

# ASSEMBLY

17 May 2023

<b>Title:</b> Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-2026	
<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety</b>	
<b>Open Report</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Wards Affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Yes
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<b>Accountable Director:</b> Gary Jones, Operational Director Enforcement and Community Safety	
<b>Accountable Executive Team Director:</b> Alison Stuart, Chief Legal Officer	
<b>Summary</b> <p>This paper provides an overview of the recent work to create the Community Safety Partnership Plan (CSPP) 2023-26 at <b>Appendix 1</b>.</p> <p>The CSPP 2023-26 retains the existing crime and disorder priorities of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Priority 1 - Keeping children and young people safe.</li><li>Priority 2 - Tackling safety in the neighbourhood &amp; community.</li><li>Priority 3 - Reducing offending.</li><li>Priority 4 - Standing up to hate, intolerance and extremism.</li><li>Priority 5 - Tackling violence against women and girls.</li></ul> <p>The activities defined within the Community Safety Partnership Plan will influence crime and disorder levels in the borough. The Community Safety Partnership Board and its subgroups will be responsible for ensuring that progress against the plan is maintained and regularly reviewed.</p> <p>The Cabinet considered and endorsed the CSPP at its meeting on 18 April 2023.</p>	
<b>Recommendation(s)</b> <p>The Assembly is recommended to approve the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.</p>	
<b>Reason(s)</b> <p>The CSPP is linked to Council priorities “Prevention, Independence and Resilience” and “Participation and Engagement” as well as linking to theme 8 of the Borough Manifesto: Crime and Safety.</p>	

## **1. Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 The Community Safety Partnership Plan (CSPP) represents a significant commitment by partners including the Council, Police, Fire, Probation and Health authorities as well as local voluntary groups to working together to improve the lives of our residents.
- 1.2 Every three years the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Board is required to develop an overarching Community Safety Partnership Plan under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The plan provides an overview of the work and priority areas that fall under the responsibility of the CSP.
- 1.3 The CSPP incorporates local data, an insight on the roles and responsibilities of the board and its subgroup structure and how the Council will work in partnership to address local community safety priorities. The plan is published on the Council website to keep residents informed on the progress of the CSP in reducing crime and disorder.
- 1.4 Within the three-year plan cycle, annual reviews of the CSPP are conducted through the CSP and its subgroups to ensure that the governance structure of the CSP and its responsibilities remain valid and any new workstreams are reflected in the plan.

## **2. Proposal and Issues**

- 2.1 In advance of the CSPP 2023-26 being written, a full Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment (CDSA) is undertaken by the Council's Community Safety Analyst to understand trends and patterns in crime and disorder locally and to support priority setting. The CDSA took place between July and October 2022, and the learning from this year's assessment is set out below:
- 2.2 In Barking and Dagenham in 2021/22 all major crime types had exceeded pre-Covid 19 levels, except for the following offence types:
  - Burglary offences
  - Robbery offences
  - Theft offences
  - Vehicle offences
- 2.3 In 2021/22 there was a total of 20,560 offences reported to and recorded by the Police, which is an increase of 1,931 offences (+10.4%) on the 18,629 offences reported in 2020/21.
- 2.4 The majority of the additional 1,931 offences reported were seen in:
  - Violence Against the Person Offences which accounted for 724 (37.5%) of the additional 1,931 offences. Most of these were in the Violence Without Injury (VWOI) minor offence type, accounting for 27.5% of the overall increase in offences reported. This will be mainly due to ongoing improvements in the recording of offences by the Police.
  - Theft offences which accounted for 399 (20.7%) of the additional 1,931 offences. Ongoing improvements in recording of offences by the Police will be

contributing to these increases but figures were still lower than pre Covid 19 levels.

- Public Order offences which accounted for 242 (12.5%) of the additional 1,931 offences. This is likely to reflect ongoing improvements in the recording of offences by the Police.
- Vehicle offences which accounted for 234 (12.1%) of the 1,931 additional offences. These are thought to be well reported and recorded by the Police and reflect a genuine increase in crime but still lower than pre-Covid 19 levels.
- Arson and Criminal Damage offences which accounted for 220 (11.4%) of the additional offences reported. The majority of which is criminal damage which can be affected by ongoing improvements in the recording of offences by the Police.

2.5 Based on this year's assessment of offence volume, cost and estimated harm, the recommendation is for the existing priority crime and disorder types to remain priorities. This includes:

Priority 1 – Keeping children and young people safe.

Priority 2 - Tackling safety in the neighbourhood & community.

Priority 3 - Reducing offending.

Priority 4 - Standing up to hate, intolerance and extremism.

