REPORT TO:	**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**	**AGENDA ITEM: 7**
DATE OF MEETING:	**6th SEPTEMBER 2017**	**CATEGORY: DELEGATED**
REPORT FROM:	**DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND PLANNING SERVICES and CHIEF EXECUTIVE**	**OPEN**
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	**STUART BATCHELOR Ext. No. 5820**	**DOC:**
SUBJECT:	**REVIEW OF AREA FORUM MEETINGS**	**REF:**
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	**ALL**	**TERMS OF REFERENCE:**

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 Members note the report and provide observations and guidance on the review process.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 The report provides information on the current system of Area Forum and Safer Neighbourhood meetings and a proposal for modernising the structure of the meetings.

3.0 Detail

3.1 In 2013 the current system of holding Area Forums and Safer Neighbourhood meetings on the same evening was introduced. This followed from several years previously when the Safer Neighbourhood meeting structure was established and issues on community safety previously discussed at the Area Forums were then raised at the new dedicated Safer Neighbourhood meetings.

3.2 For a number of years the two meetings on the same night has operated well, with consistent attendances and the full time allocations being used. However the past two years has witnessed a decline in attendances, particularly of the Area Forum meetings and on regular occasions a significant gap between the ending of the Safer Neighbourhood meeting and the start of the Area Forum meeting. Appendices No.1 provides a breakdown over the past two years.

3.3 Consequently it is an appropriate time to review the reasons for this change and consider any renew/modification to the current meeting structure.

3.4 Officers from the two meetings have considered the reasons for the change and identified the following:

- Over the past 10 years there has been a steady reduction in the recorded level of crime and anti-social behaviour. This has meant the need for members of the public to attend Safer Neighbourhood meetings to raise concerns has reduced. Frequently now the meetings are not identifying 'priority actions' for the agencies to target in the coming months. This has resulted in some meetings finishing early.

- Due to the pause between the two meetings people who have no interest in local authority issues take the opportunity to leave. This is more likely when there is a long gap between meetings.

- The Area Forum agenda's generally uninspiring. Only occasionally are special items added, generally at the Etwall Area Forum, and there is not an incentive for the general public to attend unless a key local concern is evident.

- The community awareness of the Area Forum meetings is very limited and the agenda does not lend itself to widening a debate about the needs of an area.

- The decision of Derbyshire County Council to not routinely send a Liaison Officer to the Forums has been detrimental to the usefulness of the meetings to attendees who want to raise issues directly with County officers.

3.5   In discussion with representatives from the voluntary and community sector, Police and District Council officers it is felt that whilst the current format is not working it is very important that a programme of community meetings is still maintained. Such meetings allow public officials and elected representatives to be questioned directly by residents and for organisations to disseminate important messages out to the community. Consequently a proposal for merging the Safer Neighbourhood meeting and the Area Forum has been developed.

Proposal

3.6   The agenda setting of a new Forum would need to be proactive in order to attract members of the community and the branding of the meetings as part of a 'Communication Plan' to promote the meetings would be important. The meeting would also include an opportunity for an in depth discussion about the issue in a particular area which could be managed as an open discussion and provide for the identification of priorities and an action plan. The current Safer Neighbourhood grant scheme could be amended to help support these identified priorities (the current scheme has not allocated its last two annual budgets) . A suggested timetable is as follows:

NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM
Potential AGENDA
6.30PM – 8.00PM

1.	Introductions and apologies	6.30pm
2.	Chair's announcements	6.35pm
3.	Update on actions from last meeting	6.40pm
4.	Safer Neighbourhood Report (Police/SSDP) & Q&A	6.45pm
5.	Local Authority Report (SDDC, DCC)	7.00pm
6.	Local issues (open forum)	7.15pm
7.	Summary of agreed priorities/actions and Neighbourhood Grants	7.45pm
8.	Close	8.00pm

3.7 Initial and informal discussions with the Police and South Derbyshire CVS have taken place and the proposal is considered to be a move forward from the current system and if supported by all parties would be successful.

3.8 The Chairing of the meetings would be as per current Area Forums with a District Councillor being nominated.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None arising directly from this report.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 The Councils Corporate Plan aims to ensure that the local community are fully engaged in what the Councils priorities are and maintaining a well attended and informative programme of community meetings is key to the Councils success.

