

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Housing and Wellbeing Committee on 23 November 2023
SUBJECT:	Safer Arun Partnership scrutiny report
LEAD OFFICER:	Dax O'Connor, Community Safety Officer
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION: IMPROVING THE WELLBEING OF ARUN: Develop and implement a Wellbeing Strategy to plan services, resources, amenities, activities, and places to help our community thrive	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT: The Council has a duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 5) to review and scrutinise the decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions by the Safer Arun Partnership.	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY: Not applicable to this external body scrutiny report.	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report provides the latest update information in relation to the performance of the Safer Arun Partnership to allow this committee to carry out its statutory scrutiny function.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1. Since the last scrutiny report was presented to the Committee on 20 June 2023, the Safer Arun Partnership has met on two occasions. This report provides a summary of those meetings and agreed actions.
- 3.2. Grant funding decisions can be found at 4.4., 4.5. and 4.13 of this report. The Safer Arun Partnership considers applications from statutory agencies and community groups where initiatives address community safety concerns linked to the partnership's strategic priorities.

4. DETAIL

4.1. Councillor Alan Butcher was elected as the Safer Arun Partnership's new Chairperson at the meeting on 25 July 2023. Thanks were given to Councillor Alison Cooper for her stewardship as Chair over the previous two and a half years.

4.2. The key points of the partnership meeting dated 25 July 2023 are set out through sections 4.3 to 4.9 of this report.

4.3. A significant budget of £92,000 was noted as being available due to underspend across previous years. Officers advised partners that it should be a priority to identify suitable projects to make use of these funds. Grant funding is allocated to the Safer Arun Partnership from the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, and it is imperative they see that funds are being utilised to combat crime and anti-social behaviour in line with the partnership's strategic priorities.

4.4. Five initiatives were proposed, with funding agreed as follows:-

- Youth voice led safety project-

National youth arts charity, Artsworld, to collaborate with the APC in Littlehampton to develop safety messages that are devised, created, and delivered by pupils themselves. The project will explore what the key issues are locally that impact young people's sense of safety and the safety of their own communities. Various mediums of communication will be explored with young people themselves determining how to deliver and showcase their messaging to their peers.

£6,000 allocated

- Safer Schools event-

To provide a seminar for all Year 7 or 8 pupils attending secondary school in Arun, giving information, and sharing lived experiences in relation to violence, drugs, and criminal exploitation. Funding required to cover venue hire, two-way transport for all pupils, costs of speakers, and set-up of a marketplace for youth service organisations to attend and engage with pupils highlighting the diversionary activities available.

£20,000 allocated

- Enhancing Community Speedwatch-

As part of the Arun and Chichester Road Safety Action Group, it is noted that Arun has distinctly fewer active speedwatch groups. This proposal would seek to support formation of new groups and to acquire 'training' equipment that groups can loan whilst establishing themselves.

£5,000 allocated

- Supporting reduction of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)-
To provide funds for Arun DC's Safeguarding Lead to obtain a small stock of personal safety devices, doorbell cameras, and PAYG mobile phones, which can be utilised alongside Arun NPT to support victims and those at increased risk of personal harm.
£3,000 allocated
 - Local Action Teams-
SAP has endorsed the creation of Local Action Teams where they are considered necessary to address localised issues such as increased fear of crime and ASB due to feeling unsafe in that area. A Local Action Team will bring together 'on the ground' stakeholders and agencies to tackle these issues. This proposed budget would allow the LAT to implement practical measures and promotional activities.
£6,000 allocated
- 4.5. The partnership subsequently considered an application from Angmering Parish Council for funding of £817.56 aimed at increasing target hardening work around the Community Centre, to include enhanced CCTV and anti-climb paint. Approval was given and funds have been paid.
- 4.6. Agreement was given to contribute to the planned community safety survey being run in conjunction with all Community Safety Partnerships across West Sussex. Whilst WSCC will be hosting the survey, it was noted that residents tend to identify more with their local area more than the county. The platform will allow people to select the area where they live so that views can be recorded at a local level. Consulting with residents to understand how safe they feel, and the community safety issues relevant to them is vital for the partnership to ensure that targeted work is undertaken.
- 4.7. Partners identified a heightened risk around children and young people, both in Arun and across the county. A number of activities were planned to take place over the summer months, with a multi-agency approach agreed. Both higher and lower level engagement would take place with young people and inform a collective longer term response. Targeted hotspot locations included railways stations and rail travel, local parks, and town centres.
- 4.8. The key points of the partnership meeting dated 24 October 2023 are set out through sections 4.11 to 4.17 of this report.
- 4.9. It was noted that the Community Safety consultation is underway and runs until 3 November 2023. Results will be collated by WSCC during the following weeks with results and analysis passed to each Community Safety Partnership as soon as possible.
- 4.10. In response to concerns around youth disorder and violence, partnership work is underway with a focus on train lines and cross-district travel. BTP, Southern Rail and youth services are involved.

