

Community Safety Monitoring Report

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| Report No: | OAS/WS/19/001 | |
| Report to and date: | Overview and Scrutiny Committee | 13 June 2019 |
| Cabinet Member: | Councillor Robert Everitt Tel: 01284 769000 Email: Robert.everitt@westsuffolk.gov.uk | |
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Decisions Plan: This item is not included in the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All

Recommendation: It is **RECOMMENDED** that,

- (1) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider and discuss the information outlined in this report.

1. Background / Context

- 1.1 Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) were introduced in 1998 under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and amended by the Police Reform Act 2002. A CSP is a statutory body made up of the following partner organisations; police, local authorities, probation, clinical commissioning group and fire and rescue services. Western Suffolk CSP covers West Suffolk Council, Babergh and Mid Suffolk council areas. Representatives from the Youth Justice Service and Registered Social Landlords have been co-opted to the partnership.
- 1.2 Over the past year the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP) continued to meet and discharge its statutory duties by:
- carrying out an assessment of crime and disorder in the area;
 - continuing to deliver the three year plan and actin plan to reflect the priorities of the Partnership; and
 - carrying out Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- 1.3 In May 2018, the WSCSP considered its priorities for 2018 -2019. Based on the outcomes of partnership discussions and a strategic assessment of crime, the following priorities were identified as the focus for the WSCSP:
- a) **County Lines** drugs markets established by criminals from out of the county. This includes supporting victims of substance misuse, tackling drug dealing and supply, safeguarding vulnerable adults at risk of 'cuckooing', and young people being used to 'run' drugs and who could be sexually exploited.
 - b) **Violence against Women and Girls (including men and boys).** This includes domestic abuse, sexual violence, modern day slavery and sexual exploitation.
 - c) **Domestic Homicide reviews**, including ensuring that the WSCSP continues to carry out effective reviews, refines processes and shares learning across Suffolk.
 - d) **Hate Crime** – this includes the identification and support for victims of hate crime by raising awareness and building confidence in reporting hate crime incidences.
 - e) **Prevent** - this is one of the stands of the Government's CONTEST strategy to counter extremism and terrorism. The 'prevent' stand aims to raise awareness to stop people becoming drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support at an early stage.
- 1.4 Section two of this report provides more detail of the progress made to implement and/or address these priorities.

2. Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Priorities

2.1 County Lines

The name 'county line' refers to the phone number (line) often used by urban street gangs (USG) to control and facilitate drug dealing in more rural locations. County Lines activity underpins serious and organised crime, which results in links to other criminal activity such as child and adult sexual exploitation, trafficking and modern day slavery.

County Lines activity is distinctively different to local drug activity due to the high levels of violence demonstrated and the involvement of young children groomed to be 'runners' and carry weapons.

County Lines are operating in Suffolk and the number of lines varies at any given moment. In Western Suffolk there is somewhere between 17 and 25 lines operating. This is an indicative figure only and frequently changes.

The Suffolk Children's Safeguarding Board is using the following guidance when identifying gangs and gang culture:

Urban Street Gangs are defined as a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:

- see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group;
- engage in a range of criminal activity and violence;
- identify with or lay claim over territory;
- have some form of identifying structural feature; and
- are in conflict with other, similar, gangs.

In Western Suffolk there is not currently an identified issue with urban street gangs (USG), but there are emerging gang culture behaviours seen within the cohort of young people who are involved, or on the periphery of being involved.

2.1.1 Suffolk Response to County Lines

In 2017 Suffolk Police carried out a threat assessment, which observed that street gangs from London dominated the supply of class 'A' drugs to Ipswich and other towns. It also noted that young people from Suffolk were being 'groomed' into becoming involved in drug running to end users initially by befriending and gifts but then increasingly by coercion, violence and threats. Their risk of coming to harm was high. These concerns were shared by other statutory agencies including Youth Offending Service (YOS) and Children and Young People's services (CYP).

As a result of these concerns, Suffolk Public Leaders agreed that in conjunction with partners, a Suffolk Strategic Action Plan should be developed and agreed. This should be supported by local tactical action plans, which would be delivered by the relevant Community Safety Partnership. A former representative from the National Crime Agency helped partners to produce the strategic plan for Suffolk and develop the local

tactical action plan, through a series of meetings and workshops with stakeholders from all sectors.

