



Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

Wed 1 Nov
2023
6.30 pm

Council Chamber
Town Hall, Redditch

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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[Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel - 1st November 2023](#)

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Crime and Disorder Scrutiny

Wednesday, 1st November,
2023

6.30 pm

Council Chamber Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:

Joanna Kane
(Chair)
Imran Altaf
Andrew Fry

Anthony Lovell
Timothy Pearman

1. Apologies and Named Substitutes

2. Declarations of Interest and of Party Whip

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and / or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests, and any Party Whip.

3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2022 (Pages 5 - 16)

4. North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership - Update on Work in Redditch 2022-23 including Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Activity (Pages 17 - 56)

5. County Lines Drug Activity - An update on Prevention Strategies (Pages 57 - 66)

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Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 2nd
November, 2022

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Sid Khan (Chair), and Councillors Imran Altaf, Tom Baker-Price, Timothy Pearman and David Thain

Officers:

Bev Houghton, Judith Willis, Joanne Gresham and Mateusz Sliwinski

Democratic Services Officers:

Jo Gresham and Mat Sliwinski

1. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nyear Nazir, Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Regulatory Services.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

Prior to consideration of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership - Update on work in Redditch 2021-22 Councillor Sid Khan declared an Other Disclosable Interest in his capacity as a member of the West Mercia Police BME Independent Advisory Group. He remained present in the meeting and took part in the vote thereon.

There were no further Declarations of Interest nor of any Party Whip.

3. TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22ND NOVEMBER 2021

Chair

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The minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 22nd September 2021 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel held on Wednesday 22nd September 2021 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE ON WORK IN REDDITCH 2021-22.

The Community Safety Manager provided a detailed presentation updating Members on the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) in Redditch Borough.

The following was highlighted for Members' consideration:

- NWCSP had been established in May 2013, following the merger of the three district CSPs in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest. It was explained that local authorities had a statutory duty to scrutinise the work of its local Community Safety Partnership, under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006. Members were informed that Redditch Borough Council's representation on the NWCSP was the Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Regulatory Services, the Council's Deputy Chief Executive and the Community Safety Manager. The NWCSP had a direct role in holding the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to account through the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel. It was reported that John Champion was the current PCC and that Marc Bayliss had been appointed to the role of Deputy PCC replacing Tracey Onlsow, who been in the role for six years. Members were informed that in November 2021 the PCC appointed two new Assistant PCCs, Paul Middlebrough and Nicola Lowery who worked closely to represent the PCC within communities across West Mercia.
- The NWCSP produced a rolling three-year plan that was refreshed annually through a strategic assessment, which

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gathered research, evidence and intelligence along with professional expertise of those working locally. The Plan for 2021-24 included the following priorities which had been informed by the strategic assessment:

- Reducing Violence and Abuse.
 - Reducing Theft and Acquisitive Crime.
 - Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour, Damage and Nuisance.
 - Protecting Vulnerable Communities.
 - Reducing Offending and Reducing the Harm caused by Drug and Alcohol Misuse.
-
- As part of the PCC's CCTV Capital Fund, Members were informed that in 2017-18 the PCC had allocated significant funding to develop and upgrade CCTV across the West Mercia force area which included an allocation of £195k of grant funding for improvements to the area's CCTV scheme. This funding was used across the three Local Authorities to modernise the CCTV infrastructure that served the three district areas. The upgrade included 3 moveable cameras, enhanced digital capability, improved image quality and a greater capacity to expand the scheme and/or link up to other digital systems across the region. Further funding from the PCC's CCTV Capital Fund of £65k had been received in 2020-21 and 2021-22 with £20k for 2022-23. Members were interested in what this year's funding allocation would be spent on and the Community Safety Manager undertook to provide this information to Members.
 - In September 2021 a new grant was released, the PCC's Fly Tipping fund. The funding available from this new grant was £100k and was for the CSPs to work with local private landowners to address the problem of fly-tipping on private land. It was reported that NWCSP had been allocated £22k of this funding and that it was firmly aimed at NWCSP's work with private landowners only and that local authorities would not be able to access this funding. Members were keen to better understand the landowners' charter and how many private landowners had signed up to be a part of it. It was

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noted that this project was facilitated by Wyre Forest District Council and that further information would be requested in order to provide information to Members.

- There were Community Safety Project Officers who worked on behalf of the Council and NWCSP, and they delivered a variety of community safety projects and initiatives across the Borough.
- Tools and powers used in respect of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) cases within the Borough including verbal and written statements. Information was provided on the issuing of Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) by the Police, Council services and Social Landlords. It was stated that 9 CPWs had been issued in 2020-21 and none had been issued in 2021-22. Members were informed that 1 Community Trigger/ASB Case Review had been carried out in June 2021. It was explained that a Community Trigger/ASB Case Review was introduced as part of the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014 and was a facility available to victims of ASB to request a review of their reported case, if they felt that no action had been taken. It was clarified by Officers that the Community Trigger/ASB Case Review was not a complaints process but a review process and if specific complaints were made by residents, it should be through the relevant partners complaints procedure. Members were informed that CPWs were a very effective process and helped to mitigate any further necessary action as a breach of the notice would result in a criminal offence.
- One of the responsibilities of the NWCSP was to reduce fear of crime and raising awareness in communities was part of that. The Community Safety Team worked to promote key safety messages at a national and local level and the work of the NWCSP. This was done through social media campaigns. Some examples of these campaigns were Ask for Angela (NTE Safety Campaign), Mental Health Awareness Week and Nominated Neighbour.

Following the presentation Members were keen to understand further some of the areas highlighted within the presentation. These areas were as follows:

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- The difference between arson and the deliberate setting of a fire – it was explained that arson was a very serious criminal act (defined under the Criminal Damage Act of 1971 as an act of attempting to destroy or damage property, and/or in doing so, to endanger life). Deliberate fires include those where the motive was suspected to be deliberate but not targeted for example, the setting of a fire by a group of young people as ASB but not intended to specifically harm anyone.
- The priorities of the Plan and whether these were different from previous iterations – Officers informed Members that the priorities were quite broad, and that the annual review allowed amendments and additions to be made, if necessary. This was particularly useful when dealing with emerging crimes and issues.
- CCTV – Use of facial recognition and Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Officers reported that although this technology was available in the specification, it was not used by the Council's system. It was noted that there were still improvements to be made in this area and Officers explained that there needed to be a balance between identifying people on CCTV and human rights. It was noted that CCTV was very heavily regulated, and the Council was regularly audited by the Surveillance Camera Commissioner and needed to be compliant. Officers informed the Panel that the next audit was due imminently. Members were reassured that due to the recent digital upgrade of the CCTV cameras, the Council's CCTV was an excellent and future proofed system. There was interest expressed by Members who were keen to visit the Monitoring Centre and Officers undertook to facilitate this.
- Reporting on PCC funding – Members were interested to better understand the way in funding was received. It was explained that funding was received retrospectively and only after thorough and acceptable reporting to the PCC had been provided by Officers. It was reported that this happened on a quarterly basis.
- Crime Prevention Initiatives – there were queries in respect of specific initiatives that were undertaken in order to prevent

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crime, particularly in the winter months. Specific reference was made regarding taxi driver safety and burglaries targeting Asian gold in particular. Officers confirmed that initiatives did take place in both of these areas and that awareness was raised by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) in their work with local taxi drivers. The issues regarding theft of Asian gold, particularly at times of family celebrations, were discussed and Officers who worked with communities, helped to raise awareness in these areas of concern.

