

COMMUNITY WELLBEING PDG
30 JUNE 2015
ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR CRIME & POLICING ACT 2014

Cabinet Member: Cllr Margaret Squires
Responsible Officer: Head of Housing & Property Services

Reason for Report: To update Members on the work of the East & Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the priority areas of work for the CSP Plan running 2015 to 2017.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. That the PDG recognise the proactive and preventative work of the CSP and the benefits of working in Partnership with other agencies in order to ensure that Mid Devon stays a safe place to live, work and visit.**
- 2. That the PDG that the Cabinet approves the new priorities and supports the CSP in delivering safety messages to the communities of Mid Devon.**

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The wellbeing and safety of Mid Devon communities.

Financial Implications: MDDC contributes a small grant to the work of the CSP but the main funding is from the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner and distributed via the Safer Devon Partnership (SDP).

Legal Implications: There is a statutory obligation for local authorities to work in partnership with other statutory agencies to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, via a CSP. The Partnership is obliged to produce a three year plan to outline how it will achieve this.

Risk Assessment: Failure to engage with other partners and the cessation of community safety messages and activities could result in a rise in crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the Mid Devon area.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The CSP is required to produce a three year plan in order to outline the priorities relating to local crime trends and to identify ways in which partner agencies (both statutory and non-statutory) can work together to reduce crime further. This PDG report contains some information taken from the current plan.

1.2 The CSP uses analytical data gathered within the Devon Strategic Assessment and the Devon and Cornwall Peninsula Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment to help identify key trends and hotspots of crime and disorder. It was acknowledged within both reports that crime in general is falling year on year but there are different types of crime coming to the fore such as cyber-crime and fraud, and others where recent media exposure has increased public confidence to report, such as domestic and sexual crimes.

- 1.3 In addition to the above analytical reports the CSP has taken into account feedback from members of the public via various forms of consultation such as 'Have Your Say', Neighbourhood Assessments and feedback received at Local Action Group meetings. In January 2015 a consultation workshop was held with representatives from partner agencies to look at localised community safety issues and possible solutions.
- 1.4 As a result of assessment and consultation our priorities for the next 3 years will be as follows:-
- **Domestic, family and sexual abuse**
 - **Substance misuse**
 - **Anti-social behaviour.**
 - **On-line Safety & Scams**
 - **Crime Prevention, including rural crime and Prevent** (anti-extremism and radicalisation)
- 1.5 The CSP Steering Group meets every 2 months to monitor, oversee and support the work of the Action and Thematic Groups.
- 1.6 Local & Thematic Action Groups - Each main town in East & Mid Devon has a geographically based Local Action Group (LAG), which is responsible for the town and its rural communities. In Mid Devon there are three namely Exe (Tiverton), Creedy (Crediton), and Culm, (Cullompton).

LAGs which are unique to East and Mid Devon in the Devon and Cornwall area were established to tackle crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and community safety issues within those localities. They comprise local officers, some of which are from the statutory organisations mentioned above, but also may include elected members and representatives from the voluntary and business sectors.

In addition there are several thematic groups that look to address issues of domestic and sexual abuse, drug and alcohol issues and keeping safe on-line. Each of the LAGs and thematic groups has objectives and action plans which link directly to the Partnership Plan.

2.0 **The Priorities**

2.1 Information below provides a broad outline of the main issues.

2.1.1 **Domestic, family and sexual abuse**

Many people in East & Mid Devon may have the view that Domestic Abuse does not happen where they live. This is a common misconception. Domestic Abuse happens everywhere. The table below gives an overview of crimes reported to the police. Due to the high levels of media coverage on high profile and celebratory court cases this has encouraged many historical victims to come forward and report past crimes to the police.

2.1.2 Police Stats

12 months to February 2015	East & Mid Devon
Arrests from Domestic Abuse Incidents	469
Domestic Abuse Incidents with Children Present	864
Domestic Abuse Incidents involving Drugs or Alcohol	885
Domestic Abuse Incidents involving Repeat Victims	862
Rape	82
Previous 12 months	54
Difference	51.9%
Other sexual offences	139
Previous 12 months	115
Difference	20.9%

2.1.3 The CSP has a thematic group that looks at local issues and works together to provide training opportunities for staff and publicity campaigns to get the safety messages out to all members of the community.

