

Report to: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 6 February 2023

Title: Eastbourne & Lewes Community Safety Partnership – Annual Report (Eastbourne).

Report of: Tim Whelan, Director of Service Delivery.

Cabinet member: Councillor Peter Diplock.

Ward(s): All.

Purpose of report: To enable Cabinet to consider the 2022/23 performance of the Eastbourne & Lewes Community Safety Partnership (E&LCSP).

Decision type: Information.

Officer recommendation(s): (1) That the Scrutiny Committee note the achievements and activities of the Eastbourne & Lewes Community Safety Partnership in 2022/23.

Reasons for recommendations: For the Committee to consider progress on delivery of the current Community Safety Plan.

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1. Introduction.

- 1.1. Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which set out a statutory requirement for specified public service authorities to meet regularly to discuss ways of reducing crime and disorder, address incidences of anti-social behaviour, and minimise re-offending in their local area.
- 1.2. Key members of the Eastbourne & Lewes Community Safety Partnership (E&LCSP) include; Sussex Police; East Sussex Fire & Rescue Authority; the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner; NHS clinical commissioning groups; and East Sussex County Council. Membership can be extended to other key local and voluntary partners as appropriate. Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils play a key role in supporting the work of the CSP, by acting as the secretariat, co-ordinating agreed strategic plans, and reporting performance. The respective portfolio holders from each council co-chair Partnership meetings.

- 1.3. Lewes & Eastbourne CSPs have been working on a joint basis for the past five years, and in February 2019 the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner formally endorsed their merger (a legal requirement). The merger helped align the work of the CSP with Sussex Police's district boundaries and provided efficiency savings that allow more of the Commissioner's budget to be allocated to front line priorities. Cabinet should note that scope is left within the plans to ensure that priorities reflect the local issues of concern in each Council area, such as road safety in Lewes and supporting the street community in Eastbourne. A budget allocated by the Sussex Police Crime Commissioner remains ring fenced for use in the Borough.
- 1.4. A strategic planning meeting of the E&LCSP takes place every quarter, whilst the Eastbourne Joint Action Group (EJAG) meets regularly to identify local issues and risks across the town. EJAG escalates issues to the strategy group as appropriate. Portfolio holders and senior council officers routinely attend the County level community safety forum (the East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership) to address issues such as domestic abuse, organised crime and county lines, at a strategic level.

2. Annual Plan 2022/23.

- 2.1. CSPs have a statutory duty to set out a plan and monitor progress. The latest plan was approved by the Partnership in July 2022, following a review that considered recent crime and anti-social behaviour trends, residents views, and issues of national concern, such as violence against women and girls and the impact that the cost of living crisis may have on patterns of crime and anti-social behaviour. It also took into account the wider strategic priorities of the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the Safer East Sussex Team, who support the work of the County Council.
- 2.2. The review recommended that the headline priorities of the plan remain unchanged, as they remained well placed to tackle the Borough's current challenges. Some of the more targeted goals in the plan were updated to reflect the specific types of anti-social behaviour (ASB) that residents were most concerned about, and help address partners increasing concerns about online crime, fraud and harassment. As a result, the six priorities addressed by the Partnership in 2022/23 remained as follows:
 - Promoting safe & welcoming spaces to reduce the incidence of crime & ASB.
 - Tackling the incidence of hate crime, domestic & sexual abuse.
 - Reducing the incidence of serious violence & knife crime.
 - Addressing the impact of organised crime on local communities.
 - Lowering levels of anti-social driving on the Borough's roads.
 - Supporting the street community and addressing related ASB.
- 2.3. CSPs are awarded an annual grant by the PCC, based on a formula that takes account of population density and an analysis of local levels of crime. A review of funding was last carried out by the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner in 2019, resulting in an increased allocation of £48,547. The level of funding received during this current financial year remained unchanged.