As part of the Suffolk Strategic Plan, a county-wide gang's coordinator was appointed in January 2019 and a multi-agency team developed to embed knowledge and expertise in local areas and to support working with young people already involved in this activity.

2.1.2 **Western Suffolk CSP Tactical Action Plan**

The WSCSP TAP has six objectives, which are largely focused on working in the preventative space:

- 1) *Communications* – a communications strategy to manage incident and media enquiries and to raise awareness of success has been developed. Consistent messaging to reassure communities that agencies are working together and have clear pathways for reporting and the sharing of intelligence to safeguard our young people and adults at risk.
- 2) *Training and awareness* – a training and awareness partnership plan has been developed. Raising awareness of County Lines has been undertaken to ensure that appropriate levels of training has been delivered across the partnership. Sessions have included; what is a county line; how is it different from local drug activity; what to look for; how to report issues and share intelligence and how to support those who may become involved. Sessions have been delivered to children's services, adult care services, GPs, hospitals, elected members, local authority staff, probation and rehabilitation services and the voluntary and community sector. Further sessions are planned with mental and sexual health practitioners. Train the trainer sessions have been held to ensure sustainability and consistency of message across all partners including schools. An online training and awareness package is being developed for use across the partnership.
- 3) *Engagement* – an engagement plan for educational settings and communities has been developed. It has been a priority to ensure that schools and colleges receive the appropriate information delivered by a variety of means to pupils, staff, governors and parents. A series of age appropriate sessions have been delivered by commissioned organisations and partners to upper schools. Primary schools are being supported through their feeder upper schools, however further support will be available for any school that has a particular identified issued.

Bespoke packages are being designed for use in Pupil Referral Units in conjunction with head teachers and internal officers from the partnership. Home Schooled children are also receiving information through Suffolk County Council Home school coordinators. Work to encompass those children who are excluded from school is being delivered through the Suffolk Strategic action plan.

Community awareness raising is in the planning stage for identified key areas, working with local community groups and connectors. This will focus on awareness raising, what to look for and how to report concerns.

- 4) *Information, data and intelligence* – it is important to ensure that appropriate and time critical information is shared across the Community Safety Partnership. To this end a central knowledge and information hub for practitioners has been developed to create a central 'library' of supporting materials for partners to ensure that consistent messaging is being delivered and reduce duplication. Police continue to collect intelligence to identify county lines activity and those involved at every level of the organised crime group. Drug litter finds are logged and collated across services to create a map of locations for dealing or using.
- 5) *Diversion and exit* – The county-wide Youth and Gangs Team have developed three multi- agency case conferencing panels across Suffolk. The West Suffolk Panel met for the first time in February 2019 and continue to meet monthly to case manage high risk individual young people associated with County Lines. This enables a multi-agency consistent and coordinated approach when responding and supporting those who are already involved or at risk of becoming involved in County Lines activity.
- 6) *Enforcement* – Enforcement activity of Class A and County Line crime continues to be managed via the monthly Operation Velocity meeting chaired by the Western Area Superintendent. All intelligence is assessed and active county lines are prioritised. This allows the Police to direct resources to those drug dealing gangs causing the greatest threat and harm. Typically there are between 17 to 25 County Lines will be operating within Western Suffolk, frequently moving between towns and requiring a flexible and rapid policing response.

The Police in West Suffolk have created a network of officers whose aim is to develop intelligence, raise awareness amongst colleagues and take positive action in the form of misuse of drugs warrants and disruption visits. This approach has proven successful in focussing front line staff to this critical area of business.

The proactive West Scorpion Team and the Constabulary's Serious Crime Disruption Team employ a range of tactics to monitor, arrest and prosecute drugs operations and supplement localised work. Specifically, in the past 12 months 118 persons have been arrested in relation to County Lines drug dealing in Western Suffolk; 102 searches have been conducted of either a person or a vehicle; 108 warrants/disruption visits to addresses involved in County Lines drug dealing; drugs worth a minimum of £24,000 have been seized; cash totalling £35,698 has been seized; and 3089 intelligence reports have been submitted by Western Area staff.