Following the detailed discussion in respect of the work of the NWCSF, Officers provided further information on the work of the Partnership, the Community Safety Team and partners in 2021-2022. During this presentation Members' attention was drawn to the following:

- Two changes had been made to the NWCSF Responsible Authorities in this Plan. These were that the Probation Service was now a single Responsible Authority and that Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest – Integrated Care Board had replaced Clinical Commissioning Groups.
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provided statutory guidance in respect of standards and best practice for Responsible Authorities with statutory duties to support and assist victims of domestic abuse. As a result of this guidance a domestic abuse partnership board had been established at County level and a Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy had been developed.
- The next phase of the Government's 10-year Combating Drugs Partnerships strategy was announced in June 2022. The associated guidance provided a very specific framework for how partners in each locality in England worked together to reduce drug-related harm in their area. Members were informed that the PCC had announced an additional £100k of funding was available in order to support the work of the Combating Drugs Partnerships.
- The Respect Programme – this programme was made up of bespoke one-to-one mentoring, classroom sessions and

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whole school assemblies. The mentoring programme provided weekly sessions to young people who had been referred to the scheme and who were at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of crime. Members were informed that there had been 30-60 referrals each half term and there were 135 open cases at any one time. It was noted that this was an exceptionally well respected project that did not exist anywhere else within Worcestershire.

- Community Safety Enhanced Youth Support Workers – in 2021-22 a Public Health Grant of £83k per annum for three years had been received by Redditch Borough Council from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund. This allowed the team to appoint two full time youth worker posts in partnership with Young Solutions Worcestershire. Members queried what would happen at the end of the funding period. It was confirmed that Officers would work hard to secure future funding after the three year period had finished.
- Volunteer it Yourself (VIY) and Launch of the W.I.S.E Youth Centre – The VIY initiative combined DIY and volunteering and as a result young people were able to learn DIY and trade sector skills whilst helping to repair and refurbish community facilities. During the programme it was reported that 12 Entry Level 3 City & Guilds Accreditations had been awarded in carpentry, Health and Safety and decorating. The VIY project concluded with the opening of a new youth centre. On Monday 15th August 2022 the W.I.S.E Youth Centre opened in Market Walk in Redditch Town Centre. The renovation of the centre had been undertaken by the young people participating in the VIY initiative.
- The Empowering Young People Programme - It was explained that this was an 11-week programme of arts and crafts, issue-based activities addressing life skills, confidence building and self-esteem work. Some areas that had been covered over the previous year had been ASB, County Lines Drug Dealing and Hate Crime Awareness. It was reported that 8 programmes had been delivered in 2021-22.
- Youth Outreach – Members were informed that the Community Safety Team were working in conjunction with a local youth provider UP Foundation, to deliver outreach and

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detached youth work across the Borough. Through these outreach patrols, youth workers would engage with between 20 and 400 young people per month.

- The Young Citizens Challenge – this project had returned to face-to-face sessions in 2022. The initiative saw year 6 students from Worcestershire, which included students from schools within Redditch, attend an event at Bromsgrove Fire Station which highlighted key safety messages in respect of fire safety, water safety and personal safety.
- The Virtual Decisions Knife Crime Project was a one of a kind, innovative project using virtual reality technology in order for young people to face real world scenarios and make choices when faced with multiple dilemmas, including the carrying of a knife and gang activities. It was considered a ground-breaking project and Members were informed that the Office of the PCC was looking to potentially commission further delivery of the project across West Mercia.
- Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) – it was reported that ABCD officers had been recruited to work in Abbeydale and Woodrow and an officer recruited to work specifically with members of the BME communities across Redditch. Members were keen to understand what kind of engagement was being undertaken across all BME communities and Officers agreed to contact the relevant ABCD officer to provide further information.
- Safer Streets 2, Woodrow – It was reported that this funding had finished in 2022. However, the funding had supported multiple works to improve the safety and security in Woodrow Centre, Ombersley Close and Rushock Close. Members were informed that further details of the project were available on the Redditch Borough Council website.
- The Nominated Neighbour Scheme had continued throughout 2021-22. This scheme was available to vulnerable residents across Redditch. It was reported that at the time of the meeting there were 124 residents enrolled in the scheme.
- Planning Consultations – Two Community Safety Project Officers who were College of Policing trained, Designing Out Crime Officers (DOCO). This qualification meant that they

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were able to review planning applications and make crime prevention and security recommendations. In 2021-22 officers examined 34 applications, 23 of which related to Redditch Borough Council.

- ASB Awareness Week - this event took place from 18th July to 24th July 2022 in Redditch Town Centre and Arrow Valley. A drop in session held on 21st July 2022 in the Town Centre had provided advice on measures to address ASB.
- Hate Crime Awareness Week 2022 – this event was held between 10th and 14th October 2022 and had culminated with an in person event at Redditch Town Hall with guest speakers which included the Rt. Honourable Stuart Lawrence, Naughty Boy and Azeem Rafiq. Although Members were happy that such a great event with high profile speakers had taken place at the Town Hall, they did express their disappointment at the low numbers of representatives from Redditch BME communities in attendance. Although Officers explained that BME communities had been informed that this event was taking place, some Members felt that it was held in the day and that potentially not all members of the BME communities within Redditch wanted to attend events such as these.
- Safe Places Scheme – it was reported that this scheme was designed to offer people with a disability, illness or learning difficulty, or anyone else who felt in danger a safe place. It was somewhere they could go to for help if they were being bullied or harassed while out and about. Members were keen to be provided a list of Safe Places within Redditch and Officers undertook to provide this information. It was also raised whether children were able to access the Safe Places. Although Officers confirmed that Safe Places were provided for use by anybody, the advice for children would generally be to find a responsible adult if they were experiencing issues whilst out and about, in line with safeguarding guidance.
- White Ribbon Domestic Abuse Campaign – This campaign was being planned at the time of the meeting, but it was reported that there would be community events and social media promotion as part of the campaign.

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Members were pleased with the detailed presentation; however, they were also keen to understand some areas in more detail. It was queried what engagement was being undertaken by Officers with local mosques and schools. Members were informed that work was carried out with youth groups including an Asian boys' group in Smallwood. This work was assisted by engagement carried out by the Police SNTs and the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Nyear Nazir.

In concluding this item, the Chair requested that the impressive work of the Community Safety Team be formally noted in the minutes, and that the Panel expressed thanks to all members of the team for the work carried out during 2021-2022.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

5. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The Community Safety Manager provided Members with an update on the work of the Partnership in respect of ASB. In doing so the following was highlighted for Members' attention:

- The data included in the report covered 1st April 2019 to 31st July 2022. This included data from Covid-19 years and the associated lockdowns. The aims and purposes of the report was to develop a common understanding among partner agencies of ASB incident recordings and provide the NWCSPP with an updated overview of ASB incidents recorded in Redditch between the period as outlined above.
- There were three types of incident types included within the data. These were AS Environmental (when a person's actions affected the wider environment, such as public spaces or buildings e.g., littering), AS Personal (when a person targeted a specific individual or group e.g., Trespassing) and AS Nuisance (when a person caused

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trouble, annoyance or suffering to a community e.g., Nuisance Neighbours).

- There had been 39% fewer incidents of ASB recorded between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022 than during the same period in the previous year. This equated to 1576 fewer recorded incidents of ASB. It was noted that there had been an increase in recorded incidents of ASB during the first national lockdown between March and June 2020, however this could have been due to more people working from home during this time and being exposed to ASB that they otherwise might not have observed during working hours.
- The largest increases of recorded incidents of ASB in 2021-2022 were identified as being in Abbey ward which was consistent with previous years. It was noted that the Town Centre was included in Abbey ward which could explain why there were higher incidents in this ward. The data also showed that Greenlands ward had so far experienced the highest number of incidents during this financial year.

Following the presentation of the report there was a query regarding whether redacted information could be made available to Members. The Community Safety Manager explained that some of the information in the report had been removed in order to ensure that the information remained anonymised. However, it was agreed that the Officers would find out if it was possible to provide this information to Members.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 8.07 pm

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Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Panel

To: Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel
From: Bev Houghton
Service Area: Community Safety
Contact Info: 01527 64252 Ext 3194

CC: Cllr Lucy Harrison – Portfolio Holder for Community Services & Regulatory Services
Sue Hanley – Interim Chief Executive & Chair of NWCSP
Judith Willis – Head of Community & Housing Services

Review of the work of North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership 2022-23

1. Summary

1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) for the financial year 2022-23.

