

**Report for: Community, People and Equalities
PDG**

Date of Meeting:	25 March 2025
Subject:	COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE - PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN REPORT 2025 - 2028
Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Wulff, Cabinet Member Cabinet Member for Quality of Living, Equalities and Public Health
Responsible Officer:	Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health (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 provide an update on the East & Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) priorities and the planned activities of the Partnership for the coming year 2025/26 and beyond. The report is closely linked to the ASB Update report that is also on the same agenda.

Community safety relates to all crime, anti-social behaviour (ASB), harm and other behaviours that negatively affect the lives and local environment of communities. Partners with responsibility for community safety are required to protect communities from the threat and consequences of these issues by reducing their incidence and fear of their occurrence. A new Devon-wide Community Safety Strategic Assessment was undertaken by the Safer Devon Partnership in 2024 which identifies current trends in crime, ASB and behaviour of concern.

Two new CSP sponsored initiatives were introduced by the Council in 2024/25:

- a) The use of statutory Community Protection Warnings and Notices was delegated to Neighbourhood Officers in Mid Devon Housing for the first time in April 2024, with ongoing advice and support provided by the Council's Community Safety Officer.
- b) A new multi-agency panel has been established under the CSP called the Mid Devon Youth ASB Intervention Panel, which is chaired by the Community Safety Officer. Agencies can refer in young people of concern, and the Panel aims to take a trauma informed, child centred approach in deciding what support can be offered by agencies to seek to change behaviours and support the family, as well as considering what ASB sanctions should be applied.

The Government is considering a wide range of changes in 2025/26 including proposals to extend anti-social behaviour powers under the Crime and Policing Bill and by updating the statutory guidance.

The Government is also considering reform of Community Safety Partnerships 'in line with the Government's Safer Streets Mission and Home Office priorities including the roll out of new Young Futures Prevention Partnerships, and the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee'.

Recommendation:

- 1. That the PDG notes the report.**

Section 2 – Report

1 Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The East & Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was 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 is agreed under a Terms of Reference. Oversight is provided by a CSP Board which hold quarterly meetings and comprises both statutory and other key partner agencies. The role of chairing the partnership can be met by any of the statutory partners within the partnership and currently this function is 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 Council's Scrutiny Committee via an annual report.

1.4 The CSP supports the priorities and work of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and plays an active role in the development and delivery of the Police and Crime Plan.

1.5 The statutory CSP partners in local context 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 Integrated Care Board

1.6 The principal purpose of this report is for the Policy Development Group to be aware of the planned activities for the CSP.

2 Priority Areas 2025/26 – 2027/28

2.1 The East & Mid Devon CSP Priorities for 2022-25 were based on the evidence given in the Safer Devon Partnership (SDP) Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2021/22. A new Community Safety Strategic Assessment was undertaken by the SDP in 2024. The trends include:

2.1.1 The CSP area had the second highest increase in crime at 4.49% overall behind South Devon & Dartmoor CSP.

2.1.2 The largest increase in Offence Groups in East and Mid Devon was within Theft from the Person, which has increased by 78.05% and Trafficking of Drugs, which increased by 30.91%. However, this is from a low base with an increase in cases of 67 and 65 respectively for the whole of Devon in the 2023/4 financial year.

2.1.3 Although figures are relatively small, Possession of Weapons offences in the CSP area have increased by 18% over the past year. Across Devon there were an additional 63 cases in the 2023/4 financial year. This is possession of an offensive weapon and is not crimes where there has been violence/use of the weapon which is at a significantly lower level. Serious violence crimes with injury were down 4% in the financial year 2023/4.

2.1.4 East and Mid Devon has also seen the highest increase in domestic abuse flagged crime, which has increased by 7.7%, compared to the 1.05% increase across Devon. Domestic abuse is a more prevalent crime county-wide and nationally. Within Devon, it was estimated that over 30,000 people experienced domestic abuse in the 2023/4 financial year and this a fifth of all crime in the county.

- 2.1.5 Tiverton has seen ASB linked to alcohol. As a result, a Community Alcohol Partnership has been set up in order to educate young people around the dangers of alcohol misuse and help promote healthier activities.
- 2.1.6 ASB has been a significant concern in Exmouth, including the Harbour and Marina areas, the seafront, Manor Garden and The Strand. Exmouth has benefited from recent Home Office ASB Hotspot programme funding, which has enabled the employment of street wardens to tackle these issues.
- 2.1.7 Despite the changes and issues highlighted in the strategic assessment, Devon remains a relatively safe place to live with low rates of criminality. This is evidenced by an overall crime rate of 50 crimes per head of resident population compared to an average for England and Wales of 110 crimes per head of 1000 population.
- 2.2 Current financial pressures and cost of living challenges facing households and wider society are highly likely to influence the occurrence, complexity and intensity of hidden harms including domestic and intimate partner violence and abuse. Violence Against Women and Girls, sexual violence and weapons related violence remain substantial issues of concern. Against this context, community safety remains an important area of focus for national government with new policy and legislation continuing to be announced.
- 2.3 The CSP priority areas of focus for 2025-2028 will be based on the Strategic Assessments and the 2025 CSP priority setting meeting is scheduled for mid-March to enable discussion and shaping of the priorities by CSP Board Members. A verbal update will be provided at the PDG. Current Priorities include:
- **Violent Crime**
 - o Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence & Abuse
 - o Street safety (including street drinking)
 - o Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking
 - o Violence Against Women & Girls
 - **Youth Risk & Vulnerability**
 - o Community Wellbeing (including mental health)
 - o Exploitation
 - o Radicalisation and violent extremism (Prevent)
 - o Anti-social Behaviour (now a priority in the new Police & Crime Plan 2025-29)
 - o Hate Crime and related community tensions
 - **Serious Violence Duty**
 - **Martyn's Law - new legislation expected in 2025**
 - **Government Review of ASB powers and CSPs.**

