

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Hampshire 2050, Corporate Services and Resources Select Committee
Date:	30 November 2023
Title:	Hampshire Community Safety Strategy Group
Report From:	Director of Adults' Health and Care

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work of the Hampshire Community Safety Strategy Group during 2023.

Recommendation

2. That the Select Committee notes the progress on the work of the Hampshire Community Safety Strategy Group (HCSSG), including the role in providing oversight and assurance of collaborative arrangements at the Hampshire county-level to address community safety priorities.

Executive Summary

3. This report provides an update on progress of the work of the Hampshire Community Safety Strategy Group in ensuring effective collaborative arrangements at the county level to address strategic community safety priorities.

Contextual information

4. The role of the Hampshire Community Safety Strategy Group (HCSSG) is to prepare a Community Safety Agreement based on a strategic assessment for the area which gathers evidence to inform strategic priorities relating to current and emerging risks and vulnerabilities. The HCSSG oversees county-level collaborative arrangements for addressing these priorities and how the responsible authorities under community safety legislation might otherwise work together to reduce crime and disorder or combat substance misuse.
5. The HCSSG is chaired by the Director of Adults' Health and Care and meets quarterly. It is well attended by wide range of senior representatives from community safety partner agencies.

Hampshire Strategic Assessment for Community Safety and Hampshire Community Safety Agreement.

6. The HCSSG continues to focus on the four strategic priorities agreed in December 2021:
 - Exploitation, serious violence and drug related harm through organised crime.
 - Intimidation, violence and abuse of women and girls
 - Hate related offences and violent extremism
 - Promoting community wellbeing and cohesion
7. Throughout 2023, the Group has continued to receive assurance reports from sponsors on the partnership arrangements supporting these priorities and has looked collectively at the emerging and common risks and opportunities for enhanced collaboration.

Priority 1: Exploitation, serious violence and drug related harm through organised crime

8. There are three main areas of strategic partnership activity which work in combination to address this priority:
 - The Violence reduction unit
 - The Combatting Drugs Partnership
 - The Serious and Organised Crime Partnership

There are well established partnerships across Hampshire which support this priority including the Local Safeguarding Boards for Adults and Children (see separate reports).

Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

9. The Serious Violence Duty commenced on 31st January 2023, under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. One of its main objectives is to address high levels of knife crime across the country. The duty applies to the County Council and other local authorities, the Police, Youth Offending Teams, the Integrated Care Board, Probation Service and the Fire and Rescue Service. The Police and Crime Commissioner receives funding to work with responsible partners to conduct a strategic assessment and response plan for all the partners to support. There is strong partnership governance around this element. A VRU Director for Hampshire, Portsmouth Southampton and the Isle of Wight has been appointed and is co-ordinated a partnership-led “public health” approach to tackling serious violence.
10. In 2023 this work has included the co-production of a needs assessment” and the development of a tactical response arrangements for addressing local areas of concern and for working with priority offenders. The more challenging aspect is in the understanding of vulnerability to becoming involved in, or a victim of, serious violence, and in developing effective

preventative strategies. This involves continued close co-ordination with the work of the Willow Team and Youth Offending Team in Children's Services and is supported by a "trauma informed practice" concordat between all partners. The common definition of serious violence established across Hampshire and the isle of Wight includes possession of weapons, violence with injury, robbery of personal property, robbery of business property, violent disorder and riot and homicide. Police data identifies possession as the single biggest offence despite its under reporting and under-recording.

