

Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Monitoring Report (April 2021 to March 2022)

Report number:	OAS/WS/22/007	
Report to and date(s):	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16 June 2022
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Decisions Plan: This item is not included in the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: All wards within West Suffolk

Recommendation: It is recommended that:

- 1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider and discuss the information outlined in the report.**

1. Context to this report

- 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 comprising of the following partner organisations: police, local authorities, probation, clinical commissioning group and fire and rescue services. The Western Suffolk CSP covers West Suffolk Council, Babergh and Mid Suffolk council areas. Representatives from Youth Justice Service, registered social landlords and education have been co-opted to the partnership.
- 1.2 Over the past year the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP) has continued to meet and discharge its statutory duties by:
- a. Carrying out an assessment of crime and disorder in the area;
 - b. Delivering a three-year plan and action plan to reflect the priorities of the partnership and
 - c. Carrying out Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- 1.3 A review of the WSCSP action plan was completed in June 2021 and, following discussion with statutory partners, the plan was updated formally agreed by the WSCSP Responsible Authorities Group in June 2021.
- 1.4 Based on the outcomes of the partnership discussions the following priorities remained as a focus for the WSCSP:
- a. **County lines:** Widening the scope of county lines to encompass all types of criminal exploitation including modern slavery. Workstreams including supporting victims, engaging with communities, agreeing an awareness and training programme, safeguarding vulnerable adults at risk and young people being criminally exploited.
 - b. **Violence against women and girls:** This priority includes actions to address domestic abuse, sexual violence, modern slavery and sexual exploitation.
 - c. **Hate crime:** including the identification and support for victims of hate crime, working with partners to raise awareness and continue to build confidence in communities to report hate crime incidences.
 - d. **Prevent:** as part of the Government's CONTEST strategy to counter terrorism, "prevent" aims to raise awareness within communities to stop people being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given advice and support at an early stage.
 - e. **Domestic Homicide reviews:** Ensuring the WSCSP continues to carry out effective reviews, appropriate action plans and shares learning across organisations in Suffolk.
- 1.5 As part of the partnership's annual review of the action plan and identifying emerging issues it was also agreed to adopt Anti-Social Behaviour as a priority for 2021–2022.

- 1.6 Section two of this report provides more detail of the progress made to address these priorities.

2. Proposals within this report

2.1 Criminal Exploitation

- 2.1.1 County lines activity underpins serious and organised crime, which results in links to other criminal activity such as child and adult criminal exploitation, trafficking and modern slavery.
- 2.1.2 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.
- 2.1.3 County lines are operating in Suffolk and the number of lines varies at any given time.
- 2.1.4 In West 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 in county lines.
- 2.1.5 Over the last year the WSCSP has continued to work with partners to address the wider issues of criminal exploitation as well as monitoring county lines activity.
- 2.1.6 Criminal exploitation training and awareness sessions were commissioned throughout the year and continue to be part of partners’ programme of ongoing training. Over the past year West Suffolk Council trained officers have delivered awareness sessions. Two sessions have been for internal staff, engaging with over 15 council staff and one session has taken place within a school setting, engaging with 20 staff members.
- 2.1.7 The WSCSP has also worked closely with staff at Suffolk County Council to commission external partners to provide more in-depth training to staff. Over the last year an extensive training package has been developed that consists of various options for partners including:
- a. Webinars both training and awareness raising
 - b. Online training
 - c. Workshops both online and in person covering topics such as: child criminal exploitation, parent and carers, criminal exploitation, disrupting exploitation and working with young people.

- 2.1.8 These training sessions were available throughout the year and will continue as part of the WSCSP commitment to raising awareness amongst our partners and communities. From March 2021 through to April 2022 over 20 different types of criminal exploitation training has taken place and engaging with staff from West Suffolk Council, Community Action Suffolk, Adult Community Services, schools and West Suffolk College, and WSCSP partners.
- 2.1.9 As part of the County Lines Intensification Week in 2021 officers engaged with taxi drivers, hotel staff and Air BnB representatives to start raising awareness of criminal exploitation. Over the next year this work will continue to ensure appropriate training is offered.