2.2 **Violence Against Women and Girls (including men and boys)**

2.2.1 **Violence against Women and Girls National Strategy**

In 2016 the Home Office published the Government Strategy to tackle Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG). Although not included in the Strategy name, it does include men and boys but accepts that this is a gendered issue predominately affecting women and girls. Local authorities

were encouraged to complete the self-assessment toolkit which then fed in to a Suffolk wide Strategy. In 2018 the Suffolk Violence Against Women and Girls, Men and Boys strategy was adopted.

As a result of this, a multi-agency VAWG steering group was established and an action plan agreed. This meeting brings together the skills expertise and resources across Suffolk to look at the whole agenda rather than specific issues in isolation. Over the past year, good progress has been made in relation to commissioning, governance and service improvement to help support those affected by domestic abuse.

2.2.2 Suffolk wide projects which support victims of domestic abuse

1) *Specialist Refuge: Satellite Accommodation*

A successful bid for government funding led to the award of £500,000 to establish 23 specialist satellite beds across Suffolk; four of these beds being across West and Central Suffolk. The satellite refuge provides sanctuary for victims fleeing domestic abuse who are unable to access refuge due to complex needs such as substance dependency or mental health. This funding also provides a bed space in Ipswich for victims who have no recourse to public funds. Although based in Ipswich this bed space is accessible to victims across Suffolk. In addition a specialist domestic abuse worker, employed by Anglia Care Trust now works within the West Suffolk Housing Team. Since the project started, 51 people have been supported (across Suffolk).

2) *Target hardening*

Funding has been pooled by partners across Suffolk to develop a county-wide target hardening scheme for victims of high risk domestic abuse. The national charity Safe Partnership provides a crime reduction and fire risk survey, undertakes any security or arson reduction measures all in one visit and within 24 hours from referral. This ensures that the victim can remain as safe as possible in their own home. This is risk assessed carefully and only those for whom it is safe will be offered this scheme. The scheme commenced in April 2018 and by the end of January 2019 it had supported 90 high risk victims of domestic abuse to remain in their home, 33 of those victims were from West Suffolk (51 from within the WSCSP boundary).

3) *Domestic abuse champions*

In 2018 funding was agreed by Public Sector Leaders to fund the Suffolk Domestic Abuse Champions Network. This funding has been used to develop a model which enables a programme of training for champions within the community which will encourage early disclosure. Through training provided by Domestic Abuse Champion Co-ordinators, champions will be identified as the "go to" person for information between their own agency and local support services. The training programme will run for the next two years, with the commencement of the first round of training across Suffolk in June and July 2019. West Suffolk Council will be reviewing their Domestic Abuse Support Policy and will identify appropriate officers to attend the training. Alongside this the Families and Communities Officer (Families lead) will also be

engaging with partners to identify volunteers and partners who would also benefit from the training.

4) *Suffolk Violence and Abuse Partnership*

The Suffolk Violence and Abuse partnership is a group of professionals (statutory and voluntary sector), who work in the area of domestic abuse either with victims and/or perpetrators. Over the last 12 months the partnership has widened its remit to include sexual violence and abuse and has now become an informal meeting for partners to share best practice, network and provide a consistent Suffolk approach to domestic abuse. This partnership is actively supported by West Suffolk Council, with our Families and Communities Officer (Families lead) providing a resource to the partnership and also representing the council at the West Suffolk Domestic Abuse Partnership and the Suffolk VAWG steering group. This provides a consistent approach for West Suffolk Council.

5) *Suffolk Domestic Abuse Co-ordination Centre*

The National Charity 'Safe Lives' has been appointed to help develop the Suffolk Co-ordination Centre model, funded by Public Sector Leaders. The model is based on creating a single point of access for victims to ensure appropriate support is given at the earliest opportunity. Recommendations on the proposed model are expected in July 2019.

6) *West Suffolk Domestic Abuse Partnership*

The partnership is made up of statutory and voluntary practitioners who are working within the area of domestic abuse. West Suffolk Council support this partnership and take an active role at the meetings. The partnership meet quarterly to share best practice and network and is a way for programmes and projects within West Suffolk to be highlighted and raised as well as local organisations promoting their services. For example, Freedom Programmes are currently taking place in Brandon, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and will soon be launched in Mildenhall.

