

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Lewes on 7 July 2016.

PRESENT Councillors Angharad Davies (Chair) Councillors Colin Belsey, Charles Clark and John Ungar

LEAD MEMBERS Councillor Bill Bentley

ALSO PRESENT Keith Hinkley, Director of Adult Social Care and Health
Samantha Williams, Assistant Director, Planning, Performance and Engagement
Louisa Havers, Head of Performance, Engagement and Safer Communities
Justine Armstrong, Safer Communities Manager
James Rowlands, Joint Strategic Commissioner for Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls
Chief Inspector Ross, Sussex Police

1 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH 2016

1.1 The Committee registered its thanks to Cllr Pragnell for his chairing of the Committee over a number of years.

1.2 The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2016.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Charlton, Cllr Sheppard (Cllr Whetstone substituted), and Cllr Webb.

3 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

3.1 There were no disclosures of interest.

4 URGENT ITEMS

4.1 There were no urgent items.

5 FORWARD PLAN

5.1 The Committee RESOLVED to note the latest edition of the forward plan.

6 ANNUAL REVIEW OF SAFER COMMUNITIES PERFORMANCE, PRIORITIES AND ISSUES

6.1. Louisa Havers, Head of Performance, Engagement and Safer Communities introduced the annual review of the Safer Communities Partnership which this year focused on domestic abuse and Prevent work, and included the East Sussex Safer Communities Partners Business Plan 2016/17. The Committee considered each of these main three areas in turn.

Domestic Abuse

6.2. James Rowlands - Strategic Commissioner for Domestic Abuse (for both East Sussex and Brighton & Hove, since the establishment of a joint unit) gave an overview of developments and priorities. Key points included:

- The launch of a new domestic abuse service, 'The Portal', in February 2016.
- The significant work being undertaken this year in relation to child sexual abuse including the introduction of a specialist worker to support families experiencing abuse, and the extension of access to talking therapies working with NHS England.
- Ongoing work to encourage people (including the friends and family of victims) to report domestic abuse and access support. The increase in reporting of domestic and sexual abuse is positive and reflects national trends.
- Work on reaccrediting the Council to the White Ribbon scheme – this is focused on awareness raising, working across district/boroughs, and encouraging people to report domestic abuse.
- The involvement of East Sussex as one of three areas piloting the 'Ask Me' scheme developed by Women's Aid – this involves training 50 champions to talk about the issues in communities.
- Undertaking three statutory reviews of domestic violence homicides in order to ensure any lessons are learnt.

6.3. The Committee asked a number of questions covering the following areas:

- **Homicide reviews** – it was confirmed that these reviews are primarily considered by the Safer Communities Board, but are also shared with the Home Office.
- **Resources to deliver on the ground given financial constraints** – Chief Inspector Rosie Ross from Sussex Police confirmed that domestic abuse is a priority area and is not facing reductions in available resources, so there would be no reduction in frontline officer response. James Rowlands explained that a key aspect in delivering support for victims of abuse is in how their first disclosure to a professional is managed and responded to. Statistics indicate that people may approach a professional between five and eight times before getting a response. A training programme is being rolled out to address this issue and police officers are using a body worn video camera to help gather evidence.
- **Financial abuse** – it was clarified that financial abuse primarily comes under safeguarding processes and the Committee would receive the annual safeguarding report in September 2016. However, the Safer Communities Partnership is piloting a post that will involve looking at the response to domestic abuse amongst older people, which includes financial abuse. The Lead Member for Adult Social Care advised that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has set up an elders commission whose first report in March 2016 highlighted elder abuse as a priority. This is being fed into the PCC's new Police and Crime Plan.
- **Police links to schools in new policing model** – Chief Inspector Ross advised that there had been some turnover amongst police schools liaison officers in the county, but these roles had not been removed and were being recruited to. Sussex

Police is reviewing the structure as part of wider work to review prevention activities, but there definitely would continue to be a police presence in schools.

- **Awareness raising** – it is the case that people who know about abuse taking place often need help to identify it, and then require help to access support. Efforts are being made to promote awareness by using the limited available resources to their best effect, based on experience of what works. This includes a specific rape and sexual consent awareness campaign this summer. Creative opportunities to get messages out via TV, radio, social media and theatre were discussed by the Committee.
- **Portal publicity** - the initial focus has been on establishing a phone line and website but posters and business cards have also been widely distributed and can be ordered from the Portal. More resources will follow including a 'z card'; and targeted materials for groups such as older people, BME groups, LGBT community, younger people and Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) users. The 50 'Ask Me' champions will also be a key way to communicate to people. The key messages being communicated are about what services are available rather than the name of the service providers, which are deliberately anonymous and neutral for confidentiality reasons.
- **Portal service model** – the Portal is intended as a single point of access by telephone, website or email – this is known as a 'no wrong door' model. Initial contacts are followed up by phone or face-to-face meeting depending on which is most appropriate. The main bases in East Sussex are in Eastbourne and Hastings but staff can use other locations, for example, the interview room in Children's Centres.
- **Support to escape domestic abuse** - a safety plan for the victim is developed following an initial assessment that identifies the level of risk and any other needs of the victim. The safety plan can involve the victim leaving immediately for a refuge, or involve other ways to keep them safe in their home. Refuge places in East Sussex have been sustained, as funding reductions have been managed in other ways, but there is pressure on services outside of East Sussex as a result of funding reductions elsewhere. This can make it more challenging to arrange an out of area placement. It was noted that leaving the home is not always the safest option.
- **Action against perpetrators** – Chief Inspector Ross advised that the police have some powers to remove perpetrators using Domestic Violence Protection Orders, which have been used successfully in some cases. However, whether exercising these powers is the appropriate action to take depends on the need of the victim. He said that the services that the police provide aim to minimise disruption to victim and family. A three-year pilot project has begun in West Sussex to look at ways to disrupt and change the behaviour of perpetrators, but the results will not be available for some time.
- **Male victims** – it was noted that about 18% of domestic abuse victims are male and about half of them were in same sex relationships. There are similar issues around encouraging reporting, plus additional barriers related to perceptions of masculinity.
- **MARAC decline in use** – Louisa Havers advised that the reason for the decline in the use of MARACs is being investigated. However, it is too early to tell if this is an ongoing decline as it relates to only one area of MARACs, and it is the first time it has happened.

