

Part I

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All Wards

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 16 JANUARY 2020
REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 District Councils have a mandatory duty to act as a “responsible authority” on their local Community Safety Partnership (CSP), in order 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 had major successes in tackling youth anti-social behaviour (ASB), continuing to deliver the youth engagement project ‘Positive Pathways’, introducing the county-wide SOS project (intervention project for young people who are involved in gangs, county lines and violence) and delivering youth violence education to all students within the borough.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Committee note the report of the Community Safety Partnership’s successful work over the past 12 months.
- 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 impact crime has on residents of the borough.
- 2.3 The committee formally supports the partnership’s ongoing commitment and work to reduce youth ASB and to tackle emerging issues such as ‘county lines’, knife crime and serious violence.

3 Explanation

- 3.1 The composition of the CSP can be found in Appendix One which also sets out the various subgroups that form the CSP.
- 3.2 Appendix Two sets out a copy of the CSP’s Three Year Plan, which provides the partnership with some strategic direction as it works to make this borough a safer place to live and work.

4 Crime Statistics (provided by Herts Constabulary)

- 4.1 Current trends with regards to crime within the borough in 2019. Crimes compared between the 1st April 2019 and the 12 December 2019, and compared to the same period 2018.

4.2 Burglary (Residential)

4.2.1 251 this year compared with 341 last year. A decrease of 26.4%

4.2.2 Burglary residential has fallen across the county by 15.4%.

4.2.3 94 offences have taken place within Welwyn Hatfield South Ward (increase of 8). This is the highest concentration of offences across the district. This ward contains areas such as Brookmans Park which has seen the highest increase of reported crime of 18 reports compared to 8 last year.

4.2.1 Welwyn Hatfield North has suffered 90 offences (down 11) and Welwyn Hatfield West has had 67 offences (down 18).

4.2.2 Proactive operations have taken place this year around dwelling burglary which is thought to have impacted this decline. Hertfordshire Police continue to deliver Operation Guardian whereby they deploy Ring doorbell cameras (in addition to the 25 deployed last year) to high risk areas which has assisted in detecting theft related offence.

4.3 Burglary (Business and community)

4.3.1 121 this year compared with 113 last year. An increase of 7.1%

4.3.2 Burglary (business and community) has reduced across the county by 6.3%

4.3.3 Burglary (business and community) has fallen across the county, however there has been an increase locally - in particular in Welwyn Garden City.

4.3.4 Handside Ward incorporates the Town Centre and repeat victims of note were Gosling Sports Centre of which offenders were identified and John Lewis who were broken into on a number of occasions in quick succession. Again suspects identified and charged.

4.4 Robbery

4.4.1 There were 66 offences this year compared with 67 last year. A decrease of 1.5%.

4.4.2 Hertfordshire as a whole has seen an increase of robbery offences of 16.1%.

4.4.3 Welwyn Hatfield has seen the second highest reduction in Robbery overall in the county.

4.4.4 Hertfordshire Police continue to robustly manage known offenders. It has been noticeable this year that there is an increase of suspected drug dealers being subject of being robbed of their drugs and money.

4.5 Shoplifting

4.5.1 There were 648 offences compared with 627 last year. An increase of 3.3%

4.5.2 Hertfordshire as a whole has seen an increase of 5.9%.

4.5.3 The district has seen a slight increase in shoplifting year to date, most notably in the Welwyn Hatfield North area (Town Centre). The outcome rate remains good with an increase of detections by 40.9%.

4.5.4 There has been an increase in community and business engagement this year to prevent and detect this crime type. Namely the weekly CSP stall set up in the Howard Centre, charity events (Jail and bail) and the Christmas operation Op Bauble.

4.6 **All Crime**

4.6.1 Welwyn Hatfield is currently 3rd highest out of 10 CSP's for crime volume across the county though Welwyn Hatfield are also 7th with regard to our crime reduction over the year.

4.6.2 It is thought that proactive work around Ring doorbell cameras has generated more crime reports with potential lines of enquiry and there has also been more proactive work around cuckooing/county lines which may have impacted where more drug trafficking offences are being recorded. New reporting methods may also have contributed to higher crime volume as for example when a group of people are caught shoplifting at the same time but cannot be proved under joint enterprise the crime has to be recorded as a number of individual crime reports rather than one.

