



Communities & Localism Select Committee Agenda

Date: Wednesday 19 April 2023

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: The Oculus, Buckinghamshire Council, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury HP19 8FF

Membership:

M Harker OBE (Chairman), A Waite (Vice-Chairman), A Alam, S Barrett, P Bass, P Cooper, P Drayton, G Hollis, M Hussain JP, M Knight, F Mahon, C Oliver, G Smith, M Stannard and L Smith BEM

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2	Declarations of Interest	
3	Minutes	5 - 12
	The minutes of the meeting held on 8 th February 2023 to be confirmed as a correct record.	

4 Public Questions

Public questions is an opportunity for people who live, work or study in Buckinghamshire to put a question to a Select Committee.

The Committee will hear from members of the public who have submitted questions in advance relating to items on the agenda. The Cabinet Member, relevant key partners and responsible officers will be invited to respond.

Further information on how to register can be found here: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/your-council/get-involved-with-council-decisions/select-committees/>

5 Town and Parish Charter

14:10

13 - 28

The Committee will receive an update on the work that has been taking place to promote and implement the Council's Town and Parish Charter following its adoption in July 2022.

Contributors:

Cllr Steve Bowles, Cabinet Member for Communities
Roger Goodes, Service Director, Partnerships, Policy & Communications
Simon Garwood, Senior Policy Officer

6 Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy

14:50

29 - 62

The Committee will consider the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy, a partnership strategy which will be considered and approved by Cabinet in May 2023. Members will have the opportunity to discuss the priorities that have been identified and to understand the next steps, including how an action plan will be developed in order to implement the strategy effectively.

Contributors:

Cllr Steve Bowles, Cabinet Member for Communities
Gideon Springer, Head of Community Safety, Buckinghamshire Council

7 Community Resilience Update

15:25

63 - 66

The Committee will receive an update on the ongoing

work of the Resilience service, with particular focus on their work with town and parish councils who wish to develop community resilience plans.

Contributors:

Cllr Steve Bowles, Cabinet Member for Communities

8 Work Programme

15:50

The Chairman will remind members that a Work Programming discussion will be arranged via MS Teams in May.

Work programme suggestions are welcomed and can be put forward to the Chairman or Kelly Sutherland, Scrutiny Manager at any time.

9 Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting will take place in June – exact date to be confirmed shortly.

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Kelly Sutherland
democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk 01296 383602

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Agenda Item 3
Buckinghamshire Council
Communities & Localism Select
Committee

Minutes

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES & LOCALISM SELECT COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2023 IN THE OCULUS, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL, GATEHOUSE ROAD, AYLESBURY HP19 8FF, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.53 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

M Harker OBE, A Waite, S Barrett, P Bass, P Cooper, P Drayton, M Hussain JP, F Mahon, C Oliver, G Smith, M Stannard and L Smith BEM

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

R Stuchbury, K Sutherland, S Bowles, R Goodes, C Harriss, W Morgan-Brown, S Payne, G Springer and R Bryant

Agenda Item

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Councillors Matt Knight and Arman Alam.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- In connection with agenda item 6, Councillor Mimi Harker declared an interest as Vice-Chairman of the Missenden's Community Board and Councillor Ashley Waite declared an interest as the Chairman of the Haddenham and Waddesdon Community Board.
- In connection with agenda item 7, Councillor Mimi Harker declared an interest as a Domestic Abuse and Violence Champion for Buckinghamshire Council.
- In connection with agenda item 7, Councillor Gregory Smith declared an interest as he worked for the Suzy Lamplugh Trust.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th January 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

Members expressed their sympathy for the victims of the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. The Chairman encouraged the public to offer financial support to victims where possible.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

5 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Chairman thanked Members and presenters for their contributions to the last meeting. A letter had been sent to East West Rail and HS2 to summarise the main points discussed and key actions agreed in the meeting, which had been circulated to Committee Members. An update would be provided once a response had been received.

6 COMMUNITY BOARD REVIEW - 6 MONTH PROGRESS UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Steve Bowles, Cabinet Member for Communities; Roger Goodes, Service Director, Policy and Communications and Wendy Morgan-Brown, Head of Community Boards, to the meeting.

The Chairman explained that the purpose of this item was to receive an update following the Select Committee's review of the operation of the community boards. The review report, including recommendations, had been presented to Cabinet in May 2022.

During the presentation, the following key points were raised:

- Since the Select Committee's review there had been a demonstrable change in how Community Boards operated, in particular in terms of value for money. Community Boards had also been subject to a member task and finish group review and a review as part of the Better Buckinghamshire programme.
- Community Boards were not simply grant giving bodies. Community Boards played an important part in facilitating activity and engaging local partners to improve the local community. Examples included a repair café, tree planting schemes and the establishment of a community hub.
- Since their inception, Community Boards had delivered over 840 local projects, with a financial value of over £9 million, nearly half of which was provided by partners. Over the next financial year, there would be an increased focus on delivering further improvements, increasing contributory funding, reducing overheads and considering changes to the Boards in line with the Electoral Boundary Review which would be published shortly.
- It was noted that the forthcoming change of Highways Contract had led to some delays in transport related Community Board projects.

The following points were noted during the Committee's discussion:

- A Member noted that the new electoral boundaries would be implemented for the 2025 elections therefore if Community Boards were revised in light of boundary changes, this would need to be operational for 2025. The Cabinet Member commented that boundary changes would be taken into account as part of this year's Community Board review and it could be that the number of Boards would be slightly reduced.
- Members expressed concern that changes could lead to a further reduction in the Community Board budget and it was important that Community Boards were well-funded. The Cabinet Member explained that whilst the Community Board budget was being reduced for the coming financial year, there was a small underspend from 2022-23, where some projects had been delayed and reviewed and this would be carried forward to offset the reduction.
- In response to a question on improving community engagement with Community Boards, it was noted that some Community Board managers now worked in Parish Council offices and out in the community, which was encouraging more collaborative working. In addition, over the summer, there had been various Community Board events, which saw members of the public finding out more about the role of the Boards, helping

to create a more positive image.

- A Member asked for examples of how the Community Boards had positively reinforced Council campaigns as this could be another way of providing value in addition to funding community projects. It was reported that successes were being collated into an Annual Report, but one example was how a number of Community Boards had organised coffee mornings to support Ukrainian guests in the county.
- In connection with increasing community engagement, a Member suggested that Community Board meetings should include an item on the agenda to provide an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions. The Cabinet Member suggested that a bi-monthly newsletter might be useful to promote the work of the Community Boards and it was also suggested that a mechanism for sharing project ideas across the Community Boards would be useful.
- The Community Board roadmap which the Select Committee review recommended had not yet been completed, but this would be built into the upcoming review. The focus to date had been on operational improvements and the staffing restructure, but now these had been implemented the road map could be developed
- It was noted that highways schemes took up a large amount of Community Board funding. Cllr Bowles advised that the new highways contract provided an opportunity for significant cost reduction compared to the TfB contract. Some Community Board schemes would also be repriced moving forward.
- A Member asked about the support given to Community Boards which were not reaching their objectives as well as others, highlighting the significant difference in performance between some Boards in terms of attracting contributory funding and delivering projects which had a real impact for residents. On average Community Boards were achieving 87p per pound spent by the Council in contributory funding, but some Boards were attracting as much as £2. Mr Goodes advised that the management team attended Community Board meetings and regularly talk to Chairmen and Board Managers to identify areas of support. Some lessons were also taken from other councils running a similar model.
- It was noted that whilst it was not possible for Community Boards to change Council policy, it was possible to arrange for specialist officers to attend meetings if the public wished to discuss a specific issue with Council services in their area.
- The role of the unitary councillors on the Community Boards was discussed. It was emphasised that unitary councillors play an active role within their Community Board, particularly with regard to agreeing funding for projects. Whilst town and parish councillors did not have the ability to vote, they were still able to bring their views about projects forward and played a key role in contributing to the effectiveness of the Boards.
- Members noted that Community Boards received £3 million of funding, with £2 million being spent on projects and £1 million on overheads and questioned the value for money of the model. As part of the review, there was an aim to reduce overheads and increase contributory funding. However, it was highlighted that the importance of contributory funding should not be seen as a measure of a Community Board's success in isolation, as some communities would inevitably find it more difficult to raise funding but this didn't mean they had any less value as a community.
- A Member emphasised the importance of good chairmanship for the success of Community Boards and encouraging engagement from parish councillors. The Cabinet Member agreed and suggested that training could be considered as part of the review.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and Officers for their attendance and contribution to the meeting and re-emphasised the importance of effective engagement with the public. A further update around Community Boards would be provided to the Committee in the autumn.

7 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Gideon Springer, Head of Community Safety to the meeting.

The Chairman explained that at Council in November, Members took part in White Ribbon Day, with several Members signing up to become Domestic Abuse Champions. The programme involved two days of training to learn how best to support victims.

During the presentation, the following key points were raised:

- Training courses for Members wishing to become domestic abuse champions are run throughout the year. Since White Ribbon Day, 33 Councillors and 160 other partners had signed up to the programme. Members interested in the programme were advised to contact Faye Blunstone.
- The Council was part of the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and a subgroup had been set up to focus specifically on violence against women and girls (VAWG), which worked with key partners to positively impact womens' safety. The group had four objectives:
 - Early intervention and prevention focussed on several issues including domestic abuse, stalking and female genital mutilation.
 - Supporting victims, through statutory and non-statutory organisations and the voluntary sector. Further information can be found on the new domestic abuse website, which also included support for women who were victims of violence in other environments.
 - Pursuing perpetrators in partnership with the police.
 - Strengthening the partnership response: identifying pathways for victims to come forward. Violence against women and girls was significantly underreported. Much of this objective focussed around communicating with victims to ensure they receive support through judicial and non-judicial interventions by the police.

The following points were noted during the Committee's discussion:

- The Chairman thanked Mr Springer for his work on the subject and highlighted the importance of communicating the issue to the public, for example through distributing posters outlining ways that individuals could get support.
- Cllr Stuchbury posed the following question which included national figures from the Office of National Statistics: *According to recent ONS statistics, in the year ending June 2022, 194,683 sexual offences were reported to the Police nationally but just 4,466 rape cases were referred to the CPS. Of these, referrals, charges were brought in 2385 cases. While this was a slight increase on the previous year, it falls short of the 3,671 cases in which charges were brought in 2016.*

In the year to June 2022, there were 1,765 convictions for rape, compared to 2,991 convictions in 2016.

Have we got any comparable data for Buckinghamshire or the wider Thames Valley area? I think it is important to understand a baseline of data so that we can see how partnership working to prevent violence against women and girls translates into reporting of offences and subsequent prosecution and conviction of perpetrators, so that we can give more confidence to individuals in disclosing traumatic events that have happened to them.

