

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Monday, 9 January 2023 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

T G Belben (Chair)

K Khan (Vice-Chair)

M L Ayling, H Hellier, I T Irvine, R A Lanzer, A Pendlington, S Piggott, S Pritchard, T Rana and S Sivarajah

Also in Attendance:

Councillors R D Burrett, S Mullins and Chief Inspector Ben Starns - Sussex Police

Officers Present:

Dan Carberry Public Protection and Enforcement Manager

Ian Duke Deputy Chief Executive

Trish Emmans Community Safety Officer

Heather Girling Democratic Services Officer

Kate Wilson Head of Community Services

1. Disclosures of Interest and Whipping Declarations

The following disclosures were made:

Councillor	Item and Minute	Type and Nature of Disclosure
Councillor R A Lanzer	Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC) (Minute 6)	Personal Interest – Member of WSCC
Councillor R A Lanzer	Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC) (Minute 6)	Personal Interest – WSCC Cabinet Member for Public Health & Wellbeing

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 21 November 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were asked.

4. Safer Crawley Partnership Annual Review and Forthcoming Priorities

The Commission received an update from Chief Inspector Ben Starns, Public Protection & Enforcement Manager and the Community Safety Officer, together with the Head of Community Services and Councillor S Mullins on the annual performance report of the Safer Crawley Partnership along with the future priorities. During the discussion, the following points were expressed:

The purpose of the Safer Crawley Partnership was to reduce re-offending, tackle crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, alcohol and substance misuse and any other behaviour which had a negative effect on the local community so that people in Crawley were safer and felt safer.

Statutory partners included: WSCC, Sussex Police, West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, Probation Service and Crawley Clinical Commissioning Group together with other partners including OSPCC, Crawley Open House, Crawley & Gatwick Business Watch, CGL, Audio Active, CCYS and schools.

The Four priorities:

- Serious and Organised Crime (Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking)
- Street Community
- Protecting Vulnerable Individuals
- Business Crime
- Violence Against Women & Girls

2021-2022 funding included:

- Funding allocation from Sussex PCC - £51,362,87
- Project funded in 2021-2022
 - £25,000 mobile CCTV/ANPR cameras. Two CCTV cameras deployed in Church Walk
 - £10,000 Crawley & Gatwick Business Watch. Support following reduction in membership fees due to impact of COVID and lockdown, provided the BCRP manager with the opportunity to re-engage with members
 - £1,500 Joint Action Group. Small scale initiatives such as 'no motor vehicle' signage in Broadfield to tackle issue of motorbikes and quadbikes being used on footpaths causing a nuisance to local residents
 - £9,580 Safer Schools Event. Presentation from St Giles Trust to all Year 8 and Year 9 students on county lines, drugs, gangs and exploitation, followed by a market place of positive activity providers and supports services
 - £9,312 AudioActive Cyphers Schools project. Cypher/Beats and Bars sessions delivered in schools to vulnerable young people identified by teachers/pastoral care team who are at risk of exploitation or who they may have concerns about.
 - £50,000 Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP). Funding for AudioActive to run the SHIFT programme targeting young people aged 11 to 18 years old, who are involved in, or at risk of being involved in antisocial behaviour, crime and or violence.

2022-2023 funding included:

- Crawley Open House Outreach and Day Centre – towards staffing costs for drop-in services and for Outreach Team.

- Youth Advice Centre – CSE Prevention Initiative – preventative workshops in schools for young women identified as being at risk of exploitation and 1:1 mentoring.
- AudioActive - provide music recording/production equipment and pump prime 4 additional AudioActive projects and taster sessions for 11-25 year olds.
- Junior Citizens - contribution to multi-agency 2 week event for all year 6 students educating young people on ASB and increasing awareness on how to keep themselves safe on the streets and online etc.
- Bike marking kits - bike marking pop up sessions to be held early 2023.

In terms of crime data, *crimes with a weapon* figure had increased, however this could be attributed to better reporting of offences. Acting on intelligence received was critical and it was noted that 'stop and search' along with other methods had attributed to a reduction in *possession with a weapon* figure. It was important that these figures did not escalate to *crimes with a weapon*. It was acknowledged that the public needed confidence in reporting crime as emerging issues would equate to prompt resourcing. Public engagement and interaction needed to be productive.

