

Report to: Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 22 June 2017

By: Director of Adult Social Care and Health

Title: Annual Review of Safer Communities Performance, Priorities and Issues

Purpose: To update the Committee on performance in relation to safer communities in 2016/17 and the priorities and issues highlighted in the Partnership Business Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is recommended to:

- (1) consider and comment on performance in 2016/17 and the priorities and issues identified for 2017/18.
 - (2) identify any issues for inclusion in the committee's future work programme.
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1 Background Information

1.1 The County Council's priorities for community safety are informed by the East Sussex Safer Communities Partners Business Plan April 2017 to March 2020 which has been agreed by the partnership and is attached at **Appendix 1** of this report.

2 Supporting Information

2.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. The Safer Communities budget position for 2016/17 showed £365,917 at end of year as an underspend but allocated for this financial year.

2.2 The Police and Crime Commissioner has indicated that the allocation of £236,000 from the Sussex Safer Community Fund will be maintained at this level for 2017/18.

Performance Summary

2.3 Over the past 10 years, reported crime in East Sussex has fallen by a third, and although at the end of 2016/17 the reporting levels increased (+3,662/ +13%), this is a trend that is mirrored elsewhere in the country, including West Sussex (+4,215 / +10%) and Brighton and Hove (+2,174 / +9%).

2.4 Although we have seen an increase in Violent Crime as a whole (+23%), we need to be mindful that these figures also include reports of Sexual Offences and Domestic Abuse, which we are actively asking people to report.

2.5 In relation to reports of Sexual Offences and Domestic Abuse, these have seen an increase, which is likely to reflect a number of trends. Firstly, the partnership is actively encouraging people to report. Secondly, this reflects a longer term national trend. Locally, in the last 12 months (to March 2017), Serious Sexual Offences have risen by 19% (+141) and reports of domestic abuse crimes have increased by 758 (+22%). The rise in the latter offences

continues to be seen as a positive step in that the public feel able to talk to the police about such matters, and they will be taken seriously and dealt with sympathetically and supportively.

2.6 In addition to this, the overall picture relating to domestic violence, the number of high risk cases referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) in the county has increased when compared to the previous year. A total of 628 cases were discussed at MARAC in East Sussex during 2016/17, an increase of 142 (+29%) on the same period in the previous year. Repeat referral rates have now increased to 29% and sit within the Safe Lives recommended range of 28% to 40%. There has been a great deal of work undertaken in raising awareness and specialist training has been undertaken and available on request from the Safer East Sussex Team to ensure that all professionals are aware of the MARAC process. The Joint Unit has also enabled East Sussex and Brighton & Hove to coordinate activity to review and develop training and awareness activity.

2.7 In line with the Police and Crime Plan target, hate crime has also seen a rise in reporting of 23% (+99) during the 12 month period. This has been partially triggered by the EU Referendum and Article 50. However, the increase in East Sussex has been lower than the national average.

2.8 The total numbers of police recorded reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in East Sussex continue to fall. Sussex Police recorded a total of 13,072 reports during 2016/17, a reduction of 353 on the previous year, it is important to note that alongside this work we have made great headway in the areas of prevention and enforcement. We are confident that this reduction is a direct result of partnership working and dealing with ASB through prompt, robust and effective interventions thus preventing initial and repeat incidents.

Partnership Priorities April 2017 to March 2020

2.9 The Modern Crime Prevention Strategy was published by the Home Office in March 2016 and updates the way in which we think about crime prevention, aiming to build upon the successes of the past while making the most of new research, techniques and technology. To ensure the Safer East Sussex Partnership is embracing the new strategy, the Strategic Assessment of Community Safety 2016 was produced using MoRiLE (Management of Risk in Law Enforcement); a UK-wide project that is used by law enforcement agencies to assess and prioritise risk. It allows a consistent approach to the identification of strategic priorities across all law enforcement and community safety agendas and provides a sound evidence base for selecting partnership priorities.

