



Report to the Environment, Transport and Locality Services Select Committee

Title: Safer Bucks Plan

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Report signed off by Cabinet Member: **Martin Phillips**

Electoral divisions affected: **All**

Purpose of Agenda Item

At the request of the Chairman of this Committee this is a report to provide the Committee with an update regarding progress against the Safer Bucks Plan 2013/14, priorities for the 2014/15 and emergent priorities within the plan.

Background

Community Safety is an area of concern for all communities and is consistently highlighted as a high priority by our residents. The impact of crime and disorder on the quality of life of individuals and whole communities means that it affects everyone who lives, works and visits Buckinghamshire.

It is widely recognised that tackling community safety issues cannot be achieved solely by the police. It requires the work of a number of organisations, in partnership, along with the community to raise the issues and identify solutions to those issues; and then to work together to put those solutions into action.

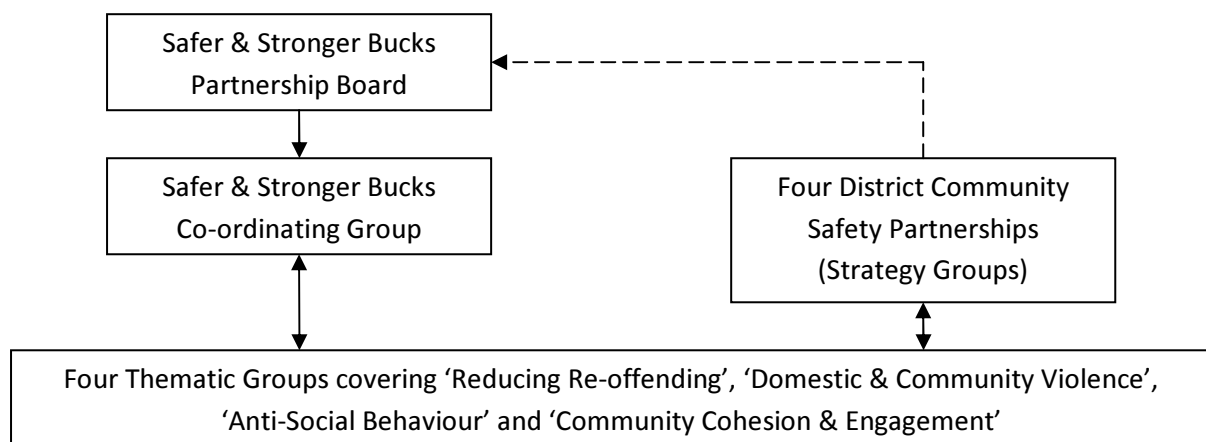
The Safer Bucks Plan forms our Community Safety Agreement and is a requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. As Buckinghamshire has a two tier authority system, both the Districts and Bucks County Council are required to have such a plan in place. In response to these requirements the Safer Bucks Plan plan is designed to identify:



- How the partners can work together to address the most important community safety issues relevant to the county. These issues are based on analysis of crime and disorder data and on feedback from the community;
- The issues that will be fed into the work of the partnership across the county and will set out how the partners plan to deliver against these priorities.

Report

1. The Safer and Stronger Bucks Partnership Structure



- 1.1 **Safer & Stronger Partnership Board.** The role of the Board is to drive the strategic direction of crime reduction in Bucks. There is representation from the Districts, Police, Probation, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Police and Crime Commissioners Office, Police and Crime Panel and Public Health. Actions will be passed down to the Co-ordinating Group for progression.
- 1.2 **Safer & Stronger Co-ordinating Group.** This will monitor the action plans of the thematic subgroups and reports progress to the Board. The group will also advise the Board of emerging strategy and issues.
- 1.3 **District Community safety Partnerships.** Each District is required to have their own community safety partnership (CSP). Each CSP will look to apply crime reduction initiatives relevant to the emergent issues in their district this could be relating to a particular local hot spot for a specific type of crime.

2 2013/14 Performance

- 2.1 There have been a number of significant achievements in the areas of work which supported the delivery of the Safer Bucks Plan. The following are some key highlights of these achievements.
- 2.2 **Anti-Social Behaviour.** The most recent Partnership Strategic Assessment identifies that anti-social behaviour (ASB) has seen a substantial reduction (35%) in reported incidents across the whole of Buckinghamshire, equating to 4,372 fewer incidents than the previous year. However, this is still an average of over 600 reports a month.

2.3 Domestic Violence. There has been an increase in the reporting of Domestic Violence (DV), which is considered positive as DV is traditionally a hidden and under reported crime. Treatment interventions have been increased for the victims of high/medium risk of DV with an approximate 90% increase over the year and with 83% of clients demonstrating a reduction in risk as a result.

