

BARWON LAC

Community Safety Precinct Committee Minutes 17 August 2011

Report to Crime Prevention Partnership August 2011

Narrabri Bowling Club, Narrabri

Participating Agencies/Community members

Tim	Beattie	Crime Manager	Barwon Local Area Command
Steve	Laksa	Inspector	Barwon Local Area Command
John	Ridley	Inspector	Barwon Local Area Command
Jason	Ronczka	DVLO & Crime Coordinator	Barwon Local Area Command
Crystal	Jones	YLO	Barwon Local Area Command
Jo	White	Analyst	Barwon Local Area Command
Sheryl	Ridley		Narrabri Chamber of Commerce
Rohan	Vaughan		Department of Community Services (Moree/Narrabri)
Simone	Moodie		Department of Housing NSW
Fran	Dodson		Department of Housing NSW
Ian	Dunnet	Editor	Narrabri Courier
Shane	Bradford	Fire Captain	NSWFB – Narrabri
Phil	Marshall	General Manager	Narrabri Shire Council
Robyn	Faber	Mayor	Narrabri Shire Council

Attending Agencies / Community members

Tim Beattie – Crime Manager, Barwon LAC

John Ridley – Inspector, Barwon LAC

Steve Laksa – Inspector, Barwon LAC

Jason Ronczka – Leading Senior Constable (Crime Co-ordinator & DVLO), Barwon LAC

Crystal Jones – Constable (YLO), Barwon LAC

Robyn Faber - Mayor, Narrabri Shire Council

P Etheridge – Narrabri Shire Council

Lester Kelly – Narrabri Shire Council

Jessica Atkinson – Narrabri Courier

Sheryl Ridley – Chamber of Commerce

Tony Longworth – Chamber of Commerce

Richard Orr – Chamber of Commerce

Community members

Meeting Opened: 17:38

Previous Minutes Moved: Det. Insp. BEATTIE

Seconded: Cst JONES

Apologies:

Jenny Hayes – Commander, Barwon LAC

Ken Bates – Narrabri Shire Council

Ian Dunnett – Narrabri Courier

Priority Crime Category

Detective Inspector Tim Beattie welcomed everyone to the meeting and made apologies for Commander Hayes who is at court in Sydney

Outline of the CSPC guidelines which encourages community partnerships

Although there are nil outstanding actions Mayor Faber stated that she is still working on youth issues in Boggabri and working more with the Police for diversions from crime (has been previously spoken about at meetings)

Action Items

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Mr Beattie made introductions of Police present and their roles within the Command

Local Crime Type Priorities

Mr Beattie gave a Presentation on Crime: Considerable improvement in major crime categories between May and July with marked difference for the same time in 2010 – Stealing offences have increased in both Narrabri and Wee Waa Sectors since July – Personal and home security continues to be a major concern with offences committed on victims with unsecured homes and/or vehicles

Presentation included a review of crime in the Narrabri Sector with break downs for Narrabri, Wee Waa and Boggabri. Reference was made to ongoing low levels of security within the communities despite continuing crime prevention messages from Police in all forms of media.

Mr Beattie and Mr Ridley discussed the MO of offences, patterns, locations and offenders in general as well a number of arrests which made during the time frame May to July 2011.

Mr Ridley spoke in depth about assaults and alcohol related crime in relation to late closing of licensed premises. A number of Police have been injured as a result of these offences and that September marks the beginning of 'silly season' as we move into the summer months and expected increases in offences.

DV related assaults are down across the command – most are associated with drugs and alcohol

Discussion Items:

Concerns raised from the floor about the involvement of the Liquor Accord and their enforcement of Responsible Service of Alcohol which Mr Ridley says is not the sole cause of increasing assaults. Discussion moved to pattern of alcohol related crime in private homes and how Police are unable to enforce this. Attendees were concerned at the increase in physical altercations with Police which have led to injuries to local Police.

Discussion turned to the impact of mining on the community and how this has (if any) negatively impacted on crime. Mr Ridley confirmed there have been a small number of events which involved mine workers but that charges were laid and also the Mines communicated/cooperated with Police and those workers have also been dealt with in-house. Mining Industry's own regulations and strict alcohol/drugs policy will assist in preventing any repeat offenders.

Mr Ridley spoke about current patterns of BES/Stealing offences and targeting of outskirts of town and rural related business. In the Wee Waa Sector a number of YP's have been identified as responsible for the increases in offences as well as an 18 year old male who has been charged with multiple offences.

The involvement of YP's in property offences led to Mr Beattie and Mr Ridley speaking on the importance of family, community and government working towards diversions against crime for young people and provided a summary of one young person who was local to Wee Waa that was let down by the system. Mr Beattie explained that the reason many young people are on the streets at night is due to it not being safe at home due to alcohol, drugs and domestic violence. Mayor Faber was supportive of any programs that the Council could assist with that may help to get kids back on track and that they would be willing to work with Police on these programs in the future.

Some questions were raised as the involvement of Community Services involvement but due to representatives not being present at this meeting this avenue of discussion was not continued.

Constable Jones detailed the process of the Young Offenders Act and the difficulties that this poses and how it can be quite traumatic for young persons especially those without family support.

