

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 NOVEMBER 2017
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS ANNUAL REPORT 2016

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 District Councils have a mandatory duty to act as a “responsible authority” on its local Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to plan and deliver measures to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, to reduce offending and promote assurances to the public whilst working together with other statutory and non-statutory organisations.
- 1.2 The Welwyn Hatfield CSP over the past twelve months has significantly grown its engagement with partners, to include new partners from across the borough and county. The Partnership developed a new action for this year which focuses on priority areas where the borough requires attention in order to reduce crime and disorder.
- 1.3 The CSP action plan has been shared publicly to enable those that the partnership is set up to help see what is being delivered.
- 1.4 The current DPPO (Designated Public Protection Order) in Hatfield town centre is no longer fit for purpose. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014 provides local authorities with the power to create a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO). The CSP is working together to put a proposal for a new PSPO in Hatfield Town Centre to replace the DPPO that is currently in place. The new order would aim to provide a better framework for enforcement officers which will hopefully help to reduce unwanted behaviours in the town such as street drinking.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee note the report of the Community Safety Partnership’s successful work in 2016.
- 2.2 That the committee note that the risk of crime locally remains low, however the Partnership still works to continue to both reduce crime and the affect crime has on residents of the borough.
- 2.3 That the committee note that the ongoing financial support, received from the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office which enables a huge amount of the work carried out by the partnership, will change from the 1st April.
- 2.4 That the committee supports the CSP in its review of the current DPPO in Hatfield Town Centre.

Implications

3 Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications directly related to the content of this report.

4 Link to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The content of this report is linked to the council's corporate priority to '*Maintain a safe and healthy community*', however it is also linked to 'Protect and enhance the environment' and to 'engage with our communities and provide value for money'

5 Legal Implications

5.1 Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by subsequent Acts), district councils have a duty to plan jointly with other named responsible authorities to table the incidence of, and fear of, crime, anti-social behaviour and the misuse of drugs. This complements the council's duty under the same Act to consider the implications for crime and disorder arising from its operations, and to account for those implications in any decisions it takes. National guidance requires that the Executive Member formally represents the council on the strategic body.

5.2 Under the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Public Health Act 2007, district councils have a duty to scrutinise the work of the local CSP through a nominated committee, which for WHBC is the Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6 Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no climate change implications directly relating to the content of this report.

7 Risk Management Implications

7.1 The recognised risk that a partner might disengage from joint work is reduced in the case of the CSP because each responsible authority has a statutory duty to take part. Partners recognise the value of the CSP, and the main threat to partners' involvement arises from major legislative or organisational changes. The most significant change has been the County Community Safety Unit re-structure changes which has seen the change in working relations between Welwyn Hatfield CSP and its County equivalent.

7.2 The CSP's priorities and programmes are well aligned with those of the Police and Crime Commissioner, although the CSP rightly retains its autonomy and legal accountability. Important to note that due to the changes in the way in which the CSP is funded this could have an effect on the ability of the CSP to be reactive to situations within the borough. The effect of the funding changes will not be known until early 2017 when the funding for the CSP is confirmed.

8 Explanation

The composition of the CSP can be found in Appendix 1 which also highlights the variety of subgroups that form the CSP.

Crime Statistics

8.1 Current trends with regards to crime within the borough in 2016

- Burglary Dwelling down by 39 or 15.2% (218 vs. 257)
- Burglary Other down by 22 or 9.4% (213 vs. 235)
- Other Thefts down by 80 or 12.2% (578 vs. 658)
- All Crime up by 710 or 13.9% (5,819 vs. 5,109)

Burglary is down since the arrest and imprisonment of a local person known to the police.

- Shoplifting up by 192 or 35.2% (737 vs. 545)

The Police have seen an increase in shoplifting as criminals have started to recognise the sentencing differential between shoplifting and other crimes combined with quick turnaround potential of the new goods versus old. Items stolen are predominantly meat, alcohol and perfume.

Engagement work is being done to bring the impact of low sentencing to the attention of the Judiciary to address the lack of deterrent. Further work is being done to encourage shops to provide adequate staffing levels to prevent the crimes occurring. Unfortunately, there is reluctance from shops to protect themselves. The Police have been informed by shops that they would rather wear the losses than employ staff to prevent it.

8.2 Public order and harassment offences States

- Harassment up by 52 or 26.3% (250 vs. 198)
- Public Fear, Alarm or Distress up by 149 or 82.3% (330 vs. 181)
- Violence Against the Person up 274 or 22.0% (1,522 vs. 1,248)
- Criminal Damage up by 64 or 9.1% (764 vs. 700)

The Police have seen a significant increase in anti-social behaviour in and around Woodhall area in WGC and a 'gang' formed referred to as WH44. A series of measures were set up to address the poor behaviour of the young persons including use of dispersal orders to provide the community relief. Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) Officers and partners engaged with parents to bring their children under control, some of whom were shocked to learn the level of violence exhibited.

Operation Hade was set up to arrest 19 young persons, some of school age, who attacked innocent members of the public during an evening of unprovoked violence following a dispersal order in Woodhall area.

Partnership working between the Police, WHBC, Housing Trust, schools and charity groups along with a large quantity of arrest is starting to bring respite to the community and modify the youths' behaviour.

8.3 Non dwelling burglaries stats

- Burglary Other down by 22 or 9.4% (213 vs. 235)

8.4 Motor vehicle related crime stats

- Motor Vehicle Crime up by 64 or 14.5% (505 vs. 441)
 - Theft From Vehicle up by 9 or 2.8% (326 vs. 317)
 - Theft Of Vehicles up by 40 or 85.1% (87 vs. 47)

Increase in thefts from insecure vehicle. A trend has emerged for owners to not lock vehicles of high value in order to avoid damage to the vehicle. This is known by criminals who target the insecure vehicles as easy pickings particularly in areas of high value. Occurring across the County and arrests are being made.

