

Meeting: Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 23 January 2012

Subject: Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment, Identified Priorities for 2012–2013

Report of: Cllr Brian Spurr, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles

Summary: This report informs Members of the three priorities that have been identified through the Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment. The identified priorities are the same as last year. The priorities have been agreed by the Community Safety Steering Group and recommended by the Community Safety Executive Group. They are also subject to public consultation. Members have been invited to comment on the three priorities before they are recommended for adoption by the Community Safety Partnership.

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Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The agreement of the three priorities, and the subsequent work in reducing offences, incidents and offending, will make a significant contribution to the quality of life experienced by local residents and communities. Joint work on the priorities by all of the community safety statutory partners will also contribute to the delivery of the Council's community safety priority of 'Creating Safer Communities' to reduce crime, fear of crime, anti social behaviour and increase public confidence.

As one of the five thematic partnerships of the Central Bedfordshire Together (CBT), Community Safety has an integral role in achieving the CBT Vision of 'Globally connected, delivering sustainable growth to ensure green, prosperous and ambitious place for the benefit of all'. Delivering to the three priorities will have a positive effect on greater economic and community prosperity, sustainable growth and raising standards.

Financial:

1. The majority of the work undertaken is done through existing resources within each partners' organisation. The Home Office does occasionally offer grants to the Partnership for specific areas of work and the Partnership will bid for these to provide additional support to existing resources.
2. Financially the partnership save on resources, by pulling together to work on priority areas that effect them all, using an intelligence led approach.

Legal:

3. Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council has a statutory duty to do all that it reasonably can to reduce crime and disorder in its' area. The Crime and Disorder Act also places a statutory duty on the Council, along with the other Responsible Authorities, to produce an annual Strategic Assessment which identifies crime and disorder priorities for our area.

Risk Management:

4. There are risks and challenges to working in partnership with the Statutory partners of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) (*Police, Police Authority, NHS Bedfordshire, Bedfordshire & Luton Fire Service, Bedfordshire Probation Trust*), should the Council not agree with the identified priorities.
5. There is a risk to the Council should it not agree with the partnership data and analysis that has been provided. If new priorities were to be agreed without supporting data and evidence, the process would not stand up to audit, and would not be based on intelligence. This would make it difficult to gain support from partners to work with us on any new issue.
6. There are potential community implications if work on the high risk indentified priorities is not undertaken. The three areas have scored highest in the risk matrix, been highlighted through public consultation, and are known to affect Public Confidence and Fear of Crime (Appendix 1).

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

7. None

Equalities/Human Rights:

8. By working on the three priority areas, there will not be unlawful discrimination or contradictions under the European Convention of Human Rights.
9. Statistics and data have been used and analysed to identify the high risk areas to the CSP and our communities. All members of our communities have been taken into account, and there have been no groups omitted from the process.
10. The impact of working on the proposed priority areas will not discriminate against individuals or groups. In fact the work around Anti-Social Behaviour, Reoffending and Domestic Abuse will support minority groups and individuals who may not have felt supported, or engaged.

11. An Equality Impact Assessment has been refreshed for this strategic period. This assessment has highlighted areas of concern due to low level reporting of Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse and Crime by vulnerable groups. By recommending the three priority areas for the CSP we will also be addressing high risk areas identified in the Equality Impact Assessment.

Community Development/Safety:

12. The detrimental impact that anti social behaviour causes has continued to be a key concern for local residents. In agreeing this as a priority to be worked on by the partnership, it should help improve the quality of life for our communities; help reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti social behaviour itself.
13. Fear of crime is raised by local residents as a concern, and working on crimes that impact the most, in terms of victims and community impact, will support our co-ordinated approach to decrease fear in the community. Domestic Abuse, Anti-Social Behaviour incidents and becoming a repeat victim, all have a significantly negative impact on our residents.
14. Reducing re-offending is a national concern. It is estimated that approximately 10% of the active offender population is responsible for half of all crime and that a very small proportion of offenders (0.5%) are responsible for one in ten offences. Providing the correct support to the most prolific offenders in Central Bedfordshire will contribute to not only a reduction in crime and disorder but hopefully the rehabilitation of these individuals, which includes providing accessible services to offenders to support them with substance misuse, in particular alcohol and drugs.

Sustainability:

15. The enforcement and prevention work that will be undertaken on the three priorities, can make a significant contribution to the quality of the physical environment, tackle those responsible for crime, disorder and anti social behaviour, and prevent some offences in Central Bedfordshire.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **That the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee recommends to the Executive the approval of the three Partnership Strategic Assessment Priorities identified for 2012 - 2013. These Community Safety priorities are:**
- (a) **Anti-Social Behaviour**
 - (b) **Reduce Reoffending**
 - (c) **Domestic Abuse**

Reason for Recommendation: The Council is a statutory member of the Central Bedfordshire Community Safety Partnership. Under the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Partnership is required to undertake an annual strategic assessment to identify crime and disorder

priorities for the Partnership area. The strategic assessment for Central Bedfordshire, undertaken for 2012/13, has identified the priorities set out in this report.

