

# **People & Health Scrutiny Committee**

## **14<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

### **Community Safety Annual Scrutiny Report**

#### **For Review and Consultation**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr G Carr-Jones, Housing and Community Safety

**Local Councillor(s):**

**Executive Director:** V Broadhurst, Executive Director of People - Adults

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**Report Status:** Public

#### **Recommendation:**

That members of the Committee consider and comment on the community safety annual report.

#### **Reason for Recommendation:**

To ensure the Council complies with its legal duties relating to community safety.

#### **1. Executive Summary**

Under the Police & Justice Act 2006, local authorities are required to have Crime & Disorder Committees that review and scrutinise partners' community safety work. The committees should formally review progress at least once a year.

In Dorset Council, the function of the Crime & Disorder Committee is fulfilled by the People & Health Scrutiny Committee (for scrutiny work) and the People & Health Overview Committee (for any proactive community safety work).

This annual scrutiny report provides information on partners' work in three main areas:

- Progress against the Community Safety Plan 2020-23
- Work undertaken to respond to new legal requirements placed on the Council under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Work to prepare for new, emerging statutory duties

Any observations or recommendations from the Committee will be considered by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and used to help develop its work.

## **2. Financial Implications**

The Dorset CSP does not receive any funding, however partners' plans and strategies clarify where they will focus their time and effort and their broad activity to meet priorities.

The economic and social cost of crime has a significant impact, including on the public purse. The Home Office estimate that the cost for a single victim of domestic abuse is £34,015 a year (based on 2016/17 figures). Evidence shows that 6.3% of women and 2.7% of men aged between 16 and 59 have experienced partner abuse once or more in the last year. When applied to the Dorset Council area population, that equates to an estimated 8,113 people at a cost of £276 million a year. Almost £200m of those costs relate to physical and emotional harm.

The estimated cost of a domestic homicide is £2.2m.

Other significant costs include Rape (£39,360 per crime), Violence with Injury (£14,050 per crime) and Other Sexual Offences (£6,520 per crime).

(sources: [The Economic and Social Costs of Crime](#) Home Office, July 2018 and [The Economic and Social Costs of Domestic Abuse](#) Home Office, January 2019)

The Council received £650,000 new burdens funding in 2021/22 from central Government to help meet new statutory duties in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

The Council and partners were awarded £380,000 this year from the Home Office following a successful bid to the Safer Streets Fund Round 3.

## **3. Well-being and Health Implications**

Tackling crime and the fear of crime has a significant impact on health and wellbeing.

#### **4. Climate implications**

None.

#### **5. Other Implications**

Community safety – as set out in the report.

#### **6. Risk Assessment**

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

#### **7. Equalities Impact Assessment**

An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed when developing partners' most recent community safety plan. The assessment highlighted several positive impacts on those with a protected characteristic.

An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed as part of the development of Dorset's Domestic Abuse Strategy.

#### **8. Appendices**

None.

#### **9. Background Papers**

[Dorset Community Safety Partnership Terms of Reference](#)  
[Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-24](#)  
[Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill](#)

#### **10. Background**

- 10.1 Local authorities are required to have Crime & Disorder Committees that scrutinises the Council's and its partners' delivery of their statutory community safety functions. The committees should formally review progress at least once a year.

10.2 Partners' work is co-ordinated through the Dorset Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The CSP is a statutory partnership under The Crime & Disorder Act 1998. It brings together the following responsible authorities who must work together to understand and address community safety issues in their area:

- Dorset Council
- Dorset Police
- Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group
- Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority
- The Probation Service (Dorset)

10.3 The terms of reference for the Dorset CSP describe its role, working practices and the duties the partnership is required to carry out.

10.4 This annual scrutiny report focuses on three main areas of activity:

- Progress against the Community Safety Plan 2020-23
- Work undertaken to respond to new legal requirements placed on the Council under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Work to prepare for new, emerging statutory duties

## **11. Progress Against the Community Safety Plan 2020-2023**

### Community Safety Plans

11.1 CSP's are required to produce three-year Community Safety Plans that are revised annually.

11.2 The plans are informed by needs assessments and local people's views about community safety issues.

11.3 The Dorset CSP agreed its 2020-23 Community Safety Plan in March 2020. It was formally adopted by Dorset Council in October 2020. The Plan is refreshed annually and includes the following priorities:

- Domestic Abuse
- Serious Sexual Offences
- Rural Crime
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- County Lines
- Fraud

- Public Place Violence
- Anti-Social Behaviour

### Progress Against the Community Safety Plan

11.4 The second year of the 2020-23 Plan has seen the Council and its partners continuing to respond to community safety issues associated with the Covid 19 pandemic whilst progressing work against their priorities. Tackling domestic abuse has remained a key focus.

