

Agenda Item No: 6

**Report No:
40/16**

Report Title: Lewes District Community Safety Partnership Annual Report

Report To: Scrutiny Committee Date: 3 March 2016

Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Customers and Partners

Ward(s) Affected: All

Report By: Jo Harper, Head of Business Strategy and Performance

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Purpose of Report:

1. To enable the Committee to scrutinise the work of the Lewes District Community Safety Partnership.

Officers Recommendation(s):

2. To note the activities of the Lewes District Community Safety Partnership during 2015/16.
3. To note the plans to merge the three Community Safety Partnerships of Lewes, Eastbourne and Wealden, retaining local Joint Action Groups in each locality.
4. To note the actions planned to respond to the Council's new duties relating to the Prevent agenda (as set out in paras 20-25).
5. To agree any further recommendations the Committee would wish to make to the Cabinet Member for Customers and Partners with regard to the work of the Lewes District Community Safety Partnership.

Reasons for Recommendations

6. For the Scrutiny Committee to fulfil its duties under the Police and Justice Act 2006.

Information

7. Crime reduction and community safety is consistently one of the top concerns when local residents are asked about their priorities for local areas. Community safety is about more than simply policing. It has been recognised that It needs a creative and cooperative approach that draws in other services – from licensing, to activities for teenagers, to planning – but also engages the community at large: businesses; faith groups; local charities; community groups; and individual members of the public.
8. To this end, since 1998, Local Authorities have had a statutory duty to participate in local Community Safety Partnerships alongside the Police, Fire service, health and other key local agencies. These partnerships have been very successful in coordinating the activities of different agencies to deliver a targeted and joined up approach to tackling crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour.

Scrutiny of Community Safety Partnerships

9. Provisions in sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 – as amended by section 126 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 - enable Scrutiny Committees to bring their unique perspective to bear on how Community Safety Partnerships are tackling crime and disorder.
10. Guidance produced by the Home Office on the scrutiny of community safety partnerships¹ makes it clear that it is the role of scrutiny committees to “*enhance existing partnership arrangements by developing a clear structure for overseeing and reviewing the delivery of joint responses on community safety and by creating a clearer link between partner agencies and the public on community safety.*”
11. The guidance goes on to say that “*the role of scrutiny should be focused on the partnership as a whole, if issues arise which relate specifically to a particular partner organisation, it may be appropriate to refer such issues to the governing bodies of that organisation for action.*” For example, if concerns relate purely to Police activity, then these should be referred to the Police and Crime Commissioner.
12. This report aims to provide the Committee with sufficient information to scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership over the past year.

Lewes District Community Safety Partnership

13. We are fortunate that the Lewes District is a relatively low crime area. For this reason a proportionate approach is taken to local partnership working. The Community Safety Partnership is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Customers and Partners and meets on a quarterly basis to coordinate the multi-agency approach to tackling crime and disorder issues in the district. It formulates a

¹ National Support Framework : Delivering Safer and Confident Communities. Guidance for the Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Matters – England. Implementing Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006. Home Office May 2009

plan based on priorities expressed by local people and then oversees the delivery of that plan, monitoring crime and disorder data to ensure the desired impacts are achieved.

14. Delivery of the community safety plan is delegated to the Joint Action Group (JAG). This is also a multi-agency body. Operational level staff from each of the key agencies meet in this forum on a monthly basis to coordinate activity on the ground.
15. In addition, there is a Lewes District Domestic Abuse Action Group which focuses on multi-agency approaches to tackling domestic abuse and raising the profile of this issue – in particular through the White Ribbon campaign.
16. Other work relating to road safety and casualty reduction, substance misuse, reduction of reoffending and sexual violence is addressed in county-wide groups, to which local partners contribute as necessary.

Community Safety Funding

17. The Community Safety Partnership receives a funding allowance each year to enable it to commission projects and activities to tackle its priorities. As a result of underspends in previous years, the partnership currently has £57k available to support local projects. It is likely that an additional allocation of £21,976 will be provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner for 2016/17.
18. These funds have to be allocated in line with the Partnership's priorities. There is a simple funding application process, whereby organisations requesting grants less than £1,000 can have their requests approved by the JAG. For larger allocations, a subgroup of the full Partnership is convened to consider the application. Given the current significant levels of unallocated funds, the Partnership intends to be more proactive in promoting the grants scheme with local groups and organisations in the coming year.

