

REPORT OF North Devon and Torrridge Community Safety Partnership
To: External Overview & Scrutiny/ Licensing & Community Safety
Subject: ND&TDC Community Safety Partnership Update
Date: 31st October 2019 **Reference:**

PURPOSE OF REPORT: To provide members of the Torrridge External Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and North Devon Licensing and Community Safety Committee with an update on the work of the North Devon and Torrridge Community Safety Partnership

1. INTRODUCTION

The North Devon and Torrridge Community Safety Partnership is a statutory body set up under sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is made up of representatives from a number of agencies involved with crime, disorder and community safety. North Devon and Torrridge have a joint CSP board and meet on a quarterly basis. The current Chair of the board is Superintendent Toby Davies of Devon and Cornwall police. Meetings are attended by the following agencies:

- Torrridge District Council
- North Devon District Council
- Devon and Cornwall Police
- Devon Cornwall and Somerset Fire and Rescue
- Police and Crime Commissioner Representative
- DCC Public health
- Together (drug and alcohol support services)
- Leesar (domestic and sexual violence support services)
- Probation services
- TTVS/NDVS (voluntary services)
- North Devon Healthcare Trust
- Elected members from TDC, ND and DCC

The current priorities of the CSP are:

Priority one: protecting the vulnerable

The broadest of our priorities focuses on crimes that often affect the most vulnerable in our society, for example: child sexual exploitation, modern slavery or radicalisation. With each we are fundamentally concerned with the impact on our communities from a range of risks to the most vulnerable in our society.

Priority two: domestic abuse and sexual violence

A multi-agency approach to domestic abuse and sexual violence allows the victim to be at the heart of the service. DSVAs are



commissioned locally and operate important provisions such as support and advice services, court located independent domestic violence advisors (IDVA's) and places of safety. In the past year a new Sexual and Domestic Violence Forum for Northern Devon has been set up with the aim of bringing together a range of partners to develop and implement creative solutions for victims and perpetrators of sexual and domestic violence.

Priority three: substance misuse

Utilising a partnership approach to identify, support and tackle alcohol and drug related issues within our communities. We work with specialist drug and alcohol services (both commissioned and voluntary) which in turn work with both service users and their families in a range of ways to reduce harm and support recovery.

Priority four: emerging threats

To allow the CSP to respond quickly and effectively to new concerns, we review emerging issues in our communities and where necessary, will set up a specialist group from within our partners to work on a specific problem. Any of our partners can bring matters to the board for consideration and action. County Lines is an example of an 'emerging threat' that was recognised at its early stages locally.

Our CSP is represented on the County strategic level Safer Devon Partnership through our Chair. Some statutory functions of the CSP are delivered at regional level, such as the production of a crime and disorder strategic assessment, regional reoffending strategy development, and the management of Domestic Homicide Reviews. At a local level, the role of the board consists of setting and monitoring local priorities, overseeing the allocation of CSP funding by both authorities and maintaining an overview of issues affecting community safety in both districts. At the present time, both authorities receive £12500 through the OPGC to support of the work of the CSP.

2. REPORT

The North Devon and Torridge Community Safety Partnership has had an active year, facing many challenges over a range of issues.

One of the statutory functions of a CSP is in relation to terrorism and extremism. Devon and Cornwall is designated as a low risk area but we are still required to comply with statutory guidance around The Prevent Duty as specified in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This requires all specified authorities to have "due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism". To fulfil this requirement, The North Devon and Torridge CSP play a full role in the Devon and Cornwall Prevent Partnership who meet on a quarterly basis. The partnership has developed an action plan based on the recommendations of the Devon and Cornwall Counter Terrorism Local Profile and are about to launch a comprehensive training plan for the public sector in our area.

One of the focus issues for the CSP over the past year has been around the impacts and perceptions of homelessness. Last year North Devon Council worked with 155 rough sleepers. Currently on any one night North Devon have



between 17 and 20 rough sleepers on the streets. Recognising this evidenced need, North Devon Council has been successful in receiving funding from MHCLG to assist with supporting rough sleepers. The funding has allowed enhancement of the existing team and as well as a full-time Outreach worker, the following are now in place; a full-time Mental Health CPN, a full-time Drug and Alcohol specialist, a part-time Adult Social worker (shared with Torrridge), a full-time Navigator working with the most entrenched rough sleepers, a full time floating support worker, 4 units of Housing First and 12 Supported Lettings tenancies.

Torrridge's rough sleeper numbers are generally lower than North Devon's and it is estimated that on a typical night there may be up to 5 rough sleepers on the streets, although it is possible that the genuine number of rough sleepers has been consistently underestimated due to the predominantly rural nature of the district and lack of resource for outreach, which can make it difficult to locate and engage with rough sleepers. Additionally, it is recognised that rough sleepers sometimes migrate from Torrridge to North Devon to access services.

