

**Report for: Scrutiny Committee**

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Date of Meeting:	18 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
Subject:	<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23</b>
Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Wulff, Community & Leisure
Responsible Officer:	Simon Newcombe, Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing (Chair of the East and Mid Devon CSP)
Exempt:	Not Applicable
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	None

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)**

This is an annual report to ensure that the Scrutiny Committee has oversight of the East and Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the opportunity to review the activities of the partnership during 2022-23 with a look ahead to the priorities for 2023/24 and beyond. This report would normally be presented in the spring but has been delayed this year due to the administrative change at the council and the absence of a Community Safety Officer for 10 months until August 2023. Activity in the past 12 months has been restricted accordingly with a focus on core priorities and preparation for new Serious Violence duties as set out below.

The overarching priorities for the CSP remain unchanged for 2023/24, but with a new Serious Violence Duty on ‘specified authorities’ introduced in 2023 and requiring the partners to work together in a multi-agency manner and publish a strategy and action plan to reduce serious violence in their areas.

## **Recommendation(s):**

- 1. To note the work and completed outcomes of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in delivering activities against the Partnerships priorities and action plan for 2022 – 2023.**
- 2. That the Scrutiny Committee further notes the ongoing priorities of the East and Mid Devon CSP and planned activities for 2023-24 including the new statutory Serious Violence Duty.**

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The East & Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has been formed in order to meet our statutory duties under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and is a multi-agency group working together to reduce crime and disorder.
- 1.2 The formal operating structure of the partnership comprises of quarterly meetings of all partner agencies. The role of chairing the partnership can be met by any of the statutory partners within the partnership and most recently this function has been carried out by Mid Devon District Council.
- 1.3 The Police and Justice Act 2006 requires the local authority to put in place a method of scrutinising the manner in which the partnership functions. Every local authority must have in place a committee with the power to review and scrutinise the actions of the CSP and make recommendations about how it functions. The East and Mid Devon CSP is scrutinised through this Councils Scrutiny Committee via an annual report.
- 1.4 The statutory CSP partners are:
  - Devon and Cornwall Police
  - Devon County Council
  - Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service
  - Probation Service
  - East Devon District Council
  - Mid Devon District Council (current Chair organisation)
  - NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (One Devon)

### **2.0 Priority Areas 2022/23 and 2023/24**

- 2.1 The East & Mid Devon CSP Priorities for 2022-23 were based on the evidence given in the Safer Devon Partnership (SDP) Strategic Assessment, which was produced in December 2021 and the CSP Quarterly Update documents. These gave clear indications that the biggest areas of concern were hidden risk, harm and exploitation alongside emerging issues as we transitioned out of the Covid-

19 pandemic. East & Mid Devon risks are clearly mirrored within the report, matching the key areas.

- 2.2 The CSP therefore has priorities based on the Strategic Assessment 2021-22. Below are the priority areas of focus that have been discussed, shaped and agreed by the CSP members:

### **Violent Crime**

- Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence & Abuse
- Street safety (including street drinking)
- Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking
- Violence Against Women & Girls

### **Youth Risk & Vulnerability**

- Community Wellbeing (including mental health)
- Exploitation
- Prevent (of extremist views)
- Anti-social Behaviour
- Hate Crime

- 2.3 A range of activities were undertaken or supported in 2022/23 and these included:

- Contribution of funding was made to South Devon & Dartmoor CSP for the Countywide 'Let's Talk Teenagers' Project.
- For ASB Awareness week the council joined with the Police to undertake joint visits to our estates and offered support and advice to residents.
- DYS Space were funded to provide positive summer activities for young people in the Tiverton area over the summer holiday period.
- Crediton Community Youth Work - provided schools transition support for Year 11 pupils.
- Developed the Trauma Informed Approach.
- Organised a focus group on sexual exploitation.
- Body worn cameras were purchased for the Street Scene service utilising grant funding
- Supported the Warm Spaces Project in Mid Devon

- 2.4 The priorities for 2023/24 have remained unchanged and all CSP parties have agreed will to continue into 2024/25 under the planning cycle previously adopted which continues to be compatible with the 2021 SDP Strategic Assessment and latest crime statistics/trend data provided into the CSP from Police partners in the quarterly updates. This will be reviewed following completion of strategic needs work under the new Serious Violence Duty (see below).