- In response, Mr Springer emphasised that the ONS data only included reported incidents and it was important to note that rape and sexual assault against females were

significantly underreported crimes. The Council's aim was to increase the reporting of offenses, as well as reducing the occurrence of incidents. Within Buckinghamshire, there were 894 sexual offenses reported in 2021, 1,149 in 2022 and 1,100 in 2023 so far. It was difficult to compare this data to the national figures, as the police recorded offenses per thousand population. The majority of those offenses were committed by men, thus efforts should be made to educate children, young men and families on how they could support this issue. In 2021, 27 rape crimes within Buckinghamshire resulted in formal action. There were many complex reasons behind the low number, some of which related to the law and current Crown Prosecution Service backlogs. Mr Springer recognised the need to improve these figures and noted that there were also targets set by the government to improve the figures.

- A Member asked whether the Council was satisfied with the response provided by the police, highlighting the issue of staff turnover. It was noted that the police forces across the country were recruiting additional staff, with Thames Valley, in particular, experiencing a significant uplift. Front line officers were often the most inexperienced. Training programmes were in place, though gathering experiences would require some time. However, the issue extended beyond the police, with key partners in the community all playing a significant part in mitigating the issue. Work needed to be done in terms of changing attitudes around violence, which relied on parents, the education system and men collectively to discuss the issue of female safety.
- It was suggested that posters outlining options for support for victims of violence should be provided to different establishments. Cllr Bowles welcomed the idea and noted that the 'Ask Angela' scheme was still being promoted to hospitality venues by community safety officers, street wardens and neighbourhood policing teams. However, mail drops were not identified as the most effective method to raise awareness for the scheme, with training and discussion yielding better results. Work was also being undertaken with key partners to raise awareness. The Council was also working on developing effective awareness-raising campaigns, and any suggestions were welcome.
- The importance of ensuring that younger people were sufficiently educated around violence against women and girls was highlighted. It was noted that most schools had included PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education) in their curriculum, where children were taught about appropriate relationships. The Council's education department also had a number of staff in safeguarding who visited schools to inform pupils around safety on the internet. There was also a safeguarding lead in every school to deal with issues of this nature.
- A third-party community-led organisation provided a sexual assault service in Buckinghamshire for victims, which would support individuals even if they didn't wish to report the crime to the police. Information about these organisations was available on the Council's website.
- A Member highlighted the importance of providing support for members of the LGBT+ community. It was noted that a third of reported incidents in Bucks had male victims, and the new domestic abuse service included support for men as well as members of the LGBT+ community.
- A Member asked whether any work had been undertaken around creating positive role models against violence, such as the 'Lads need Dads' charity. Mr Springer advised that the onus to educate children around appropriate behaviour was on parents. Many incidents committed in school and similar environments were committed by young people who had not received sufficient education about appropriate sexual behaviour.
- In response to a Member's question, it was noted that one of the sub groups focused on stalking, and aimed to support victims to come forward. There had been a significant increase in incidents, particularly due to the rise of digital communication. Whilst the Council was working closely with the police on this issue, there was currently no

statutory resource to address the issue effectively. Work was particularly focused around prevention, though more needed to be done to increase people's confidence to report incidents.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Bowles and Mr Springer for their work on the topic, and reiterated the importance of prevention, early intervention and education on what constitutes acceptable behaviour.

8 FILM OFFICE UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Clive Harriss, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, Sophie Payne, Service Director, Culture, Sport and Leisure and Ruth Bryant, Buckinghamshire Film Officer, to the meeting.

The Film Office offered a service for people wanting to film in locations across Buckinghamshire. The service was self-funding, meaning that the income of the Council from filming fees covered the costs of the service.

The following points were noted during the Committee's discussion:

- A Member noted that most of Buckinghamshire's filming locations were centred around infrastructure in the South of the county and asked whether the North would become more involved in the film business in the future. Cllr Harriss noted that the whole of the county had already been involved in terms of location filming. In terms of film studio sites, individual companies could choose their locations and the south of the county had proved popular in the past as it was to the West of London where there had traditionally been studios at Ealing and Park Royal and many skilled technicians who had commuted into London in the past lived nearby.
- A Member asked about the target income set for the film office in the ensuing financial year. It was noted that a similar target had been set but the aim was to maximise opportunity and income for the Council.
- In response to a Member's question, it was explained that the film office had launched a website in December 2022 which included a facility for people to self-register locations for filming. So far, 120 applications had been received, and more were continuously encouraged. There was a wide variety of locations that would be of interest to productions, such as empty warehouse spaces, agricultural land and stately homes. The Film Office had been promoted at several Community Boards and they would be writing out to Town and Parish Councils to promote opportunities and the Code of Practice which had been developed to ensure that disruption from filming was minimal.
- Some Members raised concerns about new film studio space planning applications in green belt areas. Whilst it was acknowledged that filming in the county was exciting and brought with it job opportunities, there needed to be a balance in terms of protecting green space. The Cabinet Member explained that the relevant Planning Committee would have to take a view according to planning policy; this was not a matter for the Film Office. In response to a Member's concerns around frequent highway disruption as a result of filming, it was noted that film crews had to obtain permission to film on their desired roads and often alternative locations or very specific timeframes were offered to ensure disruption for local residents and traffic was minimised.
- A Member questioned whether there was a chance that the filming 'bubble' could burst but the Cabinet Member confirmed that it was currently a growth area because of the increased demand for streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon. Buckinghamshire was known as a centre of excellence in terms of the creative industries and this could only be a good thing for young people who wished to pursue a career in

this area.

- It was noted that film crews had a variety of roles behind the scenes, ranging from sound, filming, lighting and security to catering. There were also various colleges that offered film and media education, with many opportunities to work for production companies locally in Buckinghamshire. Pinewood had also recently run a 'Futures Festival', attracting 4000 young people with opportunities of working with high-profile companies such as Sony.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and Officers for their attendance and contribution to the meeting and hoped that the Film Office would continue to go from strength to strength.

9 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman led Members in a discussion around ideas for the future work programme. The Chairman advised that she had been considering possible topics for the Committee's next piece of review work and suggested that Digital Exclusion might be worth investigating. She noted that there was a drive to deliver more Council services digitally for efficiency and costs reasons, which might put accessibility at risk. Several Members agreed that more and more services moved to digital delivery, partly due to the pandemic, and agreed that there was a need to discuss this issue. The impact of digital delivery on older adults, disabled people, community engagement, and the environment was highlighted. It was agreed that Scrutiny Manager would carry out some background research to formulate a scope on the topic for the Committee to discuss.

ACTION: Kelly Sutherland

Further suggestions raised included:

- Cost of Living;
- Performance of Social landlords;
- Barriers to devolution for Parish and Town Councils
- New Highways contract

It was noted that some of the suggestions might fall under the remit of one of the other Select Committees. The Scrutiny Manager would pass the suggestions on to colleagues in the team as appropriate.

ACTION: Kelly Sutherland

10 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 19th April 2023 at 10am.

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Town & Parish Charter

Report for the Communities and Localism Select Committee





Contents

- Background context
- Independent Review
- Purpose of the Charter
- Content of the Charter
- Summary of the Action Plan
- Key achievements
- Next Steps
- Town and Parish Survey
- Strategic Engagement Framework
- Think Local Campaign

Background Context

- As a new council, we wanted to take the opportunity to strengthen the relationship between all tiers of local government.
 - There has been an ongoing programme of work to create a document that outlines this commitment to town and parish councils and articulates some key areas to help cement a strengthened relationship.
- Work has involved extensive engagement with local councils & members and has been supported by an independent consultant.
- The Town and Parish Charter was agreed by Cabinet in July 2022 and has now been published on the Buckinghamshire Council website along with a link to a downloadable version for town and parish councils <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/community-and-safety/town-and-parish-charter/>

Independent Review

- An Independent Review of the charter was jointly commissioned by Buckinghamshire Council and Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (BMKALC).
- The consultant engaged with selected local council chairs and clerks, plus cabinet members and BC officers, discussing themes including, the content of the charter, issues emerging, what good looks like and how we get there.

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The key findings which emerged were:

- Everyone wants to succeed for residents
 - Lots of good work is already happening
 - Biggest issues are trust and understanding
 - Delivery and communication is key to improving trust and understanding
- The review found that the charter itself wasn't the real issue but the issues above were preventing us reaching an agreement.
 - Recommendation that Buckinghamshire Council produce a short one-way commitment which sets out assurances for how Buckinghamshire Council will work with local councils going forward.

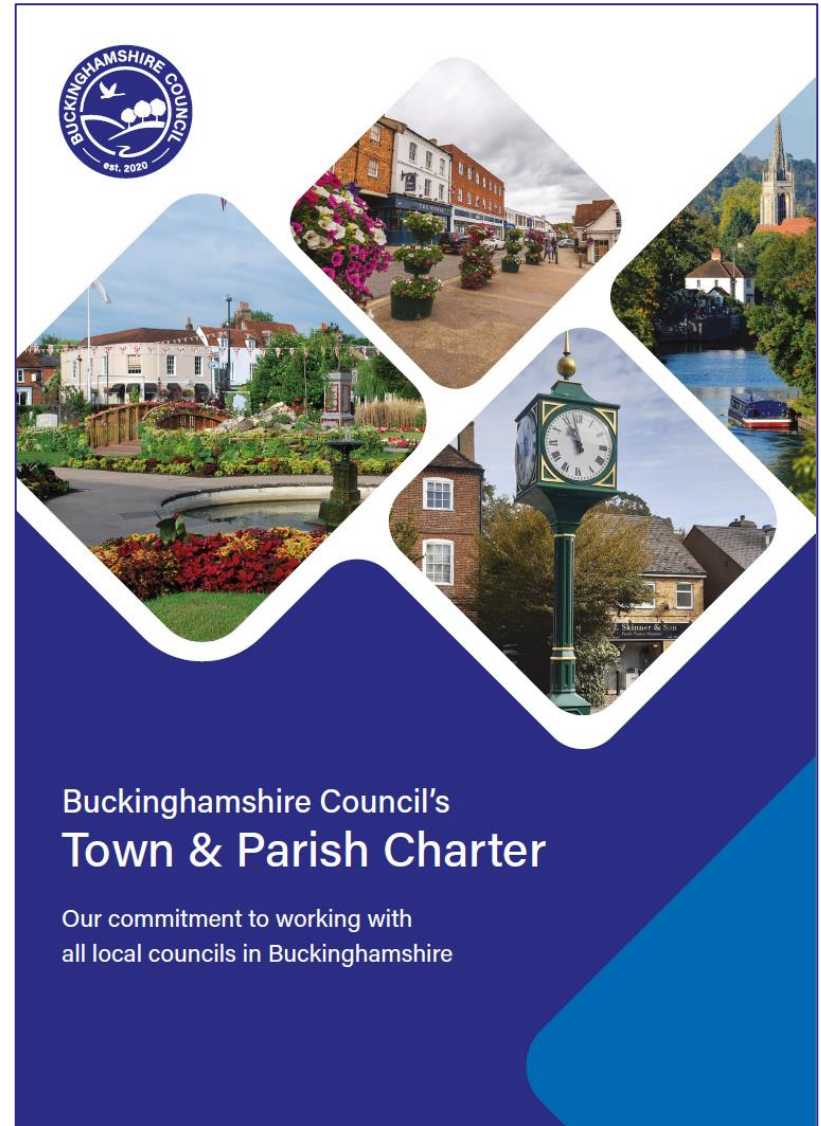
Purpose of the Charter

- The Charter articulates and demonstrates our commitment to work together with town and parish councils to serve the people of Buckinghamshire.
- We have a common purpose to improve the economic, environmental, health and social wellbeing of Buckinghamshire and its residents, businesses and visitors.
- To achieve this, Buckinghamshire Council will work together with town and parish councils to:
 - promote the best interests of the communities we serve,
 - provide quality, value for money public services and,
 - promote opportunities for greater public participation and involvement in public life.