In 2019/20 Torrridge successfully secured funding from MHCLG for 14 hours rough sleeper outreach per week and a part time social worker (shared with North Devon). This additional resource has enabled the Council to make an improved offer to those rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping in Torrridge and between April and September outreach has worked with 30 people who were rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping. Improved engagement has enabled the Council to carry out more thorough assessments and has enabled rough sleepers to better access and utilise pathways to specialist accommodation, local supported accommodation and the private rented sector. Torrridge continues to explore ways of working in partnership with others to secure rough sleepers in the district access to appropriate support and services.

The homeless and those at risk of homelessness are some of the most vulnerable in our society, and can present a complex mix of needs and issues that cannot be addressed by a single agency or approach. This will be an ongoing area of focus and we will continue our proactive approach in responding to homelessness and rough sleepers in our communities.

In addition to the above, the following gives an outline of some of the other work carried out by the partnership:

- A very popular bite sized training programme continues to be delivered covering a range of topics of interest and use to both front line staff and to members. Topics covered to date include sexual violence, modern slavery, County Lines, radicalisation, dementia, suicide awareness and loan sharks. The bite size programme is central to the awareness raising and training carried out by the CSP and we encourage attendance by members at every event and feedback is very much welcomed.
- County Lines has been a significant issue in both areas and through the CSP, awareness raising and improved intelligence had been generated which has led to increased enforcement action and a reduction in activities across Northern Devon. An 'exploitation toolkit' has been developed by the SDP which has been promoted to all frontline staff and partners, to aid recognition and reporting of these issues.
- Programmes funded by the CSP – Street Marshals, dementia trackers, Op Mangold support (Bideford ASB issues) Op Fagment/ Spare Change/Real Change campaign support (Barnstaple ASB/Homelessness), mediation services



and support resources for taxi drivers in relation to reporting modern slavery and CSE, Honest Truth (road safety) campaign packs and training, and various crime prevention tools and materials to support community events and targeted action campaigns.

- Active involvement in the Devon Anti Slavery Partnership and Migrant Workers Action Group (MigWAG). This has led to operations in both authorities in conjunction with other agencies, against local businesses and operations implicated in modern slavery practices.
- Promotion of Fire and Rescue's Home Fire Safety visit Programme to vulnerable households in Torridge.
- Road safety has previously been recognised as an 'emerging threat' leading to the setting up of the Northern Devon Road Safety Partnership. Campaigns coming out of this group include the road safety campaign promoted on Evans transport vehicles, the Honest Truth which provides training for driving instructors on including wider road safety messages to their clients, and the promotion of 'Op Snap' – the new police facility that allows dashcam footage of dangerous driving on our roads to be submitted directly to the police for review and action against perpetrators.
- Both Local Authorities have gained accreditation with the Police's Community Safety Accreditation Scheme allowing closer working between our enforcement teams and the police, giving nominated council staff increased legal powers and authorised access to police database information to assist in tackling antisocial behaviour.
- New for the CSP – we have produced a newsletter which we will publish twice a year on all aspects of our work, which we are unveiling at this meeting.

Crime statistics and emerging threats are reviewed at every CSP meeting. In terms of local crime, trends are generally rising especially in relation to crimes associated with County Lines (drugs, violence etc.) and shoplifting (which also has a connection to County Lines). Generally, we are mirroring the national trend in crime levels, however, Northern Devon remains amongst the lowest crime areas in the country.

3. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND CHALLENGES

One of the statutory functions of the Safer Devon Partnership is the production of a strategic assessment which is the evidence base used to set strategic priorities for all the CSP's across Devon and the wider peninsula. At the time of writing the updated strategic assessment is being finalised for sign off by the SDP. It is then intended to use this as a basis for reviewing the priorities for this CSP at its next meeting in January.

Our current priorities, especially 'protecting the vulnerable' are very broad and encompass a range of issues impacting on our communities. While we have broadly met our delivery plan, there are always areas where we could be more active and involved but we have to be realistic about what we can achieve with the resources available to all the partners in the CSP. What is clear is that no one agency holds the key to any issue and the multiagency approach in all of these areas is the only way these problems can be addressed effectively in these straightened times.



4. CONCLUSIONS

North Devon & Torridge Community Safety Partnership remain active and committed to monitoring, supporting and promoting activities in a wide range of areas that impact on community safety across Northern Devon. This is against a backdrop of ever reducing resources across all agencies as well as changing threats and issues facing our communities, which while providing continual challenges, also gives a driver to maintain our work in a efficient and effective joined up manner. The CSP provides a basis for this approach and is pivotal for community safety in Northern Devon.