2. Background

2.1 NWCSP has been in existence since May 2013, following the merger of the three district CSPs in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest. The Community Safety Teams that support and co-ordinate the work of the Partnership are employed by the respective local authorities.

2.2 Local authority representation on NWCSP is fulfilled through a number of positions. Redditch Borough Council's Elected Member representative is Councillor Lucy Harrison, Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Regulatory Services. Sue Hanley, the Council's Interim Chief Executive is Chair of NWCSP and also acts as the Responsible Authority representative on the Partnership. The Council's Community Safety Manager, Bev Houghton provides co-ordination support to NWCSP and manages the Council's Community Safety Service.

2.3 Scrutiny arrangements for the CSP remain unchanged with local authorities having a statutory duty to scrutinise the work of its local CSP, under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

2.4 Alongside the relationship the Council has with the CSP, there is also a direct role in holding the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to account through the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel (PCP). Redditch Borough Council's representative on the PCP is Cllr Joanne Beecham. The most recent West Mercia PCP meeting will be held on 30th October 2023 and

the public papers circulated for the meeting can be accessed here: [West Mercia Police and Crime Panel on 30/10/2023 at 10:00am](#)

3. Current Position

3.1 North Worcestershire CSP Plan 2021-24

NWCSP has a statutory duty to produce a three-year rolling plan outlining how the Partnership intends to address key crime and community safety priorities, as identified through its annual strategic assessment which is based on research, evidence and intelligence from national, regional and local sources.

Informed by the strategic assessment, the Community Safety Partnership Plan sets out the priorities that the CSP will focus on for a 3 year period from 2021 to 2024.

The current North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership plan has the following priorities: -

- I. **Reducing Violence and Abuse:** Focusing on violence in public places, and domestic abuse.
- II. **Reducing Theft and Acquisitive crime:** Focusing on burglary and doorstep crimes and scams
- III. **Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour, Damage and Nuisance:** Focusing on neighbourhood nuisance, criminal damage and problems facilitated by environmental factors.
- IV. **Protecting Vulnerable Communities:** Focusing on Hate Crime & Targeted Harassment, Criminal Exploitation, County Lines, Modern Slavery and Violent Extremism

The Partnership also focuses on two cross cutting themes that impact across the above priority areas. These are **Reducing the Harm caused by Drug and Alcohol Misuse** and **Reducing Re-Offending**

The North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021-24 is currently being reviewed and a new community safety action plan for North Worcestershire will be developed and agreed for 2024-27.

3.2 John Campion, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

First elected in 2016, John Campion is the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The PCC has a duty to co-operate with all CSPs in his geographical area to reduce crime and disorder and there is a reciprocal duty on CSPs to collaborate with the PCC. Both bodies must have due regard for each other's priorities within their respective plans. The PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan 2021 – 2025 can be read here: - [Safer West Mercia Plan \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](#)

The PCC is supported by Assistant PCCs, Paul Middlebrough and Nicola Lowery who work alongside the PCC. They represent him within communities across West Mercia holding portfolios that include rural, business and cyber-crime, victims' services and force-wide commissioning. In September 2022, Marc Bayliss (former Leader of Worcester City Council) was appointed as Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner's for West Mercia.

NWCSP works closely with the Deputy and Assistant PCCs and are actively involved in the West Mercia PCC's commissioning model for crime reduction activity. Well established commissioning areas include the co-ordination of Data Analysis support, consolidation of funding for Integrated Offender Management across the force area and force-wide commissioning of victims services such as Crimestoppers and Victim Support.

More recently the PCC released a tender for delivery of a Hate Crime Support service across West Mercia, which won by Victim Support West Mercia. The PCC also opened a Fly Tipping fund that CSPs could bid into to support private landowners to address environmental crime issues. The PCCs commissioning model has led to more funding being provided at a West Mercia force level to deliver activities in these key thematic areas.

PCC's CCTV Capital Fund: Since 2017 the PCC has allocated significant funding to develop and upgrade CCTV across the West Mercia force area. NWCSP first received an allocation of £195,000. On behalf of the three Local Authorities, the CSP used this capital contribution alongside matchfunding from the core grant and from the district council's own budgets to modernise the CCTV infrastructure that serves the three district areas in North Worcestershire. As a result of this upgrade the whole CCTV scheme now has enhanced digital capability, improved image quality and a greater capacity to expand the scheme and/or link up to other digital systems across the region.

Between 2020-22 the PCC allocated an additional amount of £130k capital funding towards CCTV and the CCTV project team implemented spending proposals agreed by the CSP which continued to enhance the capability and capacity of the CCTV scheme. The funding provided improvements to man technological aspects of the Monitoring Centre and provided redeployable cameras which are being used to respond to emerging areas of concern across the three areas in North Worcestershire. A further funding allocation of £20,000 was given to NWCSP for 2022/23 and details of the 2021-23 CCTV capital fund allocations can be found in **Appendix 1**. The PCC has made no further allocation of CCTV capital funding for 2023-24.

3.3 NWCSP ring-fenced grant funding from the PCC 2022-23

NWCSP is allocated an annual ring-fenced amount from the PCC of £139,250. The details of the CSPs agreed project spend can be found in **Appendix 1**.

The progress of these grant funded projects is reported quarterly to the PCC and other grant funders and at the end of the financial year there is a requirement to provide a comprehensive evaluation of all the funded projects. This includes a full breakdown of project expenditure and the outputs/outcomes that the funding has achieved.

In 2023-24 new funding will be made available by the Home Office via PCCs to support Community Safety partners in **Implementing the Serious Violence Duty**. Through the CSP, the Council will be required to meet its requirements with regard to the Serious Violence Duty as laid out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022. Statutory guidance updated on 22 June 2023 outlines how key specified authorities (of which the Council is one) should exercise their functions in relation to the Duty and funding from the Home Office is being allocated to Policing areas to support this process.

The statutory guidance sets out how specified authorities should work together to deliver the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty in order to prevent and reduce serious violence within a defined area. Whilst funding amounts and arrangements are still being negotiated, it has been agreed that local co-ordination will operate at a countywide level with the Worcestershire Safer Communities Board and the two Community Safety Partnerships in North/South Worcestershire working together to address serious violence. The definition of Serious Violence that all West Mercia Partners will be working to can be found in **Appendix 1**.

In addition to the annual review of the work of the Community Safety Partnership, Elected Members of the Crime and Disorder Panel requested to see information about the steps and strategies that are put in place to tackle County Lines drug activity. Information on this topic can be found at **Appendix 2**.

3.4 Local Delivery, Key Projects and Progress

Local delivery of community safety projects and initiatives falls under the remit of the Community Safety Operational Groups. The Safer Redditch group is a multi-agency partnership chaired by the District Police Inspector. The activities and interventions of the group are supported by the Community Safety Team and other council service areas such as Environmental Services, Planning and WRS.

Alongside supporting the CSP sub-groups, the Community Safety Team also monitor and respond to local community safety issues, co-ordinating operational delivery with partners. The team is often a first point of contact for residents and community groups with concerns about local crime and disorder issues and our officers are able to call upon other community safety partners when solutions to these concerns require a multi-agency response.

Community Safety Project Officers Richard Waterhouse and Sarah McIntosh work on behalf of the Council and NWCSP, delivering a variety of community safety projects and initiatives across the Borough. The wider team are also available to provide information, support and guidance to residents, council colleagues, external partners and elected members on a variety of crime prevention and community safety concerns and issues. **Appendix 1** provides an update on the key community safety project activity that has taken place in 2022/23.

3.5 **ASB, Problem Solving and Partner Engagement**

Following the presentation of the Council's updated ASB Policy in June 2020, Elected Members requested that an update on activity to address ASB issues be presented at the annual Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Panel.