Priority 5 - Tackling violence against women and girls.

2.6 With the data and insights gathered through the CDSA process, the Community Safety Partnership Team moved forward with drafting the CSPP 2023-26 for further consultation and engagement. The re-write of the Community Safety Partnership Plan has focussed on the following areas:

- The CSP governance structure, priorities and cross cutting themes will be reviewed to consider if the structure and priorities areas are still valid and no changes are required.
- The data focusing on the makeup of the borough and communities and community safety data have been reviewed and updated in line with the refreshed annual Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment.
- The priority groups provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities for each subgroup.

2.7 The flightpath for the CSPP 2023-26 is set out below:

- Crime & Disorder Strategic Assessment (October 2022)
- Workshops held with CSP Board members (December 2022)
- Draft plan circulated to CSP board members (January 2023)
- Corporate Performance Group report and discussion (January 2023)
- Resident engagement through One Borough Voice Platform and virtual resident event (February 2023)
- Oversight & Scrutiny Committee (February 2023)
- Formal sign-off of CSP Plan at the CSP Board (March 2023)
- Endorsement via Cabinet (April 2023)
- Approval by the Assembly (May 2023)

2.8 In December 2022, the draft CSP Plan was circulated to all CSP subgroup chairs and members. This included an in-person engagement workshop with CSP board

members to gather feedback and insights into emerging issues and priorities for the borough.

2.9 CSP Board members were asked to focus on four questions which would help steer the CSPP development:

- Is anything missing in the plan that has been identified as a priority in the strategic assessment?
- Are the cross-cutting themes covered sufficiently, and how are they best delivered - VAWG, cost of living, perceptions/engagement, drugs? Where should the responsibility sit?
- Does the CSP feel as though it has sufficient oversight of delivery against the plan? Could future meetings be organised differently?
- Are we doing enough engagement? Should we be asking for more feedback on priorities, suggestions for delivery?

2.10 High-level feedback from CSP board members in December 2022 included the following, which have been incorporated into the final version of the CSPP:

- Women's safety and serious violence are emerging priorities which need to feature more prominently in the next Community Safety plan.
- There is a need to increase visibility of the Police, council, and partners working within our community.
- Cost of living: concerns about the impact on local crime, in particular low level offending and the exploitation of young people.
- Tackling organised crime: Street begging is an issue within the borough and there is an organised crime element which sits behind it such as deploying people to certain areas and also filters down to lower-level crime.
- The local authority and partners should increase their support of grassroots organisations to carry out work that tackles crime and exploitation.
- Amendments should be made to the CSP subgroups to ensure they remain fit for purpose and sharing of good practice from the Barking Town Centre Meeting, Ending Gang and Youth Violence Panel.
- Priority 2 of the CSP plan - 'Tackling Crimes that affect people the most' is vague and should be re-named to 'Tackling safety in the neighbourhoods / community', picking up issues such as anti-social behaviour.
- The VAWG priority area has seen improvements with the launch of the strategic board and the new local authority domestic abuse lead. The CSP board will need to be kept engaged in the strategy and workplan of this group moving forward.

2.11 The Community Safety Partnership Plan online consultation survey received 231 visits to the consultation with 37 engagements. Residents were in support of the community safety priorities and actions. The highest level of support was received for the following priorities:

- A dedicated approach to reduce knife crime and organised offending across the borough.
- Focus on improving visibility of police, council, and partners in the local community.
- Having a connected community that respect each other and celebrates different backgrounds.

- Educate and communicate the issues around domestic abuse and challenge abusive behaviours.
- Issues that are affecting residents the most included fly tipping, anti-social behaviour, and drug use.

2.12 From the online consultation survey, the comments received from residents included:

“These places look ok 9-5.00 but after dark - the night city changes when the sun goes down round here. Barking station area, the steps to the right of Upney Station, Leftley Estate, just about any TESCO cashpoint in the borough.”

“Near the Barking station, there are always police which is a clear sign there is drugs or gang activity quite prominent in the area. There are peddlers everywhere you turn, outside the shops, outside the bar which is next to the Boots, that is a very significant area where we know things happen there.

“I would never want to walk alone at night for fear of being mugged or robbed, especially because there seem to be so many kids around in hoods and covered masks. I don't think it's safe for women.”

“Police are only attending when a call is made. Although sometimes they still don't. Policing should be preventative rather than reactive but it appears not. More police and some CCTV would help.”

“More community police presence. They should never remove the police hub on Woodward/Hedgeman's road.”