Content of the Charter - Overview

- The Charter includes a brief introduction and three main sections:
 - Effective Communication
 - Services and Collaboration
 - Planning Processes



Content of the Charter - Effective Communication

To enable effective communication Buckinghamshire Council will...

- Appoint key member and officer leads for relationships with town and parish councils
- Ensure a wide range of effective channels are in place to enable two-way communication, spanning all levels of the organisation
- Priority phone lines for parish councils and key senior officer contacts list
- Focus groups and local meetings to address issues around service delivery where necessary
- Provide parish councils with advance notice / schedule of consultations and aim to allow at least 6 weeks for responses wherever possible



Content of the Charter - Services and Collaboration

To provide effective services and collaboration Buckinghamshire Council will...

- Encourage Buckinghamshire ward councillors to attend parish and town council meetings
- Ensure there are opportunities to comment on proposed changes to services
- Provide early communication and support in all financial transactions with parish and town councils
- Work with BMKALC to provide training, support and resources to assist parish and town councils
- Provide specifications for relevant services along with procedures for monitoring and reporting any developing service issues
- Improve and agree response times for key services to respond to information requests from parish and town councils
- Support parish and town councils to address local needs through the provision of advice and signposting.



Content of the Charter - Planning Processes

To enable Parish and Town Councils to contribute to the planning process Buckinghamshire Council will...

- Statement of Community Involvement regarding consultation with parish and town councils on planning issues
- Equip parish and town councils with knowledge/skills to enable them to share the views of the communities they represent
- Enable parish and town councils to set policies for their own local areas by preparing Neighbourhood Plans
- Ensure parish and town councils have the right to request a 'call in' of an application (or request a Buckinghamshire Councillor do that for them) and are given a dedicated speaking slot where they have made representation
- Consult parish and town councils when producing a Local Plan that will replace the current adopted local plans on completion



Summary of the Action Plan

- The action plan will establish mechanisms for accountability and ensure the charter will become embedded within the council and in the ongoing relationship with local councils
- It also addresses a number of areas for improvement which came out of the development of the charter

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The Partnerships, Policy and Communications team will act as the lead service in implementing the action plan and building on the existing relationship at a strategic level to ensure effective partnership and joint working

- This won't however replace existing operational relationships and arrangements for engagement and consultation with local councils on specific service issues



Key achievements

- Cabinet Member for Communities appointed as the lead for relationships with parish and town councils and champion of local councils
- Senior Policy Officer appointed as key strategic lead and point of escalation for unresolved operational matters. Also responsible for implementation of the action plan
- Priority phone number and mailbox for parish councils within the customer service centre
 - The priority phone line has received 74 calls since October 2022
 - The parish support mailbox has received 106 emails since October 2022
- Key contacts list provided to parish councils of key numbers, mailboxes and senior officers

Key achievements

- Regular newsletters to all town and parish councils
- Invitations to all meetings within their community board areas
- Strong relationship developed with BMKALC
- Quarterly Parish Liaison Meetings hosted by BMKALC
- Quarterly Planning Forums supported by BMKALC
- Clerks Forums



Areas identified for further development

- Understand the needs of town and parish councils and any concerns they have around communication, collaboration and service delivery.
- Ensure that Buckinghamshire Council's engagement and meetings with town and parish councils are effective, avoiding duplication and filling in any gaps.
- Embed the charter across the whole of the organisation and ensure that there is a good understanding of how town and parish councils work, the challenges they face and how they can help us improve services.



Additional support

- The Legal and Democratic Services Team provide support and training to town and parish councils on governance issues.
- In the past year they have supported local councils with 15 complaints about parish councillor's conduct.
- They have delivered three training sessions on code issues (in partnership with BMKALC).
- They have delivered training for individual councils e.g. Buckingham Town Council and Hughenden Parish Council.
- The team are often called upon to provide support at challenging times, on sensitive issues and have received excellent feedback from a number of local councils on their work.

Next Steps

- Town and Parish Survey
 - Survey of town and parish councils covering communication, community boards, governance and finance and service delivery.
- Strategic Engagement Framework
 - Full audit of all formal meetings and communications with town and parish councils.
- Think Local Campaign
 - Internal campaign across all services to help officers understand how town and parish councils work and the challenges they face. Particular focus on key service areas that interact regularly with town and parish councils.



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Report to Communities and Localities Select Committee

Date:	19th April 2023
Title:	Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy 2023-26
Cabinet Member(s):	CLlr Steve Bowles
Contact officer:	Gideon Springer
Ward(s) affected:	All

Recommendations:

- *Note the priorities and key actions for the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy 2023-26*
- *Note the next steps, which include*
 - *Publication of the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy 2023-26 in May 2023*
 - *Development of detailed delivery plans for each priority area*
 - *Development of measures to track and demonstrate progress and impact*

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The 2020-2023 Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy ends on 31st March 2023. Following the completion of the Community Safety Strategic Assessment and public consultation, the 2023-26 Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy has been produced ready for publication in May 2023.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) (as revised by the Police and Justice Act 2006, and the Policing and Crime Act 2009) places a duty on the Safer Buckinghamshire Board (SBB) to undertake a strategic assessment of community safety in its area and produce a three-year community safety plan.
- 2.2 The members of the Safer Buckinghamshire board are :

- Buckinghamshire Council
- Thames Valley Police
- Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue Service
- Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Board
- National Probation Service – Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

2.3 The Safer Buckinghamshire Board considered the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Assessment at its meeting on 5th December 2022. The Strategic Assessment was circulated in the papers for the meeting of 5th December, and is also available from communitysafety@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

2.4 As part of developing the strategic priorities for the Safer Buckinghamshire Board it is also a legislative requirement that there be public engagement. During September and October, through a survey and extensive communications plan, we asked people in Buckinghamshire what their community safety concerns and priorities were. The survey, which included multiple choice questions and the opportunity to make additional comments, was also promoted to Councillors and Town and Parish Councils in Buckinghamshire. An analysis of the public engagement was also presented to the Safer Buckinghamshire Board on 5th December 2022.

2.5 Taking the Strategic Assessment, the public engagement findings and other known insights into account, the Community Safety Team developed proposed priorities and key actions. Engagement for the priorities has included:

- A discussion with the SBB Chair, Chief Supt for Buckinghamshire
- Sharing with the LPA Commanders for South Bucks and Aylesbury
- Sharing with Service and Corporate Director
- A partnership workshop at the SBB meeting on 5th December 2022

3. Proposed Priorities

3.1 The 5 proposed priorities, outlined in more detail within the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy 2023-26, are:

- **Neighbourhood crime**
- **Anti-social behaviour**
- **Serious violence**
- **Violence against women and girls**
- **Exploitation of vulnerable people**

3.2 The Council's Communications team will assist in the production of this document, ensuring the Strategy document meets accessibility standards. As a consequence, some of the detailed wording in the proposed priorities and key actions may need to be amended to meet these requirements. We will work closely with the Communications Team to make sure that accuracy and intended meaning is not lost in this process.

4. Delivery Plans

4.1 In line with the new priorities, five Priority Sponsors from different organisations will work with identified multi-agency subgroups to develop Delivery Plans.

4.2 The Delivery Plans will be taken to the Safer Buckinghamshire Board for approval, and updates on all actions will be provided at each meeting of the Board. A key action for the Neighbourhood Crime Priority will be to establish a multi-agency operational group who will direct partnership activity, resources and communications in hotspot locations. The Serious Violence subgroup will support early intervention for vulnerable young people and those becoming at risk, and the Exploitation of Vulnerable People Priority will include actions relating to providing training for professionals to improve understanding of exploitation and contextual safeguarding.

4.3 The Strategic Assessment identified the top 5 wards which experience the highest crime rates for each crime type. When collated, 13 wards were found to be in the top five for all crime types. Of these 13, 6 are wards that the Opportunity Bucks programme will initially be focusing on.

4.4 One of the priorities with the Quality of the Public Realm theme is Reducing crime and Anti-Social Behaviour. The Delivery Plans that will be developed for the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy 2023-26 Priority 1 - Neighbourhood Crime and Priority 2 -

Anti-Social Behaviour will ensure there is a focus on the areas with highest crime and disorder rates, including these particular wards.

- 4.5 The attached table provides an update on the work the Council's Community Safety Team are already undertaking within some of these wards. We will explore opportunities to expand appropriate projects into these wards, working with the Priority Sponsors, to help with the levelling up agenda.
- 4.6 A query has been raised in relation to Domestic Abuse (DA) training for Buckinghamshire Council staff. In December 2022 a multi-agency DA and Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) training strategy was produced and a fully funded training catalogue launched to internal colleagues and partners. In total there are 15 types of course, which include DA Act, Coercive Control, Adolescent to Parent Abuse and a course on the impact of domestic abuse on children and families. Since the launch last month, 184 people have attended training. Attendees are from Buckinghamshire Council, DA and VAWG specialist services, Police, OPCC, NHS, education, housing associations, solicitors and many more. In addition, two Domestic Abuse Triage Workers have been funded by the Community Safety team, and they work within the Adult Social Care and Children Social Care, in order to provide expertise and guidance on how to deal with domestic abuse cases.