Use of ASB Tools and Powers

To date **11 Community Protection Warnings (CPWs)** have been issued by Council service areas in 2022/23.

8 CPWs were issued by Planning, to address the problem of waste deposited or accumulated on land, and unsecure premisses encouraging ASB and having negative impact on quality of life of others in locality. One CPW issued by Planning progressed to **Community Protection Notice (CPN)**.

7 CPWs were issued by Environmental Services in relation to waste deposited on land, fly tipping and inappropriate parking of commercial vehicles in residential area.

There were **no** ASB Case Reviews (formally Community Triggers) carried out in Redditch in 2022/23.

A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) has been requested for Redditch Town Centre following concerns raised by businesses, residents and the Local Policing Team. PSPOs are designed to stop individuals or groups of people committing anti-social behaviour in a public space. The behaviour that the Order aims to prevent includes alcohol related ASB, misuse of intoxicating substances and offensive or threatening behaviour. These issues have been identified as having a detrimental effect on those in the area and are (or are likely to be) of a persistent or continuing nature and are (or are likely to be) considered to be unreasonable. Anyone who refuses to stop these anti-social behaviours within the boundary of the PSPO could be asked to leave the area for a set period of time, have their articles confiscated, be issued a fine or could be arrested.

The statutory public consultation about the PSPO was launched on Friday 28th September, closing on Sunday 29th October. The proposal whether to make the Order will be taken to Executive Committee on 5th December. Information promoting the PSPO consultation can be found in **Appendix 1**

Calls for service and support

Community Safety Team receives a number of calls for advice and assistance from other council service areas and partner agencies requiring expertise in crime & ASB prevention, problem solving or community safety interventions to assist in resolving complex issues and cases. Requests for support and information are also received from members of the public, Elected Members, voluntary and community groups and other external agencies.

Between Sept 2022 and Aug 2023, the Community Safety Team received multiple requests for service in Redditch and these were broken down as follows: -

19 requests from Residents
13 requests from Elected Members
24 requests from Partner Agencies
52 Requests from internal services

The requests for service were related to the following areas:

33 Domestic Violence, MARAC & Sanctuary incl. Home Security Assessment
13 ASB
15 ASB related to drugs
16 ASB related to Neighbourhood Issues
3 Youth ASB
3 CPW advice related to dogs
6 Personal safety information and guidance
4 Burglary/break-ins
7 Designing Out Crime

3.6 Communications and Social Media Campaigns

The Community Safety Team continued to support various national and local campaigns throughout 2022-23 to promote key safety messages and the work of NWCSP. Partnership projects such as Nominated Neighbour, the Respect Programme and raising awareness of Hate Crime Reporting are regularly promoted to residents and partner organisations.

In addition to the annual Hate Crime Awareness Week and Domestic Abuse White Ribbon campaigns supported each year, in July 2023 the Community Safety Team supported national ASB Awareness Week, with extensive social media campaigns and attending local activities.

Other campaigns and local community events supported and promoted throughout the year included:

- Personal and community safety work with students in schools
- Supporting local Community Days organised by schools and other partners
- Nominated Neighbour - raising awareness of the tactics of rogue traders
- Supporting the Pride Month events across North Worcestershire

- Operation Sceptre and other Knife Crime awareness events and activities carried out by the Police
- International Human Rights Day
- Loan Shark Awareness
- International Women's Day
- Child Exploitation Awareness Week
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Ask for Angela (Night Time Economy Safety Campaign)
- Drowning Prevention Week
- Young Citizens Challenge
- Delivering talks to community groups about home security and scam awareness

The Community Safety team also uses social media to raise awareness of community safety issues and keeps residents and partners informed of work being delivered by partners, via our X (formally Twitter) account **@SaferRedditch** and via the Councils' own Facebook pages.

A wide range of awareness raising and information messages are promoted via the X account **@SaferRedditch** which had 686 followers in 2022/2023 (an increase of 20 followers from 668 in the previous year).

The Community Safety Partnership's work is also widely promoted across North Worcestershire using other CSP X accounts such as **@nworccsp**, **@NWHateIncident** and **@SaferBromsgrove**.

Community safety promotional campaigns and awareness messages from X accounts across North Worcestershire were seen by 19.5k, with 250 direct engagements. There has been a decline in direct engagement and this seems to be in line with general social media trends seen in 2023. Reach and engagement rates have dropped sharply, due to various factors and trends such as Twitter changing hands and re-branding as X, alongside people making changes to their personal social media habits.

The breakdown for the main awareness campaigns for all North Worcestershire Twitter impressions are:

Hate Crime Awareness Week – 4.5k
 White Ribbon Domestic Abuse Campaign – 4.9k
 CSE Awareness Day – 2.5k
 ASB Awareness Week – 3.5k

Community Safety awareness messages and projects are also promoted via the Borough Council's Facebook page and up-to-date information about Community Safety projects and general crime prevention work is available on the RBC website and on the NWCSPP website at [North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership \(nwcsp.org\)](https://www.nwcsp.org)

4. Recommendation

4.1 That the progress made by North Worcestershire CSP be noted.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1: NWCSP Project Review for 2022-23 - Presentation

6. Background Papers

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel - [Committee details - West Mercia Police and Crime Panel - Worcestershire County Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan 2021-25 - [Safer West Mercia Plan \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](#)

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North Worcestershire **Community Safety Partnership**

Review of the work of the Community Safety Partnership in 2022/23

Bev Houghton
Community Safety Manager
1st November 2023

NWCSP Responsible Authorities

- **West Mercia Police**
- **Bromsgrove District Council**
- **Redditch Borough Council**
- **Wyre Forest District Council**
- **Worcestershire County Council**
- **Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service**
- **The Probation Service**
- **Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest – Integrated Care Board (replacing Clinical Commissioning Groups)**

NWCSP Priorities

The following priorities were agreed by Community Safety Partners for 2021-24

Priority	Aims to Reduce
Violence and Abuse	Violence in Public Places
	Domestic Abuse
	Child Exploitation
Theft and Acquisitive Crime	Burglary and
	Theft From Stores
	Doorstep Crimes, Scams & Rogue Traders
Anti-Social Behaviour, Damage and Nuisance	Neighbourhood Nuisance
	Criminal Damage
	Problems facilitated by Environmental Factors
Protecting Vulnerable Communities	Hate Crime & Targeted Harassment
	Criminal Exploitation, County Lines & Modern Slavery
	Violent Extremism
Reduce the Harm caused by Drug Alcohol Misuse	
Reduce Offending and Re-Offending	

New & Emerging Initiatives

In April 2021, **the Domestic Abuse Act** received royal assent and statutory guidance was issued in July 2022. Section 84(4) of the 2021 Act requires relevant agencies exercising public functions, to have regard to the Domestic Abuse statutory guidance in the exercise of those functions. Some organisations e.g Housing Authorities also have specific statutory duties to safeguard victims of domestic abuse.

[Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance](#) - This statutory guidance sets standards and promotes best practice for those **responsible authorities with statutory duties to support and assist victims of domestic abuse**.

In line with the guidance, an upper tier domestic abuse partnership board has been established at county level and a **Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy** has been developed which focuses on the key strategic responses of prevention, provision of services, partnership, pursuing perpetrators and criminal justice.

The Worcestershire Strategy can be found here - [Domestic Abuse | Worcestershire County Council](#)

New & Emerging Initiatives

On the 28th June, the Government introduced a number of law changes as part of the **Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022**. The PCSC Act 2022 focuses on; an overhaul of sentencing laws to make streets safer, ensuring serious violent and sexual offenders spend longer behind bars, implements measures to help cut crime and better protect the public and equips the police with the powers and tools they need to combat crime.

Draft guidance placing a new duty on specified authorities to address Serious Violence was issued by the Government on the 9th June 2022. The draft guidance aims to support specified authorities and PCCs in the exercise of their functions in relation to the **Serious Violence Duty**; as laid out in the PCSC Act 2022.

