

MEETING /	GENERAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	4TH MARCH 2013
TITLE OF REPORT:	HEREFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP REPORT
REPORT BY:	NINA BRIDGES, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES MANAGER

1. Classification

Open.

2. Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

3. Wards Affected

County-wide.

4. Purpose

To update the Committee on the current priorities and issues for the Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership (HCSP).

5. Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) the Committee notes the content of the report;**
- (b) the Committee notes the refreshed Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy 2011 – 2014; and**
- (c) the Committee comments on the community safety issues and activities identified.**

6. Key Points Summary

- Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership (HCSP) was formed as a result of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act.
- HCSP are required to provide the Scrutiny Committee with an annual progress report on the work of the community safety partnership (CSP).

- The HCSP is required to carry out statutory duties, including an annual strategic assessment and a Crime and Disorder Strategy, known as the Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy.
- The annual strategic assessment has been completed and has informed priorities for 2013 – 2014.
- The Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy is a statutory document which forms part of the budget and policy framework.
- Home Office guidance requires that local authorities have a scrutiny function for crime and disorder focused on the Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership as a whole.

7. Alternative Options

7.1 There are no Alternative Options – this is a statutory requirement.

8. Reasons for Recommendations

8.1 The HCSP is required to report at least annually to General Overview and Scrutiny Committee so it can review, scrutinise and make recommendations on the Partnership's activities.

9. Introduction and Background

9.1 **The Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership** is a statutory partnership formed as a result of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act and the later amended 2002 Police Reform Act. These acts placed a duty for the 'responsible authorities' to work together to reduce crime and disorder. The responsible authorities include:

- Local Authority
- Police
- Police Authority (with election of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the LPA has been abolished)
- Fire and Rescue authority
- Health (CCG to take this responsibility from April 2013)
- Probation

The Herefordshire Partnership Executive Group (HPEG) has become responsible for the Community Safety Partnership's statutory duties.

Statutory duties of the HCSP include to:

- Prepare a Strategic Assessment on crime and disorder
- Produce a community safety partnership plan which lays out what the priorities are and how they will be addressed (reviewed annually)
- Consult and engage with the community
- Formulate and implement a strategy to reduce re-offending by both adult and young offenders
- Prepare an information sharing protocol which must be signed by all responsible authorities
- Ensure that it has a committee with power to review or scrutinise decisions made; or other action taken to make reports or recommendations (section 19 – 21 of the Police and Justice Act 2006)

- Establish Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR), as appropriate, (section 9 of the Domestic Violence and Crimes Act 2004).
- A reciprocal duty for the responsible authorities and the Police and Crime Commissioner to co-operate.

10. Key Considerations

10.1. Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy

The Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy is a three year strategy; 2013-14, year three of the strategy has recently been refreshed using information from the annual strategic needs assessment of crime and disorder in the county. This entails a robust process looking at partner information relating to crime and disorder and consultation with communities on what their concerns are. This forms the basis of the strategy and informs the key priorities each year which the HCSP will focus on.

The Strategy is refreshed annually to reflect the emerging priorities for partners and communities. The annual strategic assessment for 2012 -13 has been completed and on the basis of the issues identified, four priorities have been chosen for 2013 -14. The refreshed Community Safety Strategy now reflects these priorities together with a number of cross cutting themes to support the delivery of the Strategy. The Strategy also provides the framework for how partners will work together and target resources where they are needed in the most efficient and effective way.

The four priorities for 2013 – 2014:

- **Integrated Offender Management (IOM)** - Through partnership working, activity is focussed around supporting offenders away from crime. This priority also seeks to ensure that repeat and vulnerable victims of crime are adequately supported.
- **Alcohol Harm Reduction** – An Alcohol Harm Reduction strategy and action plan has been jointly by HPEG and Herefordshire’s Health and Well-being Board, in recognition of the high priority for both Board’s agendas. The focus of the strategy is to educate and raise awareness of sensible drinking; reduce violent crime linked to alcohol consumption; contribute to a reduction in alcohol-related assaults presenting at A&E; and intervene early to prevent violent crime and disorder.
- **Empowered Localities** - It is recognised that in order to deliver effectively and reduce crime and ensure that our communities feel safer, we need to work with communities in both identifying and tackling issues.
- **Domestic Violence and Abuse** – This is now included within the strategy as a priority, following feedback from partners and research indicating that this is a growing cause for concern. A multi-agency working group is overseeing a needs assessment. This will inform improvements to joint working to address the issues of domestic violence and abuse in Herefordshire. Accountability remains with those organisations to ensure that they are fulfilling their own responsibilities and remits in relation to domestic violence and abuse (working alongside other organisations as appropriate), although this assessment may highlight the potential for improvements in policy and practice within those individual organisations.
- **Cross cutting themes:**
 - **Education** - the community safety partnership felt that by enabling young

people to make informed life choices this can effect behaviour and prevent young people getting into difficult and vulnerable positions. As part of this approach HCSP is working with West Mercia Women's Aid to introduce the delivery of sessions in selected primary schools designed to promote healthy relationships and raise awareness about domestic abuse to year 5 and year 6 pupils. This will complement a programme already run by WMWA targeted at secondary school aged children.