5. Legal and financial implications

- 5.1 The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) (as revised by the Police and Justice Act 2006, and the Policing and Crime Act 2009) places a duty on all Community Safety Partnership to produce a three-year community safety Strategy. Within Buckinghamshire the partnership is called the Safer Buckinghamshire Board, and the community safety Strategy is called the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy. The current Strategy ends on the 31st March 2023, so the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy 2023-26 should be published by 1st April 2023.
- 5.2 At present, all Community Safety Partnerships receive a Community Safety Grant from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which is to be used to fund projects which will assist with the delivery of the community safety plan. The Safer Buckinghamshire Board in conjunction with the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), manage the Community Safety Grant. Bids for the funding are reviewed by the Priority Sponsors, and the Board, to ensure the projects meet the requirements of the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy.
- 5.3 If the decision was made by the PCC that the funding for the Community Safety Partnership was to be reduced, or managed differently by the OPCC, this could impact on the delivery of the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy 2023-26 and the Delivery Plans.

- 5.4 Over the last 5 years the volume of crime has increased by 14% and it is likely that the demand on community safety partners will continue to increase due to the significant challenges facing the community currently. It may be that economic hardship increases crime levels including fraud even further.
- 5.5 However, there are continued resource constraints on both the Council and our community safety partners which could see an impact on our delivery.

6. Corporate implications

- 6.1 The Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy 2023-26 and the implementation of the Delivery Plan will contribute towards the Buckinghamshire Council Corporate Plan through the following key priorities:
- Strengthening our communities
 - Protecting the vulnerable

7. Local councillors and community boards

- 7.1 The public consultation was shared with the Community Board and Councillors as part of the communications plan.

8. Communication, engagement and further consultation

- 8.1 During September and October a community safety residents survey was posted on Your Voice asking people in Buckinghamshire what their community safety concerns and priorities were. The survey, which included multiple choice questions and the opportunity to make additional comments, generated 1,264 responses, which was an increase of 21% when compared to the previous survey.
- 8.2 The formal Strategy document was finalised for approval by the Safer Buckinghamshire Board at its meeting on 22nd Feb 2023

9. Next steps and review

- 9.1 The Strategy will be taken to Cabinet in May for final sign off.
- 9.2 The Safer Buckinghamshire Board Managers will work with the relevant Priority Sponsors to:
- Ensure that detailed delivery plans are developed for the delivery of the priorities;
 - Ensure mobilisation and delivery of the Strategy, commissioning task and finish groups etc. as required;

- Develop a dashboard that will include delivery impact measure for the plans.
- 9.3 The Annual report on the work of the Safer Buckinghamshire Board will be produced in February/March 2024.

10. Background papers

- 10.1 Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy 2023-26 see Appendix A

Opportunity Bucks – Community Safety projects currently underway and those you would like to run

Ward	Current project/activity (with brief detail)	Project you would like to run	Lead	Timescale
Aylesbury North West				
	Aylesbury serious violence open spaces project- aiming to increase confidence of park users whilst decreasing crime, ASB and serious violence. Various initiatives fall under this umbrella.		Chris Geen	Ongoing
Aylesbury North				
	Aylesbury serious violence open spaces project- aiming to increase confidence of park users whilst decreasing crime, ASB and serious violence. Various initiatives fall under this umbrella.		Chris Geen	Ongoing
Aylesbury South West				
South Court	Redeeming Our Communities led by local Baptist Church Mentoring for families and young people, Boxing activities Club, Community Café/drop in centre	Early Intervention and Youth Engagement projects	Chris Geen/Rachel Robinson	Project running for last 12 months and is ongoing
Chesham				
Chesham Town	Chesham multi agency tasking group – Following information from MACE in relation to a group of young people vulnerable to drug and ASB issues engagement with schools and local N/Hood policing, parent safeguarding sessions were conducted for a core vulnerable group who were engaged with, and safeguarding conversations conducted, Youth out-reach work is in action to reach young people in known areas where they gather to sign post them to diversionary activities and support.	Early Intervention and Youth Engagement projects	Chris Geen/Eve Chason	Project running last 9 months and is ongoing

Ward	Current project/activity (with brief detail)	Project you would like to run	Lead	Timescale
	Community Safety Officer has recently linked in with the Job Centre, and will be planning drop in sessions which will involve other partners		Eve Chason	Unknown at present
West Wycombe				
Booker, Cressex and Castlefield				
Castlefield	Castlefield problem solving group. A group currently comprising of Community Safety, NHPT, CADO & Bucks Council ASB team. Looks at issues which can be addressed by partnership working such as littering, broken fencing, school engagement, traffic calming issues, family centre engagement etc. Meets every 8 weeks.		Alyss Ord/ Chris Geen	Currently ongoing as actions arise organically.
Abbey				
Dovecot Road Underpass	Knife amnesty bin looking to be installed. Location agreed by highways who own the land. Installation being discussed and banner to advertise being designed.		Alyss Ord/ PCSO Bennett.	April 2023
Terriers and Amersham Hill				
Ryemead and Micklefield				
Totteridge and Bowerdean				

Across Bucks	Current project/activity (with brief detail)	Project you would like to run	Lead	Timescale
	Safe Places scheme – support for vulnerable individuals when out in the community		CSOs	Ongoing
	Ask for Angela- sexual violence campaign		CSOs	Ongoing
	Vulnerability campaign- promoting a safer night out, party safe/home safe materials		CSOs/TVP/Licensing	Ongoing

Across Bucks	Current project/activity (with brief detail)	Project you would like to run	Lead	Timescale
	as well as materials for bar, security and waiting staff			
	Hotel Watch – ‘spot the signs’ exploitation inputs and materials for hotel staff		CSOs/TVP Safeguarding	Ongoing
	NTE exploitation campaign- ‘spot the signs’ exploitation materials for late night eateries/taxi drivers		CSOs/TVP/Licensing	Ongoing
	Ask for Ani (run by pharmacies)- domestic abuse support.		Pharmacies	Ongoing
	Community events targeted at vulnerable groups- incorporates a variety of crime prevention information, often themed depending on the needs of key target groups.		CSOs/partner agencies such as TVP/Trading Standards	Ongoing

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Appendix A

Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy

2023 – 2026

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How we will work in partnership

Introduction

We are pleased to introduce the Safer Buckinghamshire Partnership Strategy for 2023 – 2026 which sets out the strategic areas that we have prioritised to tackle over the next three years. The central vision of the Safer Buckinghamshire Partnership is for Buckinghamshire to continue to be one of the safest places to grow up, raise a family, live, work and do business.

The Safer Buckinghamshire Board, which is the multi-agency partnership responsible for tackling crime and disorder within Buckinghamshire, is committed to addressing the issues that cause the greatest level of harm to our communities. The priorities within this strategy are informed by an in-depth analysis of data from a range of community safety agencies which are contained in the Partnership Strategic Assessment, along with the views of people living and working within Buckinghamshire.

Our 2023-2026 priorities are:

- Neighbourhood Crime
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Serious Violence
- Violence against Women and Girls
- Exploitation of Vulnerable People

We recognise we can only achieve our vision with our communities. With community involvement, we will be more able to protect individuals and property and make our neighbourhoods even safer. We want to reduce crime and disorder and protect vulnerable people in Buckinghamshire. Crime is constantly changing, and we face increased pressures on our resources. A partnership approach that involves local communities is the best way to tackle these challenges.

We would like to acknowledge all of the hard work and efforts of partner agencies and Council services who, on a daily basis, contribute significantly to keeping Buckinghamshire safe – and we look forward to replicating further successes throughout 2023 – 2026.

Chief Supt Michael Loebenberg
Chair – Safer Buckinghamshire Board

Dr Jane O-Grady
Vice Chair – Safer Buckinghamshire Board

The Safer Buckinghamshire Board

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a duty on the police and local authorities to work together with named partner organisations to form a Community Safety Partnership and develop an action plan to reduce crime within the local area. In Buckinghamshire this partnership is called the Safer Buckinghamshire Board.

The members of the Safer Buckinghamshire Board are:

- Buckinghamshire Council
- Thames Valley Police
- Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue Service
- Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Board
- National Probation Service – Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Board works with a wide range of partners from the statutory, community/voluntary and business sectors; and other organisations are invited to attend Board meetings and be involved in the work of the Safer Buckinghamshire Partnership.

The Safer Buckinghamshire Board works closely with other strategic boards to support the delivery of the priorities set out in the Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy. Issues such as domestic violence and abuse, tackling serious violence and keeping children and young people safe, requires a safeguarding focus and long term health interventions, to ensure that the underlying causes are addressed. A number of the priorities and actions outlined in the strategy are shared across the four strategic partnerships, with regular meetings of the chairs of the boards enabling delivery of our shared priorities.

The Board has Statutory Duties in in relation to:

- Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Annual Partnership Strategic Assessment
- Community Safety Plan
- Community Engagement and Consultation
- Information Sharing Protocols and Information Sharing Agreements
- Reducing reoffending
- Preventing extremism
- Modern Slavery
- Anti-social behaviour
- Drugs and alcohol misuse

Key Legislation

Key pieces of legislation govern the priorities in this plan. Due consideration has been given to the following:

Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Police and Justice Act 2006, Policing and Crime Act 2009

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gave a statutory responsibility to local authorities, the police, and key partners to reduce crime and disorder in their communities. Responsible authorities, commonly referred to now as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), are required to carry out audits every three years and to implement crime reduction strategies.

The Police and Justice Act 2006 introduced amendments, including the addition of anti-social behaviour and substance misuse within the remit of the Community Safety Partnership strategies. Reducing reoffending was added by the Policing and Crime Act 2009.

Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004

The requirement for Community Safety Partnerships to conduct Domestic Homicide Reviews came into effect in April 2011 as a result of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

This introduced directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to replace Police Authorities in England and Wales. It is a requirement for the PCC to have regard to the priorities of the responsible authorities making up the CSPs and for those authorities to have regard to the police and crime objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan. The legislation also brought with it a mutual duty for the PCC and the responsible authorities to act in co-operation with each other in exercising their respective functions.

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

The Act introduced simpler and more effective powers to tackle anti-social behaviour and provide better protection for victims and communities. This includes a new Community Trigger and Community Remedy to give people a greater say in how agencies respond to complaints. Updated statutory guidance from the Home Office released in December 2017 has brought greater clarity around the use of the tools and powers introduced by the Act.

Safeguarding legislation

Between 2014 and 2016 a number of pieces of legislation were introduced, including the Care Act 2014, Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Serious Crime Act 2015, Modern Slavery Act 2015 and Psychoactive Substances Act 2016. Legislation introduced duties including new reporting, referral and decision-making mechanisms, staff awareness requirements and impacts on contract management in the work of relevant organisations.

Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

This places a legal duty on local authorities “when exercising its functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Prevent is one of four strands of the government’s counterterrorism strategy and aims to stop people

becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Section 36 of the CTSA places a duty on local authorities to ensure that a Channel Panel is in place for their area that provides support for people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The changes introduced through the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 will impact on victims, families and agencies by improving the response to domestic abuse. The Act included a statutory definition of domestic abuse; introduction of a Domestic Abuse Commissioner; a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Order; a new duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims and their children in safe accommodation.

