

# 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 Overview and Scrutiny in autumn 2023 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 Introduction

- 1.1 This report follows previous reports the last of which was in November 2021, in regard to specific elements of work undertaken by the Community Safety Management Group (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.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.

- 2.4 The group has noted that this period has been impacted heavily by the Covid-19 pandemic and extended periods of lockdown. As a result it is difficult to provide accurate interpretation of year-on-year data, and so the data provided is for information purposes, rather than for longer term trend analysis.

### **3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities**

- 3.1 The CSMG has collectively assessed and proposed the partnership priorities to the Test Valley Partnership annually, and were agreed in October 2022.

The CSP Priority Areas for 2021/22 will remain:

- Community Crime Prevention and Public Safety. To increase public reassurance and confidence to report issues to public bodies.
  - Anti-Social Behaviour, through Positive engagement and early intervention with young people, to identify and address potential causal issues of behaviours.
  - Supporting Vulnerable People in Need, including issues of Domestic Abuse, Scams, and Hate Crime.
  - Drug related harm, including knife crime and Modern Slavery linked to 'County lines'.
  - Fire Safety; including the promotion of Safe and Well visits and advice.
  - 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.
- 3.2 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.

### **4 Context**

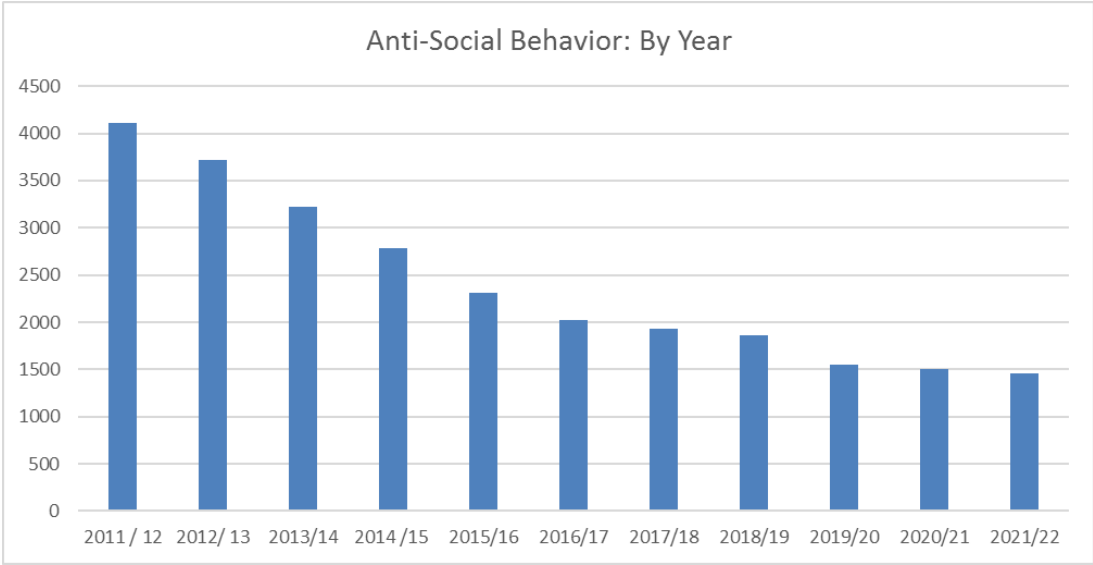
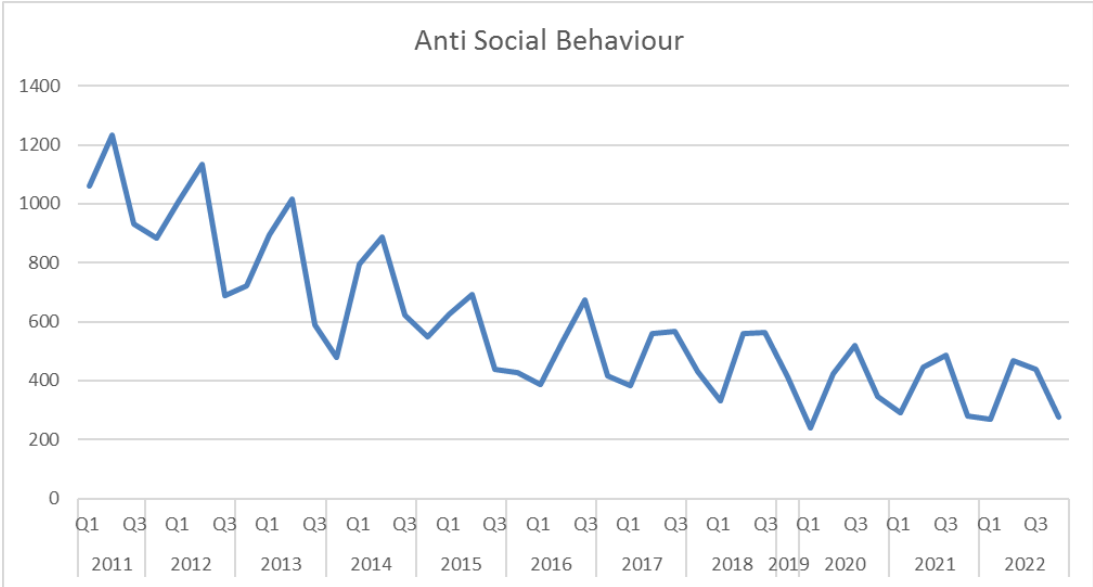
- 4.1 The diverse nature of the Community Safety Management Group, incorporating statutory, voluntary and third sector organisations linked to community safety allows for a wide range of information, skills, capacity and intelligence to be brought to the group and incorporated into discussions and projects. It also allows for important messages around crime prevention and public safety to be disseminated to these groups and their wider community networks.
- 4.2 This period has continued to have been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Therefore it is difficult to provide accurate an interpretation of year-on-year data

