



# **Overview & Scrutiny Board**

To: Overview & Scrutiny Board

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CC: Cllr Peter Whittaker – Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services & Community Safety  
Sue Hanley – Chief Executive & Chair of NWCSP  
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## **Review of the work of North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership 2023-24**

### **1. Summary**

1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) for the financial year 2023-24.

### **2. Background**

2.1 NWCSP has been in existence since May 2013, following the merger of the three district CSPs in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest. The Community Safety Teams that support and co-ordinate the work of the Partnership are employed by the respective local authorities.

2.2 Local authority representation on NWCSP is fulfilled through a number of positions. Bromsgrove District Council's Elected Member representative is Councillor Peter Whittaker, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Community Safety. Sue Hanley, the Council's Chief Executive is the Chair of NWCSP and Judith Willis, Head of Community & Housing Services acts as the BDC Responsible Authority representative on the Partnership. The Council's Community Safety Manager, Bev Houghton provides co-ordination support to NWCSP and manages the Council's Community Safety Service.

2.3 Scrutiny arrangements for the CSP remain unchanged with local authorities having a statutory duty to scrutinise the work of its local CSP, under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

2.4 Alongside the relationship the Council has with the CSP, there is also a direct role in holding the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to account through the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel (PCP). Bromsgrove District Council's representative on the PCP is Cllr Helen Jones. The most recent West Mercia PCP meeting was held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and the

agenda and draft minutes of the meeting can be accessed here: [Agenda for West Mercia Police and Crime Panel on Wednesday, 7th February, 2024, 11.00 am - Worcestershire County Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

### 3. Current Position

#### 3.1 North Worcestershire CSP Plan 2021-24

NWCSP has a statutory duty to produce a three-year rolling plan outlining how the Partnership intends to address key crime and community safety priorities, as identified through an annual strategic assessment based on research, evidence and intelligence from national, regional and local sources.

Informed by a strategic assessment, the Community Safety Partnership Plan sets out the priorities that the CSP will focus on for a 3 year period currently 2021 to 2024.

At present the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership plan has the following priorities: -

- I. **Reducing Violence and Abuse:** Focusing on violence in public places, and domestic abuse.
- II. **Reducing Theft and Acquisitive crime:** Focusing on burglary and doorstep crimes and scams
- III. **Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour, Damage and Nuisance:** Focusing on neighbourhood nuisance, criminal damage and problems facilitated by environmental factors.
- IV. **Protecting Vulnerable Communities:** Focusing on Hate Crime & Targeted Harassment, Criminal Exploitation, County Lines, Modern Slavery and Violent Extremism

The Partnership also focuses on two cross cutting themes that impact across the above priority areas. These are **Reducing the Harm caused by Drug and Alcohol Misuse** and **Reducing Re-Offending**

The North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership Plan 2021-24 is currently being reviewed. A new community safety action plan for North Worcestershire CSP for 2024 to 2027 is being developed in draft and will be agreed by NWCSP in April / May 2024.

#### 3.2 John Campion, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

First elected in 2016, John Campion is the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The PCC has a duty to co-operate with all CSPs in his geographical area to reduce crime and disorder and there is a reciprocal duty on CSPs to collaborate with the PCC. Both bodies must have due regard for

each other's priorities within their respective plans. The PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan 2021 – 2025 can be read here: - [Safer West Mercia Plan \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk)

The PCC is supported by Assistant PCCs, Paul Middlebrough and Nicola Lowery who work alongside the PCC. They represent him within communities across West Mercia holding portfolios that include rural, business and cyber-crime, victims' services and force-wide commissioning. In September 2022, Marc Bayliss (former Leader of Worcester City Council) was appointed as Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner's for West Mercia.

NWCSP works closely with the Deputy and Assistant PCCs and are actively involved in the West Mercia PCC's commissioning model for crime reduction activity. Well established commissioning areas include the co-ordination of Data Analysis support for West Mercia CSPs, consolidation of funding for Integrated Offender Management across the force area and force-wide commissioning of victims services such as Crimestoppers and Victim Support.