3. Crime and incident trends.

- 3.1. An analysis of latest data, shows that for the year to December 2022 a total of 9,484 crimes were reported across the whole of Eastbourne, a rise of 9.5 % when compared to the same period last year. This trend reflects increased activity across both the commercial and night-time economy, now that almost a full year has passed since most Covid-19 restrictions were lifted. It can be seen in recorded crime trends nationally.
- 3.2. Once other reported incidents taken into account, such as those of anti-social behaviour (ASB), as well as domestic abuse and hate crime reports that are not classified as crimes, the increase (7.7%) is slightly lower. This is largely accounted for by a significant fall in the number of recorded ASB incidents, which fell by 90%, (1,813 incidents). This trend reflects a fall from the high levels of incidents recorded during periods of lockdown, when figures reflected real time increases resulting from more neighbour disputes, increased reports of youth driven ASB, as well as a significant number of lockdown breaches recorded under ASB categories.
- 3.3. The rising crime trend was reflected across the most commonly reported types of crime, including robbery, theft and vehicle offences, with levels of acquisitive crime \uparrow 13%. An increase in the recorded level of shoplifting (\uparrow 19%) may also reflect cost of living pressures. Levels of burglary bucked this trend. They fell during the pandemic and also fell year on year (\downarrow 11%) reflecting targeted work by local neighbourhood policing teams and the fact that many people are still working from home. There have also been increases in public order offences (\uparrow 17%) and public place violent crime (\uparrow 14%), again reflecting increasing activity in the night-time economy. However, it is important to stress that the number of recorded knife crime (68) incidents and serious violence (81) incidents remain relatively low, though clearly they are of concern.
- 3.4. Levels of reported domestic abuse (crime & incidents) fell slightly (\downarrow 5%), although the number of overall reports remained high (2,800 incidents). Levels of reported hate crime and incidents have fallen slightly and remain relatively low, although there were increases in reports relating to religion (up \uparrow 69% - 22 reports), sexuality (up \uparrow 31% - 67 reports), and race (up \uparrow 7%), which remains the highest reporting category (191 reports).
- 3.5. The Borough continues to be a relatively low crime area. The most recent figures from the Government's benchmark 'Most Similar [Crime] Group'¹ (which compares Eastbourne with fourteen other local authority areas - September 2022) shows that, with a rate of 90 crimes per 1000 people, the Borough one of the three lowest. This level is well below the group average of 111 crimes per 1000 people.

¹ 'Most Similar Groups' are districts / boroughs that have been found to be leading comparators based on an analysis of those demographic, social and economic characteristics which most relate to crime.

- 3.6. These trends have set the tone for the work of the partnership across the last year, which has supported a range of initiatives that have helped; address anti-social behaviour; support organisations tackling domestic abuse; respond to increasing levels of serious and violent crime; support the local street community; and address safety on local roads. Key highlights, activities and achievements across these priorities are set out below.

Priority 1. Promoting safe & welcoming spaces that reduce the incidence of crime & ASB - through:

- Continuing to work with multi-agency partners to deliver activities focussed on creating safe spaces for women and girls, by reducing the risks present in and around the night-time economy. This work includes promoting initiatives funded by the Government's *Safer Streets* programme, working in close collaboration with local police / partners to support operations promoting engagement with licenced premises, raising awareness of drink spiking, and reducing the harms associated with drug and alcohol use. To support this the partnership awarded a funding package to Eastbourne Street Pastors, who continue to assist vulnerable people on all weekend nights of the year.
- Administering the Joint Action Group (JAG), which meets monthly to discuss local crime issues, identify local hotspots of ASB, and agree solutions. Approved funding this year has delivered new CCTV to improve the security of buildings, supported Eastbourne Neighbourhood Watch to re-establish activity after the pandemic, and purchased equipment for local youth groups.
- Funding the replacement of four CCTV cameras in Seaside Road, Terminus Road and along the seafront, to rectify recurrent fault and improve imaging. CCTV across the town viewed 7,000 emergency and priority incidents across the year, around 10% of which were actively resolved whilst being viewed live by incident room operatives at Sussex Police's control centre.
- Working with Sussex Police to support *Operation Blitz*, the local initiative targeted at tackling anti-social behaviour across the town. A recent refresh of the operation has added in weekday patrols at identified hotspot locations and during busy periods, such as the school holidays. The operation has addressed numerous incidents of ASB and co-ordinates the response of police, youth outreach services and Council officers to tackle local issues.
- Completing works to upgrade lighting in Gildredge Park, improving the safety of residents and schoolchildren who use the route daily. The project was funded by a successful bid to the *Safer Streets 3* programme.
- Supporting the Council's Neighbourhood and Environment First teams work to keep public spaces across the Borough clean, tidy, and free from rubbish. In the year to date (April to November) the teams dealt with over 950 reports of fly-tipping, graffiti, rubbish, and abandoned vehicles. The teams employ a range of monitoring and enforcement activities, including warnings, fixed penalty notices, prosecutions, and the deployment of CCTV. In addition the partnership has funded ten litter picking kits to help support the activities of local voluntary 'clean-up' groups.

