbie Ferguson Community Safety Manager
Thomas Hall Corporate Manager, Citizen Engagement
Tracy Tiff Scrutiny Officer

APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Andrew Simpson.

1 ELECTION OF THE CHAIR OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY (EVALUATION OF DISPERSAL ORDERS) TASK AND FINISH GROUP

It was proposed by Councillor Tavener that Councillor B Hoare be elected Chair of this Task and Finish Group.

It was:-

AGREED: That Councillor Brian Hoare be elected Chair of the Community Safety (Evaluation of Dispersal Orders) Task and Finish Group

2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Community Safety (Evaluation of Dispersal Orders) Task and Finish Group.

3 SCOPING EXERCISE

The Task and Finish Group scoped its review (draft attached at Annex I to the minutes).

It was noted that this Task and Finish Group had evolved from the previous Overview and Scrutiny system, which had set up a Dispersal Orders Working Group that had requested an evaluation of Dispersal Orders. When the previous Overview and Scrutiny system ceased, the Community Safety Team had carried out the evaluation. T Hall advised that when the Overview and Scrutiny

Committee had included the evaluation of Dispersal Orders on its work programme it had been unaware of the evaluation that had taken place.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 12 December 2006, had discussed the need for this Task and Finish Group as evaluation work had already been completed. At that meeting it was commented that:

- Clearly some evaluation has been carried out but further questions need to be asked, for example what is the Exit Strategy and what is the next stage of the process
- There is a need to ascertain whether Councillors have been consulted on the Dispersal Orders Boundary Protocol
- Further Dispersal Order statistics should be provided

In scoping the review, the Group discussed the Report on Dispersal Orders, 2006 that had been produced by L Owens and J Ashton.

It was commented: -

- It would be beneficial for the Group to hear the views of a Senior Officer from Northamptonshire Police on Youth Dispersal Orders. The Police supplies statistics about responses to Dispersal Orders, such information would be beneficial to inform the review. The Police can identify key offenders.
- Warning letters to offenders and their parents/guardians are issued and often the parent or guardian will call and express their shock that the young person is behaving in such a manner, commenting that they will they be disciplined. A record of such letters is kept by the Anti Social Behaviour Unit
- The majority of Dispersal Orders are on the South West sector
- 16 Dispersal Orders have been granted in the borough
- Clarity was requested regarding the 19 designated areas per force. D Ferguson undertook to provide this information to the next meeting
- There is not a designated 'owner' of the outcomes of the Dispersal Orders Report. The Council has chosen to carry out an evaluation, few others have
- D Ferguson had shared the report with the COMPAS Unit and Northants Police recently and it was welcomed. COMPAS will publish the report on its website
- It would be beneficial for the Group to investigate the effectiveness of reporting on Dispersal Orders
- When measuring the effectiveness of Dispersal Orders, what happens in that area and surrounding areas, during and after the Dispersal Order

should be investigated

- The Youth Workers have been made use of in areas with Dispersal Orders, finding out the views of young people. A multi agency approach was taken which was very effective
- The report provided statistics on two areas with Dispersal Orders; there is a need for similar information on the remaining fourteen areas. A map showing the coverage of the town and any duplication would help inform the review
- Duston is an area that had two Dispersal Orders. The second one had a different, multi-agency, approach to that of the first
- Many residents have commented that although Dispersal Orders made them feel safer and reduced the fear of crime, they were apprehensive that once the Dispersal Order had ended that the problems would reoccur
- The success of Dispersal Orders is dependant upon police resources
- Regarding an Exit Strategy, D Ferguson advised that none of the 16 areas had had such a Strategy. However, Duston did have an Exit Strategy for its repeat Dispersal Order, which was looked at by the Anti Social Behaviour Working Group that had been set up in the area. The Chair emphasised the need for an Exit Strategy
- Dispersal Orders are intended to be a short-term measure with a long-term solution. The Government intends Dispersal Orders to be used to combat residents' fear of crime
- The Police usually initiates Dispersal Orders. It collates all the evidence. A proposed Dispersal Order is then sent to the Council who countersigns the Order. A Dispersal Order must be countersigned before it can be implemented. In response to a query whether Councillors were consulted on the Dispersal Order boundaries, D Ferguson advised that she would not countersign a Dispersal Order unless it has been agreed by at least one ward Councillor.

The Chair requested that the following information be provided to the next meeting: -

- 1 An analysis of the 16 areas that had Dispersal Orders, any links to deprivation and details of the areas with repeat Dispersal Orders. This information could be given on a map of the borough.
- 2 Responses to the following questions: -
 - Where are the repeat areas and why did they need a further Dispersal Order
 - Details of any Exit Strategies, i.e. Duston
 - Clarity on the consultation process for Dispersal Orders
- 3 Feedback on anti social behaviour interventions within NBC's control

A senior Police Officer would be asked to attend the next meeting to respond to the

Group's questions. The Chair would put together a draft list of questions and circulate to the Group for comment.

AGREED: (1) That the following information be provided to the next meeting:-

- **An analysis of the 16 areas that had Dispersal Orders, any links to deprivation and details of the areas with repeat Dispersal Orders. This information to be given on a map of the borough.**
- **Responses to the following questions: -**
 - **Where are the repeat areas and why did they need a further Dispersal Order**
 - **Details of any Exit Strategies, i.e. Duston**
 - **Clarity on the consultation process for Dispersal Orders**
- **Feedback on anti social behaviour interventions within NBC's control**

(2) That a senior Police Officer be asked to attend the next meeting to respond to the Group's questions. The Chair will put together a draft list of questions and circulate to the Group for comment.

4 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

The schedule of meetings was agreed:-

January to March 2007

15 February 2007 Holding Room

8 March 2007 Holding Room

Commencing at 6.30pm

The meeting concluded at 7:35pm

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

COMMUNITY SAFETY (EVALUATION OF DISPERSAL ORDERS) TASK AND FINISH GROUP

1. Purpose/Objectives of the Review

- To add value to the Dispersal Order process

2. Outcomes Required

- To make recommendations for better management and use of Dispersal Orders
- To help all Councillors understand the Dispersal Order process and how it fits into anti social initiatives in wards
- To make recommendations for multi agency working to defect young people from anti social behaviour
- To share outcomes with partners

3. Information Required

- The effectiveness of reporting on Dispersal Orders
- Analysis of the 16 areas in the borough that have had Dispersal Orders, links to deprivation
- Details of repeat Dispersal Orders
- Details of Exit Strategies, i.e. Duston
- Consultation process for Dispersal Orders
- Anti Social Behaviour interventions within NBC's control
- Police's views on Dispersal Orders, now and in the future
- Dispersal Order response statistics

4. Format of Information

- Officer reports/presentations
- Baseline data
- Witness Interview with Senior Police Officer

5. Methods Used to Gather Information

- Minutes of meetings
- Desktop research
- Evidence from Northants Police

- Evidence from the Anti Social Behaviour Unit

6. Co-Options to the Review

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7. Evidence gathering Timetable

December 2006 to March 2007

23 January 2007

15 February

8 March

8. Responsible Officers

Lead Officer	Thomas Hall
Co-ordinator	Tracy Tiff

9. Resources and Budgets

D Ferguson, Community Safety Manager, to provide support and advice.

10. Final report resented by:

Completed 8 March 2007. Presented by the Chair of the Task and Finish Group to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its March meeting and then to Cabinet.

11. Monitoring procedure:

Review the impact of the report after six months.