

Scrutiny Committee



Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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To: Vale Scrutiny Committee

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South and Vale Community Safety Partnership – performance report

Recommendation(s)

(a) To note the progress that the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has made so far in 2014/15 in delivering its priorities and statutory functions

(b) To consider the anticipated direction of travel of the Partnership in 2015/16

Purpose of Report

1. The main purpose of this report is to update the scrutiny committee on the progress that the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is making to reduce crime and the fear of crime, focusing on the benefits it generates for residents, businesses and partner agencies in the two districts. The summary of the work the Partnership has been delivering since April 2014 to achieve its priorities is supplemented by the CSP quarter two (Q2) performance report, attached as Appendix A.
2. The report also briefly outlines the direction of travel that the South and Vale CSP is expecting to take in 2015/16 to address emerging key priorities.

Background

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CSP

3. The South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was formed in April 2011, bringing together the two existing district CSPs that were created in accordance with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This was done so that the partnership was coterminous with the newly formed local police area and mirrored the shared working across the district councils.
4. Under the umbrella of the South and Vale CSP, a wide variety of local agencies work together to maintain low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in both districts and ensure that residents feel safe and stay safe.
5. The Partnership involves the community safety portfolio holders from both district councils and officers representing:
 - South Oxfordshire District Council
 - Vale of White Horse District Council
 - NHS Oxfordshire
 - Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)
 - Thames Valley Police (TVP)
 - Probation Service
 - Sovereign Vale Housing Association
 - Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service
 - Soha Housing
 - Oxfordshire Public Health
6. The Partnership has a statutory duty to develop and publish a plan which sets out its priorities, actions and measures. The 2014/15 plan is attached as Appendix B. When drafting the current plan and to meet our statutory duties, we reviewed information from the Oxfordshire Strategic Intelligence Assessment along with the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) plan and carried out a multi-agency workshop.
7. The CSP has a statutory duty to monitor the effectiveness of its Plan which is done through its quarterly performance reports that are reviewed at its quarterly Partnership meetings.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF CSP PRIORITIES

8. To help the CSP deliver its priorities and statutory duties, it receives funding from the PCC. This income stream is not secure and is agreed on an annual basis. The Partnership's 2014/15 funding from the PCC is £117,111.
9. The CSP uses some of its grant to directly fund four officers:
 - ASB Co-ordinator (full time) – employed by the district councils and works within the community safety team
 - Community safety projects officer (full time) – employed by the district councils and works within the community safety team

- ASB Assistant (part time) – employed by Thames Valley Police
- Crime Reduction Adviser (full time) – employed by Thames Valley Police (the post holder moved to another role within the police in August and the post remains vacant, subject to a police review of the roles of this post)

10. The work carried out by the Crime Reduction Adviser included carrying out prevention surveys, promoting crime prevention tools like Cremark (property marking for large farming and plant machinery) to local communities and helping better secure the homes of victims of domestic abuse.

11. The CSP also uses its funding to support local capital and revenue projects that it believes will help the Partnership to deliver its priorities. Managed by the community safety team, this involves overseeing the CSP grant application process, drafting Service Level Agreements (SLAs), monitoring contract compliance and running the CSP budget group to ensure accountability and proper governance. In 2014/15, the community safety team is managing SLAs on behalf of the CSP for a range of projects, including a dedicated outreach service for victims of domestic abuse in South and Vale (please see page six for further project details) and a small repairs scheme to help vulnerable people stay safe in their own homes (further details on page 10).

12. A South and Vale CSP financial summary for 2013/14 and 2014/15 (quarter two) can be found in Appendix C.

DELIVERING THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP'S PRIORITIES AND STATUTORY DUTIES – SUMMARY OF KEY AREAS OF WORK IN 2014/15

To cut crimes that are of most concern to the public and to protect the most vulnerable members of our communities

REDUCING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

13. There are a number of statutory functions relating to anti-social behaviour that the CSP funded staff are responsible for delivering:

Statutory responsibility	Relevant legislation
Consulting on and introducing Designated Public Place Orders (currently in Thame, Abingdon and Henley) to stop anti social behaviour related to the consumption of alcohol.	Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 (to be replaced by Public Space Protection Orders as part of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014).
On behalf of the CSP, managing Community Trigger process	Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Statutory responsibility	Relevant legislation
Managing the process for issuing Community Protection Notices (non noise related)	
Supporting police applications for Criminal Behaviour Orders	

