

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 APRIL 2019

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PERFORMANCE AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES IN BRIDGEND TO BE SAFE AND COHESIVE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides Scrutiny members with:

- An overview of the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership Priorities and Projects;
- A review of progress to date.

2. CONNECTION TO CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN/OTHER PRIORITIES

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate priorities:

- Support a successful economy - taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county;
- Helping people to be more self-reliant - taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Bridgend Public Services Board (PSB) was established on 1 April 2016, following the introduction of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. At their meeting on 27 March 2017, the PSB took the opportunity to review the governance arrangements and priorities of the Bridgend Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The PSB decided to embed the activities of the Bridgend CSP into its own assessment and planning activities and by making it a sub board of the PSB.

3.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and subsequent legislation outlines clear responsibilities for community safety which are outlined at 3.3 to 3.6 below.

3.3 The establishment of a Strategy Group which includes representatives from the 6 responsible authorities as set out below:

- Police
- Police and Crime Commissioner

- Local Authority
- Fire and Rescue Service
- Health
- Probation

3.4 As set out in legislation, the Strategy Group has:

- Produced an annual strategic assessment, which includes an evaluation of the previous year's work and priority setting based on public consultation.
- Agreed an information sharing protocol and designate a liaison officer in each local authority.
- Formulated and implemented a partnership plan which sets out:
 - ✓ A strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder, reduction of re-offending, and combating substance misuse
 - ✓ The priorities identified in the annual strategic assessment
 - ✓ Steps to be taken to implement the strategy and meet the priorities
 - ✓ Resources to be allocated
 - ✓ How success will be measured
 - ✓ Detail arrangements to enable information sharing

3.5 Bridgend Community Safety Partnership also oversees and monitors the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy and makes the decision to implement a Domestic Homicide Review.

3.6 There is no requirement for a separate Community Safety Partnership under the legislation. Providing the strategic group includes the responsible authorities, it can be merged into any partnership arrangements.

3.7 At their meeting on 27 March 2017 the PSB agreed that:

- The strategic assessment of crime and disorder is incorporated into the wellbeing assessment of Bridgend, published in 2017.
- Issues identified through the Wellbeing Assessment are used to develop a 'safe, cohesive communities' wellbeing objective for inclusion in the Wellbeing plan. A copy of the Wellbeing Plan for Bridgend is attached as **Appendix A**.
- The priorities and actions i.e. the 'steps' identified to meet the wellbeing objectives discharges the duty to develop a community safety strategy.
- To ensure the wellbeing objectives and associated priorities are met the Community Safety Partnership Executive (with an expanded membership) retains its name but becomes a 'sub-board' of the PSB.
- The Community Safety Partnership Sub Executive will twice yearly report on progress to PSB. The first report to be submitted to PSB at their meeting on 17 June 2019.

4. **CURRENT SITUATION/PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 The CSP developed its strategic plan to deliver on the Wellbeing Objective Supporting Communities in Bridgend to be safe and cohesive. As well as outlining the statutory obligations of the partnership, the plan details the actions the partnership will take to achieve its priorities.
- 4.2 In May 2018 the CSP agreed additional key areas of work to be included in the delivery plan for 2018/19:
- Rough Sleeping
 - Suicide Prevention
 - County Lines/organised crime – community and vulnerability links
 - Community Engagement
 - Fraud/vulnerable people
 - Co-ordinated approach to partner engagement with schools through the Bridgend Head Teachers Forum
- 4.3 A copy of the Strategy is attached as **Appendix B** and a progress report on the actions outlined in the Strategy is attached as **Appendix C**.
- 4.4 As well as addressing these issues the CSP has responded to community safety issues as they arise and these are outlined below:

Bridgend Town Centre

Early on this year concerns were raised around Bridgend Town Centre. These include:

- Young people and antisocial behaviour at Bridgend Bus Station and Newbridge Fields
- Rough sleepers and drug related litter under the Rhiw Bridge
- Rough sleepers in Bridgend Town Centre
- Concerns around illegal drug use and sale
- Complaints from traders and others regarding lack of response/action by South Wales Police (SWP) and Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC).

To address these concerns, the CSP have agreed and implemented a series of actions which have started to mitigate some of the issues raised:

- Engagement with young people causing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) at Bridgend Bus Station
- Day time provision for rough sleepers
- County Lines training for partner organisations and taxi drivers
- Upgraded mobile CCTV cameras
- Increased police presence in the Town Centre
- Engagement with rough sleepers

- Work with BCBC Highways, National Resources Wales (NRW) and Bridgend angling association to develop a model for closing the area under the Rhiw Bridge
- Rigorous enforcement of the Public Space Protection Order prohibiting street drinking
- Issue of Criminal Behaviour Orders
- 'Report it' Campaign with Town Centre Traders
- Operation Red Dragon, a lengthy undercover SWP operation, which resulted in 30 arrests
- Operation Chesapeake – large police presence with sniffer dogs resulting in 22 stop and searches and 4 arrests
- Detached youth work provision and a Pop Up Graffiti School
- Extended provision for young people causing ASB in Maesteg
- Support for a Town Centre Marshall – Bridgend

Feedback from stakeholders on these actions has been positive, as evidenced through their comments below.

