

## Minutes of the meeting of the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee held in Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Monday 13 February 2023 at 9.15 am

**Committee members present in person and voting:** Councillors: Barry Durkin, Jim Kenyon, Jonathan Lester (Chairperson) and David Summers

**Committee members participating via remote attendance:** Councillors: Felicity Norman

[Note: Committee members participating via remote attendance, i.e. through video conferencing facilities, may not vote on any decisions taken.]

### Others in attendance:

M Averill	Interim Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste	Herefordshire Council
J Barnes	Chief Transformation and Delivery Officer	Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care System (ICS)
B Baugh	Democratic Services Officer	Herefordshire Council
J Campion	Police and Crime Commissioner	West Mercia Police
J Coleman	Democratic Services Manager	Herefordshire Council
R Cook	Corporate Director - Economy and Environment	Herefordshire Council
A Davidson	Assistant Director Prevention	Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue
Councillor C Davies	Ward Member for Bromyard West	Herefordshire Council
Councillor G Davies	Cabinet Member - Commissioning, Procurement and Assets	Herefordshire Council
A Deans	Interim Programme Director – Major Contracts	Herefordshire Council
D Freeman	Corporate Director - Children and Young People	Herefordshire Council
H Hall	Corporate Director Community Wellbeing	Herefordshire Council
Councillor J Harrington	Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport	Herefordshire Council
P Middlebrough	Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner	West Mercia Police
A Rees-Glinos	Democratic Services Support Officer	Herefordshire Council
H Speight	Higher Partnership Analyst	West Mercia Police
Councillor D Toynbee	Cabinet Member – Children and Families	Herefordshire Council
A Turton	Partnership Officer	Herefordshire Council
Councillor A Tyler	Cabinet Member - Housing, Regulatory Services and Community	Herefordshire Council
Superintendent H Wain	Local Policing Commander	West Mercia Police

### 17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Paul Andrews, Tracey Bowes, Toni Fagan and Kath Hey.

## **18. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor David Summers was present in the meeting room as the substitute for Councillor Tracy Bowes. Councillor Felicity Norman participated via remote attendance on behalf of Councillor Toni Fagan.

## **19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In relation to the item 'Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership' item, Councillor Barry Durkin advised the committee that he was the Vice-Chairman of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel.

During the item 'The Public Realm Services Future Operating Model', Councillor Jim Kenyon advised the committee that he had a non-pecuniary interest due to an association a sub-contractor.

## **20. MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting were received.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairperson.**

## **21. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Pages 9 - 12)**

Questions received and responses given are attached as Appendix 1 to the minutes.

## **22. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

No questions had been received from councillors.

## **23. HEREFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The purpose of this item was to undertake crime and disorder scrutiny function in relation to Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

The key participants were introduced and the Cabinet Member - Housing, Regulatory Services and Community (and Chairperson of the CSP Board) gave an introductory presentation covering: the role and membership of the CSP; the CSP strategy, 'Our Plan to Keep You Safer' (2021-2024), which included the strategic priorities 'To prevent Violence Against Women and Girls' and 'To reduce the harm from Domestic Abuse'; the delivery of the strategy and funding arrangements; the structure of groups and sub-groups; data in relation to the strategic priorities; data on all crime trends and for comparative police force areas; positives and challenges in recent years; and an acknowledgement to all the partners, agencies and volunteers involved for their efforts.

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) made opening comments about: CSPs predated PCCs; the value of scrutiny activity to check the effectiveness of the CSP; current PCC initiatives; the need to address behaviours and to support communities to be safe and resilient to stop crime happening in the first place; and the need to be resolute in the commitment to the strategic priorities.

