

TITLE	Community Safety Partnership Update
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 July 2022
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Crime and Disorder issues can affect all sections of society. Whilst Wokingham remains a very safe place and has one of the lowest crime rates in the Southeast, some categories of crime are seeing an upward trend.

The Wokingham Community Safety Partnership, made up of key stakeholders including, Wokingham Borough Council, Thames Valley Police, Berkshire Fire and Rescue, Health and Probation Services. Continue to work together to address issues and concerns effecting the borough and its residents.

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) are one year into its three-year strategy, this report outlines the progress and outcomes achieved in year one.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee considers an update on reported crime and disorder issues from April 2021 – March 2022 and offers comment.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The Wokingham Community Safety Strategy was adopted in June 2021. The focus for the 2021-2024 strategy is on the following three strategic priorities, underpinned by five specific aims:

Strategic priorities

- 1 Listening to needs and concerns of local residents
- 2 Intervening early and preventing issues escalating
- 3 Working together to protect vulnerable residents

Specific Aims

- 1 Work with communities to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots
- 2 Reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse
- 3 Reduce incidents of serious violence and knife crime
- 4 Tackle exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- 5 Reduce incidents of residential burglary and theft from vehicle

Statutory and other partners

The borough is much better placed to tackle crime and disorder if everyone – local residents and businesses, community and voluntary groups, and city services – work together in a coordinated way. The local authority, police, health, probation and fire services are statutory partners under the 1998 Act. However, in practice, the Community Safety Partnership works across a much wider range of partners at different levels and on different topics to work out what needs doing, who can help and to take action. There is

good information exchange between those concerned, including with residents, so that agencies can listen and respond to the needs of local people.

Setting our work in context

As well as the impact on individuals, the negative effects of crime and disorder draw widely on public services. Working in partnership and adopting a 'whole system approach' is essential. The partnerships work contributes to the Police & Crime Commissioner's Police and Criminal Justice Plan and to the council's Corporate Plan as well as measures in the Public Health Outcomes Framework.

Background

Community Safety Partnership 2021/22

The Community Safety Partnership's aims and overarching duty is to:

- Reduce crime and disorder
- Improve community safety
- Reduce re-offending

By addressing these three overarching outcomes the partnership serves to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in or visits the borough. The focus for 2021-2024 is on the following three strategic priorities, underpinned by five specific aims:

Strategic priorities

1. Listening to needs and concerns of local residents
2. Intervening early and preventing issues escalating
3. Working together to protect vulnerable residents

Specific Aims

1. Work with communities to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots
2. Reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse
3. Reduce incidents of serious violence and knife crime
4. Tackle exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults
5. Reduce incidents of residential burglary and theft from vehicle

Statutory and other partners

The borough is much better placed to tackle crime and disorder if everyone – local residents and businesses, community and voluntary groups, and city services – work together in a coordinated way. The local authority, police, health, probation and fire services are statutory partners under the 1998 Act. However, in practice, the Community Safety Partnership works across a much wider range of partners at different levels and on different topics to work out what needs doing, who can help and to take action. There is good information exchange between those concerned, including with residents, so that agencies can listen and respond to the needs of local people.

Strategic context

As well as the impact on individuals, the negative effects of crime and disorder draw widely on public services. Working in partnership and adopting a 'whole system approach' is essential. Our work contributes to the Police & Crime Commissioner's Police and Criminal Justice Plan and to the council's Corporate Plan as well as measures in the Public Health Outcomes Framework.

Analysis of Issues

2021-2022

This past year the Wokingham Community Safety Partnership was Chaired by Susan Parsonage, Chief Executive of Wokingham Borough. The work of the board was supported by the Executive Member for Neighbourhood and Communities, Bill Soane.

Following the adoption of the Community Safety Partnership Strategy for 2021- 24 at the start of June 2021. The partnership has made positive progress on several of its workstreams

Domestic Abuse Key Achievements

- Wokingham Domestic Abuse Policy 2021 – 2024 has been agreed and adopted to incorporate priority areas. This is in line with the new duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- New commissioned domestic abuse support service has been put in place from 1st July 2021 with the service operating from the Community Hub in Waterford House.
- Delivered over 28 Multi and single agency training sessions, involving over 20 different organisations, with over 1285 people attending increasing their education and insight.
- Developed and implemented a domestic abuse communications plan across various platforms including digital. This has raised awareness and provides information to victims about support options and includes a revamp of the domestic abuse webpages; new leaflets and resources have been produced with a series of information video's plus social media messaging and press releases.
- Increased our local understanding and created focused action plans developed to reach out to those currently under-represented within domestic abuse services, including those who have protected characteristics to increase access to services and drive improved service responses.