Priority 2. Tackling the incidence of hate crime, domestic & sexual abuse - through:

- Participating in strategic initiatives to address the incidence of domestic abuse. This work involves contributing to the development of joint needs assessments and implementing the two key action plans that set out to improve response / support services, and increase the availability of specialist accommodation in which to re-house victims. A separate stream of work, supported by the *Safer Streets* fund is delivering awareness campaigns, bystander training, and education programmes focussed on promoting healthy relationships to young people.
- Directly funding projects offering support through programmes delivering; security adaptations that allow victims able to stay in their existing home feel safer; community arts sessions focussed on improving the confidence of hate crime, domestic and sexual abuse victims; and a sports rehabilitation programme targeted at NHS referrals who have diagnosed mental health conditions, likely to increase their risk of experiencing abuse.
- Supporting the Homes First team, who have employed a new dedicated specialist advisor role, who is leading work to establish best practice across the housing teams. This work is currently assessing practice against the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) standard, a benchmark backed by the leading sector specialist organisation supporting housing providers in this field. Meanwhile, alongside other districts & boroughs, the team continue to provide short-stay respite accommodation, to cater for the urgent re-housing needs of local domestic abuse victims.
- Contributing to a fund that pays the cost of Domestic Homicide Reviews in East Sussex. These reviews undertake detailed assessments of the circumstances surrounding individual cases, and apply insights and key learning points to the processes and practices of the relevant agencies involved, to help reduce future risk. There are currently five reviews being considered by County's Safer Communities Board, which both Council Member and Officer representatives attend.

Priority 3. Reducing the incidence of serious violence & knife crime - through:

- Participating in the Violence Reduction Unit, a Sussex Police and County led task force, co-ordinating a strategic approach to tackling serious violence across East Sussex. Work in Eastbourne continues to address issues in identified 'harm hotspots' across Devonshire Ward and the town centre, principally through increased levels of patrol activity, victim and perpetrator profiling. A recent analysis of local crime trends showed that this is having a beneficial effect. This work has been supplemented by a new project setting out to understand the drivers of serious and other crime in Devonshire Ward, funded by a £10,000 award from the most recent round of the *Safer Streets* fund. The project has employed a Community Development Worker to engage with the local community and is currently gathering evidence. It runs to March 2024.

- Preparing for the implementation of a new (statutory) *Serious Violence Duty*. This requires community safety partnerships to draw together local strategic needs assessments that identify patterns of serious violence and explore its causes. Once established, local action plans must be agreed and put in place before the end of January 2024. The Partnership is working with Sussex Police, the Safer East Sussex Team and, other districts and boroughs to develop a response, which we anticipate will cover the whole of East Sussex.
- Supporting activities to reduce knife crime, which include Sussex Police's *Operation Safety*, that drives a range of local awareness and enforcement initiatives to help keep residents safe from knife-related harm. These include incident led patrols, social media campaigns, community engagement, knife sweeps, test purchasing and much more. It runs side by side with the *kNOW Knives* programme delivered by ESCC's Targeted Youth Service. This programme runs prevention sessions that raise awareness of the risks of knife carrying, discuss the related topic of exploitation, and examine the myths and fears surrounding knife crime and gang culture.
- Sponsoring Eastbourne Youth Radio's annual broadcast, an established initiative that engages young people to deliver a week-long programme of 'on air' programmes, that discuss a range of topics including mental health and wellbeing, knife crime and bullying.
- Approving a recent bid from the Eastbourne Business Crime Partnership (EBCG) to deliver a new *Night-time Marshall* service in the town centre. The principle role of the marshalls will be to prevent vulnerable persons becoming victims of crime, help licenced premises control incidents, and support the management of taxi ranks. The service will be deployed every Friday and Saturday throughout the year, and is supported by Sussex Police, who are providing match funding. The plan is to run the service for a full twelve months, to allow sufficient time to evaluate the impact and, if proved worthwhile, identify sustainable funding sources. The service will complement the other investments in additional night-time economy patrols targeting the safety of women and upgraded town centre CCTV.