Hampshire Combating Drugs Partnership

11. The Hampshire Combating Drugs Partnership, chaired by the Director of Public Health works closely with pan Hampshire arrangements chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner. It has prepared a needs assessment and response plan covering the three pillars of the national drug strategy below. It also recognises the drivers and harm of alcohol abuse in the development of its strategy:

Achieving a generational shift in demand for drugs:

- commissioning preventative work in schools
- early intervention and signposting for children, young people and families most at risk of substance misuse (identifying hidden harm)
- targeted interventions preventing the escalation of use and harm
- maximise opportunities for early intervention into treatment eg the expansion of drug testing on arrest

Breaking drug supply chains

- disruption of county lines
- protecting vulnerable adults from cuckooing
- increase the sharing of community intelligence (CPI)
- safeguarding those vulnerable (both adults and young people) to drug related harm.
- early warning system for drug related overdoses: using opportunities to neutralise unstable supply
- coordinated communications

World class treatment services

- increase access especially to alcohol treatment
- work across the system to refer at the earliest opportunity
- ensure robust pathways of care - criminal justice (including prison), mental health, domestic abuse services, social care, acute hospital settings and homelessness services
- address co-occurring conditions
- integrate physical and mental health care with substance misuse services
- education, training and employment opportunities
- build partnerships with local housing services

Serious and Organised Crime Partnership

12. The Serious and Organised Crime Partnership led by Hampshire Constabulary complements the work of these partnerships and connects with regional and national efforts to disrupt the business model of organised crime and to seize the proceeds. Criminal groups and networks have become increasingly agile and sophisticated across an increasing range of criminal activity, and in the use of exploitative tactics, including through digital channels. The local collaboration involves intelligence gathering, analysis and sharing between partners, and the recent establishment of dedicated county lines police teams working closely with Children's Services and other partners.

Priority 2: Intimidation and violence against women and girls

13. The **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Task Group**, established by the Police and Crime Commissioner established in 2022, has been co-ordinating work to complete the problem profile based on calls for evidence and data analysis, and to address priorities of building confidence in reporting, expediting the legal process, managing offenders and increasing safety in the night-time economy and at event venues. The priorities also extend into established areas of partnership working including domestic abuse (see 14 and 15 below). The objectives also include addressing underlying attitudes and societal norms, which require longer term approaches and challenges to policies and practices in a range of settings including education and workplaces.
14. During 2023, progress through these partnership arrangements, supported by additional funding and successful partnership funding bids to the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, has enabled several key activities to be progressed:
 - the launch of a new Stalking Advocacy and Support Service in July and the securing of additional funding for the development of psychologist-led stalking interventions delivered as part of Stalking Protection Orders, Community Orders, licence conditions on release from custody and voluntary Police referrals in the event of "no further action" cases.
 - the expansion of "Project Foundation" to all Police District Priority Crime Teams to support the identification and risk management of repeat and serial perpetrators of physical and sexual violence in the community. The project's focus is on perpetrators whose abuse has occurred in a family setting where children are present and where police have not been able to bring a charge. It also seeks to identify any new relationships where someone could be at risk and put a plan in place to protect them.
 - projects aimed at training in managing the night-time economy, addressing antisocial behaviour and intimidation towards women and girls, and increasing confidence to report.

- securing Rape Support Testing services for the period 2023-25, and the commissioning of an additional Frankie Worker and sexual crime therapeutic services across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The Frankie Worker Service provides one-to-one therapeutic counselling and play therapy support to children and young people aged 0–18 years who are victims of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or female genital mutilation with a high level of unmet and complex need or in need of protection. The all-age Sexual Crime Therapeutic Provision offers a telephone helpline, therapeutic support and activities to help adults, children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse, assault, rape or violence at any time in their lives.
 - the commissioning of an all-age Victim Care Hub to provide emotional and practical support to victims of crime and those impacted by crime, regardless of whether they have reported to the police or how long ago it occurred. This is expected to become operational in 4 locations within Hampshire and Isle of Wight from 1 February 2024.
15. Hampshire has a strong **Domestic Abuse Partnership** led by the Director of Public Health. The strategic needs assessment and accommodation assessment has been completed and the strategy for 2023-25 has been published with the following priorities:
- Prevention: providing resources and education to prevent domestic abuse through early intervention.
 - Professional care: supporting victims and survivors.
 - Pursuing those who cause harm: actively identifying and engaging perpetrators.
 - Partnership: working together as one community.
16. An additional 10-25s Needs Assessment includes further recommendations for service enhancements and collaboration. There is collaboration across the wider Hampshire and Isle of Wight area and with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) on the Victim/Survivor Voice programme and on learning from domestic homicide reviews (DHRs). The Integrated Care Board will also be considering how VAWG can be reflected in the design of new Women's Health Hubs.
17. Given the VAWG priority impacts on the work of many agencies and relates to several existing partnership arrangements, the County Strategy Group has been bringing focus to leadership and co-ordination around the more cross-cutting elements with a particular focus on some of the preventative elements:
- a) empowering more women and girls to voice their experiences of VAWG
 - b) capturing more evidence and building a comprehensive picture of the range of life experiences, including what is typical
 - c) supporting schools and reducing the delivery burden on teachers to handle expectations and requests around the various safety agendas including serious violence/ VAWG/ domestic abuse and PREVENT and enabling

