

**Portfolio Holder Report****Portfolio Holder Report – Environmental Services & Community Safety****Introduction and Overview:**

At Bromsgrove District Council Portfolio Holders provide an annual update to Council on services within their portfolio remit. These services are delivered in accordance with the Council's Strategic Purposes, as detailed in the Bromsgrove District Council Plan 2019 – 2023.

This report provides an outline of services and activities within the remit of this particular Portfolio Holder. Information is included in relation to the Council's Strategic Purposes, relevant key activities, partnership working, projects and programmes and news stories.

A version of this report, focusing on each Portfolio Holder's remit in turn, will be considered at each meeting of Council (except for the Annual Council meeting).

Whilst services will be contributing information into this report it is worth noting that not all sections of the report will be relevant to all service areas. In this circumstance, some sections may not be completed by all services.

The report will be structured as follows:

- 1) Update on Strategic Purposes
- 2) Partnership working
- 3) Key activities and priorities
- 4) Good news stories and awards (if applicable)
- 5) Other

The Council has the following Strategic Purposes and Priorities:

<b>Strategic Purposes</b>	<b>Council Priorities</b>
Run and grow a successful business	Economic development and regeneration
Work and financial independence	Skills for the future
Living independent, active and healthy lives	Improving health & well being
Affordable and sustainable homes	A balanced housing market
Communities which are safe, well maintained and green	Reducing crime & disorder
The Green Thread runs through the Council Plan	<b>Internal priorities</b>
	Financial stability
	High quality services
	Sustainability



**Portfolio Holder Report**

**1. Update on Strategic Purposes**

**Relevant Strategic Purpose: Communities which are safe, well maintained and green**

The Community Safety Team supports Council to meet its statutory duties under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and all subsequent community safety legislation. The Community Safety Team is made up of 5 officers who work across Bromsgrove & Redditch and with partners, other service areas and local communities to develop projects, initiatives and interventions to reduce crime, disorder and ASB.

The team also works with other agencies to provide victim support and implement actions to reduce fear of crime. The team operates in an advisory and co-ordinating capacity mainly via the Safer Bromsgrove operational group to improve community safety in local neighbourhoods. Reducing Crime & Disorder is also corporate priority and the team uses its considerable expertise and experience to help other council services embed crime and ASB prevention into mainstream corporate service delivery.

Environmental Services are one of the most visible representatives of the Council for our residents, providing street cleansing and horticultural work to maintain the appearance of the district, and providing Waste Collection Services to every household to support them with the management of their residual waste, dry recycling, and their garden waste if they wish to sign up to our chargeable "Brown Bin" service.

Tanker service to support our residents who do not have access to mains sewerage and provide a high-quality service at an affordable price, which also influences the pricing of private service providers to ensure good value for everyone.

As well as the direct services to deliver these actions, Environmental Services also carry out Enforcement Work to tackle environmental crime and works with partners such as the Worcestershire County Council Highways team and BDHT to support residents and ensure issues reach the right people for resolution.

Through our work with NWWM we manage and enforce the District Council's responsibilities for Land Drainage and flooding.

**Relevant Strategic Purpose 2: Run and grow a successful business**

Environmental Services operates a successful Commercial Waste Service that supports businesses to manage their waste responsibly and cost effectively. As well as supporting the businesses to flourish, it also links local businesses success back to the local taxpayers, as the income from this service offsets wider costs of providing services to our residents, adding a social value for businesses when they choose to use us to manage their waste.



**Portfolio Holder Report**

**Relevant Strategic Purpose: Living independent, active and healthy lives**

Another area the Community Safety Team co-ordinates is support for residents and communities who are victims of crime or more susceptible to crime and disorder to help them to move toward a better quality of life, free from the fear of crime. The team works with partners and voluntary sector services to provide support to those who have experienced crime and disorder, for example providing security assessments for Domestic Abuse survivors, encouraging and supporting victims of hate incidents to make reports and seek help and co-ordinating a problem-solving approach those experiencing anti-social behaviour. The team also co-ordinates activity and interventions to help protect young people who are at more risk of becoming victims of crime and providing interventions for young people at risk of falling into criminality and anti-social behaviour.

