

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2017
Subject:	Community Safety Partnership
Report of:	Richard Kirk, Interim Head of Community Services
Corporate Lead:	Rob Weaver, Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor Mrs K J Berry, Lead Member for Community
Number of Appendices:	None

Executive Summary:

Community safety responsibilities have continued to evolve since the original formation of the Tewkesbury Community Safety Partnership almost 20 years ago.

Successive changes to public services have resulted in less in-house capacity and a move away from localised services in other community safety partner agencies. The community safety agenda is no longer met through the six district partnerships in Gloucestershire and a more effective delivery is considered possible through a larger countywide community safety partnership, supported by thematic working groups and local community safety forums for local implementation.

The management of anti-social behaviour (ASB) within Tewkesbury Borough has been influenced by changes within the Council, and within the partner agencies, and is the subject of further review in the context of community safety, which is ongoing. Changes will now be implemented to support the new county model of community safety.

Recommendation:

To receive an update and note the ongoing review of the county and local community safety and anti-social behaviour activities within the borough.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The Community Safety Partnership within Tewkesbury Borough has become progressively less effective. This has largely resulted from reduced capacity within the five responsible agencies to strategically drive community safety locally whilst maintaining other core functions.

Community safety remains a statutory obligation for the Council and the other responsible agencies and a rationalised model of delivery in conjunction with the other district authorities would enable the Council to meet its obligations more effectively.

The apparent contraction of services within the other agencies has led to larger, less localised structures, which are more compatible with a countywide community safety partnership. The formulation of a County Community Safety Partnership would enable responsible authorities to maintain a meaningful community safety agenda with all local districts within Gloucestershire.

Within the Council there has been a dispersion of ASB responsibilities across a number of service areas and a review of ASB services and the connection to wider community safety activities is necessary to ensure that activities remain effective.

Resource Implications:

ASB and community safety functions require the input of several in-house services and several external agencies and rely heavily on inter-agency partnerships to remain effective. Management and delivery of the ASB and community service functions will be met through the existing staffing establishment.

Legal Implications:

Community Safety Partnerships were set up under Sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. They are made up of representatives from 'responsible authorities' which are the local authorities, police, fire and rescue, probation and health. The proposed changes to the Community Safety Partnerships in Gloucestershire are set out in this report.

Risk Management Implications:

The risks associated with not delivering an integrated approach to community safety will be reduced by supporting the countywide community safety partnership model.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The new county partnership will be the subject of a co-ordinated performance management framework to assess the achievements and determine future priorities and workloads.

Environmental Implications:

None

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 Effective partnership working is essential to help reduce crime and improve outcomes for communities and ensure that local resources are used efficiently and effectively. There are legal requirements for the five "responsible authorities" (police, local authorities, fire & rescue authority, probation and health) to work together in Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to jointly:

- reduce re-offending;
- tackle crime and disorder;
- tackle anti-social behaviour;
- tackle alcohol and substance misuse; and
- tackle any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment.

1.2 Community safety activities within CSPs cover a broad spectrum of activities from serious issues, such as knife crime, to prevention/diversion activities. There are common factors which affect all CSPs and other localised issues which have a differential impact.

1.3 Since the introduction of the legal duty to form CSPs there has also been a raft of national legislation, initiatives and responsibilities, which have increased their responsibilities.

2.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY WITHIN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

- 2.1 CSPs usually work at district or unitary authority level. Within Gloucestershire, community safety is currently managed at a district level and there are consequently six separate district community safety partnerships.
- 2.2 There are considerable differences in the community safety focus across the partnerships reflecting the levels of challenge in the districts. The urban areas have developed and maintained comparatively more robust structures than within the rural districts where there tends to be a lower incidence of crime.
- 2.3 Whilst there are differences in capacity and demand across the districts, there are also similarities in common local challenges and the need to respond to national initiatives such as hate crimes, anti-slavery and the Prevent agenda.
- 2.4 The current county community safety structure inevitably involves considerable duplication of effort associated with six separate partnerships. It is recognised that there is inevitable fragmentation across the county and no clear conduit for sharing strategies, learning, or implementing lessons from emerging issues, such as domestic homicide reviews.
- 2.5 There is a lack of strategic focus in many CSPs resulting in some issues such as youth offending, hate-crime, drugs and alcohol, domestic abuse, anti-slavery losing prominence as CSPs focus upon locality issues.
- 2.6 The national policy context around public services has experienced dramatic change with the impact of austerity pressures since 2010. This applies similarly to services provided by single organisations and those cross-cutting functions, which involve wider partnerships.
- 2.7 During this period central government funding for a range of activities, which was a feature of the general "community safety landscape" pre-2010, has all but ceased, taking along with them some of the overarching county architecture, largely created to serve the Local Area Agreement process, which used to support the strategic overview of these issues. This has resulted in disjointed activities locally and countywide as the public services and other partners have contracted and priorities shifted.

