

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE BOARD 20 OCTOBER 2022**

### **WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE REPORT**

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#### **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
2. Key partners involved in community safety have been invited to attend this meeting.

#### **Background and context to community safety**

3. The OSPB has been designated by the Worcestershire County Council (the Council) as its statutory Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee and is responsible for the consideration of Crime and Disorder matters. As part of this responsibility, the Board usually meets on an annual basis with Crime and Disorder partners, to discuss issues of mutual interest.
4. Community Safety responsibilities are primarily set out under s.17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Act details the requirement for Responsible Authorities (Local Authorities, the Police, Fire and Rescue, the Integrated Care Board (formerly the Clinical Commissioning Groups) and the Probation Service to develop policy and operational approaches to prevent crime and disorder, combat substance misuse and reduce reoffending.
5. Community Safety is not a specific “service” as such and the wide ranging S17 requirements are carried out through a range of Council and Worcestershire Children First (WCF) duties and activities.
6. These include some significant commissioned services. Activities for instance include the wider safeguarding management responsibilities within the People Directorate and WCF (such as the GET SAFE child criminal exploitation services and tackling issues such as modern slavery and trafficking). There is strong partnership working which extends into the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and private sector. Much of the work is about systems leadership, coordination, and reassurance, to ensure that these responsibilities are brought together as appropriate and co-ordinated in a way that helps protect the local population. There are good working relationships with the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) across the Council and WCF, with excellent examples of co-operation in commissioning of services relating to child exploitation and domestic abuse in particular.

7. At County level, in two tier Local Government, there is a requirement for a group to take strategic oversight of community safety matters, although it does not have the same operational duties that are required of Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's). The Worcestershire Safer Communities Board (SCB) discharges the statutory duty under S17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (within two tier authority areas) to provide strategic coordination and support to community safety and criminal justice activity, in Worcestershire, taking account of national legislation and guidance. It produces an annual Community Safety Agreement and action plan and has oversight of several priority areas overseeing the work of subgroups on domestic abuse, substance misuse, reducing offending and Prevent and Prepare (violent extremism). The SCB is chaired by the Interim Director of Public Health and administered by dedicated officers in the Council's public health team.

### **Coordination with other partnership boards**

8. All members have key strategic roles and are responsible for reporting back to their own organisations. They are also engaged in other, related, forums such as the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel, the West Mercia Criminal Justice Board, the Health and Well-being Board, Worcestershire Adults Safeguarding Board and Worcestershire Children's Safeguarding Partnership.

### **Annual Update on developments in relation to Community Safety in Worcestershire**

#### **Drug and Alcohol Abuse**

##### Government's 10-year drugs plan

9. The Government's new 10-year drug strategy, **From Harm to Hope**, is intended to cut crime and save lives. It has three priorities: breaking drug supply chains, delivering a world-class treatment and recovery service and achieving a generational shift in demand. It also includes £2.7m national funding for drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services from 2022/23 to 2024/25, through designated grants to areas that are intended to deliver:

- More treatment places
- Additional drug and alcohol and criminal justice workers
- Fewer drug related deaths.

10. A further £642k has been allocated by the Government to help support rough sleepers in Worcester City who have substance misuse problems.

11. The current annual expenditure on the main drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services (the Council, Public Health (PH) and Government substance misuse grant), delivered through Cranstoun, is £4.46m

#### **Combatting Drugs Partnership**

12. Recent government guidance, that sits alongside its Drugs Strategy, outlined the structures and processes through which local partners in England should work together to reduce drug-related harm. To assist with the delivery of the strategy, a Combatting Drugs Partnership has been formed covering Worcestershire and

Herefordshire and chaired by the PCC. By the end of 2022, the partnership is expected to:

- Conduct a joint needs assessment, reviewing local drugs data and evidence (by end October 2022)
- Agree a local Drugs Strategy Delivery Plan, including developing data recording and sharing (by end November 2022)
- Agree a local performance framework to monitor the implementation and impact of local plans (by end October 2022)

13. A key focus through the forthcoming Drugs Strategy will be the need to have an enhanced focus on primary prevention – in the pre-treatment space. This will be assisted by the new Combatting Drugs Partnership and the PH and PCC’s focus on Prevention.

