
Report to Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee

17th November 2023

The Safer West Sussex Partnership Executive Board Strategic Intelligence Assessment.

Report by Assistant Director (Communities)

Electoral divisions: All

Summary

The Safer West Sussex Partnership (SWSP) is the West Sussex executive Community Safety Partnership which aims to reduce crime and disorder, vulnerability, and inequality. The Strategic Intelligence Assessment (SIA) is critical in supporting these aims as it seeks to provide the SWSP with an accurate picture of current threats, harms, and emerging risk across West Sussex using a range of verified data sources. This enables the partnership to jointly identify priority areas of risk, and then through the thematic sub-groups develop strategic responses to these.

The focus for scrutiny

Scrutinise the current approach to how the Safer West Sussex Partnership utilises the Strategic Intelligence Assessment and how it identifies its strategic priorities.

In particular, that the Committee:

- (1) Scrutinise the current partnership approach in utilising the Strategic Intelligence Assessment in identifying strategic priorities.

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, places a statutory requirement on every local authority area to work together to: reduce reoffending, tackle crime and disorder, lower anti-social behaviour, tackle alcohol and substance misuse, and challenge any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the community including reducing serious violence. As West Sussex is a two-tier authority, this is achieved through the local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in each district and borough area where priorities take into account local crime and disorder matters, and through the Safer West Sussex Partnership (SWSP) Executive which provides the focus and coordination of strategic county-wide priorities. This ensures that crime and disorder priorities and the views of residents are recognised at both a local and county-wide level.

- 1.2 SWSP is responsible for identifying how strategic crime and disorder can be effectively identified and responded to across West Sussex, complementing the priorities and work of local CSPs in each district and borough. The aim is to add value to the work already undertaken by individual agencies or localities and ensure funding opportunities are maximised to help maintain safety and wellbeing in local communities.

Relevant Legislation

- 1.3 The role of multi-agency partnership in preventing and reducing crime was developed in the 1980s but was not given a statutory basis until 1998. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposed a duty on certain key public sector organisations (initially just councils and the police) to work together to make places safer, a requirement that has since been strengthened by subsequent legislation. The Act created Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), one for each local government area, which brought together the police and local authority, and subsequently fire and rescue services, the police authority, health, and probation to formulate strategies for the reduction of crime.
- 1.4 The function of SWSP is therefore a statutory requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which directs local authorities, the police, and key partners to reduce crime and disorder in their communities. Under this legislation the responsible authorities commonly referred to now as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), were required to carry out three-yearly audits and to implement crime reduction strategies.
- 1.5 The Police and Justice Act 2006 introduced scrutiny arrangements in the form of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee, as well as introducing a number of amendments to the 1998 Act including the addition of anti-social behaviour and substance misuse within the remit of the CSP strategies. Reducing reoffending was subsequently added by the Policing and Crime Act 2009.
- 1.6 The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007 set out further revisions to the 1998 Act, the most notable of these was the introduction of statutory functions which CSPs must implement. These are the replacement of three yearly audits with an annual strategic intelligence assessment, a community safety agreement and public consultations.
- 1.7 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 introduced directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to replace Police Authorities in England and Wales. There are five key relationships enshrined in the legislation in relation to CSPs and PCCs. Firstly, the PCC and CSP must have regard to each other's priorities within their plans to encourage joint working on mutual priorities, to ensure that the PCC priorities are tackled at the local level, and that CSP priorities are reflected and resourced. Secondly the PCC has a power of accountability over CSPs; they can call in representatives of CSPs in the force area to a meeting to discuss strategies to reduce crime; thirdly, they can request a written report from a CSP. PCCs can approve mergers between CSPs but cannot dictate mergers; and finally, PCCs can make grants to CSPs for the reduction of crime and disorder. In summary this legislation formalised the relationships and expectations between CSPs and PCCs, and a mutual duty for them to act in co-operation with each other in exercising their respective functions.

- 1.8 The requirement for CSPs to conduct Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR) came into effect on 13 April 2011 as a result of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004). In West Sussex it was agreed that these would be commissioned by SWSP on behalf of the local CSPs. The DHR process has been developed and enhanced since its introduction including the implementation of updated statutory guidance in 2016 from the Home Office.