Formal report recommendation	Relevant report
<p>Encouraging the reporting of racist incidents and crimes which should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to report at locations other than police stations • the ability to report 24 hours a day. 	Recommendation 16 from the Macpherson Report

14. The CSP funded ASB Assistant who works for Thames Valley Police supports the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer (a police officer role) in monitoring action taken by neighbourhood officers to tackle cases of ASB reported to the police. This involves helping to draw up Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, Criminal Behaviour Orders and other police led ASB interventions as well as running regular neighbourhood ASB case meetings.

15. If residents don't feel able to report ASB to the police, they can contact the district council's community safety team by phone, email, website report form or in person to report the incident. The issues reported to the team are varied and range from neighbour disputes to racist abuse and harassment. We investigate the case thoroughly, working in partnership with relevant agencies and providing updates to the complainant until the issue has been resolved. This service provides residents who are unable or unwilling to report ASB to the police with an effective alternative reporting option. Victims/witnesses have a single point of contact for their case and feel actively supported by the councils. Acting as a 'critical friend', the community safety team ensures that appropriate and joined up action is taken by agencies to resolve cases.

ASB case study

A resident in Faringdon was suffering from noise nuisance caused by a neighbour who was frequently having parties. They contacted the community safety team's ASB Co-ordinator for help because they did not feel that their case was being taken seriously by other agencies.

The ASB Co-ordinator established that Sovereign were the Housing Association who owned the property in question. As a housing association normally takes the lead on a noise issue relating to its tenants, the Co-ordinator reported the problems to the appropriate Housing Officer.

The Housing Officer spoke to the complainant and agreed an action plan to resolve the problem. They also spoke to the people who were causing the noise nuisance. The ASB Co-ordinator advised the complainant to contact them again should problems persist but no further reports were received.

16. In addition, the CSP helps to fund local community based projects that aim to divert young people away from committing ASB. Progress updates on the delivery of these projects are included in the attached CSP Q2 performance report on page 4.

Outcomes from a CSP funded ASB diversionary project in South Abingdon

The Partnership agreed to continue funding DAMASCUS (a local youth outreach charity) in 2014/15 to build sustainable community cohesion in South Abingdon by supporting communities to connect with disengaged young people. These sessions are street based and include workshops focusing on bullying, sexual health, protective behaviours and drugs and alcohol for young people. They are also supporting a small community action team consisting of volunteers (adults) and young people to run community events. Although this project is not due to finish until the end of March 2015, it is already delivering tangible benefits to the community:

- 62 different young people aged between eight and 22 have so far engaged with the outreach workers, including groups of young people known to commit ASB.
- Outreach workers are providing 1-2-1 support work with three young people who are not in education, employment or training.
- The young people organised a community football academy for October half term and ran a Christmas bingo event for the senior citizens.

Feedback from one of the young people involved - "looking forward to the half term and doing something for the old people at Christmas"

TACKLING LOCAL PRIORITY CRIME (REDUCING DOMESTIC BURGLARIES AND VIOLENCE, PROMOTING A SAFER NIGHT TIME ECONOMY AND TACKLING RURAL CRIME)

17. The community safety team runs Nightsafe, a multi-agency sub group of the CSP which delivers initiatives to help reduce late night violence and associated crime and disorder. Resources, knowledge and data from TVP, licensing, community safety and Fire & Rescue are pooled to tackle premises of concern (e.g. running joint test purchase operations to prevent the sale of alcohol to underage people). Licensed premises sign up to the voluntary Nightsafe charter so they take a positive role in helping promote a safe night time economy.

Licensed premises' commitment to promoting responsible drinking

The community safety team, district councils' licensing teams and the police have continued to roll out Nightsafe across South and Vale. The number of towns signed up to Nightsafe in South and Vale now stands at five (Abingdon, Wantage, Didcot, Henley and Thame), involving over 50 licensed premises.