14. Treatment outcomes in Worcestershire:

<b>Proportion of all in treatment, who successfully completed treatment and did not re-present within 6 months, 01/12/2020 to 30/11/2021</b>		
<b>Substance</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Opiate	Worcestershire	6%
	National	5%
Non-opiate	Worcestershire	37%
	National	34%
Alcohol	Worcestershire	41%
	National	36%

## **Prevent**

15. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 sets a duty (the PREVENT duty) on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The Worcestershire Prevent Strategy Group (PSG) role is to provide strategic co-ordination and support to the Government's PREVENT agenda, in Worcestershire, taking account of national legislation and guidance. It receives an annual Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) for Worcestershire. From this, a local risk assessment has been created and the annual action plan has been developed.

16. For 2022/23 the action plan has changed its focus in order to prioritise issues relevant to Worcestershire; the risk assessment is now a living document, adapting to, and reflecting, local and national issues as and when they arise. Guidance from the regional Prevent advisor has led to the creation of a local problem-solving group, with representatives from the District Councils, Health and Education addressing PREVENT related issues. Although in its infancy, the group has already met and discussed the appearance of swastika symbols in Worcester and Bewdley, long term concerns regarding the risk of radicalisation via the online space, and the potential for vulnerable people and those with mental health to be radicalised.

17. Current threats to Worcestershire continue to relate to Islamist extremism, the extreme far right and unclear / unspecified ideologies, with the most significant threat from the far right. Communication is a key focus, with more information sharing on

current topics, such as a recent slideshow on the far-right group Patriotic Alternative and a detailed document illustrating far right symbolism

18. Training continues to be a priority; and national training packages are currently being tested prior to release. Partners in Counter terrorism policing are providing Synergy training at County Hall in October, the target audience relating to those who deal with young people and relate to an individual being radicalised. This invitation has been shared with a range of partners.

19. Worcestershire Channel Panel continues to receive referrals from a wide spectrum of sources. Advice from the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) is that it is inappropriate to share statistics, but common themes include an increase in Right Wing referrals and a consistent issue with individuals with mental health issues and learning difficulties.

20. The Council has issued the Annual Assurance Statement regarding Channel Panel which captures its compliance with the requirements relating to Channel panels. It is based upon a self-assessment for local authorities. The Statement considers processes and whether the Chair and Deputy Chair have the appropriate skills and authority to discharge the duties of the Panel. This document was endorsed by the Council's Chief Executive and returned to the Home Office on 1 April 2022.

21. The Home Office recently formally observed a Channel Panel meeting and fed back their satisfaction to the Chairman.

## **Protect**

22. The Protect arrangements (forming part of the CONTEST, Counter Terrorism Act response) have been given significant prominence in this year's CTLP. The Government recognises that there needs to be a robust approach and guidance, similar to that provided for Prevent, around protecting spaces to which the public have access. The Government is due to legislate on this new duty. Following discussions with Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) Police, Worcestershire Local Authorities and the West Mercia Local Resilience Forum (LRF), a Worcestershire Protect Group has been established. The Protect Group is a sub-group of the SCB, who oversee assurance of the Worcestershire approach on Protect.

23. The Protect duty applies to all Worcestershire Local Authorities and District Council's (DCs) are central to this, with their town centre management oversight and interest in planning of buildings and the street scene. Chief Executives and senior Local Government officers are invited to regular national briefings on Protect and wider CT issues by the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) and the Council has been fully engaged in this.

24. A proportionate response to the proposed Protect duty has been taken, this has involved compiling a list of locations which may be subject to the legislation. Free SCan (See Check and Notify) training delivered by specialists in counter terrorism security, with the focus on addressing threats and risks to organisations is planned. This has been shared with partners and the Districts and is due to take place between October and January, with areas covered including communications teams, front line staff and CCTV operators. Staff will also be encouraged to download the Government Protect App, which provides information and advice on how to deal with a major incident. It is not known when the duty will be passed as legislation.