Activities in the past year

19. The Community Safety Partnership has had a busy year, with a number of new and developing initiatives taking place to tackle the issues of concern. Summarised below are some of the main activities we have undertaken or commissioned. A full list of community safety grants awarded within 2015/16 to date is set out at appendix 2.
 - The Shop Watch scheme in Lewes has continued to grow and has been successful in reducing shoplifting in the town. 16 businesses are now participating in the scheme.
 - We have held a range of White Ribbon activities, including partnerships with local rugby team and the 'Living Library' project. These events have helped to raise the profile of domestic abuse and make people aware of agencies that can help. Reporting of domestic abuse incidents has increased significantly in

the past two years, which may be in part a result of the awareness raising activities undertaken.

- We have reduced the amount of fly-tipping occurring in the district by regular patrols of hotspots and taking legal action. Occurrences have reduced from over 500 in 12/13 to around 150 in the current year.
- Fire safety awareness work, including promoting installation of smoke alarms, has continued to reduce the number of dwelling fires. The number of dwelling fires in the district has reduced from 51 in 13/14, with an estimated 40 likely by the end of 2015/16.
- Safety in Action has been run again to address arson, amongst a range of other issues, with 859 young people from across the district attending sessions held last year.
- Road Safety Workshops have been held to address the driving behaviours of young men. Twelve 'safe drive stay alive' workshops have been held with around 180 participants in total.

Public Sector Prevent Duty

20. A particular development in the past year has been a change in legislation around the prevention of violent extremism – known as Prevent. A new duty has been placed on local authorities which means the Council now needs to take a more active role in this area of work. Appendix A of this report explains the Government's strategy in relation to counter-terrorism (Contest), of which Prevent is a part.
21. Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced a new duty for the Public Sector have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The Prevent Duty came into force on 1 July 2015 and each Council was awarded a one-off grant from the Home Office of £10,000 to help the Council implement it.
22. Authorities have been advised that they should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions. Specifically, the Council now has a duty to do the following:
 - Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the risk of radicalisation in their area, institution or body.
 - Demonstrate evidence of active co-operation with the police, in particular with local Prevent co-ordinators and co-ordination through existing multi-agency forums.
 - Ensure staff who engage with the public are trained to ensure they understand what radicalisation means, why people may be vulnerable to it, know what measures are available to prevent people from being drawn

into terrorism, how to challenge extremism and access support for people who may be exploited by radicalising influences.

- Ensure information sharing agreements are in place at a local level, for example, to enable a person at risk of radicalisation to be given appropriate support.
- Maintain appropriate records to show compliance with their responsibilities and provide reports when requested.

23. In conjunction with the Community Safety Partnership, the Council has developed an action plan, to comply with the new legislation. This includes;

- Working with the Prevent Board to agree risk and co-ordinate Prevent activity.
- Working with our Partners, using counter-terrorism local profiles (CTLPs), to assess the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism.
- Developing an action plan to deal with any identified risks.
- Ensuring that any publicly owned venues or resources in the District cannot be used for promoting extremist views, and that any publicly accessible Council IT equipment uses filtering systems that limit access to extremist material.
- Using the Home Office funding, we are purchasing a programme of staff training in combination with the other District and Borough Councils in East Sussex. This will be rolled out to all relevant frontline staff as well as senior management and elected Members.
- Also using the Home Office funding we are commissioning an innovative programme of workshops for local secondary schools. These workshops teach resilience to online radicalisation, tackle issues around hate crime and encourage safe discussion of contentious issues.

24. It should be noted that the Home Office funding has been provided at very short notice, and it must be spent by 31 March 2016. Officers have worked hard to commission interventions quickly, but there is a risk that not all of the £10k may be spent within the required time period, requiring some to be returned. If this happens, we will look to use local community safety funds to meet any shortfall.