2.13 A summary of the survey responses is set out at **Appendix 2**.

2.14 Feedback from the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee in February 2023 included:

- Highlighting the importance of communication between all stakeholders and praised the acknowledgement of this in the Plan.
- Noting the need to listen to residents' voices through the virtual resident engagement event and encouraged the Committee to promote this event in their communities.
- Noting concerns about the perceived increase in violence towards women and girls.
- The community is conscious about the abstractions of Police officers out of the borough to Police large scale events and the impact this has on local safety.
- The visibility of Police is felt to have reduced and needs to be improved.
- The rise in online crime and the online safety of young people online is an area which needs to have a clear emphasis through the Community Safety Partnership.
- Burglaries have not increased and the need for a continued focus on this area.
- Vehicle crime and particularly the theft of catalytic convertors are an ongoing concern to residents.
- The emergence of cannabis factories in private sector housing and how the Police, Council and partners increase the detection and response to this issue.

- 2.15 The responsibility for the delivery and progress of the Community Safety Partnership Board Plan 2023-26 will sit with the Community Safety Partnership Board and its relevant subgroups, led by Cllr Syed Ghani and Chief Superintendent Stuart Bell. The senior managers responsible for delivery and progress of the plan from a Council perspective will be Alison Stuart, Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer, and Gary Jones, Operational Director for Enforcement and Community Safety.

### **3. Options Appraisal**

- 3.1 Do nothing – this assumed not to be a valid option as the Council has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce audits and strategies to plan for future input to the reduction of crime in our area.
- 3.2 Proceed with the creation of the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26 – to set out the priorities and activities to meet the Council’s statutory responsibilities and to further reduce crime and related issues.

### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 As referred to above, there has been extensive consultation and engagement in the development of the CSPP 2023-26 including:
- (i) Consultation and discussions with Community Safety Partnership Board members including the Police, Probation, Health, Voluntary, Council services and Community Sector organisations took place through a dedicated Community Safety Partnership Board Plan workshop on 7 December 2022.
  - (ii) Internal discussions at portfolio meetings with the Lead Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety Cllr Ghani. Internal discussions with Operational Director, Enforcement & Community Safety, Community Safety Operations Manager.
  - (iii) Presentation of the CSPP 2023-26 at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 February 2023. Committee members were invited to provide input and their comments were noted and incorporated into the final plan.
  - (iv) A virtual resident workshop and Q&A session held on 21 February 2023 chaired by Councillor Worby and included presentations by the Community Safety Partnership Manager, Community Safety Operations Manager, LBBB Comms Team, Domestic Abuse Improvement Lead and representatives from the Police.
  - (v) Wider and formal public consultation with residents, visitors, partners and community and voluntary organisations about their experiences of safety in the borough and their priorities for the future. The consultation closed on Tuesday 28 February 2023 through the One Borough Voice Platform and the public’s feedback was incorporated into the final plan.
- 4.2 The Cabinet also considered and endorsed the CSPP at its meeting on 18 April 2023.

## 5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Afzal Hussain, Senior Accountant

- 5.1 This report seek approval to the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26.
- 5.2 The activities defined within the CSPP will influence crime and disorder levels in the borough. The Community Safety Partnership Board and its subgroups will be responsible for ensuring that progress against the plan is maintained and regularly reviewed.
- 5.3 The plan will be funded through grants and thus have no financial implications on the Council's budget. Finance will be working closely with the service to ensure grants are claimed and spent according to the grant conditions.

## 6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Kayleigh Eaton, Principal Contracts and Procurement Solicitor

- 6.1 The Council has a statutory duty to work in partnership to reduce and prevent crime and disorder, including anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, in its area, placed upon it by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. That Act also places requirements on the Council to develop Community Safety Partnerships, for the discharge of this duty. These partnerships are made up of representations of police, local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, health services and probation services. There is a duty for this partnership to develop a Community Safety Partnership Plan
- 6.2 This Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023 – 2026 represents the Borough Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy which, in accordance with Part 2, Chapter 4, section 2.1 (ii) (a) in the Constitution, forms part of the Council's overall Policy Framework. As such the Assembly is responsible for approving the CSPP.

## 7. Other Implications

- 7.1 **Risk Management** - Proceeding with the recommended actions assists in mitigating Corporate Risk CR.4 – Significant Incident in the Community'.
- 7.2 **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact** – The Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment (CDSA) referred to in paragraph 2.1 above was used to inform the development of the Equality Impact Assessment at **Appendix 3**.

**Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:** None

### List of appendices:

- **Appendix 1** – Draft Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26
- **Appendix 2** – One Borough Voice resident consultation report
- **Appendix 3** – Equality Impact Assessment