'the afternoon drop-in at The Zone is working well. It is well-utilised and is helping to keep people safe' SWP

'there are less people on benches and shoplifting' SWP

'the young homeless presence has dropped considerably at the Bus Station'.

'noticeable decrease in ASB at the bus station due to the police having more of a presence there' BCBC

However, under reporting of ASB and other incidents remains an issue and the importance of reporting is being reinforced through 'Report it' campaigns with town centre traders and through social media.

4.5 **Cyber Crime**

The CSP is working closely with South Wales Police Regional Cyber Crime Unit to ensure the Tarian Cyber Resilience Tour is well attended. The Tarian Cyber Bus tour is funded by Welsh Government and aims to raise awareness of the public's vulnerability to cyber crime and to promote some simple steps to reduce the risk of becoming a victim. The Cyber Bus was in Bridgend Town Centre on 22 March 2019 and offered advice and support to residents and businesses on the dangers of cyber-crime. A series of workshops aimed at small businesses were delivered during the day, hosted by Valleys to Coast at their Nolton Court offices.

4.6 **VAWDASV (Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence)**

VAWDSV services in Bridgend County are offered through a 'one stop shop' based in the Civic Centre, known as the Assia Suite. This is based in Bridgend Civic Centre and offers victims of domestic abuse a confidential,

robust range of services. Victims of domestic can self-refer by using the drop in facility or are referred by the police and other agencies. Numbers accessing the service are significantly higher than anticipated.

	Projected Annual	No. to date (quarter 3)
Victims receiving support	365	739
Public Protection Notices (PPN) Victims contacted	500	678
Victims receiving ongoing support in the community	60	265
Independent Domestic Violence Advocate Service		
No of High risk victims supported through Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) daily discussions	n/a	99
No high risk victims supported through court	n/a	52

Awareness Raising – regular awareness raising events are held across the County Borough. These take place in areas well used by members of the public, including Bridgend Bus Station, McArthur Glen Shopping Centre, local Supermarkets, BCBC Civic Offices, HALO leisure centres etc. This combined with national awareness raising of VAWDASV through mainstream and social media could explain the high number of victims accessing support.

A very successful learning event was held on 9 October 2018. The event was identified as an action on the last Domestic Homicide Review Action Plan (awaiting approval from the Home Office prior to publication) and covered a wide range of domestic abuse and safeguarding issues. The aim of the event was to raise awareness of domestic abuse and its consequences. Speakers shared both their experiences of the abuse they had suffered and their experience of accessing services. Attendees were provided with information on how to recognise domestic abuse, how to report it, and how to support victims to access services. It was jointly planned and funded between BCBC and SWP and feedback from participants has been extremely positive.

To meet the requirements of the VAWDASV Act 2015 all local authorities in Wales must provide training, which meets the learning outcomes of the Group 1 of the National Training Framework, to all staff. To meet this requirement in BCBC, an E' learning module has been developed. To date 4345 employees (74% of the headcount) have completed this training.

The Spectrum programme (safe, equal and healthy relationships) has been delivered to 405 children in schools. This is funded by Welsh Government and delivered by third sector domestic abuse charity, Hafan Cymru. It is a healthy relationships programme focussing on domestic abuse, sexual violence and violence against women. The programme is aimed at foundation phase and key stage 2 using a 'whole school approach'.

Bridgend has been piloting the Choices Perpetrator programme. Twenty six referrals were made to the programme, and eleven were accepted as participants. Eleven women and fourteen children are also offered intensive support alongside the perpetrators. The intervention is delivered by Calan DVS and is a male perpetrator, female victim model of intimate partner violence. It is a 32 week programme with 5 weeks of initial assessments. During assessments participants are provided with the mechanism to reduce abusive behaviour. Not all perpetrators are accepted onto the programme as they have to really want to change their behaviour. Those involved with the criminal justice system cannot be accepted or those engaged with domestic abuse perpetrator programmes through Probation as part of a licence requirement. The aim of a perpetrator intervention is to keep the victim and the child/ren safe. A woman's safety worker supports the victim and the children's worker supports the children.

4.7 Suicide and Self Harm Prevention

The Suicide and self-harm prevention strategy for Bridgend 2017-20 was approved and signed off by the Bridgend Public Services Board on 26th March 2018.