25. The main focus of the Council is in the 'Prevent' stream of Contest, but, LDC also needs to be aware of how its work may have an impact on the other 3 strands (see appendix 1). For example, the Council needs to work with Partners to ensure there is sufficient protection around major international events or venues within the District, such as Bonfire or Glyndebourne. We may also be requested by law enforcement agencies to provide information which can assist with pursuing offenders – such as through our fraud detection work. Finally, our emergency planning function forms part of the 'Prepare' strand of Contest.

Community Safety Plan and Priorities for 2016/17

26. When developing its plans and priorities for the coming year, the Community Safety Partnership has been mindful of the views and concerns of local residents. A survey is commissioned each year by ESCC which provides all the East Sussex Community Safety Partnerships with useful information about the views of their local residents.

In 2015, the top community safety priorities for residents in Lewes were:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (27%)
- Burglary (22%)
- Road Safety (14%)

The top types of Anti-Social Behaviour that residents said were the most important to tackle in Lewes were:

- Careless/Inconsiderate Driving (34%)
- Illegal Parking (14%)
- Dog Fouling (12%)
- Drinking in Public Places (11%)

In addition, the Residents Survey commissioned by LDC in Summer 2015 also asked some questions about community safety, and in particular environmental crime.

- 38% of respondents felt that rubbish or litter lying around was a problem.
- In Newhaven Valley and Central Seaford a third of people were particularly concerned about people being drunk or rowdy in public places.
- In Newhaven Valley and Lewes Bridge a third of people were concerned about vandalism and graffiti.

27. This resident feedback, together with an analysis of crime data, provided the basis for the Partnership to establish its priorities for the coming year. These have been agreed as set out below.

Work in partnership to seek long lasting solutions to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB):

28. ASB remains a priority to the community and the police and partner agencies continue to receive many calls. The impact of anti-social behaviour can disproportionately affect the health and well being of residents and communities. We will continue our partnership approach to this work, collaborating closely between agencies to help resolve disputes and take action where resolution cannot be achieved.

Promote community safety initiatives to reduce crime and the fear of crime:

29. Crime levels in Lewes continue to be low but there is a disproportionate fear of crime that requires the partnership to reassure the public and promote the work

that all partners undertake. Proactive campaigns and promotional activities will continue to be used to provide public reassurance.

30. We will expand the Shopwatch Scheme, focussing on charity shops who often struggle to have an effective response to retail crime on their premises. Also, we will extend the 'Paws on Watch' initiative developed in the Wealden area to cover the Lewes District, enabling local dog walkers to be 'eyes and ears' in their local area on community safety matters. Work with community-based partners such as Neighbourhood Watch are also important in addressing this priority.

Work to protect and support vulnerable victims of crime:

31. This is a new priority for the Partnership, to acknowledge the importance of prioritising community safety work where vulnerable victims are involved.

Encourage the reporting of Domestic Abuse incidents:

32. Lewes continues to be strongly committed to the White Ribbon campaign and it will continue to be a priority to encourage victims to report incidents to the police. Domestic violence is widely known to be an under reported crime which this priority aims to reverse. The Lewes District Domestic Abuse Action Group will continue to lead on this area of work. We will continue our work to raise awareness - particularly in rural communities – of the Domestic Abuse support which is available.

Reduce the number of Dwelling Fires:

33. We continue to work with partners to identify those most vulnerable from fire in our community, so that prevention support can be promptly delivered, such as Home Safety Visits, smoke alarm installations, well-being checks and further referral links to other agencies.

Reduce the number of Killed & Seriously Injured on Lewes District's roads:

34. We continue to focus on making our roads safer for all road users across the district as the level remain unacceptably high. We will work with the fire service as it realigns posts to enable more dedicated staff time to be given to tackling behaviours resulting in road traffic accidents.

Promote and contribute to the implementation of the Prevent agenda:

35. We will deliver our local action plan, outlined above, including providing awareness training to partners as part of the national counter-terrorism strategy, Contest (see appendix 1).

The Future of the Community Safety Partnership

36. Prompted by recent changes agreed within Sussex Police, local Community Safety Partnerships in East Sussex have been asked to consider their

structures going forward. Sussex Police are shortly to merge their current policing divisions of Lewes, Wealden and Eastbourne into a single division. With this in mind, the three local Partnerships for these areas have each been asked to consider a similar merger.

