

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.
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- 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 NWCSPP, 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 NWCSPP 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