Priority 4. Addressing the impact of organised crime on local communities - by:

- Contributing to the *Serious & Organised Crime Partnership*, a police-led collaboration, set up to tackle serious crimes that are being systematically carried out by organised groups. The partnership has an operational focus, identifying specific crimes that present a high level of harm to local residents, then sharing information and intelligence to help disrupt these.
- Directly funding organisations that deliver programmes engaging and supporting young people, many of whom are at risk of being drawn into anti-social behaviour and more serious crime. This year these have supported YMCA run youth projects and the local fire cadet service, who run programmes designed to boost confidence, improve self-esteem, and develop new skills.

- Supporting the work of Sussex Police's *Discovery* team, who co-ordinate operations that tackle modern slavery, exploitation, and human trafficking. Partners, including the Council's Homes First, licencing, benefits and democratic services teams routinely work with *Discovery* to source information on residents and businesses, verify intelligence, and on some occasions accompany visits. Over forty council officers received an update and briefing from the *Discovery* team in January. Raising awareness in this way helps disrupt the activities of organised crime groups who set out to exploit vulnerable persons, often forced to work in local restaurants, nail bars, and brothels across the Borough.
- Raising awareness of scams, most recently by addressing the current risks posed by organised criminals seeking to fraudulently exploit funds offering residents financial help with the cost of living. To help tackle this Council websites provide clear warnings and links to support organisations such as *Get Safe Online*, whilst the Partnership has funded a series of advertisements on *Seahaven FM* that promote the current help on offer, but caution residents to remain alert to scams.

Priority 5. Supporting the street community and addressing related ASB - through:

- Continuing to support the work of the Rough Sleeper Initiative, who provide comprehensive support and outreach services. Their activities identify rough sleepers and connect with local services, including referrals to an in-house team of health, social care, substance misuse & housing professionals.
- Providing a new round of funding to support the re-establishment of the weekend day shelter run by the Kingdom Way Trust, which has been up and running at new premises on Seaside Road since the summer. The service provides refreshments and a warm safe space, supporting up to 50 members of the street community every Saturday and Sunday.

Priority 6 - Lowering levels of anti-social driving on the Borough's roads - through:

- Pushing through plans to implement a new *Public Place Protection Order* (PSPO) focussed on addressing the incidence of anti-social driving in specified areas of the town. The PSPO, which covers roads leading up to Beachy Head, seafront parades and in Sovereign Harbour, is targeted at addressing specific issues such as speeding, aggressive driving, illegal manoeuvres, racing, and excess noise from vehicles. The order is enforced by Sussex Police on behalf of the Council.
- This year the partnership has supported related initiatives sponsored by East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, that set out to reduce the harm caused by road traffic collisions. The first, Biker Down, is an initiative targeted at raising awareness of how first response care should be administered to victims of motorcycle collisions, whilst the second has funded the purchase of resuscitation dummies, to support local first aid education sessions in schools and colleges.

3.7. A summary of the annual income and expenditure for Eastbourne's Partnership budget is set out in appendix 1. The budget has been fully utilised this year and has provided funding to a range of community groups, voluntary organisations and statutory agencies, in line with all six of the 2022/23 priorities. Where possible opportunities have been taken to draw in match funding, to optimise the impact of the grant.

