



Practice Note 14

The Fife Tasking Model

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Project Background and Aims

During 2006, following a Best Value Review of community safety in Fife, the structure of the Community Safety Partnership was rationalised in line with the National Intelligence (business) Model. This along with local government elections in 2007 led to the establishment of seven Area Community Safety Co-ordinating Groups (ACSCG) to mirror the new area committee structure. Fife Community Safety Partnership (FCSP) agreed to pilot a 'partnership tasking model' and approach within one of these seven local areas.

This work began in April 2007 with a focus on tackling antisocial behaviour in the Templehall area of Kirkcaldy, before being expanded to the whole of the area committee area in February 2008.

This work was subject to an independent evaluation by Reid Howie Associates in Summer 2008. The final evaluation report emphasised the benefits of multi-agency partnership working within the area and concluded that the reformed structure showed signs of making a positive impact.

In late 2009 the Safer Neighbourhoods Team (SNT) Tasking Group carried out a self-assessment questionnaire survey. 21 group members completed the questionnaires, and responses included:

- Partners share a common vision of the direction the SNT Tasking Group should take: strongly agree -47.6%, agree - 52.4%
- There is effective buy in and support from my own organisation: strongly agree - 57.1%, agree - 33.3%

Work is now underway to roll out the approach to other areas in Fife with the first tasking meeting taking place in the Levenmouth Area in January 2010.

The monthly tasking meetings include the following elements: -

- Analysis of partnership data by Community Analyst,
- Production of a monthly tactical assessment,
- Regular attendance by a range of partners from the statutory and voluntary sectors,
- Support from FCSP in establishing and managing tasking system,
- Support from FCSP with training on information sharing, and
- Link between local service delivery and strategic partnership to highlight problems and best practice.

Resources

Funding: No additional funding requirements.

Partners: Fife Constabulary, Fife Council, NHS Fife, Clued-Up detached youth work service,

Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular self-assessment exercises are to be built into this process Fife-wide, once it is fully implemented.

The partners involved in this process often come from widely varying backgrounds, both culturally and organisationally, and it is vital that the barriers and facilitators to effective engagement are understood and dealt with. For that reason FCSP applied to the Practitioner Fellowship programme being organised by the SCSN and the Universities of Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow. This application was successful and the study was undertaken during the summer of 2010.

Activities

The Tasking Model operates using a monthly cyclic process. The process begins with a full analysis being conducted of all partnership data relevant to community safety issues, by the Community Analysts team imbedded in the FCSP. The analysis follows the community safety priorities pertaining to each of the seven areas and typically includes data from Fife Constabulary, Fife Council (including Environmental Services, Community Wardens and local services), NHS Fife, relevant Housing Associations and voluntary services such as detached youth work services.

The analysis of the data produces a set of monthly priorities which are reviewed with to produce a clear picture of current local issues, key stakeholders, potential impacts and possible solutions. This process is based on the IDPartners problem solving methodology advocated by Sixth Sense¹.

¹ See <http://www.sixthsensetraining.co.uk/> for more information on IDPartners.

Alternative solutions are rationalised into a set of recommendations for consideration by the relevant ACSCG. All necessary data, together with recommendations are contained within a tactical assessment document, which is published to the relevant ACSCG several days before their monthly meeting.

At the monthly meeting all recommendations are considered and tasks agreed upon and allocated to relevant services and individuals. Furthermore, all tasks are noted by officers of the Fife Community Safety Partnership who then collate and publish them to the relevant local partnership group for action.

A feedback system is in operation allowing all those undertaking tasks to update the community analysts' team with the result of the tasks. All data received from this system is included in the subsequent analysis for the next months report.

The results of all tasks, including where there has been no feedback received, is published on the next months tactical assessment to allow for an element of peer accountability.

Impact

15 practitioners from the Kirkcaldy, Levenmouth and Cowdenbeath ACSCG's were interviewed to get feedback on the Tasking Model. These were carried out by the Fife CSP Development Officer as part of the Practitioner Fellowship with the University of Dundee and the SCSN.

The experience of those interviewed was generally positive. Issues such as data sharing arrangements, leadership and accountability did not feature as strongly as might have been expected from such a diverse group. Several positive features of the Tasking Model were identified from the interview data:

- The partners are operating within a clear and unambiguous information sharing protocol,
- There is a clear process framework to the monthly tasking cycle,
- There is a clear sense of accountability built in to the process,
- There is a clearly identified central resource to provide consistent support and advice, and
- Tasking is administered centrally creating a sense of consistency in that process and efficiency in sharing data across this central hub.

There is a clear indication that participants are gaining a benefit from this process in the way off improved service delivery through the clear establishment of community safety priorities and their role in the wider agenda. The tasking process appears to give very clear direction to these partners and, in some cases, has provided them with such clear guidance that they can attest to using the issues raised to better focus their own service delivery.

Lessons Learnt and Sustainability

It is clear that the implementation of a sustainable Tasking Model is dependent on several Factors. First, it is vital that a comprehensive Information Sharing Protocol (ISP) is in place

and, to engender a sense of inclusivity, it is important that data is sourced from as wide a partnership spectrum as possible. This will also assist in providing a more comprehensive picture of the real issues. The SNT Tasking Group has thus far not encountered negative information sharing issues. Group partners appear to be comfortable with what is being asked of them and they recognise that their information helps build a picture on the tactical assessment, which helps them.

The tactical assessment must be relevant to the area community safety priorities and any subsequent recommendations must be relevant and achievable in the monthly cycle.

Practitioners seem to prefer the tasking process to be administered centrally by the community safety partnership to maintain quality, provide policy and practical support and link directly into the analytical effort. Two points emerge here. One the one hand, the lead partner of the Tasking Model should provide clear and strong direction, whilst on the other hand, partnership membership should be augmented by the ability of individual partners to take decisions at the monthly meetings and undertake tasks across their own service. Further, to maintain momentum for the group a system of peer accountability should be built into the tasking process.

Last, training needs should be around information sharing, problem solving and the practicalities of the tasking process

Summary

The Fife Tasking Model provides a framework for sharing and analysing data, identifying monthly local priorities and recommending alternative strategies for tactical response. The system has been embraced by participants, which include Fife Constabulary, Fife Council, NHS Fife, and Clued-Up detached youth work service. The Tactical Model was initially launched in the Templehall area of Kirkcaldy in 2007 and rolled out to the whole of Fife in January 2010.

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