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Venue Penlan Social Club, Penlan, Swansea
Title: Crime & Disorder Solutions- Neath Port Talbot

**Joint statement by Superintendent Bob McAllister,
Neath Port Talbot Division, South Wales Police
and Ken Sawyers, Chief Executive,
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council**

We have a strong belief that the 1998 Crime & Disorder Partnerships have been a significant success. As local Police Superintendent and Chief Executive of Neath Port Talbot and co-Chairs of the Partnership we are both actively engaged on local Crime & Disorder issues.

Local Government Modernisation has also enabled Neath Port Talbot to have a Cabinet Member with specific responsibility for Crime and Disorder.

The local partnership is strong and imaginative - focused on practical action. But it is not perfect. Some partners have different degrees of financial engagement. However, partnership working is set firmly within the Neath Port Talbot overarching Community Plan which looks ahead to the year 2012 and includes Crime and Disorder as one of its overriding themes with stretching targets. (See Appendix 1).

A new three-year "Crime and Disorder Strategy" and Action Plan has recently been published, focussing on seven themes:-

1. Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour
2. Reducing Youth Crime and Disorder and promoting a range of diversionary activities for young people
3. Tackling Drug and Alcohol misuse through a co-ordinated approach to prevention, detection and treatment
4. Reducing the level of recorded crime by using crime data to target action effectively
5. Reducing the level of repeat incidents of Domestic Violence
6. Continuing a programme of Public Safety; and
7. Further improving the effectiveness of the Crime and Disorder Partnership

To elaborate further on three of these issues:

1. Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

In the last few years concern regarding nuisance and anti social behaviour has grown. Surveys carried out indicate that a majority of residents rank this as one of their main concerns.

Neath Port Talbot CBC and South Wales Police have signed a protocol for joint working in these cases with the aim of ensuring that all agencies co-operate in finding an appropriate solution for “individual” cases; and develop a structure for monitoring and evaluating “acceptable behaviour contracts” and “anti-social behaviour orders.”

A Crime & Disorder Case Review Group has been established to tackle anti social behaviour and a range of options can be applied either individually or collectively.

Punitive	Intervention
Criminal Prosecution	Changes to the physical environment eg introduction of better street lighting closure of alleyways and footpaths cutting of hedges
Eviction	
Injunction- Housing Acts	Involvement of Support Agencies
Noise Nuisance Prosecution	- Streetwise - Youth Service - Youth Offending Team - Social Work Support
Alcohol Drinking Area Bans	
Trading Standards Prosecution	Creation of new facilities - Motor Scrambling Course - Car Mechanics - Skateboarding Parks - Youth Stops
Anti- Social Behaviour Order	
Acceptable Behaviour Contracts	

Currently the following action is being taken:

Action	No. of Cases	Agencies
Support and intervention	7	Youth Service Education
Under Investigation for analysis	5	Police Housing Education
ASBO – Active Monitoring for breaches	2	Youth Offending Team Housing Police
Use of Trading Standards/Alcohol Ban Legislation	3	Trading Standards Police Leisure
Use of eviction	1	Housing Police
Commencement of ASBO procedure	4	Police Council
No further action required	6	
Commencement of ABC Procedure	5	Police Council

Resources to support this work have been a challenge but are presently being addressed by the establishment of a dedicated team; the launch of the scheme publicly by leaflets and posters; the establishment of an IT system; and the establishment of a pilot warden scheme. The scheme has recently been commended as innovative and effective.

2. **Drugs and Alcohol**

The whole substance misuse landscape seems to have changed in the last twelve months. But whilst the public debate is about drugs, it is still predominantly because of the misuse of alcohol that difficulties occur in our local communities and town centres.

Some recent statistics for the Morgannwg Drug & Alcohol Action area (Bridgend; Neath Port Talbot and Swansea) are:

- (a) alcohol is the biggest problem with an estimated 16,000 dependent adults within the area;
- (b) an estimated 8,000 adults were reported as dependent on drugs across the area but 80% of dependent drug and alcohol users do not access services; and
- (c) 65% of heroin users were aged between 15-25 when they began to use it, whilst a further 5% were below 15.