4. Consultation.

4.1. An ongoing process of engagement is in place to help assess and evaluate the success of projects and other measures supported by the Partnership. Over the past year this has involved key operational representatives, including those from Sussex Police, East Sussex Fire & Rescue, and the Safer East Sussex team. They meet regularly to consider the implications of issues raised by the Eastbourne Joint Action Group, analyse crime trends, and respond to emerging risks.

5. Corporate Plan & Council Policies.

5.1. The objectives of the E&LCSP continue to be in line with those set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, which commit to delivering resilient, healthy, and engaged communities, by employing strategies to help reduce the incidence and fear of crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and work to minimise re-offending. Measures taken to reduce environmental crime and improve road safety raise the quality of the local area for all local residents, visitors, and businesses.

6. Business case.

6.1. The annual CSP plan sets out the approach that the Council, along with other partners, will take to reduce crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, and re-offending across their local area. The current plan identifies six clear priorities, agreed with partners, that will help address local issues. The next plan is due to be signed off by the Partnership in early Spring 2023.

7. Financial appraisal.

7.1. There are no direct financial implications for the Council arising from the recommendations set out in this report. However, a summary of the current income and expenditure account, managed by the Council on behalf of the Partnership is provided in Appendix 1. *Deputy Chief Finance Officer consulted **/**/2023.*

8. Legal implications.

8.1. This report sets out how the Council has complied, and will continue to comply, with its duties under section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007. *Lawyer consulted: **/**/2023 (Legal ref: *****).*

9. Risk management implications.

9.1 The annual Community Safety Plan incorporates a review of high level risks associated with the delivery of CSP activities. These include risks relating to, maintaining adherence to the statutory duties set out in the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, partner attendance, and funding. It also looks at how current issues, such as the cost of living crisis, might impact crime trends. The risk review provides an assessment of the likelihood, impact and severity of each risk and assigns ratings accordingly, alongside accompanying mitigations.

10. Equality analysis.

10.1. This report provides an update on progress in meeting the objectives set out in the current Community Safety Plan and as such does not contain proposals or specific recommendations. As such there are no direct impacts on the public or employees, so no Equality and Fairness Analysis is associated with this report.

11. Environmental impact analysis.

11.1. There are no direct environmental impact implications for the Council arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

12. Appendices.

12.1. Appendix 1 – Eastbourne CSP - Income & Expenditure 2022/23

13. Background papers.

13.1. The following background papers is associated with this report - Eastbourne & Lewes Community Safety Plan.

Appendix 1 - Eastbourne CSP – Income & Expenditure 2022/23

Spend by project

Income	£ Amount
2022/23 Grant - Police & Crime Commissioner	£48,547.19
Other income - Accruals / refunds 2021/22	£11,311.00
Income - Total	£59,858.19
Expenditure by bid / project	£ Amount
Willingdon Community Centre CCTV - SCDA	£1,000.00
Eastbourne Youth Radio - Educ. Business Partnership	£490.00
Re-start bid - Eastbourne Neighbourhood Watch	£1,799.00
Weekend street comm. provision - Kingdom Way Trust	£6,500.00
Domain hosting - Eastbourne Neighbourhood Watch	£18.00
Lighting upgrade Gildredge Park - Costain	£1,727.12
Support with costs - Eastbourne Street Pastors	£5,000.00
Anti-Social driving PSPO signage – production / install - Costin	£5,737.53
Domestic Homicide Review fee - ESCC	£3,000.00
CCTV renewals EBC town centre - The Sussex PCC	£11,817.21
Biker Down - ESFRS	£879.00
Fire Cadet equipment - ESFRS	£902.50
Fraud / cost of living ads - Seahaven FM	£978.75
Community Litter Picking kits - Environment Fist	£930.00
Sports Rehab for MH referrals - Defiant Sports	£4,944.00
DA support scheme - Change Grow Live	£2,000.00
Resuscitation manakins - ESFRS	£407.03
Creative workshops DA/Hate victims - Compass Arts	£4,825.00
Night Marshalls - Sussex Police / BCRP	£7,000.00
Expenditure - Total	£59,955.14

Spend by priority

