

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel

21 June 2021

TITLE:	Community Safety Partnership Review and Refreshed Community Safety Strategy
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Bowen -Cabinet Member for Communities
CONTACT OFFICER:	David Smith - Principal Officer Communities & Partnerships
WARDS INVOLVED:	All

Appendices Attached – Appendix A: Community Safety Partnership Plan; Appendix B: Community Safety Partnership Strategy; Appendix C: Summary of Council’s Contribution to the Community Safety Partnership

1. Reason for the Report

1.1 The District Council is required by statute to work in partnership with other listed organisations to tackle community safety problems in Staffordshire Moorlands. The Council’s corporate plan committed the Council to ‘Review the Council’s community safety arrangements in order to maintain strong partnerships with community groups’. This report supports the delivery of that commitment.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee notes:
- the Community Safety Partnership’s strategy and plan; and
 - the contributions that the Council makes towards community safety.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The District Council has three main duties in relation to community safety and must:
- work with partners to formulate and implement a community safety strategy (Section 8);
 - ensure that it has a committee to scrutinise crime and disorder matters at least once a year (Section 9); and

- consider the crime and disorder implications when exercising its functions (Section 10).
- 3.2 The District Council discharges its duty to work with partners to formulate and implement a community safety strategy through its involvement in the Moorlands Together Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership. Appendix C provides a summary of the Council's contributions to the Partnership.
 - 3.3 The Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel scrutinises crime and disorder matters at least once a year. The Committee receives an annual report on the activity of the Community Safety Partnership as well as an annual update from Staffordshire Police.
 - 3.4 Every Committee report includes a section on community safety implications, which ensure that such considerations form part of the Council's decision making process. This includes evaluating the impact of regeneration, asset management or planning policies.
 - 3.5 The Council provides a range of services that contribute to improving the safety of Staffordshire Moorlands. This includes CCTV in town centres across the District, the work of the Democratic and Communities Service, licensing taxis and places that sell alcohol, responding to statutory nuisances, supporting the homeless, and providing support to vulnerable people and those at risk of becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 This report helps to deliver Aim 1: 'To help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live and work' and specifically the commitment to: "Review the Council's community safety arrangements in order to maintain strong partnerships with community groups".

5. **Alternative Options**

- 5.1 None identified

6. **Implications**

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

The report describes how the Council meets its obligations under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

6.2 Workforce

None

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

None

6.4 Financial Considerations

None – all commitments are made from within current budgets. The Partnership also receives specific funding from Staffordshire's Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

6.5 Legal

The District Council is required to work in partnership to tackle community safety issues by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and associated regulations.

The District Council has a duty under s17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to exercise its functions with 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, substance misuse and re-offending.

The Council must also ensure that it has a committee to scrutinise crime and disorder matters at least once a year under the Police and Justice Act 2006.

6.6 Climate Change

The Partnership duties include a requirement to tackle behaviour that spoils the local environment like dumping rubbish. The Council intends to continue to influence the Partnership's priorities to include a greater emphasis on both the local environment and climate change.

The Partnership will take into account climate change issues when designing and delivering projects of services. This could include looking at opportunities for promoting climate change awareness and action when commissioning diversionary activities, and checking that any contractors are taking steps to contribute to the agenda.

6.7 Consultation

The Partnership Plan and Strategy have been shared with and agreed by community safety partners.

6.8 Risk Assessment

The change of Police and Crime Commissioner is likely to have some impact on the work of the Partnership and possibly to partnership funding. The Partnership will reflect any changes in approach when developing its future plans.

Mark Trillo

Executive Director (Governance & Commissioning)

Web Links and Background Papers

<https://staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk/cms/wp-content/uploads/Police-and-Crime-Plan-Final-9-6-17-6.pdf>
<https://staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk/get-involved/community-funding/>

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7. Community Safety

7.1 The District Council has three main duties in relation to community safety and must:

- work with partners to formulate and implement a community safety strategy (Section 8);
- ensure that it has a committee to scrutinise crime and disorder matters at least once a year (Section 9); and
- consider the crime and disorder implications when exercising its functions (Section 10).

7.2 The Council also has a general duty to promote and improve the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the Staffordshire Moorlands and specific obligations in relation to various functions that contribute towards making communities safer, such as licensing. This report primarily focuses on the specific obligations highlighted above.

8 Working in Partnership

8.1 The District Council discharges its duty to work with partners to formulate and implement a community safety strategy through its involvement in the Moorlands Together Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership.