More recently the PCC released a tender for delivery of a Hate Crime Support service across West Mercia, which was awarded to Victim Support - West Mercia. The PCCs commissioning model has led to more funding being provided at a West Mercia force level to deliver activities in these key thematic areas.

**PCC's CCTV Capital Fund:** Since 2017 the PCC has allocated significant funding to develop and upgrade CCTV across the West Mercia force area. NWCSP first received an allocation of £195,000. On behalf of the three Local Authorities, the CSP used this capital contribution alongside match funding from the core grant and from the district council's own budgets to modernise the CCTV infrastructure that serves the three district areas in North Worcestershire. As a result of this upgrade the whole CCTV scheme now has enhanced digital capability, improved image quality and a greater capacity to expand the scheme and/or link up to other digital systems across the region.

Between 2020-22 the PCC allocated an additional amount of £130k capital funding towards CCTV and the CCTV project team implemented spending proposals agreed by the CSP which continued to enhance the capability and capacity of the CCTV scheme. The funding provided improvements to technological aspects of the Monitoring Centre. It also enabled a recommendation from a Council Task and Finish Group to provide redeployable cameras to be funded and they are being used to respond to emerging areas of concern across the three areas in North Worcestershire. A further funding allocation of £20,000 was given to NWCSP for 2022/23 and details of the 2021-23 CCTV capital fund allocations can be found in **Appendix 1**. The PCC made no further allocation of CCTV capital funding for 2023-24.

### 3.3 NWCSF ring-fenced grant funding from the PCC 2023-24

NWCSF is allocated an annual ring-fenced amount from the PCC of £139,250. The details of the CSP's agreed project spend for 2023/24 can be found in **Appendix 1**.

The progress of these grant funded projects is reported quarterly to the PCC and other grant funders and at the end of the financial year there is a requirement to provide a comprehensive evaluation of all the funded projects. This includes a full breakdown of project expenditure and the outputs/outcomes that the funding has achieved.

In 2023-24 new funding was made available by the Home Office via PCCs to support Community Safety partners in **Implementing the Serious Violence Duty**. Through the CSP, the Council is required to meet its requirements with regard to the Serious Violence Duty as laid out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022. Statutory guidance, updated on 22 June 2023, outlines how key specified authorities (of which the Council is one) should exercise their functions in relation to the Duty and limited funding from the Home Office has been allocated to all policing areas to support this process.

The statutory guidance sets out how specified authorities should work together to deliver the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty (SVD) in order to prevent and reduce serious violence within a defined area. It has been agreed that local co-ordination of SVD activities will operate at a countywide level, with Worcestershire Safer Communities Board alongside the two statutory Community Safety Partnerships in the North and South of Worcestershire working together to address serious violence. Home Office funding allocations for SVD interventions for 2023-24 total **£50,599** for Worcestershire and the definition of Serious Violence that all West Mercia partners are operating under can be found in **Appendix 1**.

### 3.4 Local Delivery, Key Projects and Progress

Local delivery of community safety projects and initiatives falls under the remit of the Community Safety Operational Groups. The Safer Bromsgrove group is a multi-agency partnership chaired by officers in the Community Safety Team and the activities and interventions of the group are supported by the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams, other Community Safety partners and council service areas such as Place Teams, Planning and WRS.

Alongside supporting the CSP sub-groups, the Community Safety Team also monitor and respond to local community safety issues, co-ordinating operational delivery with partners. The team is often a first point of contact for residents and community groups with concerns about local crime and disorder issues and officers are able to call upon other community safety partners when solutions to these concerns require a multi-agency response.

Community Safety Project Officers David Rischmiller and Sarah McIntosh work on behalf of the Council and NWCSP, delivering a variety of community safety projects and initiatives across Bromsgrove District. The wider team are also available to provide information, support and guidance to residents, council colleagues, external partners and Elected Members on a variety of crime prevention and community safety concerns and issues. **Appendix 1** provides an update on the key community safety project activity that has taken place in 2023/24.

### **3.5 ASB, Problem Solving and Partner Engagement**

As part of the implementation of the Council's ASB Policy in June 2020, Elected Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board receive an update on activity to address ASB issues as part of the annual Crime & Disorder Scrutiny process.