The principal topics of the debate included:

1. The purpose of the 'Channel Panel', as part of the Prevent strategy, to support individuals at risk of radicalisation.
2. The impact of healthy relationships education and initiatives in schools and how to evidence outcomes over the next twelve months, including comparative data from other CSPs and feedback from parents / guardians.
3. The issue of elder abuse in the county.
4. The influence of social networking and other media platforms in shaping relationships and behaviours.
5. Challenges associated with funding to deliver programmes in schools were outlined but it was acknowledged that there were other opportunities to promote key messages across broader society.
6. The PCC questioned whether the council was assured that it was deploying resources effectively to address the strategic priorities.
7. The work being undertaken by the CSP with education professionals and practitioners to raise awareness about the damage caused by emotional abuse and controlling behaviours in relationships. Reference was also made to the Drive campaign which aimed to deter perpetrator behaviour.
8. The need to promote sources of help and support to enable people to recognise and respond appropriately to all forms of abuse. The PCC emphasised that help and support was available, whether or not victims wished to report incidents to the police. It was acknowledged that messages had to be communicated in ways that were relevant to young people and the voices of young people should be heard.
9. The work of the police in terms of child exploitation and online protection.
10. The training undertaken by West Mercia Police and Fire and Rescue Service personnel on domestic abuse matters.
11. In response to a comment about improving pastoral support in educational settings, the Corporate Director – Children and Young People advised that the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee had considered an item on 'Children and Young Peoples Mental Health' which included a review of schools' pastoral support ([minute 31 of 2020/21 refers](#)). Later in the meeting, a committee member suggested that this topic should be revisited by that scrutiny committee.
12. Two strategic priorities had been identified but the CSP was responsible for, and had sub-groups undertaking activity on, a range of other issues. The Cabinet Member - Housing, Regulatory Services commented on the challenge for the CSP Board to manage its meeting time as effectively as possible.
13. The Chairperson noted that 'A Strategic Assessment will be undertaken every three years, while the HCSP Strategy will be reviewed annually by the HCSP Board to evaluate progress and ensure that the strategy adapts to changing needs.' (agenda page 58) and invited participants to identify what was working well and what was not working well as a partnership. In response:
  - The PCC commented on the need to respond and adapt to change, including the requirements and opportunities presented by the Serious Violence Duty.

- The Assistant Director Prevention noted on the value of collaborative working but considered that there was more work to be undertaken on data sharing.
- The Higher Partnership Analyst said that there was a need to understand what other relevant data was held by the partners and to ensure that there was robust evaluation of the initiatives being undertaken.
- The Cabinet Member - Housing, Regulatory Services commented on the quality of the data from police but this could not be shared with communities. A concern was expressed about the limited resources available to the Partnership Team to support the safeguarding boards and partnerships.
- The Local Policing Commander commented on the importance of considering measures of effectiveness before delivering any sort of initiative.
- The PCC also commented on the value of sharing needs assessments and other drivers for organisational activity.

The Chairperson invited the partners to consider whether they were doing enough to promote the work of the CSP.

14. Further to point 10 above, further information was provided about the training of Fire and Rescue Service personnel and the roles of signposting and safeguarding officers and prevention champions.
15. The use and synchronisation of different communication channels was explored further, including the involvement of Talk Community.
16. The potential of Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology to detect and deter crime.
17. The function of Operation SNAP in handling video and photographic evidence from members of the public in relation to cycling and driving offences.
18. The PCC encouraged ward councillors to engage with local policing teams to identify opportunities to enhance visibility and accessibility.
19. The expansion of the Safer Streets Programme into other areas of Herefordshire.
20. The Corporate Director Community Wellbeing said that further consideration would be given to the contribution of the Talk Community hubs to the CSP strategic priorities. The Cabinet Member - Housing, Regulatory Services and Community added that capital funding had been allocated to enhance the hubs.
21. The Chief Transformation and Delivery Officer advised that the ICS intended to attend all CSP Board meetings but there had been some meeting clashes.
22. The potential to support community groups and improve facilities in order to enhance community resilience.
23. There was a discussion about the outreach to parish councils, particularly given the comment in Appendix A to the report that 'Resources are not available to complete Partnership surveys and information gathering to gain the views of Herefordshire people on how safe they feel and what concerns them the most' (agenda page 36). The Assistant PCC noted that some parish councils did not appear to be aware of the CSP, indicating a need to improve dialogue.