Statutory Duties of CSPs

- 1.9 The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007 introduced three new requirements to the functioning of CSPs. These are consulting with the public on community safety issues, preparing an annual strategic intelligence assessment, and production of a community safety agreement. All three of these requirements are linked and complimentary.

Public Consultation

- 1.10 Each CSP has a statutory duty to consult with the public on community safety issues. West Sussex SWSP has very recently completed the 2023 survey which was co-designed and delivered in partnership with local district and borough CSP's. This was to maximise the local networks and means of engaging residents using both countywide and local area channels. Positively this survey has been completed by over 1300 residents and this number is considered a positive level of engagement. This will contribute greatly to analysis and understanding of what community safety issues are impacting people locally.
- 1.11 It is acknowledged that an online survey is not the best model to engage children and young people and gain their voice. Therefore, in early 2024 the SWSP has planned a community safety consultation with all the secondary schools in West Sussex. The intention is to work with as many schools and children as possible across the county to achieve a strong 'baseline' understanding of the community safety issues effecting children and young people in the county.

Strategic Intelligence Assessment (SIA)

- 1.12 The SIA is a statutory requirement for all CSP's and provides the SWSP Executive with an accurate picture of current threats, harms and emerging risks using a range of verified data sources. This includes local and national crime data as well as information from a range of sources including Police, Children's Services, Adults Services, Education, Health, and the public consultations.
- 1.13 The SIA is developed and created by the partnership analyst. This is a role which is funded by local CSP's, WSCC and Sussex Police. The analyst produces the intelligence assessment on behalf of all CSPs in West Sussex.
- 1.14 The SIA analyses national issues and uses local data to provide an understanding of how these impact locally in West Sussex. For example, the prevalence and impact of county lines, or understanding knife crime issues. The analysis of the data serves to project emerging risk, threat and harm and identifies the long-term strategic priorities a focus on those that are complex, have impact across communities countywide, and requires multi-agency resources to challenge.

County Community Safety Agreement (CCSA)

- 1.15 The CCSA is a county-wide commitment setting out the ways the responsible authorities in the county will work collectively to respond to the identified priorities. The CCSA meets the statutory duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006) in which responsible authorities are required to consider crime and disorder in the delivery of all their duties.
- 1.16 The SWSP County Community Safety Agreement 2021-2025 outlines the strategic priorities of the partnership which are informed by national crime and disorder priorities, and through the strategic intelligence assessment. The current strategic priorities are:
- Violence & Exploitation
 - Social Inequality & Hate Crime
 - Preventing Radicalisation & Violent Extremism
 - Domestic & Sexual Violence and Abuse
 - Substance Misuse
 - Digital Safety

West Sussex Partnership Structure and Governance

- 1.17 The SWSP Executive has links to a number of other strategic boards within the County Council including the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Children's Safeguarding Partnership, and the Safeguarding Adults Board. The relationship between these boards is formalised in a protocol, which sets out the governance arrangements, the roles and responsibilities of the boards, and how they will work collaboratively to promote the welfare of children and adults in West Sussex.
- 1.18 Each of the six district and borough local authorities have their own CSP meeting structure and relationship with the PCC. They each have their own priorities identified through both the SIA and through local issues and local demand. Scrutiny of these plans and priorities takes place via the local scrutiny arrangement of the district and borough.
- 1.19 To coordinate and deliver on the Partnership's strategic priorities, sub-groups have been formed each with a thematic focus and reporting into the Executive Board. The analysis of the SIA underpins the work these sub-groups are focused upon:
- 1.20 **The Partnership Tactical Tasking and Coordination Group (PTTCG)**
- This operational group meets monthly to identify specific areas of threat, harm, risk or vulnerability from performance assessments or emerging patterns of crimes or incidents. The group is co-chaired by Sussex Police and WSCC. This allows partners to be responsive to emerging risks and oversees the coordinated response to them.

1.20 **Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Steering Group**

- 1.21 The West Sussex Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Steering Group (DSVASG) is a collaboration of statutory and third sector partners and services, working in partnership with the common objective of reducing domestic and sexual violence and providing accessible services to support survivors and their families.