- 2.5 However, the Council became subject to a new statutory **Serious Violence Duty** in 2022/23. The Duty requires 'specified authorities' to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in an area, the cause of that violence, and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence. The Duty does not specify a lead authority to be responsible for coordinating activity, or prescribe a structure in which the prescribed authorities are expected to work. Local policing bodies (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC) are responsible for allocating grant funding for authorises under the Duty. It is anticipated that local leaders may use existing local structures to comply with the new duty to work together, such as CSPs. Governance in Devon and Cornwall is still under discussion and will need to be resolved as an urgent matter in order to confirm the required local partnership arrangements with the Home Office.
- 2.6 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 has been amended to ensure preventing and reducing serious violence is a statutory priority for CSPs. We are participating in a Devon working group developing a Devon-wide strategic needs assessment and Serious Violence Strategy for adoption in 2024. This will be the major priority for the CSP's in the next 12 months.
- 2.7 Under the new Duty local partnerships will be required to produce an evidence based Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) to identify current and long-term issues in relation to serious violence and to understand emerging trends. The SNA will require data from a wide range of partners including Health, Educations and Prisons.
- 2.8 The SNA has been commissioned alongside the Safer Devon Partnership at County level with meetings planned during November and December 2023 to discuss the draft findings ahead of a legal deadline to publish the SNA by 31 January 2024. As CSP Chair, Mid Devon are directly engaged with this work.
- 2.9 The Duty also requires that an annual Serious Violence Strategy be produced by the local partnership which identifies the causes of serious violence in that area and details are range of new and existing actions to prevent and reduce serious violence and its drivers that have been identified. This will follow publication of the SNA which will directly underpin the strategic approach to the reduction of serious violence locally.
- 2.10 We continue to promote an overarching 'Trauma Informed' approach across the partner agencies. This approach encourages practitioners and staff to recognise that many service users and community members have experienced some form of traumatic event that they are living with day to day, and may impact on their life choices, activities and actions.

### 3.0 **Action Plan 2023 – 2024**

#### 3.1 Work over the coming year will include:

- Continued Partnership working with other Devon CSP's to consider joint project working and funding applications.
- Finish the ASB Toolkit and work with CSP partners to promote improved processes and empowerment for use of ASB legal powers. Provide local training for practitioners and partners to ensure improved use of powers.
- Roll-out of delegated powers to Mid Devon Housing under the ASB toolkit including Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and Community Protection Notices (CPNs)
- Link into the evidence base for Serious Violence Duty Strategic Needs Assessment and Serious Violence Working Group at Peninsula and Devon level as required under new Duty.
- Further support, training and awareness raising for staff and practitioners on the Trauma Informed Approach and transitioning from being **Trauma Aware**, to being **Trauma informed** and for this approach to be consistently embedded across the Partnership.
- Supporting communities, organisations and partners to have an increased awareness and understanding of the community safety priorities and their role in tackling these using a systemic model.
- Continued efforts to reduce the violence towards women and girls.
- Take a multi-agency approach to tackling street safety through disruption, enforcement and taking steps to increase pro-social activities to reduce the risk of repeated incidents.
- Develop an increased understanding of the modern slavery and human trafficking profile in the community and develop proportionate responses to address.
- Focus on responding proportionately to criminality and Anti-Social behaviour committed by youths and take steps to increase opportunities that facilitate desistance from offending.

#### 4.0 **Funding 2023 – 2024 onwards**

4.1 Historically the Devon CSP's have received annual grant allocations to support local projects and purchases which support achieving the CSP goals by reducing or tackling specific areas of crime or concern. This financial support has now been withdrawn.

4.2 The CSP's are able to support local bids from organisations and community groups for funds from the OPCC Community Grant Scheme if the projects meet the CSP priority areas in their grant applications. Furthermore, there is an expectation from the PCC that local bids are consistent with the adopted

priorities of the relevant CSP. The CSPs themselves are unable to make a direct bid to this grant scheme.

- 4.3 Sourcing other funding streams is an option but staffing resources have been steadily reduced and this has resulted in fewer projects being supported or delivered directly by the CSP. Joined up working with other CSPs will ensure that we have the benefit of mutual support at the forefront of funding applications.
- 4.4 The CSP has been awarded £8k from the Government (distributed by OPCC) in 2023/24 for funding projects or initiatives that will support the new Serious Violence Duty. This represents £4k per district area.
- 4.5 The CSP are legally responsible for the delivery of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR's) under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. An annual funding contribution has been made by the District Council to Devon County Council / Safer Devon Partnership (SDP) to oversee these reviews on our behalf.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report, aside from highlighting potential costs arising from Domestic Homicide Review responsibilities, as set out below.

