

## **BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

### **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2007**

#### **REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS MANAGER (Community Services)** **(Author: Gill Tavender, Safe Communities Manager)**

### **COMMUNITY SAFETY – DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HATE CRIME CO-ORDINATORS**

**Summary:** This report requests General Purposes Committee approval for 2 part time fixed term posts, previously agreed through star chamber process.

#### **1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Star chamber 05/06 agreed a budget to employ either one full time or two part time posts to support emerging Statutory duties and to meet BVPI requirements. Due to complicated negotiations with partner agencies and Manager and staff long term sickness within the section, the recruitment of these posts has been delayed.
- 1.2 Partner arrangements are now in place for these posts to progress for a pilot period of 2 years fixed term.

#### **2. KEY DECISION**

- 2.1 This is not a key decision.

#### **3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

- 3.1 The matter raised in this report falls within the following Council priorities:
  - A safe and healthy environment

#### **4. REASONS FOR THE POSTS**

- 4.1 The Council has a Statutory duty to work in partnership to deliver aspects of the 1998 Crime & Disorder Act, the 2006 Crime Act Review – Police & Justice Bill, and in particular, Section 17 of this Act which places a duty on Local Authorities to consider crime & disorder implications in every decision that it makes. The Breckland Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) works closely with a range of agencies such as the Police, Norfolk Fire Service, Norfolk County Council, PCT, Youth Offending Team to meet these duties, in reducing and preventing crime. The Home Office sets targets which require a local focus in addressing violent crime, wounding, criminal damage and burglary. Domestic Violence (DV) and Hate Crime are categorised within these and play a significant part in the overall performance of the CDRP.

##### Domestic Violence Co-Ordinator

- 4.2 The Council is monitored by a range of BVPIs, one of which is BVPI 225, Actions Against Domestic Violence. This BVPI is split into 11 components, shared between community safety and housing. One of those components is to employ a Co-Ordinator. The Council is targeted to meet 90% of the components by year end equating to 10/11. Failure to employ a dedicated resource will result in only 7/11 being achieved.
- 4.3 The primary role of this post will be to deliver the BVPI on behalf of the Council and to work with relevant agencies in devising and co-ordinating a work programme which meets, Council, National and County DV Strategies and mandatory Local Area Agreement outcomes. The post will be employed by Community Safety but will also liaise closely with Housing.

##### Hate Crime Co-Ordinator

- 4.4 Hate crime is increasing, primarily due to the increasing numbers of Black & Ethnic Minority Community groups. As expected the majority of incidents and offences occur where there is a major population base. In the Western Police area, Kings Lynn & Thetford record the highest incident rate. The role of this post will be integral to improving the service to survivors of hate related incidents. Hate crime includes racial, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation and disability.

- 4.5 The post will support the Police Minority Ethnic Liaison Officers in achieving community cohesion; supporting projects designed to improve cultural awareness; assisting with the organisation and management of community events and supporting partner agencies with timely and accurate information to assist the targeting of offenders. In achieving this function, the role will be integral to improving access to services across the public sector and partners.
- 4.6 This post will be based with the Police Hate Crime Unit and will hot desk with both Breckland Council and Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council (KL&WNBC). KL&WNBC have contributed £10,000 towards the cost of the post and the Police are providing in kind contribution through office accommodation, line management, free training for all staff on hate crime, computer and equipment. The post will provide a valuable link for the Council, both in terms of across departments internally, and with the Police and specialist agencies such as the Norfolk & Norwich Racial Equality Council.
- 4.7 Due to the timing of job evaluation panel meetings, Members are requested to support the employment of both posts, subject to, JEP grading. Star Chamber has approved a fixed budget for 2 years. It is anticipated evaluation panel will agree grade 9 which will meet budget availability and also be in line with equivalent posts in other agencies and Police. Full budgetary costs have been considered, taking account of the external partner funding, a proforma b is attached for information. Leaving the GP approval until the next meeting in September, would significantly delay the drawing down of external funding and success of the posts, in meeting their targets.

## **5. OPTIONS AVAILABLE**

- 1 To agree to the employment of the posts.
- 2 Not to agree to the employment of the posts.
- 5.1 Option 1 is recommended.

## **6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 6.1 Not employing the posts will significantly impact upon achieving BVPI delivery and Statutory responsibilities as a CDRP Responsible Partner. Objective 5 of the Council's Annual Delivery Plan also articulates a key project of 'Working towards level 3 in Community Safety KLOE (key lines of enquiry). This KLOE contributes towards the Council's 'direction of travel' and could result in a poor rating in future inspections, if not progressed.
- 6.2 Both posts provide the Council with specialist resources, for a trial period of time. The posts' success will be monitored and evaluated to assist the Council and CDRP in making an informed decision as to longer term requirements and needs in both crime areas.

## **7. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 7.1 Members are recommended to support the employment of 2 part time, fixed term contract posts, A Domestic Violence Co-Ordinator and a Hate Crime Co-Ordinator, subject to job evaluation panel confirmation of grade.

Where appropriate, this report has taken account of the need for compliance with

- The Council's Equal Opportunities Policies and Gender Equality Scheme
- Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Section 40, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006