With input from the Democratic Services Manager and other attendees, the committee discussed potential recommendations to the Community Safety Partnership and agreed the following resolution.

**Resolved:**

**That the following recommendations be submitted to the Community Safety Partnership:**

- a) **Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to explore the current role of pastoral care within educational settings in enabling young people / their peers to recognise, record and report / refer abuse in all of its forms.**
- b) **CSP to utilise wider synchronization of social media and research commonly used channels used by differing cohorts of society to promote key messaging, sources of help and support.**
- c) **CSP to approach 'Talk Community' with a view to sharing data and to strengthen their network for communicating sources of support and help.**
- d) **CSP to respond to the committee request to broaden and strengthen its reach within the community, and particularly outreach to parish councils.**
- e) **CSP to explore how the Safer Streets funding can be channelled as effectively as possible in the county's rural areas.**
- f) **CSP to explore how we cultivate / new funding sources to further the priorities of the CSP.**

**In addition to the recommendations above, the committee requested that the following actions be undertaken:**

1. **CSP to present the evidence gathered on the healthy relationships education and its measurable impact on reducing domestic abuse / peer-on-peer / violence against women and girls in younger people.**
2. **CSP to present the evidence of the 'Drive Campaign' in relation to prevention of controlling and coercive behaviours / mental abuse related crimes.**
3. **CSP to explain how its priorities are changing as a result on new funding and interventions such as the serious violence duty and resulting strategy.**
4. **CSP to explain where improvements to sharing of data is enabling clearer understanding of trends and measures and how they influence operational practice.**
5. **CSP to explore innovative / smarter ways of working in relation to funding streams being deployed.**

[Note: There was a short adjournment before the next item.]

## **24. THE PUBLIC REALM SERVICES FUTURE OPERATING MODEL**

Further to [minute 8](#) of the meeting held on 14 October 2022, the purpose of this item was to provide the committee with the outcome of a midpoint review of the council's public realm services and to invite comments and constructive challenge regarding the proposals to select and develop a Future Operating Model.

The Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport made opening comments about: the background to the public realm service contract with Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) that had been awarded in 2013; the key features of the existing model; audits undertaken of the public realm contract which had identified issues with the effectiveness of contract monitoring on the council side; various model types had been considered by Cabinet Members and by a cross party member working group; it was considered that Model Five, 'in house client and technical staff with existing provider (single contract) for top up professional services and works', would deliver the council's objectives.

The principal topics of the debate included:

1. The initial implementation costs of the model and opportunities to deliver efficiencies to reach a cost neutral position with ongoing service costs.
2. The learning from bringing public rights of way and traffic management services back in house in April 2022, particularly in relation to communications and staff planning.
3. The transfer of technical and professional services staff from BBLP to the council.
4. Encouraging the public to report potholes, with an enhanced digital presence.
5. The future management of assets and the modernisation of the vehicle fleet.
6. The options appraisal identified that Model Five would provide value for money and would negate risks for the council.
7. The Cabinet Member - Commissioning, Procurement and Assets commented on the benefits of competitive dialogue with potential suppliers, including on social value and environmental objectives.
8. The improvements that had been made to contract management, informed by the Major Contract Improvement Plan, including enhanced constructive tension between the parties.
9. The interim arrangements and plans for the recruitment of permanent heads of contract management, highways, and transportation.
10. The value of public rights of way, including for population health and wellbeing, and the importance of engagement with volunteers interested in supporting and improving the network, subject to appropriate supervision and mitigation of risks.

[Note: With the assent of committee members, the Chairperson determined that the meeting should continue beyond three hours.]

11. It was noted that there was limited detail on the additional costs and challenges referenced in paragraphs 18 and 19 of the report (agenda pages 64/65). The Cabinet Member - Infrastructure and Transport said that a preferred model had been identified but further decisions would not be taken until the new administration period. Comments were made about the importance of corporate memory and apprising councillors about the situation.
12. The need for flexibility in terms of potential suppliers for major infrastructure projects.