Prevent & Channel

- Completed a review of compliance and identified gaps in line with the Prevent Duty 2015, compliance analysed against government guidance and toolkit with RAG status.
- Agreed and adopted a new local Prevent Action Plan 2021/22, including key objectives and actions to address local risk and comply with Prevent Duty benchmarks.
- Assessed and reviewed data and local profile information with regards to the Local Counter Terrorism risk assessment 2021.
- Updated and implemented Prevent Venue Hire Policy and Guidance to support Statutory requirement for booking venues to comply with guidance.
- Reviewed and updated Prevent Board terms of reference and membership to include recommended partners, Voluntary sector and Further Education college.
- Development and implementation of a Prevent training plan with tiered training to identify staff cohorts and targeted training requirements.
- Produced and delivered Prevent training sessions; Prevent Presentation and Q and A for councillors and staff teams
- Produced Prevent communications plan and campaign material. Campaign took place week commencing 18 October, information also included in residents' newsletter.
- Updated and reviewed Prevent content for Council Website and intranet, including legal requirements – privacy notice and complaints procedure.
- Assessment of compliance against Channel Duty statutory guidance for local authorities and identified gaps, analysed against 2020 Channel guidance with RAG status
- Updated Council constitution to include Channel Duty new legal requirement from 2020.

- Implemented new Information Sharing Agreements, Channel operational guide, Channel information Gathering template and Channel Support Plan template.
- Completed statutory Channel and annual assurance statement.

Substance Misuse Key Achievements

- Commissioned service provider has issued over 500 naloxone kits to service users, partner agencies and residents.
- Delivered drug awareness workshops to over 800 students across the borough
- Supported 91 young people with substance use issues
- Supported over 500 adults with substance use issues
- Supported 90 family members around their loved one's substance use
- Established a well-attended service user forum to help shape the delivery of the service moving forward, feedback already being incorporated into service delivery for example - emotional wellbeing group created, off site groups implemented.
- Initial positive feedback from CQC inspection (awaiting final report)
- Commissioned service registered with AQA awarding body to be able to offer accreditation to young people for drug awareness and behaviour change modules
- Improved engagement in the Drug Diversion Scheme (YP)
- Implemented colocation facility with Sexual health clinic and from Station Rd and drop-in surgery at Wokingham hospital
- Establishment of an on-site hepatitis C treatment clinic resulting in 100% of clients referred to treatment completing treatment for hep C

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Delivered borough wide multi-agency anti-social behaviour panel, dealing with medium and high-level complex cases.
- The anti-social behaviour panel took over 19 medium – high level cases
- 12 medium – high level ASB cases problem resolved and closed.
- Co-ordinating response, action plan in response to 2 Community Triggers, both investigated and closed with a satisfactory outcome.
- 4 Community Protection Warnings issued.
- 1 Acceptable Behaviour Agreement (ABA) issued.
- 86 separate reports of ASB received and resolved
- Attendance at Neighbourhood Action Groups
- Attendance and contribution at approximately 50 safeguarding meetings.
- Co-ordinated response to car meets, working with Thames Valley Police to target car meet hotspot locations across the Borough, including hire of private security, installing of mobile CCTV.
- Supporting Thames Valley Police led operations resulting in the issuing of 27 Section 59's warnings to drivers using cars in an anti-social manner.
- Undertaking public consultation for a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in relation to car cruising.

Anti-Social Behaviour in Council Housing Stock

- The Housing Service reported 219 new ASB related cases in the 2021/22 financial year. This is a slight decrease from the previous year (with 235 new cases reported), but a significant increase from the 2019/20 financial year when

160 new cases were reported. Previous trends show that the service would normally see an average of 160 new cases reported, but during the pandemic the service reported an increase in new cases.

- The Housing Team closed 216 cases in the last financial year, with 99.8% of all closed cases resolved. This is the highest close, resolution rate, the service has reported since data on this key performance indicator has been collected.
- Of the new cases reported in the 2021/22 financial year, the most reported was noise nuisance, with 36% attributed to this case type.
- During the two years the service was dealing with the pandemic there was a big increase in the number of neighbour disputes reported to the service. In the 2019/20 financial year the service reported 4 neighbour disputes, this increased to 18 in the 2020/21 financial year and 24 in the last financial year. It is interesting to note that the increases in neighbour disputes have again been in line with the pandemic.
- The last financial year also saw the lowest average of number of days to close a case, 40 days. The service saw two new Housing Officers join in January of this year and with patches split between four officers than the previous two, we would expect to see this number decrease. In the previous financial year the average number of days to close a case was 47 days and 52 days in the year before that.
- No tenants were evicted due to ASB, but the service did issue two Closure Orders, three Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and one possession order.