4.6.3 Crime reporting is currently up by 4.4% what it was at this point last year. The highest increase in reporting is in Welwyn Hatfield North (WGC) up by 707 reports (37.6%).

4.6.4 12.5% of the crime reported within the CSP is detected (0.2% increase from last year). The average detection rate across the county is 13.3%. Welwyn Hatfield are the fifth highest performing CSP for detecting crime.

4.6.5 It is believed that the amount of proactive work by partners and ongoing high visibility/community engagement has contributed in the increase of crime reporting, which although can be seen as a negative (as figures appear worse year on year) it is also encouraging that we better understand the wider picture of our overall crime.

4.6.6 Hertfordshire Police continue to work closer with partners on identifying vulnerable people and properties used for county lines. ASB hotspots and vehicle crime has also been high on our priorities this year.

4.6.7 Safeguarding also remains one of the CSP's key priorities, this includes ongoing work with the private care homes in the district including managing vulnerable people placed in district from outside boroughs.

4.7 Public order and harassment offences

4.8 **Stalking and Harassment**

4.8.1 There were 445 incidents compared to 422 last year. An increase of 5.5%

4.8.2 Hertfordshire as a whole has seen an increase of 0.7%.

4.8.3 A change in the way these offences are recorded has caused a slight increase across the county and the borough. Stalking and harassment legislation now run hand in hand, meaning every time a report is received, a crime of harassment is recorded as well as a crime of stalking. This is in essence a good news story, as we encourage these reports to ensure victims are appropriately safeguarded.

4.9 **Public Fear, Alarm or Distress**

4.9.1 There were 341 offences compared to 387 last year. A decrease of 11.9%.

4.9.2 Hertfordshire has seen a decrease of 16.9% across the county.

4.9.3 There has been an increase in public order offences in Hatfield West and Hatfield North, this can be attributed to several reasons. The ongoing youth ASB at Woodhall shops and in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre have contributed to these rises, with longer term work taking place to manage these issues. We have also seen an increase in offences in places such as the Galleria, with large groups of youths congregating. The implementation/enforcement of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in Hatfield has also meant more confrontational engagement with the public, leading to an increase in recorded crimes.

4.10 **Violence Against the Person (victim based)**

4.10.1 There were 1987 offences compared to 2018 last year. A decrease of 1.5%

4.10.2 Hertfordshire as a whole has seen an increase of 2.1%.

4.10.3 We continue to encourage the victims of Domestic Abuse (DA) to report assaults and incidents of domestic abuse. There is currently work taking place to understand our DA offences and those subject to repeat offences. The CSP has the second highest detection rate within the county with the highest improvement on last year (2.3%). Work also continues with schools and higher education establishments to raise awareness around this crime type.

4.11 **Criminal Damage**

4.11.1 There has been 704 reports compared to 727 last year, which is a reduction of 3.2%.

4.11.2 Hertfordshire has seen a reduction of criminal damage offences of 4.8% across the county.

4.11.3 The work undertaken around Woodhall shops and through community engagement has contributed to this reduction in offences of reported damage. Increased awareness of what constitutes ASB has been fed into schools through the mini police programme as well as Year 6 Crucial Crew and young people have continued to feed back that they were unaware how ASB and criminal damage were intrinsically linked through the annual borough-wide youth survey. Our CSP currently has the second highest detection rate across the county and the biggest improvement against all ten CSPs.

Motor vehicle related crime stats

4.12 **Theft From Vehicle**

4.12.1 There were 331 offences compared to 318 last year. An increase in of 4.1%.

4.12.2 Hertfordshire as a whole has seen a reduction of 2.9%.

4.12.3 Welwyn Hatfield has continued to produce good performance with regard to this crime type despite a spike in reporting over the spring/summer. There have been a number of prevention messages, events and robust investigation which all contributed to keeping offences down to a minimum. Theft from insecure vehicles has been a recurring theme throughout the year.

4.13 Theft Of Vehicles & Taking without consent

4.13.1 There were 168 offences compared to 110 last year. An increase of 52.7%.

4.13.2 Hertfordshire has seen an increase of 5.1% across the county.

4.13.3 The entire South East has seen an increase in Theft of Motor vehicles. In particular, high value keyless thefts. These are committed by organised crime groups and crime prevention messages have regularly been advertised in order to combat this. Locally there has been some success with the south of the borough around increasing understanding about the importance of key storage.

Drug and substance abuse stats

4.14 Drug Possession

4.14.1 There were 193 offences compare to 211 last year. A decrease of 8.5%.

4.14.2 Hertfordshire has seen a reduction of 0.1%.

4.14.3 Continuity of local scorpion officers (scorpion officers are the proactive team who target the most wanted suspects involved in county lines, drugs and associated crime) has contributed to this reduction. Local 'users' are well known to the police and prevention measures are also now backed up with the assistance of the council around assistance and referrals. Improved management of initial logs coming into the police and the implementing of the victim service team (VST) dept. has enabled officers to be more proactive in stop and search. Work continues to educate schools around the risk of drugs and associated criminality.

4.15 Drug Trafficking

4.15.1 There were 63 offences compared to 44 last year. An increase of 43.2%

4.15.2 Hertfordshire has seen an increase of 15.7% across the county.

4.15.3 Concerns around county lines have emerged within these figures with a continued identified increase in drugs trafficking. Enforcement measures such as Closure Orders have made it more difficult for Dealers to establish themselves locally. Tackling drug offences is a large piece of work which includes education, prevention and enforcement and will continue to be undertaken by the CSP to ensure our vulnerable residents do not become victims.

4.16 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- 4.16.1 All ASB incidents = 2,386 compared to 2,658 reports last year (decrease of 272 incidents – 10.2%). Welwyn Hatfield have the highest reduction of ASB across the county.
- 4.16.2 There has been a significant decrease in Nuisance ASB reported to Police by 355 incidents.
- 4.16.3 Work continues to take place around ASB. Operation Brillo (targeted operation around Youth ASB in Welwyn Garden City), Op Martinet (targeted operation around Youth ASB in the Galleria) are a couple of the operations ongoing to reduce ASB in built up areas as well as various community engagements and CSP projects such as Positive Pathways, diversionary projects and more.
- 4.16.4 Although police reports of ASB are down the reporting levels to Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council's ASB team has increased by 137% an increase of 149 offences (when comparing 1 April – 30 November 2019 and the same period last year). However this is thought to be due to the ASB team expanding, resulting in an increase in resource as well as a new ASB policy. This increase in resource has also meant better engagement with residents resulting in residents being more aware of how/when to report ASB and feeling more confident to do so.

4.17 Fire Figures

- 4.17.1 From 1 January 2019 to 30 November 2019 there were a total of 114 Primary Fires compared to 123 during the same period last year – down by 7.3% (Primary Fires are fires of any property type including a dwelling or one that is under construction, any type of business, hospital, religious venue and sporting venue).
- 4.17.2 From 1 January to 30 November 2019 there were a total of 158 Secondary Fires compared to 144 during the same period last year – up by 9.7% (Secondary Fires include trees, hedgerows, grasslands, bins and other outdoor items).
- 4.17.3 It is thought the slight increase in secondary fires can be attributed to the spate of arsons during summer 2019 taking place around King George V Playing Fields in Welwyn Garden City. A co-ordinated response between CSP agencies was agreed to tackle this spate and as a result there have been no further incidents since August 2019.

Community Safety Priorities

- 4.18 Priorities for 2019 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 (Lead officer is SNT Inspector Wayne Nash).

2. Prevent Anti-social Behaviour

This priority area is led by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (Lead officer is Neighbourhood and Enforcement Manager Kerry Clifford).

3. Reduce the likelihood of drugs and alcohol misuse and its impact to the community.

This priority is led by Joint Agency Group Chair (Lead officer is Community Safety Co-ordinator Zoe Keyte).

4. Protect Vulnerable People

This priority is led by Herts Fire and Rescue Service (Lead officer Community Engagement Officer Zoe Crossan).

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

This priority is led by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (Lead officer is Neighbourhood Enforcement Manager Kerry Clifford).

6. Increase awareness of county lines and enforce against known offenders in the local area

This priority is led by Hertfordshire Constabulary and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. 2019 saw the delivery of some new projects and initiatives as well as the development and improvement of some of our annual events.

