

## **South Tipperary Safety and Security Partnership**

Council Chamber, County Hall, Clonmel, 18/01/05

Present: Mairead Ryan, Margo Hayes, Mary FitzGerald, Antje Hogan (Citizens Information Service), Tess Collins, Jim Lynch, Stephen O'Sullivan, Tadg Browne, Michael Collins, Jean Nelson, Catriona Crowe, Eoin O' Neill, Jean Nelson, John Murphy, Marie O'Gorman, Geraldine Mullane, Michael FitzGerald, Housing Section  
Apologies: Anne Galvin, HSE, Andrew McMahon, HSE.

The Chairman noted that the past year had been a good one with the committee beginning to get to grips with issues. Geraldine Mullane and Antje Hogan were introduced to the members.

- 1) **Introductions and minutes:** Minutes of previous meeting were adopted (proposed Jim Lynch, seconded Mairead Ryan)
  - a) **Matters arising:** A letter from Pat Crummey, Assistant Commissioner, G.S. was noted as was a request to brief the Chief Superintendent in Thurles re: the committee's views on community policing. It was agreed that a community representative might attend to corroborate the value of measures such as Operation Delphi.
- 2) **Review of IPA Anti-Social Training:**

Members noted that the training was excellent, with clear 'bottom lines'.  
Tess Collins outlined the present draft of the Anti-Social policy document, the procedures in it and the provision for tenant training. Members responded that

  - There was a need for high support accommodation for the homeless, especially single men
  - Case Conferences should be called at an early stage (there was some debate as to whether or not it would be a formal or informal meeting but members were informed that the Second Chance programme would have the same effect as a Case Conference at an early stage)
  - The policy needed to take account of very early intervention
  - Domestic violence may involve only one member of the family with the rest of the family being affected but innocent
  - Different persons should chair the Second Chance programme team and the committee deciding on the ultimate sanction of eviction.
  - The new policy should be uniformly adopted by the local authorities in the county
  - The Second Chance programme would have support for the families as its core value
  - Three of the local authorities were now using the same system to record tenant complaints
  - There should be links to local authorities outside the county
  - Members recommended that the county Homeless Forum should be invited in to present their programme and needs
  - Members endorsed the following report from the IPA training session participants:

The course showed that the only way to effectively tackle anti-social behaviour in local authority estates is in a systematic, focused, resourced way which involves all the agencies and which is not afraid of, in a very worst case scenario, putting someone onto the streets with possible fatal consequences, having made provision for appropriate accommodation for the homeless. The alternative is to try to contain matters with an 'acceptable level' of anti-social behaviour making life miserable for tenants in some locations because of crime, drugs and violence.

To succeed the following factors need to be taken into account:

1. We need a policy document for the whole county agreed, supported and driven at a senior level in the local authorities
2. Resources, supports and 'bottom lines' need to be agreed.
3. Front line staff need support and training in interviewing, evidence gathering and investigation skills
4. A systematic computerised complaints recording system needs to be implemented county-wide

5. The process needs meetings and agreements between state agencies (SEHB, GS) at both Management and front-line staff level
6. Guidelines for the exchange of data need to be worked out at a senior inter-agency level (there is legal provision for the exchange of data from the GS to LA but what about other directions?).
7. The Second Chance (a process of inter-agency interventions with problem tenants before legal steps are taken) programme needs to be implemented across the county
8. We need to remember that not all tenants are problems and that they are customers.
9. It will not be easy to take the ultimate step in evicting a tenant unless there is somewhere for them to go ie a high support lodging (mostly for single men). If there is no specialist lodging then the problem is only transferred to the Health Board or to a private estate house, supported by the Health Board where the G.S have to deal with the consequences. We must make provision for the homeless
10. We need legislation to deal with the problem of noise affecting neighbours
11. We need more facilities for youth/children in the estates.

**3 Facilities for Youth:** Arising from a recommendation at the last meeting, Eoin O'Neill presented a report on the work on of the Waterford Youth Service and its facilities.

Presentations re:Waterford Youth Service  
Youth Facilities:

**Safe :-** Young people need to feel that the building and environment is safe and contained. The parents also need to know this. An environment with which the young people can identify and where they feel they belong.

**Affordable :-** There is not point having wonderful facilities when people cannot afford to use them.

**Accessible :-** There is a need to recognise that young people and adults use premises differently, young people call in and drop in more, adults tend to come a building for a specific purpose and then leave. Young people need a space where they can identify with. Facilities need to be provided at a local level (housing estates), the location is key, so that the best site is chosen and does not exclude or ghettoise the facility or cause other problems)

**Welcoming :-** The facility needs to be welcoming and user friendly. Planning, layout and design is very important. Good quality fittings and furnishings, people will respect and look after them.

**Managed & :-** Once the facility is up, the ongoing management and maintenance **Maintained** is crucial, policies and procedures need to be in place. There are lots of facilities around that people and groups are not able to access, because of rules and committees.

**Some other points: -**

In South Tipperary there is only one purpose built youth facility in the County.

Some County and City Councils around the country are taking a more strategic and active role in both providing land and the facilities (including community buildings as part of new housing developments that are being built).

The staffing of the facilities is crucial, by having youth projects located and working in the premises, this allows for young people to come in access the facility. In South Tipperary the number of youth projects is low, with either poor (too much to cover) or none in some areas.

Young people need to have access to facilities even if they are not members of the projects (Drop ins and Cyber Centres). The experience is that when young people in an area are excluded they tend to vandalise the facility.

The design and layout of the building is very important, facilities that we have found to be core are: kitchen, café, games and activity room, meeting rooms, office and computer room and art and craft room.

Keeping facilities open when young people are off, i.e at weekends is a challenge for the Youth Service that e are presently looking at.

### **Funding of Work & Facilities:**

Dept of Education & Science:

- Disadvantaged Grant Scheme
- Youth Service Grant Scheme
- Youth Information Grant
- Youth Club Grant

Dept. of Justice Law & Equality

- Garda Special Projects
- Probation & Welfare Service

Health Service Authority

- Neighbourhood Youth Projects
- Community Based Drugs Initiatives (section 65)
- Local Drugs Task Force (administered)
- Young Persons Facilities & Services Fund (administered)
- Youth Homelessness Strategy

Dormant Accounts Board

- Dormant Accounts (administered by ADM)

Dept. Social Family Affairs

- Once off grants
- Funding for work with families

Fas

- Pathways

Additional points

- We must have high quality community centres
- Single community houses are too small
- We need to plan facilities on a county level
- This is not just a 'working class' area issue, other areas have no facilities also
- Local people must be involved#
- Facilities must be actively managed
- Young people are our resource for the future, not the enemy
- Location Location Location is vital for youth facilities
- A visit to youth facilities in Waterford was suggested
- Local youth facilities of c5000 square feet at a present cost of €1107 per square feet are suggested
- Cahir is a major gap in youth provision and South Tipperary in general is way behind

It was agreed that the next meeting of the committee would concentrate on youth facilities and their value in safety and security issues.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 1st March. 2005, 10.00 – 12.30 in Clonmel, Council Chamber, Co. Hall, Clonmel