

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 27 February 2014

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WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Councillor Sohail Munawar – Commissioner for Social and Economic Inclusion

PART I **CONSIDERATION AND COMMENT**

THE WORK OF THE SAFER SLOUGH PARTNERSHIP (SSP)

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report gives an overview of the crime and disorder issues in Slough and the work of the local Community Safety Partnership in tackling those issues. We seek Member views on this work.

2. **Recommendation**

The Panel is requested to discuss the information provided and consider the effectiveness of the programmes of work in place to tackle SSP priorities.

3. **Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

- Health and Wellbeing – The SSP contributes to Health and Wellbeing through the provision of high quality drug and alcohol services and promoting positive behaviour change.
- Safer Communities – The SSP contributes to Safer Communities through working to ensure the borough is a safe place to live, visit, work and play; increasing confidence in reporting of crime and anti-social behaviour; and reducing crime, its fear and perception. The work of the SSP in supporting these priorities is set out in the report.

4. **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

The JSNA highlights crime and disorder, domestic abuse and alcohol and drugs misuse as priorities.

5. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications of proposed action.

(b) **Risk Management**

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	None	None
Property	None	None
Human Rights	None	None
Health and Safety	None	None
Employment Issues	None	None
Equalities Issues	None	None
Community Support	None	None
Communications	None	None
Community Safety	None	None
Financial	None	None
Timetable for delivery	None	None
Project Capacity	None	None
Other	None	None

(c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no human rights or other legal implications arising from this report.

(d) **Equalities Impact Assessment**

Feedback and close monitoring of data is analysed according to Slough Borough Council equalities monitoring categories, thereby enabling any differential impact on particular groups to be identified. Those who are from minority ethnic groups, those with learning and physical disabilities and those with mental health problems are all at a disproportionately greater risk of becoming victims of anti-social behaviour.

6. **Supporting Information**

6.1 **Background**

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced the requirement for local authorities, Police and other key agencies to work together to tackle crime and disorder via Community Safety Partnerships. The Safer Slough Partnership (SSP) is Slough's Community Safety Partnership.

6.2 **Governance and Membership**

The SSP is a Partnership Delivery Group (PDG) which reports to the Slough Wellbeing Board and its work feeds into the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy. Meetings take place quarterly and members include Slough Borough Council (including an elected member), Thames Valley Police, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue, East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Thames Valley Probation. The Police and Crime Commissioner is due to attend a meeting this year and is represented by a member of his office at all meetings. The following

members are co-operating bodies who support delivery: Slough Business Community Partnership, Slough Council for Voluntary Services, and Registered Social Landlords. There is also a representative of the Berkshire Bench (magistrates) who is invited to support the work of members.

6.3 Aims and objectives

The SSP seeks to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime. It also seeks to reduce the harm that drugs cause to individuals, families and the wider community and create a safe place and cleaner environment for all those who live, work, visit and invest in Slough.

6.4 Funding

Funding was received from the Police and Crime Commissioner for 2013/14 as follows:

- Community Safety Partnership: £107,827
- Drugs Intervention Project: £215,165
- Youth Offending Team: £48,627
- Total: £371,619

6.5 Challenges

Continued investment and focus on crime reduction in Slough has reduced crime of real concern to our communities significantly. This has been achieved despite the on-going challenges faced in Slough, which include:

- A local transient population, which makes it difficult for partners to bring about long term changes in crime and ASB. It also makes it difficult to detect crime or to identify regular offenders.
- There are high levels of new arrivals and asylum seekers in Slough, many of whom are at risk of exploitation.
- Population density and houses of multiple occupation (HMOs): Slough has one of the highest levels of population density and over-crowded housing in England and Wales, coupled with one of the largest population increases and widening diversity; this can act as an aggravating factor with regards to crime, including burglary and violence as well as anti-social behaviour.
- Population age: Slough has a younger population when compared to other areas. As the surge of young people approaching secondary school age draws near, there is a potential for increasing demand made upon policing and community safety.

6.6 Current SSP priorities

Priorities are determined based on the outcomes of the Strategic Assessment. The Strategic Assessment is an annual report which identifies current and future opportunities and risks relating to crime, anti-social behaviour, drug misuse and behaviour affecting the environment in Slough. It identifies priorities, strategic actions and targets that will be monitored and supported by the SSP. Specific action plans are drawn up to ensure multi-agency delivery at an operational level. The Strategic Assessment is currently being updated for 2014/15 in order to review priorities. It is unlikely that priorities from this year will be dropped, although emerging priorities may be added.

In order to effectively reduce harm in 2013/14 the SSP used the Strategic Assessment to identify the following priorities:

- P1. Reduce violent crime.** Particular effort will be made to reduce
- Youth Gang-related violence
 - Domestic Abuse
- P2. Acquisitive Crime.** Particular effort will be made to reduce:
- Burglary
 - Robbery
- P3. Anti-Social Behaviour.** Particular effort will be made to reduce:
- Street Prostitution
 - Repeat victimisation

6.6.1 Targets

To support the above priorities, the SSP agreed the following local targets for 2013/14:

- Reducing property crime – **2%** reduction in burglary and increase the detection rate to **18%**
- Reducing robbery of personal property – **2%** reduction and increase the detection rate
- Reducing violent crime – **2%** reduction in violent crime and increase the detection rate to **45%**

In addition to the specific targets above, further targets were agreed with the Police and Crime Commissioner including:

- Increase in numbers accessing Domestic Abuse Services (victims and perpetrators)
- Increase in non-police referrals to the Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Increase in number of gating projects in crime and ASB hotspots
- Increase in number of residents engaged with via Thames Valley Alert and council-led surveys

6.6.2 The overall crime picture in Slough

All crime has reduced by 18% when comparing April-December 2011 and April-December 2013. This is part of a long-term trend: crime has fallen in Slough by 38% between April 2003 and March 2013. For a number of years (2003 – 2010) Slough had the highest levels of crime in the Thames Valley. Recent initiatives from the SSP have altered this and now Oxford and Reading have higher levels.