### **Legal Implications**

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 makes it a statutory requirement for the Police and Local Authorities to engage with partners to form a Community Safety Partnership for the purposes of reducing crime and disorder. The 1998 Act places a legal responsibility on the Partnership to consult with the Community on the priorities it has set and inform them of progress against the action plan. The Act also requires the Partnership to carry out a Strategic Assessment of the area which is used to inform the partnership priorities. The Partnership is also responsible for conducting Domestic Homicide Reviews and these are led by Devon County Council.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed a duty on Local Authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation. A Devon Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board is now in place to assist with the discharge of these duties and is represented for Mid Devon by the Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing.

The Serious Violence Duty, which is encompassed in the Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 is part of the Government's broad approach to prevent and reduce serious violence. The key strands being a multi-agency public health approach to understanding the drivers and impacts of serious violence, and a focus on prevention and early intervention.

Responsible authorities (also known as “duty holders”) who are subject to the Duty include: local authorities, the police, youth offending teams, Integrated Care System, Probation, and the fire service.

The Serious Violence Duty requires organisations above to work together to share information, analyse the situation locally and come up with solutions, including the publication of an annual strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence on a local basis. The duty also requires the responsible authorities to consult educational, prison and youth custody authorities for the area in the preparation of their serious violence strategy.

In addition to the Serious Violence Duty Section 17 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act has been amended to make preventing and reducing Serious Violence a statutory requirement for Community Safety Partnerships (CSP).

The Commencement of the Serious Violence Duty was on 31 of January 2023 with a requirement to formalise local partnership arrangements during 2023 and for specified authorities to publish their SNA and Strategy by 31 January 2024.

### **Risk Assessment**

There is a risk to the Council if it does not fully engage with the Partnership in respect of failing to meet its numerous statutory duties. In turn, the ability of the Partnership to provide effective multi-agency working to reduce crime and disorder in our community is potentially reduced.

### **Impact on Climate Change**

None directly arising from the report. The partnership undertakes the majority of its work remotely through electronic communications which limits officer travel and physical meetings.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The 2018-21 CSP Plan has had an equality impact assessment (EIA) completed. The transition to the Trauma Informed approach plan in 2019-20 also had an equality impact assessment completed. Overall, no adverse impacts on persons with legally protected characteristics were identified. No significant changes have been beyond those required legally under the new introduced beyond the new Serious Violence Duty outlined above, consequently no new EIA has been produced. The pending Devon level Serious Violence Strategy go through a formal equalities impact assessment process.

### **Relationship to Corporate Plan**

The priorities of the CSP and the activities undertaken as part of the action plan compliment the ambitions of the Corporate Plan. In particular this activity contributes to the priority of Community. The CSP works directly with the wider community, youth groups and local partners to ensure the district is a safe place to live, work and visit.

### **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:** Andrew Jarrett  
Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151  
**Date:** 5 December 2023

**Statutory Officer:** Maria De Leiburne  
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer  
**Date:** 5 December 2023

**Chief Officer:** Simon Newcombe  
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director  
**Date:** 28 November 2023

**Performance and risk:** Steve Carr  
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager  
**Date:** 6 December 2023

**Cabinet member notified:** Yes

### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Simon Newcombe, Corporate Manager for Public Health, Regulation and Housing or Adrian Gardner, Specialist Lead for Community Safety & Safeguarding  
Email: [snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk) or [agardner@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:agardner@middevon.gov.uk)  
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#### **Background papers:**

Safer Devon Partnership  
Information relating to the Devon Strategic Assessment and priorities for Devon.  
<https://saferdevon.co.uk/about-safer-devon/>

East and Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership  
Local priorities and background information  
[East and Mid Devon CSP - Safer Devon](#)

Police and Crime Commissioner Grants  
Devon Community Foundation – Grants to enable and empower smaller VCSE organisations to reduce violence and ASB  
[PCC Grants - Safer Communities - Devon Community Foundation \(devoncf.com\)](#)