18. In addition, we promote strong educational messages to local communities about behaving sensibly and responsibly when on a night out (e.g. campaign in licensed premises to remind people of penalties for alcohol related disorder, test purchase operations).

Tackling underage drinking in Wantage and Grove – August 2014

To help put a stop to off licences selling alcohol to underage children and young people, the CSP's Nightsafe group worked with the police over the summer to carry out test purchase operations in Wantage and Grove.

A test purchase operation is where someone under 18 attempts to buy alcohol to see if the shop is prepared to serve them. All eight premises tested passed. In previous tests, four of the shops failed which shows that the partnership approach to tackling underage sales is making a difference.

19. CSP initiatives to tackle domestic burglaries and rural crime are included in the CSP Q2 performance report (Appendix A, pages 5-6 and 8-9).

REDUCING DOMESTIC ABUSE AND CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

20. In terms of reducing domestic abuse in South and Vale, the CSP has a statutory duty to conduct Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs). These take place when a murder has been committed in either of the district areas and the victim and offender were in some form of relationship. The main aim of a Review is to establish what lessons can be learned regarding the way in which local professionals and organisations work individually and together to safeguard victims. The community safety team is responsible for managing the DHR process. So far in 2014/15, the CSP has commissioned one DHR for a murder that happened in October in Abingdon (Hales Meadow - Culham side). It is also continuing to oversee a DHR that it commissioned in 2013/14 following a murder in Didcot. This is being run jointly with a Serious Case Review due to the age of the victim.

21. With funding from the CSP, Mears provides a small works sanctuary scheme to help people suffering from domestic abuse stay safe in their own homes. Details of how this service has been used so far in 2014/15 can be found on page 10 of the attached CSP Q2 performance report.

22. The CSP continues to fund a dedicated outreach service for women, men and children whose lives have been disrupted by domestic abuse in South and Vale. On behalf of the Partnership, A2 Dominion provides 38 hours of domestic abuse services each week across both districts. They also set up and run rolling help groups and enable those in need to draw upon the range of resources – from a 24 hour help-line, to accommodation provided in refuges. Performance figures for this service are included in the attached Q2 CSP report (pages 9-10).

Domestic abuse outreach service – a case study from 2014 (names have been changed)

Katie had been separated from her partner Lewis for nearly five years but she and her two daughters were being constantly harassed and emotionally abused. There was also a long history of significant violence from her ex-partner, against both Katie and her eldest child. Her case was referred to A2Dominion by social services.

Katie was receiving hundreds of text messages a day and phone calls from Lewis. He was harassing her at work and was spotted near her work and home on a number of occasions. She had reported his harassment on a few occasions to the police but felt too scared of his reaction if she was to apply for a non-molestation order. She disposed of her mobile phone so she could no longer receive text messages from him. The outreach service provided her with another mobile temporarily for safety reasons.

Katie was keeping her youngest daughter off school as she was concerned Lewis would try and take her.

Katie became mentally unwell, was having regular panic attacks and could not leave the house. She began to realise the severity of the situation and felt ready to move away from Lewis out of the area.

Over a ten month period, the outreach worker provided Katie and her children with the following support:

- arranged for target hardening works to be carried out to Katie's home
- secured support for the youngest daughter from the Early Intervention Service, Child Protection, Team Around the Child and the local school.
- gave Katie the confidence to report Lewis's actions to the police
- helped Katie access a food bank, benefits and a crisis loan when Katie was too unwell to work
- found places at a refuge for Katie and her children when she felt able to leave the area
- obtained travel warrant from social services and booked a taxi to get the family safely to train station
- found Pet Refuge spaces for the family pets as this was a major barrier to leaving

The family are now safely settled in a new area - they will be re-housed soon and be re-united with their two dogs. Katie is taking medication for her mental well-being and her youngest daughter is receiving therapy and support to help her cope with the emotional abuse Lewis put her through which was a way for him to continue abusing Katie.

23. The CSP has agreed an action plan to raise awareness in South and Vale about Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and how it can be stopped. It has also commissioned a pilot project in the Vale to help young people recognise the dangers relating to risky behaviours and to engage them in making positive life choices.