Prevent

6.4. Louisa Havers explained that Prevent work is set out in a Prevent Partnership Plan, overseen by a multi-agency Prevent Board which she chairs. The annual plan is informed by the

Sussex Counter Terrorism Local Profile produced by Sussex Police. This work is increasing in scale, for example, in 2014 there were five referrals to Channel compared to 36 in 2016.

6.5. Lucy Spencer, Strategy and Partnerships Officer for Prevent, highlighted two key areas of achievement:

- The '**Think, Protect, Connect**' project – funded through the Home Office's Prevent funding to District and Borough Councils – aims to counter online radicalisation and give children critical thinking skills in relation to online material. These skills are applicable to other areas such as sexual exploitation. The project works through schools and colleges and links to the anti-bullying project. It is now being rolled out to all primary schools, and school governing bodies are also included in training.
- **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub** – Safeguarding referrals previously went directly to the police for screening, meaning that partner organisation did not always see the full picture. Now all safeguarding referrals go through a single Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and radicalisation issues are referred on from the Hub to the appropriate organisation. This is an innovative approach compared to other areas.

6.6. The Committee asked questions on this area of work as follows:

- **Safeguarding hub** – Chief Inspector Ross confirmed that the police are part of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub; this enhances the previous referral process rather than replaces it.
- **Hate crime** – Chief Inspector Ross advised that the force had seen a slight increase in hate crime in East Sussex over the past two weeks following the result of the EU referendum. There appears to have been 12 crimes since 23 June with an identified link to the referendum. Sussex Police is aware that not all hate crime is reported and there is ongoing work to increase reporting. Hate crime reports are reviewed every 24 hours and a community tension assessment is being put together, to be followed by communication of key messages via the media. The Director of Adult Social Care and Health noted that the County Council has clear policies regarding unacceptable behaviour.

Engagement Events and East Sussex Safer Communities Partners Business Plan 2016/17

6.7. Justine Armstrong-Smith explained that the Safer Communities Partnership was holding engagement events to gather information and feedback from wider partners to inform the East Sussex Safer Communities Partners Business Plan 2016/17. These events are part of the 2016 risk assessment process which is using an adapted version of the MoRiLE (Management of Risk in Law Enforcement) methodology. The events aim to identify threats and harms, share achievements, and identify better ways to tackle issues. They had been very well attended with much enthusiasm.

6.8. The Committee asked questions covering the following areas:

- **MoRiLE methodology** – this approach involves identifying current threats and the harm they are causing; analysts then draw in other evidence and data to determine the likelihood and volume of these threats. A number of new issues were identified through this process at the first engagement event. The outcomes of this assessment will then be shared with partners at a further event which will look at the resources and capabilities and skills available to address them. The Committee would be made aware of the outcomes of this second event.
- **Partnership changes** – Louisa Havers confirmed that the streamlined partnership arrangements are designed to ensure that local expertise and knowledge is still captured and that the arrangements will be reviewed to ensure this continues.
- **Anti-social behaviour (ASB)** – Chief Inspector Ross advised that there are different categories of ASB and that personal ASB has seen a reduction.

- **Rogue traders** – Chief Inspector Ross advised that Sussex Police undertake joint work with Trading Standards on this issue at a local level. At a strategic level the force and partners are looking at the national picture and how best to undertake preventative work.

6.9. The Committee RESOLVED to request a further annual report in June 2017 – to include an update on how new partnership arrangements are working and relationships with Joint Action Groups.

7 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

7.1 The Committee reviewed its future work programme, noting the following:

- Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) discussions are expected to be more complex for 2016/17 onwards due to joint programmes with health partners.
- The 15 September RPPR report will include an update on the impact of 2016/17 savings (particularly on the voluntary sector) and corporate risk register items related to Adult Social Care.
- A report on employability and skills in relation to learning disability has been added to the 10 November meeting.

7.2 The Committee RESOLVED:

- To request a report on delayed transfers of care for the 10 November meeting;
- To nominate Cllr Belsey as Committee representative on the East Sussex Better Together Scrutiny Board to replace Cllr Pragnell;
- To request a briefing note on East Sussex 1Space to be circulated by email; and
- To update the work programme as discussed.

The meeting ended at 11.37 am.

Councillor Angharad Davies
Chair