The lowest ever price of Class A Drugs and their increased availability has meant that in the last twelve months, the DAAT's responsiveness to the dangers of chaotic drug use has had to be continually re-assessed. It has made effective action planning, whether in the statutory sector or the non-statutory sector, even more challenging.

Pleasingly, the need for more investment in treatment services is being universally recognised. In particular, credit is due, we believe, to Mrs. Edwina Hart, the Minister who has expressed her personal determination to do more about this issue for Wales, albeit that it is also a Home Office responsibility.

There is, we believe, clear evidence that a significant expansion of effective drug treatment services will reduce hospital costs, violence, welfare costs and drug related crime and that earlier access and other arrangements will lead to tangible benefits – a win, win situation for all.

In terms of disrupting supply, whilst this will always be problematical, the local Action Teams have been undertaking pioneering work. There has been the “Rat on a Rat” Campaign in Swansea, so ably supported by the South Wales Evening Post, but before this, the Neath Port Talbot Local Action Team had its MAD Campaign – “Melin against Drugs”, quickly followed by a campaign in Ystalyfera and by STOP – “Sandfields Takes On Pushers”.

The Melin campaign in particular was a quite remarkable example of how a community can join together, with professionals, to seize the initiative and make a real difference. A drugs hotline to the Police was established and many arrests followed.

3. **Youth Offending**

Neath Port Talbot has many local initiatives, e.g:

- a part time fire worker to look at Arson, Vehicle Crime etc.
- a partnership with the Drugs Agency WGCADA to look at the Arrest/Referral scheme and deal constructively with offending drug users.
- a dedicated victim liaison worker whose role is to consult with and represent the views of victims, in all cases where there is an identifiable victim. Also within the Referral Order process to accompany the victim to the Youth Offender Panel, encourage them to express their views, and support them through the process.
- the Youth Inclusion Programme in Sandfields, which is to be funded until 2006 by the Youth Justice Board, has made a strong contribution to crime reduction in the area. The policy of targeting disaffected young people in the community is proving a highly successful strategy.
- five local areas are involved in the SPLASH Cymru programme providing structured activities during the school holidays for young people aged 9-17.
- young offenders are involved in structured leisure activities which can extend far beyond their statutory orders, involving, for example, a partnership with the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme.
- Other current initiatives included Crucial Crew, which operated in 55 primary schools in 2002 helping 2000 children.

The Local Authority Crime & Disorder Team shares the local Police Station in Port Talbot. It is a symbolic expression of our partnership.

4. **Some Areas of Concern**

- (a) There has been increasing concern about the Youth Justice Board's and Westminster Government's understanding of issues affecting Wales.
- (b) There is concern on a South Wales basis concerning the response of the National Probation Service to the funding and resourcing of Youth Offending Teams.
- (c) The availability of skilled practitioners to increase any newly funded drug treatment services remains a challenge.
- (d) A key issue is the need for longer term (say 3–5 year) funding, for non-statutory agencies and so end the short term funding regime which consume so much of their energy, leading in turn to financial instability and uncertainty.
- (e) Also, any new money must truly add value and not simply replace earlier short term funds!

We are happy to elaborate further on these or any other Crime & Disorder issues. Superintendent McAllister will speak also about Community policing and the achievements of Performance Targets.

Superintendent Bob McAlister
Neath Police Station

Ken Sawyers
Port Talbot Civic Centre

Appendix A

The potential effects of crime and disorder on the quality of life of people cannot be overstated. Whilst the incidence of criminal activity and disorderly behaviour is relatively low in comparison to many other areas, the impact on victims can still be far-reaching, well out-weighting the actual seriousness of any incident. Equally, the fear of crime and disorder can prevent people from carrying out their normal activities.

Surveys have highlighted concerns about such issues ranging from older people's fear of going out at night to young people's worries about peer pressure and drugs. Information about actual crime levels reveals a need to address car crime, house burglary, violent crime and the supply of drugs.

The Crime and Disorder Act has been a catalyst for forging an effective partnership between the Council, the Police and other partners. All are working together to tackle the problems of crime and disorder. The Council and the Police published a three-year crime and disorder strategy in 1998 having undertaken a wide-ranging audit of the levels of crime and anti-social

behaviour in Neath Port Talbot. The strategy has been implemented through a series of action plans relating to: reducing the fear and incidence of domestic violence; reducing youth crime and disorder ; increasing public safety; reducing substance misuse; and monitoring the cost of crime and disorder.

