

**Report to:** People Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 20 June 2019

**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 2018/19 and priorities and issues highlighted in the Partnership Business Plan

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (1) To consider and comment on performance in 2018/19 and the priorities and issues identified for 2019/20**
  
  - (2) To consider if there are any specific issues that should be considered 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 Business Plan April 2017 to March 2020, refreshed in March 2019, which has been agreed by the Safer Communities 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.

2.2 Unlike previous years, the Police and Crime Commissioner has allocated funding directly to District and Borough Council based Community Safety Partnerships.

**Headline Activity**

2.3 Over the past three years there have been significant changes nationally in the way that performance information is viewed. Agencies have moved away from numerical targets and measures, focussing instead on broader aims over longer periods. This is reflected in the Sussex Police and Crime Plan for 2017/21, and the Sussex Police Operational Delivery Plan 2018/19. The Safer Communities Partnership has also mirrored this trend and has developed a headline report, which monitors outcomes and activity as opposed to targets.

2.4 At the end of 2018/19, the recorded levels of total crime in East Sussex had increased by 513/ +1.5%. This is preceded by an increase of +3,051/ +9.7% in 2017/18. Although total crime appears to be increasing, an increase in the number of crimes recorded does not necessarily mean the level of crime has increased. For many types of crime, police recorded crime statistics only cover crimes that come to the attention of the police and can be affected by changes in policing activity and recording practice and by willingness of victims to report.

2.5 For example, there has been an increase (+11.7%) in Violent Crime as a whole, but 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, and also reflects a longer term national trend. Locally, in the last 12 months (to March 2019), Serious Sexual Offences have risen by 8.6% (+90) and reports of domestic abuse crimes have increased by 965 (+19.8%).

2.6 Between April 2018 and March 2019, there were 889 high risk domestic violence and abuse cases discussed at the East Sussex Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs). This was an increase of 157 (+21.4%) when compared to the previous year. Repeat referral rates have decreased to 24% and sit just outside of the Safe Lives recommended range of 28% to 40%. There were a total of 1,452 children associated with the MARAC cases recorded in the year up to the end of March 2019.

2.7 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. In addition, a redesign process is underway, with the pilot of a dual route MARAC process that includes multi-agency hub case management to commence during 2019.

2.8 According to the Office for National Statistics, Fraud is the most common type of crime in England & Wales and is becoming more complex and deceptive, much of which is targeted at vulnerable and elderly people. The East Sussex Against Scams Partnership (ESASP) launched in March 2017 to encourage organisations to sign up to the Charter and pledge their commitment to help raise awareness about scams. By the end of March 2019, 105 organisations had joined the ESASP Charter and, with the assistance of other East Sussex SCAM champions, 2,979 residents had participated in Friends against Scams awareness sessions.

2.9 Think Protect Connect, a programme for promoting digital resilience and critical thinking skills in the online world, has been integrated into the East Sussex Community Safety Education Programme 2017/18 and is being rolled out to primary schools. Between April 2019 and March 2019, 103 Think Protect Connect sessions had been delivered to schools within East Sussex. In addition, training was delivered to a total of 5,270 young people, which also included raising awareness around online safety, personal safety and drugs.

2.10 In 2019/20, the Think Protect Connect programme will be relaunched as the Relationships Programme for children and young people. This will consist of four workshops which will provide young people with the opportunity to discuss Community Safety issues that can impact early on in their development. One of these workshop focuses strongly on relationships with social media. The programme provides schools and other youth settings with a range of innovative resources to safeguard children and young people from online radicalisation and extremism.

2.11 The reported instances of modern slavery and human trafficking are increasing nationally each year and the reported instances in Sussex have followed this national trend. In 2018, there were 48 (15 adult and 33 minor) potential victims referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) by Sussex Police and East Sussex Local Authority, a 31% increase on 2017, compared to a 36% increase nationally. Referrals for minors accounted

for 68% of all potential victims and had increased by 45% (48% nationally) since 2017. This is largely due to the increase in NRM referrals relating to County Lines. UK, Vietnamese and Albanian were the most commonly reported potential victims. The most common exploitation type recorded (for both adults and minors) was labour exploitation (66%), a category which also includes criminal exploitation, followed by sexual exploitation (23%).