#### **Use of ASB Tools and Powers**

A total of 16 Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) were issued in the period 2023-24. The Community Safety Team issued 7 of these. The Police in conjunction with relevant Housing Associations issued 4 warnings and a Housing Association independently issued another 2 CPWs.

Environmental Services issued 2 CPWs in relation to waste and unsightly property and Planning issued 1 CPW in relation to a derelict building.

Only two formal Community Protection Notices followed the earlier issue of the CPWs and these were served by the Police during the same reporting period. This is regarded as positive and mirrors the national experience that early use of CPW measures can deter escalation of ASB and prevent the need for more serious enforcement action. Very often a warning about the potential use of enforcement measures helps to solve the problem and the Community Safety Team regularly provide advice and support to other internal departments and other community safety partners in the use of various measures under the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

In November 2023 the team provided training to staff from a local housing association in the use of CPWs and as a result, their staff are now increasingly utilising these tools to address neighbour nuisance problems at an early stage. A national legal expert in the use of these powers has said that a great benefit of the CPW/CPN process is that it bestows on agencies the power to deal with nuisances that anti-social residents don't believe can be addressed. This dispels the idea that agencies can only pursue the difficult and prolonged route of criminal or tenancy action when dealing with persistent, problem residents.

In September 2023 a resident requested an ASB Case Review relating to a long-standing neighbour dispute that had escalated, causing a significant toxic

atmosphere in a small close of nine properties. During the course of the case review the Community Safety Team identified that the CPW/CPN process was an appropriate means by which order and tranquillity might be restored to the area.

The primary partners were the Police and a Social Housing provider who had incurred significant service demand on numerous occasions since April 2021. Following advice and support from the Community Safety Team, four CPWs were served on residents by the Police and Housing Association jointly, Subsequently the victims received further abuse which resulted in two CPNs being served on two of the four residents. To date this seems to have brought some calm to this location. The use of these measures has also provided valuable evidence; in the event the Housing Association needs to take future action against the offenders.

Back in 2022 several CPNs had been issued to a landowner and their agent in respect of long-standing nuisance from off-road motorcycles. This enforcement action resulted in substantial works to secure the land by the landowner and a dramatic reduction in the nuisance. However, there remained a few determined offenders who continued to gain access to the land and create nuisance to residents opposite. Due to the prior CPN process being largely successful in reducing the nuisance that residents experienced, they felt more confident to provide intelligence about the remaining offenders. Registration numbers of the vehicles that were transporting the bikes to the location were provided to the Community Safety Team, along with video and photographic evidence. As a consequence seven CPWs were issued to the registered keepers of these vehicles prohibiting them from allowing their use to transport off-road vehicles to cause nuisance. To date none of those vehicles have returned to the location.

The Community Safety team keeps an overview of local ASB activity and provides advice and guidance on ASB Enforcement to various services and partners with enforcement capabilities. The team also coordinates and funds membership of a nationally recognised consultancy network which provides access to a leading ASB Barrister to ensure that any information and guidance shared is accurate and up to date with current legislation and practice.

### **Calls to the Community Safety Team for service and support**

The team receive a number of calls for advice and assistance from other council service areas and partner agencies requiring expertise and advice in problem solving processes in order to implement Crime & ASB prevention measures. Often these community safety interventions assist in resolving long standing complex issues and cases.

Requests for support and information are received from members of the public, Elected Members, voluntary and community groups and other external agencies and can include complaints about neighbourhood issues, concerns

around domestic abuse, use of illegal substances, home security concerns, personal safety and environmental crime issues.

Between March 2023 and February 2024, the Community Safety Team received multiple requests for service in Bromsgrove and these are categorised as below:-

- 43 requests from Residents
- 10 requests from Elected Members
- 21 requests from Partner Agencies
- 7 Requests from internal services

Requests for service related to the following ASB and Community Safety themes:

Whilst the Community Safety Team does not provide an ASB service, Project Officers receive several requests for support because callers do not know where else to turn.