2.2 **Violence Against Women and Girls**

- 2.2.1 The Suffolk Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) The action plan focuses on the following key themes:
- a. **Commissioning:** understanding local need and designing services that meet that need whilst providing value for money.
 - b. **Insight:** understanding the scale and nature of threats Suffolk faces and effectively collating and analysing data.
 - c. **Prevention and education:** raising awareness of VAWG crime types and encourage disclosure and early help.
 - d. **Coordination and communication:** continue to promote the services available and ensure everyone knows how to access support.
 - e. **Protection and justice:** be an advocate and influence decision makers to ensure victims are supported
- 2.2.2 The WSCSP collaborates on several projects that support victims of domestic abuse in West Suffolk and residents are able to access specialist support that is commissioned countywide through Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner, as well as local support services that offer very localised support.
- 2.2.3 The following services are commissioned through Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner:
- a. Anglia Care Trust Domestic Abuse Outreach service: providing support for victims of domestic abuse. The team works with individuals to build their resilience and reduce the risks to them. It helps survivors to access suitable services and can also offer financial advice.
 - b. Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid: providers of refuge and support for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. Sage living accommodation for up to eight women and 15 children as well as a range of community services, freedom programmes, courses and counselling for women and children.

- c. Home Start Mid and West Suffolk: providing one to one support for families that have experienced domestic abuse, as well as providing group work for parents, care providers and children.
- d. Norfolk and Suffolk Victim Care: providing emotional and practical help to anyone affected by crime.
- e. Leeway Independent Domestic Violence Advisory (IDVA) service: providing support and help to those identified as high risk of domestic abuse.
- f. Survivors in Transition: providing support to men and women who have experience sexual abuse, exploitation, or violence in childhood.
- g. Restitute: providing assistance to families of those supporting victims of sexual abuse or violent crime
- h. Suffolk Rape Crisis: providing trauma informed support to women and girls affected in any way by sexual violence.
- i. Fresh Start New Beginnings: providing free specialist support for young people who have experienced sexual abuse/assault.
- j. The Ferns Sexual Assault Referral Centre: specialist centre for victims of rape and sexual assault regardless of whether they have reported the crime to the police.

- 2.2.4 The West Suffolk Domestic Abuse Partnership consists of statutory and voluntary practitioners working within the area of domestic abuse. The partnership provides an opportunity for all to meet, network, share best practice and support local projects such as White Ribbon Campaign, freedom programmes, educational support and local awareness raising.
- 2.2.5 Specialist Refuge Satellite Accommodation remains in place across the partnership area. There are 23 specialist satellite beds across Suffolk with four being in the partnership area across West and Central Suffolk. This satellite refuge continues to provide sanctuary for victims fleeing domestic abuse who are unable to access the refuge due to complex needs. Individuals who access this service are also able to receive specialist support through a dedicated domestic abuse worker based within the West Suffolk Council Housing Team. Between April 2021 to March 2022 five individuals have benefited from specialist refuge in West Suffolk.
- 2.2.6 Target Hardening funding has been pooled and committed by partners across Suffolk to provide a countywide target hardening scheme for victims of high-risk domestic abuse. This scheme ensures the victim can remain as safe as possible within their own home. Between April 2021 to March 2022 ten properties have been supported in West Suffolk with target hardening measures to help the victim remain in their home. The national charity Safe Partnership provide a crime reduction and fire risk survey, undertakes any security or arson reduction measures in one visit and within 48 hours from referral.
- 2.2.7 Domestic Abuse Champion funding is secured until 2023 to provide Suffolk with a Domestic Abuse Champions Network. This model continues providing a programme of training for champions within our communities.

The Network continues to grow with 770 people now trained as champions across a wide range of services.