Serious Violence Duty (Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022)

The Serious Violence Duty requires local authorities, the police, fire and rescue authorities, specified criminal justice agencies and health authorities to work together to formulate an evidence based analysis of the problems associated with serious violence in a local area, and then produce and implement a strategy detailing how they will respond to those particular issues. Prisons, youth custody agencies and educational authorities may also need to work with these core partners.

National Drugs Strategy – From Harm to Hope

A new cross-Government 10-year national drugs strategy was published in April 2022 with 3 core priorities:

- Break drug supply chains
- Deliver a world class treatment and recovery system
- Achieve a shift in demand for recreational drugs

Guidance for local delivery partners sets out a requirement for local areas to have a multi-agency Combating Drugs Partnership (CDP), accountable for delivering against the new National Combating Drugs Outcomes Framework.

About Buckinghamshire

Buckinghamshire is a county in the south-east of England, bordering Greater London and Berkshire to the south, Oxfordshire to the west, Northamptonshire to the north, Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes to the north-east and Hertfordshire to the east. Buckinghamshire consists of 12 key towns: Amersham (New and Old Town); Aylesbury, Beaconsfield (old and new town), Buckingham, Chesham, Gerrards Cross, Great Missenden, High Wycombe, Marlow, Princes Risborough, Wendover, Winslow.

- The population size in the County has grown from around 505,300 people in 2011 to approximately 553,100 people in 2021. An increase of 9.5 per cent (2021 Census).
- In England, over the same period (2011 to 2021), the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489,800, an increase of 6.6 per cent. The growth is 2.9 per cent lower than the increase in Buckinghamshire (2021 Census).
- There were 6.2 per cent more 20-39-year-olds in Buckinghamshire in 2021 than previously estimated by the ONS. However, there were 3.3 per cent fewer 0-14-year-olds than previously estimated (2021 Census).

Buckinghamshire is an affluent county but contains some of the lowest levels of deprivation in England, with 3.3% of the population categorised as living in the 3 most deprived Indices of Multiple Deprivation deciles.

The relative affluence masks areas of poverty, with the greatest deprivation in Buckinghamshire found in the population of 'Urban City and Town' areas.

Buckinghamshire has better health overall in comparison to England and the South East. Life expectancy is higher for men and women; however, the health of residents varies within, and between, local areas. For example, people living in more deprived areas are more likely to live in poor health and die younger than people living in more affluent areas. They are also more likely to develop multiple long-term conditions earlier, such as diabetes and heart disease.

- In 2018 to 2020, the average life expectancy for men in Buckinghamshire was 81.5 years, and the average life expectancy for women was 85.1 years.

People in Buckinghamshire have also experienced declining mental health with rising diagnoses, referral rates and greater social isolation. COVID-19 has also impacted income, employment, and education – all factors that can affect someone's health and wellbeing.

Buckinghamshire has lower crime rates than England, the South East and Thames Valley. However, examining data at a smaller geographical level reveals areas within the county that experience crime rates far higher than the average rate for the county. Thames Valley Police is responsible for policing Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, along with Berkshire and Oxfordshire. It is the largest non-metropolitan force in England and Wales.

What have we done in the last three years?

The priorities we committed to delivering in the previous Safer Buckinghamshire Plan covering the period 2020-23 are set out below:

- Helping communities to become more resilient - targeting support to those communities experiencing greater levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Protecting vulnerable adults and children - working with them to reduce their chances of experiencing or committing serious crime, especially violent crime, or being exploited.
- Addressing the impact of drugs, alcohol, and poor mental health - working to reduce levels of crime and harm linked to these factors.
- Tackling domestic violence and abuse - focusing on early intervention and improving services for victims.
- Dealing with offending - acting as early as possible to prevent first time offending and bringing offenders to justice and working hard to stop re-offending.

For the duration of our previous Safer Buckinghamshire Plan 2020-23, we were able to make substantial headway on achieving our aims through the delivery of projects, partnership working, and placing the victims of crime at the heart of our response to crime and disorder. However, the impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic must be acknowledged. During the last three years, the pandemic has forced the agencies involved in the Safer Buckinghamshire Board to adopt new ways of working. Across all of our priorities, we have addressed the impact of Covid-19 and taken steps to reduce its impact on crime and the causes of crime.

This has undoubtedly been a difficult period, but the strength of partnership working in Buckinghamshire has enabled the Community Safety Partnership to remain assured that community safety issues across Buckinghamshire are identified, addressed and reviewed.

During the last three years we have:

- Expanded the Council's Street Warden Team to cover not only High Wycombe town centre, but also Aylesbury. They have been working with partners to address town centre issues of begging and rough sleeping – supporting and referring individuals who are genuinely homeless, along with identifying those who are exploiting visitors to our town centres.
- The Community Safety newsletter, which includes a variety of community safety information and signposting to local services, now reaches almost 4000 subscribers each quarter.
- Buckinghamshire Council were awarded accreditation as a Friends Against Scams (FAS) Organisation.
- The Council's Community Safety Team are working alongside Trading Standards and Thames Valley Police to establish a local multi-agency Task and Finish Group to raise public awareness of fraud and scams.
- Environmental Visual Audits (EVAs) have been regularly undertaken alongside community members, Thames Valley Police and representatives from other partner

agencies in some of our local areas, to identify issues of concern. Partners have then developed a holistic approach in taking action to address the problems.

- Buckinghamshire Council Serious Violence Officers are linked into the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) funded Hospital Navigator post, based within Stoke Mandeville Hospital. The Navigator, alongside vetted volunteers, work within the A&E Unit to identify individuals who may be a victim or perpetrator of serious violence. They are approached and offered support and if accepted, signposted on to further services.
- The Buckinghamshire Serious Violence Reduction plan has been developed and embedded across the Partnership, which includes the development of the VRU multi-agency data-sharing and analytical platform Thames Valley Together.
- There has been an increase in service and partnership representation within our Anti-Slavery and Exploitation Network (A-SEN), which aims to raise awareness of issues within this area and share knowledge and best practice. Speakers have included nationally recognised organisations such as: The Salvation Army, Gangmaster and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), Anti-Slavery Commissioners Office and Human Trafficking Foundation.
- The Buckinghamshire Hotel Watch Scheme has been expanded to over 80 premises across the county - all of which have been provided with information and guidance on how to spot the signs and report concerns, of exploitation.
- Following training, 3 community hubs were created to support and work with LGBTQ+, disability and ethnic minority communities. The hubs delivered projects during National Hate Crime Awareness Week
- Police and Crime Commissioner Community Safety funding has been allocated to support specialist intervention activities to students who are at highest risk of engaging in activities that put them at risk of exploitation and/or serious violence and criminality
- Partners are delivering the Blue Light project, which utilises behaviour change and assertive outreach strategies with complex drinkers, whose alcohol use and associated lifestyle contributes to a pattern of more frequent contact with a range of frontline public services. This is a highly diverse service user group whose social circumstances range from being housed to homeless, involved in the criminal justice system, commonly experiencing mental health problems, facing financial difficulties, and lacking in social capital or support networks.
- Criminal Justice Community Connectors have been recruited and work in the courts and police custody suite screening people, giving harm reduction advice and, where appropriate, Naloxone training and issuing a Naloxone kit. This work has resulted in a steady increase in referrals for individuals requiring structured drug/alcohol treatment.
- Needle Exchange Dispensing Unit has been installed within Aylesbury Custody Suite and TVP have been working in partnership on a harm reduction initiative to ensure appropriate access to needles for people who inject drugs. A Needle and Syringe dispensing machine has now been fitted within Aylesbury custody suite to dispense 1ml & 2ml packs. The dispensing units will be managed and restocked by One Recovery Bucks.
- The Buckinghamshire Council Community Safety team were successful in obtaining funding from the Ministry of Justice. With this, Women's Aid successfully appointed

a Complex Needs Floating Support Worker in December 2020. The worker provides intensive one to one work with clients of all risk levels who are survivors of domestic abuse but are unable to access emergency refuge accommodation. Clients are offered support, information and advocacy when dealing with other issues relating to their domestic abuse whilst in temporary accommodation.

- Talkback were commissioned by Buckinghamshire Council in March 2020 to produce a research and recommendations report into domestic abuse and learning disability and/or autism in Buckinghamshire. Following on from this, Talkback Advice Bureau (a drop-in service) was launched in Wycombe in November 2021. A second drop-in centre will open in Chesham in 2022. Funding is also in place to develop a service online.
- Development of a 24 hour mental health helpline to provide advice during covid pandemic
- There are 441 trained Domestic Abuse Champions across a range of organisations in Buckinghamshire.
- The PCC funded Youth Offending Service multi-agency project has enabled effective prevention work to be carried out across 16 schools in Buckinghamshire with young people at risk of offending.
- National data shows that Buckinghamshire had 132 First Time Entrants per 100,000 young people aged 10-18 in the October 2020 to September 2021 period. This is a decrease from October 2019 – September 2020 where there were 153 First Time Entrants per 100,000. Buckinghamshire Youth Offending Service is performing better than the National and Thames Valley rates against this indicator.
- The Safer Buckinghamshire Board allocated funding from the PCC Community Safety grant to increase the outreach capacity for both Wycombe and Aylesbury Women's Aid in response to increased demand following Covid lockdown.
- A professional's toolkit of learning disability and domestic abuse advice materials and publicity has been created and is being regularly updated. Buckinghamshire Council has started work to create an Easy Read website for those with learning disabilities. One of the roles of this website will be to host the Toolkit.

What you told us

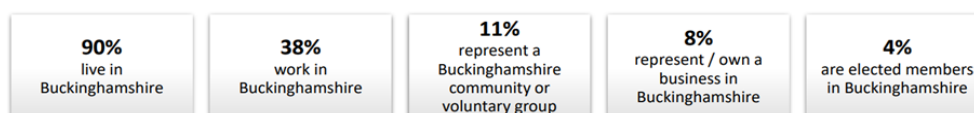
Each year the Safer Buckinghamshire Board undertakes an annual public consultation in order to understand the views and concerns of residents and communities.

In September 2022, we asked people in Buckinghamshire what they thought the biggest community safety issues were. The survey included multiple choice questions and the opportunity for people to give comments.

However, due to the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, a few days into the survey we halted the promotion and communications for a few weeks, out of respect.

Nevertheless, we received 1,264 responses, an increase of 20% on last year

- Demographic information was collected for the first time this year and indicates a reasonable distribution across age, sex, and ethnicity. A slightly higher proportion of women completed the survey (57%) and the age groups between 35 and 74yrs are over-represented (75% in total).



- Distribution of respondents were heavily weighted to the south of the county, with 50% from Chiltern and South Bucks area.
- When asked how much of an issue respondents felt a list of crime types were over the last 12 months, the following were selected as the most concerning – this is compared to those selected in 2021:

Top Concerns Related to Crime 2022	% of respondents with 'Very Big' or 'Fairly Big' concerns
Fraud /scams (including online fraud)	67% ←
Theft from a motor vehicle	52% ↑
Criminal damage	49% ↑
Cyber crime / cyber bullying	44% ←
Theft of a motor vehicle	43% ↑
Theft of equipment / tools from van	42% ↓
Burglary - sheds and garages	41% ←

Top Concerns Related to Crime 2021	% of respondents with 'Very Big' or 'Fairly Big' concerns
Fraud / scams (including online fraud)	69%
Theft of equipment / tools from van	49%
Theft from a motor vehicle	48%
Cyber crime / cyber-bullying	44%
Criminal damage	43%
Burglary - sheds and garages	41%

- As the tables illustrates, fraud and scams continue to be of most concern to respondents. The remaining crime categories that are of most concern have remained similar to those selected in 2021, however with the addition of theft of a motor vehicle as a fairly big/very big concern.

- The most common reasons for responding that a type of crime is a 'Very Big' or 'Fairly Big' concern is 'you heard about it in the local news' (54%) and 'it has happened to someone you know' (52%).
- When asked how much of an issue respondents felt a list of types of anti-social behaviour (ASB) were over the last 12 months, the following were selected as the most concerning – this is compared to those selected in 2021:

Top Concerns Related to ASB 2022	% of respondents with 'Very Big' or 'Fairly Big' concerns	Top Concerns Related to ASB 2021	% of respondents with 'Very Big' or 'Fairly Big' concerns
Speeding	66% ←	Speeding	77%
Fly tipping	65% ←	Fly Tipping / Litter	76%
Parking	56% ←	Parking	64%
Criminal damage / vandalism	48% ↑	Dog Fouling	51%
Dog fouling	44% ↓	Criminal Damage / Vandalism	43%

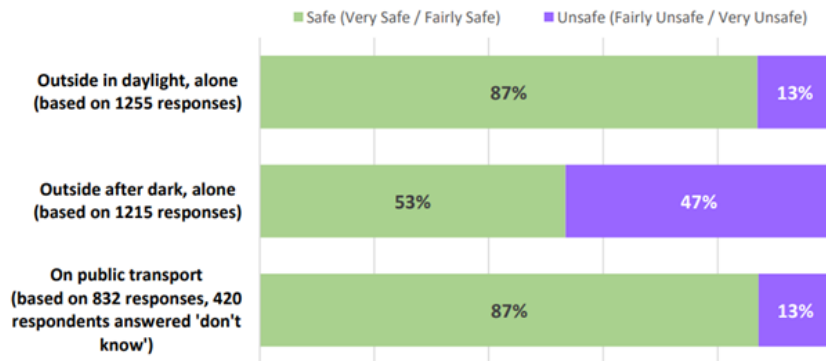
- Although the top three issues remain the same as last year, the proportion of respondents considering them to be either Very Big or Fairly Big issues has fallen in each case.
- Criminal damage / vandalism is the only ASB issue to see an increase, up 5%. This was also reflected in the Crime question.
- The most commonly selected reason for responding that a type of ASB is a 'Very Big' or 'Fairly Big' concern is 'it has happened to you / you've seen it before'.
- Concerns relating to ASB continue to primarily be based on personal experience of the responder, rather than hearing about it from a third party. This was also the case in the 2021 survey
- When asked how much of a problem respondents felt a list of drugs and alcohol related issues were, the following were selected as fairly and very big concerns:

Top concerns relating to Alcohol and Drugs 2022	% of respondents with 'Very Big' or 'Fairly Big' concerns	Top Concerns Related to Alcohol and Drugs 2021	% of respondents with 'Very Big' or 'Fairly Big' concerns
Drug paraphernalia discarded (canisters)	43% ←	Drug paraphernalia discarded (canisters)	47%
Drug use	43% ←	Supply / selling of drugs	43%
Behaviour related to drug use	42% ←	Drug use	43%
Supply / selling of drugs	42% ←	Behaviour related to drug use	43%
Drug possession	39% ←	Drug possession	37%
Alcohol disorder / behaviour	38% ←	Alcohol disorder / behaviour	36%

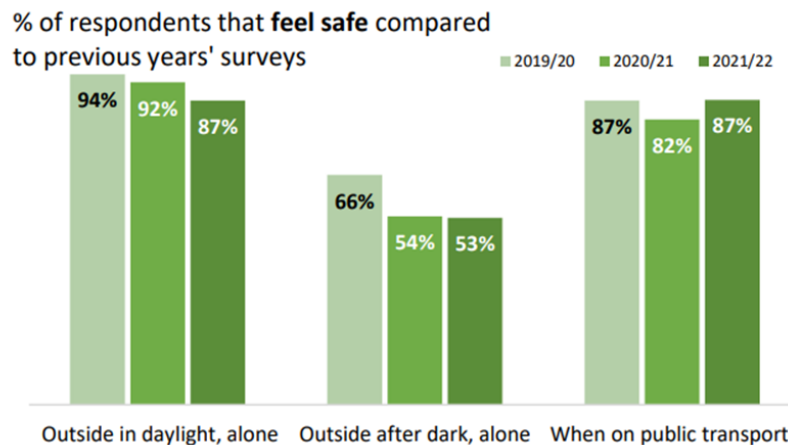
- The most common reasons for responding that a Drugs concern is 'Very Big' or 'Fairly Big' is 'it has happened to you / you have seen it before'. This was also the case in the 2021 survey.
- The proportion of respondents that were a victim of a crime in the 12 months leading up to the survey was 29%, higher than 2021 (20%). The proportion of crime

victims that did not report the crime in 2022 is 33%, slightly lower than 2021 (36%). Direct comparison with last year is difficult due to a different question configuration – however, ‘Little chance of catching the perpetrator’ is the most common reason in both years

- When asked how safe/unsafe respondents feel in their local areas, 47% felt unsafe/very unsafe after dark, whilst 13% felt unsafe/very unsafe when outside in daylight. 13% of respondents felt unsafe/very unsafe on public transport, however only 832 residents answered this question, and 420 responded ‘don’t know’.



- The following table illustrates the difference in responses over the last three years regarding people’s feeling of safety:



Crime and Community Safety in Buckinghamshire

The Strategic Assessment is produced 3-yearly, assessing crime and crime related issues across the county to inform the priorities of the Safer Buckinghamshire Partnership. The last report was completed in 2020, reviewing the 5-year period between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2019. The 2023 Strategic Assessment includes data from Thames Valley Police, Buckinghamshire Council, Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue and Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards, it covers the time-frame April 2017 – March 2022.

The crime rate in Buckinghamshire in 2021/22 has marginally increased for the fourth year (excluding 2020/21 – see below regarding Covid Pandemic) to 59.6 crimes per 1000 population. Compared with the wider Thames Valley (72.4 crimes per 1000 population) and England (88.7 crimes per 1000 population), Buckinghamshire remains an area of relatively low levels of crime. Nevertheless, between 2017 and 2022 there were 152,235 crime occurrences across Buckinghamshire with 79,198 recorded victims, 21% of whom were victimised on more than one occasion.

The high-volume crime in Buckinghamshire is similar to that identified 3 years ago, with violent offences (37%) and theft offences (30%), accounting for most crimes. However, the increasing levels of violent crime identified in the Strategic Assessment 2020 have continued, as has the identified trend of theft crimes reducing (even without the impact of Covid). The result is that violent crime is now the highest volume crime type in Buckinghamshire, with theft offences now accounting for the second highest volume of crime. This pattern is repeated nationally and is not unique to Buckinghamshire. Public order is the third highest volume crime with 14% share, which has also increased over last 3 years. Other crime categories continue to account for broadly the same proportion of crime as 3 years ago.

2021/22 crime rates:

- Violence against the person offences 22.1 crimes per 1000 population – an increase of 9.6 over last 5 years
- Criminal damage and arson 5.7 crimes per 1000 population – a decrease of 1.4 over 5 years
- Public order offences 8.3 crimes per 1000 population – and increase of 6.7 over 5 years
- Theft offences 17.6 crimes per 1000 population – a decrease of 8.5 over 5 years
- Sexual offences 2.2 crimes per 1000 population – an increase of 0.6 over 5 years
- Drug offences 2.0 crimes per 1000 population – a increase of 0.5 over 5 years

Covid Pandemic

In March 2020, a global pandemic placed the UK into a series of national lockdowns and restrictions and there has been significant impact on many aspects of life, both during and since the key periods of lockdown. Crime levels reflected some of the significant changes. The Office National Statistics (ONS) highlighted an instant drop in overall crime. This same pattern can also be seen in the crime levels of Buckinghamshire.

Figure 12 - Crime level changes June 2019 - May 2020, England and Buckinghamshire



The drop was not consistent across all crime types, the pattern in Buckinghamshire mirrored the national pattern. Those crime types that fell significantly, nationally were Sexual Offences, Robbery Offences, Criminal Damage & Arson Offences, and Theft Offences as outlined by ONS2. Such changes are likely a result of:

- People being instructed to stay home, with the closure of the night-time economy and non-essential retail
- Reduced movement of people, limiting the opportunity for perpetrator and victim to come into contact, and those people not at home being more visible.
- The act of staying home had a protective effect against some crimes such as residential burglary and vehicle crime.

The pandemic also had a significant and widespread economic and social impact. Living under Covid-19 restrictions compounded existing vulnerabilities and, in some cases, individuals not previously identified as vulnerable may have become so because of the pandemic.

Challenges were not felt equally across all communities; while some were grateful to spend more time with families, stop long commutes, achieve a better work / life balance and save money, other people experienced increased levels of loneliness and isolation and reduced personal resilience and loss of income, this was particularly noted in young people and older adults.

As the financial crisis now takes hold, those people who struggled economically, in health and / or socially are facing this next challenge with reduced resilience and resources.

War in Ukraine

Many Ukrainians have sought refuge in the UK. The Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme has resulted in Ukrainian refugees moving into Buckinghamshire. Some of these people may have experienced trauma, be vulnerable to exploitation and potentially could be victims of domestic violence. There is also the potential that they could experience hate crime.

Financial crisis

For the first time in a generation or more, interest rates are increasing, which together with increasing energy, fuel and food prices is creating cost of living increases that many people cannot absorb.

Our priorities for the next three years

Using all the information available we have developed a set of priorities for 2023-26. They focus on the known causes of crime and also the concerns of people in Buckinghamshire.

1. *Neighbourhood Crime*
2. *Anti-Social Behaviour*
3. *Serious Violence*
4. *Violence against Women and Girls*
5. *Exploitation of Vulnerable People*

Cross Cutting Priorities

Underpinning these five priorities will be common themes that are applicable to any or all of the priorities to a greater or lesser degree. Those common themes are:

- **COVID-19 recovery**

It is important to look at how we return our services to 'business as usual' as we move out of the pandemic, recognising the impact COVID-19 has had on residents' and businesses, and using what we have learned to enhance and improve our approach.

- **Drugs and Alcohol**

Drug use drives crime, damages people's health, puts children and families at risk and reduces productivity – it impacts all of the country, with the most deprived areas facing the greatest burden. A new cross-Government 10 year national drugs strategy 'From harm to hope' was published in April 2022. This followed the publication of Dame Carol Black's independent drugs review in 2020 and 2021, commissioned by the Home Secretary. The strategy is led by the Home Office and includes additional investment for local authorities to supplement the public health grant tied to specific actions as agreed with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.

The strategy has 3 core priorities:

- a) Break drug supply chains
- b) Deliver a world class treatment and recovery system
- c) Achieve a shift in demand for recreational drugs

Guidance on the strategy sets out a requirement for local areas to have a multi-agency Combating Drugs Partnership (CDP), accountable for delivering against the new National Combating Drugs Outcomes Framework. A Buckinghamshire Combating Drugs Partnership has been established on the Buckinghamshire Council footprint and is chaired by the Director of Public Health and Community Safety.

While the key focus is on drugs, it is recognised that alcohol is frequently used alongside drugs and that treatment services tend to be integrated across alcohol and drugs (as in Buckinghamshire). It has been agreed nationally CDPs should cover both alcohol and drugs as their use is interlinked.

As well as being driven by the Combatting Drugs Partnership, tackling the impact of drugs and alcohol will also feature within the delivery plans for each of the Safer Buckinghamshire Board priorities for 2023-26.

- **Offending**

The number of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time is lower in Buckinghamshire than national rates and rates across the Thames Valley. The rate of young people reoffending in Buckinghamshire is also currently lower than that seen nationally, and across the Thames Valley. However, both national and local data clearly shows that young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds are over-represented within the criminal justice system. Buckinghamshire's Youth Justice Plan sets out its ambition to continue to focus on prevention and diversion to ensure these rates remain low and that disproportionality is addressed across the county.

The causes of offending are broad and complex, so it is important that a range of organisations work together to help prevent offending and re-offending. Once someone has begun offending, there is a greater chance that they will re-offend. For adults in particular, the risk of reoffending is reduced if people can rebuild community and family connections and access safe, stable accommodation. Employment and education are also critical, along with providing continuity of care for offenders who experience substance misuse issues, especially when they leave prison. The criminal justice partnership plans focus on these important issues.

The Safer Buckinghamshire Partnership will maintain strong links with this agenda to ensure we support partners to deliver positive actions, through our delivery plans and through funding opportunities.

- **Levelling up**

Whilst the majority of our communities are thriving in the county, we know that in some areas of Buckinghamshire people are experiencing significant hardship. As partners, we want to come together with these communities and draw upon our collective resources to enhance opportunities and promote community wellbeing.

The Government has placed 'Levelling up' at the heart of its agenda to recover after the pandemic.

Within Buckinghamshire, 'Opportunity Bucks - Succeeding for All' provides a framework for bringing partners together to focus our collective resources in tracking those local priorities that will make a difference to the outcome of residents. It will focus on five themes:

- Education and Skills
- Jobs and Career Opportunities
- Quality of our Public realm
- Standard of Living
- Health and Wellbeing

Initially, the programme will be focused on 10 wards in three areas – parts of Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Chesham. Local action plans will be developed through engagement with the communities, led by the Community Boards.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour is one of the priorities within the Quality of our Public Realm theme, therefore the Safer Buckinghamshire Board will undertake co-ordinated, joined up work with the Opportunity Bucks Quality of the Public realm Working Group to deliver reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour in identified locations.

Delivery Plans

Delivery Plans will be produced for each priority setting out clear measures so that we can track the impact of our actions.

The plans will seek to tackle each of the priorities by taking a public health approach and addressing the underlying factors in order to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people.

It is also important to work with our local communities to understand local priorities and develop an approach that is responsive and effective in increasing feelings of safety.

We will use our funds, including the Community Safety Grant from the Police and Crime Commissioner, to support these priorities. Our focus will be on early interventions to prevent crime at the earliest opportunity.

The [Thames Valley Police and Criminal Justice Plan](#) sets out the strategic priorities for policing between 2021 and 2025:

- Strong local policing – preventing crime and protecting communities
- Fighting serious organised crime – protecting vulnerable people
- Fighting fraud and cybercrime – fighting modern crimes
- Improving the criminal justice system – reducing reoffending
- Tackling illegal encampments – enforcing with partners

The new Safer Buckinghamshire Board priorities will contribute to the delivery of the above Police and Criminal Justice Plan priorities.

Priority 1 - Neighbourhood Crime

Our research, analysis and consultation feedback has told us that:

‘Crime destroys lives. Victims are often left traumatised, injured or heartbroken. Crime can ruin neighbourhoods and does great economic damage to our country. It makes people feel unsafe on the street and in their homes. Criminal activity fuels and funds huge criminal enterprises. Involvement in crime can set someone on a path that brings enormous harm to themselves and others.’ (*Beating Crime Plan, 2021*)

When asked how much of an issue respondents felt a list of crime types were over the last 12 months, Fraud and Scams continue to be of most concern to respondents, with 67% of those completing our survey feeling it was a ‘fairly big’ or ‘very big’ concern. This was followed by theft from motor vehicle (52%), criminal damage (49%), cybercrime (44%) and theft of a motor vehicle (43%).

The National Crime Agency (NCA) states that fraud is the most experienced crime in the UK. Fraud can be defined as trickery used to gain a dishonest advantage, which is often financial, over another person. Fraud is an under-reported crime, the NCA estimates only 20% of crimes are reported to the police.

Tackling and reducing crime is the central aim of a Community Safety Partnership, and therefore it is essential as one of the priorities.

We will:

- Work with key partners to establish an operational group, who will take an evidence-informed approach to crime hotspots and trends. The group will direct partnership activity, resources and communications, taking into account the community safety concerns identified through the public consultation.
- Continue to raise awareness of fraud, scams and cybercrime and how people can report incidents, providing support for those that need it.
- Support the work of the Combatting Drugs Partnership, recognising drugs and alcohol as drivers of crime and associated criminalities.
- Work with communities and partners to raise awareness of Hate Crime, building trust so people feel confident in reporting.
- Support innovative projects that address the prevention and reduction of offending behaviour.

Priority 2 - Anti-Social Behaviour

Our research, analysis and consultation feedback has told us that:

Anti-social behaviour can be described as behaviour/actions which cause or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress and, if left unchecked, can have a serious adverse effect on individuals, communities and the environment. Victims of anti-social behaviour can become frightened of leaving their home and even feel unsafe when in their homes, meaning they are less likely to engage in community activity, thus creating a more fragmented and less cohesive community.

Anti-social behaviour in Buckinghamshire continues to be a key community concern, identified annually in the Residents Community Safety Survey, which highlighted discarded drug paraphernalia (43%) and behaviour related to drug use (42%) as being a very big or fairly big problem.

Everyone has the right to feel safe in their own homes and neighbourhoods.

We will:

- Work with partners to raise awareness of the ways in which people can report anti-social behaviour, ensuring that safe reporting mechanisms are accessible to all.
- Develop a multi-agency approach which maps occurrences of anti-social behaviour, locations and times. To identify repeat victimisation, known perpetrators, affected parties and direct partnership activity and resources.
- Consider a wide range of preventative and diversionary activities to help respond to anti-social behaviour.
- In partnership with registered social landlords, Community Boards, residents and other key partners, utilise all appropriate tools and powers to tackle anti-social behaviour.
- Support victims of anti-social behaviour by providing practical guidance in partnership with support agencies; to address victim's needs, particularly those who are considered vulnerable.

Priority 3 - Serious Violence

Our research, analysis and consultation feedback has told us that:

Serious violence has a negative impact on individuals, communities and the county as a whole. It stops people feeling safe and affects their wellbeing. We also know that traumatic and negative experiences, especially in childhood, can have a lasting effect and make someone more vulnerable to harm in later life.

Nationally, serious violence and knife crime increased by 84% between June 2014 and June 2020. Concerns around serious violence and the need for specific and co-ordinated attention from partners as a priority matter gained traction with the publication of the national Serious Violence Strategy, April 2018. The Strategy highlighted increases in knife crime and serious violence and was followed in 2019 by the Serious Violence Duty and in 2022 by the Act, placing a legal duty on 'Duty holders' to work together to prevent serious violence – making it a priority within the 2023-26 Safer Buckinghamshire Strategy.

Tackling serious violence is not a law enforcement issue alone. It requires a coordinated approach involving a range of partners across difference sectors.

If serious violence is not appropriately addressed, it can deter individuals from actively engaging in and connecting with leisure, social and community activities.

We will:

- Raise awareness of serious violence through communication, education and training; so that professionals and those in our communities can recognise signs, how to report their concerns and make referrals to other agencies (as appropriate).
- Support early intervention for vulnerable young people and those becoming at risk.
- Deliver the key actions as set out in the partnership [Safer Buckinghamshire Serious Violence Reduction Plan](#)
- Develop awareness of, and embed, the Serious Violence Agenda and Duty requirements amongst the partnership.
- Enhance appropriate support for those who are released from prison, who are most at risk of re-offending.
- Undertake a proactive partnership response to cohorts and locations vulnerable to serious violence.

Priority 4 - Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Our research, analysis and consultation feedback has told us that:

Crimes of violence against women and girls are many and varied. They include rape and other sexual offences, stalking, domestic abuse, 'honour-based' abuse (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and 'honour' killings), 'revenge porn' and 'upskirting'. These crimes are deeply harmful, not only because of the profound effect they can have on victims, survivors and their loved ones, but also because of the impact they can have on wider society, impacting on the freedom and equality we value and enjoy.

One in 20 adults are estimated to experience domestic abuse every year, equating to almost 21,000 people a year in Buckinghamshire, or 57 people every day. It is a crime which disproportionately affects women, but also happens to men and is irrespective of sexuality, religion, gender, ethnicity, income or age. Individuals and families may live with domestic abuse for a significant time and suffer a multitude of incidents before asking for help. It can have a devastating impact upon physical and mental health and wide-reaching consequences for children who witness and experience it.

We will:

- Deliver early intervention and prevention initiatives to reduce violence against women and girls.
- Raise awareness of these crimes through communication, education and training, so that professionals and those in our community know what to look out for, know how to report their concerns, and make referrals to other agencies (as appropriate)
- Deliver the key actions as set out in the partnership [Domestic Abuse Strategy](#).
- Work to prevent and reduce domestic abuse at the earliest opportunity through proactive use of communication and cross-agency training
- Provide effective services that meet the needs of victims and their families, including male victims and other vulnerable communities.
- Ensure a wide range of safe accommodation options are available for victims, survivors and their children
- Develop a multi-agency approach to dealing with perpetrators

Priority 5 - Exploitation of Vulnerable People

Our research, analysis and consultation feedback has told us that:

Exploitation involves being groomed, forced or coerced into doing something for someone else's gain. The exploitation of vulnerable adults and children is a national issue, often complex and intertwined with serious violence, organised crime, drugs and county lines. Modern Slavery, as defined by the [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#) includes all forms of exploitation. It encompasses slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Victims are often hidden away, may be unable to leave their situation, or may not come forward because of fear or shame.

We know that in Buckinghamshire less affluent areas and urban areas experience disproportionately higher levels of crime. Many of these areas also experience other deprivations such as Health and Social Care Support needs which can heighten their vulnerability to crime. With the current cost-of-living crisis, it is likely that vulnerabilities will increase, and therefore vulnerability to crime including exploitation, will also increase.

In 2021, 12,727 referrals of potential victims of modern slavery were made in the United Kingdom through the National Referral Mechanism process. This represents a 20% increase in referrals compared to the preceding year. An accurate estimate of the true number of victims is difficult to achieve; recent research suggests only 20-30% of victims are known. If this is the case the number of victims is likely to be 5 times higher than that recorded. In Buckinghamshire criminal exploitation is the most significant form of exploitation and low reporting rates remain a concern for all areas.

Extremism causes harm to individuals and whole communities. By intervening at the earliest opportunity, we can work in partnership to address the personal and social factors which make people more receptive to radicalisation, diverting people away from being drawn into violent ideologies and criminal behaviour.

We will:

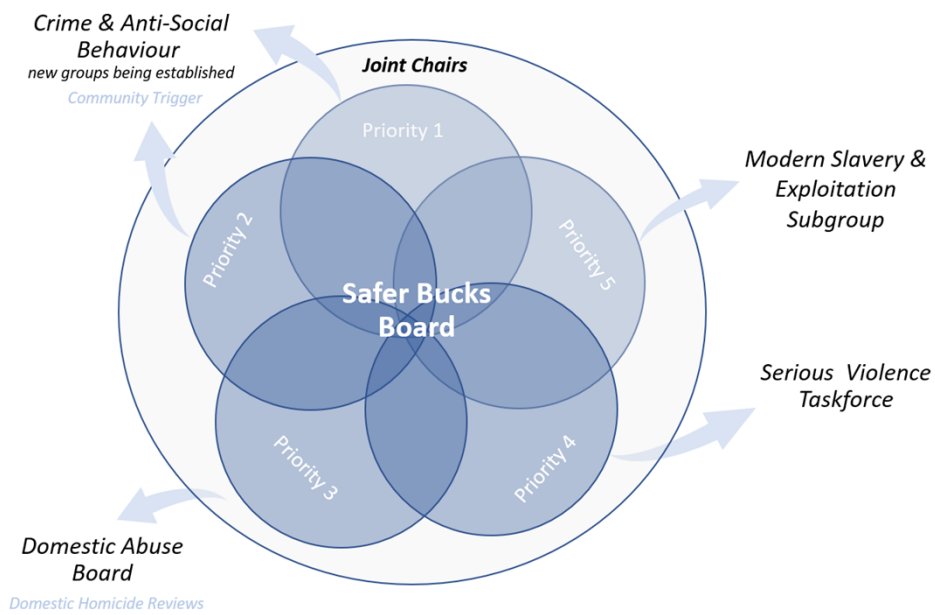
- Identify young people at risk of exploitation and deliver early intervention and prevention projects to prevent further harm.
- Improve reporting and referral processes to effectively identify and safeguard victims of modern slavery and exploitation
- Work with local communities to ensure they can recognise the signs and know how to report exploitation
- Provide training for professionals to improve understanding of exploitation and contextual safeguarding
- Empower those affected by child exploitation, supporting them to identify strategies to exit & withdraw safely
- Identify vulnerable groups and locations where exploitation is at risk of occurring and take action to reduce the risk in these groups and areas.
- Use intelligence to disrupt perpetrators and bring them to justice
- Provide support for individuals (and where appropriate their families) who are vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism leading to terrorism.

How we will work in partnership

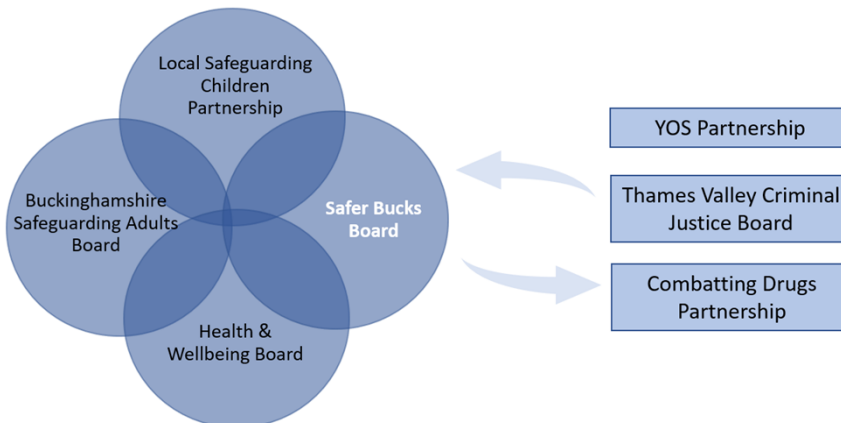
The Safer Buckinghamshire Board has the responsibility to deliver the priorities that are set out within this plan. The Board is also responsible for the strategies that flow from this plan, including the Serious Violence Plan and the Domestic Abuse Strategy.

This requires partner organisations to work together to share skills, knowledge, and resource in order to effectively deliver a service that achieves our ambitions and makes Buckinghamshire a safer place to live, work and visit.

Partnership Landscape



Strategic Partnerships





Report to Communities and Localism Select Committee

Date:	19 th April 2023
Cabinet Member(s):	Cllr Steve Bowles
Contact officer:	Vince Grey, Resilience Service, Business Operations, Resources

Council Resilience Group

Focussing on the continued development of the Council Resilience Framework and Standards Policy we have held two Executive Council Resilience Group (CRG) meetings in the last six months. The theme has been to focus on a One Council Approach to deliver across both council services and collaboration with local communities. During the last two meetings a range of subjects have been brought to the CRG for discussion and review. These range from community resilience, climate change, Corporate Business Continuity plan, Council cyber framework, Exercise Faraday and the council winter readiness and response framework.

Winter Readiness and Response Framework

Building on the One Council Approach we have developed a council winter readiness and response framework that has been in place since November and concluded on the 31st March. This framework provided an overarching review of the council's winter preparedness utilising 15 front line services which included Service Areas dealing with vulnerability i.e. health, Social care and Housing. Service Areas dealing with front line operational activity i.e. Waste Management, TfB, Country parks and Service Areas dealing with emergency or risk i.e. Resilience Service, Business Assurance and Community Safety.

These Service Areas also formed a winter cell which met on the first Thursday of each month. Through the cell we were able to report across the whole council with regards to any arising issues or concerns through the winter months. The winter cell was designed to cover a range of winter planning assumptions from poor weather, cost of living crisis, developing situations across Europe, health concerns, fuel costs and the possibility of power outages as per the Governments power outage plans.

The above approach has proved very successful in supporting the council and provided reassurance across the board. As a result we will be setting up a Summer Framework utilising the same blueprint as the winter framework, this will run from June till September.

One aspect of developing the summer and winter frameworks is that it allows the council to understand any current issues or horizon scan, thus enabling us to plan for better outcomes across all our service areas. This in turn ensures that service provision to the public is always at its peak and responses can be managed quickly.

Work with Parish and Town Councils

There has been a drive for the Resilience Service (RS) to deliver evening community workshops focusing on supporting communities in developing local community emergency plans. At present 4 such workshops have taken place, with one community moving forward to develop their own plan and a second one currently undertaking a review prior to moving forward. As part of the engagement process the RS are keen to develop work within communities that are part of the Opportunities Bucks levelling up programme and by linking in with Community Boards and Town/Parish Clerks we are hoping to drive this activity forward.

Member Training

The RS have undertaken two Member training sessions with regards to emergency management and the council resilience framework and standards policy. These sessions discussed the topics in general but also provided an oversight of the role of Members in these areas of business and how Members could provide their continued support. In particular we are looking for continued Member support in the area of developing local community emergency plans to ensure communities can become more resilient and support the Governments national resilience strategy. Up to seventy Members took part in these sessions and positive feedback was received with regards to the content and support the sessions provided Members

Training and Exercising

The RS have undertaken a range of training and exercising over the last six months. In response to the Governments plans for the possibility of power outages, the RS along with colleagues in Business Assurance, planned Exercise Faraday, a four day exercise to test the council power outage plans and business continuity planning across our front line 15 services as identified in the winter cell. Ex Faraday proved very successful and a report has been reviewed at CMT with regards to its outcomes and next steps. The RS further tested the power outage plan at a regional and national level through our engagement with the Local Resilience Forum's Ex Lemur and the Governments Ex Mighty Oak. Again through testing these process we are able to be better prepared to support the needs of the community should any of these eventualities take place.

The RS worked in tandem with Marlow Town Council in January to exercise their own Town flood plan, Ex Naboo. This was run over an afternoon and involved a range of assets from both Buckinghamshire and Marlow Council's.

We are currently working up a training offer to support the training of all the directors within the council with regards to their role in emergency management. This will also be transformed into training for our volunteer staff, particularly those performing roles at rest centres, local authority liaison officers and third sector voluntary organisations.

Through testing and training these processes we are able to be better prepared to support the needs of the community should any of these eventualities take place. In turn this leads to better service provision to the public.

Resilience Service Webpage

The RS webpage is constantly evolving and we review its content and analytics on a regular basis with our web colleagues. Through this process we aim to provide continued support to communities and businesses across Buckinghamshire on a range of subjects. We review up and coming national days or weeks of activity and plan accordingly using the webpage to deliver important messages i.e. 30 ways for 30 days in September. We also utilised the webpage to support our attendance at the Bucks County Show and highlight the impact of understanding the need for personal resilience in the home and wider community.

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