South and Vale pilot schools project to empower and protect vulnerable young people

Working with Oxford City Council and the TVP schools officer, the community safety team has set up a pilot project with The King Alfred School in Wantage and Faringdon Community College. The schools have identified small groups of young people who they feel are vulnerable and have been displaying risky behaviours.

Since September, a youth outreach provider called Inspired has been running workshops with these groups to build their self-esteem, self awareness and use of appropriate assertiveness skills. There is a focus on leadership and having a positive influence within their peer groups.

The young people are able to receive information and support on various issues such as online safety, pornography, alcohol and drug misuse, and healthy relationships. As well as working with the two lead schools, this project is also being delivered in partnership with local youth projects and relevant organisations depending on the groups' needs.

The project also includes taking the young people to a one-day workshop in Oxford to explore issues relating to CSE with professionals from agencies including the police and health.

The project ends on the 31 March 2015 when a full evaluation will be provided to the CSP. This will include the number of young people supported by this project, the number of referrals made to other agencies as a result of this project and to which agencies, at least one case study from a young person who took part and anecdotal feedback from schools and parents about the impact of the programme on young people.

A summary progress update on this initiative is provided in the attached CSP quarter two performance report (page 10).

To protect the visible presence of the police and partners to cut crime and the fear of crime and to reassure communities

SUPPORTING THE SOUTH AND VALE MULTI-AGENCY ASB TEAM

24. The community safety team is responsible for running Joint Agency Tasking (JATAC), a sub group of the CSP which tackles community safety issues that due to their scale, complexity or potential impact, need a multi agency approach. Officers from Thames Valley Police, community safety, environmental health, housing, Soha, Sovereign Vale, Mental Health, youth services, environment agency, Fire & Rescue and other agencies share resources, knowledge and data on a monthly basis to support:

- repeat victims of ASB
- medium/high risk ASB victims
- families in need of intervention to avoid ASB
- vulnerable individuals (e.g. homeless individuals, repeat missing young persons)

25. JATAC provides a framework for holding responsible agencies to account for the actions they've taken to support vulnerable residents and identifying any further action needed. Priority crimes/community safety issues that need a multi agency response are also discussed and actioned.

26. The value of this group is reflected in the regular and on-going participation of the broad range of organisations and in a recent Ofsted Inspection at Oxfordshire County Council, the inspectors highlighted the effectiveness and value of JATAC in supporting troubled families in South and Vale.

27. The CSP has a legal duty to provide a Community Trigger, in accordance with the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. This mechanism gives victims

and communities the right to require agencies to review cases of persistent anti-social behaviour if they feel the issues have not been properly addressed already. The trigger could be activated by a member of the public, a community or a business. Rather than set up a new panel, the CSP will be able to use JATAC as the ASB case review panel for the statutory Community Trigger process which maximises resources. The Community Trigger process is managed by the community safety team.

To communicate and engage with the public in order to cut crime and the fear of crime and build trust and confidence with our communities

28. The community safety team actively promotes and supports initiatives run by local communities that help residents feel safer (particularly those most vulnerable to becoming victims of crime and ASB). For example, we have encouraged local businesses to become 'Safe Places' for vulnerable people in Wantage and Didcot by promoting the scheme in the council's business newsletter, made links to the various Street Pastor schemes in Abingdon, Wantage and Grove, Thame and Wallingford and attend the quarterly meetings of the Neighbourhood Action Group chairmen.
29. We also support the police in raising awareness amongst our councillors and residents about current crime trends and crime reduction initiatives (for example, sharing advice about reporting hare coursing via South and Vale News, signposting people to free 'no trick or treat' posters via Infocus, encouraging people to mark their property with Smartwater to help prevent burglaries via our residents' newsletter).

Work with criminal justice partners to reduce crime and support victims and witnesses

INTEGRATED OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

30. Working with the Probation service wherever possible to utilise their Community Payback scheme, the community safety team delivers a wide range of targeted community safety projects to help people feel safer in their communities. These range from clearing footpaths in Cumnor and North Hinksey to helping young people improve the appearance of an underpass in Faringdon to increase feelings of safety and access to community facilities. These projects deliver visible, tangible benefits to local communities and, where Community Payback has been involved, residents see offenders repaying their debt to society.

Cumnor path clearance (September 2014) – feedback from the parish

'I've run out of superlatives to describe what the Community Payback team has once again done...what a difference they made and as they were finishing off a couple of family groups walked by, perhaps being able to use the path for the first time in months'

'The good people of the Pinnocks Way estate will be forever in your debt and on their behalf I'd like to say a big thank you for the team's magnificent efforts'



SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

31. The Partnership funds a small repairs scheme to enable vulnerable people who have been victims of burglaries and/or anti-social behaviour to feel and stay safe in their own homes. Through requests from neighbourhood police teams and/or residents themselves, the scheme (run by on behalf of the CSP by Mears) can provide target hardening home improvements including door chains, pricka strips and spy-holes. The scheme also installs CSP funded guard/memo cameras to collect evidence of repeat offences. Usage figures for this scheme between April and September are included on page 13 of the attached quarter two CSP performance report.

Installation of a memo camera leads to significant arrest

Footage captured on a memo camera that was installed by Mears at a repeat victim's address, along with a sighting, resulted in the arrest and charge of a prolific rural crime offender.

ANTICIPATED DIRECTION OF TRAVEL FOR THE CSP IN 2015/16

32. On behalf of the CSP, the community safety team is currently gathering information from a range of sources (police crime data, council and housing association data, agency stakeholder survey, district councillor survey) to produce an up to date Strategic Intelligence Assessment (SIA). As well as considering trends in crime and ASB over the past 12 months, the Assessment will also highlight any emerging issues that are likely to impact on community safety in the two districts in the next 12 months. The Partnership will use the SIA to help identify its priorities for 2015/16 which will be set out in its annual Plan.

33. From initial conversations with agencies within the Partnership, emerging key issues that are likely to influence the CSP's direction of travel are around protecting vulnerable people and managing areas of greatest risk to the community. Although local priority crime and ASB will still feature in the CSP's work, we expect its Plan to give greater emphasis to tackling domestic abuse and child sexual exploitation and helping protect missing persons and vulnerable adults.

Financial Implications

34. None

Legal Implications

35. None

Risks

36. The CSP funding from the Home Office has been reducing year on year, as the table below demonstrates.

- Oxfordshire County Council plugged the gap in 2012/13 and 2013/14
- The Home Office funding transferred to the PCC with effect from 1 April 2013.

South and Vale CSP Income	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 estimate
Home Office Income	£234,128	£180,666	£101,525	-	-	-
Income OCC	-	-	£82,938	£82,938	-	-
Income PCC	-	n/a	n/a	£101,525	£117,111	£117,000
Total CSP Income	£234,128	£180,666	£184,463	£184,463	£117,111 (plus £16k from both district councils and £7.5k for CSE project)	£117,000

37. The income stream from the PCC is not secure and is agreed on an annual basis. We know that it will not cover all the existing activity of the CSP so without some mainstream funding, there is a significant risk that the two CSP funded posts within the community safety team will cease in 2015/16. The Legal, Licensing and Community Safety Manager has submitted a growth bid to cover the two posts currently employed by the district that are currently funded by the partnership. (ASB Co-ordinator and Community Safety Projects Officer)

Other Implications

38. None.

Conclusion

39. Despite a significant reduction in funding and staff over the past three years, the Community Safety Partnership has continued to deliver projects to meet the needs of local communities and ensure that statutory functions are delivered.
40. This is demonstrated in the quarterly Partnership performance reports and is reflected in the results of the most recent council resident's survey (2013/14, where 81 per cent of respondents in the Vale of White Horse said they were satisfied with the quality of community safety services in their local area. 74 per cent of respondents said that services provided in their local area to reduce crime, the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB) were of most importance to them.
41. In order to continue to provide services that tackle the most important community safety issues in South and Vale in the face of further reductions to the CSP budget, the Partnership:
- is seeking to mainstream fund the staff in point 9 above thus making the reduced level of funding available to support projects
 - anticipates the need to give greater focus to protecting vulnerable people when it sets its priorities for 2015/16

Background Papers

- Appendix A – South and Vale CSP performance report (quarter two 2014/15)
- Appendix B – South and Vale CSP Plan 2014/15
- Appendix C – South and Vale CSP financial summary for 2013/14 and 2014/15 (quarter two)