


**14 September 2021**

<b>Report of</b>	<b>Strategic Director for Customer &amp; Relationships</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Sonia Carr</b>  <b>282978</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Safer Colchester Partnership</b>		
<b>Wards affected</b>	All		

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. This report provides the Crime and Disorder Committee with the opportunity to review the work of the Safer Colchester Partnership [SCP] during the period March 2021 – September 2021. Included within the report is background information and an explanation of the role of the Safer Colchester Partnership, work undertaken by the Partnership during March 2021 – September 2021 and future priorities for 2021/22.
- 1.2. Appendices are provided from the Statutory members of the SCP (including Health, The Probation Service (TPS), Essex County Council (ECC), Essex Fire and Rescue (ECFRS) and Essex Police) to deliver more detailed partner information on performance/activities linked to the SCP and their own priorities.
- 1.3. At the Crime and Disorder Committee meeting, key stakeholders, including the Colchester Borough Council Portfolio Holder and Executive Director, Colchester District Commander (North Local Policing Area) Essex Police and senior representatives from other statutory and non-statutory partner agencies will be in attendance to provide further details to Committee Members and to answer any questions that they may have.

## **2. Action Required**

- 2.1. To invite the Crime and Disorder Committee to scrutinise the work of the Safer Colchester Partnership [SCP].

## **3. Reason for Scrutiny**

- 3.1. Under the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 the Committee is required to meet at least once a year to review the work and progress of the Safer Colchester Partnership in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their statutory crime and disorder reduction functions.
- 3.2. However, during the 'annual' Crime and Disorder Committee Panel meeting on 10 September 2019; the Committee requested that there be two Panel meetings

per year (taking place in March and September) so that they could receive and discuss performance data and statistics from the statutory partners of the Safer Colchester Partnership. This motion was agreed by the Chair of the SCP.

#### **4. Background Information**

- 4.1. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out statutory requirements for local agencies to work together to tackle crime in their local area. Partners involved in this work are known as 'Responsible Authorities'.
- 4.2. The SCP was set up in order to deliver this statutory duty and includes the following partners: (statutory) Colchester Borough Council (CBC), Essex Police, Health/Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), The Probation Service (TPS), Essex County Council (ECC), Essex Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) and non-statutory partners include Colchester Borough Homes (CBH), University of Essex, Community 360 and Colchester Garrison, Colchester Business Improvement District (BID) and the Ambulance Service.
- 4.3. There are many areas where the work of agencies overlaps, and it is more effective to work in partnership to address issues. Also, more effective data sharing between agencies enables partners to target resources to where they are needed most.
- 4.4. The SCP has a statutory duty to carry out an annual 'Strategic Assessment of Crime'. This involves analysing data on the frequency, location and types of crime (over the period 1st October – 30th September) in order to identify patterns and trends. The CBC Community Safety Team, alongside Essex Police's Intelligence Analyst, lead on the delivery of this Assessment and, once completed, it is shared amongst SCP partners and used to develop the SCP Annual Partnership Plan (for the period 1 April - 31 March) which prioritises key local issues and outlines actions to address them. The SCP then monitors this Annual Plan throughout the financial year, reviewing and refocusing activity as necessary to effectively tackle the issues.

#### **5. The Partnership's work during 2021 – up to September 2021**

- 5.1 Following completion of the Strategic Assessment of Crime 2020-21 in December 2020, and the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions imposed from March 2021, the SCP agreed to adopt the previous year's Key Priorities for the period April 2021 - March 2022.

It was felt that the pandemic restrictions impacted on crime committed and reported in 2020, resulting in crime types experiencing unprecedented significantly reduced or increased levels. As restrictions changed, crime levels have continually readjusted. As the data set significantly reflects crime within a pandemic environment the data may not accurately inform priorities for the following year where similar restrictions may not be in place. The Partnership agreed the priorities identified in the previous assessment had not had an opportunity to address them.

- Tackling Organised Crime, Gangs and County lines with an emphasis on Drug Trafficking

The Safer Colchester Partnership will continue to develop the intelligence and awareness picture of this escalating criminality, especially focusing on Drug Trafficking. To best tackle this issue the Safer Colchester Partnership will strive to provide appropriate safeguarding and support to those vulnerable to this type of drug-related exploitation with a further aim to assist in the disruption of drug-related activities within the community.

- Driving down Anti-Social Behaviour and Violent Crime in public, focussing on Hate Crime

The Safer Colchester Partnership will use all available resources and legislation, including utilising the four standing Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs), to tackling ASB and violent crime within the District. Reductions in these areas will bring reassurance to residents regarding their personal safety and will assist in driving down crime rates for the area. With a further emphasis on Hate Crime as identified by the risk matrix, addressing this type of behaviour and conduct can help improve the community quality of life.

- Identifying and supporting the reporting of Hidden Harms with a proactive approach to those at risk of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences

The Safer Colchester Partnership will aim to increase the understanding and awareness, to both the general public and front-line practitioners, of the Hidden Harms our communities face. Encouraging those who are affected by these harms to engage with the Partnership or relevant agencies/charities to seek help and support, with an emphasis on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences as identified by the risk matrix.