[Serious Violence Duty: Draft guidance for responsible authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/serious-violence-duty-draft-guidance-for-responsible-authorities)

The Serious Violence Duty guidance sets out how the PCSC Act 2022 amends the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act and places a requirement for Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to formulate and implement a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence.

Worcestershire CSPs are currently working together to establish how best to exercise this duty in a consistent and collaborative manner across the partnership areas of operation.

New & Emerging Initiatives

On 15th June 2022, the government announced their vision for establishing **Combating Drugs Partnerships** in local areas as part of the next phase of their 10-year strategy to **reduce supply and demand for illegal drugs**.

[Guidance for local delivery partners - Combating Drugs Partnerships](#) - provides the framework for how partners in each locality in England should work together to reduce drug-related harm in their area, with each Combating Drugs Partnership appointing a single Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) to act as chair and take responsibility for reporting back to central government.

Locally, discussions are underway to establish the Combating Drugs Partnership that will cover the Worcestershire area. West Mercia Partners have agreed that the PCC will be the Senior Responsible Officer for a new Combating Drugs Partnerships which will be aligned to Integrated Care Board boundaries: [Integrated Care Board - Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care System](#)

The PCC has announced £100,000 of additional funding to support the work of the Partnerships and further details on the Combating Drugs Partnership will be shared as the structures and local strategies develop.

North Worcestershire CCTV Funding between Apr 2020 and Mar 2022

Allocation	PCC Grant
1 additional camera on Town Hall roof and upgrade of 24 cameras in Redditch Borough	£48,403.41
Install 1 x new camera and pole in Sanders Park and upgrade of 9 cameras in Bromsgrove District	£32,135.57
Upgrade of various cameras in Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport	£36,458.00
Monitoring Centre equipment and signage for the benefit of Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest areas	£12,766.60
Total Grant Allocation	£130,000.00

NWCSP was allocated a further £20,000 capital for CCTV for 2022-23

North Worcestershire CCTV Funding for 2022 / 2023

Area of Benefit	PCC Grant
Purchased additional moves of the 9 existing re-deployable cameras and associated signage	£17,152
Purchased a digital sign in system to improve compliance processes for the Monitoring Centre	£ 1,350
Contribution towards a new camera in Bromsgrove to support surveillance of the NTE	£ 1,500
Total	£20,000

NWCSP Core Funding - 2022/23

Area of Benefit	PCC Grant
West Mercia CSP Analyst Team (Top Sliced)	£20,000
West Mercia Integrated Offender Mgt. (Top Sliced)	£ 5,000
West Mercia Hate Crime Project (Top Sliced)	£11,000
West Mercia Crimestoppers Initiative (Top Sliced)	£ 1,700
Bromsgrove Youth Outreach	£13,534
Bromsgrove Tasking Projects	£10,649
Redditch Youth Outreach	£13,534
Redditch Tasking Projects	£13,650
Wyre Forest Detached Youth Team	£20,000
Wyre Forest Tasking Projects	£10,183
NW Domestic Homicide Reviews	£20,000
Total	£139,250

Safer Redditch – Tasking Fund 2022/23

Funded Projects	Amount
Redditch Pubwatch Insurance	£316.20
Sanctuary Improvements to Property of a DA Survivor	£612.00
Pilot of ASB App for Neighbourhood & Tenancy Team	£1500.00
Contribution to Mobile Metal Detector (Knife Arch)	£2,694.00
College of Policing DOC Training Event for Planning Services	£450.00
Hate Crime Awareness Week Conference/Resources	£6410.13
CCTV Technical Consultancy - Woodrow Centre	£1668.00
Total	£13,650.33

Community Safety Project Updates

2022-23

The Respect Programme provides community safety awareness sessions as part of school PHSE drop down days and bespoke classroom sessions on various subjects such as recognising and reporting hate crime, understanding healthy relationships/domestic abuse, the dangers of substance misuse and promoting respect and community responsibility.

The programme also provides a therapeutic mentoring scheme which provides weekly support and guidance sessions to young people at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of crime.

2022–23 saw the largest growth in the referrals to the service. The team received between **30 to 60 referrals** each half term, with our team of mentors holding around **155 open cases** at any time.

The referrals into the programme continue to increase in complexity with support required for young people who are at a high level of need and are at real risk of being affected by criminality, both as potential victims and potential perpetrators.





Following year-on-year increases in referrals to the Respect Programme, we have been very fortunate to be able to expand our current team of experienced, qualified mentors.

We now have a well-established team of youth workers who support the delivery of the Respect Programme across Redditch and Bromsgrove



Community Safety Enhanced Youth Support Workers – Redditch

In 2021/22 the Council's Community Safety Team were successful in obtaining a 3-year Public Health grant of £83,837 pa from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). This has now been extended for a further year (2024-25) from the WCC Public Health Ring-fenced grant.

This funding has been used to provide dedicated youth workers in Redditch, working in partnership with Young Solutions Worcestershire. The focus for the youth workers is to provide outreach/detached support in identified areas of concern, to deliver Empowering Young People group work sessions and provide one to one mentoring to local young people at risk of being victims or perpetrators of crime and who have been detrimentally affected by the Coronavirus Outbreak.



The Empowering Young People Programme

This project provides an 11-week programme of arts and crafts, issue-based activities and interactive workshops addressing issues such as life skills, confidence building and self-esteem work.

The project is now entering its sixth year and goes from strength to strength with tailored sessions delivered to groups of young people based on their specific needs. During this year, the programme has had more of a focus on male only groups and has been successful in addressing some of the more negative male stereotypes that young boys are exposed to. Other EYP content delivered over the year has included ASB, County Lines, CSE, Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Misuse and Hate Crime Awareness

Over the year (2022/23) 5 Empowering Young People programmes have been delivered in Redditch, taking place in both school and community settings.



Redditch Youth Outreach

The Community Safety Team works with local youth provider The UP Foundation to deliver outreach and detached youth sessions across the Borough.

Up Foundation youth teams patrol local neighbourhoods twice a week, depending on the weather. At the height of summer, workers were engaging with between 200 to 250 hundred young people per month.

Outreach delivery is also supported by or Enhanced Youth Support team, who also deliver two session a week.

The Community Safety Youth Outreach Teams are now being seen as a model of best practice across the County. The achievements of these teams in delivering this type of on the ground, responsive youth provision has directly led to discussions about how to reshape the delivery of youth provision across Worcestershire.



Youth Scape Project in Redditch

Following a successful bid by Young Solutions Worcestershire to the Big Lottery fund for countywide Youth Scape project, the Community Safety Team are hosting the project for Redditch and are working with local youth provider Your Ideas to provide a youth worker post for three years.

The youth worker is delivering outreach, therapeutic one to one mentoring, open access youth club support and targeted group sessions. Through this project, a new youth club has been established in Woodrow Centre with well over 30 young people attending each week.



In May 2023, the Annual Redditch and Bromsgrove Young Citizen's Challenge (YCC) was held at the Bromsgrove Police and Fire Station from 22nd - 26th May

YCC offers all Year 6 students from Redditch and Bromsgrove the opportunity to take part in a series of scenarios and take quizzes on what to do in various situations, when exposed to different risks. Each partner-led session promotes experiential learning as each scenario is interactive and designed around student participation.

Key partners such as the Community Safety Team, Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Safer Roads Team, SARA (Water Safety) and Western Power were in attendance to get across key safety messages across to Year 6 students. Across the week Community Safety Partners engaged with 926 young people.



During 2022-23, the Community Safety Team has supported several voluntary youth providers with funding applications. This is with a view to securing the future of local community projects that are the most needed by young people in our neighbourhoods.