4.3 In 2021/22, Total Crime in Test Valley increased by 1,588 despite having fallen in the previous year, overall increasing by 662 to the pre-pandemic period. Reporting levels were consistent across each of the first three quarters of 2021/22 before falling in Quarter 4 (Jan - March 2022).

**5 Anti-Social Behaviour**

5.1 Analysis of the available data shows that reports of incidents of ASB made to Police for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 have continued to fall by a further 51 incidents (3.26%) in 2021/22. Across the year the majority of these reports were classified as ‘Community’ (83.3%), with others being recorded as ‘Personal’ (3.6%) or ‘Environmental’ (13.1%) based.

5.2 In 2021/22, reports decreased year-on-year in quarters 1, 3 and 4, peaking in June and August, likely to be linked to the European Football Championships, before falling back in December, Jan and February. However, a spike was noted in March 2022, with reports rising largely down to issues of youth ASB in Andover Town Centre and led to the formation of Op Solar.



- 5.4 When considered by Ward, the highest levels of reports of ASB remained noted in St Marys (278:+5); Alamein (153: -55); Winton (148: +15) and Abbey (132: +3) wards 1. Countywide, Test Valley District recorded the sixth lowest levels of ASB over the year, without adjustment for population numbers
- 5.5 Online reports of incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour to Test Valley Borough Council's Community Safety Team fell from 174 in 2020/21, to 124 in the year to 31st March 2022.
- 5.6 Data from the risk factors shows that Test Valley is not included in the three districts with the highest risk of violence across Hampshire. All districts, bar one, recorded an increase in the number of crimes. After factoring in population, Test Valley was not listed in the Top four published districts with the highest rates of crime per head.
- 5.7 When focusing on the narrow definition of most serious violence (where the aggrieved or offender was aged under 25), Test Valley was not listed in the published top 3 areas which had the largest number of crimes, or those with the highest numbers of these crimes which involved a knife, where the aggrieved or offender was aged under 25. Analysis of narrow definition most serious violence indicated there was one hotspots within the district, in Alamein Ward. However, focusing on small area analysis (below beat level) using 2020/21 data the areas has not been highlighted as an area with high numbers of knife crime in those aged under 25.