Serious Violence and Exploitation

- Implementation of a Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategic Board
- Development of a Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy for the Borough
- Review of at risk of exploitation, missing, multi-agency risk assessment process and procedures and performance management.
- Integration with the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit's, Thames Valley Together Data Project, allowing more expedient and effective data sharing practices.

Whilst this has allowed us to lay the foundations of the serious violence and exploitation work. The overall aim is to ensure that: Serious violence causes less harm to individuals and communities.

What we are working towards achieving:

- Fewer people harmed by serious violence
- Less crime involving weapons
- All parts of the community to be free of the fear of violence and confident to report
- A thriving night-time economy free from alcohol-related violence.
- A stronger preventative approach to serious violence through the better use of all available data.

Exploitation (including modern slavery and human trafficking)

What we are working towards achieving:

- Prevent children, young people and vulnerable adults from becoming involved with organised crime groups and gangs
- Safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults who are being exploited
- Provide a safe, effective pathway to enable children, young people and vulnerable adults to exit involvement with organised crime networks

- Increase awareness of the signs and risks of all forms of exploitation among agencies and the wider community

Violence Against Women and Girls

The Community Safety Partnership is proud to report on the progress of the work on domestic abuse. However, we recognise that continuous improvements are needed to ensure that the response for victims is not only meeting good practice but exceeding it.

The work and service improvements to date have laid the foundations, from this point on the Partnership can further strengthen and focus on wider work to address violence against women and girls.

What we are working to achieve in 2022-23

- A borough where domestic and sexual violence and abuse is not tolerated by our communities or our organisations.
- Victims to be believed not blamed, treated with dignity and respect, and supported to feel safe within their community, knowing that their offenders are being worked with to change their behaviour and/or brought to justice.
- All sectors, services, neighbourhoods and communities across the borough to recognise that domestic and sexual violence is everyone's business and to overcome barriers to progress.
- More prevention and early intervention work. Evidence based approaches are needed to change attitudes and challenge behaviours in our communities so victims are protected and the cycle of offending is broken.
- A stronger criminal and civil justice response to perpetrators, and the development of sustainable proactive intervention and preventative programmes.
- Robust partnership working at both a strategic and operational level across a broad coalition of partners to enable consistent quality services, working across services and sectors and focusing on positive outcomes for victims.

Crime Performance Summary

Crime Type	Apr 2020 Mar 2021	April 2021 Mar 2022	% Change	Change Actual
All Crime (excl. fraud)	6759	7495	+ 10.9%	+736
Residential Burglary – Dwelling	124	169	+36.3%	+45
Burglary – Sheds/Garages	149	92	-38.3	-57
Robbery	38	32	-15.8%	-6
Violence with injury	620	761	+22.7%	+141
Public Order	539	962	+78.5%	+423
Domestic Abuse Recorded Incidents	1055	1155	+9.5%	+100
Domestic Abuse non recorded Incidents	1154	1094	-5.5%	-63
Rape	66	91	+37.9%	+25
Drugs offences Possession*	212	200	-5.7%	-12
Anti-Social Behaviour (TVP)	1416	1224	-13.6%	-192
Theft of Vehicle	155	168	+8.5%	+13
Theft from Vehicle	336	272	-19.1%	-64
Hate Crime	266	303	+13.9%	+37
ASB (WBC Housing)	235	219	-6.3%	-14

Wokingham MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences)

	Cases	Repeat Cases	Percentage Repeat Cases
April 19 to Mar 20	128	34	26.5%
April 20 to Mar 21	136	52	38.2%
April 21 to Mar 22	75	23	30.6%

All crime for the period 1st April 2021-31st March 2022. Wokingham Borough has seen an increase in crime by **+10.9%** which is **736** recorded crimes. It should be noted that despite this increase as a Borough Wokingham still has one of the lowest crime levels compared with others in Thames Valley and the Southeast. It is also noteworthy that the previous 12 months (1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021) saw some of the lowest levels of recorded crime levels both nationally and locally. This was mostly attributed to the Covid 19 pandemic and related lockdown.

Crimes that have increased.

Residential burglary has seen an increase of 36.3% or 45 offences compared with the previous year. Nationally and locally burglary levels fell to some of the lowest levels on record. This can largely be attributed to residents returning back to work places and resuming leisure and holiday activities. As activities resume back to pre-covid levels, more homes have become unoccupied for a period of time and we are seeing an increase in offenders targeting homes in the borough. Family gold burglaries are the key

identified trend for the borough, involving organised criminals travelling across the country targeting homes.