For performance statistics please see Appendix A.

6.6.3 The work of the SSP towards its targets

The SSP has worked hard to achieve these results, focussing on prevention and intelligence-led work to create an environment of sustainable crime reduction, and working with colleagues in neighbouring boroughs to tackle cross border crime. Key initiatives are in place to reduce violent crime and this includes the provision of new services around domestic abuse and targeted work against gangs. Implementation of a new CCTV system and an anti-burglary campaign is currently reducing acquisitive crime. The continuation of the initiatives put in place to address street prostitution and repeat victimisation and intensive work with the most troubled families in the town are reducing levels of anti-social behaviour. The Drugs and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) services have also recently been re-commissioned, helping to engage with substance misusers who contribute to levels of crime across the borough to fund their addiction.

Community Safety funding is carefully targeted and enables prevention, support and engagement work to take place in order to maintain the reduction in crime that Slough has experienced over recent years. Without such funding, much of this work would not have taken place, resulting in rising crime levels not just in Slough, but across neighbouring localities.

Work has focussed on the SSP's key priorities and includes the following:

- Domestic abuse audit (covered in the Domestic Abuse report)
- Alleygating projects
- Street Angels support worker
- Child Sexual Abuse coordinator

(Please see Appendix B for further information)

6.7 Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)

6.7.1 The Home Office definition of ASB is “any aggressive, intimidating or destructive activity that damages or destroys another person's quality of life”. This is a deliberately broad definition as antisocial behaviour is subjective and may vary from person to person and community to community, and can include noisy neighbours, littering, graffiti, ASB in parks, street drinking, dog fouling and prostitution. The Community Safety team work very closely with the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team and other partner to tackle ASB. Community Safety is a cross cutting agenda and tackling ASB requires a joined up and holistic approach. ASB policies and procedures are due to be reviewed imminently in order to ensure that best practice is achieved across the partnership.

6.7.2 ASB surveys are conducted regularly with residents in the borough. The results of these indicate that the issues of most concern to residents are environmental issues, including flytipping and littering (Baylis & Stoke, Britwell, Central, Chalvey, Cippenham Green and Wexham Lea) and people being drunk or rowdy in public places (Britwell, Chalvey and Farnham). People congregating and intimidating others was also highlighted as a concern across the borough.

6.7.3 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced Anti-social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and Parenting Orders, which were reinforced by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Criminal Justice Act 2001. There is now the Anti-

Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Bill which underwent its last full debate in the House of Commons at the beginning of February 2014; the result was that, once the final element, Clause 151 which defines a miscarriage of justice for the purposes of compensation, is resolved, the Bill will be given Royal Assent (probably within three months) at which time it will become law. However enactment of the new law is likely to be delayed until Autumn 2014.

6.7.4 Other legislation used to tackle 'enviro' ASB such as dog fouling, noise nuisance and fly tipping includes the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Housing Act 1996 and the Noise Act 1996.

6.7.5 The SSP has invested in campaigns to encourage reporting of crime and ASB and have maintained a 24-hour ASB hotline, managed by the CCTV Team, to take calls at any time of day or night. This hotline has been publicised in the Citizen, local papers, and via leaflets and wallet-sized cards, distributed at events and door-knocking exercises. Residents can also contact us via the Slough Borough Council website and email.

For more detailed information on partnership working and projects, and how the SSP is addressing these concerns, please see 'Community Safety in Slough' in [Appendix B](#).

6.8 [Prostitution](#)

6.8.1 Reducing street prostitution is an SSP priority. Due to changes in legislation to treat prostitutes as victims rather than perpetrators, Eastern European street prostitutes began coming to Slough and now there are two distinct groups: British-born street workers who tend to be drug-users; and the Eastern European street workers who are not usually drug-users and work here to send money to their families.

6.8.2 There is a monthly street prostitution case review meeting to enforce legislation and support the vulnerable. This has led to a range of actions including arrest operations against kerb crawlers, the issuing of removal letters by the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) to Eastern European sex workers, and support offered including access to drug treatment, safe housing, assistance with applying for benefits, and counselling and support for those who are eligible.

6.8.3 There has been a £35k investment by the DAAT for a female outreach worker post to address the needs of drug dependent street sex workers. The project has been very successful and to date 85% of British street workers have engaged with local drug treatment services, addressed their drug related needs, entered employment, training or education and have therefore moved away from street sex working.

Please see [Appendix C](#) for the action plan covering current activity.

6.9 [Conclusion](#)

The SSP is performing well against its targets. The effective use of intelligence and targeted work has enabled resources to be directed in an effective manner resulting in a 38% reduction in the annual level of reported crime since April 2003. Its future performance depends on continued partnership working and focussing on joint priorities across our organisations, with strong leadership from Slough Borough Council.

7. **Appendices attached**

A - SSP Performance table

B - Community Safety in Slough (for case studies)

C - Prostitution action plan

8. **Background Papers**

None.