

Report on the work of the Test Valley Community Safety Group

Report of the Community Engagement Manager (on behalf of the Test Valley Partnership)

Recommended:

- 1. That the report be acknowledged and partnership approach be endorsed.**
- 2. That Officers bring a report back to OSCOM in autumn 2021 to give an annual update on the work of the Community Safety Management Group.**

SUMMARY:

- A report on the work of the Test Valley Community Safety Group over the past twelve months and the priorities for the year ahead.

1 Background

- 1.1** This report follows previous reports and discussions in October 2018, March 2019 and October 2019, in regards to specific elements of work undertaken by the Community Safety Management Group (CSMG). In October 2019 OSCOM approved a recommendation for an annual update on the breadth of work of the CSMG.
- 1.2** This report summarises the priorities of the CSMG and gives examples of some of the projects and operations it has initiated and operated, its successes and challenges over the past twelve months.
- 1.3** The CSMG is a sub-group of the Test Valley Partnership and comprises of the statutory Community Safety Partners (TVBC; Police; Fire & Rescue Service; Clinical Commissioning Group; Probation), plus other relevant local Community Safety Partners such as Registered Social Landlords, Neighbourhood Watch, Street Pastors, Youth Crime Prevention (YCP), Town Centre and BID managers, amongst others.
- 1.4** It enables organisations working locally in this sector to respond to the needs of communities in a co-ordinated and organised way by sharing skills, resources and data. The group addresses community safety specific issues on a tactical and localised level. This allows for responsible authorities and other local agencies and partners to work in partnership to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour priorities locally.
- 1.5** Officers from TVBC also attend monthly confidential Police Tactical Command Briefing Meetings to help ensure that effective two-way communication and co-ordination is maintained on key issues between the CSMG and Police. CSMG priorities are a standing item on this agenda.

1.6 The CSMG collectively assesses and proposes the partnership priorities to the Test Valley Partnership annually. The priority areas (subject to ratification by the Test Valley Partnership) for 2020/21 are:

- Community Crime Prevention and Public Safety. To increase public reassurance and confidence to report issues to public bodies.
- Anti-Social Behaviour, in particular including street-attached behaviours.
- Supporting Vulnerable People in Need, to include issues of Domestic Abuse, Scams (in particular Covid related), Hate Crimes and Modern Slavery.
- Positive engagement and early intervention with young people, to identify and address potential causal issues of behaviours.
- Drug related harm, and knife crime linked to 'County lines'.
- Maintain rural community confidence, through encouraging co-operative partnership amongst landowners and partners.
- To encourage co-operative partnership amongst agencies and community/voluntary sector groups working towards enhanced and positive communities.

1.7 In addition, monthly sub-group casework meetings (Community Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) are also held in the North & South of the district with all relevant partners to discuss and plan for cases on an individual basis.

2 Context

2.1 The CSMG has implemented a range of operations and projects to help address the priorities and key issues identified. A sample of the recent early intervention, responsive and engagement partnership operations and projects planned and monitored via the CSMG are outlined below.

2.2 The diverse nature of the group, incorporating statutory, voluntary and third sector organisations linked to community safety allows for a wide range of information, skills, capacity and intelligence to be brought to the group and incorporated into discussions and projects. It also allows for important messages around crime prevention and public safety to be disseminated to these groups and their wider community networks.

'Op Mazi': Op Mazi' is a multi-agency programme, incorporating Police, TVBC and local specialist treatment and support service sector partners to address negative street attached behaviours in Andover town centre. Partner services include Two Saints, NHS Inclusion Substance Misuse Service, MIND, Salvation Army and the Bridge Drop-in amongst others. The approach includes an increased police presence and regular partnership patrols in the areas most affected, plus direct specialist engagement with those concerned to identify any vulnerabilities and issues, with subsequent referrals to partners for action on drink and drug related issues, housing and/or benefits as applicable.