Public Order has increased by 78.5% or 423 offences. Changes implemented by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Crime Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in the way crimes and incidents in this category should be recorded has resulted in incidents that were previously recorded in the ASB category to now be recorded as public order. The data suggests there is evidence of small increases related to the reopening and use of licenced premise after the lock down period. In addition, following further detailed analysis of the data and incidents in this category it should be noted that this rise in public order is largely down to this new recording practice.

Domestic Abuse recorded incidents have increased by 9.5% or 100 actual offences. This increase is in line with the national picture on domestic abuse. An increase in awareness and education, the end of the Covid pandemic, plus national media coverage of a number of connected violence against women and girl's issues is all thought to have contributed to increased reporting from victims. Locally the commissioned service provider has also seen an increase in referrals and victims accessing services in line with national trends.

Rape incidents have seen an increase of 37.9% or 25 offences. This is in line with the national picture. Police forces across the UK have recorded the highest ever number of rape and sexual offences in the 12-month period to September 2021. According to the Office of National Statistics nationally there has been a 13% rise in reported offences with the biggest surges seen after the murder of Sarah Everard. The rise is thought to have been driven by the impact of high-profile media campaigns encouraging victims to report.

Theft of a Vehicle increased by 8.5% or 13 actual crimes, whilst this is an increase on the previous year, overall this figure remains low. Most theft of vehicle offences have been in relation to cars taken in connection with a burglary where the keys have been stolen. The top three cars stolen are Land Rover, BMW and VW.

Hate Crime incidents have increased by 13.9% or 37 actual incidents. In the main this is in connection with the race and religion and disability hate crime categories. We have seen a 5 year upward trend both locally and nationally, this is thought to be connected to the EU referendum, 2017 terrorist attacks and Black Lives Matter movement in 2020.

The Multi-Agency Problem Solving Tasking Group will manage the harm caused to victims of hate. We are also seeking to increase community and individual knowledge of and trust and confidence in statutory services so as to increase the reporting of hate incidents and establish third party reporting mechanisms across the borough. We are working with education providers to ensure that bullying is consistently addressed using best hate incident practice. Working with partners, whether from the community, voluntary or statutory sector is central to our work. This will include keeping in close communication with elected members and local residents through Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAG's), the new Equality Forum and residents' and community groups facilitating dialogue and joint working among diverse community groups.

Crimes that have decreased.

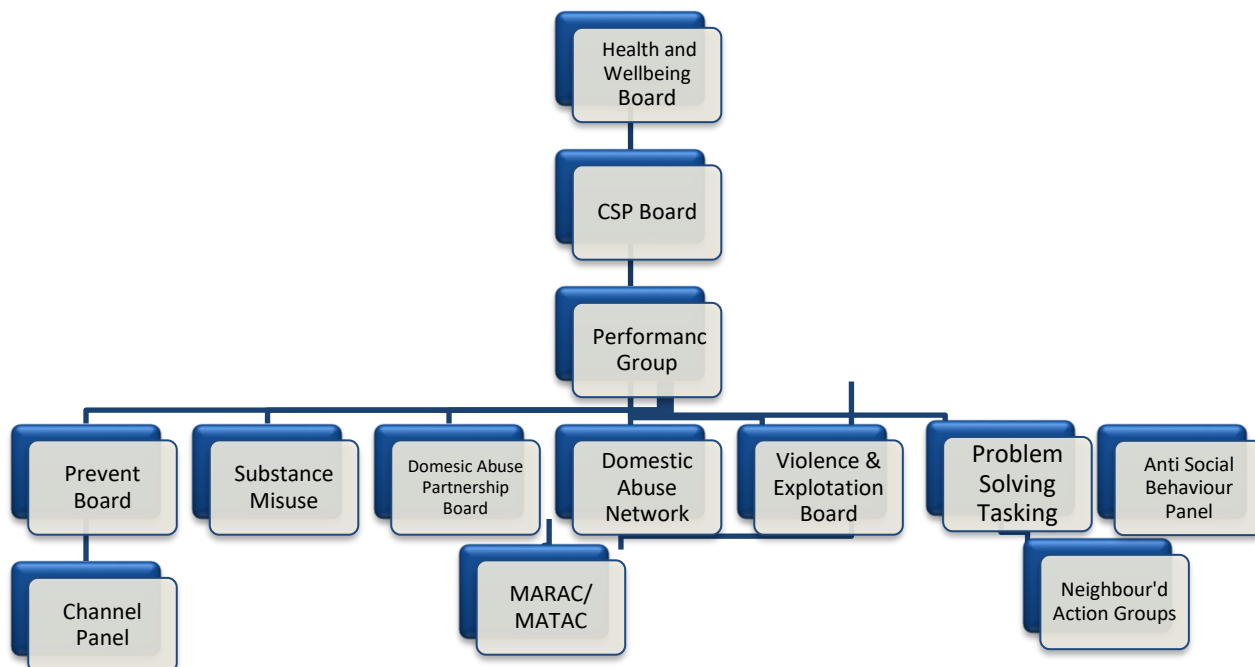
Burglary Non-Dwelling has seen a decrease of 38.3% or 57 offences. Over the period of the pandemic thefts and burglaries from sheds, outbuilding and garden office type buildings saw an increase. During the pandemic as more residents remained at home, due to lock down there were less opportunities for residential burglaries to take place. As a result it is thought that opportunistic offenders turned their attention to sheds and outbuildings targeting gardening machinery, tools and bikes instead. The decrease represents the reduced targeting of non-dwelling buildings and a return to pre-covid levels.