11.5 Examples of work undertaken so far in 2021/22 include:

- Securing £380,000 through a successful bid to the Home Office's Safer Streets Fund Round 3. The funding is being used to instal new CCTV in key locations in Weymouth and help tackle violence against women and girls by supporting the Stalking Clinic and running a series of interactive empowerment and bystander intervention workshops at Weymouth College during Sexual Violence Awareness Week in February 2022.
- Running a high-profile campaign to raise awareness of domestic abuse support services. The campaign involved placing banners on refuse and other Council vehicles to reach as many residents as possible. Other partners have expressed an interest in joining the campaign.
- The DRIVE programme, which works with high harm perpetrators of domestic abuse, has been established in Dorset. The programme links closely to partners' other high-risk domestic abuse work. Early findings from the project are due to be produced shortly.
- Various training programmes related to DRIVE have been rolled out to front line professionals. Over 200 people have completed training.
- Other domestic abuse related training is in place including specific packages related to the Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour based violence (DASH) risk assessment, Coercive and Controlling Behaviour, Complicated Matters and Adult Safeguarding – Domestic Abuse.
- A domestic abuse toolkit has been published for front line practitioners working with children and families. The toolkit has been developed by a range of partners with input from front line practitioners.
- Partners have agreed a joint Domestic Abuse Commissioning Charter to help align their commissioning activities for domestic abuse services and interventions. The Charter involves making clear commitments and establishes shared outcomes across agencies.
- The UP2U family practice model for domestic abuse continues to be rolled out across Children Service's in Dorset.
- Dorset Council is also considering options for the future of the UP2U Creating Healthy Relationships Programme.

- Dorset Police has provided 'Domestic Abuse Matters' training for its Officers. The course is delivered by the Charity SafeLives and was developed in conjunction with the College of Policing. It aims to transform the response to domestic abuse, ensuring the voice of the victim is placed at the centre, and controlling and coercive behaviour is better understood.
  - An audit has been completed on older people and high-risk domestic abuse with work progressing in response to learning points jointly with the Adults Safeguarding Board.
  - Various actions and activity has taken place based on the recommendations from Domestic Homicide Reviews.
  - The Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has produced a domestic abuse toolkit for GPs and those working in primary care.
  - Training on modern slavery and preventing violent extremism is now mandatory for all Dorset Council staff.
  - The Council ran a communications campaign to coincide with the national 16 days of action against domestic abuse campaign.
  - The development of community safety partnership arrangements at a locality level to better tackle neighbourhood issues.
- 11.6 Work to refresh the Community Safety Plan for 2022/23 is underway. Priorities have been identified using data and information. Public consultation including through the Council's Residents' Survey and People Panel, will help inform the refreshed plan.

## **12. Domestic Abuse Act 2021**

- 12.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 became law on 29 April 2021. The Act places new duties on local authorities including to establish a Local Partnership Board (LPB) and produce a needs assessment and strategy relating to support for victims and children in safe accommodation.
- 12.2 The Dorset CSP took on the functions of the LPB for the Dorset Council area. It's terms of reference and membership were updated accordingly.
- 12.3 The Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy was published on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 following a period of public consultation. It includes a position statement, an introduction to the requirements in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, recommendations from the needs assessment, a broad outline of activity in response to the recommendations and details on governance arrangements.

- 12.4 Central Government provided each local authority area new burdens funding to help meet their new statutory duty to provide support to victims and their children in safe accommodation. Dorset Council received £650,000 new burdens funding in 2021/22.
- 12.5 Dorset Council commissions an Integrated Domestic Abuse Service that provides a wide range of support and help for people experiencing domestic abuse. Support services include safe accommodation, community outreach, recovery programmes and a helpline.
- 12.6 Plans for using the additional new burdens funding were agreed by the CSP (in its capacity as the LPB) in October 2021 and were referenced in a report to Cabinet in November 2021. The new burdens funding will be used to help fund current accommodation based support, to continue and enhance support for children in safe accommodation, to provide more housing support, develop target hardening work so people can remain in their own homes safely (target hardening involves improving the security of a property to reduce the risk of crime and improve safety) and undertake research and analysis to understand needs, what works and good practice in relation to domestic abuse (including implementing the findings).

### **13. Emerging Work**

- 13.1 The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill is currently progressing through the House of Lords and nearing its final stages before becoming legislation. The Bill proposes a new Serious Violence Duty and the introduction of Offensive Weapon Homicide Reviews.

#### Serious Violence Duty

- 13.2 The proposed Serious Violence Duty will require the Council and its partners to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence in their area, the causes of that violence, and preparing and implementing a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence.
- 13.4 The Council and its partners will be expected to:
- Undertake work to understand local issues
  - Prepare and implement a strategy

- Review the strategy annually

#### Offensive Weapons Reviews

- 13.5 The Bill also makes provision for the establishment and conduct of reviews of the circumstances of certain homicides where the victim was aged 18 or over and the events surrounding their death involved, or were likely to have involved the use of an offensive weapon.
- 13.6 The provisions will place a duty on the Council, Police and Clinical Commissioning Groups to consider whether the criteria for an offensive weapons homicide review have been met and if so to conduct the review.
- 13.7 The criteria for a review will be set out in regulations. In circumstances where a domestic homicide review is already required, it will not be necessary to also conduct an offensive weapons homicide review.
- 13.8 The Home Office will establish a new non-statutory Oversight Board to monitor implementation of the findings from the reviews and share the lessons nationally.
- 13.9 The Government intends to pilot reviews initially in several areas before they are rolled out nationally.
- 13.10 The Council and its partners, through the CSP, are beginning to prepare for these new responsibilities focusing on how existing processes can be used to ensure efficiency.

#### **Footnote:**

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.