- 2.2.8 West Suffolk Council have eight members of staff trained as champions and in November 2021 the council launched a dedicated Domestic Abuse Champions intranet page for staff and councillors to access support and information on domestic abuse.
- 2.2.9 The White Ribbon Campaign was 16 days of action which took place in late November 2021. The Council's Domestic Abuse Champions held an open day at West Suffolk Council where guest speakers engaged with staff, awareness raising sessions took place and champions were available to talk to college staff. Alongside this dedicated day partners also held awareness raising events including open days within services and campaign materials available throughout West Suffolk.
- 2.2.10 West Suffolk Council actively engaged with the countywide campaign with this year's focus on engaging with men and boys to end violence against women. The hashtag #AllMenCan was the leading message this year. The campaign used social media to raise awareness, schools were engaged and asked to support the campaign.
- 2.2.11 In February 2022 the WSCSP took part in the campaign around raising awareness of sexual violence. The focus of the campaign was to raise awareness of peer-on-peer abuse and sexual violence.
- 2.2.12 The aim of #itsnotok awareness week was to raise awareness and campaigning against sexual violence. The week aimed to generate discussion among the general public, statutory bodies and third sector organisations about how sexual abuse and sexual violence and its impact.
- 2.2.13 Through the use of social media this campaign saw a high level of impact reaching over half a million people. This was achieved by a joined-up approach from partners across the Suffolk system.
- 2.2.14 As reported in last year's annual report, lockdown restrictions changed the way services could interact with victims who needed support, however Suffolk responded quickly to the restrictions and adapted services to enable to continue to provide a level of support to victims. The following services continue to adapt and provide support:
- a. In May 2020 the Suffolk 24/7 Freephone Domestic Abuse Helpline was launched, with funding secured until 2023. The helpline was launched in partnership with Anglia Care Trust. To date nearly 800 calls have been made to the dedicated number and this service continue to operate.

- b. National and local resources were made available through a variety of mechanisms and continue to be shared by partners through vaccination sites, GP surgeries, supermarkets and schools.
- c. As part of White Ribbon Campaign Suffolk Libraries opened as a Safe Space premise, which allows victims of domestic abuse to utilise the premises as a safe space and the trained library staff can offer support and assistance. All libraries across Suffolk are part of this scheme.

2.2.15 Over the last 12 months the current VAWG strategy has been reviewed and a new strategy adopted at the Safer Stronger Communities Board in January 2022. The action plan is being developed with partners to ensure the correct actions and activities are detailed to deliver the new strategic objectives. The VAWG steering group will oversee the action plan to ensure progress is made in line with agreed timescales and outcomes.

2.3 **Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)**

2.3.1 Carrying out Domestic Homicide Reviews is a responsibility of the Community Safety Partnership. A DHR is triggered when the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse, or neglect by a relative, household member or someone with whom he or she has been in an intimate relationship. There are currently two DHRs being undertaken in West Suffolk.

2.3.2 A death in 2020 within West Suffolk triggered a DHR. The review was agreed by the WSCSP in December 2021 and submitted to the Home Office for approval, the partnership is still awaiting the Home Office decision. The action plan was agreed and adopted at the March 2022 CSP meeting and work is underway in relation to those recommendations with quarterly reports being presented to the CSP. A final decision on publication of the review will take place once the Home Office have provided the partnership with their decision. A death in 2021 within West Suffolk triggered a DHR. The review is currently being drafted and any recommendations put forward will be considered by the WSCSP at a later date.

2.4 **Hate Crime**

- 2.4.1 A hate crime is defined as any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived:
- a. race
 - b. religion or belief
 - c. physical or sensory disability
 - d. learning disability or mental health
 - e. age
 - f. gender
 - g. sexual orientation
 - h. gender identity
- 2.4.2 West Suffolk Council continues to be an active partner within the Suffolk Hate Crime Network as well as supporting projects commissioned through the WSCSP.
- 2.4.3 In October 2021 WSCSP and West Suffolk Council supported the National Hate Crime Week. The Council supported the countywide campaign through its social media channels with messages around support and how to report a hate crime being promoted daily. The CSP commissioned a month-long campaign "Fearless" organised by Crimestoppers.
- 2.4.4 In October 2021 the HOPE awards were launched, as part of the National Hate Crime Awareness week by Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Police, supported by the WSCSP. This initiative was open to all young persons between the age 11 and 18 and nominations in four categories: diversity, determination, teamwork and respect and kindness.
- 2.4.5 Over 50 schools across Suffolk took part in the awards. There were eight applications from WSCSP area within all four categories and awards to five schools have been presented.
- 2.4.6 Hate crime training and awareness raising sessions are actively promoted. Suffolk County Council provides a "Hate Crime" module which is a short e-learning training module available free of charge for all partners in Suffolk. The module has three elements: - "What is Hate Crime?", "The Law" and "How to Respond" and is accessible online, providing partners with an overview and good understanding of hate crime. The course can be accessed through: www.suffolkcpd.co.uk
- 2.5 **Prevent**
- 2.5.1 West Suffolk Council continues to execute its statutory duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and to consider local threat levels.
- 2.5.2 The Suffolk PREVENT Delivery Group brings together partners to acquit that duty which include, local authorities, prisons, probation, schools,

university and colleges, health sector and police. Each quarter the group receive recommendations from the Counter Terrorism Local Profile, and these are adopted into the rolling partnership action plan.

