



## **SCRUTINY COMMISSION: 6 NOVEMBER 2019**

### **LEICESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2019-2021**

#### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

##### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to set out the duties placed on the local authority and other named statutory responsible agencies in relation to crime and disorder, to outline the current approach adopted in Leicestershire and seek the views of the Scrutiny Commission on the content of the draft Leicestershire Community Safety Strategy as a part of the consultation. The report also provides an update of work being undertaken by several partner agencies in relation to tackling knife crime across Leicester City, Leicestershire, and Rutland.

##### **Policy framework and previous decisions**

2. The Community Safety Strategy forms part of the Policy Framework as set out in Schedule 2 of the Articles (Part 2) of the County Council's Constitution. This is a new strategy.
3. The County Council's Strategic Plan 2018-22 sets out an outcome-based approach with five strategic outcomes for good quality of life in Leicestershire, including keeping Communities safe. This covers matters such as safeguarding for adults and children, and the need for people to feel safe in their daily lives, at home and whilst out and about in the County. The Community Safety Strategy will support this, setting out the Council's responsibilities in relation to crime and disorder issues and priorities agreed by Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), the Police and Crime Commissioner, and other statutory agencies with whom the Council works

##### **Background**

4. The duty for agencies to work together to reduce crime and disorder arises from section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The local authority is named as one of the responsible authorities in the act. While the Crime and Disorder Act places a duty on responsible authorities to work together, the responsibility for introducing local plans to reduce crime and disorder is vested in local CSPs which in Leicestershire are run by District Councils.

### **Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board (LSCSB)**

5. In order to co-ordinate work between Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) focused agencies, the LSCSB was introduced 10 years ago to identify joint countywide priorities. The Board is chaired by the County Council's Lead Member for Children and Families and Community Safety, and other board members include the chairs from each of the CSPs, senior representatives from the responsible authorities; the police, public health, Fire and Rescue, and both the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Company, and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
6. The role of the LSCSB is to oversee and co-ordinate the implementation and delivery of Leicestershire Community Safety Partnership priorities identified by the Board including coordination of the Police and Crime Plan for the LLR area. The priorities include, reducing re-offending and substance-related crime and disorder, protecting those considered to be most vulnerable in the community, reducing anti-social behaviour and increasing public confidence in local crime and disorder services.
7. The key roles and responsibilities of the Board are as follows:
  - To provide strategic leadership in delivering safer communities priorities across Leicestershire;
  - To develop joint approaches to community safety and encourage collaborative working across agencies and partnerships; and
  - To facilitate greater alignment between CSPs and other bodies and structures with community safety responsibilities.
8. The approach adopted has been for the County Council's Community Safety Team to liaise with district councils and LLR agencies. This has entailed undertaking planning, adopting a number of work-streams, and enabling the LCSCB to fulfil its function by providing the necessary background information and data and support for its meetings. An important part of the Community Safety Team work has been regular attendance at local CSP meetings and providing support to enable CSPs to introduce a local plan linked to countywide and more recently PCC priorities.

### **Police and Crime Commissioners**

9. In 2012 the landscape in relation to community safety became more complex particularly in two tier local authority arrangements, due to the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners who have responsibility for oversight of the local police force and introducing a force-wide (LLR) Police and Crime Plan focused on reducing crime and disorder in the region.
10. Recognising that there may be some crossover in the role of PCCs and County Councils in two tier arrangements, the Crime and Disorder Regulations 2012 introduced a requirement for county-level strategy groups such as the LSCSB to introduce a community safety agreement and a

partnership plan. Research into the national picture highlighted that a number of local authorities had introduced a community safety agreement that:

- i) amalgamated collective countywide priorities; and
  - ii) provided a web-based plan available to the public. In Leicestershire a web-based plan has been introduced by the LSCSB. The plan identifies common themes and priorities and provides links to the PCC and CSP plans and to related national crime and disorder strategies. The planning cycle linked to the local community safety agreement is being developed by the LSCSB (a copy of the plan and the web link details are outlined at Appendix B).
11. As indicated the PCC functions include oversight of the local police and production of a police and crime plan. Oversight of the PCC lies with the Police and Crime Panel, a joint committee which includes a County representative who can raise Leicestershire related issues. The Police and Crime Panel includes a county representative who can raise county-related issues. The current representative on this the Cabinet Lead Member for Children and Family Services and Community Safety, who also chairs the LSCSB.

### **Community Safety Team**

12. In addition to having a role in co-ordinating the work of the LSCSB the County Council's community safety team also leads and co-ordinates operational planning across the county on several areas linked to crime and disorder. This includes co-ordinating standards, commissioning, joint working arrangements, priority setting, data sharing, training, and joint working arrangements linked to, anti-social behaviour, Prevent activity (related to counter terrorism), hate crime, and domestic violence. In addition to this, the team co-ordinate, with other responsible agencies, the LLR response to emerging threats currently notably serious organised crime, exploitation of children, knife, and cyber-crime.