4.11. It is noted that fraud now accounts for approximately 40% of all reported crime. Work in Arun includes delivery of fraud awareness presentations by Community Wardens and promotion of Get Safe Online campaigns. WSCC will be creating a dedicated project for delivery which will be shared with the CSP and partners to push through local networks to reach residents across the district.

4.12. SAP makes an annual contribution towards a data analyst role at WSCC. It has been requested that they provide a quarterly data report, utilising statutory agency data sets, and specific to the adopted strategic priorities of each district. This will assist the partnership to track progress and measurement of outcomes of the work done.

4.13. The following funding application was agreed:-

- Youth diversionary activity fund-

Neighbourhood Youth Officers and ASB Caseworkers will have access to funding that can be utilised to support young people access diversionary activities where they come to notice for their involvement in ASB and concerns are raised that they could escalate to violence or crime. There are currently only limited options available to divert young people from such behaviour, such as free swimming passes. This does not appeal to everyone. Officers will work closely with the young person and their family to identify appropriate activities that meet their interests and are most likely to help curb their anti-social or criminal behaviour.

£3,000 allocated

4.14. The Council's Community Safety team have identified the need for an effective detached youth outreach service across the district, to engage with young people and guide them in the choices they make. An initial approach was outlined with all partners agreeing to this approach, in principle. A more detailed project plan has subsequently been provided and distributed to partners for comment and agreement to provide partnership funding.

4.15. The partnership undertook a detailed conversation about the heightened tensions, ASB, and crime in Littlehampton town centre. Individual agencies are all carrying out work to address the concerns being raised, but it was agreed that some of this has not been shared with the community. Details of live investigations will not be published, but there are opportunities to build up community trust by providing updates to the public on the proactive work being completed. Some examples of work that could be shared include:-

- The extended foot patrols by Community Wardens and police to counter reported ASB and gatherings in the High Street during specific times. These are being supported by officers from the Council's Community Safety team.

- WSCC funding secured to provide immediate youth outreach sessions in the town centre during the evenings.
- Establishment of a Local Action Team that involves ‘boots on the ground’ officers from multiple agencies and local stakeholders to identify and carry out practical direct action and review enforcement options.
- Op Sonar set up as a dedicated police response to town centre concerns.
- Ongoing liaison between the ASB team and licensing authorities to identify premises supplying alcohol to street drinkers or underage persons.
- Partners participating in community engagement and listening events, such as the town council’s market stall, and days of action.
- Delivery of ASB early education talks to primary school pupils by Community Wardens. To be followed up by police Neighbourhood Youth Officer.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1. Consultation has not been undertaken in relation to this information report.

6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 6.1. Consideration of options / alternatives is not required as this is an information report relating to an outside body.

7. COMMENTS BY THE INTERIM GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 7.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

- 9.1. This report is an “information only” paper which provides detail from which the committee can scrutinise the performance of the Safer Arun Partnership. It should be noted that SAP is an outside body.

However, when undertaking scrutiny of the Safer Arun Partnership, the committee does have authority to make its own recommendations back to the partnership in relation to any performance and reporting elements it deems appropriate.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

10.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

11.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

13.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1. This report resolves the Crime and Disorder Committee's statutory duty in providing scrutiny of the local community safety partnership.

15.2. It is noted that the council's Housing and Wellbeing committee is designated to serve as the statutory Crime and Disorder Committee in Arun.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Safer Arun Partnership Plan 2023-2025 www.arun.gov.uk/safer-arun-partnership