- Working with Community Safety Team and the Leisure Services team, Young Solutions – Worcestershire was granted £2,200 to support local summer holiday activities in Redditch through the Worcestershire County Council’s Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) funding
- The Community Safety Team supported local youth providers Your Ideas with their successful Youth Endowment capital funding to redevelop their building in Woodrow.
- The Community Safety Team has been supporting the YMCA by providing Enhanced Youth Support Officers to help with their delivery of the Churchill Youth Club
- Community Safety Officers have been working closely with the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) officers in Abbeydale and Woodrow since they started in post, helping them to co-ordinate activities and support initiatives designed and developed by local community members

Nominated Neighbour Scheme

The Nominated Neighbour scheme, which aims to protect vulnerable residents from doorstep crime and rogue trader offences, continues to be a successful local initiative.

126 vulnerable Redditch residents are now signed up to the scheme, which is further promoted with partner agencies including Trading Standards and Age UK. Also, several presentations and promotional events have been delivered this year and during these events there were 125 positive engagements with residents who directly received advice about keeping safe from scams, rogue traders and other doorstep crime offences. Redditch venues included Ecumenical Centre, Older Person's Forum, Millward Place Older Person's Complex, Archer Road / Other Road Community Meeting and Redditch Green Fair at Arrow Valley Lake

The Community Safety team also monitors and circulates information on current national, regional and local scams that may target residents.



Planning Consultations



The Community Safety team has two College of Policing qualified, Designing Out Crime Officers (DOCO) who can review planning applications, making appropriate crime prevention and security recommendations with the aim of making future building developments less vulnerable to crime and disorder

In 2022-23 officers examined 34 applications totalling 1052 residential units, 10 Commercial Units and 1961 Sqm. of commercial development.

22 of these applications related to Redditch developments. For example, DOCO advice was provided regarding the Council's own re-development of the Redditch Town Hall and advice was also provided for youth organisation Your Ideas' development of their youth centre in Bengrove Close following a successful bid to the national Youth Endowment Fund.

As part of wider development of this area of work the team organised a Designing Out Crime Conference on 8th February 2023 for Planners, Elected Members, Partner Agencies and the Police.

Crime Risk Surveys



Home Security Assessments

The Community Safety team has carried out 32 Home Security Assessments at the properties of residents vulnerable to crime with many households receiving upgrades and improvements to the physical security of their properties.

Some security assessments were made following discussions about the safety of domestic abuse victims held at MARAC meetings. Other assessments were carried out at the request of community safety partners such as the police and council services such as the Neighbourhood & Tenancy team.

Domestic Abuse support including Sanctuary and MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

The Community Safety team attends the local MARAC meeting which is a nationally recognised process for managing high risk domestic abuse cases. Vulnerable residents who are assessed as being at high risk of serious harm from an intimate partner or family member are referred into MARAC for the purpose of coordinating safeguarding activities across all organisations that can offer support and assistance.

Between September 2022 and September 2023 Community Safety officers completed 19 Sanctuary assessments at the properties of our most high-risk victims. The security upgrades provided have allowed the tenants to remain safely in their homes.

Redditch Town Centre Environment Visual Audit

A sub-group of Safer Redditch has been set up to look specifically at issues in the within Redditch Town Centre. This multi-agency group has made recommendations for changes to the local environment that will help to reduce incidents of ASB within the town centre.

Recommendations have included changes to lighting, maintenance of tree and shrubs, review of different access points into the centre and work to provide more security to the area around the bandstand.



Proposed Town Centre PSPO

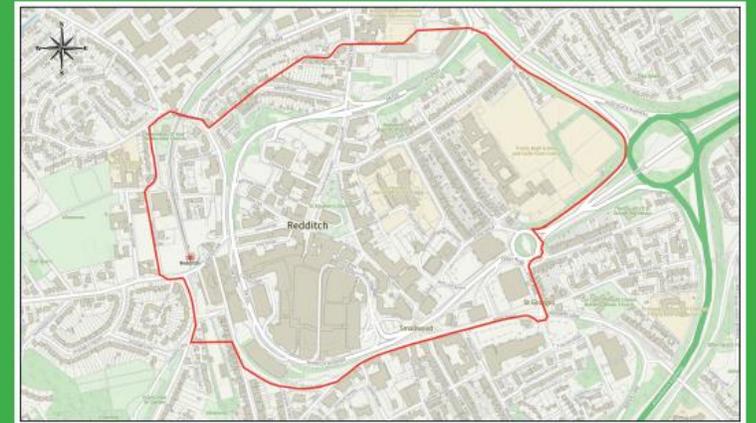
Another of the recommendations from the Town Centre sub-group is to propose implementation of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Redditch Town Centre.

The aim of the PSPO is to stop problems like:

- Alcohol related ASB in open spaces
- Possession and use of Psychoactive Substances e.g., Nitrous Oxide
- Public urination, defecation and other offensive, indecent or threatening behaviour
- Abusive, obscene and threatening language

If agreed by the Council, the PSPO will allow officers to ask people to stop drinking alcohol in the restricted area and ask them to surrender their drink and all containers. Anyone using intoxicating psychoactive substances could have their items confiscated and anyone behaving in a threatening, abusive or offensive manner could be asked to leave the area for a set period of time. A breach of a PSPO is a criminal offence and if a person refuses to comply with a request, they can be issued a fixed penalty notice of up to £100 or they could be arrested. On conviction, the fine for breach of a PSPO is up to maximum of £1000.

Redditch Borough Council wants your views on a proposed **Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)** that would restrict alcohol related anti-social behaviour, stop misuse of intoxicating substances and prevent abusive and offensive behaviour in an area of the town centre marked in red on the map below.



View the proposals in full and have your say at www.redditchbc.gov.uk/TownCentrePSPO

Paper questionnaires are available at Redditch Town Hall and Redditch Library.

Closing date for comments: Midnight on Sunday 29th October, 2023.



If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs, on equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or 01527 548284.

Environmental Visual Audit Archer Road / Other Road

Following concerns raised by residents, the Community Safety Team carried out an initial Environmental Visual Audit of the area accompanied by the Ward Member, officers from West Mercia Police and RBC Planning dept. EVA is a process that looks for any environmental opportunities to reduce criminal activity.

As a result of this joint audit, RBC Environmental Service Team carried out landscaping work in the area to cut back overgrown hedges. Residents and the nearby High School also assisted with a general tidy up. Other improvements in the area included the setup of a resident's group, improvements to lighting and increased police patrols.

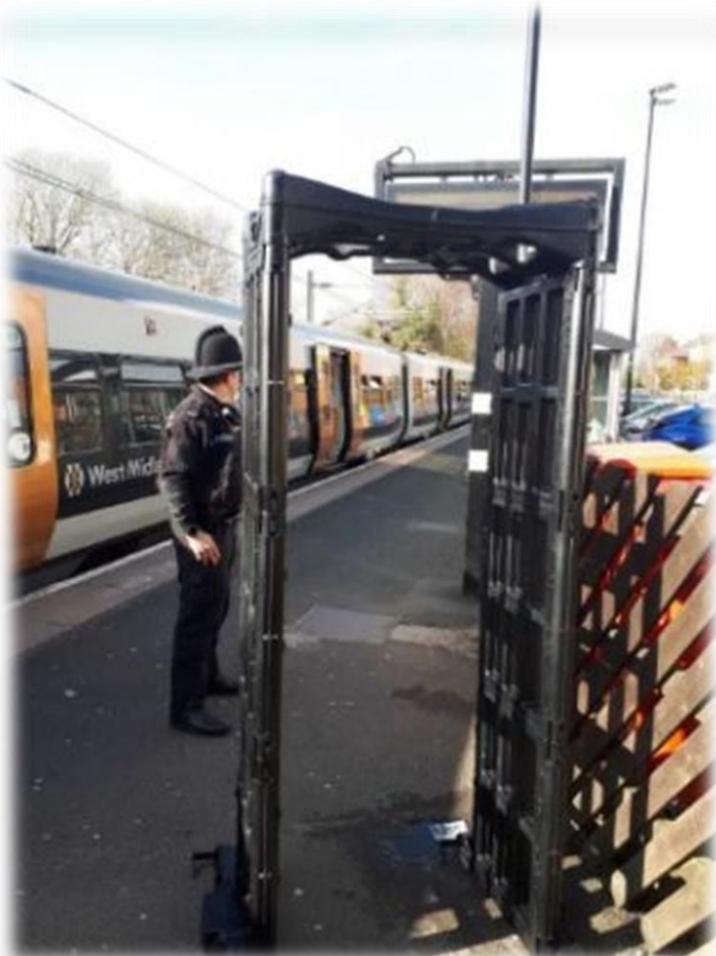


Operation Sceptre – Knife Crime Awareness Campaign 15th to 21st May 2023

‘Op Sceptre’ is a week-long national campaign aimed at tackling knife crime. During the week members of the public were encouraged to hand-in unwanted knives to prevent them from getting into the wrong hands and being used in crime. Knife Surrender bins were placed at key locations and the Community Safety Team supported Safer Neighbourhood Officers at key community events to raise awareness of the topic and encourage people to take the opportunity to surrender any knives causing concern.