8.2 The term Community Safety Partnership¹ (CSP) is not used in legislation and a CSP is not a legal entity. Rather, it is the collective term used to describe multi-agency arrangements that allow specified organisations (“the responsible authorities”) to fulfil their statutory obligations under the CDA and associated regulations.

8.3 The responsible authorities for the purposes of the Act are the:

- District Council
- County Council
- Chief officer of police
- Providers of probation services under section 3 of the Offender Management Act 2007
- Fire and Rescue Authority; and
- Every Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) that covers the whole or any part of the area.

¹ CSPs are sometimes referred to as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) or Safer and Stronger Communities Partnerships.

- 8.4 These responsible authorities must also act in co-operation with the relevant local probation board, specified providers of probation services, and anyone prescribed by order by the Secretary of State.
- 8.5 The CSP members are required to work together to formulate and implement a strategy at District level for:
- Reducing crime and disorder in the area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment);
 - Combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area; and
 - Reducing re-offending in the area.
- 8.6 This work is carried out on behalf of the responsible authorities by a strategy group² that is appointed to prepare an annual strategic assessment, prepare and implement a partnership plan, review the expenditure of partnership monies, and assess the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of partnership expenditure.
- 8.9 The current membership of the Strategy Group is as follows:
- Councillor Mike Bowen (Chair), Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
 - County Councillor Ross Ward, Staffordshire County Council
 - Mark Trillo, Executive Director, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
 - Jill Norman, North Staffordshire Operations Manager, Support Staffordshire
 - Sarah Wilks, Head of Engagement, Peak District National Park Authority
 - Helen Chadwick and , Station Manager, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service
 - Chief Inspector Mark Thorley, Staffordshire Police.
- 8.10 Officer support for the group is provided by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and Staffordshire County Council.
- 8.11 The Partnership has adopted the following vision:
- Our Vision** is for Staffordshire Moorlands to be a place where people feel safe and supported, the diversity of our community is valued, and our environment is protected.
- 8.12 The Partnership follows a three-tier approach to enable it to achieve its vision, and looks to:
- **PREVENT** problems from occurring in the first place (Primary prevention).
 - **REDUCE** the impact of community safety problems (Secondary prevention)

² Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007

- **SUPPORT** those affected by problems and provide support to help stop people from reoffending (Tertiary prevention).

8.13 Each year, the CSP updates its priorities and partnership plan. The delivery of the 2020/21 plan was hampered by the Coronavirus pandemic and associated lockdown and several actions have been rolled-over to the 2021/22 plan. This year, the partnership has also refreshed its strategy (Appendix A). The plan, which can be found at Appendix B, describes how the Partnership intends to address the following priorities:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Domestic Abuse
- Rural Crime (including burglary and vehicle theft)
- Fraud
- Vulnerable People

Partnership Support

8.14 The District Council provides administrative support to the partnership. This includes:

- Preparing the Partnership Plan and Strategy;
- Holding Partnership funds, overseeing expenditure, and accounting to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner;
- Completing annual evaluation of expenditure;
- Reporting on partnership activity to the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee;
- Representing the partnership at County and other meetings;
- Arranging partnership meetings; and
- Minute-taking.

8.15 Appendix C provides a summary of the Council's contributions to the Community Safety Partnership.

9 Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Matters

9.1 The Council must ensure that it has a committee to scrutinise crime and disorder matters at least once a year. The Committee must have the power to:

- review or scrutinise how the responsible authorities discharge their crime and disorder functions and make reports or recommendations to the local authority about the discharge of those functions;
- make a report or recommendations to the local authority concerning crime and disorder (including in particular forms of crime and disorder that involve antisocial behaviour or other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), or the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances that affects all or part of their ward. Any member of the authority who is not a member of the crime and disorder committee can also refer any such matter to the committee; and

- require the attendance of an officer or employee of a responsible authority or of a co-operating person or body in order to answer questions provided that reasonable notice is given.

9.2 In all cases where the Committee makes a report or recommendations then it must provide a report to each responsible authority and co-operating body.

9.3 The Communities Overview & Scrutiny fulfils the Council's obligations under the Police and Justice Act 2006³. The Committee receives an annual report on the activity of the Community Safety Partnership as well as an annual update from Staffordshire Police.

10 The Effect of the Council's Functions on Community Safety

10.1 The District Council has a duty to exercise its functions with regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent:

- (a) crime and disorder (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment);
- (b) the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and
- (c) re-offending, in its area.