Introduction

16. The Executive Summary of the Strategic Assessment (Appendix 2) sets out the scanning exercise that was completed together with the matrix used to determine the high risk priorities. These priorities are consistent with last year's and are still the highest risks for 2012 -2013. The matrix can be used as a guide by Members to ascertain what was considered in the scanning process.
17. The report proposes the three priorities for the Central Bedfordshire CSP 2012 – 2013. These are:-
 - **Anti-Social Behaviour**
18. To help combat repeat victimisation of anti-social behaviour (ASB) we will pull our resources together to support victims and their families, support vulnerable members of the community and tackle those who commit ASB.
19. Following Central Bedfordshire's ASB Review in the summer of 2011, a partnership ASB Action Plan had been developed, detailing the processes and methods as to how partners will work together to tackle ASB, and address the key recommendations that require further partnership work. The partnership will agree new protocols to improve the care and support provided to witnesses and repeat victims of ASB.
 - **Reduce Reoffending**
20. We aim to reduce the high number of offences that are committed by the small percentage of offenders who regularly commit them. We aim to support and engage with the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Programme.
21. The countywide IOM Delivery Group gives strategic direction to the implementation of the programme together with collaboration of resources and partnership work across Bedfordshire. The IOM Steering Group supports the Delivery Group to ensure tactical delivery takes place, processes are mapped and there is consistency across how offenders are dealt with in Bedfordshire. By partners working together to target the offenders who commit the majority of crimes in Central Bedfordshire, we will have a positive impact on crime reduction in the area and confidence in partnership working.
 - **Domestic Abuse**
22. To help combat repeat victimisation of domestic abuse we will pull our resources together to support victims and their families, support vulnerable members of the community and tackle those who commit domestic abuse.

23. There is a three year Domestic Abuse Strategy (2009-12) and delivery plan in place, which has been reviewed this year. The Domestic Abuse Steering Implementation Group oversees a co-ordinated approach to domestic abuse in Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough, identifying key actions required to tackle domestic abuse, focussing on prevention, protection and provision. Partners then work together to assist victims ensuring that they are supported and receive the assistance and help they require.
24. Work will shortly start to address the identified gap with perpetrators of Domestic Abuse. A 'Healthier Relationships Course' will be delivered to male perpetrators and shared with victims in order to try to reduce the risk of further domestic abuse and harm to victims of domestic abuse in Central Bedfordshire.
25. The course is aimed at perpetrators who pose a standard to medium risk to their partners, and have not yet been convicted of domestic abuse offences. It would be offered as an awareness raising course, as a means of becoming more aware of what is understood to be abusive behaviour and inviting increased responsibility for their own behaviour. It will look to make people aware of alternative strategies for dealing with conflict within their relationships.
26. The course will have four components: individualised assessment of perpetrators and victims; a perpetrators' awareness raising course; an awareness raising course and/or individual sessions with victims; and an optional restorative justice family meeting..
27. In considering the report, and the three priorities identified, the Committee should note that the partnership will target its work towards these three priorities. A review of outcomes will take place after six months. This review will monitor progress made against the priorities, the partnership work taking place and it will consider if there are any other community safety risks that need to be addressed. This update report is used to inform the Partnership. At the end of the year this report then informs the next Strategic Assessment.
28. Performance Reporting is in place for the CSP against these priorities, and plans are outcome focussed. Performance management is undertaken via the Community Safety Executive Group, which considers overall performance, funding, the Strategic Assessment and Partnership Plan, and ensures that the CSP complies with statutory requirements and adopts best practice.
29. The Steering Group takes a co-ordinated, problem solving approach to identifying, planning & implementing approved outcomes to support the priorities in the Partnership Plan. Partners will inform the group of the progress in their areas, the progress towards their action plans and their outcomes. The Steering Group is also required to make recommendations to the CSP Executive on various aspects of the partnership work.
30. Specific delivery groups then look at individual priorities, which have actions / delivery plans, and deliver the tactical activity required to reduce risk and improve performance.

31. The three priorities are going out to public consultation via our social media sites and in the next News Central magazine (January 2012). Each of the statutory partners has engaged fully in the prioritisation matrix and in the discussions to recommend the priorities for 2012 -2013. Central Bedfordshire Members have been advised of the three priorities via the Member Bulletin dated 8th December, and have been invited to comment on them.
32. During 2011 the CSP created a CSP Business & Action Plan, which outlines how we will achieve our Partnership Plan and mitigate our strategic risks. Owners been allocated from across the partnership and work is taking place around the three priorities, the work required prior to the election of the Police Crime Commissioner and the Police Crime Panel, development of a Communications Plan with regular messages to our communities and increasing our data and intelligence flow between partners.

Conclusion

33. It is essential that Central Bedfordshire CSP has an agreed set of priorities, informed by the Strategic Assessment.
34. It is also important that these new priorities are communicated to local residents, the wider public and businesses in the area, so they can comment on the priorities, and support the CSP. In this way we can work together in keeping the area safe, protected, we are robust around anti social behaviour, crime and re-offending; all of which have an impact on our communities.
35. It is also important that the CSP works together as a partnership, on the key issues that have been identified. By combining our efforts and resources, we will see the biggest impact and start to become proactive rather than reactive.
36. By working to the three priorities, the CSP will contribute significantly to the achievement of the Council's Vision, the CBT Vision, and one of the key deliverables (of Sustainable Communities aim), to *"Reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime"*.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Risk Matrix for the Partnership Strategic Assessment

Appendix 2 – Executive Summary of the Partnership Strategic Assessment