5.2. The SCP Annual Partnership Plan 2021-22 details the specific work and projects undertaken to address these themes (to date); this is attached as Appendix A.

5.3 Updates from statutory members of the SCP including Health (CCG), The Probation Service (TPS), Essex County Council (Adult and Children's Services), Essex Fire and Rescue (ECFRS) and Essex Police are included as Appendix B.

## **6. Plans for the Partnership's work during September 2021- March 2022**

6.1. As detailed in 5.1, the Key Priorities for the period including September 2021 – March 2022 are:

- Tackling Organised Crime, Gangs and County lines with an emphasis on Drug Trafficking
- Driving down Anti-Social Behaviour and Violent Crime in public, focussing on Hate Crime
- Identifying and supporting the reporting of Hidden harms with a proactive approach to those at risk of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences

- 6.2. The Annual Partnership Plan for 2021-22 will continue until the end of March 2021.

## **7. Changes during the year to date**

- 7.1. The Department for Work and Pensions and Eastlight Community Housing became members of the Partnership during 2021.
- 7.2. The Essex Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) was removed due to reunification with The Probation Service.
- 7.3. A change in name – The National Probation Service was replaced with The Probation Service.
- 7.4. A new Portfolio Holder for Communities was appointed by the Council. Councillor Beverley Oxford now holds this office.
- 7.5. The continued employment by the local authority of a Covid Co-ordinator and Town Marshals (previously called Covid Marshals) to work closely with Essex Police, Business Improvement District and Council Neighbourhood Teams to support public compliance with Government guidelines, as well as to assist in monitoring and reporting of ASB and drug/alcohol use.
- 7.6. Successful partnership working between all agencies in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the recovery of businesses following national lockdown, including Covid Lateral Flow Test giveaways and Mobile Testing Units across the borough.
- 7.7. New Domestic Abuse Bill became law from 30 April 2021 – activity to ensure requirements on partners are met.
- 7.8. Planning continues for The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill currently being considered in the House of Lords, although initial findings suggest the Partnership have the necessary procedures in place to meet its requirements.
- 7.9. The deployment programme for the digital CCTV is nearing completion – offering upgraded and significantly enhanced/improved coverage already delivering solid results.

## **8. The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)**

- 8.1. The PFCC is invited to attend Crime and Disorder Committee meetings. Unfortunately, the PFCC already had an existing engagement in his diary for this date and is not able to attend.
- 8.2. The PFCC for Essex's Community Safety Development Fund enables voluntary and community safety groups from across Essex to apply for funding. This is to help prevent and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in Essex and support vulnerable people.

## **9. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications**

9.1. No specific Equality and Diversity implications.

## **10. Strategic Plan References**

10.1 This work contributes to the Council's Strategic Plan 2020-2023. Under 'Creating safe, healthy and active communities', the priority to 'Provide opportunities for young people', includes key goals to tackle crime issues and tackling anti-social behaviour. Specifically:

- Provide positive opportunities for young people to engage with their local community and do things that interests them, keeps them safe, makes them happy and supports improved mental wellbeing
- Support the creation of strong, safe, and friendly communities that care about each other
- Work with Essex Police, Colchester Borough Homes, Essex Youth Service and other partners to reduce anti-social behaviour and tackle serious crime
- Work alongside our partners to improve cleanliness and community safety in the town centre
- Upgrade and extend the CCTV network to reach more places

## **11. Consultation**

11.1. The Strategic Assessment of Crime 2020-21 was completed in December 2020 and has been used to identify the Key Priorities for the SCP for 2021-22.

## **12. Publicity Considerations**

12.1. All publicity aims to achieve a positive reflection of the work of the SCP. There is a dedicated website, providing information and advice for residents and members of the public – [www.safercolchester.co.uk](http://www.safercolchester.co.uk)

## **13. Financial implications**

13.1. It is expected that funding for the Partnership's work will continue to be reduced. Therefore, the Partnership will consider the financial sustainability of any project work it undertakes.

## **14. Community Safety Implications**

14.1. The Community Safety implications are the subject of this report.

## **15. Health and Safety Implications**

15.1. There are no specific Health and Safety Implications.

## **16. Risk Management Implications**

16.1. There are no specific risk implications.

**ACRONYMS:**

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Description</b>
APP	Annual Partnership Plan
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBH	Colchester Borough Homes
CBO	Criminal Behavioural Order
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CPN	Community Protection Notice
CPW	Community Protection Warning
CS	Community Safety
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
ECFRS	Essex County Fire & Rescue Service
FPN	Fixed Penalty Notice
KP's	Key Priorities
PFCC	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
SCP	Safer Colchester Partnership

**Appendices:**

- Appendix A                SCP Annual Partnership Plan 2021-2022
- Appendix B                Statutory Partner Updates