An increase has been seen in theft of moped, scooters and small motorcycles by youths to 'joy ride'. Unable to hot wire them successfully has led to further theft.

8.5 Drug and substance abuse stats

- Drug Possession up 9 or 4.5% (209 v 200)
- Drug Trafficking up 8 or 24.2% (41 v 33)

Community Safety Priorities

8.6 Priorities for 2016 were set by the CSP's Responsible Authorities Group in March of this year. The group made a judgement based on local knowledge and data to focus on different strands relating to Community Safety which would be taken forward by the officers best placed locally to ensure effective change and management of those areas.

1. Keep Down Crime, especially burglary at home

This priority area is led by the Herts Constabulary, SNT Inspector Jeff Scott.

2. Prevent Antisocial Behaviour

This priority area is led by the Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust Head of Community Development, Kerry Clare.

3. Reduce the damage caused to neighbourhoods by drugs and alcohol misuse.

This priority is led by Herts County Council, Programme Manager (Drug using offenders) Alex Kweller

4. Protect Vulnerable People

This priority is led by Herts Fire and Rescue Service, District Commander Paul Redhead and Helen Edmondson from East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group .

5. Support People enduring or escaping Domestic Abuse, Intimidation and Harassment.

This priority is led by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, Community Safety Coordinator, Chrystalla Karvella

- 8.7 2016 saw some great projects and programmes delivered across the CSP and several of these were managed and delivered by the Council:

The Annual **Crew Crucial** event continues to educate and equip all Year Six students within the borough for the challenging transition from primary to secondary education. The Council leads on the planning of the event, which is delivery of a series of workshops, and the logistics of the day ensuring that each school is fully briefed before attending and is given where possible a time slot best suited for them. The Council engages with partners to ensure appropriate delivery of each workshop.

The Borough's **Community Information Days** sees very specific areas of the borough targeted. In 2016 two CID days have been completed the first^t was in Hatfield Town Centre in July, the major outcome of this event was the formation of the Hatfield Town Centre Task and Finish group which aims to bring together partners who can deliver change. The Task and Finish group has an action plan that focus on all subject matters including, fly-tipping and litter, anti-social behaviour, street drinking, CCTV, trees and much more. The second CID event took place on a Friday night in Woodhall, Welwyn Garden City. The event came about after a significant increase in ASB in the area, the event aimed to re-assure the public, provided an opportunity for the residents and businesses to air their concerns, provide a dedicated resource to engage with young people and better understand their needs as well as provide information and advice to those who reside and use the local area.

The Council CCTV contract/ service level agreement with St Albans and Videcom finishes in March 2018. As such the Council is undertaking a review of its public realm CCTV with a view on whether to re-tender the contract in partnership with St Albans Council. The Borough Council has also undergone an internal audit across several departments to ensure that it meets the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's guidance.

Safer Together events have been re-energised by taking the event into more populated areas. In July 2016 the event took place in the Howard Centre, Welwyn Garden City where a significant number of local residents and commuters actively engaged with the partnership to find out more about services from bike marking, neighbourhood watch, cold-calling, domestic abuse, community housing, drug and alcohol services and much more. The second event will take place at Gracemead House, Hatfield on 1 December.

Hatfield Town Centre DPPO/PSPO

- 8.8 The current DPPO in Hatfield is no longer fit for purpose in that it does not provide enforcement officers with the ability to stop anti-social behaviours such as street drinking.
- 8.9 The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014 provides local authority the ability to make a public spaces protection order if it satisfies on reasonable grounds that two conditions are met. The first condition is that:

(a) activities carried on in a public place within the authority's area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or

(b) it is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect.

The second condition is that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities:

(a) is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature,

(b) is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and

(c) justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice.

8.10 Recent consultation in the town centre highlighted the increase in the perception of homelessness, street drinking and general anti-social behaviour throughout. This information will provide the CSP with the frame to review the current DPPO and put forward a new Order which would strictly prohibit things such as street drinking.

8.11 The proposal of the new PSPO is being worked on currently and it is hoped if agreed by members to be implemented in April 2017. It is acknowledged that before the new Order is put in place new signage and marketing about the changes will be required to ensure that the public are appropriately informed and due consideration on how the Order will be implemented and enforced will be required.

Other CSP items to note

8.12 Other significant events and projects which the partnership has been a part of through 2016 include the following:

National Playday	Christmas Lights Events (November)
Prince's Trust – Team Project	Simply Amazing Welwyn Hatfield
Domestic Abuse Conference	WRAP (Prevent) Training
Hoarding Project	Refuge Fun Day
Operation Balsam	Saleswatch
Local Litter Collections	Student Drop in Surgeries
Student House Visits	Garage Watch
Youth Magazine	Safe and Well Pilot
E-safety Workshops	Community Champion Training
National Road Safety Week	Year 9 Crucial Crew

9 Equality and Diversity

9.1 I confirm that an Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out in connection with this progress report, but the CSP assess equalities implications of projects as they are developed, and in considering bids for support. Much of its work is driven by a commitment to protect the most vulnerable. Its priorities continue to include domestic abuse and "hate crimes" against persons who might be victimised based on their age, ethnicity, sex, sexuality or disability. As such, the work of the CSP has a positive effect on persons with protected characteristics under the relevant equality duties.

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Date
Title

October 2016
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