

RESIDENTS' SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE - SAFER HILLINGDON PARTNERSHIP REPORT

Committee name	Residents' Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Richard Webb, Director of Community Safety and Enforcement
Papers with report	Appendix A – Safer Hillingdon Partnership Dashboard Appendix B – Hillingdon Serious Violence Strategy Appendix C – Domestic Abuse Strategy
Ward	All

HEADLINES

As part of its statutory responsibility to undertake crime and disorder scrutiny, this report provides the Residents' Services Select Committee with an update on the work of the Safer Hillingdon Partnership, as the statutory community safety partnership for the Borough.

In January 2023, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced a serious violence duty on specified responsible authorities. One of the duties is to identify an appropriate partnership forum to have responsibility for the collective response to serious violence. In London, Borough Community Safety Partnerships have assumed that responsibility. This report provides a summary of the Safer Hillingdon Partnership's work to meet the new serious violence duties.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Residents' Services Select Committee notes the contents of the reports and asks questions in order to clarify matters of concern or interest in the Borough.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Residents' Services Select Committee acts as a Crime and Disorder Committee as defined in the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 and carries out the bi-annual scrutiny of decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions.

Witnesses

The Director of Community Safety and Enforcement for Hillingdon Council will attend the meeting to receive questions. The Council's Safer Communities Team facilitates the Safer Hillingdon Partnership.

Supporting information

The last Safer Hillingdon Partnership strategy related to the period 2020/2021 to 2022/2023. This strategy documented the priority themes for the partnership to be reducing burglary, reducing violence, reducing anti-social behaviour and raising confidence and tackling and preventing domestic abuse/ violence against women and girls. A supporting performance dashboard was used to track progress against a number of indicators relating to these priority themes. Appendix A of this report includes the last dashboard for the period of the partnership strategy, showing how relevant

indicators changed in 2022/23.

In December 2023 the partnership agreed new priorities for 2024. Those priorities are-

- 1) Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), including domestic abuse.
- 2) Combatting drugs (from a community safety perspective).
- 3) Anti-Social Behaviour.
- 4) Other violent crime including meeting the serious violence duty and knife crime.

In determining the priorities for the partnership it was agreed that disproportionality should also be a focus of the partnership plans for each priority.

Work is now progressing to develop a new overarching community safety strategy for the partnership and delivery plans reflecting how the partnership members will work together to improve our response to the agreed community safety priorities. As part of preparing these delivery plans, a new partnership dashboard will be developed to reflect measures which the partnership will use to monitor progress against the plans and the impact of activity relating to these priorities.

Serious Violence

The new serious violence duties came into force in January 2023. The organisations who are subject to these duties are Local Authorities, the Police, Youth Offending Teams, Integrated Care Boards and Local Health Boards, Probation Services and Fire and Rescue Authorities. The duty applies equally to all duty holders and the neither the Act nor the supporting guidance specifies who should lead the activity required to meet the duty requirements. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 has been amended to make preventing and reducing Serious Violence a statutory requirement for Community Safety Partnerships.

Across London, a definition of 'serious violence' has been agreed to ensure a consistent focus across the strategies implemented by London Borough Community Safety Partnerships. This London definition of serious violence is-

"Any violence and exploitation affecting young people under the age of 25, domestic abuse, and sexual violence. Within the context of these types of violence, it encompasses homicide, grievous bodily harm, actual bodily harm, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, personal robbery, threats to kill and violence against property caused during the commission of one of these offences.

Domestic abuse is as defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021."

The main serious violence duties applying to responsible authorities are to:

- a) Establish the local 'strategic needs assessment' which seeks to identify the drivers of serious violence acting in the local area and the cohorts of people most affected or at risk.
- b) Prepare, publish and implement a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence in the area. This strategy should outline the multi-agency response that the partnership will take to address the drivers identified in the strategic needs assessment and the activity taking to prevent and reduce serious violence in the local area.
- c) Review and update the strategy on at least an annual basis. The review should specifically consider how the interventions and solutions have impacted on serious violence within the area.

During 2023 a serious violence needs assessment was prepared for the partnership. In common with other areas, the data available for this assessment lacked some of the detail required to ensure

we have a robust understanding of the nature of serious violence in the Borough, the causes and drivers of that violence and the persons most at risk. Therefore, it was agreed that further work to finalise our collective understanding of serious violence in Hillingdon is needed in 2024.