13. The need for clarity about the division of responsibilities between contractors and the council, and for the council to be the driver for communications and primary point of contact for the public.
14. With attention drawn to the statement 'The contract has a two year no fault termination clause which both parties can enact at any time, which is proposed to be retained' (paragraph 34, agenda page 68), assurance was sought about the contingency arrangements to retender the contract and mobilise within this timeframe in the event of the clause being triggered.
15. The new range of strategic performance measures could include working in partnership with the contractor on opportunities for commercialisation, innovation and new ways of working.
16. There was an intention to continue the cross party member working group and the members were commended for their input to date.

With input from the Democratic Services Manager, the committee discussed potential recommendations to the executive and agreed the following resolution.

**Resolved:**

**That the following recommendations be submitted to the executive:**

- a) **Herefordshire Council (HC) / Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) strengthen the publicity campaign to raise awareness of where / how residents of Herefordshire can report pot-holes.**
- b) **Clarification is given on how contracts are awarded and arrangements do not tie the council in to using just one supplier for major infrastructure projects.**
- c) **Considerations are built in to the new model for the in-house element of the council's operations to generate commercial income streams.**

**In addition to the recommendations above, the committee requested that the following actions be undertaken:**

1. **HC / BBLP more clearly communicate the opportunities for volunteers to support the work of HC / BBLP on, for example, litter picking, maintenance and improved access to local footpaths.**
2. **Paragraphs 18 to 19 of the scrutiny report be clarified to explain that budgetary pressures on contract delivery are 'future' pressures.**
3. **Assurances are given to the committee that internal expertise will be factored in to the new model that enables HC to assess the quality of major infrastructure and locality works to quality assure the work of our contractors.**
4. **Evidence is given to the committee that if the 'two year' no fault termination clause – if enacted – would enable HC to move in to new and adequate contractual arrangements within that two year period.**
5. **Assurances are given that corporate memory is built in to transition arrangements (from interim to permanent arrangements).**

6. That a note be made highlighting the progress toward the establishing the details of the new operating model post-election.

**25. WORK PROGRAMME**

The work programme for the committee was received and it was noted that there were no further scheduled meetings of the committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2022/23.

The meeting ended at 1.05 pm

**Chairperson**



**Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee: Questions from members of the public and responses, plus supplementary questions and responses**

**13 February 2023**

**Question 1**

**From: Valerie Markwick, Eardisley**

As a resident in Herefordshire I am concerned about domestic violence and sexual assaults in our localities. We had a disturbing series of sexual assaults in Hereford last year. My question reflects one of the key concerns of the public meeting held on 28th September in Hereford, sponsored by Herefordshire Labour "Time to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls", of ensuring action taken delivers results. What are your plans to scrutinise and judge the effectiveness of the new safety campaigns Time for Change aimed at tackling the Community Safety Partnership's strategy priorities of domestic abuse and sexual assault?

**Response to Question 1**

The Time for Change campaigns have been funded by the Governments Safer Streets Campaign. Herefordshire and West Mercia Police have been successful with their bids for Safer Streets Funding. Thank you to colleagues who have co-ordinated and delivered the Safer Streets campaigns and to DI Julie Watson who provided this response below on behalf of the Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership.

"The time for change campaign is regularly evaluated. The first phase of the campaign - release of the video and the website, created through Safer Streets 3 funding, was subject to evaluation however we do not have access to the data pertaining to this at this current time.

Safer Streets 4 has taken the Time For Change campaign to run 3 sub campaigns –

- Christmas and New Year
- Student
- Under-represented groups

Each of the three campaigns will undergo independent evaluation for effectiveness and this is being completed by a market research company.

The Christmas and New Year campaign ran through December 2022 until 2 January 2023. This was a high profile campaign run through audio and visual channels – targeted audio messaging, billboard/kiosk visuals and editorial in local press. The audio advert alone was played over 117,000 times with completed listen through rate at just over 95%. This campaign was subject to evaluation with the feedback being positive. 19% said they had seen/heard a campaign in the previous three months which is strong market penetration for an early-stage campaign, and slightly higher than expected. 21.5% say they've heard of Safer Streets Herefordshire, and the same amount say they've heard of Time for Change. 98% of respondents who were aware of the time for change campaign say they are quite likely or extremely likely to take action if they saw a VAWG crime.