## **6 Partnership Projects**

- 6.1 The CSMG co-ordinates a range of operations and projects to help address the priorities and key issues identified. A sample of the recent partnership operations and projects planned and monitored via the CSMG are outlined below:
- 6.2 'Op Mazi': 2021/22 was again impacted heavily by the pandemic as were those who had previously been noted as being 'street –attached' and very few complaints were received from the public. Partnership patrols continued to be completed from July through to October. A small a number of individuals were noted and engaged with whilst out drinking but in the main had moved away from Pocket Park to more discrete areas where they were less visible. Various reports of begging in the town centre were received but these revolved around two repeat offenders. In March 2022, the Op Mazi patrols were aligned with those of Op Solar to provide a high visibility presence in the town centre to address both issues collectively, and will resume in summer 2022.
- 6.3 'Op Solar' – Was a joint operation launched by Police to address increasing Youth crime and ASB issues which were being reported in Andover Town Centre in early spring 2022. The operation was a district priority and combined increased co-ordinated patrols with additional partnership diversionary and engagement activities for young people, including new Pool competitions and a DoF scheme, alongside increased use of ABC's, parental home visits, community beat surgeries, out court disposals and other enforcement action as appropriate. The project has continued into 2022/23.

- 6.4 'ICE': As a result of the Covid pandemic and resultant lockdown periods, the ICE programme was suspended during 2021/22. In the interim, the project has been reviewed and it is planned that this will resume in the New Year subject to guidelines and any restrictions at that time.
- 6.5 Community Safety Week – March 2022 saw the inaugural Test Valley Community Safety Week take place. Test Valley Borough Council, along with partners Yellow Brick Road and Resilience Voyage, ran a series of events in Andover and Romsey focusing on working to support and educate young people in helping to deter negative and anti-social behaviours.
- 6.6 One highlight of the week was the 'Choose Your Own Path' bus, operated by mental health and young people's group Resilience Voyage. The bus toured the borough, providing young people with an immersive experience involving workshops and interactive activities to help educate them on different topics including the dangers of substance misuse, knife crime and gang exploitation, designed to impart important knowledge and understanding in a fun and interactive way. 90% of attendees noted an increase in their knowledge and understanding in 1 or more of the 4 areas with the majority of these noting an increase in 3 or 4 of the areas (56%). The main areas that the young people felt they had increased understanding in were, Self-awareness in how you think, feel and behave and knowledge on dealing with substance misuse situations.
- 6.7 Big Band Buffet: Due to the Covid-19 Restrictions in place, and the vulnerabilities of the demographic involved with the Big Band Buffet did not take place in 2021/2. The event will be resumed in October 2022.
- 6.8 Legacy Project: The CSMG has worked with 'The Yellow Brick Road' partners, to fund and implement 'The Legacy Project'. This is an early intervention programme tackling the risk of criminal exploitation of young people, including serious violence, gang life, county lines and modern slavery, by positive engagement with mentors with similar life experiences. Since its launch as a pilot in Andover in 2020, the project was successful in receiving funding to expand to the whole of Test Valley from April 2021.
- 6.9 In the year 2021 – 2022, 71 nominations for The Legacy Project were received from across Test Valley (up from 30 nominations in 2020/21). Nominations come from Police, Children's Services, Schools and self-nominations. Of these 54 have worked with mentors for 12 weeks each. 63% of beneficiaries showed improvement in 3 or more development areas.
- 6.10 Drug Related Harm Partnership: The Drug Related Harm Partnership has continued to operate successfully to help with the sharing of information and intelligence between agencies and police. The group meets bi-monthly to gather intelligence and co-ordinate responses to local drug related activity in a holistic manner.