2.4 Serious acquisitive crime. Between April and Dec 2013, there were 886 domestic burglaries across the county. This is a decrease of 20% (222 fewer reported incidents) when compared to the same period last year. The target for burglary was a 2% decrease and so the result has been very positive.

2.5 Supporting the most vulnerable. We have commissioned Thames Valley Victim Support to be the lead agency and support for victims of hate crime and will provide case and risk management for hate crime incidents.

The Community Safety team are working in partnership with Trading Standards and Thames Valley Police to analyse current and potential hot spots for door step crime to help with applying strategies to protect vulnerable individuals and communities. The average age of those who experience doorstep crime is 77 years old and only one out of ten crimes are reported. The impact of distraction burglary and doorstep crime is damaging and far-reaching especially in terms of health. Victims are significantly more likely to access hospitals and care settings following experiencing doorstep crime.

We continue to trail early interventions to reduce the risk for victims of domestic violence.

2.6 Tackling substance misuse in our communities. The Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT) has re-commissioned both the adult and young people's substance misuse treatment services. A payment by results element has been incorporated into the contract to incentivise the movement of opiate users from methadone maintenance programmes into detoxification programmes and thus achieving abstinence. In response to this emergent trend of NPS (New Psychoactive Substances) or 'legal highs', the DAAT has commissioned a number of training events to ensure that professionals, who may come into contact with users of legal highs, have a greater understanding of the signs of use and what treatment is available. To ensure that the long term commissioning needs are understood, the DAAT has commissioned a needs assessment, in partnership with the PCC. A post has been commissioned with one of the substance misuse treatment providers, to work with communities to better understand the effects of substance misuse on that community and assist in ensuring a targeted response is delivered.

3 Community Safety Priorities for 2014/15 within the Safer Bucks Plan:

- **Reducing violence-** through supporting victims of DV and working with partners to reduce night time economy violence.
- **Reducing acquisitive crime and reducing reoffending-** through Integrated Offender Management programmes and other partnership initiatives.
- **Reducing anti-social behaviour-** through the delivery of diversionary activities and interventions to help the most vulnerable.
- **Working with communities to address the negative impact of drug and alcohol misuse-** by awareness raising, targeted community interventions and understanding emergent trends better such as 'legal highs'.

- **Working together to address emerging concerns-** by maximising the use of resources through partnership working to address serious emergent issues such as child sexual exploitation, serious organised crime and gang activity.
- **Addressing concerns and issues relating to gangs-** through working with preventative services to support vulnerable young people.
- **Countywide priorities for supporting stronger communities-** support communities to build skills to enhance community safety, work with partners to deliver cohesion strategies and targeted activities to address.
- **Protecting the vulnerable-** Identify individuals and communities vulnerable to doorstep crime, ensure victims of domestic violence receive high quality support and delivers activities to prevent vulnerable young people at risk of radicalisation, sexual exploitation or gang activity.

3.1 New Priorities within the 2014/15 plan include:

- Doorstep crime is a completely new priority within the 14/15 plan; this is due to concerns raised by Thames Valley Police and Trading Standards and the resulting impact on the most vulnerable.
- Protection of vulnerable young people is an issue that has been strengthened significantly within the plan. There has been increasing evidence of 'legal high' use in Bucks, in response a needs assessment has been commissioned to understand the prevalence of *legal high* use and what treatment regimes would be appropriate.
- We are keen to reduce risk to the victims of domestic violence by intervening at an earlier age. Through the Chesham Wellbeing Project we will continue to trial earlier intervention including engagement with domestic violence perpetrators within a custody setting and an embedded post within Thames Valley to engage with victims.

4 Summary

Over 2013/14 there were overall reductions in crime in Buckinghamshire with good progress against the 2013/14 priorities detailed within the Safer Bucks Plan. The 2014/15 Plan highlights some emergent issues which could warrant further examination by the Committee.

Legal High misuse in Bucks is increasing in line with the national trend. Although the substances are legal the use of such substances will in all likelihood lead to similar criminal behaviours as their illicit counter parts. Compliance with court orders, such as child protection for example, will be determined through drug testing regimes and these testing regimes will not be able to identify legal high misuse.

Research has shown that doorstep crime occurs mostly with victims that are vulnerable. The average age of those who experience doorstep crime is 77 years old and only one out of ten crimes are reported. Evidence from Operation Liberal, looking into door step crime across a number of police force areas, showed that victims were repeatedly targeted with increasing impact on the victim. One victim in Bucks lost in excess of £900,000 as a result of door step crime. The impact of distraction burglary and doorstep crime is damaging and far-reaching especially in terms of health. Victims are significantly more likely to access hospitals and care settings following experiencing doorstep crime.