The group also discussed the crime environment at Boggabri and any impact that the mines have had since taking over most of the housing in town. As a result a number of low socio-economic groups have relocated from the town. The group asked if the increase to the population would result in increases of Police numbers – Mr Ridley explained that this was unlikely and would only occur after much political will.

General discussion led by questions from the floor regarding traffic offences and young drivers with concerns that the main street was becoming an increasing location for hoon offences 5-6pm of an evening and increasing towards the end of the week. Attendees reported that once calls were made to the station the offenders move on before Police arrive leading them to believe that these drivers may be in possession of scanners. Mr Beattie urged the community that reports need to be made to Police when activity is witnessed (be it drugs, anti-social or hoon behaviour) so that Police know – all too often members of the community report things after the fact and not when something could be done. Attendees agreed that this was important.

The group again discussed any negative impacts the mines may have on the area especially with a move into summer months and workers being more inclined to walk into town to socialise. Mr Ridley stated the topic is being discussed at Liquor Accord meetings and the group is intent on continuing to improve licensed premises so any issues are likely to be nipped in the bud. Again the regulatory guidelines of the mining industry will be of assistance to both the community and Police in this area. Mr Ridley stated that the community should consider that increases in population and development of industry such as local mining also has impacts on schools, hospitals etc and changes to local infrastructure will always be led by politics and government processes.

Mr Beattie gave a brief update on the Gwabegar fires which in turn led to questions of when a new Officer will be stationed. Mr Ridley said that a number of enquiries have been received but as it is a unique location Officers must visit in person before they will even be considered for placement. Mayor Faber stated that the community misses the previous Officer and is looking forward to a new posting.

BOCSAR released information during the past week in relation to Domestic Violence with Barwon ranking highly in comparison to other areas of the state. Mr Beattie urged the community to think of this as a positive improvement with more victims coming forward and likely a result of the proactive work of the DVLO. There is a real need for more information on DV and increased understanding of the complexities in relation to family issues and breaking the cycles. Leading Senior Constable Ronczka gave a brief overview on the work the Police are doing, agencies they are involved with and also the impending placement of a new DVLO for the Command.

Mayor Faber asked 'what the community can do' as we move into summer? Mr Beattie asked the community consider more information sharing, report crime or suspicious activity as it occurs, name names (be it in person or via Crime Stoppers etc.), work with the Liquor Accords, enforcement of Alcohol Free Zones by Council. Mayor Faber stated she would like to review the Alcohol Free Zone and liaise with Mr Ridley to ensure it is in the correct location although acknowledge that any extension/movement would only likely displace offences.

Mr Beattie also gave a brief overview of EyeWatch which is a Facebook page (currently in a trial phase) owned by each LAC to publicise crime, detail target hardening strategies, publish CCTV of offenders and encourages information from the community in an up to date and technology savvy fashion – likely to appeal to a whole new audience. Traditional methods of community such as radio, television and print will not be abandoned.

Mayor Faber raised concern about the availability/lack of police in the Narrabri area. Mr Beattie assured that Narrabri Police Station is at full strength for staff however there is no coverage for sick leave and maternity leave. Mr Beattie also discussed other proactive strategies being employed including the Flying Squad and Target Action Group which assists in proactive duties across the Command as the need arises.

Question from the floor relating to abductions – appears that there are increasing numbers being reported, is this something we should be more concerned about, is it happening here? Mr Beattie assured them that none had occurred in the Barwon LAC despite a number of false alarms which are likely the result of residents being very sensitive about the issue. The Police take all reports very seriously and follow strict procedures in relation to reported abductions. Constable Jones added that Stranger Danger is addressed at least on an annual basis with schools across the Command and that it is a topic well received by both staff and students.

Village Issues – nil issues to be raised, nil representatives available, appears that the lower the crime the lower the number of attendees at these meetings and is clearly a positive reflection of actions of Police – sentiment confirmed by the attendees

CCTV – questions asked from the floor in relation to trees interfering with cameras which is apparently being addressed by NSC – community is aware that the cameras are currently not working and needs to be addressed ASAP – Police still do not have access to footage and camera operations – Mayor Faber stated she will deal with these issues as a matter of priority (add to Action Items)

General Business – attendees requested increased notice of these meetings – email invitations are great but more notice please – could all previous attendees be added to the mailing list and update this list each time meetings are held

Mayor Faber asked why Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers do not attend regularly in the southern sector – Mr Beattie said that are more than willing to attend functions within the community and management more than happy to make them available but they must be invited into the community by the community – the three Barwon ACLO's do not have ties to the southern areas but initiations from elders etc. will assist in establishing networks and contacts – attendees agreed that due to tradition it is not appropriate for these men just to arrive in a foreign community they must be invited in.

Meeting Closed: 7.25pm Mr Beattie
Next Meeting: TBA

Agreed updates to Crime Prevention Action Plan

Intended Outcome	Agreed Strategies	Partner Agencies/Community member	Timeframe
Police access to NSC CCTV	Source and supply computers for Police to access NSC CCTV	Narrabri Shire Council Mr Ridley	September 2011