## **Reducing Reoffending**

### Worcestershire Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group

25. The role of the Worcestershire Reducing Re-offending Strategy Group's is to provide strategic co-ordination, oversight and support for reducing re-offending activity in Worcestershire, taking account of national legislation and guidance. It is constituted to discharge the Community Safety Partnerships' responsibilities (S17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998) to reduce re-offending by creating a strategic action plan.

26. The Group is responsible for overseeing implementation of the Integrated Offender Management strategy, and the 'One Day One Conversation' (ODOC) meetings in North and South Worcestershire. It takes responsibility, on behalf of the wider Community Safety Partnerships, for areas of activity that require a countywide and West Mercia area strategic response to reduce re-offending.

27. Worcestershire Reducing Re-offending Strategy Group (RRSG) monitors and supports the work of the Community Safety Partnerships on re-offending reduction and work with other strategic boards to ensure that re-offending reduction responsibilities are effectively co-ordinated at a strategic level. Current activity for the Group includes:

### RRSG Action Plan - 2021 to 2024

28. This is a statutory requirement that falls to the CSPs; it is discharged on their behalf by the RRG. The plan is focussed on the Integrated Offender Management pathways, and aligns with the West Midlands Regional Reducing Re Offending plan published in 2022.

### **Work across the Pathways:**

#### Accommodation

29. The PH funded commissioned report on offender accommodation in Worcestershire was finalised and published in June 2022. This identifies a range of required activities to support the implementation of a Worcestershire Criminal Justice Housing pathway protocol to be used across the partnership. The RRSG has set up a Task and Finish group to be led by Bromsgrove District Council. This Group will work on the development of the protocol, review other actions required and report to the RRSG with proposals. Their first meeting is due on 16th October 2022.

30. Community Accommodation Service Tier 3 implementation is due in the new year so progress on this will be tracked and the offender accommodation lead officer will be invited to the January meeting to brief the group. They will also be invited to be a part of the Task and Finish group.

#### Substance Misuse

31. The Hereford and Worcestershire Combatting Drugs Partnership with the PCC as SRO is now established and recruitment is underway to take forward the project management of this work. There will be a joint strategic needs assessment for drugs

and alcohol undertaken, with mapping of service provision. The Worcestershire Substance Misuse Oversight group will be reconvened to support the partnership.

32. A new Commissioned Rehabilitative Service - Dependency and Recovery will commence on 17 October 2022. The new service encompasses several elements to support people on probation identified with a drug or alcohol need, including:

- Offering practical assistance to people on probation through provision of psycho-social interventions to support recovery and build their motivation.
- Working closely with local probation staff to help build awareness of substance misuse and further treatment available through community providers of treatment.
- Improved liaison with locally commissioned drug and alcohol treatment services and other support organisations to help people on probation sustain engagement with statutory and existing provision

### Mental Health

33. Mental Health professionals from across West Mercia have been engaged in work to establish a West Mercia Criminal Justice Mental Health team, led by Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Performance and Standards Group. A number of different potential intervention pathways have been identified and a gap analysis is being undertaken. This will strengthen the links between criminal justice

### **Child Exploitation – GET SAFE**

34. GET SAFE Strategic and Operational meetings continue to take place working towards the Strategy and Action Plan for 2022 – 2024

35. The Raising Awareness of Vulnerability and Exploitation training continues to be offered to professionals across Worcestershire. From October 2021 to September 2022, 550 delegates attended. These attendees came from schools, district councils, housing associations, the NHS, West Mercia Police, youth groups and children’s charities.

36. The CLIMB program run by the Children’s Society delivers diversionary activity to improve the lives of the most vulnerable children and young people in society incorporating sports, dance, arts and music, and work with young people who are missing school or college, starting to be reported as missing, or at risk of being drawn into criminal activity.