3.0 UPDATE AND KEY ACTIVITIES

3.1 County Review of Community Safety

- 3.1.1 A "whole systems review" of community safety across Gloucestershire was commissioned by Leadership Gloucestershire in early 2016, which concluded in a leadership decision in December 2016.
- 3.1.2 The countywide review identified that there was a clear need to rationalise the current complex arrangements across the county and district partnership landscape.
- 3.1.3 It highlighted that the six community safety partnerships (CSPs) all operate differently with very different reflections on the evolution of community safety across the county. It suggested that an overall strategic vacuum across the county had led to fragmentation and disconnection between the districts, county partnerships and agencies. It was also considered that there was a need for an overarching Gloucestershire Community Safety Partnership, which takes rural and urban issues into account.
- 3.1.4 The review suggested three possible options to rationalise service delivery and jointly

deliver against countywide partnership priorities:

Option 1 – represented a relatively minor change with six district-based community safety partnerships remaining in place, but with a regular forum for chairs to meet.

Option 2 – involved the establishment of a countywide community safety partnership working closely with the six district-based community safety partnerships.

Option 3 - represented transformational change with the merger of the six district based community safety partnerships to form an overarching county partnership. Six district-based multi-agency forums would allow activities to be customised at a local level. Key forums relating to priority areas would have a direct relationship with the countywide partnership. This included public protection, ASB, drugs and alcohol, domestic abuse and sexual violence, domestic homicide reviews, hate crime, anti-slavery and organised crime.

- 3.1.5** The review also suggested that this model of delivery could incorporate more powerful and strategic links with the safeguarding agenda in the county by complementing the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board (GSCB) and Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adult's Board (GSAB)'s current approach. This approach focuses on vulnerable individuals, with a community safety agenda to counteract group behaviours with safeguarding implications (such as the attitudes and behaviours of gangs to vulnerable people for example – i.e. issues raised in the Rotherham case).
- 3.1.6** The review also highlighted a hierarchy of community safety strategic planning ranging from those involving serious harm with high levels of intervention to those with low harm and a greater potential for prevention.
- 3.1.7** The Leadership Gloucestershire partners considered the review and determined that the transformational change in Option 3 would best meet the community safety needs of the county and facilitate effective efficient activities within the districts.

4.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY WITHIN TEWKESBURY BOROUGH

4.1 Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

- 4.1.1** Within the Council, the responsibility for community safety and ASB is seen as a cross-cutting activity involving the input from a range of service areas, including: Environmental Health, Community Development and Housing. ASB and community safety are no longer the principal elements of Officers' roles in any one service (with the exception of the Youth Anti-Social Behaviour Officer) within the Council. ASB is also dealt with by the police, Families First, and our housing provider partners.
- 4.1.2** Reports of ASB are generally low across the borough as a whole and the Council's commitment to building local community resilience through the Place Programme is seen to be part of the preventative agenda for ASB and a relevant context in which to tackle community safety.
- 4.1.3** Within the Council there is no common reporting or monitoring system for ASB across the service areas. Issues tend to be dealt with successfully on an individual basis, with no overview to identify emerging problematic areas beyond the service responding to their particular ASB issue. There is, therefore, little intelligence indicating what type of problems exist, where they occur and how they have been resolved; consequently, this presents a challenge when looking at the coordination of intervention activity across the borough.

4.2 Tewkesbury Borough Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

- 4.2.1** The current delivery arrangements within the CSP in Tewkesbury Borough have not been considered in the context of the capacity changes within the local partner agencies and stakeholders. Any reduced capacity within the agencies responsible for driving the community safety agenda will have a direct impact on the effectiveness of the local community safety partnership.
- 4.2.2** Securing attendance from the responsible agencies at the Tewkesbury Borough CSP has been problematic and there has been no attendance from Health or Probation services for several years. These agencies no longer have structures that match our district boundaries and could not commit to attendance at six different CSPs in the current climate. They consequently do not directly link in with the borough on community safety issues.
- 4.2.3** However, the general attendance at the Tewkesbury Borough CSP has grown to be extensive, including many agencies and voluntary groups with peripheral concerns. There has also been a tendency amongst the non-responsible partners to assume that community safety was a Council responsibility for which the Council should be accountable at CSP meetings, rather than a collaborative function with shared responsibility.

4.3 Progress on Local Reviews

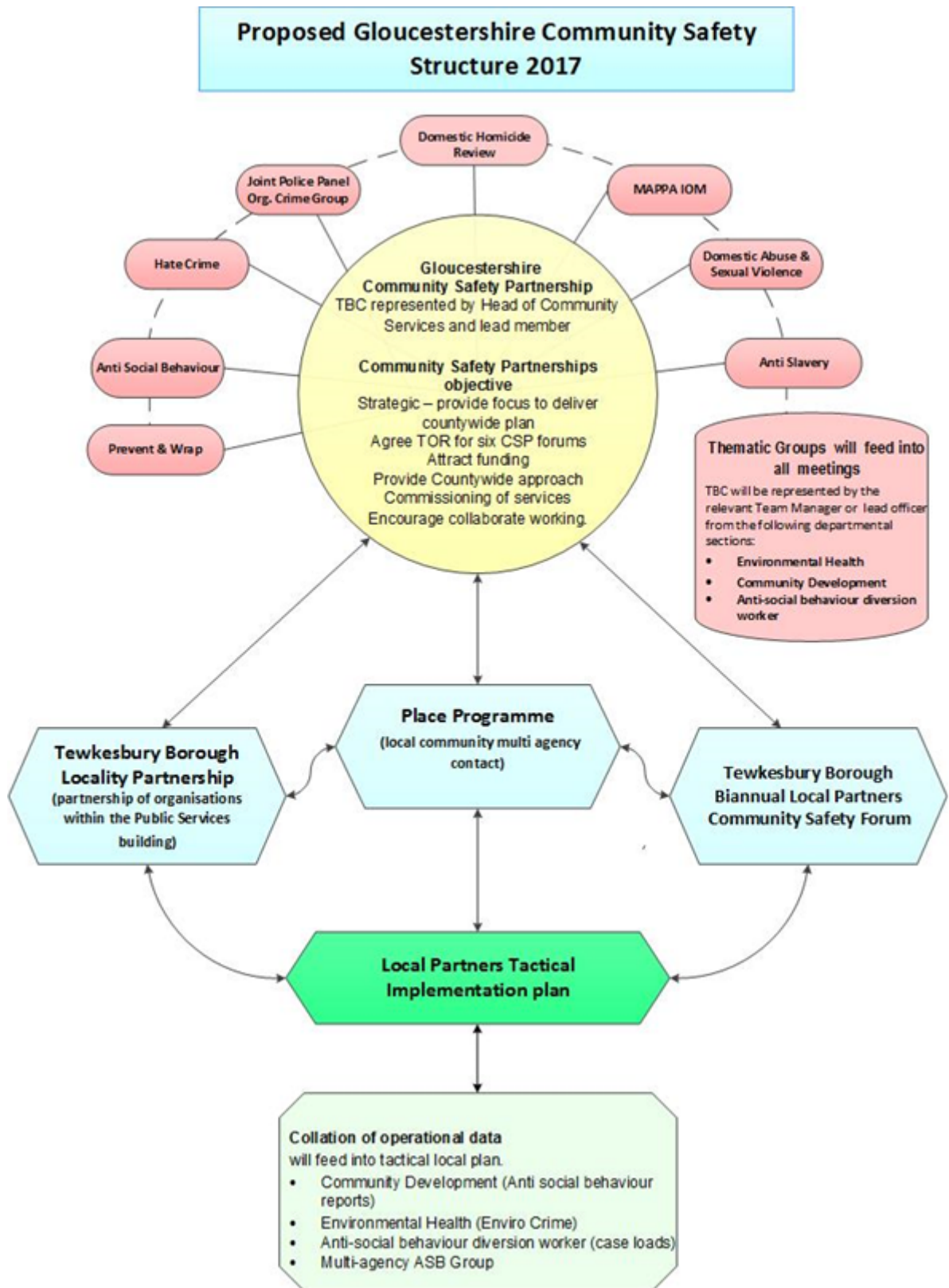
- 4.3.1** The Community Safety Partnership in Tewkesbury Borough was suspended in August 2016 pending a borough systems review of local community safety and ASB activities. This decision was taken by the Deputy Chief Executive in post at that time, with the support of the Lead Member for Community, and to be completed by the new Deputy Chief Executive and the Head of Community Services (when in post) to lead and implement changes. In addition, to help inform the process, an external consultant was commissioned to undertake the review which commenced in October 2016 and incorporated input from the Police and Severn Vale Housing Authority as key local partners.
- 4.3.2** The purpose of undertaking a local review is to gain an accurate picture of current local practice and obtain views on the potential for improvement whilst incorporating the outcomes of the simultaneous systems review of county community safety by Leadership Gloucestershire.
- 4.3.3** The consultant will be delivering her recommendations on the local architecture for delivering effective ASB and community safety functions within the borough on 23 February 2017. Once this is received, the Council will have a clearer picture of how operational ASB issues can be improved.