10.2 Every Committee report includes a section on community safety implications, which ensure that such considerations form part of the Council's decision making process. This includes evaluating the impact of regeneration, asset management or planning policies.

10.3 The Council's actions under each of the above heads is considered below.

A *Crime and Disorder*

10.4 The police have primary responsibility for responding to crime and disorder. The College of Policing describes the police's core operational duties as being:

- protecting life and property
- preserving order
- preventing the commission of offences; and
- bringing offenders to justice.

10.5 The District Council is responsible for wide a range of services. Many of these services can support work to tackle crime and disorder through the discharge of regulatory functions and by providing support for the work of Moorlands Together Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership.

10.6 The Council also provides a case management function in response to reports that it receives about anti-social behaviour. The Council will liaise both internally and externally, with agencies such as Staffordshire Police, to seek to resolve issues. The Council received 123 reports of anti-social behaviour on

³ Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009

the year to 15 June 2021 from members of the public via the reporting portal on the Council's website.

- 10.7 The Council has powers under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to issue Community Protection Notices, and apply for injunctions or Closure Orders in response to problems. Other agencies, notably Staffordshire Police, also have access to the same powers. The District Council is the only authority with the power to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order to introduce prohibitions and requirements in response to unreasonable conduct that has a detrimental impact in public places within the District. The District Council has, for example, used this power to address dog fouling and to prevent wildfires.

CCTV

- 10.8 The District Council makes a substantial contribution to preventing crime and disorder by providing a District-wide CCTV system. The system has 40 cameras that record images across the District with 24/7 monitoring from the control centre. The control room and cameras are in the process of being upgraded from analogue to digital at a cost of around £275,000.⁴
- 10.9 The following table shows the number of incidents recorded by the CCTV system across the Staffordshire Moorlands.

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Leek	134	126	82	57
Biddulph	32	35	38	11
Cheadle	32	30	31	17
Werrington	3	4	0	0
Cheddleton	0	0	0	0
Blythe Bridge	4	8	5	1
Forsbrook	1	0	0	0
Brown Edge	2	3	0	0
Total	208	206	156	86

- 10.10 The following table depicts the number of downloads by the Staffordshire Police:

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Downloads	462	227	129	62

Environmental Crime

- 10.11 The definition of crime and disorder includes behaviour adversely affecting the local environment. The District Council takes the lead role in responding to such matters, which are often at the top of the community's priorities for action

⁴ The cost of upgrading the control room is shared equally with High Peak Borough Council. The on-going yearly operational costs will reduce from £177,000 to around £30,000 once the upgrade has been completed.

and include dog fouling, litter, waste disposal, contaminated land and statutory nuisances (including noise). The following table provides details of some of the Council's work to tackle environmental crime⁵.

Type of Action	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Fly tipping investigations	290	359	557
Dog Fouling FPN	3	6	3
Litter Only FPN	55	60	15
Duty Of Care FPN	2	3	0
Abandoned Vehicles Investigated	151	166	218
Disposed	N/A	1	1

10.12 The local authority also has a duty to inspect its area for statutory nuisance which includes investigating noise. The Council responded to around 600 complaints about statutory nuisance/pollution in 2020.

Dangerous Building and Untidy sites

10.13 The District Council can take action in respect of dangerous buildings that could be a target for criminal and anti-social behaviour using its building control powers under the Building Act 1984. Actions can also be taken as a planning authority to rectify untidy sites, which can be locations for criminal activity.

Licensing

10.14 The overriding aim of the Council's licensing function is the protection of the public.

10.15 The Licensing Act 2003 regulates the sale of alcohol, the supply of alcohol by or on behalf of a club, the provision of regulated entertainment and the provision of late night refreshment. The District Council is the designated licensing authority under the Act and this function is considered further below.

10.16 The District Council is also responsible for promoting public safety through the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles. The Authority will not grant a licence to drive a vehicle unless satisfied that the applicant is 'safe and suitable'. This includes requiring an Enhanced DBS check for all drivers and compliance with the Council's code of conduct.

⁵ The reduction in activity in 2020/21 is primarily related to Covid restrictions. The Enforcement Officers were not able to carry out patrols at certain times of the year, and at the same time the footfall in many hot spot areas, such as littering in town centres, was much reduced. When patrolling was possible, officers were instructed to maintain social distancing and to issue fixed penalty notices by post rather than face-to-face. This made enforcement more difficult.