2.10 This has led to a fundamental shift in the way we have undertaken our strategic assessment and business planning processes. We held an engagement event in May and talked to 140 people, from directors to service users, who work, live and support various people in East Sussex, about what they feel the main community concerns are in the county, and used their thoughts and responses to form an insightful qualitative background to the Strategic Assessment. Once completed, we held another engagement event with partners with a focus on business planning for the year ahead. The event was an opportunity for partners to be involved in developing the partnership plan for the future. All discussions were captured by facilitators and, along with the information taken from the strategic assessment, have helped shape the partnership priorities below:

Serious Organised Crime:

- identify vulnerable adults at risk of fraud and rogue trading and develop targeted work;
- begin to explore cyber-crime with a focus on cyber bullying and online safety;
- explore further opportunities for partners to engage in early preventative work in relation to organised crime and the exploitation of young people, including links to County Lines;
- gain a better understanding of the risk of modern slavery

2.11 In addition to the priorities adopted by the partnership, work will be undertaken in relation to the areas outlined below

- Preventing Violent Extremism
- Drug and Alcohol Misuse
- Offending
- Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse

2.12 For those areas that have not been agreed as priorities, such as street communities, road safety and elder abuse, it is important to note that these are being dealt with through other partnership structures. It is also important to note that the partnership remains interested and involved in these areas of work and provide support where appropriate. The full descriptions of the priorities are set out in the attached Business Plan.

Community Safety Developments in East Sussex 2017/18

2.13 The Partnership continues to work closely with other partnership structures that also have a role to play in community safety. In 2016 these working relationship led to the development of a protocol which assists in clarifying roles, expectations, joint working arrangements and shared priorities between the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), Safeguarding Adults board (SAB), Safer Communities Partnership, Children and Young People's Trust, and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

2.14 Domestic Violence & Abuse, Stalking and Rape, Sexual Violence and Abuse are existing work packages that are included in the Safer Communities Partnership Business Plan. The number of domestic violence and abuse crimes and incidents and sexual offences have increased. While it is positive that more cases are being reported, this has an impact across all service areas. Tragically between August 2015 and March 2016 there have been three domestic homicides in East Sussex. These deaths have triggered a corresponding Domestic Homicide Review (DHR). There are a range of partnership activities underway, including a planned review of the Domestic Abuse Strategy reflecting recent legislative and policy changes and to extend it to address Sexual Violence and other forms of Violence against Women and Girls. The work that is being undertaken is described in the attached **Scrutiny Information Pack (Appendix 2)**.

2.15 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 came into force on 31 July 2015. This is intended to give this crime type a far higher profile and includes new statutory duties. However, modern slavery remains a hidden issue and available data and information is a considerable weakness, both locally and nationally. This is the first year that Modern Slavery has been adopted by the partnership and the work that is being undertaken is described in the attached **In Focus Newsletter (Appendix 3)**.

2.16 During 2016 the five Districts and Boroughs looked at reviewing their existing arrangements in line with the revised policing models. This has led to the development of Strategic partnerships with all 5 Districts retaining their locally focused Joint Action Groups. There are at present three District and Borough based Community Safety Partnerships within East Sussex. Those being

- Eastbourne and Lewes Community Safety Partnership
- Safer Wealden Partnership

- Safer Hastings and Safer Rother Partnerships are trialling a joint Community Safety Partnership

2.17 The partnership will continue to evolve as the Local Policing Model develops across Sussex.

3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The Modern Crime Prevention Strategy has developed the community safety agenda to consider the broader threat of exploitation. The introduction of a new style of strategic assessment has identified priorities concerning vulnerable individuals who are being exploited by others for personal, commercial or financial gain. A common theme of the work of the partnership continues to be people with complex needs, which would relate to any one or a combination of substance misuse, accommodation and mental and physical health.

3.2 The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the performance and achievements of the Partnership and their plans for 2017 to 2020.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All