Successes in 2024/25 to be further established in 2025/26

- 2.4 **ASB Powers** - In April 2024, as part of a CSP sponsored project, we trained and authorised the Neighbourhood Officers in Mid Devon Housing to be able to issue Community Protection Warnings and Notices, and trained officers in Public Health. This has been welcomed by housing colleagues, who have embraced the new powers as another useful tool for them to manage tenancy problems caused by unreasonable behaviour impacting neighbours.
- 2.5 Up until the end of January 2025, Mid Devon Housing have issued 15 Community Protection Warnings and 9 Community Protection Notices. Public Health have also issued 4 Community Protection Warnings.
- 2.6 **Youth ASB** - We have worked collaboratively with the Police (Child Centred Policing), the Youth Justice Service, East Devon DC and Exeter City Council to launch a Youth ASB Intervention Panel in November 2024. This approach has developed out of the innovative work carried out by Devon & Cornwall Police to introduce 'Intervention Clinics' which aim to decrease youth reoffending and prevent children entering the youth criminal justice system. Evidence shows young people who are kept out of the criminal justice system are less likely to offend in the future.
- 2.7 The Mid Devon Panel meets monthly and is chaired by the Council's Community Safety Officer, and includes representatives from the Neighbourhood Police Team, the Youth Justice Service, the Police Youth Intervention Officer and the Child Centred Policing Sergeant. Other agencies attend as necessary including Social Services, LINKS, Housing Services, Mental Health, Youth Services, Probation and Education. Agencies can refer into the Panel young people of concern, and the Panel aims to take a trauma informed, child centred approach in deciding what support can be offered by agencies to seek to change behaviours and support the child and their family, as well as considering what ASB sanctions should be applied.
- 2.8 **Martyn's Law** – The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill 2024 is proposed legislation that would enhance the security of public venues and events from terrorist attacks. The Bill is also known as 'Martyn's Law' is named after Martyn Hett, who was killed in the Manchester Arena bombing in 2017. The law would require venues to assess and mitigate potential risks, and to be prepared to deal with incidents. The bill was introduced again to Parliament in September 2024. This law has potential implications around additional focus for the CSP as well as Local Authority Licensing functions.

- 2.9 Martyn's Law will improve protective security and organisational preparedness across the UK by mandating, for the first time, those responsible for certain premises and events to consider the terrorist risk and how they would respond to an attack (also referred to as a PROTECT duty).
- 2.10 Martyn's Law will follow a tiered approach, with the level of security measures required depending on the size and type of venue. If the capacity of the venue is less than 200 people (an increase from the original proposal of 100), it will fall outside of the scope of Martyn's Law. These premises will be encouraged to adopt the spirit of the legislation and undertake voluntary measures to reduce the risk of terrorism attacks.
- 2.11 Tier 1 (standard tier): Applies to locations where the numbers of people in attendance may reasonably be expected to be over 200 and below 800. These locations will be required to undertake basic security measures, such as staff training, public awareness campaigns, and the development of a preparedness plan.
- 2.12 Tier 2 (enhanced tier): Applies to locations where the numbers of people in attendance may reasonably be expected to be over 800 at the same time. These locations will be required to conduct a risk assessment and develop a detailed security plan in addition to the Tier 1 measures.
- 2.13 The Security Industry Authority (SIA) has been named as the regulator for Martyn's Law.

3 Government Review of ASB powers and Community Safety Partnerships

- 3.1 As covered in the ASB Update report on the same PDG agenda, the Government is seeking to bring in new powers to tackle ASB as part of its Crime & Policing Bill. This includes the introduction of 'Respect Orders' to ban persistent offenders from town centres or from drinking in public places like High Streets and parks. Breaching the orders will be a criminal offence, carrying a prison sentence of up to two years, with courts also able to issue unlimited fines or order offenders to carry out unpaid work. Respect Orders have been described as effectively a modernised version of the ASBO (Anti-Social Behaviour Orders) which were first introduced in the 1990's but withdrawn by the 2010 Government. Respect Orders would only apply to adults. The Government also intends to increase the awareness of the ASB Case Review and recommend that independent chairs are used.
- 3.2 More locally, the Police & Crime Commissioner's new Police & Crime Plan 2025-2029 has made tackling ASB one of the four priorities for Devon & Cornwall Police.