- 2.5.3 In order to meet the Prevent Duty there is a requirement to ensure that staff have a good understanding of Prevent, are trained to recognise vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism and are aware of available programmes to deal with this issue, including making appropriate referrals to Channel.
- 2.5.4 Suffolk held its first Prevent Week of Action between 28 February 2022 and 3 March 2022. The main aims behind the week of action were:
- a. Raise awareness of the risks of being drawn into terrorism.
 - b. The role the public have to play (friends and families) in identifying concerns and acting on them.
 - c. Upskilling professionals to raise awareness and encourage referrals of people vulnerable to radicalisation
 - d. Links to Hate crime/ community cohesion
- 2.5.5 The week focused on a range of communication events and utilised social media to raise awareness. A bespoke session for all Suffolk councillors was held during the week with presentation from the Home Office and Counter Terrorism Policing.
- 2.5.6 PREVENT training has been available to staff at West Suffolk Council since 2016. Between April 2021 to March 2022 two training sessions were provided with a total of 19 staff in attendance.
- 2.6 **Modern Slavery**
- 2.6.1 The WSCSP adopted Modern Slavery in 2021 and over the last 12 months officers from the council has been engaged with the countywide Modern Slavery steering group. The group is actively developing a strategy and action plan which will be presented, discussed and adopted by the WSCSP later in 2022.
- 2.6.2 Through the council's safeguarding training modern slavery is covered in terms of raising awareness of the National Referral form, the definition of modern-day slavery, how staff can address concerns and how to complete the referral form. West Suffolk Council has also commissioned an e-learning module on My Learning that staff can access.
- 2.6.3 In early 2021 Suffolk County Council successfully received funding from the Home Office, which was matched funded by Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner, to support two approaches:

- a. Practitioner training on the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and the partners' referral duties.
- b. Development of two training films, filmed in Suffolk for staff to identify and refer potential victims of exploitation. Both these training opportunities have been supported by WSCP and will be promoted within the council.

2.6.4 The WSCSP supported the GO Bags initiative and provided funding for ten Go Bags which are designed as an emergency provision for a short period of time (24/48hrs) and provides essentials for victims of modern slavery before they are safeguarded by other agencies. To date Suffolk Police have utilised two Go Bags for victims.

2.7 **Anti-Social Behaviour**

2.7.1 Preventing and responding to, anti-social behaviour (ASB) remains a priority for the WSCSP and the council. As set out in previous reports council staff continue to chair monthly Forums which bring together a number of organisations to co-ordinate responses to reports of ASB in communities across West Suffolk. The council continues to support the Community Trigger process.

3. **Alternative options that have been considered**

3.1 None

4. **Consultation and engagement undertaken**

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 associated with the proposals**

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 of West Suffolk Council's activities

6. **Implications arising from the proposals**

6.1 Financial: None

- 6.2 Legal Compliance: Community Safety Partnerships are statutory bodies 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. In addition, information can be legally shared if it is shared in order to prevent or detect crime.
- 6.4 Equalities: The WSCSP focusses on those who are impacted by crime and particular types of crime such as Hate Crime. Equality issues are taken into consideration as part of the annual monitoring and agreeing the action plan.
- 6.5 Crime and Disorder: covered in the main body of the report.
- 6.6 Environment or Sustainability: None
- 6.7 HR or Staffing: None
- 6.8 Changes to existing policies: None
- 6.9 External organisations (such as businesses, community groups): Community Safety Partnerships are statutory bodies with prescribed statutory partners who are required to be part of the partnership.

7. Appendices referenced in this report

- 7.1 None

8. Background documents associated with this report

- 8.1 The Suffolk Police and Crime Plan 2022/2025 published by the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner. This plan is required to reflect the priorities in the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Plan. This plan is published on the Suffolk PCC website.

[Police & Crime Plan - Suffolk PCC \(suffolk-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.suffolk-pcc.gov.uk)