- 2.4 During lockdown, Op Mazi patrols were suspended, replaced by regular police patrols of the key areas. Also concentrated efforts were made nationally and locally to reduce the numbers of street attached people in the community. Subsequently, Op Mazi as resumed and noted fewer individuals causing concern in the Andover Town Centre, which has continued to be the case to date. Partners, recently including the Andover BID Rangers, continue to patrol to both deter issues and to offer support as necessary to influence longer term changes of behaviours.
- 2.5 In the second half of 2019 12 homeless people were supported into accommodation as a direct result of the proactive working between police and partners, including TVBCs housing service. A further four were assisted but did not proceed, whilst others found their own accommodation or left the area.
- 2.6 In addition the implementation of the PSPO in the summer has allowed increased highly visual publicity of the requirements to those involved, and further powers for authorised officers to help address anti-social behaviour.
- 3 PSPOs:** A new Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) became live 16 July 2020. The PSPO introduces new powers in areas in and around Andover and Romsey which allow authorised officers to require that people who are drinking alcohol and displaying anti-social behaviour cease drinking alcohol or surrender their alcohol. In Andover it introduces further powers to authorised officers to deal with issues of harassment and public urination within the Andover Town Centre area.
- 3.1 **Andover Town Rangers:** The Council has also contributed £15,000 to a six-month trial of a project led by Andover BID to bring Town Rangers to Andover town centre. The specific element of their work which our contribution is concerned with is their potential impact on anti-social behaviour in the town centre and to engage with those displaying negative street-attached behaviours in particular. The Rangers are also authorised to use powers under the PSPO, as described above.
- 4 Big Band Buffet:** The Big Band Buffet is an annual event open to over 55s and those who may be isolated or vulnerable and at increased risk of crime of other harm. It provides a free lunch accompanied by a band, alongside talks and stands from partners on relevant topics such as home and fire safety, staying safe at home, cybercrime, fraud, scams and distraction burglaries.
- 4.1 This year's event was held in January and attended by around 150 people and attracted the highest number of agency and support groups providing advice and support to older people to date. 98.5% of the participants rated the event as either 'good' or 'excellent' and in particular feedback highlighted the value of the event in helping people to learn more about the services available and how to access them. To date over 1,100 people have attended these annual events.

4.2 Other plans for direct support for vulnerable people have been impacted by Covid-19, although links with Police and Trading Standards 'Operation Liberal', 'SCAMnesty', and 'SCAMchampion' projects have continued to identify, engage and publicise to advise people at risk of current frauds and scams locally via existing networks.

5 **'ICE'**: 'ICE' (Intervention, Communication; Education) is an early intervention project developed to identify young people with risky or altered behaviour, and who may be at increased risk of causing Anti-Social Behaviour in their communities, without criminalising them. ICE comprises Test Valley Borough Council, Hampshire Police, Fire & Rescue Service, Army and Schools; and operates via a series of voluntary workshops for young people to attend, referred by schools, partners and families, highlighting concerns of changes in pupil behaviour, likely to be linked to ASB/offending.

5.1 Feedback from participants and partners continues to be positive, in terms of the course and its subsequent impact on attitudes and behaviours. The deputy head teacher of a Romsey school said 'this course has provided invaluable support to a group of young people who often get overlooked and witnessed real growth in some of the students from the duration of the project'.

5.2 A successful programme was completed in the autumn term of 2019, however the spring cohort was forced to close early as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak. 27 young people attended the bulk of the available sessions, of whom 15 completed one of the programmes. Plans to revise the project to be Covid secure for 2021 are under discussion.

6 Drug Related Harm and Knife Crime:

6.1 **Violence Reduction Unit:** Hampshire was identified as one of 18 areas to receive funding in 2020/21 for a Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) from the Home Office. This aims to reduce violence, with a focus on youth knife crime. The VRU has produced a 'problem profile' covering the Hampshire County Council area's community safety partnerships. The profile notes that Basingstoke, Rushmoor, and Test Valley reported a higher number of knife-related violent crimes. Within Test Valley, Andover has two areas within the top ten beats with higher counts of 'narrow definition most serious violence', where an offender or aggrieved under 25 and a knife was involved between 2016 and 2019. These are Alamein (17 knife crimes) and St Marys (12).

6.2 The CSMG is working closely with the VRU on various work streams to develop coordinated action plans and to access funding to help address this. In addition to this, two further initiatives have been launched to help meet this objective:

6.3 **Legacy Project:** The CSMG has worked with partners including the Police and Youth Offending Team to help 'The Yellow Brick Road' and 'UpSkillU' groups develop, fund and implement an innovative scheme call 'The Legacy Project'. This is a new scheme to work with young people via schools, Pupil Referral Unit and others in Andover at risk of exploitation and grooming into drugs supply, to help educate and mentor against drugs, exploitation, knives, and county lines, based on a model used successfully in London.

- 6.4 Mentors work closely with statutory services, other agencies and families to manage a young person's risky behaviour, build resilience around personal safety and critical decision making, engage in education training or employment opportunities as well as support relationships and manage conflict. This project is the first of its kind outside London and was able to launch in July.
- 6.5 **Drug Related Harm Partnership:** In 2020 the CSMG also developed a Drug Related Harm Partnership to help with the sharing of information and intelligence between agencies and police. The model has proven successful and now meets monthly to gather intelligence and co-ordinate responses to local drug related activity in a holistic manner.
- 7 **Maintaining Rural Community Confidence:** During 2019-20, Police identified an increasing trend in crime types within rural communities. As a result Police and partners are aiming to provide support and opportunities to improve rural crime prevention measures, to reduce opportunities to commit crime, and to help increase community confidence. Police have been working with partners to implement a range of measures with further options under discussion, subject to the best means to continue with in Covid 19 Guidelines.