2.3 Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)

Carrying out Domestic Homicide reviews is the responsibility of the local Community Safety Partnership (CSP), and is triggered when the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted in violence, abuse or neglect by a relative, household member or someone he or she has been in an intimate relationship with.

West Suffolk Council has not had any DHRs in this period but the WSCSP is supporting a number of reviews triggered by events in the Babergh/Mid Suffolk area.

2.4 Hate Crime

The Suffolk Hate Crime Network continues to be well attended by statutory and voluntary sector partners including West Suffolk Council and is moving forward in some collaborative approaches for 2019, including work to support National Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2019. The purpose of the

week is to raise understanding and awareness of hate crime, including where to access support.

Hate crime training sessions to raise awareness of hate crime have been held and delivered by ACE Anglia, Suffolk Refugee Support, YMCA Trinity, Suffolk Coalition of Disabled People and ISCRE. It is anticipated that these sessions will have reached over 400 people. There is also e-learning on Hate Crime available which is open and free to partners:

https://suffolk.melearning.university/course_centre

2.5 PREVENT

In 2017 the government placed a statutory duty on a number of organisations including local authorities to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and to consider local threat levels.

The Suffolk PREVENT Delivery Group brings together partners to acquit that duty which include, local authorities, prisons, probation, schools, university, colleges, health sector and police. Recommendations from the quarterly Counter Terrorism Local Profile are adopted into the Partnership Action Plan and work relating to the individual action, is completed by members of the group, including West Suffolk Council.

Trainers continue to deliver sessions to raise awareness of prevent across the County. Suffolk currently has over 80 practitioners trained to deliver training from a wide range of organisations. Since 2015 when training began over 8,000 people have attended a workshop. Three workshops were held in West Suffolk for 34 frontline staff during 2018 -2019.

A Suffolk PREVENT Conference was held on the 30 April 2019. All organisations in Suffolk which have a statutory duty to prevent people being drawn into terrorism were invited to attend the conference. This included members of WSCSP and other organisations who work in the field of Safeguarding, PREVENT, Counter Terrorism and delivery of Workshop to Raise Awareness of PREVENT (WRAP). Over 160 people attended the conference.

3. Alternative Options

3.1 None.

4. Consultation and engagement

4.1 The annual monitoring report draws on information from all partner agencies in relation to community safety issues. Due to the sensitivity, some information remains restricted.

5. Risks

5.1 There are high to medium risks to our communities around any reduction in partnership working, including appropriate information sharing in relation to community safety. This may arise due to loss of resources, return to silo working practices and non- engagement of partners. This can be mitigated

by the continued commitment of the leadership team and elected members, to support partnership working and, to embed this into all areas West Suffolk Council's activities.

6. Implications arising from the proposal (delete where either they are not relevant to the report or are already covered in the main report)

6.1 Financial - none

6.2 Legal Compliance – Community Safety Partnerships are statutory bodies are required to carry out a number of duties. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act requires Local Authorities to consider crime and disorder in all their functions.

6.3 Personal Data Processing- Information sharing protocols are in place with Suffolk Police. In addition information can be legally shared if it is shared in order to prevent or detect crime.

6.4 Equalities – N/A

6.5 Crime and Disorder – covered in the main body of the report.

6.6 Environmental or sustainability – N/A

6.7 HR / Staffing - None

6.8 Changes to existing policy - None

6.9 Impact on other organisations (e.g. community groups, businesses, partner organisations). - Community Safety Partnerships are statutory bodies with prescribed statutory partners who are required to be part of the partnership.

7. Appendices

7.1 **Appendix A** – Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Plan 2019 - 2022. This plan is required to reflect the Suffolk Police and Crime Plan published by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

8. Background documents

8.1 The Suffolk Police and Crime Plan 2017 -2021 published by the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner. This plan is required to reflect the priorities Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Plan. The plan is published on the Suffolk PCC website.
<http://suffolk-pcc.gov.uk/the-commissioner/police-crime-plan>