The make-up of the Neighbourhood Policing Team was discussed as the PCSOs were allocated for each area with increased knowledge and being able to network with key stakeholders.

2021-2022 Key Achievements included:

- Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) – joined up group able to identify vulnerable individuals and groups.
- Street Community – joint working to liaise and work with partners on a regular basis to tackle street homelessness, begging and street drinking, but also enforcement powers were used for those that unfortunately were not willing to engage due to the complexity of their needs. Whilst figures had increased in comparison to 2021, they did not equate to 2020 levels and had remained low following the impact of 'Everyone In' initiative.
- Protecting Vulnerable Individuals – There was continued awareness raising of domestic abuse and hate crime support services. Individuals susceptible to cuckooing were identified and monitored and a number of addresses had been attended and part / full closure orders had been obtained which also included arrests of criminal individuals and drugs seized. Meetings with partners ensured the scope of cases, supporting of individuals and preventative work.
- Business Crime – There were designated PC and PCSOs for the Town Centre, which fed into the intelligence meetings which resulted in good and effective use of ASB legislation. The increased use of the DISC app for reporting crime by business watch members had been positive. In addition the joint working between Police and the borough Licensing was in place in relation to the night-time economy.
- Violence against women and girls – The PCC 'Do the right thing campaign' campaign was regularly promoted via social media, along with StreetSafe for the public to report locations where they feel unsafe to inform police patrols. Additionally further work had been undertaken to promote the 'Bystander to Upstander' training which involved the skills to challenge unacceptable behaviours, including those which may have become normalised over time. It had been predominantly used to challenge attitudes towards women and girls. Specific patrols had been instigated in relation to the night-time economy and key hotspot locations with funding had been provided by the PCC to St John Church to reinvigorate the street pastor scheme.

Other Achievements:

- Partnership working continued around tackling organised criminal groups involved in modern day human trafficking as did the work on identifying and deterring county drug lines travelling from London.
- Awareness had continued in relation to domestic abuse, hate crime support services and digital safety.

Challenges/Emerging Issues:

- There was still the unwillingness of some individuals from the street community to engage with support services, which has impacted the town centre businesses.
- It was acknowledged that the reporting of hate crime required encouragement.
- The Violence against Women and Girls priority was unfortunately added late 2022 which had limited project opportunities.
- Rise in number of individuals carrying knives
- Series of robberies within town centre footprint.
- Increase in drug related activities within the town centre and surrounding wards.

The presentation has been attached as Appendix A to these minutes.

During the discussion with Councillors, the following comments were made:

- Support that PCSOs had been reinstated for each area.
- It was important to continue to report crime or possible crime, as this would aid intelligence gathering. This message needed to be communicated as evidence would assist in more target policing.
- Acknowledgement that the public required confidence in the reporting mechanisms.
- It was commented that it was hoped the reduction in rough sleepers and the street community would continue, as a result of the joint partnership arrangements.
- Recognition that recent bike thefts were a concern, and lack of CCTV was an issue. However, funding had been sought for bike marking kits with sessions to be held early 2023.
- Clarification was sought and obtained on the data, in particular *crimes with a weapon* and *possession of weapons*. There was a rise in number of individuals carrying knives, but it was important that the methods used (eg stop and search) impacted the *crimes with weapon* marker to ensure possession did not result in use. It was noted that the 10,656 figure indicated the total crimes including minor offences.
- Acknowledgement that the fear of crime was impactful (particularly knife crime) and there was a need to manage any community tensions with positive, constructive engagement; Engagement Officers, PCSO relations, social media and Sussex alerts which provided crime data.
- Recognition that the DISC reporting system for businesses had been welcomed especially for targeted shoplifting and robberies within the Town Centre footprint.
- Clarification obtained as to the training undertaken engaging with vulnerable persons together with gang affected individuals and risk of exploitation, particularly in schools. Whilst predominately provided within secondary schools, it was hoped this would be rolled-out within other school settings.
- Recognition that video doorbells could prove a deterrent for criminals. It was noted that some Neighbourhood Watch Schemes (Hillingdon, Cumbria,

Portsmouth) invested in offering free or discounted video doorbell schemes and further investigation would take place for the borough.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted with the views and actions expressed being acknowledged by officers. The Commission's gratitude was relayed to Chief Inspector Starns and officers for their attendance at the Commission.

5. Cabinet Member Discussion with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement

The Commission noted the update given by Councillor S Mullins and questioned her on a variety of issues relating to the portfolio. The following topics were discussed:

- Junior Citizen had proven to be extremely successful for young people to gain experience and advice, particularly on ASB and increasing awareness on how to keep themselves safe on the streets and online etc. All councillors were encouraged to be involved in this event.
- Youth Council elections could now take place post-Covid and it had been interesting to see young people engaged and involved with the process.
- It was recognised that there were opportunities for councillors to become more involved, particularly with events such as Junior Citizen. The life skills being offered enhance the lives of young people and councillors could make a positive contribution.
- It was suggested that through the Social Inclusion work there was a chance to rebuild the engagement following the pandemic and reach out to communities. It was important to build links with the community, experience events and activities. It was hoped with the new town hall that community engagement would increase.
- Clarification sought and obtained in relation to the Community Wardens' role and cross-portfolio working, community safety and ASB. Recognition that the role was wide-ranging and well-respected by the community and businesses but had struggled to recruit recently. It was important that resources were targeted in specific areas and a review would commence shortly over the different models of working.
- Confirmation that the methods of policing had changed and more work was carried out covertly.
- The Community Grants process was discussed in relation to the cost of living crisis and it was acknowledged it was a 'balancing act' to support groups as well as provide information for alternative funding.
- Recognition that the 50-year anniversary of Town Twinning was approaching and ideas were welcomed from councillors as to how to celebrate as it was important to maintain connections.

RESOLVED

That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission thanked Councillor S Mullins for attending and for the informative discussion that had ensued.

6. Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC)

An update was provided from the most recent HASC meeting. It was noted that the previous meeting had focused on the following items:

- NSH Winter Preparedness
- Access to NHS Primary Care
- South East Coast Ambulance Service Update
- Quarter 2 Quarterly Performance and Resources Report.

The [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 23 November 2022 were published on the WSCC website.

The next meeting was scheduled for 11 January 2023 and would focus on the following:

- West Sussex Stroke Programme
- Delivery of the Adult Social Care Strategy 2022-2025 'The life you want to lead'
- Adults' Services Quality Assurance Update

7. Forthcoming Decision List - and Provisional List of Reports for the Commission's following Meetings

The Commission confirmed the following reports:

30 January 2023

1. Crawley Borough Local Plan Review
2. 2023/2024 Budget and Council Tax
3. Treasury Management Strategy 2023-2024
4. 2022/2023 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3
5. Corporate Plan 2023-2027
6. Corporate Debt Policy - PROV REFERRAL
7. Tenancy Policy (Crawley Homes) – PROV REFERRAL

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.04 pm

T G Belben (Chair)

Appendix A

Safer Crawley Partnership

Annual Review 2021-22 and Priorities for 2022-23

Purpose

To reduce re-offending, tackle crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, alcohol and substance misuse and any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local community so that people in Crawley are safer and feel safer.

Statutory Partners

- Crawley Borough Council
- WSCC
- Sussex Police
- West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
- Probation
- Clinical Commissioning Group

Other partners involved in the community safety partnership include:

- OSPC, Crawley Open House, Crawley & Gatwick Business Watch, CGL, Audio Active, CCYS and schools

Priorities for 2021/22

- Serious and Organised Crime
- Street Community
- Protecting Vulnerable Individuals
- Business Crime
- Violence Against Women & Girls

Funding for 2021-22

- Funding allocation from Sussex PCC - £51,382.87
- Project funded in 2021-22
 - £25,000 mobile CCTV/ANPR cameras
 - £10,000 Crawley & Gatwick Business Watch
 - £1,500 Joint Action Group
 - £8,580 Safer Schools Event
 - £9,312 AudioActive Cyphers Schools project
- £50,000 VRP funding for AudioActive to run the SHIFT programme

Crime Data

	01.10.21 - 30.09.22	01.10.20 - 30.09.21	01.10.19 - 30.09.20
Total Crime	10,856 (+4.3%)	10,219 (5.5%)	10,815 (5.4%)
Crimes with DA flag	1,916 (-2.1%)	1,968 (8.2%)	2,132 (+2.3%)
Burglary	267 (-11.0%)	300 (-28.1%)	417 (-11.1%)
Stalking and Harassment	636 (-50.0%)	1,267 (+16.5%)	1,088 (+10.5%)
Crimes with Weapons flag	335 (+15.5%)	290 (-17.1%)	350 (-10.8%)
Possession of Weapons	64 (-67.0%)	149 (-16.3%)	178 (-14.0%)

Crawley PCSOs

Beech & Osceops Green - PCSOs Vanda Lengyel & Lucy Denty
Broadfield - PCSOs Anna Urbanczyk & Leo Elves-Smart
iffeld - PCSO Doreen Walling
Lurgate Green - PCSO Nadeem Darabagh
Maldenover, Worth & Three Bridges - PCSOs Riley Brown-Douglas
West Green - PCSOs Sarah Mariner
Northgate, Pound Hill & Forge Wood - PCSO Joanne Hall
Southgate - PCSO Ryan Howker
Furnace Green & Tiggle - PCSO Steve West
Town Centre - PCSOs Suzanne Lyden, Alex Sarabog & Jamie Chandler
BCRP - PCSO Aid Ahmad

Review of 2021-22 Achievements & Challenges

Serious & Organised Crime

- Partnership working (Police, CBC, Immigration, DWP) around tackling organised criminal groups involved in modern day human trafficking through utilising car washes and other business interests within Crawley
- Identifying and deterring county drug lines travelling from London, Kent, Surrey and other counties, targeting young people and the vulnerable in Crawley

Street Community

Number of Rough Sleepers by month

Street Community

Key achievements

- Joint working to tackle street homelessness, begging and street drinking
- Focus on triggers for rough sleepers
- Use of enforcement powers for those not willing to engage
- Rough sleeper number remain low continued impact of "Everyone In" initiative
- Multi-disciplinary outreach team

Key challenges

- Unwillingness of individuals to engage with support services
- Access to mental health services
- Impact of street community in the town centre businesses

Protecting vulnerable individuals

Key achievements

- Continued awareness raising of domestic abuse, hate crime support services and digital safety
- Individuals susceptible to cuckooing identified and monitored. A number of addresses have been attended and part full closure orders have been obtained. This also includes arrests of criminal individuals and drugs seized.
- safeguarding awareness training package for licensed taxi drivers

Key challenges

- Vulnerable individuals - often chaotic and complex
- Encouraging the reporting of hate crime
- Ejection ban made it challenging to deal with offenders in the traditional way

Business Crime

Key achievements

- Designated PC and PCSOs for town centre
- Increased use of DISC app for crime reporting by business watch members
- Joint working between police and council licensing in relation to the night-time economy
- Use of enforcement action to impact on prolific shoplifting

Violence against women & girls

Key achievements

- PCCs "Do the right thing campaign" promoted via social media
- Promotion of "Bystander to Upstander" training
- Promotion of StreetSafe for the public to report locations where they feel unsafe to inform police patrols
- Op Tondem patrol in relation to the night-time economy
- Op Safety patrols in key hotbed locations
- Funding provided by the PCC to St John Church to reinvigorate the street pastor scheme

Key challenges

- VAWG priority added November 2021 which limited project opportunities

Priorities for 2022-23

Four priorities

- Serious and Organised Crime
- Street Community
- Protecting Vulnerable Individuals
- Business Crime
- Violence Against Women and Girls

Current challenges/ Emerging Issues

- Rise in number of individuals carrying knives.
- Series of robberies within the Town Centre footprint.
- Seasonal rise in disorder associated with the Night-time Economy in the Town Centre.
- Increase in drug related activities within the town centre and surrounding wards.

Funding for 2022-23

- Crawley Open House Outreach and Day Centre
- Youth Advice Centre - CSE Prevention Initiative
- AudioActive
- Junior Citizens
- Bike marking kits

Questions?

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