37. The Lewes Community Safety Partnership met in December 2015, and agreed, subject to suitable terms of reference and membership being established, that a merger with Eastbourne and Wealden would be beneficial. However, it was strongly felt that local Joint Action Groups should be retained in each area, to ensure a local focus for delivery was maintained. Similar views were expressed by both Wealden and Eastbourne Partnerships.
38. Work is currently in progress to set up this new merged configuration. Consideration will also need to be given to the officer support required by the new merged arrangements as our current officer support is through a shared post to which all councils and other partners contribute financially, but who is line managed through Sussex Police. This current arrangement comes to an end in March 2016. Given the Joint Transformation Programme between Lewes and Eastbourne, it is timely to consider how best officer support might be provided in future.

Financial Appraisal

39. There are no direct financial implications for the Council arising from the recommendations set out in this report. Paragraph 38 explains that officer support to a merged Community Safety Partnership will need to be reviewed. This could lead to a reduction in the Council's annual contribution towards the cost of officer support, £5,800 in 2016

Legal Implications

The Legal Services Department has made the following comments:

40. These are set out within the body of the report.

Risk Management Implications

41. The Lewes District Community Safety Partnership is well established and provides a strong multi-agency framework for addressing crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour issues in the district. This report notes that there is to be a merger of this partnership with those of Eastbourne and Wealden. The merger presents a potential risk that Lewes issues may take a lower priority to those of other areas. This risk is to be mitigated through the Terms of Reference for the merged partnership providing equal status to the three areas.
42. There is a risk that the Council might not meet the new duty for Local Authorities relating to Prevent. The action plan set out in this report aims to mitigate that risk.

Equality Screening

- 43.** The work of the Community Safety Partnership positively impacts on a number of groups across the District who share protected characteristics, so has a positive contribution towards our Equalities Objectives, and as this report is a progress update, it does not require an EA. However, the report does contain one proposal for change going forward – the merger of the 3 Community Safety Partnerships – and this change will be subject to its own EA as part of the merger process.

Background Papers

44. All papers relating to the Lewes District Community Safety Partnership are held by the Business Planning and Strategy Team

Appendices

Appendix 1 – A Summary of the Government’s Counter-terrorism Strategy

Appendix 2 - Community Safety Grants Awarded in 2014/15

A Summary of the Government's Counter-terrorism Strategy

CONTEST is the name of the United Kingdom's counter-terrorism strategy. The aim of the strategy is "to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence." CONTEST is split into four work streams: Prevent, Pursue, Protect, and Prepare.

Prevent

The purpose of Prevent is to stop people from becoming or supporting terrorism. This includes countering terrorist ideology and challenging those who promote it; supporting individuals who are especially vulnerable to becoming radicalised; and working with sectors and institutions where the risk of radicalisation is assessed to be high.

Pursue

The purpose of Pursue is to stop terrorist attacks by detecting, prosecuting and otherwise disrupting those who plot to carry out attacks against the UK or its interests overseas.

Protect

The purpose of Protect is to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack in the UK or against its interests overseas and so reduce their vulnerability. The work focuses on border security, the transport system, national infrastructure and public places.

Prepare

The purpose of Prepare is to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack where that attack cannot be stopped. This includes work to bring a terrorist attack to an end and to increase the UK's resilience so we can recover from its aftermath.

Appendix 2**Community Safety Grants Awarded in the past year**

Organisation	Purpose of Grant	£ awarded
Sussex Community Development Association	Youth Drop-In facility at Denton Island premises, provision of youth worker sessions, venue costs, materials	5089
Stephen Israel – The Company	Film of a play dealing with juvenile mental health issues in conjunction with CAMHS to be shown in secondary schools	500
RISE	Living Library – Domestic violence drop in event at Lewes Library	280
East Saltdean Neighbourhood Watch	Shed alarms / OTD prevention for residents of East Saltdean	1000
Wave Leisure	Targetted Swim programme in conjunction with Priory School, Lewes	1000