37. Breakdown of CLIMB referrals

<b>Worcs Regions</b>	<b>Accepted</b>	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Wyre Forest</b>	27	9	36
<b>Worcester City</b>	30	9	39
<b>Redditch</b>	19	8	27
<b>Bromsgrove</b>	15	5	20
<b>Malvern Hills</b>	10	2	12
<b>Wychavon</b>	21	5	26

<b>TOTAL</b>	116	38	<b>160</b>

38. Multi Agency Audits have been undertaken (for GET SAFE) in respect of individual children who have been RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated RED due to the level of risk and concern. There have been two so far for 2022. Actions agreed by the Operational Group after these audits:

- GET SAFE Team will be delivering workshops to WCF colleagues focusing on victim blaming language.
- Other agencies will provide similar support as this continues to be an issue within case recording and report writing.

## Trading Standards

39. The Strategic Assessment for the County Council's Trading Standards Team has identified the following areas as key priorities for the coming 2 years:

- Doorstep Crime and Scams
- Illegal Tobacco
- Product Safety
- Protecting animals and the food chain
- High value incidents of consumer detriment

40. During 2021/22, the service:

- Removed 201,510 illicit cigarettes and 57kg of illegal tobacco from the marketplace,
- Removed 11,021 unsafe products from the market, including non-compliant vapes
- Tested 36 premises for sales of age restricted products to minors, with 5 selling (3 alcohol, 2 vapes)

41. Whilst the Team have yet to formally map any organised crime groups (OCGs) it is clear that the distribution of illegal tobacco is very much done via OCGs, and the team continues to work with the Police on this. Two Licensing Act 2003 reviews were undertaken in relation to the on-going supply of illegal tobacco, resulting in licenses being revoked and the Police undertook a closure of a premise in Kidderminster under provisions in the Anti-social Behaviour, Policing and Crime Act 2014, these powers not being available to the County Council.

42. Doorstep Crime, rogue traders approaching older and vulnerable consumers about unnecessary home improvement or repair work didn't go away during the pandemic and has remained a focus, as has dealing with the victims of mailing and telephone scams. One trader was prosecuted last year for various offences including

fraud and 118 scam. Victims were subject to interventions from officers seeking to help them to stop responding to scam mailings.

## **Domestic Abuse: implementing the Domestic Abuse Act 2021**

43. In the last report (October 2021) details were provided of the duties imposed by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the creation of the Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (DAPB), the commissioning of the Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy (based on a needs assessment) and the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board Action Plan. These have all been completed.

44. The key Domestic Abuse Advice and Support Service (DAASS) commission was awarded to West Mercia Women's Aid in April and covers refuge services, support into Safe Accommodation, Help line, one-to-one counselling, psychological support and children's play therapy. At the time of this report there are 15 new safe units of accommodation either open or due to be opened across the County

45. The Council are also:

- Involved in jointly commissioning the DRIVE perpetrator program in partnership with the PCC which is delivered by Safe Lives and Cranstoun
- Funding 3 modules of Domestic Abuse Training
- Managing PCC's Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) contract

46. This commissioning activity is supported by a partnership Joint Commissioning Group involving the Council, the DC's, the PCC and the ICB

47. The Domestic Abuse Lead for the Council, an advanced Public Health Practitioner, is working with Herefordshire Council to prepare for the White Ribbon campaign 2022 themed around Men and Masculinities and with the intention of engaging businesses to challenge Domestic Abuse.

48. Relating to the duty from Part iv of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the Council are also partnering with Herefordshire Council to commission a Lived Experience project intended to seek the views of the survivors of Domestic Abuse (particularly those with protected characteristics and to whom the Equalities Act applies)

49. Also relating to the duty detailed above, the Council is in the process of building a service specification and commissioning a Sanctuary Scheme to enable the survivors of Domestic Abuse to be supported to remain in their accommodation by "target hardening" the premises. This requires enhanced resource across the county to advise on Designing Out Crime as well as capital outlay, a service provider and a new, consistent pathway to describe how such services are accessed

50. The duty to carry out statutory Home Office Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR) sits with the two Community Safety Partnerships. In Worcestershire it has been agreed through the SCB, that these will be co-ordinated at County level, with PH Community Safety officers carrying out that role as its contribution to the DHR process. Sadly, since the time of the last report, there have been 7 Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) referrals that have been identified as meeting the criteria for review. This presents a considerable commitment for the Safer Communities Team.