48 requests related to ASB issues were received in 2023/24 including:-

- 7 ASB related to inappropriate use of motorbikes.
- 9 ASB related to neighbourhood issues
- 1 ASB related to noise nuisance
- 1 ASB related to dogs
- 15 ASB related to youth ASB
- 5 ASB related to vulnerable residents
- 1 ASB related to Arson
- 2 ASB related to road safety
- 2 ASB related to drugs/cannabis smell
- 5 ASB related to other general ASB issues

Community Safety / Crime Risk requests included:-

- 2 requests for an ASB Case Review /Community Trigger
- 2 requests related to Issuing CPW/CPNs
- 1 request related to a MARAC domestic abuse case
- 7 requests related to designing out crime advice
- 2 requests related to drug dealing
- 6 requests related to empty buildings
- 6 requests related to environmental issues
- 2 requests related to event safety
- 5 requests related to the Nominated Neighbour scheme to address doorstep crime
- 3 requests related to road safety issues
- 11 other requests signposted to other departments to provide specific advice

### 3.6 Communications and Social Media Campaigns

The Community Safety Team has supported various national and local campaigns throughout 2023/24 to promote key safety messages and the work of NWCSP.

Projects that are led by the Community Safety Team such as the Respect Programme, Nominated Neighbour and Hate Incident Reporting were regularly promoted and annual national campaigns such as ASB Awareness Week, Hate Crime Awareness Week and the Domestic Abuse White Ribbon campaign were supported (as shown in **Appendix 1**)

A number of other national campaigns were also supported throughout the year, including:

Ask for Angela – Night Time Economy (NTE) Safety Campaign  
Young Citizens Challenge  
Loan Shark Awareness Week  
Drowning Prevention Week  
Child Exploitation Awareness Day  
International Women’s Day  
LGBT History Month

Community Safety Project Officers were also involved in number of local events and community engagements throughout the year, providing crime prevention and community safety information and materials. These included:-

Op Sceptre – supporting Police Knife Surrender Scheme - May 2023  
ASB Awareness Week Partnership Stands – July 2023  
Bromsgrove Library Community Safety Event - July 2023  
Charford School Community Day - July 2023  
MP’s Pensioners Fair - July 2023  
Woodrush Wellbeing Fayre – July 2023  
South Bromsgrove Drop-down Day – July 2023  
BDHT Fun Days – August 2023  
Freshers Week at HoW College – September 2023  
Hate Crime Awareness Week Disability Conference – October 2023  
White Ribbon 16 Days of Action Partnership Stands – December 2023

All of these events were widely promoted to local residents through the Councils, CSP social media and local press.

The main social media platform used by Bromsgrove Community Safety is Twitter using **@SaferBromsgrove** for local issues, **@nworccsp** (across North Worcestershire) and **@NWHateIncident** (for hate crime awareness projects and campaigns). The **@SaferBromsgrove** Twitter account has **644 followers**



Alongside these campaigns, the team also raises awareness of wider community safety issues and keeps residents informed of work delivered by our partners such as the Bromsgrove Youth and Community Hub, the Starting Well Partnership, BDHT, GET SAFE, Pubwatch, Women's Aid, HW Fire & Rescue Service and West Mercia Police.

Community Safety awareness messages and projects are also promoted via the Council's Facebook page and up-to-date information about Community Safety projects and general crime prevention work is available on the RBC website and on the NWCSPP website at [North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership \(nwcsp.org\)](http://NorthWorcestershireCommunitySafetyPartnership.nwcsp.org)

#### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the progress made by North Worcestershire CSP be noted.

#### **5. Appendices**

Appendix 1: NWCSPP Project Review for 2023-24 - Presentation

#### **6. Background Papers**

West Mercia Police and Crime Panel - [Committee details - West Mercia Police and Crime Panel - Worcestershire County Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](http://Committeedetails-WestMerciaPoliceandCrimePanel-WorcestershireCountyCouncil.moderngov.co.uk)

PCC's Safer West Mercia Plan 2021-25 - [Safer West Mercia Plan \(westmercia-pcc.gov.uk\)](http://SaferWestMerciaPlan.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk)

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