- 3.4 The Government is also considering reform of Community Safety Partnerships but further details are awaited. The previous Government had also tabled proposals to change some aspects of how CSPs work and their relationship with the Police & Crime commissioners. However, these changes were not implemented before the General Election.
- 3.3 Within Devon there will be important requirements to set out how the upper tier Community Safety Partnership (Safer Devon Partnership) and existing strategic needs assessments are updated and link into the work of district level CSPs. This close strategic and delivery alignment is already in place but will require review in the context of any specific proposals once formalised.

4 Action Plan 2025/26

- 4.1 Within the above context, the work of the CSP during 2025/26 will focus on the following activities:
1. Continued Partnership working with other Devon CSPs to consider joint project working and funding applications wherever possible.
 2. Continue to develop, expand and improve the new approach to tackling Youth ASB in Mid Devon through the multi-agency Youth ASB Intervention Panel meetings successfully introduced in November 2024.
 3. Continue to support and build expertise in Mid Devon Housing to utilise delegated ASB powers including their use of Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and Community Protection Notices (CPNs).
 4. 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, and develop a support the development of the overarching Strategy delivery plan for 2025/26 onwards.
 5. Review further support, training and awareness raising for staff and practitioners on Trauma Informed Approach. This will focus specific services and areas where best practice can the highest impact on transitioning from being *Trauma Aware*, to being *Trauma informed* - this follows up on Council endorsement in late 2022 to work towards a corporate approach. There are no specific budget resources available in the 25/26 budget to deliver this more holistically.
 6. Continued efforts to reduce the violence towards women and girls.

7. Take a multi-agency approach to tackling street drinking through disruption, enforcement and taking steps to signpost offenders to support services to reduce the risk of repeated incidents.
8. Work closely with Mid Devon and East Devon Housing services to review potential commencement of work towards gaining UK benchmark Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation.
9. Implement any new ASB legislative requirements and guidance introduced by the Government during the year, and;
10. Promote National ASB Awareness week 2025.

5 Funding 2025/26 onwards

- 5.1 The CSP holds no budget for supporting projects or carrying out intervention work.
- 5.2 The CSP encourages local bids from organisations and community groups for funds from the PCC Community Grant Scheme operated by the Devon Community Foundation. The CSPs themselves are unable to make a direct bid to this grant scheme.
- 5.3 Sourcing other funding streams is an option but overall resources have been steadily reduced and this has resulted in fewer projects being supported or delivered directly by the CSP. Collaboration with other Devon CSPs will be even more important to share staff resources and expertise, and deliver projects of mutual benefit.
- 5.4 The CSP are legally responsible for the delivery of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. An annual funding contribution is made by the Council to Devon County Council to oversee these reviews on our behalf. The Community Safety Officer takes part in any reviews involving Mid Devon residents.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report, aside from highlighting ongoing budget provision arising from Domestic Homicide Review responsibilities and successful bids for grant award funding under the Serious Violence Duty Home Office funding managed by the PCC in conjunction with the Safer Devon Partnership.

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 under agreement 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.

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.

Specified authorities (also known as "duty holders") who are subject to the Duty include: local authorities and specifically CSPs at upper and lower tier level, the Police, Youth Offending Teams, NHS Integrated Care Boards, Probation Services and Fire Services.

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 a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence on a local basis.

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 specific statutory requirement for Community Safety Partnerships (CSP).

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 made beyond those required legally, consequently no new EIA has been produced.

The Devon Serious Violence Strategy 2024 has been subject to the Devon County Council 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 Officer

Date: 12 March 2025

Statutory Officer: Maria de Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 12 March 2025

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director

Date: 12 March 2025

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 11 March 2025

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Simon Newcombe, Head of Housing and Health or Adrian Gardner, Specialist Lead for Community Safety & Safeguarding Email: snewcombe@middevon.gov.uk or agardner@middevon.gov.uk Telephone: 01884 255255

Background information

Safer Devon Partnership

Information relating to the Devon Strategic Assessment and priorities for Devon.

<https://saferdevon.co.uk>

Direct link to the Devon Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2023/4

[Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2023-24 - Safer Devon](#)

Police and Crime Commissioner Grants

Devon Community Foundation – Grants to enable and empower smaller VCSE organisations to reduce violence and ASB

[Grants - Devon Community Foundation](#)

Recent Government Statements and Proposals on ASB:

[More support for victims of antisocial behaviour - GOV.UK](#)

[Understanding the experiences of victims of antisocial behaviour - GOV.UK](#)

[Government response](#) January 2025 - 'Still living a nightmare: Understanding the experiences of victims of anti-social behaviour'

[Crime and Policing Bill: Antisocial behaviour \(ASB\) factsheet - GOV.UK](#)