**Key activities since last report:**

The NWCSP Action Plan priorities for 2023-24 are to Reduce Violence & Abuse, Reduce Theft & Acquisitive Crime and Reduce ASB, Damage & Nuisance. Two cross-cutting themes of Reducing the Harm Caused by Drugs & Alcohol and Reducing Re-Offending.

North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership funding is provided by the West Mercia PCC and for 2023-24 has been allocated as follows to address the CSP priorities and develop relevant interventions and projects.

The projects in grey are West Mercia wide projects where the PCC top slices each CSP's ring-fenced grant prior to allocation in order to support on-going force wide delivery.

<b>NWCSP Funded Projects</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Contribution to West Mercia CSP Analyst Team	£20,000
Contribution West Mercia Integrated Offender Management	£1,000
Contribution to West Mercia Hate Crime Project	£5,412
Contribution to West Mercia Crimestoppers	£2,000
Bromsgrove Youthwork, Outreach & Mentoring	£15,000
RUN – Resources for new Bromsgrove DA Survivors Support Group	£ 2,000
Bromsgrove Youth Hub – Friday Sessions (part-funding)	£ 3,500
Safer Bromsgrove Projects & Initiatives	£ 5,512.67
Redditch Allocation	£29,012.67
Wyre Forest Allocation	£32,012.68
NW Domestic Abuse Homicide Reviews and Support	£20,000
NW Safe Places Scheme	£ 3,800
Total Grant	£139,250.00



**Portfolio Holder Report**

**Key activities since last report – Environmental Services**

Following a motion to Full Council in 2022 regarding how we manage the grass cutting of our Open Spaces and Highway Verges within settlements, we have reviewed how we currently provide our services, and put forwards proposals to support working with resident groups and ward members to identify areas suitable for naturalising to support habitat creation and the creation of green corridors to support pollination during the Summer Months, whilst maintaining aesthetic maintenance in those areas that matter most to our residents. This has also supported wider consideration on our Biodiversity responsibilities that are also being reviewed to support our Climate Change ambitions.

In 2019 the Government announced their Waste and Resources Strategy, which set out ambitious aims for supporting higher environmental standards, which had a number of elements regarding how waste would be managed in future. This has been through public consultation, and partially enacted through the Environment Act 2021, and in order to meet the requirements expected through this, we have been working closely with the six other Councils in Worcestershire, as well as the Climate Action Group WRAP to consider options for future waste arrangements to ensure we are delivering the right services for our residents, whilst ensuring compliance with our legal responsibilities.

Sickness rates have continued to put pressure on our services as we have emerged from the Coronavirus pandemic, and having maintained our services across the District through an exceedingly challenging period, we are now working to review our standards and prioritise areas that will have the greatest benefit for residents. Road sweeping is an often overlooked area of work that can have a large impact on the appearance of an area, and over the last six months we have made changes to how this work is carried out and managed to help improve the standards and then maintain them as we move into the Winter. This has seen a considerable improvement across our towns and villages in recent months, and is now targeting known flooding areas and our road networks outside of settlements to improve the overall appearance of our roads and support the County Council in their maintenance of the drainage systems.

We have been reviewing the options available to us regarding how we manage our fleet of vehicles and equipment to reduce our Carbon emissions and provide effective and efficient services, and have made changes to how we manage the working life of our Refuse Collection fleet, by refurbishing rather than replacing vehicles in order to extend their lifespan. Not only is this a more environmentally sustainable way to refresh and optimise our fleet, it is also more cost effective than buying new vehicles, and the savings will help support future investment in vehicles that will further reduce our carbon impact as technology develops and is able to support the local needs and pressures of providing our services across Bromsgrove District.

Our Commercial Services team have continued to grow our customer base and support local businesses to manage their waste effectively, with

**Portfolio Holder Report**

extremely strong customer retention as a result of our quality standard of service, and instantly recognisable yellow lorries. With an increasing aware of social responsibility, many of our customers have also appreciated the benefits of using our services and knowing that their costs are also supporting their local community, as our income helps to offset the wider pressures on Council Finances, and secure services for residents.

Fly Tipping remains an on-going pressure for our Place Teams to manage across the District, although over the last two years, the Place Teams have significantly increased the use of warning signs across the district, and invested in more advanced camera systems to improve our evidence gathering capabilities which has resulted in a number of Fixed Penalty Notices being issued and paid this year, and several cases being considered for further Court Action.

**Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones For Next Period**

**Implementing the Serious Violence Duty** - The Community Safety Team will be supporting the Council to meet its requirements with regard to the Serious Violence Duty. Statutory guidance updated on 22 June 2023 outlines how specified authorities (of which the Council is one) can exercise of their functions in relation to the SV Duty, as set out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022.

The guidance sets out how specified authorities should work together to deliver the requirements in the SV Duty to prevent and reduce serious violence within a defined area. It has been agreed that local arrangements will operate at a county level with the Worcestershire Safer Communities Board and the two Community Safety Partnerships in North/South Worcestershire working together to address serious violence. The Partnerships have adopted the following definition of Serious Violence which recognises the types offences that have such a devastating impact on lives of victims and families and instil fear within our communities.

***West Mercia's definition of Serious Violence:***

*Violence, both physical and sexual, causing lasting psychological or physical harm, or where lasting harm was intended. This includes offences where there is an inherent threat of physical harm, such as county lines or offences involving use of an offensive weapon, blade or pointed article or any corrosive substance. To include:*

- Violence with injury resulting in serious harm
- Homicide including attempted murder
- Serious sexual harm –rape and sexual assaults
- Robbery
- Violence, including threats and aggravated offences such as those involving use of an offensive weapon, blade or pointed article or any corrosive substance
- Violence, including threats and aggravated offences which involve use of a firearm
- Offences with a county lines marker
- Violence with injury marked as domestic abuse
- Violence with injury marked as hate crime
- Modern slavery offences



**Portfolio Holder Report**

**Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones For Next Period – Environmental Services**

As part of his speech about net zero on 20 September 2023, the Prime Minister indicated a change of direction in Government policy on recycling, and appears to be reinstating local discretion to collect waste and increase recycling in the way that councils know will work best for local communities. The announcement was very high-level and having already had delays of over two years regarding what the requirements will be for Local Authorities under the Environment Act 2021, it is unknown as to when we may have clarity on how far Defra proposes to amend other aspects of the proposals, which have now been re-labelled as “simpler recycling”.

The Senior Worcestershire Waste Officers Group is continuing to support consideration of future options for the provision of waste collection services for Bromsgrove and wider Worcestershire, and this is being supported and reviewed by the Waste Task and Finish Group set up by the Worcestershire Leaders Board to make recommendations that best support our needs and aspirations. This will allow the Council to make informed decisions on future services to meet our responsibilities as the District continues to grow.

**2. Partnership Working:**

The Council works with a range of partner organisations to meet the needs of residents and businesses in the District. The following section details work delivered within the remit of this Portfolio Holder.

**Partnership working examples:**

Alongside the Council’s statutory duty to work in partnership to address crime and disorder via North Worcestershire CSP, the council is represented on a number of sub-groups and multi-agency forums to address specific community issues. For example: -

**GET SAFE Child Exploitation Strategic and Operational Groups.**

GET SAFE is the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership’s response to addressing all forms of exploitation that could affect young people in our local neighbourhood. GET SAFE is the Worcestershire partnership title for the identification and management of multi-agency support and protection for children and young people at risk of **G**ang-related activity, **S**exual **E**xploitation, **T**rafficking, **M**odern Day **S**lavery, **A**bsent and **M**issing, **F**orced Marriage, **H**onour Based Violence and **F**emale Genital **M**utilation, and **C**riminal **E**xploitation.

**Worcestershire Adult Exploitation Group** – This group is a sub-group of the Adult Safeguarding Partnerships and is currently developing an Adult Exploitation Strategy to protect those people over 18 who have Care & Support Needs from being targeted and exploited by criminals and predators. The group is aligning its processes to the GET SAFE structure to



**Portfolio Holder Report**

ensure there is a consistent approach to exploitation work across the county and a smooth transition from child to adult services for those most in need.

**Prevent Strategy Group** – provides a multi-agency response to Preventing Violent Extremism actions and supporting the work of the statutory Channel. The Home Office have recently reviewed its Prevent Duty Guidance, which will come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2024. A Local Government Toolkit has also been developed to support councils in implementing the new guidance, in recognition of the key role local authorities have in identifying and supporting those at risk of radicalisation.

