

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>18 JULY 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-17</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S WELLBEING</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Key Decision**

This is not an executive decision.

## **Wards Affected**

County-wide.

## **Purpose**

To adopt the Herefordshire Community Safety Strategic Plan 2014 – 17.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT: Council adopts the Herefordshire Community Safety Strategy 2014-2017.**

## **Alternative Options**

- 1 No alternative options are applicable; it is a statutory requirement to have a community safety strategy for the county.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 2 The Herefordshire Community Safety Strategic Plan is in the Budget and Policy Framework and therefore needs to be adopted by Council.

## **Key Considerations**

- 3 Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a statutory partnership formed as a result of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act (later amended 2002 Police Reform

Act). These acts placed a duty for the 'responsible authorities' to work together to reduce crime and disorder and thus make Herefordshire a safe place to live, work and visit. The vision for the CSP is that "Herefordshire remains a low crime area and partners work together to ensure it remains that way".

- 4 It is a statutory requirement to have a community safety strategy for the local authority area. The Herefordshire Community Safety Strategic Plan (Appendix A) is a three year plan, underpinned by an annual strategic needs assessment of crime and disorder in the county. The assessment which forms an integral part of the Integrated Needs Assessment, 'Understanding Herefordshire', provides the intelligence to inform the CSP's decision on the key priorities to focus on. The Strategic Plan is reviewed annually with up to date information provided through the strategic needs assessment. The Plan provides the strategic direction for the CSP and it is the principal document which the responsible authorities within the CSP (Police, Local Authority, Probation [National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company], Fire Service and Clinical Commissioning Group) use to direct partnership work in the area of community safety in Herefordshire.
- 5 The CSP also has identified the following overall parameters for effective partnership working on community safety and to ensure there is no duplication:
  - focus on a small number of priorities where CSP can make a difference;
  - meeting the needs of the most vulnerable people living in Herefordshire is the driving force;
  - jointly commission and decommission services;
  - have a joined up approach to operational practice;
  - have an effective protocol for sharing information;
  - a joined up approach to understanding needs and setting priorities based on the evidence; and
  - be able to assess the effectiveness of services and deliver measurable outcomes.
- 6 The Strategy details the priorities identified for 2014-17. It also provides information on key objectives and outcomes, focussed on partnership activity which will have the most impact. The key priorities are identified as:
  - a) reduce re-offending and bring offenders to account;
  - b) address the harm caused by domestic violence and abuse (DVA);
  - c) reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs; and
  - d) promote community cohesion and reduce the volume of anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- 7 Keeping people safe on the county's roads is also regarded as hugely important by the CSP. The Partnership continues to monitor safety on Herefordshire roads, although it is not a specific designated CSP priority.
- 8 The CSP works closely with the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to co-ordinate effort and to prioritise the issues that matter most to local residents. The PCC has asked each West Mercia Community Safety Partnership to act as the lead body for delivery of his Rural Crime and Business Crime Strategies within each partnership area alongside the police. In Herefordshire, the CSP will support the PCC to deliver the aims of his Rural and Business Crime Strategies aligned to the priorities identified locally.

- 9 The CSP will work together to share resources efficiently and effectively, reducing crime rates and improving the quality of life for communities in Herefordshire. Creating aligned local strategies with health partners provides the opportunity to improve care, reduce duplication of effort and identify and implement possible efficiencies for all agencies involved. There are also shared issues with the Families First programme, especially as the families within this programme are often those who have multiple problems which are reflected in the local community safety priorities. Direct funding to CSPs has been substantially reduced over recent years and the remaining funding now comes principally from the elected PCCs for each police force area.
- 10 Cabinet reviewed the Strategy at its meeting on 3 July 2014 and has recommended to Council that it be adopted.