- 10.17 All drivers in the District are required to attend an approved safeguarding course and to complete and pass either the BTEC Level 2 certificate in the introduction to the role of the Professional Taxi or Private Hire Driver or the NVQ level 2 certificates in Road Passenger Vehicle Driving (Taxi and Private Hire Driver) or an equivalent qualification. This ensures that drivers have an awareness of safeguarding and how to provide safety and security for passengers
- 10.18 An applicant who fails to meet all required tests, conditions, code of conduct and standards will not be deemed a safe and suitable person and the application for a licence or renewal will be refused.
- 10.19 The District Council is also responsible for regulating scrap metal dealers under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013. Every scrap metal dealer is required to have a licence and operating without one will be a criminal offence. The District Council can refuse to grant a licence where the applicant is judged not to be a suitable person to operate as a scrap metal dealer. The licensing of dealers contributes to community safety by helping to make it more difficult to commit crimes such as metal theft, fraud and money laundering.

Physical Activity and Support

- 10.20 The Council's leisure provision can help with diverting people from crime and rehabilitating victims of crime. Involvement in physical activities can provide positive role models, teach life skills, offer diversion and safety, build confidence and encourage self-discipline. The Council's physical activity and sport strategy ('Towards an Active Staffordshire Moorlands') recognises that physical activity and sport can also play a big part in enhancing relationships and social networks, which can create safer and stronger communities.
- 10.21 Some key outputs of the Council's strategy include:
- Increased outreach work undertaken by leisure centre staff in the priority places in partnership with the Council and local community partners,
 - Lex Leisure installed a new 3G football facility at Brough Park Leisure Centre which saw bookings grow by over 50%,
 - Over £1.1 million worth of capital improvements to parks and recreation facilities at a range of locations across the district,
 - Provision of the annual Staffordshire Moorlands Sports Awards to celebrate the contribution and achievements of clubs, coaches, team and athletes from across the Moorlands.

B Misuse of Drugs, Alcohol and other Substances

- 10.22 The District Council is the designated licensing authority for the Staffordshire Moorlands and, as such, is responsible for developing a local policy, processing applications and convening hearings to consider any representations concerning applications or existing licences. The licensing authority must promote the licensing objectives when carrying out its duties:

- the prevention of crime and disorder;
- public safety;
- the prevention of public nuisance;
- the protection of children from harm.

C Re-offending

10.23 Research on the reasons for re-offending has led to the identification of seven pathways for reducing re-offending:

- Pathway 1: **Accommodation** (stable accommodation can reduce the likelihood of re-offending by more than 20% as it provides the vital building blocks for accessing a range of other services and for gaining employment).
- Pathway 2: Education, training and employment
- Pathway 3: Health (Offenders are disproportionately more likely to suffer from mental and physical problems)
- Pathway 4: Drugs and alcohol
- Pathway 5: **Finance, benefit and debt** (Ensuring that ex-offenders have sufficient lawful funds to live on is recognised as vital to their rehabilitation.)
- Pathway 6: Children and families (maintaining family relationships can help to prevent prisoners re-offending and can assist them to successfully settle into the community).
- Pathway 7: Attitudes, thinking and behaviour (Offending behaviour programmes within prison and probation aim to change the way that offenders think about their actions and their effects on others, and to improve their self-control).

10.24 The District Council plays an important role in supporting Pathways 1 and 5. The Council can also assist in tackling alcohol misuse through its licensing function and the work of the Regeneration Service can support Pathway 2 through the creation of employment opportunities. This work not only assists in reducing recidivisms but may also help to prevent individuals from entering into the criminal justice system in the first place.

Accommodation

10.25 The District Council has a duty to take reasonable steps to help prevent any eligible person who is threatened with homelessness from becoming homeless. This means either helping them to stay in their current accommodation or helping them to find a new place to live before they become actually homeless. If someone becomes unintentionally homeless then the Council will take reasonable steps to help them to secure accommodation.

Finance, benefits and debt

- 10.26 The District Council administers the housing benefit and council tax reduction schemes for eligible Staffordshire Moorlands residents. The Council has also administered the Test and Trace Self-Isolation Support Payment Scheme during the pandemic.
- 10.27 The Council can also assist in the delivery of the other pathways by supporting the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector and through its involvement in key partnerships such as Moorlands Together. For example, the Council provide funding for the three Citizens Advice services within the District, Support Staffordshire and Haregate Community Centre.