NWCSP Funded Knife Arch



Date	Purpose
13/10/2022	Joint operation with SNT, BTP and West Midlands Safer Travel Team at Redditch Train Station to prevent people from using knives and to counteract cross border County Line drug activity.
16/12/2022	Operation Prescence - Knife Crime Operation. A local seasonal operation including Kingfisher Centre and areas of concern in Woodrow.
20/01/2023	Night-Time Economy deterrent activity outside Licensed Premises in the Town Centre
03/03/2023	Ongoing operation regarding knife crime prevention at various locations within the Town Centre
12/05/2023	Supporting national Operation Sceptre Knife Crime Awareness and Surrender campaign
06/07/2023	Joint operation with SNT, BTP and West Midlands Safer Travel Team at Redditch Train Station
26/07/2023	Joint operation with SNT, BTP and West Midlands Safer Travel Team at Redditch Train Station
11/10/2023	West Mercia Police County Lines Intensification Week at Redditch Train Station

MAKING COMMUNITIES SAFER

#ASBAwarenessweek



North Worcestershire
Community Safety Partnership

3rd to 9th July 2023



For this national week of focus on ASB, the Community Safety Team organised a programme of events incorporating a media campaign and community events that ran throughout the week. Community Safety Officers joined partners including the Police and Housing Providers to provide advice on measures to address ASB and discuss with residents their experiences and concerns about ASB locally.

Both an internal and external communications took place with articles on the Orb, in the local press and messages were shared daily via social media. These matched the daily themes suggested by the national organisers www.resolveuk.org.uk

Hate Crime Awareness Week 2023

This year's Hate Crime Awareness Conference took place on Thursday 19th October and was delivered in partnership with Victim Support and West Mercia Police with a focus on Disability. North Worcs. Hate Incident Partnership (NWHIP) was fortunate to have Lorraine Kelly open and close the event and Sir Lee Pearson shared his experiences of being a victim of hate crime via a pre-recorded video.

Throughout the day, multiple sessions were held with attendance from local schools and community groups that support residents who have a disability. The About Face Theatre group delivered a performance which engaged the audience, asking key questions about what they were seeing and what could have been done differently to prevent the incident of hate crime being enacted on stage.

NWHIP members also generated and shared relevant Hate Crime Awareness Week content via social media.



Annual White Ribbon Domestic Abuse Campaign 25th Nov to 10th Dec

The 2023 campaign is currently being planned and will again feature various community events and social media promotion, with the 16 Days of Action again being supported by our partners and the local press.

Last year, officers were able to move back to face-to-face delivery with the Community Safety team and partners hosting a publicity stand in Kingfisher Centre to support the campaign and promote the work of support services.

Alongside in-person promotion, the team also had a strong social media campaign, engaging with local sports teams and the full 16 Days of Action were supported by our partners and the local press.



White Ribbon UK



Safe Places Scheme

The Safe Places Scheme gives the elderly, people with a disability, illness or learning difficulty, or anyone who feels in danger; a range of safe places where they can go to for help if they feel they are being bullied, abused or harassed while out and about.

All Safe Places are identified by a Safe Place sticker and the organisations employees receive training, so that they can give reassurance and help people contact appropriate support, as needed.

A full directory of the Safe Places in Redditch is available here: [Safe Places | Our Way Self Advocacy](#)

Directory of Safe Places 		
Redditch		
Coffee #1	Kingfisher Shopping Centre B97 4HJ	
Age UK	85 Mason Road Headless Cross B97 5DQ	
Barclays Bank	Kingfisher Shopping Centre B97 4HJ	
Connect	6 Evesham Walk B97 4EX	
Emmanuel Church	The Ecumenical Centre 6 Evesham Walk B97 4HJ	
Kingfisher Reception	Kingfisher Shopping Centre Walford House B97 4HJ	
Palace Theatre	Alcester Street B98 8AE	

Redditch Borough Council	Town Hall Walker Stanz Square	
Shopmobility	Kingfisher Shopping Centre Kingfisher Walk B97 4HJ	
St Stephen's Church	Church Green B97 4DY	
The Library	15 Market Place B98 8AR	
Where Next Hub	Unit 24 Millsborough House Ipsley Street B98 7AL	
Where Next Nurseries	Wellesbourne Close Easemore Road B98 8ER	
Wilkinson	Kingfisher Shopping Centre B97 4HJ	
Batchley Support Group	21/21a Salters Lane Batchley B97 6JY	

Head of Wellbeing	9 George Walk B97 4HB	
Youth & Community Enterprise	The REDI Centre, South Street, B96 7DQ	
Nesta' Café	Kingfisher Shopping Centre B97 4HJ	
Bono Tea Room	Kingfisher Shopping Centre B97 4HJ	
British Heart Foundation	3 Market Place B98 8AA	
The Wetherspoons Pub	Unicorn Hill, B97 4QR	



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North Worcestershire **Community Safety Partnership**

County Lines Drug Activity An update on Prevention Strategies

Bev Houghton
Community Safety Manager
1st November 2023

Introduction - What is County Lines?

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to suburban areas, market towns and coastal towns (Home Office, 2018). It can happen in any part of the UK, is against the law and is a form of child abuse.

Children and young people may be criminally exploited in multiple ways. Other forms of criminal exploitation include child sexual exploitation, trafficking, street gang activity and knife crime. County lines gangs are highly organised criminal networks that use sophisticated, frequently evolving techniques to groom young people and evade capture by the police. Perpetrators use children and young people to maximise profits and distance themselves from the criminal act of physically dealing drugs (*National Crime agency, 2019*). Young people do most of the work and take the most risk.

Dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines” are used to help facilitate county lines drug deals. Phones are usually cheap, disposable and old fashioned and they are changed frequently to avoid detection by the police. Gangs use the phones to receive orders and contact young people to instruct them where to deliver drugs. This may be to a local dealer or drug user, or a dealer or drug user in another county.

Phrases that young people may use to refer to county lines include:

- ‘running a line’,
- ‘going OT/out there’
- ‘going country’
- ‘going cunch’.

County Lines - Actions and Interventions

The National Crime Agency - [County Lines - National Crime Agency](#)

Nationally, tackling county lines and the gangs responsible for high levels of violence, exploitation and abuse of vulnerable adults and children is a priority for all UK law enforcement. Collectively law enforcement has been stepping up its response, working to identify and take effective action in areas of the country with the most significant problems. To enhance the law enforcement response further, a multi-agency county lines coordination centre has been established, bringing together officers from the National Crime Agency (NCA), the police and regional organised crime units. Together, they develop the national intelligence picture, prioritise action against the most serious offenders and engage with partners across government including in the health, welfare and education spheres to tackle wider societal issues.

