

## SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** Council

**DATE:** 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017

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**WARD(S):** All

### PART I FOR ENDORSEMENT

#### PROGRESS UPDATE ON COUNCIL MOTION OF 26<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2016 - SAFER SLOUGH PARTNERSHIP

##### 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the work undertaken by the Neighbourhoods and Community Services (NCS) Scrutiny Panel on the matter referred to it from the July 2016 Council meeting.

##### 2. Recommendation

The Council is requested to resolve that the work reported by the Safer Slough Partnership to the NCS Scrutiny Panel on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017 be endorsed as a suitable response to the Council motion of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

##### 3 The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

###### 3a Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) Priorities

The focus of the original motion on public safety and the reduction of fear in the local population support the following priorities:

- Protecting vulnerable children
- Improving mental health and wellbeing

###### 3b Five Year Plan Outcomes

The motion also relates to the following outcome:

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit.

##### 4 Other Implications

###### (a) Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

###### (b) Risk Management

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal or Human Rights Act implications relating to the content of this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

Feedback and close monitoring of data would be analysed according to SBC equalities monitoring categories, thereby enabling any differential impact on particular groups to be identified.

## 5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 At its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016, Council passed a motion on sex crime in Slough. The exact wording of the motion was as follows:

*“This Council resolves to work with Thames Valley Police through the Safer Slough Partnership to prioritise its response to counter the increase in serious sex crimes around the town and to reduce the fear of sexual offences across the Borough.”*

- 5.2 This motion was passed unanimously without amendment. Given the need to monitor the progress made on this matter, it was referred to the NCS Scrutiny Panel for a future discussion. The date that was set for this agenda item was 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017, the annual Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel.
- 5.3 This meeting heard that the Safer Slough Partnership (SSP) was increasing the amount of work it was undertaking on sexual violence. However, this was not done under a separate, discrete focus but was rather under a range of different focuses which SSP had identified (e.g. domestic violence, crime prevention). It had also commissioned the Parks and Open Spaces Task & Finish Group to examine how public areas could be made safer for local residents (with specific reference to sexual violence in light of recent incidents) which was in the process of finalising its recommendations. The full structure of this set up was outlined in the agenda papers for the NCS Scrutiny Panel’s meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017.
- 5.4 However, the NCS Scrutiny Panel had felt that a specific focus explicitly targeted at sexual violence would be preferable. As a result, the NCS Scrutiny Panel recommended that such a focus be created and asked for SSP to provide an update on its work to the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017.
- 5.5 The meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017 took this update, which is attached as Appendix A. The NCS Scrutiny Panel particularly noted the completed work of the Parks and Open Spaces Task & Finish Group. Whilst it was felt that the work on sexual violence could be communicated more clearly, its breadth and focus was in line with the Council’s request. As well as focusing on crimes against the person, SSP was committed to measures to provide long-term mitigation on the issue (e.g. work in schools). It was noted that not only were the number of sexual offences in decline in Slough, but that this level of decline exceeded national averages.
- 5.6 The NCS Scrutiny Panel also recognised the sensitive nature of the area concerned. As a result, it acknowledged that direct communications on the matter could prove counter productive; even positive news on the issue could risk reintroducing the reputation created by previous high profile cases into the public discussion. As a result, it noted the

initiatives such as the 'Love Parks' campaign aimed at changing perceptions over time through positive messages.

- 5.7 Given this, the NCS Scrutiny Panel approved of the work being done by SSP by tackling sexual violence through work across a series of themes rather than through the creation of one specific, nominated focus. To ensure that this progress is being maintained, the NCS Scrutiny Panel will be taking an agenda item on the matter at its first meeting of the 2018 – 19 Municipal Year.

## 6 **Comments of Other Committees**

The comments of the NCS Scrutiny Panel at its meetings on 2<sup>nd</sup> March and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017 are outlined in section 5 of this report.

## 7 **Conclusion**

The Council is requested to note the progress made by SSP outlined in Appendix A and the discussions of the NCS Scrutiny Panel.

## 8 **Appendices**

'A' - Progress Update on work by the Safer Slough Partnership

## 9 **Background Papers**

None.