

Wycombe Community Safety Partnership Plan – Update on 2015/16 achievements and priorities for 2016/17

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What is the Commission being asked to do?

The Commission is asked to note the successful work of the Wycombe Community Safety Partnership in 2015/16.

The Commission is requested to note and support the Priorities for 2016-17 for the Wycombe Community Safety Partnership.

Executive Summary

The Wycombe Community Safety Partnership Plan (**Appendix A**) sets out the aims and objectives for the Partnership for the period from April 2016 to March 2017. The Plan explains the structure and system for conducting business and the contribution and commitment of partners. The plan is forward looking with a focus on community and tackling the issues that matter most to residents, businesses and visitors.

The Wycombe Community Safety Partnership (WCSP) regards the Plan as a living document that will build upon successes and identify areas where there is a need to focus resources and expertise.

Background and Issues

The Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009, in conjunction with Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, sets out the requirements for discharging crime and disorder overview and scrutiny arrangements. Every local authority is required to have a designated crime and disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee with power to make recommendations regarding the functioning of their local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (locally the Community Safety Partnership). Wycombe District Council uses the Improvement and Review Commission for this purpose.

The regulations leave the frequency of meetings to local discretion, subject to the minimum requirement of once a year.

Progress during 2015-16

The table below shows the number of key offences which occurred during 2013/14 and 2014/15, along with the percentage difference.

Offence Type	Number of Offences During 2013/14	Number of Offences During 2014/15	% Change
All Crime	7,879	7,795	-1.1%
Violence Against the Person	1,251	1,370	9.5%
Sexual Offences	213	221	3.8%
Robbery	62	60	-3.2%
Burglary Dwelling	271	297	9.2%
Burglary Non-Dwelling	493	409	-17%
Theft of Vehicle	96	121	26%
Theft from Vehicle	683	601	-12%
Bicycle theft	112	101	-9.8%
Shoplifting	755	789	4.5%
Arson	65	54	-16.9%
Criminal Damage	1,254	1,287	2.6%
Drug Offences	301	324	7.6%
Public Order Offences	252	197	-21.8%

In total Wycombe District has seen a reduction of just over 1%, which equates to 84 fewer victims. Over the past 5 years we have seen significant reductions in many of our most serious crime types, and as a partnership we're heavily invested in problem solving, catching and convicting. It was anticipated that these levels of reductions could not remain so high, and the figures above reflect that expectation

The increases seen in Wycombe are consistent across the whole Thames Valley, and feedback from the police indicates that they believe some of the increases are due to changes in recording processes. In particular, when Officers attend a domestic incident they now ask questions concerning any historic violence – if a victim discloses any incidents they are recorded, which impacts on current crime levels (even if the incident is historic). Similar questions are asked when Officers are dealing with Sexual Offences, however there has also been an increase in confidence to come forward to report historic offences due to the high profile national incidents.

Wycombe Community Safety Plan 2016-17

Wycombe Community Safety Partnership priorities are identified using two analysis documents: The Thames Valley Police Force Strategic Assessment and the Buckinghamshire Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment.

Both documents are produced annually and are complemented by regular monitoring of partnership activity, detailed analyses that explore the key and emerging problems, and consultation with community groups. This process helps the Partnership to direct its resources so they remain focused on the main priorities,

adapt to new issues, and are delivered in a manner that gets to the root causes of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Following this research the following have been identified as priorities for the Wycombe Community Safety Partnership this year:

- Crime and anti-social behaviour
- Domestic Abuse
- Exploitation of the vulnerable
- Continue the work of the Nightsafe Partnership
- Cybercrime

Although they have not been included as individual priorities, the Community Safety Partnership is aware that drugs and alcohol fuel a large proportion of crime and anti-social behaviour and as such will feature in the work we undertake to tackle our priorities.

New and key areas of work

Prevent

Wycombe continues to be identified as a Priority Area for Prevent, which is part of the Government's Contest Counter Terrorism Strategy.

Prevent aims to reduce the risk of people becoming radicalised and then becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It does this operating in three main areas;

- Ideology
- Individuals
- Institutions

The Coordinator works with institutions such as schools and Mosques, providing training to help identify those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and nearly a thousand individuals have received this training. The local authority also funds others who provide support to young people through various training programmes. These are intended to enable young people to challenge those that may attempt to adversely influence them, and to be more aware of the dangers on the Internet.

There is also a County-wide safeguarding panel, known as Channel which directly supports those who have been identified as being most at risk of radicalisation. It is an entirely voluntary programme and it has successfully supported a number of individuals.

Forced Marriage, Honour Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

Honour based violence is a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families and/or communities to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. It is often linked to family members who think

someone has brought shame to their family or community by doing something that is not in keeping with the traditional beliefs of their culture.

It is essential that information on the support agencies that are available to help victims of these types of crime is made available, and this is something the members of the Wycombe Community Safety Partnership will be doing this year.

In October 2015 a new duty was introduced that requires health and social care professionals and teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM in girls aged under 18 to the police. FGM is a serious crime and the police will need to investigate each reported case appropriately. The police will work with social care professionals to make sure that the girl is safe and her needs are put first. The purpose of the new duty is to help make sure that professionals have the confidence to confront FGM and to help increase the number of referrals to the police so that cases can be investigated appropriately.

Again, awareness needs to be raised about this type of crime and the support that is available to the victims, and potential victims.

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. In 2013 the National Referral Mechanism, the UK's victim identification and support process, received 1,746 referrals of potential victims of trafficking – almost a 50% increase on 2012 figures. But these are just the victims that we know about. Modern slavery is a largely covert crime: victims tend to be controlled and hidden away.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 received Royal Assent in March 2015. The Act will give law enforcement the tools to fight modern slavery, ensure perpetrators can receive suitably severe punishments for these appalling crimes and enhance support and protection for victims.

The Wycombe Community Safety Partnership are working with colleagues across the county to raise awareness of these crimes, train frontline practitioners and try to identify victims and perpetrators. This work will also reflect the WDC Modern Slavery statement that is currently being produced by HR and legal Services.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime is one of the fastest growing criminal activities in the world. It covers a huge range of illegal activity including financial scams, computer/smartphone hacking, downloading pornographic images from the internet, virus attacks, online bullying and a person or criminal group pretending to be someone they are not whilst online dating or talking to people online.

Research has been commissioned by Buckinghamshire County Council to understand how cybercrime is reported, and what the extent of the problem is. Following the results of the research we will work with partners to develop a strategy to improve our understanding and tackle the key issues locally.

Conclusions/ Recommendations

The remit of the Community Safety Partnership is broadening to new and challenging areas, such as modern slavery and cyber-crime. But within our Partnership Plan we have ensured that we continue to address the more 'traditional'

themes of community safety, which are still a priority for the community, such as acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Commission is asked to acknowledge the achievements of the Wycombe Community Safety Partnership during 2015-16 and to support its priorities for 2016-17.

Next Steps

The Partnership Plan for 2016-17 will be monitored via the Wycombe Community Safety Strategy group meetings.

Background Papers

The Wycombe Community Safety Plan 2016-17 is held by Community Services Team and published on the Council's website.