- 4.19 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 delivered via 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 to them. The Council engages with partners to ensure appropriate delivery of each workshop.
- 4.20 The Borough's **Community Information Days (CID) – a visible partnership presence in the community** - sees very specific areas of the borough targeted. In 2019 there were six CIDs. From these dates the CSP have spoken to approximately 1,000 residents and 70 businesses. The results of the surveys show that on average 76% of residents either feel **fairly satisfied** or **very satisfied** with their local area and only 24% are either **fairly unsatisfied** or **not unsatisfied at all**. In terms of safety, on average 88% of residents feel **very safe** or **fairly safe** in their local area in the daytime and only 12% feel either **fairly unsafe** or **very unsafe**. It should be noted that the six areas visited were chosen due to areas of concern around issues such as anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and domestic abuse.
- 4.21 The Borough Council continues to invest in the borough **CCTV network**, which plays a vital role in the prevention and the detection of crime. The current camera network in Hatfield on 2019 has been updated and added to. Through 2020 a new system of cameras will be installed at Woodhall shops to better complement the cameras in place there and additional cameras will be installed across Welwyn Garden City Town Centre. The borough continues to benefit from the

expert services of Videcom through the Council's service level agreement with St. Albans District Council which was renegotiated in 2018/19 to last a further 5 years.

- 4.22 The **Hatfield PSPO** continued into its second year. Overall reports of street drinking and rough sleeping have remained low during 2019 however we are seeing a slight increase in reporting as of October 2019 which we believe is a seasonal trend. Hatfield night shelter and the Housing First Project continues to engage with high impact street drinkers and rough sleepers which helps to prevent issues in the town centre.
- 4.23 The CSP, through its partnership with YMCA, co-ordinated a **youth survey** for all year 6, 9 and 11 pupils within the borough. This follows the work that was carried out in 2018 so we will continue to monitor each of these age groups to follow their journey, views and opinions through the secondary school stages. The surveys received 500 responses overall from year 9 and 11 pupils and the results will again help to inform youth provision across the borough.
- 4.24 The success of the **Positive Pathways Project** has continued into its second year. The project was jointly funded for another year by YC Hertfordshire and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. Since the project began in September 2018 over 60 referrals have been made. The team have worked with over 50 of these young people. As of September 2019 the number of ASB sanctions to young people (below the age of 18) being carried out by the council such as Acceptable Behaviour Contract's (ABC), Community Protection Notice Warnings to the parents (CPNw) and Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO) has decreased by 85%. We believe this is due to the early intervention work being carried out as part of the project.
- 4.25 The CSP co-ordinated a week of community safety engagements and events called '**Wel Hat Safety Week**' in September. The week consisted of a different theme to promote each day. Events which took place included two CID's, a Sunflower domestic abuse coffee morning, Learn 2 Live (road safety event), community engagement stalls and bike marking events.
- 4.26 **Friday Night KICKS** was a pilot project funded by the Council to engage with young people at Gosling Sports Park in July 2018. The success of the project has since enabled additional funding for another three years until 2022. Between May and October 2019 (when the project moved to The Ridgeway Academy) 58 male and female 11-17 year olds signed up to the project. Averaging 25-30 attending on a weekly basis with over 380 attendances across 15 weeks.
- 4.27 The CSP still continues its support of the Welwyn Hatfield Domestic Abuse forum, which put on several different events/promotion to tie in with **16 Days of Action against Domestic Abuse**. During the 16 days the CSP held two awareness events in both Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City town centres, Safer Places and Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline were in attendance. The CSP also promoted messages through social media and the council's clock was lit up in purple in recognition of the campaign.
- 4.28 In March 2019 the CSP held its annual Tri-District **Domestic Abuse Conference** with Hertsmere and St Albans Domestic Abuse Forum. The theme for the conference was Young People. In total there were over 160 delegates. Those in

attendance heard presentations from a survivor, Herts Young Homeless, Safe Lives and the Stefanou Foundation.