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 Engaging local communities and identifying local issues and actions through a community led approach is an important aspiration for the Council and its public and voluntary sector partners.

7.0 Background Papers

7.1 None with this report.

Annexe No.1
Safer Neighbourhood / Area Forum Attendees 2015-2017
2015-2016

Area 1- North West and Etwall

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	1 July 2015	15
Area Forum	1 July 2015	8
Safer Neighbourhood	11 November 2015	10
Area Forum	11 November 2015	5
Safer Neighbourhood	16 January 2016	17
Area Forum	16 January 2016	9

Area 2- Mercia and Repton

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	21 July 2015	22
Area Forum	21 July 2015	12
Safer Neighbourhood	13 October 2015	23
Area Forum	13 October 2015	13
Safer Neighbourhood	16 February 2016	20
Area Forum	16 February 2016	9

Area 3- North East and Melbourne

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	22 July 2015	20
Area Forum	22 July 2015	11
Safer Neighbourhood	29 October 2015	19
Area Forum	29 October 2015	11
Safer Neighbourhood	26 January 2016	18
Area Forum	26 January 2016	6

Area 4- Central and Swadlincote

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	30 June 2015	22
Area Forum	30 June 2015	16
Safer Neighbourhood	12 November 2015	54
Area Forum	12 November 2015	22
Safer Neighbourhood	02 February 2016	35
Area Forum	02 February 2016	19

Area 5- Newhall and Midway

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	16 July 2015	29
Area Forum	16 July 2015	21
Safer Neighbourhood	04 November 2015	29
Area Forum	04 November 2015	21
Safer Neighbourhood	03 February 2016	21
Area Forum	03 February 2016	11

Area 6- South and Linton

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	15 July 2015	23
Area Forum	15 July 2015	10
Safer Neighbourhood	18 November 2015	18
Area Forum	18 November 2015	11
Safer Neighbourhood	27 January 2016	25
Area Forum	27 January 2016	19

Average Safer Neighbourhood= 23

Average Area Forum= 13

2016-2017

Area 1- North West and Etwall

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	27 June 2016	18
Area Forum	27 June 2016	15
Safer Neighbourhood	11 October 2016	18
Area Forum	11 October 2016	10
Safer Neighbourhood	30 January 2017	13
Area Forum	30 January 2017	13
Safer Neighbourhood	12 June 2017	21
Area Forum	12 June 2017	23

Area 2- Mercia and Repton

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	05 July 2016	13
Area Forum	05 July 2016	10
Safer Neighbourhood	04 October 2016	19
Area Forum	04 October 2016	10
Safer Neighbourhood	31 January 2017	15
Area Forum	31 January 2017	15
Safer Neighbourhood	26 June 2017	19
Area Forum	26 June 2017	17

Area 3- North East and Melbourne

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	14 July 2016	16
Area Forum	14 July 2016	10
Safer Neighbourhood	10 October 2016	15
Area Forum	10 October 2016	7
Safer Neighbourhood	24 January 2017	14
Area Forum	24 January 2017	7
Safer Neighbourhood	19 June 2017	11
Area Forum	19 June 2017	11

Area 4- Central and Swadlincote

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	07 July 2016	26
Area Forum	07 July 2016	16
Safer Neighbourhood	03 October 2016	13
Area Forum	03 October 2016	12
Safer Neighbourhood	15 February 2017	21
Area Forum	15 February 2017	16
Safer Neighbourhood	13 June 2017	16
Area Forum	13 June 2017	14

Area 5- Newhall and Midway

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	29 June 2016	20
Area Forum	29 June 2016	18
Safer Neighbourhood	12 October 2016	19
Area Forum	12 October 2016	13
Safer Neighbourhood	01 February 2017	23
Area Forum	01 February 2017	17
Safer Neighbourhood	20 June 2017	21
Area Forum	20 June 2017	13

Area 6- South and Linton

Meeting	Date of Meeting	Attendees
Safer Neighbourhood	20 July 2016	20
Area Forum	20 July 2016	21
Safer Neighbourhood	31 October 2016	15
Area Forum	31 October 2016	18
Safer Neighbourhood	06 February 2017	18
Area Forum	06 February 2017	17
Safer Neighbourhood	28 June 2017	14
Area Forum	28 June 2017	14

Average SO FAR for Safer Neighbourhood= 17.4

Average SO FAR for Area Forum= 14