**Environmental Services**

- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Waste Partnership (BDC/ RBC/ WFDC/ Wychavon/ Worcester City Council/ MHDC/ WCC/Herefordshire County Council). Strategic and Operational partnership with collective work on Central Government Consultation responses and future service planning, with joint projects and funding to review service delivery in preparation for the changes being implemented by Central Government.
- Worcestershire County Council Highways Department & their contractors “Ringway” – The Place Team work closely with both teams to ensure consistency of service across the District.
- Parish Councils – The Place Teams work closely with many of our Parish Councils throughout the year, and provide additional services on behalf of some through the Lengthsman Scheme which supports communication and understanding of local issues through the additional working relationship.
- DEFRA – Providing information on services to support planning for the Extended Producer Responsibility payments model for Local Authorities, which is one of the changes arising from the Environment Act 2021.

**Key activities since last report:**

**Youth Outreach and Detached Youth work** - Patrols continue to be delivered across Bromsgrove. The youth team respond to emerging issues and also calls for intervention from partners and residents. They also carry out scheduled patrols in identified areas of concern such Sidemoor (Tues), Bromsgrove Town Centre (Weds) and Catshill (Thurs). The team engage with young people on street in local areas and either carry out diversionary work to encourage teens into regular club provision which is outreach youthwork or where young people are significantly disaffected and/or not ready to attend mainstream provision youth workers will work with them in the spaces they choose, at a pace and schedule that they decide. This is known as detached youthwork. The team also support the Street Pastor Night Time Economy patrols on late Fri Night/early Sat Morning to support any young people under 18 who are out at these high risk times and locations.

**Crime Risk Surveys and Assessments** - Dave Rischmiller and Sarah McIntosh are both College of Policing qualified Designing Out Crime Officers (DOCOs) which allows them to regularly examine and comment on Planning Applications, making recommendations based on the principles of Crime



**Portfolio Holder Report**

Prevention through Environmental Design (CPtED). Last year Dave and Sarah examined 34 applications, totalling 1052 residential units, 10 Commercial Units and 1961 Sq.m of commercial development. The team are actively engaged in the project to re-develop of the old Market Hall site in Bromsgrove Town Centre providing designing out crime advice for this substantial regeneration project.

**Community Engagement** - Across the summer, the team supported a number of community events including the BDHT Fun days, raising awareness of crime prevention methods with local residents, supporting them to keep themselves and their property safe. The team also attended the Freshers Fayre at HOW College, Bromsgrove Campus on the 14<sup>th</sup> Sept. This event was well attended by new and current students and provided a great opportunity to engage with a vulnerable group about keeping themselves and their property safe.

- Responding to Government consultations on the proposed changes to Waste Collection requirements linked to the Environment Act 2021.
- Modelling of future Waste Collection service options, considering financial, environmental and legislative factors alongside what matters to our residents.

**Anticipated Activities/Key Milestones and Priorities For Next Period**

The team will be supporting the Council to respond and implement the **Government's new ASB Action Plan**. Many of the recommendations in the plan are still out for consultation but the Government is clear that Local Authorities have a key role in addressing issues of ASB in local neighbourhoods and ensuring that victims and witnesses are at the heart of any responses to problems that are identified.

The team will also be instrumental in supporting the Council to respond to the requirements of the **Protect Duty** which is pending UK wide legislation that will be known as Martyn's Law. It will place a requirement on those responsible for certain publicly accessible locations to consider the threat from terrorism and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.

Martyn's Law is the government's response to the terrorism attack at Manchester arena and other atrocities. It is expected that when enacted the new legislation will apply to anyone responsible for publicly accessible locations used for purposes such as entertainment and leisure, retail, food and drink, museums and galleries, sports grounds, public areas of local and central Government buildings (e.g., town halls), visitor attractions, temporary events, Places of Worship, health, and education.

Discussions are ongoing with Worcestershire County Council regarding the financial contributions we receive towards services such as grass cutting, that is done on behalf of the County to meet their statutory duties, as these are





**Portfolio Holder Report**

being reviewed to ensure we are receiving appropriate funding that reflects our expenses, whilst continuing to work in partnership.