- 4.29 In July 2019 the CSP held '**Knife and Drug Awareness Days**' in all secondary schools. The days were aimed at educating and raising awareness of the serious implications of youth violence, gangs and county lines. Pupils were searched with knife wands on entering school and then received presentations from the Josh Hanson Trust and Reach Every Generation. More than 4,000 pupils benefited from this.
- 4.30 In September the CSP launched the **SOS Project**. The SOS Project is an intervention project aimed at supporting young people aged 11-25 who are at risk or already involved in high levels of; youth violence, knife crime, gang involvement and county lines. Welwyn Hatfield shares its dedicated SOS worker with East Herts, our worker had already received five referrals at the time of writing this report (December 2019). The project is a countywide initiative which has been funded through both local authority funding, county and Police and Crime Commissioner funding.
- 4.31 The CSP continues to deliver the **Sunflower Drop-In** for victims of domestic abuse at Gracemead House. This year the CSP re-launched the drop-in alongside Safe Places – Hertfordshire's commissioned domestic abuse service. Safer Places now attend the drop-in every week and offer a higher level of 121 support to those who attend. This has helped to improve numbers at the drop-in each week.

Other CSP items to note

- 4.32 Other significant events and projects which the partnership has been a part of through 2019 include the following:
- BIG Summer
 - Christmas Lights Events (November)
 - Prince's Trust – Team Project
 - Hoarding Project (including an updated Hoarding protocol)
 - Operation Balsam
 - Local Litter Collections
 - Student House Visits
 - Heads Up Magazine
 - Community Youth Champions Event
 - Facts and Futures Event
 - 12 Days of Community Safety
- 4.33 Important to note that the borough council is extremely fortunate in the cross team working around matters relating to community safety. Teams are working in partnership everyday from Environmental Services, Public Health and Protection, Community & Housing Strategy and Housing Operations to ensure that we are striving for a safer community.

5 Legal Implication(s)

- 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 take account of those implications in any decisions it takes. National guidance requires that the relevant 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 Financial Implication(s)

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly related 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.
- 7.2 Any specific risks associated with project delivery are recorded on the council's Risk Management system.

8 Security & Terrorism Implication(s)

- 8.1 There are no implications for security and terrorism arising from this report.
- 8.2 The CSP support the governments CONTEST strategy and the Prevent agenda.
- 8.3 The CSP delivers WRAP training to professionals and staff as well as 'Me and You' Ideology Training. WHBC sit on the County Prevent Board and also co-ordinate information requests from the Eastern Region Special Operations Unit.
- 8.4 The local authority also has a PREVENT steering group which meets regularly to review the council's commitment to the PREVENT agenda.

9 Procurement Implication(s)

- 9.1 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

10 Climate Change Implication(s)

- 10.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

11 Link to Corporate Priorities

- 11.1 The content of this report is linked to the council's corporate priority for 'Our Community.'

12 Communications Plan

- 12.1 Providing community assurance is a key target of the CSP. This is done via campaigns and initiatives, as well as attending community events and delivering targeted events, such as Community Information Days. We have also increased visibility amongst the community of the annual CSP Action Plan.
- 12.2 The CSP has its own social media channel and pages on the Council's website. The CSP also ensures that partners are engaging in borough wide initiatives by sharing and engaging within online media across the partnership.
- 12.3 The CSP continue to have a presence in the borough's Heads Up Magazine (youth focused) and in ONE WelHat magazine (previously LIFE).

13 Health and Wellbeing

- 13.1 Residents of the borough should feel safe at all times as that is key to anyone's positive health and wellbeing. Feeling safe has a huge impact on the mental wellbeing of individuals as well as their physical health.
- 13.2 The CSP has also been committed to raising awareness of mental health and the issues and implications. In October 2019 the '**Positive Youthful Minds Conference**' took place where over 130 professionals, parents and young people learnt all about the importance of mental health within young people and how we can work better together to support individuals.
- 13.3 The OLLE foundation also delivered '**Suicide and Self-Harm**' training to professionals in June.
- 13.4 The several youth diversion projects which link to increasing young people's physical activity.
- 13.5 The fire service delivered OPALS (older person's awareness and learning sessions).
- 13.6 The CSP delivered scams talks to residents across the borough in the library and in the local authority sheltered housing scheme.
- 13.7 Working in partnership with Herts County Council on the Herts Warmer Homes scheme.
- 13.8 To list a few of the initiatives undertaken through 2019.

14 Equality and Diversity

- 14.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been carried out in connection with this report, as it is for information only.

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Date	7 January 2020

Appendix One – CSP Action Plan 2019-2020