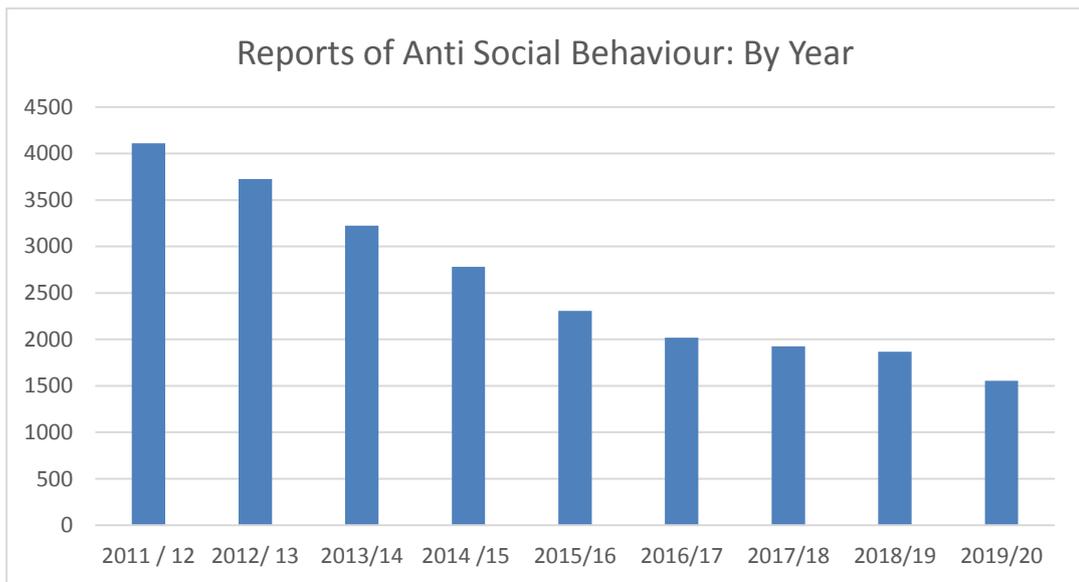
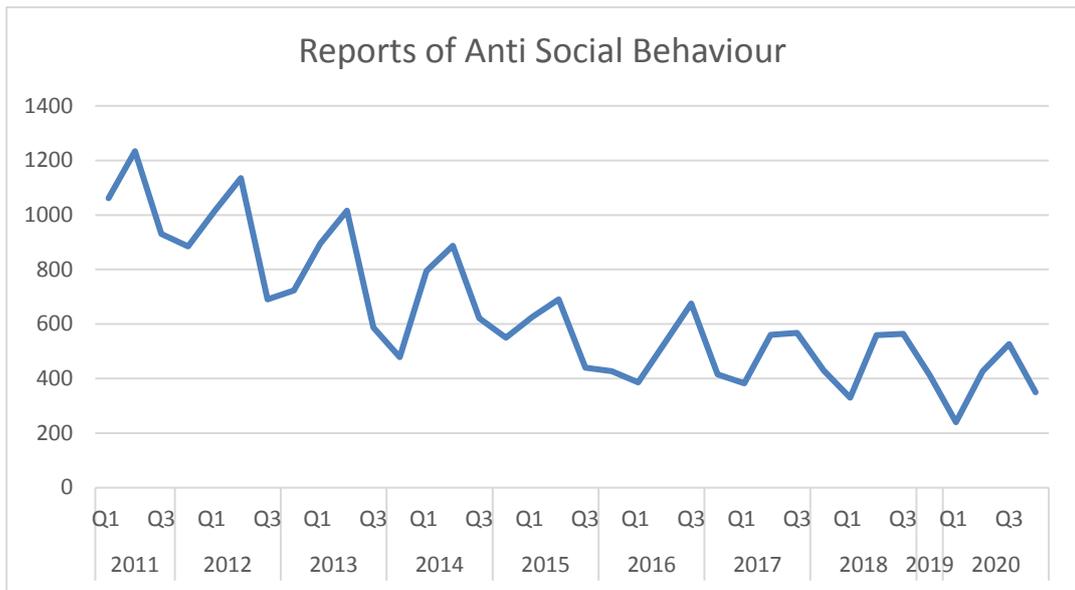
8 Cooperative Partnerships