these to be built into established frameworks for social and behavioural learning and development.

- d) Developing and extending resources for colleges, universities and workplaces to address prejudicial culture
- e) promoting the safe and responsible use of digital channels

Priority 3: Hate related offences and violent extremism.

- 18. The HCSSG has received reports from the Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board and assurance around the multi-agency arrangements. This work is detailed in a separate report to Cabinet.
- 19. PREVENT is concerned with pre-criminal justice interventions to prevent radicalisation and the risk of undertaking or supporting acts of violent extremism. A new Hampshire Constabulary Hate Crime lead is joining the HCSSG and PREVENT Board to ensure a consistent approach to identifying risk, awareness and reporting.

Priority 4: Promoting community wellbeing and cohesion.

- 20. Whilst the first 3 priorities focus on aspects of harm, this priority is concerned with opportunities to support safer communities through cohesion and mutual support across Hampshire's communities. It provides a helpful opportunity to hear more perspectives from across the voluntary, community and faith sector members of the HCSSG and to consider how community and voluntary organisations can work together better with public sector partners to identify risks and work together on solutions. A local sector review conducted in Autumn 2022 identified continued increases in demand for voluntary sector services across Hampshire with increased competition for volunteers and funds with particular pressures in mental health services.
- 21. The HCSSG has also focused on a specific aspect of this priority led by the Probation Service to support the use of unpaid work by offenders in the community. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 requires the service to consult with local partners on arrangements for unpaid work as an alternative to a custodial sentence, providing visible punitive and rehabilitative reparation to the community. The Court can sentence an individual to an Unpaid Work (UPW) requirement of between 40 and 300 hours. It is also intended to provide opportunities for practical and social skills development, pride in achievement (sometimes leading to continued volunteering) and engagement in education training and employment. The Probation Service has engaged Hampshire partners and surveyed over 2000 voluntary and community organisations to align this resource with suitable, added-value projects in the community.
- 22. The Probation Service is also working with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to consider the approach to the Government's Immediate Justice concept in the Cross Government Action Plan on Anti-Social Behaviour published in March 2023. *“Under the new Immediate Justice scheme, those found committing anti-social behaviour will be made to repair the damage they inflicted on victims and communities, with an ambition*

for them to start work as soon as 48 hours after their offence so victims know anti-social behaviour is treated seriously and with urgency.” Currently 10 Pilots are taking places across England with a view to roll out in April 2024.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

23. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council’s climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
24. This is an annual report providing an update on the work of the Hampshire Community Safety Strategy Group, so therefore no Climate Change assessment has been undertaken.

Conclusion

25. This report demonstrates continued progress in the work of the Hampshire Community Safety Strategy Group in providing assurance around effective collaborative arrangements to address the strategic priorities, and in supporting effective links between the respective partnerships to promote whole systems working and efficient use of resources.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

Document Location

Hampshire Community Safety Strategic
Assessment and Hampshire Community
Safety Agreement

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The assurance process around effective collaboration to address strategic community safety priorities supports compliance with the Public Sector Equality duty. Specific equalities impacts are considered in relation to the individual programmes of activity within the strategic priorities.