Violence and Exploitation Reduction Partnership

- 1.22 The Violence and Exploitation Reduction Partnership's strategic role is to develop and coordinate the work across the partnership within West Sussex in respect of exploitation and the response to reducing all forms of serious violence. This group reports into both the SWSP and Local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership. The focus includes children at risk of child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation; those vulnerable to Modern Day Slavery, and those who perpetrate serious harm to others. The Board was established from the merging of the West Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP), the Child Exploitation Sub-group and the Contextual Safeguarding Steering group in recognition of the overlap in priorities, vulnerabilities and risk factors. This strategic group therefore holds responsibility for delivering and having oversight locally of the VRP and the effective delivery of Home Office funding allocations.

Prevent Board

- 1.23 The West Sussex Prevent Board is a strategic forum established in response to the statutory duties introduced by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, and as a result of the risks identified in the County's Counter-Terrorism Local Profile. The Board provides leadership, direction and co-ordination of Prevent activity in West Sussex in order to reduce the likelihood of vulnerable people being drawn into terrorism and identify opportunities for joint working.

Combatting Drugs Partnership

- 1.24 The West Sussex Combatting Drugs Partnership is a multi-agency forum that provides a single setting for understanding and addressing the shared challenges related to local drug and alcohol related harms. It's creation and implementation has been in response to the Government's 10-year drug strategy, *From Harm to Hope* which mandated local authority areas to establish a local Combatting Drugs Partnership. The aims are to bring together action and oversight of the strategic priorities and commitments of the Government objectives of breaking drug supply chains, delivering a world class treatment and recovery system, and achieving a generational shift in the demand for drugs.

Digital Inclusion, Access and Safety Partnership Board

- 1.25 The problem of digital exclusion and enhancing digital safety is too great for any single organisation to solve alone. As such, the West Sussex Digital Inclusion, Access and Safety Partnership enables agencies to work collaboratively with local organisations to achieve these aims. The membership includes the County Council, voluntary sector organisations, District and Borough Councils, health services and businesses.

1.26 The partnership aims to:

- Deliver work that focuses on the priorities identified within the West Sussex Digital Inclusion, Access and Safety Strategy.
- Deliver work that focuses on agreed priorities from the Steering Group.
- Share best practice and experience.
- Identify issues from local delivery; working together to tackle these issues.
- Consider any national or local changes to practice that may affect service delivery.
- Identify issues that contribute to the Safer West Sussex Partnership work themes in the county and working together to tackle these issues.

Delivery against Priorities

1.27 There is a wide range of work being undertaken within the priority areas with examples set out below:

1.28 Violence and Exploitation

- During 2023 the processes and structure for assessing and understanding the risks to individual children and young people from exploitation has been reviewed. A new Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) framework has been developed and introduced from July 2023 and this has a stronger focus on contextual safeguarding and ensuring safeguarding plans accommodate the risks that take place outside of the home and in communities.
- The Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) programme is overseen within the Violence and Exploitation Partnership and there are two main projects being delivered: The School Inclusion Project providing enhanced support for children in mainstream schools at risk of exclusion, and the Knife Intervention Project provides community-based interventions and co-ordinating support for children who are at risk of serious violence.

1.29 Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse

- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed statutory duties on local authorities including the requirement to provide specific safe accommodation and support for victims of domestic abuse, including their children.
- There is continued high demand for Worth Services, the Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse (DSVA) service within Communities Directorate. It received a further 157 new referrals for victim-survivors across the service in the last quarter (July-Sept 23). The current case load is 223 victim-survivors allocated to the high-risk Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) Service, and 182 victim-survivors remain open to both Adult and Young Person Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) accessing our vital specialist support. There have been a further 20 Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) across West Sussex. This has involved 392 case discussions for 392 high-risk referred victim's (aged 16 or over), 348 linked child victims of domestic abuse and 392 alleged perpetrators causing harm.
- To challenge and tackle toxic masculinity and misogyny, a training product has been commissioned and designed for all staff working with young people to develop responses to this in various settings. This will help staff to address the issues through constructive discussions and provide confidence

and knowledge to do this. The intervention is particularly designed for those children who may not be in mainstream education and so may miss the universal offers available through PHSE.