### **Knife crime update**

13. Since 2017 several partner agencies including the Police, City and County Youth Offending Services, Education, the National Probation Service, and Charnwood Borough Council have worked together co-ordinating the operational response to knife crime across Leicestershire, Leicester City, and Rutland (LLR). The work has been co-ordinated through a Knife Crime Delivery Group chaired by the police which focuses on sharing information and co-ordinating initiatives across localities focused on tackling knife crime. Significantly during 2019, to complement this approach, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has been allocated £880k by the Home Office for 2019/20 to establish a Violence Reduction Unit in line with a Public Health approach to tackling violent crime.

14. The national funding has enabled the introduction of a Violence Reduction Network (VRN), which seeks to think and act differently about violence with the goal of reducing its occurrence across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). Through utilising existing partnerships including the Knife Crime Delivery Group, strengthening connections between different organisations, sectors, and communities and drawing on collective assets, the Network seeks to identify the causes of violence locally. The approach involves developing a coordinated, effective response to tackle the underlying causal factors related to violent crime so that communities across the LLR are places where all people, families and communities are safe, healthy and free of violence.
15. The VRN aims to achieve “prevention through connection” by building an inclusive, collaborative and courageous network which will drive the short and long-term system-change required to successfully tackle the causes of violence across the life-course. Up until March 2020, the initial focus of the VRN is youth violence (up to age 25) in public spaces and in particular serious youth violence involving weapons. However, the intention is to broaden out the focus to other forms of violence in due course.
16. The VRN is supported by a central team which has the following **aims**:
  - To improve understanding of violence and its root causes through data gathering and analysis.
  - To develop and share models of effectiveness for violence prevention and reduction, through drawing on local, national and international knowledge.
  - To understand and improve relevant services through service-mapping, identifying and pursuing opportunities for integrated working, and developing, testing and evaluating new or existing services to fill gaps in provision.
  - To ensure communities, including those most affected by violence, are fully involved in both improving understanding of the design and delivery of solutions.
  - To build momentum and secure the commitment to change through designing and deploying campaigns and assembling a virtual network of leadership ambassadors across the Network.
  - To co-produce and secure commitment to a long-term plan for Violence Reduction.
17. A VRN Programme Board will provide strategic leadership and direction for the work of the Violence Reduction Network (VRN), ensuring the VRN delivers against the vision and programme goals. The multi-agency chief officer membership will include the Director of Children and Family Services and a District Chief Executive. Progress will also be reported to other relevant partnership boards, such as the Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board. It is of note that The Police and Crime Panel has written to the Home Office to request that a decision regarding future longer-term funding be made and announced as soon as possible.

## **Community Safety Strategy**

18. In terms of the detail contained within the Community Safety Strategy (Appendix A), due to the nature of relationships between agencies and strategy groups in two-tier Local Authority arrangements the strategy includes background information in relation to the responsibilities of the Police Crime Commissioner, District CSP's, and the LSCSB in relation to reducing crime and disorder. Detail is also provided regarding the purpose of a community safety agreement. In Leicestershire the community safety agreement has been developed as an online document which not only contains the agreed County level priorities, but also provides links to current District CSP plans, PCC priorities, and national strategy documents connected to crime and disorder. A link is provided in the Strategy to the online Leicestershire Community Safety Agreement and is attached at Appendix B.
19. The Community Safety Strategy also links crime and disorder related priorities to strategic priorities identified and being delivered within the 5-year Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan. The last section of the Community Safety Strategy contains information on the work and priorities of the Leicestershire County community safety team, including the team's support role in relation to the work of the LSCSB.

## **Consultation**

20. Consultation on the contents of the Community Safety Strategy commenced on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and will take place for 8 weeks. The consultation period ends on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019. It will be carried out via formal and informal meetings and written communication with stakeholders comprising the Scrutiny Commission and partners who form the LSCSB: the community safety partnership for the District areas, the Police, Combined Fire Authority, Fire and Rescue Service, Leicestershire CCG's, the Probation Service, Public Health, and Leicester City Council.

## **Conclusion**

19. The views of the Scrutiny Commission are sought in relation to the draft two-year Leicestershire County Council Community Safety Strategy. In two tier Local Authority arrangements the statutory duties placed on District CSPs and Responsible agencies to work together and identify priorities are relatively complex. To inform the Scrutiny Commission the report refers to relevant legislation and provides background information concerning the role of the Police Crime Commissioner and LSCSB.

## **Resource implications**

20. There are no resource implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The strategy can be implemented using existing resources with the Children and Family Services budget.

**Timetable for Decisions**

21. The County Council Cabinet approved the draft Community Safety Strategy for consultation on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 2019.
22. The Scrutiny Commission will consider the draft Strategy at its meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019.
23. The outcome of the consultation including feedback from the Scrutiny Commission, together with the final version of the Strategy will be considered by Cabinet on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2019.
24. Subject to the views of Cabinet, the final version of the Strategy will be submitted to full Council for approval on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 2020.

**Consultation under the Local Issues Alert Procedures**

25. None.

**Equality and Human Rights Implications**

26. There are no direct EHRIA implications for the local authority as a partner agency within broader crime and disorder arrangements.

**Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

27. None.

**Officer(s) to Contact**

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**Appendices**

- i) Appendix A – Leicestershire Community Safety Strategy
- ii) Appendix B – Leicestershire Community Agreement (CSA)