### Partnership Priorities April 2017 to March 2020

2.12 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 following the ongoing 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.

2.13 This has led to a fundamental shift in the way we have undertaken our strategic assessment and business planning processes. For example, an engagement event in May 2018 provided 140 people with an opportunity to discuss what they identify as the main community concerns in the county. The participants were individuals who represented a range of different perspectives, from directors to service users, and who work, live and support various people in East Sussex. Their thoughts and responses were used 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.

2.14 In addition to the priorities adopted by the partnership, and shown in the attached business plan, work will be undertaken in relation to:

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

2.15 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 2018/19

2.16 The Partnership continues to work closely with other partnership structures that also have a role to play in community safety. In 2018 these working relationships led to the development of a protocol which assists in clarifying roles, expectations, joint working arrangements and shared priorities between the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB), Safer Communities Partnership, Children and Young People's Trust (CYPT), and the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB).

2.17 Domestic Violence and Abuse, Stalking and Rape, Sexual Violence and Abuse are existing work packages that are included in the Safer Communities Partnership Business Plan. We are currently in the process of recommissioning our Specialist Domestic Violence

services work that is being undertaken, this is described in further detail in the attached Appendix 2.

2.18 During 2018, the five District and Borough Councils reviewed their existing arrangements in line with the revised policing models. This has led to the development of Strategic Partnerships with all five councils retaining their locally focused Joint Action Groups. There are, at present, three District and Borough based Community Safety Partnerships within East Sussex:

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

2.19 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 and there are pressures on both statutory services and agencies, including commissioned specialist services, to respond to the needs of those referred within existing resources. Tragically since 2017 there have been five domestic homicides in East Sussex. These deaths have triggered corresponding Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR). There are a range of partnership developments underway, including the redevelopment of the Domestic Abuse Strategy as a Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy across East Sussex and Brighton and Hove. This will reflect legislative and policy changes and recognise the changing resource and funding environment, putting emphasis on cross sector partnerships for sustainability.

2.20 Drug and alcohol treatment provided to adults over the age of 18 years, has provided timely, relevant and effective support to East Sussex residents as proven by a low rate in representations to the service. This means that clients receive treatment for as long as it is needed and results in those engaged being able to sustain recovery and be able to reintegrate into their community. The Support and Treatment for Adults in Recovery (STAR) service recognises many paths to recovery including abstinence and harm reduction pathways. Clients are also able to benefit from a range of trauma informed care including specialist counselling and a full range of psycho-social interventions. A further commitment to support sustaining recovery is reflected through the commission of mutual aid and peer support services through the Innovation Fund. These services include peer led groups, specialist support for carers and gender specific support for women. These services have consistent engagement rates and contribute to the low presentation rate to the STAR service.

2.21 A comprehensive needs assessment has been written and extensive consultation has been carried out with a wide range of stakeholders to inform the commissioning of a new drug and alcohol treatment service for East Sussex. The new service will focus on individuals fulfilling their potential through combining formal substance misuse treatment with an enhanced partnership approach. Individuals will work with specialist workers as well as other community assets within the substance misuse landscape and beyond. This approach will concentrate on the skills and assets that an individual has rather than “treating” needs and deficits.

2.22 The Safer East Sussex Team will continue to conduct two confidential enquiries a year into the drug related deaths which occur in East Sussex. The themes and learning from these reports will feed into the Safer Communities Board as well as the newly implemented drug related death working group.

### **3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the performance and achievements of the Partnership and their plans for 2019 to 2020.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

This report impacts on all wards across the County.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Safer Communities Partnership Business Plan  
Appendix 2 - Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls: Partnership Strategy and Service Commissioning Programme