Work is underway on the next crime and disorder audit leading to the development of another three-year strategy from April 2002. Many of the objectives and targets that follow are based on the current strategy and action plans and these will need to be revised in the light of the new strategy.

Our Vision

Our Vision is that by 2012, we will have:

- *achieved and sustained a significant year-on-year reduction in the overall level of crime, particularly in respect of car crime, house burglary, drug-related crime and crimes of violence.*
- *achieved a significant improvement, measured by survey, in residents' perception of their safety in the community.*
- *Provided a wide range of diversionary social activities to reduce the likelihood of young people becoming involved in criminal or anti-social behaviour.*

Key partners in tackling crime and disorder include not only the Police and the Council, but also the Probation Service, the Magistrates Courts, the Local Action Team on Substance Misuse, the Local Health Group, the Youth Offending Team and the Fire Service. The voluntary sector and community groups have an equally important role to play, including organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch, Victim Support, Guiding Hand, Women's Aid and West Glamorgan Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

Our Objectives

This is what we wish to do together:

(a) Maintain the local community policing initiative, developing a strategic, intelligence-led approach to tackling specific criminal activity in our communities.

(b) Continue to provide locally targeted community safety initiatives aimed at reducing the fear of crime, the incidence of anti-social behaviour and increasing public safety.

(c) Tackle the problems of neighbourhood nuisance and anti-social behaviour using a multi-agency approach and seeking anti-social behaviour orders where necessary.

(d) Expand and enhance the network of local neighbourhood watch schemes, continuing to work with and support existing schemes.

(e) Work with voluntary and community groups to find local solutions to local problems of crime and disorder.

(f) Promote the "secure by design" standard ensuring that new facilities and developments are planned to "design out" crime.

- (g) Raise awareness of the extent and levels of domestic violence ensuring that victims are encouraged to come forward and seek help.*
- (h) Ensure that any gaps in service provision for victims of domestic violence are identified with practical initiatives being developed to meet those unmet demands.*
- (i) Ensure that young offenders are speedily processed through the criminal justice system.*
- (j) Provide initiatives to prevent young offenders from re-offending and continue to develop new initiatives.*
- (k) Provide training opportunities for young people on crime and disorder issues, particularly in respect of drug and alcohol misuse.*
- (l) Increase public safety through the effective use of traffic management schemes to reduce speeding, the improvement of street lighting as a deterrent to criminal and anti-social activity and the swift removal of burnt-out and abandoned vehicles.*
- (m) Use the CCTV network more effectively, extending it where appropriate, targeting those areas where criminal and anti-social activity are evident.*
- (n) Increase the numbers of car parks meeting the “secure car park status” standards.*
- (o) Expand and enhance substance misuse prevention and treatment services especially for young people.*
- (p) Tackle irresponsible attitudes to sale and consumption of alcohol and reduce the number of alcohol-related crimes.*
- (q) Encourage the involvement of the private sector in crime and disorder initiatives.*
- (r) Work with the local media to provide positive publicity about the action being taken to tackle crime and disorder.*

Specific Targets

Some specific targets by the year 2006:

- 1. Reduce the overall level of recorded crime by 15%.*
- 2. Reduce vehicle crime per 1000 population by 30%.*
- 3. Reduce house burglary per 1000 households by 25%.*
- 4. Reduce violent crime per 1000 population by 15%.*
- 5. Increase the number of drug arrests by 100% and drug trafficking arrests by 100%.*
- 6. Reduce the number of reported incidents of anti-social behaviour.*
- 7. Reduce the incidence of reported domestic violence by 10%.*

8. Reduce the fear of crime by 5%.

9. Increase the number of households covered by a neighbourhood watch scheme by 5%.

10. Reduce the time taken for young offenders to be processed through the criminal justice system to the national standard.

11. Increase the number and range of opportunities for young people to participate in youth related activities.

12. Reduce serious casualties and fatalities at road traffic accidents by 50% and serious casualties involving children by 50%.