Solihull Independent Advisory Group (IAG)

Monday 18th May 2015 Meeting Record & Actions

Present: David Page, Wayne Elcock, Eric Knibb, Nick Baker, John Cogin, Rev Roberts, Thelma Borley, Alwyn Doyle, Marcus Brain and Sarah Mushtaq (YPCC) (referred to by initials in text)

WMP: Ch Supt Murray (CSM), Insp Wilson & PS Wall.

Apologies: Dave Dixon, Jez Sumner & Insp Sarling

Minutes 24th March 2015 accepted and two updates.

From DP the proposed Stop & Search feedback letter had been rebuffed by WMP over Data Protection matters mainly (discussed later).

From CSM a report on the success in policing an EDL –v- UAF & others protest. ‘Life went on as normal’. DP added a sub-group had met with Insp Wilson beforehand. This led to a discussion over why a Muslim-only cemetery was being sought by EK and SM reported the pigs head incident @ The Hub, Hermitage Road had gone worldwide via social media arousing interest. CSM gave a confidential update given on the investigation of this incident.

Sector Reports

Insp Wilson: across Solihull Constituency crime was up by 1% and 30% in Shirley West Ward. Details given of new partnership approaches, with parents re children with weapons; Hobs Moat “walk around” with Council; School Panels with head teachers to share information on ASB & crime and a new collaboration project with Council and other agencies – with an example re suspected CSE locations being tackled.

CSM later raised the issue of consent around information sharing *– for discussion at a future meeting?* He later referred to ‘Dare to Share’ being his guiding principle as existing protocols did not cover all issues of mutual concern.

PS Wall (for Insp Green): partnerships with schools in the north of Meriden Constituency was being renewed, the demise of school-based officers three years ago had led to an information drought. By sharing concerns with those schools, originally (?) over CSE had led to a ‘tidal wave’ of information and now 40-50% local information came via these links.

Off-road bikes remained a nuisance, with a “no pursuit” policy other options were being used; some success had led to a ten-fold increase in public calls. A video was being prepared based on the story of a local youth who had crashed an off-road bike which changed his life.

Four recent woundings had caused concern, all involved people who knew each other and were slightly different, for example one involved a very drunk adult male and two youths stabbing another over cocaine.

PS Wall and CSM asked for advice on options. Various comments made re stance taken by licensed premise(s); schools on weapons and suspending if applicable giving a caution for possessing a knife. Explanation given where a suspect for four street robberies was arrested in a planned operation, a search found he had a knife, but he was not identified by the robbery victims. He did get eight months in jail for the knife offence.

CSM gave a confidential update after a question from DP re a media reported burglary where a firearm was displayed.

RR observed that locally WMP were on top of ASB and crime is not a big issue locally. WE would be able to give some assistance on youth involvement in a recent wounding.

CSE Briefing: invited guest not present and CSM gave a short briefing illustrating the “hidden” aspects of this type of crime. He noted that the Council’s existing work had greatly helped, although that showed CSE was a local issue not on the scale of Rotherham. A short discussion followed and (**Action for CSM**) a confidential briefing could be given at the next meeting.

Question Time

In reverse order to Agenda:

1. Is the Council installing LED street lighting in areas / roads that match WMP priorities? CSM replied not in the initial stage and the next stage depends on funding, but WMP will ask for priority areas needs being included. MB commented the initial stage had been in Dorridge and Knowle. DP suggested the two IAG members who sat (in their own right) on the Community Safety Board could raise this as an issue (**Action Insp Wilson to liaise with EK & JC**).
2. What is the role of Neighbourhood Watch now? WMP’s role is reducing? JC, EK & TB each made points on this matter over the lack of timely local information being given to NHW Co-Ordinators; difficulties due to DPA in communications with other Co-Ordinators and the use of social media e.g. Facebook.

CSM responded that WMP cannot service / manage NHW now and NHW had to become self-governing – this reflected him having less money and fewer officers. DP added the Partnerships Team had dropped in five years from six staff to three now and a 2014 report found NHW only covered ten thousand local residents out of ???

(**Actions for Insp Wilson: review the existing bi-monthly newsletter; review the frequency of circulating crime data; a letter to all Co-Ordinators (**see the below paragraph**) to approve sharing of contact details and what social media could contribute**).

DP suggested the IAG could help NHW Co-Ordinators if they agreed; exact format unclear – *matter for a future IAG*. (*TB added on 19/5 that CSM’s letter to the Co-Ordinators should include the offer from IAG Chair to facilitate a borough-wide meeting on the issues discussed last night*).

DP requested CSM comment on the announced closure and restricted hours for local station public enquiry offices. MB questioned what the financial benefit was and would it save the £3.1m cited. (**Action: CSM to provide MB with information on this**).

Stop & Search Scrutiny

DP noted no actual Stops had been examined for four months and this was needed soon, if necessary by a sub-group. (**Action: DP to arrange a meeting with Insp Sarling and then ask members to attend**).

Insp Wilson then gave a briefing, with a print-out provided. A discussion ensued over whether local complaints were being made; Insp Sarling had previously stated there were none and Insp Wilson knew of none himself. Stop & Search was not a local issue, confirmed by SH & WE. MB noted Elmdon Ward had one search, even though next to a ‘hot spot’ with many stops.

CSM suggested that WMP would consider writing to sixty persons subject to a Stop & Search (where a name and address were given) and invite them to neutral locations (one in the north and one in the south; RR offered the venue and perhaps Solihull College would help?) to meet with IAG members if they had concerns. (**Action: CSM and Insp Sarling to confirm if this approach was OK**).

Commanders update

A brief overview was given and in response to DP question an explanation of the value in the “triage car” (WMP, nurse and psychiatric nurse) in handling health concerns – which accounted for 20% of all calls for service.

Any other issues

CSM stressed the need for the IAG to expand its membership. DP responded six had been asked, some directly and only one had volunteered (MB). SH was attending and it appeared the Youth IAG was moribund, although members wanted to be ‘virtual members’ i.e. electronic notifications. Younger members would be welcome.

IAG membership would be handled by DP & WE, with a courtesy referral to WMP, as had happened with MB. The IAG was not for political party members.

The IAG Agenda would be drafted by DP & WE. **The next meeting is on Monday 13th July 2015, starting at 6 pm @ Homer Road.**