## 7 Other Aspects

- 7.1 'Cut it Out': Cut It Out is a new initiative developed by TVBC to help promote information about, and access to Domestic Abuse services locally. The project aims to work with and train volunteers from the hair and beauty sectors to become 'Domestic Abuse Ambassadors', and to spread this knowledge to staff, customers, and others in the sector. The objective being to provide a safe space for women to raise and discuss issues of DA in neutral environment, to understand what constitutes DA and the options available to them.
- 7.2 The project began being piloted in Romsey / Southern Test Valley from January 2022, utilising free training from 'Stop Domestic Abuse'. The project pilot was well received, although there were concerns about the timing post covid lockdown, and the level of time training would take (2x 1/2day sessions), in the sector whilst recovering from the pandemic and its effect on businesses. To this end the remaining pilot has been postponed to reduce pressure and encourage take up longer term.
- 7.3 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. In 2021/2 the Community-MARACs had 33 cases referred and reviewed across the district, unchanged from the previous year
- 7.4 Op Convergence / Op Trail – following cross-border reports with Southampton City Council of increased motorcycle nuisances on the area adjoining Chilworth, Nursling and Rownhams Ward and Coxford Ward (SCC), a joint project is underway with partners including Police, disability groups, forestry agencies and communities based on Op Convergence to develop a sustainable response plan to these issues and an agreed approach to reduce the issues of noise and nuisance to local residents.
- 7.5 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.
- 7.6 'Channel' is the government programme which supports individuals identified as being at higher risk. Two referrals were made to the Channel Panel from Prevent in the district in 2021/22, both of which were considered and adopted by the panel for further support 2.
- 7.7 Community Trigger: 'Community Trigger' is a statutory device which gives victims and communities the right to request a formal review of their case where they feel that anti-social behaviour issues remains unresolved, and circumstances of ASB meet a set threshold.

- 7.8 In 2021/22 no formal Community Trigger review requests were received, although Test Valley Borough Council did voluntarily instigate a Community Trigger following a report made by a resident where the criteria met the requirements. This aspect of the process has been concluded and the case continues to be monitored under the Community-MARAC.
- 7.9 Domestic Homicide Reviews: During 2021/22 one new request to consider a Domestic Homicide Review was received from a national support agency. The case did not meet the criteria for a DHR and following discussions with the referring agency and family representatives, was referred to the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership for a Serious Safeguarding Review to be considered as the most appropriate model for investigation in to its circumstances.
- 7.10 In August 2022 we received clearance from the Home Office to publish details of the previous review, anonymised as 'Glen'. We await clearance from the Home Office to publish details of the review for 'Nicole', although the partnership action plans which were derived from the recommendations of both reviews have now been implemented in full.

## **8 Future Legislative Duties**

- 8.1 The government have recently announced plans for new statutory duties for local authorities and community safety partnership under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. These include the duty to develop a Serious Violence Assessment, and process and to undertake independent Offensive Weapon Homicide Reviews (OWHR's).
- 8.2 The Serious Violence Duty will require Community Safety Partnerships (locally the Test Valley Partnership) including 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, RSLs and educational authorities may also be required to work with these core partners.
- 8.3 Specially the Test Valley Partnership will be required to establish a local problem profile which will support the development of a published strategy within one year of the date of the duty's commencement, promote the Strategy publicly on a public facing website and web link shared with the Home Office, and review it at least annually and disseminated through annual reporting processes.
- 8.4 An OWHR will require CSP's (local the 'Test Valley Partnership') to complete an independent review following a homicide where the death of a person, or events surrounding it, involved the use of an offensive weapon. The purpose of an OWHR is to: to identify the lessons to be learnt from the death, and to consider whether it would be appropriate for anyone to take action in respect of those lessons learnt

8.5 There are a number of outstanding questions on both of these new duties, including the resources and funding to support them, and each are likely to come into force in November 2022. We are currently working with other authorities, CSPs, HCC and the Police and Crime Commissioner to develop a co-ordinated local approach to how we progress these.

Annex

- 2021/22 Strategic Assessment Report.

**9 Equality Issues**

9.1 None

**10 Other Issues**

10.1 Environmental Health Issues - none

10.2 Sustainability and Addressing a Changing Climate - none

10.3 Property Issues - none

10.4 Wards/Communities Affected – none

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

None

Confidentiality

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	File Ref:	N/A
Officer:	Andrew Pilley	Ext:	8640
Report to:	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Date:	2 November 2022