The Student campaign is currently live with the Under-represented groups campaign scheduled for March 2023 therefore we do not have feedback on these yet."

The feedback above evaluates the effectiveness of the media campaigns, however it does not totally measure changes in behaviour or if people feel safer/ less safe. This is something that the Community Safety Partnership, the Tackling Sexual Violence Priority Group and the Safer Streets Steering Group may wish to consider. Further evaluation may include a repeat of the original community survey that was carried out as part of the evidence gathering to support the original bid for

Herefordshire's Safer Streets funding. Behaviour change takes time and a variety of factors and interventions will contribute to that change.

### **Supplementary question a)**

How will you cover the rural part of the county, the small market towns and the villages (some of which are expanding with new building, because you focus very much on Hereford and not the rest of the county)?

### **Response to supplementary question a)**

The Cabinet Member - Housing, Regulatory Services and Community: Thank you very much for your further question. Yes, Safer Streets is around the Hereford city centre at the moment but we are looking to go into the rural areas with our programmes so that we can tackle those areas as well. I do agree that we are Hereford-centric at the moment but we are aware that we need to go out further but, with the resources at the moment, that is very difficult.

### **Question 2**

**From: Jacqui Molloy, Suckley**

As a resident in Herefordshire I am concerned about domestic violence and sexual assaults in our localities. We had a disturbing series of sexual assaults in Hereford last year. My question reflects one of the key concerns of the public meeting held on 28th September in Hereford, sponsored by Herefordshire Labour "Time to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls", about the quality of data available to make decisions and guide action by agencies. Are you satisfied that the quality of the data that the Community Safety Partnership receives on domestic violence and sexual assault is good enough to ensure a consistent co-ordinated response from all the agencies and enable evaluation by you and by partners against agreed standards?

### **Response to Question 2**

The Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership paper submitted to the Scrutiny Committee for Monday 13 February 2023 (Appendix A) subsection 17 Data Sharing identifies the need to strengthen community safety multi-agency data sharing arrangements by stating, "..... most of the data provided in the reports is police data only. This is a challenge the CSP has to overcome and undermines the potential value of the strategic analytical reports", and work is on-going to address this shortfall.

The Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner Community Safety Partnership (CSP) analytical team has provided two excellent police data thematic reviews for the CSP on domestic abuse and on violence against women and girls in Herefordshire\*. (\*Both marked Official Sensitive.) The sexual violence report informed the draft Herefordshire CSP Sexual Violence Strategy to be presented to the CSP Board in March 2023 which has identified outcomes and measures/ key performance indicators to address sexual violence which will enable interventions to be measured.

### **Supplementary question b)**

Thank you for the response to my initial question. I would like to ask a supplementary in writing as I won't be present at the meeting and that is to ask what work is taking place to collect data from the other agencies and not just the police. As the CSP acknowledges that this is a "challenge it has to overcome and it undermines the potential value of the strategic analytical reports" is the scrutiny

committee clear about what the obstacles are to achieving better information on which the CSP can base decision making and resource allocation?

### **Response to supplementary question b)**

The Chairperson of the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee: I think that is an excellent question. The best way to answer that question is to address the point that has been raised and ask the Community Safety Partnership 'what are the challenges?', so that we can get a better understanding of what those challenges are and we can perhaps, as a result of that conversation, make good recommendations to assist the Community Safety Partnership moving forward.

### **Question 3**

**From: Mike Tector, Ledbury**

I am a resident of Ledbury, I am concerned about domestic violence and sexual assault in the county. I attended the public meeting on 28 September last year in Hereford, sponsored by Herefordshire Labour "Time to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls". My question regards concerns about ensuring full participation in the Community Safety Partnership by agencies attending and reporting. Are you satisfied that the partners in the Community Safety Partnership are fully involved in attending and reporting to meetings in 2022/23?