- SWSP currently managing and overseeing seven domestic homicide reviews, and considering four active referrals, on behalf of the Safer West Sussex Partnership. These reviews are a statutory duty but more importantly allow us to ensure where relevant lessons are learnt to reduce the risk future deaths or serious harm.

1.30 **Prevent Board**

- The West Sussex Channel Panel operates within Home Office guidelines to identify, risk assess and mitigate vulnerabilities associated with radicalisation into violent extremism by providing relevant targeted support. Channel is a voluntary, confidential programme which safeguards people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Every person adopted into Channel receives a tailored support plan which may utilise local and/or national resources and continues to receive that support until the risk is reduced.
- The Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) is produced by Counter Terrorism Policing South East (CTPSE) to identify risk on an annual basis. It is shared with partner agencies and used to inform focus on mitigation of risk and so may lead to tailored training packages with specific themes or aimed at specific agencies.

1.31 **Combatting Drugs Partnership**

- The West Sussex CDP is commencing a joint local needs assessment which incorporates all relevant local data and intelligence and identifying gaps. From this will be overseeing the production an ongoing local drugs and alcohol strategy delivery plan with multi-agency sub-working groups. This will be based in local district and borough councils and so will be driven by local contexts and demand.

1.32 **Digital Safety**

- SWSP is committed to developing a cross-directorate digital access, inclusion and safety strategy that also has firm links across the wider statutory and voluntary sector partnership. The strategy and any associated framework will further improve and support our partnership work to reduce online harm as well as improving how digital safety is embedded within digital inclusion and access delivery.
- During this quarter 1,794 young people, residents and professionals have participated in digital safety focused training/engagement activities. Registration for the monthly Staying Safe Online E-Newsletter continues to increase with over 6800 people now receiving this. Through these activities and other communications channels such as social media, radio, press release, blogs, local magazines, it is estimated we have reached over 100,000 people with important online safety messages and information.
- To better utilise resources across the Safer West Sussex Partnership and provide a coordinated and responsive approach to local fraud data, a fraud working group will be formed. The group will utilise local and national data,

along with reference to strategies, policy and proposals, to form a unified multi-agency action plan that will deliver targeted fraud prevention activity across West Sussex. An example, being a focus on sextortion which is one of the highest recorded fraud types in West Sussex. Work with partners is underway to plan and deliver a prevention response, working in collaboration with young people to develop resources to engage effectively with their peer groups and the target victim demographic for this crime type.

1.33 **Hate Crime**

- The Hate Incident Support Service is commissioned jointly with the PCC and this offers a direct support response to victims of hate crime and incidents. This primarily includes face-to-face, telephone, and online psychological and practical help, including advocacy and safety advice. The service is available to both children and adults. The Hate Incident Support Service provides quarterly statistics, which inform us of the trends and patterns in West Sussex, the figures include incidents where the victim or witness has remained anonymous. Quarterly review meetings are held to interrogate both the quantitative and qualitative data, and helps the partnership to recognise community tensions, which may feed into other areas of work covered by the Safer West Sussex Partnership, for example Prevent and countering extremism, or liaising with police and fire and rescue teams, such as Resilience and Emergencies. The recognised areas of community tensions also help us to pre-empt future hate crime and incidents, meaning that we can target our response in partnership with local District and Borough's, such as engagement events with the public and assertive outreach in areas of risk.

2 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

2.1 Not applicable as background report for information only

3 Consultation, engagement and advice

3.1 Not applicable as background report for information only

4 Finance

4.1 The effect of the proposal:

(a) **How the cost represents good value**

Not applicable as background report for information only.

(b) **Future savings/efficiencies being delivered**

Not applicable as background report for information only.

(c) **Human Resources, IT and Assets Impact**

Not applicable as background report for information only.

5 Risk implications and mitigations

5.1 Not applicable as background report for information only.

6 Policy alignment and compliance

6.1 Not applicable as background report for information only.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: SWSP Partnership Structure Chart