

**Report to:** Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 7 July 2016

**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 2015/16 and the priorities and issues for 2016/17 highlighted in the Partnership Business Plan

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1) consider and comment on performance in 2015/16 and the priorities and issues identified for 2016/17; and**
  - 2) identify any issues to be added to its future work programme.**
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### **1. Background**

1.1. The County Council's priorities for community safety are informed by the East Sussex Safer Communities Partners Business Plan 2016/17 which has been agreed by the partnership and is attached as **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 2015/16 showed £252,141 being carried forward to 2016/17 which is the sum of the Local Area Agreement accrual (£248,246) and the carried forward underspend/reserve (£3,895). The reserve carried forward will be required to fund the shortfall in the base budget for 2016/17.

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 2016/17.

#### 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 2015/16 the reporting levels increased slightly (+785 / +3%), this is a trend that is mirrored elsewhere in the country, including West Sussex (+2,614 / +7%) and Brighton and Hove (+961 / +4%).

2.4. We have seen an increase in violent crime as a whole, but we are confident that this is due to the impact of the most recent changes to the practice of recording crime that were introduced across the country. East Sussex is no more violent than it was a year ago, and 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. Reports of sexual offences and domestic abuse have increased. This is likely due to a number of reasons including the Safer Communities Partnership actively encouraging people to report crime, as well as a reflection of longer term national trends. Most recently, in the 12 months to March 2015 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) reported a 31% increase in the number of domestic abuse related crimes in England and Wales. The increase in sexual offences mirrors this increase, with the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) reporting a 36% increase in the year ending September 2015. Locally, in the last 12 months (to March 2016) reports of domestic

abuse crimes and incidents increased by 3%, and reports of sexual violence crimes increased by 10%.

2.6. In contrast to this overall picture of domestic violence, the number of high risk cases referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) in East Sussex has fallen: a total of 486 cases were discussed at MARAC in East Sussex during 2015/16, a reduction of 49 (-9%) on the same period in the previous year. It is unclear why this is the case and increasing people's confidence to report crime remains a local and regional priority, for example, the Domestic Abuse Action Plan includes work on raising awareness, and there is a roll out of specialist training being planned to ensure that all professionals are aware of the MARAC process. The Joint Unit will also enable East Sussex and Brighton & Hove to coordinate activity to review and develop training and awareness activity.

2.7. The total numbers of police recorded reports of anti-social behaviour in East Sussex continue to fall. Sussex Police recorded a total of 13,386 reports during 2015/16, a reduction of 2,599 on the previous year. Although this reduction does not align with the Police and Crime Plan, 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 anti-social behaviour through prompt, robust and effective interventions thus preventing initial and repeat incidents.

#### Partnership Priorities 2016/17

2.8. Each year, the Safer Communities Partnership undertakes a Strategic Assessment of Community Safety to examine emerging trends in relation to community safety, and to inform the business plan priorities for the coming year. This year, the priorities for the partnership are:

- domestic violence, abuse, and stalking;
- Prevent and hate crime;
- serious organised crime – vulnerable young people being exploited and victimised in connection with substance abuse and drug trafficking offences;
- serious organised crime – the elderly and vulnerable victims of fraud and rogue trading;
- serious organised crime – businesses as victims of fraud and cybercrime;
- road safety;
- rape & sexual violence, and abuse; and
- street communities and anti-social behaviour.

The full descriptions of the priorities are set out in the East Sussex Safer Communities Partners Business Plan 2016/17 (**appendix 1**).

#### Community Safety Developments in East Sussex 2016/17

2.9. This financial year will see a number of significant developments in safer communities work: the selection of three new priorities in relation to serious organised crime and the development of these distinct work streams; the two new partnership engagement events which will ensure more focused activity around our work streams and provide more opportunities for the wider partnership to contribute; and developing relationships with volunteers and working with the voluntary sector.

2.10. The direction of travel for the Local Policing Model remains the same. Up until 2015, Sussex Police reduced costs by £50m. However, savings of £35m are still required by 2020. The main strands of the Local Policing Programme are looking at Prevention (neighbourhood policing), Response, and Investigations. Within the new Prevention Model, which will be rolled out from July 2016, the overall number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) will reduce but there will be an allocated number per district. PCSOs' work will be more focussed and they will have more responsibilities. Following a number of stakeholder workshops at the end of 2015, three core principles for partnership working were identified: Joint Decision Model (who is the most appropriate lead), THRIVE (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigate Opportunity, Vulnerability and

Engagement), and enhanced accessibility. Sussex Police will run a further series of service delivery planning workshops to bring together stakeholders and partners; these workshops will be tailored to focus on each individual group and their area of business.

2.11. The Modern Crime Prevention Strategy was published by the Home Office in March 2016. The Strategy updates the way we think about crime prevention; aiming to build on the successes of the past while making the most of new research, techniques and technology. To ensure the partnership are embracing this new strategy, the Strategic Assessment of Community Safety 2016 will be 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. The Modern Crime Prevention Pamphlet can be found in the scrutiny information pack (**appendix 2**).

2.12. In response to the increasing threat of cybercrime, work is being undertaken with the Alliance of Chambers in East Sussex to discuss what can be done to protect businesses from cybercrime and fraud. The Alliance is a business network and represents over 4,000 local businesses in East Sussex. Work will be undertaken with The Alliance to conduct a survey which aims to understand the impact of cybercrime on businesses and then measures that have been put in place to prevent and respond to these attacks.

2.13. A multi-agency Scams Working Group has been established and includes individuals from statutory agencies with a responsibility for protecting vulnerable victims of fraud. The group will be building on existing work to support victims of scams and help build resilience in the community. Work will also be undertaken to coordinate communication activities to ensure consistent messages are conveyed by partners.

2.14. Findings and recommendations from the Health Needs Audit that was undertaken in partnership with Public Health and Homeless Link will be used to establish how to best address the health needs of the clients, and this work will be taken forwards as part of the East Sussex Better Together Programme. However, the findings have also provided a steer for work being undertaken locally in relation to the monthly client drop-ins being held in Eastbourne to better meet the immediate needs of the street community.

2.15. Another aim this year is to make young people more resilient to the risks of radicalisation online and provide schools and teachers with more support and resources to address the risk posed by online radicalisation at an operational level. Think, Protect, Connect: Building Digital Resilience is a unique and innovative project that will provide schools and other youth and community organisations with a range of high quality curriculum resources to positively engage and safeguard young people from online radicalisation and extremism by building personal and online 'digital resilience' and critical thinking skills to counter radicalisation and extremism.

2.16. Developments for Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse are described within the scrutiny information pack (**appendix 2**)

### **3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1. The Safer Communities Partnership has agreed its priorities for partnership working for 2016/17. Three new priorities have been selected: serious organised crime – vulnerable young people being exploited and victimised in connection with substance abuse and drug trafficking offences; serious organised crime – the elderly and vulnerable victims of fraud and rogue trading; and serious organised crime – businesses as victims of fraud and cybercrime. There have been many achievements delivered by the Partnership including the Health Needs Audit, undertaken in partnership with Public Health and Homeless Link and the commissioning of the new specialist domestic and sexual abuse service, 'The Portal'. The Partnership will be working closely with Sussex Police as the new Policing Model continues to be developed.

3.2. The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the performance and achievements of the Partnership and their plans for 2016/17 and identify any issues to be added to its future work programme.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None