Theft from a vehicle offences have decreased by 19.1% or 64 offences as people continue to work from home. using their vehicles less than pre-pandemic levels to commute to work, or use public car parks. As the majority of theft from vehicle offences occur away from the home there was considerably less opportunity for this crime to take place.

Robbery has a decreased by -15.8% or 6 offences, this is thought to have been as a result of the partnership drive to reduce serious violence. Robbery offences across the borough largely involve young people as both victims and perpetrators. Items taken include, mobile phones and cash. Youth Offending Services working closely with Thames Valley Police have undertaken a number of targeted interventions and education and awareness events to address this offence as part of the serious violence work stream.

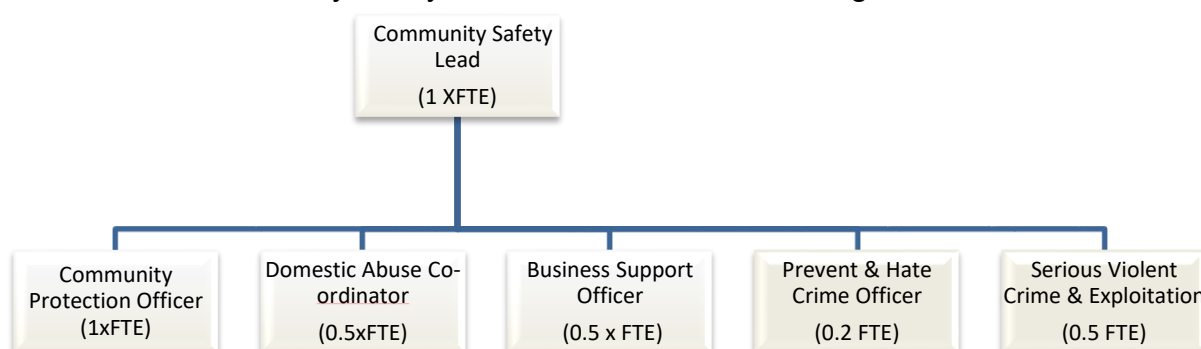
Partnership Governance & Structure

The current governance structure and delivery groups for the Wokingham Community Safety Partnership are set out below. A detailed summary of the groups can be found in Appendix A



Community Safety Team 2021-22

The council's community safety team consists of the following structure.



Funding

The main streams of funding are from the Community Safety Fund Grant, awarded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) in 2021/22 this was approximately £103K. This is to support the delivery and work of the partnership and helps support the delivery of the OPCC's priorities locally.

The Domestic Abuse Duties Grant was approximately £290K, specifically ring fenced for the delivery of the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021 duty.

In addition, the partnership received £40K from the Violence Reduction Unit to help the partnership prepare the groundwork in readiness for the new Serious Violence Duty.

The partnership also has oversight of the Borough's commissioned Domestic Abuse service and the Substance Misuse Service contracts.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

Cross-Council Implications
The work of the Community Safety Partnership impacts a range of Council and partners services.

Public Sector Equality Duty
Please confirm that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken and if an equalities assessment has been completed or explain why an equalities assessment is not required.
An Equalities assessment was undertaken in February 2021.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
There are no impacts on the Council's carbon neutral objectives.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers
None

Contact Narinder Brar	Service Place and Growth
Telephone No 07979 255308	Email narinder.brar@wokingham.gov.uk