- 4.3.4** The adoption of the new county CSP, however, is likely to address many of the challenges facing the Tewkesbury Borough CSP, namely:

- an overarching county Community Safety Strategy with themed sub-groups would enable Tewkesbury Borough to contribute and benefit from a clear focus on priorities, determined by local need and national directive;
- a shared focus across the district authority boundaries will reduce duplication, increase capacity for strategic focus and offer sharing and learning opportunities;
- the structure will also provide a forum to communicate with public agencies now operating in larger geographic areas coterminous with county boundaries;
- sharing the responsibility for community safety across the districts will also enable Tewkesbury Borough to use resources more effectively to concentrate on tactical implementation based on intelligence from efficient thematic forums with appropriate agency representation;
- there will be greater partnership opportunities and capacity for co-commissioning and funding for delivery of local community safety initiatives; and
- the structure would firmly link the borough to the statutory services within the county structures who have not attended the local forum and enable the Council to input to the development of Community Safety Services in these areas.

4.3.5 The local detail is yet to be finalised, however, one potential option could be that the local structure can be delivered through the Council's Place Programme arrangements, which will offer local community multi-agency contact. The Place Programme arrangements could then be augmented with periodic stakeholder forum events to provide further opportunities for two way communication at the local level.

4.3.6



5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Leadership Gloucestershire considered two alternative options for Community Safety, as outlined above.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1** The review undertaken by an independent consultant for Leadership Gloucestershire incorporated the views of responsible agencies throughout the county, district Council elected Members, the Police and Crime Panel, Police and Crime Commissioner, voluntary and community sector representatives, representatives from the six CSPs, victim support services and youth support services.
- 6.2** The review of ASB work within Tewkesbury Borough undertaken by the consultant has incorporated the views of key partners within Tewkesbury Borough and the responsible officers within the Council.

7.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 7.1** Data Protection Policy 1998.
Equality & Diversity Policy 2012 -2016.
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.
Corporate Enforcement Policy.

8.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- 8.1** Prevent.
Serious and organised Crime Strategy 2013.
Modern Crime Prevention Strategy 2016.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

- 9.1** None directly associated with this report other than the existing staffing establishment and elected Member time.
- 9.2** It is anticipated that a budget of up to a maximum of £5,000 will be required to cover the cost of the appointment of the consultant to undertake the internal review.

10.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

- 10.1** Contained within the body of the report.

11.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

- 11.1** None arising from this report.

12.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

12.1 None

Background Papers: Community Safety in Gloucestershire – Consultation Review 05.09.16
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Appendices: None