West Mercia Police - County Lines Teams

More locally tackling county line drug activity is led by the West Mercia Police County Lines Teams (CLT). The CLTs lead on the Pursue aspect of a Four-P Plan to **Pursue** offenders, **Prevent** victimisation, **Prepare** agencies and organisations for action and **Protect** communities and neighbourhoods. The CLTs main function is to obtain, submit, receive and review intelligence to target individual drug lines. Their aim is to target the line holders and remove them at the earliest opportunity, whilst causing maximum disruption to the gangs. The information the team receives allows action to be taken, such as executing warrants. Each known County Line Gang is mapped and recorded as an active line. The line will have its own individual plan which contains the actions and disruptions against it.

West Mercia Police - County Lines Team

Each line is allocated to an officer on the CLT to manage and the team then works together to tackle the gangs and yield results. The CLT have a weekly meeting where the lines are assessed and reviewed, and a plan is put in place to target the most high-risk gangs. When targeting these lines, the team aims to bring all associated offenders to justice, close down the county line drug gang and remove class A drugs from the streets of our communities. The team will target not only a traditional county line gangs, but they will also be involved in any significant drugs case, if necessary or be available to offer advice.

Once a line holder is arrested and the phone taken out of circulation a message will go out to all the drug users in the phone to notify them and provide them with drug support agencies for them to contact. This is a new system that is still a work in progress but is steadily improving.

Where children are involved in CL gangs then necessary referrals are made to the National Referral Mechanism, the Police Child Exploitation team and GetSafe. Fortunately, this has not been required in our area to date.

The CLT also work alongside county lines teams from other forces, particularly West Midlands Police, as many county lines in North Worcestershire originate from the West Midlands area.

Neighbourhood Crime Fighting Team (NCFT)

West Mercia Police has launched a new Neighbourhood Crime Fighting Team (NCFT) that went live on 1st October 2023. The team works alongside the CLTs and Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) and they are able to get involved and tackle local drugs issues that might not meet the threshold of the county lines team.

County Lines - Weeks of Action

Each year there are two county lines intensification weeks, which usually happen in February and in October. Police intensification weeks are national events and are co-ordinated weeks of focused activity where enforcement and prevention work is completed to address various areas of crime. During county lines intensification week there are multiple joint policing operations with West Midlands Neighbourhood Policing teams and British Transport Police.

[More than 1,600 arrests in week-long crackdown on county lines gangs | Redditch Advertiser](#)

County Lines - Protect, Prevent and Prepare Strands

The Protect, Prevent and Prepare areas of the Four-P plan are generally owned by the local Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) and the Problem-Solving Hubs who will work with partners and schools to raise awareness and provide information about county lines activity. The teams will be involved in partnership work with children and young people to deliver messages around the dangers of drugs and involvement in gangs. The CLT will also get involved in this preventative work using their expertise and experiences in the field, as required. Going forward, they will be able to attend multi-agency forums and provide presentations to give an insight into the work they do, which is often largely unpublished.

Get Safe – Worcestershire's response to Child Exploitation

Get Safe is the name for the multi-agency support and protection for children and young people at risk of Criminal Exploitation in Worcestershire.

Get Safe is a forum of professionals who share information and work together in a coordinated and focused way to tackle these challenging and ever-changing forms of harm and abuse to children.

The Worcestershire partnership includes West Mercia Police, Worcestershire Children First, a range of NHS health services, Education, Youth Justice, Housing, Probation and Early help services and our voluntary sector all working together with district councils and other support agencies.

The Get Safe Partnership is committed to tackling Child Exploitation and supporting victims and their families.

Get Safe stands for

Gangs

Sexual **E**xploitation

Trafficking

Modern Day **S**lavery

Absent or **M**issing

Forced **M**arriage

Criminal **E**xploitation

[Get Safe | Worcestershire County Council](#)

County Lines – Recent Actions and Interventions

Below is a snapshot of the activity that the North Worcestershire county lines team have completed recently. The team is made up of one Detective Sergeant and four Detective Constables. The team work hard to gather intelligence and evidence to secure charges and remand in custody people arrested for offences relating to county lines drug gangs or those involved in significant drugs cases. For example:-

An arrest of a female and the recovery of a significant amount of drugs seized with an estimated value of between £19,000 - £34,000 is currently in court.

EMZ County Line Drugs Gang: The CLT has been successfully pursuing and targeting the EMZ county line drug gang. As a result of their efforts a related vehicle was stopped and the current line holder, was arrested. The next day the line holder was charged with several serious offences including;

- Fail To Stop
- Possession Of Criminal Property – with £1200 cash seized
- Concerned In The Supply Of Heroin and Crack Cocaine
- Possession Of Offensive Weapon – following the machete found in the car

The line holder was remanded in custody by the Court, ensuring he is removed from the streets and disrupting his criminal activities.

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ENZO County Line Drug Gang - The CLT had another great result in the arrest and Remand in Custody of the Enzo county line holder. He was charged with being Concerned In The Supply of Heroin, Concerned In The Supply of Crack and Concerned In The Supply of Cannabis.

The Neighbourhood Crime Fighting Team (NCFT) stop checked two males in Kidderminster - One male arrested for possession of an offensive weapon – Charged.

Second male arrested for Possession with Intent to Supply (PWITS) – Class A 10 wraps – Released Under Investigation (RUI)

The NCFT arrested male with an outstanding warrant at an address in Redditch. He was linked to a local county line gang and the arrest was because of a scheduled check on a cuckooing address. This evidences the importance of these follow up visits to high-risk addresses and for thorough safety checks to be completed. The arrest resulted in a significant disruption of one of the main CL lines in the area and sends out a clear message to the community that people who take over the addresses of vulnerable people to deal drugs, are being identified and dealt with.

Another arrest of a female who was stop searched in an area of Redditch. The female was linked to a Redditch county line and was charged with Possession of Class A. 5 x Wraps of Crack Cocaine £50.00 and 1 x wrap Heroin £10.00 – RUI and another great disruption to an active county line.

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The NCFT arrested a male for Possession with intent to supply (PWITS) and Theft from motor vehicle (TFMV) and he was charged with TFMV. The male is a known vehicle crime offender resulting in a good outcome for reducing both drug and vehicle crime.

An arrest by SNT officers after they observed two males in a VW Scirocco counting cash in an area of Redditch. When approached the offenders rammed the Police vehicle and a member of the public's vehicle and made off on foot. The driver was arrested for Possession with intent to supply (PWITS), Dangerous Driving, Fail to Stop and Driving Under the influence drugs. The males are potentially linked to county line drug gang activity as the vehicle was searched and approximately £3,000 Class A drugs Heroin and Crack were recovered.

A stop and search of suspect was conducted after a drug deal in Black Lexus had been observed – a negative result but linked to county lines activity

Cuckooing address checks continue, working in partnership with the local Redditch Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT)

Cross border operations are regularly carried out with Redditch SNTs, South Birmingham SNTs and British Transport Police (BTP) officers.

Press releases have been sent out for the majority of the above, for example :-

[Redditch man charged with County Lines drugs offence | Redditch Advertiser](#)

County Lines - If you have a concern

If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999. If you're worried about a child but they are not in immediate danger, you should always share your concerns. You can:-

- Contact the police.
- Contact Worcestershire Children First, local child protection services. Their contact details are : -
Family Front Door
Tel: 01905 822 666
Mon – Thurs 9.00am to 5.00pm and Fri 9.00am to 4.30pm
Out of Hours Assistance – Tel: 01905 768 020
- Contact the NSPCC Helpline on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000) or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk. Trained professionals will talk through your concerns with you and give you expert advice.

When a child at risk of county lines is identified The local authority of the area the child comes from is responsible for the child's welfare, but it is also good practice for agencies to contact the local authority in the area where the child is found. They may need to be a part of the multi-agency response and there may be other children or vulnerable adults at risk.

For more information - [What Is County Lines? | The Children's Society \(childrensociety.org.uk\)](https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-is-county-lines/)