Governance arrangements for monitoring the implementation and progress of the strategy were placed under the remit of the CSP who in turn would update the PSB on a 6 monthly basis. Current comparisons between annual figures for complete suicides in the Bridgend area indicate that there has been a reduction in numbers of suicides from 20 in 2017 to 14 in 2018. It is difficult to specifically link the reduction to the implementation of the strategy but the overall reduction is encouraging.

4.8 Faith event

Bridgend PSB and CSP were delighted to welcome over 80 participants to Bridgend Public Services Board (PSB) first 'Faith Event'. Active Contributors from 54 faith and third sector organisations met with PSB member organisations to explore new ways of working together and help the PSB better understand the work of faith groups in Bridgend.

As part of the event, 44 new contacts were facilitated and discussions at the event found that faith groups made contributions to their communities across a wide range of activity including:

- helping people to age well,
- supporting children to have the best start in life
- bringing diverse communities together and promoting community cohesion
- providing community assets and facilities
- providing food clothing and furniture
- providing advice, training, work experience, employability support and volunteering opportunities

- providing help at home and support with housing

4.9 Community Safety Partnership Engagement with Schools

A number of CSP partners receive requests from schools to attend events, provide information, and raise awareness on a variety of issues. These could range from road safety, to substance misuse, to career advice. The CSP would like to investigate the potential for co-ordinating this activity to avoid disappointment and duplication. The Partnership lead for the PSB Assets Board (Chief Officer, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service) will be attending the June 2019 Head Teachers Forum, on behalf of the CSP to discuss this in more in more detail.

4.10 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

The Anti-social behaviour officer, based in Bridgend Police station facilitates the anti-social behaviour process. The table below illustrates the number of incidents and how incidents progress through the system. However, there is still a lack of reporting of ASB, so the number of incidents does not necessarily reflect the scale of ASB in Bridgend County.

	Apr to Dec 18	Apr to Dec 17
No of ASB incidents reported	1220*	1240**
No of Stage 1 letters sent	445	423
No of Stage 1 final warning letters sent	56	57
No of Stage 2 Visits	19	17
No of ABC contracts	8	4
No of Criminal behaviour orders	4	0

*775 perpetrator unknown or victim withholds consent
 **817 perpetrator unknown or victim withholds consent

Young people receiving stage 1 letters are offered support through the PCSO co-located in the appropriate early help hub.

4.11 Community Cohesion

The Welsh Government have recognised the potential increased risk of community tension and far right extremism as a result of Brexit. In response to this they have proposed that existing structure of a Regional Community Co-ordinator working across a regional footprint should be reinforced, by building a small team of Community Cohesion Officers to be based in each local authority area. Bridgend CSP has submitted a proposal to Welsh Government for a part time Community Cohesion Officer to be based in Bridgend. The post holder will undertake regular engagement with groups vulnerable to community tensions in relation to Brexit (EU citizens, BAME communities etc) collate intelligence on tensions as they emerge and co-ordinate a multi-agency response to reduce tensions and / or undertake preventative work. Welsh Government have approved the application in principle.

4.12 **Delivery and Governance**

The CSP uses a mixture of sub groups and task and finish group approach to deliver its priorities. These groups report directly into CSP and to PSB by exception. The governance arrangements for the CSP, in particular the connections to regional partnership boards are being reviewed to reflect the forthcoming change of health board boundary.

4.13 **Plans for collaboration with Cwm Taf**

The health board boundary is due to change on 1st April 2019 and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council have a shared PSB. At their meeting on 10 December 2018, Bridgend PSB considered whether it would be beneficial to work together to create a new PSB to cover the Cwm Taf region. The two PSBs have met and agreed to identify common areas of collaboration and explore further opportunities for integration. This includes a joint funding application to Welsh Government for a shared analytical resource. There are no immediate plans to create a joint Community Safety Partnership across the Cwm Taf region.

Members of the CSP are in discussion with colleagues in the Cwm Taf Region to establish Health Board representation on Bridgend CSP and to develop the strategic connections with the Area Planning Board, the Regional Safeguarding Board, the CONTEST (Counter Terrorism) Board and the Regional Partnership Board.

5. **EFFECT UPON POLICY FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE RULES**

5.1 There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 There are no equality impact implications arising from this report.

7. **WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015 IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The Bridgend Wellbeing Plan (**Appendix A**) and the Community Safety Strategy (**Appendix B**) clearly set out how the wellbeing objectives contribute to the seven wellbeing goals outlined in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

7.2 The plan outlines how the PSB and CSP will act in accordance with the sustainable development principle by ensuring that by meeting the needs of the present they do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

7.3 They do this through the 5 ways of working which are evidenced throughout the Bridgend Wellbeing Plan and the Community Safety Strategy.

8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The CSP has received the following indicative funding offers for 2019-20:

Welsh Government (VAWDSA)	£85,460
South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner	£56,100

9. **RECOMMENDATION**

9.1 The Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report.

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Background Documents: National Training Framework on Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence statutory guidance