## **Community Impact**

- 11 There is an excellent record of community safety partners working together to reduce crime and disorder and improve community safety. Recorded crime in the financial year 2013-14 was 15% less than in 2010-11 and 9% less than 2012-13. In the last quarter of 2013/14, 88% of Herefordshire residents thought that their local area has been safe over the last three months.
- 12 Your Community – Your Say consultation held in autumn 2012 highlighted the following: although there was satisfaction with policing generally, some felt that there needed to be a greater police presence; many participants felt that although maintaining a low crime rate is important, the fear of crime can make policing appear a higher priority than it actually is; rural crime, for example the theft of agricultural machinery, oil or metal was perceived to be an issue which was becoming increasingly common; speeding, particularly on rural roads and through residential areas, was consistently raised as a real area of concern, with a number of areas identifying this as being one of their top priorities; and it was felt that the loss of local youth services may lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour and low level crime.

## **Equality and Human Rights**

- 13 The priorities outlined in the Community Safety Strategic Plan are informed by the annual strategic assessment and support the Council's equality duty. The other responsible authorities for community safety share this "General Duty" to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The requirement of impact assessments for individual priorities or actions will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

## **Financial Implications**

- 14 Delivery of the Strategy priorities will be undertaken within the constraints of available partnership funded budgets or through attracting further external funding. There will

be no additional funding implications for Herefordshire Council is 2014/15. However, it should be noted that there is no core budget for the post of Community Safety Manager, which is the one dedicated post to this area of work. This has been identified as a budget pressure for 2015/16.

## Legal Implications

- 15 Under section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Herefordshire Council is a "Responsible Authority".

As such the council has two main legal duties:

- a) under sections 5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the Council and the Police in partnership, are required to collaborate with each other to develop and implement strategies and plans for dealing with crime and disorder and associated issues; and
  - b) under section 17 of the same Act, the Council is required to have due regard to the impact of each of its functions on crime and disorder and associated issues.
- 16 The council must therefore ensure that it complies with the relevant legislation and have in place the relevant Community Safety Strategy Plan.

## Risk Management

- 17 None identified for 2014/15, but there is an emerging risk of non-compliance with statutory duty: there is no core funding for the dedicated resource to support community safety, so the local authority will be unable to fulfil statutory obligations as a responsible authority and key partner of the CSP (recorded as risk serial no RSK.CCS.002).

## Consultees

- 18 Herefordshire CSP is required to provide the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an annual progress report on the work of the CSP. This was done on 12 May 2014, when the Committee received an update on the current priorities and issues for the CSP and were invited to comment on the indicative priorities for 2014/17. The Committee noted with concern the issues raised on Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and in particular the adverse impact on children from a very early age. The link between DVA and alcohol misuse was also noted, with the comment that whilst there was a noted improvement on reductions in night time disorder, more could be done with those selling alcohol. Comments were also received on the levels of youth offending, which although on the decrease were higher than the national average. Interest was shown in the use of out of court disposals, including community resolution and restorative justice. The Committee was also concerned about the impact of the changes to offender management services and specifically recommended that the CSP establishes clear performance indicators to provide assurance that any adverse effects of the change are identified and mitigated at an early stage. This is a concern shared by the CSP, with performance to be monitored and reported on as part of the Reducing Offending and Re-offending priority.
- 19 Consultation was also conducted through the strategic assessment which informs this Strategy and the priorities, requesting the views of key agencies (responsible authorities as well as a number of providers of services and voluntary sector

representatives). These views and information provided were incorporated into the strategic assessment where relevant. West Mercia Police conduct a Crime Survey and results from their quarterly surveys completed during 2013-2014 were also used to inform the strategic assessment.

- 20 The developments of the priorities and the strategic plan have also been discussed at three meetings of the CSP as well as the local authority's Management Board.
- 21 Comments from all the above consultees have been noted and are reflected within the strategic plan. They have also been reported back to the relevant priority leads, as appropriate.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Herefordshire Community Safety Strategic Plan 2014/17.

## **Background Papers**

- None identified.