

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
Wednesday 11 October 2023

Present:- Councillor Clark (in the Chair); Councillors Bacon, Baker-Rogers, Browne, Elliott, Miro, Pitchley, Tinsley, Wyatt and Yasseen.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Ball and Cooksey.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

51. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from the public or press.

52. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no exempt items.

**53. THE SAFER ROTHERHAM PARTNERSHIP (SRP) ANNUAL REPORT
2022-23**

The Chair introduced the report and outlined that under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Regulations 2009, annual scrutiny was required of the decisions made and the actions taken by responsible authorities in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions. The Safer Rotherham Partnership annual report was presented to assist with this statutory requirement, and this function was undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

The apologies of Chief Superintendent Laura Kosciwicz and Superintendent Andy Wright were noted for this meeting.

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance in his capacity as Chair of the Safer Rotherham Partnership to introduce the report. The annual report provided an overview of progress against each of the SRP priorities for 2022/23, detailing emerging challenges, performance data and case studies. It provided an overview of how the SRP worked with partners and sought to maximise available funding to meet objectives. The overarching priorities referred to in the annual report were agreed by the board on 7 April 2022, covering a three-year period. These were: protecting vulnerable children; protecting vulnerable adults; safer stronger community; and protecting people from violence and organised crime. It was noted that performance

against these priorities were monitored by the SRP board on a quarterly basis. It was noted that the partnership was about to start the process of reviewing its priorities to ensure any emerging trends are captured. A fundamental review of priorities would take place every 3 to 4 years and this was scheduled for 2025.

The Assistant Director for Community Safety and Streetscene provided further detail of the work undertaken and partnership arrangements in place to meet its objectives. It was outlined that there was a focus on raising awareness and gathering intelligence to protect vulnerable children and adults. It was noted that there had been improvements in the number of intelligence reports that had been submitted. This was thought to have been as a result of a concerted effort given to training and awareness raising and streamlining processes to ensure that it is as easy as possible for partners and stakeholders to do so.

Examples were given of the partnerships work to address criminal exploitation and awareness raising with licensed premises and hotel staff. Details were also provided of mental health support embedded within neighbourhood policing teams to identify those with additional vulnerabilities. It was noted that substance misuse remained a challenge in the borough and the partnership had secured the co-location of probation and drug and alcohol specialist workers. In respect of modern slavery, the recent scrutiny review undertaken by this committee was referenced and there would be a focus on implementing the recommendations arising from its work.

Tackling antisocial behaviour remained a priority for the partnership. It was noted that whilst statistics pointed to a reduction in incidents of anti-social behaviour, there was a need to address negative perception of anti-social behaviour and its impact on perceptions of safety. Further details were given of actions to address hate crime. Initiatives to address road safety and safety around open water were outlined, as well as incidents resulting from extremities of weather conditions (e.g. fires on open land).

It was noted that members had been engaged in the review of domestic abuse support and details were provided on how this work was progressing. Other initiatives to reduce violence against women and girls were outlined. It was noted that violence with injury offences were increasing, and the partnership was working closely to address this with the South Yorkshire Police's Violence Reduction Unit.

The Chair invited questions from the Board and a discussion on the following issues ensued:

- It was noted that there was a mapping process in place to identify organised crime hotspots. Details were requested on how this information was used to influence provision of services from the council and its partners. It was outlined that there were regular review meetings to identify opportunities to increase intelligence or

disrupt activity. An example was given of environmental health officers who have power of entry into private residential properties or businesses and the use of those powers to address organised crime.

- The hate crime awareness work was welcomed, particularly the involvement of students in the design of materials.
- Further details were sought on the issues with the CCTV network and if these had been resolved. It was noted that there has been a significant growth in the number of CCTV assets available in Rotherham. All of the fixed system had been upgraded. However, some of the re-deployable units, separate to the upgrade work, had an issue with connectivity. It was expected that this would be resolved by mid-October. An explanation of reasons behind the technical issues was requested and assurance sought that the partnership would be better placed to anticipate system upgrades in the future. It was confirmed that this was being addressed.
- The improvements detailed in the report were welcomed. Details was sought on how improvements could be sustained in light of staff turnover particularly with the loss of PCSOs.
- The correlation between child exploitation and deprivation was highlighted and assurance was sought that this was reflected in the strategic approach taken by the Safer Rotherham Partnership, particularly in its recognition of increased risk in areas of greater disadvantage. It was highlighted that the community safety partnership adopted an intelligence led approach to its work which informed the strategic allocation of resources. The development of a strategy to address neglect was cited as an example of this approach.
- Increased in intelligence reporting was cited as an indicator that training and awareness raising activities were making a difference, particularly in respect of child sexual exploitation. Assurance was given that the partnership responded to these in a robust manner. This has been validated in independent reports and reviews.
- Assurance was given that children and young people were referred to appropriate mental health support as required (i.e. substance misuse services).
- Arrangements were in place to ensure safeguards were in place to ensure that transition from children to adult services was managed appropriately.
- Examples were given of engagement with children and young people to raise awareness of healthy relationships, knife crime and criminal exploitation and tackle poor perceptions of anti-social behaviour.
- Support for the 'Reclaim the Night' event to be held on 23 November 2023 was welcomed. The event raised awareness of violence towards women and girls, to make streets and public spaces safer for everyone.
- It was noted that the Partnership had separate priorities for both child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation.

Clarification was sought if this separation would continue in the future.

- It was noted that it had not been possible to secure the attendance of South Yorkshire Police representatives at the meeting. Clarification was sought about the 'Right Person, Right Care' approach being rolled out by SYP, particularly in respect of responding to incidents with people who may have mental ill-health. It was noted that SYP were adopting a phased, managed approach to its roll-out, focussing on areas of lower risks in the first instance. Examples were given of partnership arrangements with local services.
- Details were sought of the work undertaken to measure the impact of crimes/ incidents of anti-social behaviour on communities and if the partnership challenged poor perceptions sufficiently well. The process for monitoring community impact and risk was outlined.
- It was confirmed that businesses such as hotels and licensed premises were targeted in relation to awareness raising about criminal exploitation. Further details were given of engagement work with town-centre businesses.
- Clarification was sought on how Councillors could share information safely on social media channels.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board notes the progress of the Safer Rotherham Partnership in tackling crime and disorder in 2022-23 against its key priorities and makes recommendations in relation to the current and future work of the partnership.
- 2) That the Senior Governance Advisor and Assistant Director for Community Safety and Streetscene liaise to ensure every effort be made to secure the attendance of South Yorkshire Police representatives at future meetings of this Board convened to consider the Safer Rotherham Partnership annual report.

54. WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered its Work Programme.

Resolved: - That the Work Programme be approved.

55. WORK IN PROGRESS - SELECT COMMISSIONS

Resolved: That the updates be noted.

56. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS -1 OCTOBER 2023 TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

The Board considered the Forward Plan of Key Decisions 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023.

Resolved: - That the Forward Plan be noted.

57. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no call-in issues.

58. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no urgent items.

59. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved: - That the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will be held at 10am on Wednesday 15 November 2023 at Rotherham Town Hall.