In January 2024 the partnership agreed the first serious violence strategy for Hillingdon. This is included in Appendix B. The strategy reflects our initial priorities for preventing and reducing serious violence, namely:

- 1) To finalise our shared understanding of the causes and drivers of serious violence in Hillingdon, the people and communities most at risk of becoming victims or being drawn into violence and the services which contribute to tackling violence.
- 2) To engage communities in co-designing our further response to serious violence.
- 3) Using our improved understanding and insight, to build on our existing work to ensure a comprehensive response at primary, secondary and tertiary prevention levels and including establishing robust learning process for serious incidents.
- 4) To establish a monthly Hillingdon problem solving process to ensure resources are being utilised to achieve the greatest impact.

It is anticipated that the strategy will be updated for 2025 to reflect the development work that needs to be undertaken on our response to serious violence as reflected in these priorities. In particular, the update will need to reflect community involvement in codesigning the future approach and services which will have the biggest impact on serious violence in the Borough.

Safer Hillingdon Partnership Sub-Groups

There are currently three sub-groups which report to the Safer Hillingdon Partnership. These are the Domestic Abuse Steering Executive, Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership and Prevent Partnership Board.

In 2023, a new Domestic Abuse Strategy was developed by the Domestic Abuse Steering Executive (DASE) and adopted for Hillingdon. This strategy is included in Appendix C.

This new Domestic Abuse Strategy includes the DASE vision for Hillingdon to be an area in which no form of domestic abuse is tolerated and where victims and their children know how and where to get the help they need. The priorities set out in the strategy are:

- Priority 1 - Prevention and early intervention.
- Priority 2 - Provision of services which provide protection and support.
- Priority 3 - Pursuing perpetrators and supporting perpetrators to address their behaviour.
- Priority 4 - Partnership working to ensure a coordinated community response.

In support of these priorities, two new programmes are being established in Hillingdon. The IRIS (Identification and Referral to Increase Safety) initiative is a training programme for staff in general practice surgeries to provide the support which enables staff in those surgeries to better identify and support/signpost women experiencing domestic violence to wider support services. Ultimately, IRIS aims to improve the health care response to domestic violence and abuse. This programme is now being implemented in Hillingdon.

The second initiative being implemented is the DRIVE programme. This programme challenges the behaviour of high risk, high harm perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse. It has been shown to reduce violence, victimisation and reoffending and is also being implemented in Hillingdon under DASE.

In 2023 a new Combatting Drugs and Alcohol Partnership Board (CDAPB) was established. This

Board was established to meet the requirement that each local authority has a forum to coordinate the delivery of the national Harm to Hope, Drug and Alcohol Strategy at a local level. The Board reports to the Safer Hillingdon Partnership to ensure there is oversight of the work of the Board and the use of funding allocated to support the delivery of the strategy.

There are three national objectives of the national strategy, supported by significant 3-year investment:

- 1) To establish a world class treatment and recovery system that improves the outcomes for those people in our community who experience drug and alcohol dependency, and enable them to improve their life chances, and reduce the number of deaths that occur from substance misuse.
- 2) To break drug supply chains, referred to as 'closing county lines,' and as a result reduce homicide, and tackle the supply of drugs in prison.
- 3) To reduce the demand for recreational drugs, notably to reduce the number of school aged children using drugs and support young people and families most at risk of substance misuse.

The first meeting of the CDAPB took place in August 2023. A partnership plan is now under development.

In 2023 the statutory Prevent duty guidance was updated. Our Prevent Partnership Board undertook a review of our partnership approach to implementing the Prevent duties and has agreed actions to respond to the updated guidance. Our annual plans, including a programme of awareness and training events to support staff in local organisations to understand and recognise risks of radicalisation, is well established and supported by partners.

In February 2024 a new joint Police and Council community safety problem solving approach commenced for the Borough. This approach involves a monthly meeting of key senior officers from the Police and Council during which information on new or emerging community safety risks is shared and decisions made on how we collectively respond to those risks. This meeting is intended to ensure there is a shared understanding of the community safety related threat, risk and harm in Hillingdon and to enhance our collaborative response to the community safety issues most likely to impact on Hillingdon residents and communities. By reviewing new issues monthly the forum supports the longer-term planning approach reflected in the Safer Hillingdon Partnership Plans through providing a mechanism to ensure we respond promptly to new and emerging risks.

Financial Implications

None at this stage.

Legal Implications

None at this stage.