- 8.1 **Community-MARACs** [Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences] are partnership case conferences which allow action planning using a Harm Centred Approach. All referrals received which are assessed as 'High Risk' will be heard at a case conference within 7 days.
- 8.2 In March 2020 this new process was externally evaluated, by 'RESOLVE ASB' who were asked to independently review the new systems and provide feedback and training to all partners. Positive feedback was received on the new systems and processes, including praise for the diverse range of partners fully engaged in this process, particularly citing the involvement of school representatives highlighted as good practice. Those partners with lesser or little engagement in the process were noted to be those agencies who were also reported to have similar issues elsewhere in the country, and measures continue to promote the benefits of engagement for all relevant partners in this process.
- 8.3 **PREVENT:** The CSMG is linked into the countywide Prevent Board which leads on counter-terrorism, and allows for effective information sharing between the strategic leads and the wider community on the requirements and duties. Agreement has recently been reached for security vetted officers to receive access to restricted information from the South East Counter Terrorism Local Partnership reports, from which a Situational Risk Assessment has been developed and completed for the Test Valley District.
- 8.4 To date there have been no referrals from the Board to the County 'Channel Panel' for any Test Valley residents. Channel is the government programme which supports individuals identified as being at higher risk.

- 8.5 **Community Trigger:** “Community Trigger’ (CT) is a statutory device which gives victims and communities the right to request a formal review of their case where circumstances of ASB meet a set threshold.
- 8.6 In 2019/20 one formal CT review request was received. However, this was rejected and referred to the agencies own internal complaints procedure. A second CT was instigated by TVBC and Police as this process was considered best practice to review the joint actions taken in considering a resident complaint. The review found that all actions agreed by the agencies had been taken and there was no evidence of the issue continuing.
- 8.7 **Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR):** Community Safety Partnerships have a legal duty to commission ‘Domestic Homicide Reviews’ in all cases where the death of a person aged over 16 resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person within an intimate relationship, or the same household. The objective is to identify lessons for good practice or areas of improvements.
- 8.8 A DHR (known by the pseudonym ‘Hodges’) was submitted to the Home Office ‘Quality Assurance’ Panel for review. This reported in Oct. 2019 noting - *“this is an honest and transparent review, with an excellent breadth of information and discussion in the Findings section....The Panel specifically commended the report on a thorough combined chronology”*. There were some aspects of the report which needed further revision. In consultation with the Reviews independent Chair, these points were reviewed and presented to the CSP members of the Test Valley Partnership for approval, and resubmitted to the Home Office.
- 8.9 In June 2019 a second DHR referral (pseudonym ‘Nicole’) was received. A panel was formed with a Home Office approved independent Chair and has completed its review. The report has been approved by the CSP partners, and its action plan is pending completion prior to submission to the Home Office in November. The action plan is being implemented by the relevant partners and lead agencies to address the lessons identified.

9 Anti-Social Behaviour:

- 9.1 Analysis of the data for the year to 31 March 2020 (one week into lockdown) shows that reports of incidents of ASB continued to fall, by a further 332 incidents 17.67% in 2019/20 when compared with the previous year. Reported incidents in the North of Test Valley (including Mid-Test ward beats) fell by 16.5% on the previous year. In the South, reports reduced by 18.9%.
- 9.2 From its peak of 1,234 incidents in Quarter 2 of 2011, reports have since fallen to 350 in Quarter 4 of 2019/20.



9.3 Summer 2020 has seen a particular increase in reports of neighbourhood disputes, domestic abuse and other interpersonal anti-social behaviours during the lockdown, and ongoing Covid restrictions. Latest available data shows that overall reports of ASB to Police rose by 6.5% in the quarter from April – June 2020, although reports of ASB fell by 10% in the year from July 2019 – June 2020. Overall reported crime reduced by 4.1% over this annual period.

10 Conclusion

- 10.1 Research by the College of Policing shows that working in partnership to develop problem-orientated and social skills based prevention and diversionary schemes is an effective means of reducing and addressing issues such as anti-social behaviours. Within Test Valley the CSMG has developed innovative and award winning multi agency projects, such as ICE, The Big Band Buffet and Op Mazi, to name but a few, which demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach to partnership working in Test Valley. We continue to work to develop new approaches to identified priorities utilising the skills and resources of each agency.
- 10.2 Whilst there are many variables which can influence these statistics, the CSMG believe that, in part, the downward trend shown in ASB reports reflects the positive working relationships in place, and collaborative promotion and early intervention engagement work of the group working in effective partnership, as shown in the examples cited above. This approach has also helped to develop excellent working relationships between key partners, such as the Police, and TVBC.

11 Appendix

- 11.1 2019/20 Strategic Assessment Report.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
None			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	1		
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