

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE BOARD 24 JULY 2018

ANNUAL WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

Summary

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) is asked to:
 - consider the Annual Update on developments in relation to Community Safety in Worcestershire:
 - consider the County Council's role, with partners in relation to Modern Day Slavery and Trafficking

Background

2. Key partners involved in community safety have been invited to attend.
3. Appendix 1 to this Report sets out an overview of the activities that the Council has been and is engaged in relating to its community safety function.
4. Worcestershire County Council (WCC) as a Responsible Authority has to comply with its duty under s.17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended), which requires each Authority to exercise its functions with due regard and to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour and the misuse of drugs and alcohol and other substances and reduce reoffending.
5. This is a corporate responsibility for **all** WCC Directorates, although the strategic co-ordination of community safety partnership working and corporate leadership sits with the Director of Public Health (DoPH) in the Directorate of Public Health (PH).
6. Section 30 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, gives the DoPH, responsibility for, amongst other matters, their Local Authority's role in co-operating with the police, the probation service and the prison service to assess the risks posed by violent or sexual offenders. They should also work with local criminal justice partners and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) to promote safer communities.
7. WCC fulfils its s.17 duty in a number of ways across Directorates, through commissioning, strategic and policy development, operational activity and effective partnership engagement and leadership.
8. A diagram showing the bodies engaged in community safety in Worcestershire and the links between partners is attached as Appendix 2.
9. A short briefing will focus on the issues and activity relating to modern slavery.

10. Further to the OSPB held on 7 September 2017, to consider the annual community safety report, the main points noted by the Vice Chairman and minuted, requesting further information on the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel, domestic abuse, modern slavery and Regulatory services role, were all subsequently provided.

Crime Data

11. The West Mercia Police Performance summary for January – March 2018 (attached at Appendix 3), which contains crime information and some analysis across the force area and specifically for the north and south Worcestershire CSP areas. This is used to inform key partnerships and the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel. The summary highlights what is always a complex picture and changes over time in recording methods and data can make longitudinal comparisons difficult. However, nationally and locally there is an overall increase in recorded crime in many categories, with a notable increase in violent related crime but a decrease in recorded anti-social behaviour. The quality of intelligence and analysis of data to understand the emerging problems is critical for the police and our own partnership responses. The Police are producing a range of new analytical products that provide far more locality detail about key crime issues and also a methodology to predict where and how certain crime types manifest themselves. Going forward these will be shared with partnerships and operational agencies and will be significant improvement in enabling standardised information for use across Worcestershire.

Current Focus and risks

12. Nationally and locally the nature of crime has been changing. The relative increase in violence, often has a consequential impact upon more vulnerable victims. Specific and emerging challenges such as County Lines drug dealing, child criminal exploitation, modern slavery and trafficking, domestic abuse and serious and organised criminal gangs are evident to varying degrees in Worcestershire. Although a lower risk, there also has to be vigilance around potential violent extremism and there are concerns nationally about people who are potential perpetrators, but not "in plain sight". National policy is focusing on these issues and notably there is work developing around the Governments National Violence Strategy and locally, policy and operational responses to a recent Home Office locality review on County Lines in Worcestershire are taking place. A recent report from the Local Government Association – "Public Health approaches to reducing violence", will be considered as part of this current focus.

13. Partnership working is cited by the Home Office as increasingly important in supporting the Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in tackling these issues and prevention and early intervention (as well as supporting victims of crime) needs to become a cornerstone of this approach.

14. These are all areas where WCC and its partners have significant responsibilities and expertise to support this ambition, with our own focus including safeguarding, education, commissioned services, community safety, communications and ensuring the health and wellbeing of the local community. The improvements in data and analysis that are being shared across the partnership by the Police should enable a common understanding of this changing environment so that the right strategic and operational responses can be put in place. There is a strong response underway to

tackling serious and organised crime and WCC and other key partner will play an active intelligence led role in the new county Serious and Organised Crime Joint Action Group (SOCJAG) set up by the Police.

Conclusion

15. WCC continues to meet its own duties relating to community safety as far as it reasonably can and makes a significant contribution across Worcestershire and West Mercia through its leadership role and its commissioned services.

16. There is a requirement to adapt to changing community safety and criminal activity and WCC as a significant Responsible Authority is committed to further understanding the problems and finding preventative and operational solutions to minimise risk and harm to our population.

17. The Directorate of Public Health and the DoPH will continue to ensure that systems assurance and rigour is embedded in the Council's responsibilities for community safety.

Purpose of the Meeting

18. The OSPB is asked to consider:

- (a) The content of the Annual Community Safety report;
- (b) Whether it wishes to make any comments to the Cabinet Member for Health and Well-being, WCC officers or partner agencies; and
- (c) Whether there are any issues which should be the subject of future scrutiny work.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Worcestershire County Council activities on Community Safety.

Appendix 2: Diagram setting out Community Safety governance in Worcestershire.

Appendix 3: West Mercia Police Performance Summary for [January - March 2018](#)

Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

All Agendas and Minutes are available on the Council's website at:

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/democratic-services/minutes-and-agendas.aspx>