The Place Teams are continuing to coordinate works with WCC Highways, and looking at how our Road Sweeping can better support central reservations and splitters at junctions across the District to further improve the aesthetics of these areas alongside other planned maintenance to minimise the need for additional disruption and cost associated with dedicated traffic management.

**3. Good News Stories and Awards (if applicable)**

**Title of news story:**

**Hate Crime Awareness Week 2023** takes place between the **14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October**. During the week the community safety team will be working with West Mercia Police and Victim Support to host a Hate Crime awareness event at the Parkside Council House, Bromsgrove 19<sup>th</sup> October.

The focus of the event is Disability Hate Crime and a community theatre company has been engaged to deliver sessions about service users experiences of Hate Crime. 'About Face' theatre company will be providing performances on the day, followed by exercises supporting individuals to complete a hate incident reporting form and developing understanding of how the Police handle Hate Crime reports.

There will be three sessions held across the day, at 11am, at 1:30pm and at 4pm. For more information about the event, please contact:

[communitysafety@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

**Title of news story:**

**National White Ribbon Campaign against Domestic Abuse – 25<sup>th</sup> Nov to 10<sup>th</sup> Dec**

The Community Safety Team will be hosting a Domestic Abuse Awareness stall on Bromsgrove High Street on Tues 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 11am to 1pm to promote local services and engage with residents and visitor to the town centre. The team will also be supporting various online Domestic Abuse campaigns sharing information and content from support services and agencies

The Community Safety Team will again be promoting the Herefordshire and Worcestershire White Ribbon Conference. This annual event will take place on **Friday 24 November 2023 via Microsoft Teams between 9.30 am and 3.15pm.**

The White Ribbon Conference is jointly organised by Worcestershire and Herefordshire County Councils. It aims to raise awareness about domestic abuse. Increasing our knowledge and confidence around this subject is a key part of our approach to tackling violence against women, girls and all victims of abuse in across our two communities.

Book a place at: [Joint Herefordshire & Worcestershire White Ribbon Conference - 24 Nov 2023 Tickets, Fri 24 Nov 2023 at 09:00 | Eventbrite](#)



**Portfolio Holder Report**

This year's conference will see another a wide range of guest speakers and topics. Businesses across the two counties will be encouraged to expand their role in identifying, supporting, and signposting those suffering from abuse. The conference will see **Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse**, share national best practice in relation to policies. This further embraces the ethos of "Domestic abuse is everyone's business."

**DCC Maggie Blyth**, the National Police Chiefs Council Lead for Violence against Women and Girls will be a keynote speaker. Maggie lives in Herefordshire and was previously the Chair of the Children's Safeguarding Board.

Also attending is **PEGS, a social enterprise** set up to support parents, carers and guardians who are experiencing Child to Parent Abuse (CPA).

Attendees will also hear about how domestic abuse impacts on blind victims.

The conference will also celebrate the **launch of a new initiative "cut it out"**. This initiative focuses on how people working in the beauty and hair industry can play their part in helping victims of domestic abuse.

Plus **Gareth Rogers and Joe Cole from The Right Path – Guiding Change** will present "The Journey of Educating Male Students on Misogyny & Violence Against Women & Girls".

The theme for this year's White Ribbon UK campaign is **#ChangeTheStory**. This starts with challenging harmful words, attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate violence. The conference aims to do just that and encourage all of us to make that difference.

Environmental Services is upgrading the Computer systems that support us in managing customer enquiries, and planning our work across the District, and have been rolling this out across the services over the last 12 months.

The ABAVUS system will increase our ability to identify issues and direct our staff towards issues, as well as ultimately support our residents to report and track issues that they have identified through their online accounts, either through an app on their devices or through our online portal, with updates on their issues as the team do them.

Already implemented to support our Bulky Waste Collection Service, and the services provided by our Place Teams, alongside in-cab technology to support access to information and issues even whilst out working, we are currently building the system to support our Waste Collection teams and expect to start trialling this element of the new system in the Spring, as we also further refine how residents can interact with us and improve our ability to keep them updated through the system.

The potential benefits of this system have led to ABAVUS being looked at as a corporate wide system to support other teams across the Council in making it easier for residents to access the services we provide.