- **Substance Misuse:** - A change of adult drug treatment provider in Herefordshire, drug policy and new funding models are all key issues which need to be managed to ensure drug treatment in the county continues to provide better outcomes for service users and their families. HPEG supports the intention of Public Health to explore the development of a more co-ordinated approach, through the revitalisation of the Drugs and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), which will help ensure effective commissioning and communication.

10.2 Police and Crime Commissioner

Bill Longmore was elected as the **Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)** for West Mercia in November 2012. Key responsibilities include: ensuring an effective police force is in place across West Mercia, setting the police and crime objectives for the area; and working with partners and fund community safety activity in their area.

From April 2013, the PCC will receive community safety grant funding previously awarded directly to CSPs from Government. The PCC will have the freedom to commission services from any person or organisation. Although the PCC is not a responsible authority on Community Safety Partnerships, under the Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011, a mutual duty is placed on the PCC and the responsible authorities of the CSP to cooperate to reduce crime and disorder and reduce reoffending. Together with the other CSPs across West Mercia, Herefordshire CSP is working with the PCC to ensure continued effective partnership working to deliver local community safety priorities. The closer working relationship across the West Mercia CSPs provides opportunities for joint commissioning as well as sharing good practice.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is elected for a four year term. He has a duty to consult with victims and the wider community, and will therefore need to maximise his understanding of the needs of local people. Although the PCC is an elected individual his decisions will be scrutinised and reviewed by a Police and Crime Panel (PCP). The role of the Panel will be to maintain a regular check and balance on the performance of the directly-elected Police and Crime Commissioner. This will include reviewing council tax precept levels and appointments of chief constables, with the power of veto as a last resort. There is an expectation that the relationship between the PCC and the Panel will be one of support and challenge. Membership of the PCP comprises elected members from each council in the police area as well as lay members. It is for the PCP, the members and the individual local authorities to determine how information will be passed between them. Herefordshire Council's two representatives on the Panel are Cllrs Bowen and Wilcox.

The PCC has consulted on the Draft Police and Crime Plan for West Mercia. The Plan has been drawn up with reference to the strategic assessments carried out by the community safety partnerships across West Mercia. Indeed the priorities identified in the draft Refresh of Herefordshire's Community Safety Strategy 2013/14 (Integrated Offender Management, Alcohol Harm Reduction, Empowered Localities and Domestic Violence and Abuse) are clearly reflected within a number of the PCP objectives.

The PCC will oversee the implementation of a new policing model, which will retain the

concept of local policing teams, known to and accessible by local communities. Whilst there will be cuts to policing, it is anticipated that new ways of working (new technology allowing more mobile data availability; response teams operating in designated patrol zones which complement local policing areas) and the retention of Community Support Officers, will mitigate against this and that Herefordshire will continue to be a low crime area.

11. Community Impact

- 11.1 Ensuring that Herefordshire has an effective Community Safety Partnership will contribute to a safer place to live, work and visit.

Identifying current trends and community issues is crucial if resources are to be targeted effectively to benefit local communities.

12. Equality and Human Rights

- 12.1 This strategy pays regard to equality and human rights and will not negatively impact on any members of the community.

13. Financial Implications

- 13.1 Delivery of the Strategy priorities will be undertaken within the constraints of available partnership funded budgets and carry no additional funding implications for Herefordshire Public Services.
- 13.2 Community Safety has been reviewed within the Safer and Stronger Herefordshire section of the Root and Branch Review programme. As part of this review, Cabinet members have given a commitment to retaining the co-ordination role for community safety within the local authority, although recognising that other organisations have key roles to play as responsible authorities in addressing crime and disorder. There was also strong support for addressing the issues of domestic violence and abuse and taking a cross authority / partner approach to addressing this.

14. Legal Implications

- 14.1 None identified.

15. Risk Management

- 15.1 Any risks identified within the Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy will be managed through HPEG.

16. Consultees

- 16.1 Consultation has taken place over a period of 6 months, collating data and information to produce the annual strategic assessment which informs the Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy. Information is gathered from various sources such as survey results, data collection from partners such as police, probation, registered housing providers, local authority, courts, youth offending and third sector organisations.

The following consultation to identify the priorities has included:

- Acting Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council (responsible authority)

- Clinical Commissioning Group
- West Mercia Police (responsible authority)
- Third Sector Board
- Hereford and Worcester Fire & Rescue Authority (responsible authority)
- West Mercia Probation Trust (responsible authority)
- Business Board
- HALC (Herefordshire Association of Local Councils)
- DEFRA Agencies (DEFRA agencies are made up of the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and Natural England)

Herefordshire Council carried out a survey of residents, (Quality of Life Survey) in 2012 which included questions on policing and community safety. This was followed by the Your community – your say (YCYS) consultation which used various different forum and media to capture residents views, including public meetings, targeted workshops, online forum and media and community researchers. West Mercia Police also complete a Crime Survey which reports on a quarterly basis. The results of these consultations have been used to inform the strategic assessment and the Community Safety Strategy.

All comments have been taken into consideration through the strategic assessment and have assisted in identifying the priorities for this financial year. Comments from partners have assisted in developing the Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy.

17. Appendices

- 17.1 Appendix 1 – Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy 2011 – 2014 (Year Three 2013 – 2014)

18. Background Papers

- 18.1 Strategic Assessment Summary – August 2012
Draft Police and Crime Plan for West Mercia