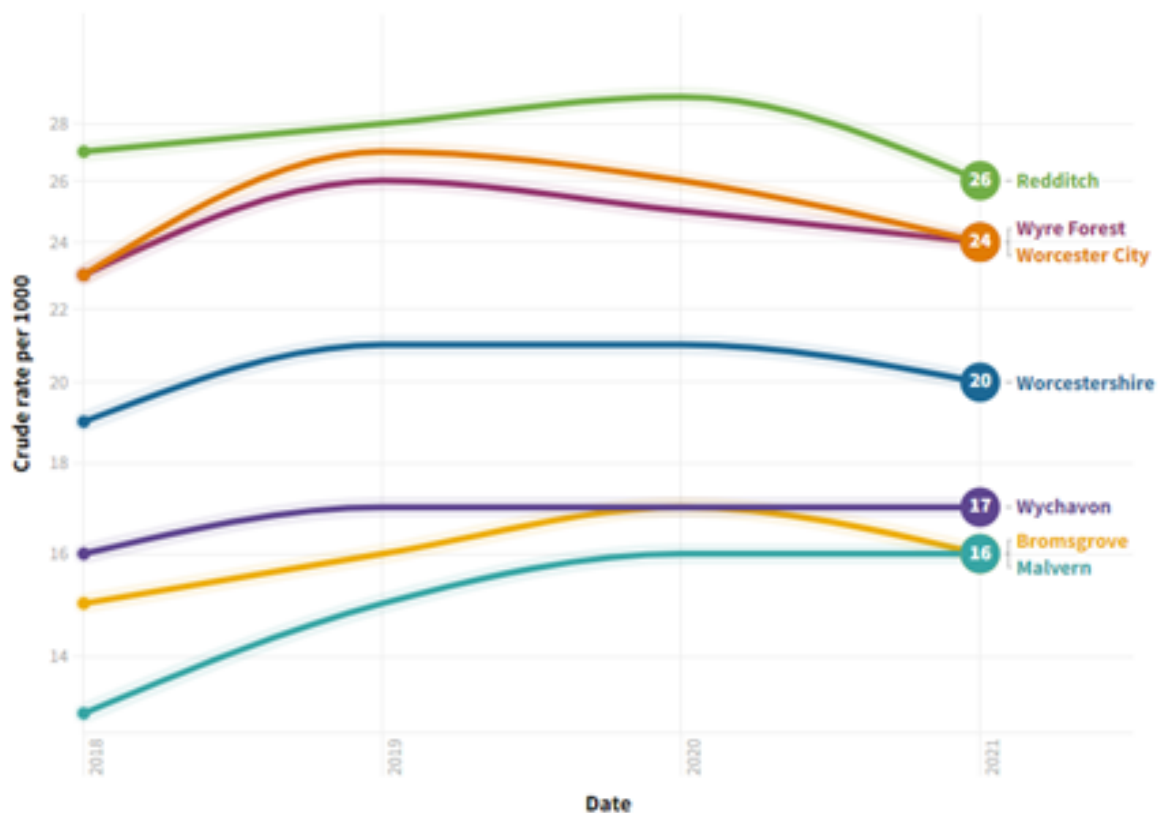


51. A new protocol for delivering these reviews has been developed, published and agreed with the Community Safety Partnerships.

52. Domestic Abuse rates per 1000 population 2018-2022 (Date provided by partnership activity between WCC and West Mercia Police):

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Worcestershire only data</b>	19	21	21	20
<b>West Mercia data</b>	25.7	29.1	30.8	30.4

53. Domestic Abuse Rates by district and averaged:



54. Historically, disaggregating Worcestershire’s data from that of West Mercia has proven difficult. This data is presented as a result of work currently being conducted between PH analysts and West Mercia.

### Purpose of the Meeting

55. The Board is asked to consider:

- The Annual Update on developments in relation to Community Safety in Worcestershire;

- Whether it wishes to make any comments to the Cabinet Member for Health and Well-being, or partner agencies; and
- Whether there are any issues which should be the subject of future scrutiny work.

### **Contact Point**

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### **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Public Health) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)