2.1.4 Future work will include:

- Workshops on Devon Rape Crisis Services
- Promotion of Domestic Violence and Abuse support services
- Events to support November Awareness week

2.2 Substance misuse

2.2.1 The role of alcohol in crime and public disorder has for some years been a high profile topic for public debate. Staff in criminal justice agencies and emergency services are confronted daily with the results of alcohol-related crime disorder and ASB. The many victims of this type of offence include those involved in street fights, domestic violence, sexual assault etc. The severity of alcohol related crime can vary widely from relatively low level offences such as rowdy drunkenness to violent assault. At the lower end of the scale alcohol-related disorder is intimidating but more serious forms of alcohol related violence have long-term effects on people's lives.

2.2.2 Drug misuse has been included in the new priorities as there are an increasing number of substances that impact on community safety. This includes energy drinks that have direct impact on the behaviour of young adults who often consume many times the daily recommended amounts. New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) have been a growing trend over many years. The Government has recently announced new legislation will be introduced to tackle this growing problem. These substances are made from a mixture of chemicals that are intended to mimic the effects of known drugs, but they often have extremely severe side-effects and in some cases result in death.

2.2.2 Future work will include:

- Education for younger people regarding the dangers of substance misuse

- Promotion of drugs and alcohol support services (RISE)
- Events to support November Alcohol Awareness week

2.3 Anti-Social Behaviour

2.3.1 ASB doesn't just make life unpleasant but it has a negative effect on many people's lives. ASB is virtually any intimidating, nuisance, inconsiderate or threatening activity that affects your quality of life. In Mid Devon the rate of ASB is reducing year on year but we continue to work closely with our partners to ensure that we keep on top of it.

2.3.2 New legislation that was introduced by the new Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 is now embraced by the council staff and partner agencies thanks to training provided via the CSP.

2.3.3 Future work will include:

- Continued use of the new legislation to tackle ASB
- Further workshops for staff to refresh and exchange best practice
- Continued Youth ASB meetings to discuss issues with partners on a monthly basis

2.4 On-line Safety & Scams

2.4.1 Online safety for young people was raised as an issue through the Culm LAG about 18 months ago. Professionals such as school nurses and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) reported a steep increase in the number of young people sharing explicit images on-line or being bullied via Facebook or other forms of social media. As a result a group called INFORM was established that links with all the Community Colleges in East & Mid Devon as well as others working with children. During the last year or so we have managed to provide free training to nearly one hundred members of teaching staff, support staff, youth workers and foster carers so that they are more familiar with current on-line trends and have access to tools and support services.

2.4.2 Scams were raised as an increasing area of concern by the strategic assessments carried out during 2014. Many people are falling victim to scams which can come via post, email, telephone or cold calling. Many victims of scams are elderly and the vulnerable who invest their life savings in the hope of gaining further money or thinking they are 'helping' others by sending money. Once on a 'suckers list' their details are sold to other scammers and the correspondence is increased substantially further. But it's not just the elderly; many younger members of society are also falling for more elaborate and calculated scams.

2.4.3 Future work will include:

- Internet safety advice and training for staff, young people and parents/carers via the INFORM group.
- Support of Scams Awareness month in July where there will be publicity, displays and use of a 'pop-up shop' in Tiverton.

2.5 General Crime Prevention

2.5.1 The CSP will support any crime prevention initiative in order to tackle and reduce any specific crime peak. The intention is that during the coming year there will be general messages about home security, rural crime and personal safety.

2.5.2 Work will also include promotion of Prevent which relates to work advising on how to identify those at risk of extremist behaviours. Locally for us this may relate to topics such as badger culling, fathers for justice and other issues of concern, rather than anti-terrorism, although we cannot afford to overlook these.

3.0 Summary

3.1 The CSP is committed to reducing crime, disorder and ASB. It intends to keep staff both internally and within our partner agencies as informed and up to date as possible with current trends, advice and available support services.

3.2 For further information on recent activities please see the annual CSP newsletter recently issued to all elected members.

Contact for more Information: Julia Ryder or Laura Maksymczuk on 01884 234996/7 or email communitysafety@middevon.gov.uk

Circulation of the Report: Cllr Margaret Squires, Management Team

Supporting Documentation:-

- Devon Strategic Assessment and
- Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment