



# Community Safety Service

Community Board Briefing



# Contents

- Introduction to Community Safety
- Partnership and Plans
- Restructure
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Serious Violence
- Domestic Abuse
- Modern Slavery and Exploitation
- CCTV
- Communications

# Legal Background

Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998:

“Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the **duty** of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to **do all that it reasonably can** to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.” .....includes tackling substance misuse, Anti-Social Behaviour and re-offending.

# Crime & Disorder

**Types of Crime & Disorder include:**

**1. Acquisitive Crime -**

Burglary

Robbery

Motor vehicle theft

Other theft

**2. Violence -**

Serious Violence

Domestic Violence

Sexual Offences

**3. Drugs Offences -**

Drug dealing

County Lines

**4. Modern Slavery -**

Criminal exploitation

Trafficking

**5. Race/Hate Crime**

**6. Anti-Social behaviour**

**7. Prevent/Channel**

# Community Safety Partnership



**Safer Buckinghamshire Board  
(Community Safety Partnership)**

**Safer Buckinghamshire  
Co-ordinating Group**

# Community Safety Partnership Members

Thames Valley Police

Buckinghamshire Council

Bucks Fire & Rescue

Clinical Commissioning Group (Health)

Probation (NPS/CRC)

Youth Offending Service

(other partners invited when relevant)

# Safer Bucks Plan and Strategic Assessment

- Regulations outline the requirement for a three year the partnership plan which sets out a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder and for combating substance misuse in the area.\*
- During each year the Safer Buckinghamshire Board prepares a strategic assessment on behalf of the responsible authorities.
- The purpose of the strategic assessment is to assist the strategy group in revising the partnership plan.

*\*The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007*



# Safer Buckinghamshire Plan



# Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is: behaviour that is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more person not in the same household as the perpetrator. It also includes fear of crime or concern for public safety, public disorder or public nuisance.



- **Reporting:** ASB is reported mainly to Police, then to Residential Social Landlords (RSLs) and the Local Authority (LA). Recording of incidents is mainly on police databases but some cases are uniquely held by RSLs and LA. The three Police areas each have a Single Point of Contact for ASB with cases managed through NHP teams. Buckinghamshire Council currently has two ASB Officers, with slightly differing responsibilities. Three Street Wardens cover High Wycombe Town Centre and a similar 12-month pilot scheme is due to commence in Aylesbury, with two street wardens.
- **Service Review:** An increase in resourcing within the Council ASB Service is under consideration, following a planned re-structure and recent review of the ASB service. There are upwards of thirty RSLs with varying levels of stock in Buckinghamshire. Only a handful of these have dedicated ASB resources. An ASB Action Group has been re-instated in High Wycombe, making one multi-agency ASBAG on each Local Police Area. Common Terms of Reference have been introduced and the website pages for each geographical area have been updated to ensure consistency.
- **Community Trigger:** There is no empirical data available to understand precisely why there is a disproportionate number of “Community Trigger” applications amongst tenants of RSLs. The Strategic Assessment shows that in areas of Multiple Deprivation within the county, Acquisitive Crime is more prevalent. Social tenancy is high within such areas and it is a recognised fact that ASB and Crime go alongside each other, leading to disproportionate numbers of incidents. The ‘Community Trigger’ is signposted on the Buckinghamshire Council website. Guidance as to how to apply for an ASB Review is clearly listed with web-forms or printable paper versions available, making it widely accessible.
- **Risks and Issues:** Anecdotal information is suggesting the Covid-19 pandemic has been the catalyst to a recent increase in “Community Trigger” applications within social housing settings, (mostly what would be traditionally known as ‘Neighbour Disputes’). A significant amount of resource is required to manage such applications and so will need to be monitored, going forward. A concerted awareness campaign for Community Triggers has been considered, but at this time would not be met with the resources required to provide an efficient and timely service, so will be deferred for later consideration.

# Serious Violence

Serious Violence is a National Community Safety priority, the Government has written a new Statutory Duty bill which is expected to be enacted in April 2022, this duty is intended to create the right conditions for agencies including Local authorities to collaborate and communicate regularly, to use existing partnerships and to share information and take effective coordinated action to reduce serious violence in their local areas.

Buckinghamshire Council has created and is leading a multi-agency Serious Violence Task Force to work towards ensuring that The Safer Buckinghamshire Partnership including the Council is ready and able to meet the obligations set out in this new duty. The Home Office is also providing a grant circa £40,000 to support local Authorities to implement and co-ordinate the serious violence agenda.

The Home Office has set up Regional Violence Reduction Units (VRU) to provide targeted funding and to implement, co-ordinate and develop products and initiatives to support , Police, Local Authorities and other statutory agencies in tackling Serious Violence for example County Lines Drug dealing and Knife Crime.

Buckinghamshire Safer Buckinghamshire Partnership is working closely with the VRU to co-ordinate violence reduction initiatives, early intervention activities and implement a whole system collaborative and local (place based) approach in reducing serious violence with our key partners and local Communities. Several of the projects initiated by the VRU are being developed in Buckinghamshire for example Hospital Navigator Role Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Intensive Engagement initiative Wycombe.

**For further information on the VRU please visit: <https://www.tvvru.co.uk>**

# Domestic Abuse Bill 2021

On the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 the Domestic Abuse Bill received Royal Assent and has since been enacted. It requires all local authorities in England to have regard to the statutory guidance in exercising their functions under Part 4. It places a duty on Buckinghamshire Council as a Tier One local authority to:

- Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board which it must consult as it performs certain specified functions
- Assess the need for domestic abuse support for all victims (and their children) residing in relevant and safe accommodation, including those who come from outside of their area.
- Prepare and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their area having regard to the needs assessment.
- Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning/de-commissioning all forms of safe accommodation)
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and delivery plan
- Annually report to central government, the first report is due in 2022

The DA Bill Places a Safe Accommodation duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other forms of safe accommodation. This includes providing homeless victims of domestic abuse automatic 'priority need' for homelessness assistance and ensuring that where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an assured short hold tenancy) this must be a secure lifetime tenancy.

The DA Board met in shadow form on the 16<sup>th</sup> March with a productive first gathering and will meet officially as an established Board at the end of June.

**For further information on the above please contact: [Paula.Wilkinson@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Paula.Wilkinson@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)**

# Domestic Abuse – Existing Business

- **Safe Spaces/Ask for Ani (Action Needed Immediately):** Throughout the pandemic there has been an abundance of communications delivered to the public via social media, over radio advertising and in public spaces. In particular, our campaign within vaccination centres which we will build on during the autumn Covid19/flu vaccination roll out. There is also a drive to promote work as a safe space to disclose also. We would like to lead by example by organising lunch time drop ins during the Summer period as staff begin their return to the office. We will be promoting zero tolerance pledge, “There’s no excuse for domestic abuse” in County Hall reception and over the intranet and arrange for workforce pledge.
- **DHR Learning Events:** These are organised twice a year and focus on a key theme coming out of Domestic Homicide Reviews. The next theme is Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse and Domestic Abuse with various nationally renowned guest speakers and over 260 professionals from Buckinghamshire and the Thames Valley in attendance.
- **Developing cross agency/county training offer:** Agreed at the DA Board was a consensus that the County needs a single training offer for the Council and its partners so as to foster consistency in identification of domestic abuse and systematic delivery in relation to those trained and the level of knowledge they require.
- **DA Champion’s Network:** The Countywide Network boasts over 450 champions from over 55 different agencies. The network provides 2 consecutive days training, quarterly network events, a contact database and monthly newsletter all free of charge.
- **BAED (Black, Asian & Ethnically Diverse) DA T&FG-** In October 2020 the Thames Valley BAED Project Group produced a report on the findings over the 2 year period. The review concluded that all forms of abuse and violence against women and girls are prevalent across the entire Thames Valley, including those areas with significant ethnic minority populations. The report has 10 recommendations which require each local authority area in the Thames Valley to work towards via a task and finish group approach. Engaging stakeholders about the new task and finish group for Buckinghamshire is progressing well and a first meeting is scheduled.
- **Learning Disability (and Autism) DA T&FG-**In March 2020 Talkback were commissioned by the Community Safety Service at the Council to deliver some local and national research to establish the nature and scale of DA issues related to people with learning disability and/or autism, both as victims or perpetrators. Upon publication of the research report, a task and finish group was established to progress the recommendations. Since then the group has met numerous times and the agenda is developing well with many of the actions well underway.
- **Employers/domestic abuse roles and responsibilities:** Employers owe a duty of care to employees and have a legal responsibility to provide a safe and effective work environment. Preventing and tackling domestic abuse is an integral part of this, especially with the new way of working due to the pandemic. We have an ambition to have the new unitary council as best in class with the intention of leading the way for all employers in Bucks. There will be a comprehensive workplace policy, promotion of toolkit, e-learning roll out and various sessions delivered internally (e.g. to Members)
- **For further information on the above please contact:** [Faye.Blunstone@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:Faye.Blunstone@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

# Modern Slavery and Exploitation

Modern slavery put simply, is where one person controls another by exploiting a vulnerability, (*Hope for Justice*). It deprives people of their most basic human rights and freedoms, poses a huge risk to their health and wellbeing and is a major source of revenue for serious organised crime.

The [Home Office NRM statistics](#) show that in 2019 in the UK, 10,627 potential victims of modern slavery were referred to the NRM; a 52% increase from 2018. The below statistics provide some further understanding of the prevalence in Buckinghamshire;

- Between 01/01/20 and 31/03/20 there were 79 NRM referrals across the Thames Valley and 13 MS1/Duty to Notify submissions. 10 of the NRM referrals were from Buckinghamshire.
- Between September 2018 and August 2019, there were 262 modern slavery crimes recorded across the Thames Valley. 41 of these were in Buckinghamshire.

However, modern slavery is a hidden crime and so is hugely under-reported; there is still a significant lack of understanding of the true picture of modern slavery in Buckinghamshire.

The Modern Slavery Act became law in March 2015 and includes measures to increase identification of and provide support to victims. Local authorities, specified as First Responder organisations, have a Duty to Notify the Home Office if they identify a potential victim of modern slavery. This is completed via the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) or through the Duty to Notify form. Community Safety Partnerships have a role to play in identifying victims, sharing information, tackling modern slavery and supporting victims.

Within Buckinghamshire we have a pathway for modern slavery referrals into both Adult and Children's Social Care. Where it is considered that a child is at risk of exploitation, referrals are made to the specialist *Missing & Exploitation Hub*. Buckinghamshire also has a dedicated support service for adult victims of exploitation which is commissioned by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The *Victims First Specialist Service* (VFSS) provides free emotional and practical support to all victims and witnesses of crime, as well as family members of victims.

Buckinghamshire benefits from an Anti-Slavery and Exploitation Network (ASEN) which is one of the regional sub-groups responding to modern slavery in the Thames Valley. It aims to share best practice, increase expertise and comprises of statutory, voluntary, private, academic, community and faith groups.

The Modern Slavery Act requires certain organisations to publish a statement on the steps they are taking to prevent modern slavery. It is considered best practice that local authorities follow this guidance, and Buckinghamshire Council published its [statement](#) in April 2020.

A broad range of activity has taken place over the past year to tackle modern slavery and exploitation including development of our training strategy, awareness raising through local campaigns, support for victims through partnership services and local projects, a pilot project to engage with victims and voluntary and community organisations that support them, development of a housing protocol for partners and further expansion of our hotel watch initiative. Priority 2 of the Safer Bucks Plan for 2020 – 2023 focuses on exploitation and our priorities for the forthcoming year are set out in the delivery plan.

# CCTV

The Council's Service Improvement Team will be undertaking a deep dive into CCTV across the Council (including bodycams and publicity).

This will be a detailed piece of work helping to inform future plans and collaborative opportunities. Partners will naturally be included as part of engagement plans.

# Communications

- Community Safety Officers use all forms of media to share community safety messages with the public
- A Communications Plan has been produced for the year incorporating key events for all sorts of crime and disorder issues
- Cross Council communications campaigns are being developed (for example, National Bike Week)
- Community Safety Officers also work closely with partners to support their communications campaigns (for example, Cyber Crime and Neighbourhood Watch)
- An internal Community Safety communications strategy is currently being developed, with the aim to raise awareness of the team and the work we do. Specific messages will be tailored for staff (for example, Personal Safety - lone working, training opportunities)
- Community Safety Newsletters are now published quarterly – the latest and previous editions can be viewed below:
  - [June 2021](#) - Awaiting data
  - [March 2021](#) - 3.7k views
  - [December 2020](#) - Data unavailable
  - [October 2020](#) - 2k views
  - [September 2020](#) - 3k views