### **Response to Question 3**

Response from Councillor Tyler Chair of the Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership (HCSP).

The Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership Board is entrusted to address crime and disorder in Herefordshire. The CSP has agreed that tackling Violence Against Women and Girls is a Strategic Priority and all partners are committed to this priority.

As Chair of the HCSP I encourage all partners to engage fully at meetings of the Partnership and its sub groups in order to evidence the impact Partners, both as agencies and individuals, are having on addressing crime and disorder in Herefordshire.

### **Question 4**

**From: Sheila Marsh, Staunton on Wye**

As a resident in Herefordshire I am concerned about domestic violence and sexual assaults in our county. We had a disturbing series of sexual assaults in Hereford last year. My question reflects two of the key concerns of the public meeting held on 28th September in Hereford, sponsored by Herefordshire Labour "Time to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls", of the importance of attitudinal change especially among men and boys, with priority to education in schools and colleges & of ensuring action taken actually delivers results. To assist scrutiny of this area, do you have access to data on how many schools have had the Purple Leaf Programme (and similar Herefordshire wide projects), how far these have changed attitudes and what further plans there are for whole school and countywide initiatives to ensure consistency in all settings?

### **Response to Question 4**

The draft Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership (HCSP) Herefordshire Sexual Violence Strategy 2023-2028 to be agreed by the Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership Board in March 2023 lists the first of three strategic priorities as Priority Area 1: Prioritising Prevention and has the following 4 aims:

1. Increase awareness and understanding of sexual violence and its drivers amongst professionals and the community
2. Challenge the myths, stereotypes and attitudes, that lead to sexual violence and stop people speaking out
3. Strengthen the capacity of educational settings, workplaces, leisure and entertainment venues to prevent sexual violence
4. Ensure that families, children and young people have access to educational resources on consent, healthy, respectful relationships and sexual violence

Clearly this will involve interventions such as Purple Leaf and programmes in schools to see how far these have changed attitudes and what further plans there are for whole school and countywide initiatives to ensure consistency in all settings.

I am grateful to colleagues at Purple Leaf and the Safer Streets Steering Group with the following response below:

“We (Safer Streets) have delivered sessions to Years 6, 9 and 12 across Herefordshire providing training for 2,706 Children as part of Safer Streets 3 in Herefordshire. Feedback across all sessions and all learning outcomes has been overwhelmingly positive from both teachers and pupils and that schools have approached us for further delivery .....

..... Our Purple Leaf Education programme (specifically delivered in schools and settings where children are at risk of/ may have experienced exploitation) continues to run in Herefordshire. The programme is currently funding by West Mercia PCC and is due to continue the current contract until 31/3/24. Again, feedback from this programme is consistently positive.”

Information on which schools have received the support is not available at this time.

Addressing the question; “what further plans there are for whole school and countywide initiatives to ensure consistency in all settings?” there is ongoing dialogue with Safer Streets programme leads and commissioners, the West Mercia Sexual violence forum, and the HCSP tackling Sexual Violence Group as to future funding and commissioning. There have been commissioning challenges but I am informed that these are to be resolved. The outline plan is to continue delivery of these core subjects in Herefordshire through a train the teacher model.

### **Supplementary question c)**

How is the change in attitudes being evaluated in the schools’ programmes (rather than simply positive, immediate feedback which is great but it does not tell us about attitude change)? Given the various commissioning challenges and ideas about ‘train the teacher’ as a way forward for this programme which takes the attitudinal change checking back another step. So I want to know really, what are the plans are for looking at attitudinal change in schools?

### **Response to supplementary question c)**

The Cabinet Member - Housing, Regulatory Services and Community: It is unfortunate that we have not got more feedback actually. We do address that the Purple Leaf programme is making a huge difference in the educational programme but the outcome, looking at the attitudes from young people and how they perceive sexual violence, we are still waiting on that. I think that over time, in the next 12 months hopefully, we will see more information coming forward to see what changes there are in attitudes, because it is so important in our schools that we see that change amongst pupils.