



SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 7th SEPTEMBER 2022

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2022-2026

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to set out the duties placed on the local authority and other named statutory responsible agencies in relation to crime and disorder, to outline the current approach adopted in Leicestershire, and to seek the views of the Scrutiny Commission on the revised Leicestershire County Council Community Safety Strategy for 2022 – 2026 as part of the ongoing consultation. This report is presented to the Commission in its capacity and the County Council's designation crime and disorder committee.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Community Safety Strategy forms part of the Policy Framework as set out in Schedule 2 to the Articles (Part 2) of the County Council's Constitution.
3. The County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-26 sets out an outcome-based approach with five strategic outcomes for good quality of life in Leicestershire. The outcomes include engendering 'Great Communities', 'Keeping people safe and well' and 'Improving Opportunities'. The Strategic Plan also covers matters such as promoting thriving and inclusive communities, in which the people of Leicestershire are safe and protected from harm, and have the opportunities and support needed to take control of their health and wellbeing and reach their full potential.
4. The Community Safety Strategy will support the County Council's Strategic Plan, setting out the Council's responsibilities in relation to crime and disorder issues and priorities agreed by Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), the Police and Crime Commissioner, and other statutory agencies with whom the Council works.
5. The current Community Safety Strategy was approved by the County Council on 19th February 2020. The revised draft Strategy was agreed for consultation by the Cabinet at its meeting on 24th June 2022.

Background

6. The County Council has a statutory responsibility under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work with other named agencies to reduce crime and disorder. In two-tier local authority areas, the duty to produce detailed locality-based plans to reduce crime and disorder sits with Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) at district

council level. A duty is placed on responsible partners to co-ordinate priorities at a county level which in Leicestershire is undertaken through the Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board (LSCSB).

7. The draft Community Safety Strategy which is attached as Appendix A to this report sets out the County Council's approach to crime and disorder in line with its statutory duties which is based on, and aligned with, the current approach and priorities introduced and overseen by partners through the LSCSB during 2021-22.

Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board (LSCSB)

8. To identify and co-ordinate countywide community safety priorities, the LSCSB was introduced in 2011. The Board is chaired by the County Council's Cabinet Lead Member for Community Safety, and other board members include the chairs from each of the CSPs, senior representatives from the responsible authorities; Leicestershire Police, Public Health, Fire Authority, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue, the National Probation Service, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).
9. The role of the LSCSB is to oversee and co-ordinate the implementation and delivery of Leicestershire Community Safety Partnership priorities including supporting the Police and Crime Plan. The priorities include reducing offending and re-offending, substance-related crime and disorder, protecting those considered to be most vulnerable in the community, reducing anti-social behaviour and increasing public confidence in local crime and disorder services.
10. The Board's key roles and responsibilities are to:
 - Provide strategic leadership in delivering safer communities priorities across Leicestershire;
 - Develop joint approaches to community safety and encourage collaborative work across agencies and partnerships; and
 - Facilitate greater alignment between CSPs and other bodies and structures with community safety responsibilities.
11. The approach adopted has been for the County Council's Community Safety Team to liaise with district councils and LLR partner agencies, to undertake planning, give support, and if required adopt work-streams. This oversight and coordination role permits the Community Safety Team to support the LSCSB by providing the necessary background information and support for its meetings.
12. An important part of the County Council's Community Safety Team's work has been regular attendance at local CSP meetings. This includes providing support to enable CSPs to introduce a local plan to address crime and disorder, importantly the Community Safety Team can ensure local strategic priorities take cognisance of and are linked to countywide, LSCSB, Strategic Partnership Board (SPB) and PCC priorities.

Police and Crime Commissioners

13. 2012 saw the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners who have responsibility for oversight of the local police force and introducing 'force-wide' (LLR) Police and Crime Plans focused on reducing crime and disorder in their region.
14. Recognising that there may be some crossover in the role of PCCs and County Councils in two-tier arrangements, the Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2012 introduced a requirement for county-level strategy groups such as the LSCSB to introduce a Community Safety Agreement (CSA) and a partnership plan. Research into the national picture highlighted that a number of local authorities had introduced a community safety agreement which:
 - i) Aggregated common countywide priorities; and
 - ii) Provided a 'transparent' web-based plan available to the public.
15. In Leicestershire a web-based plan has been introduced by the LSCSB. The CSA identifies common themes and priorities and provides links to the PCC and CSP plans and to related national crime and disorder strategies. The planning cycle linked to the local community safety agreement has been developed by the LSCSB (a copy of the plan is attached as Appendix B for information).
16. As indicated, the PCC functions include oversight of the local police and production of a Police and Crime Plan. Oversight of the PCC lies with the Police and Crime Panel, a joint committee which includes a 'County' representative along with a representative of each district council who can raise Leicestershire-related issues. The current County Council representative on the Panel is the Cabinet Lead Member for Children and Family Services and Community Safety, who also chairs the LSCSB.

Community Safety Team

17. In addition to having a role in co-ordinating the work of the LSCSB, the County Council's Community Safety Team also leads and co-ordinates operational planning across the County on several areas linked to crime and disorder. This includes co-ordinating standards, commissioning, joint working arrangements, priority setting, data sharing, training, and joint working arrangements linked to anti-social behaviour, 'Prevent' activity (related to counter terrorism), hate crime, and domestic violence. In addition, the Team works with other responsible agencies across LLR to provide a coordinated response to emerging threats – notably 'County Lines' serious organised crime, exploitation of children, modern slavery, knife, and cyber-crime.

The Previous Community Safety Strategy (2019 – 2021)

18. The new priorities are similar to the priorities in the previous Community Safety Strategy (2019 – 2021), due to them being a consolidation of partner priorities. Each district and partner agency individually undertake local needs assessments

considering data and local intelligence, taking account of qualitative and quantitative data and community needs.

19. The new Strategy has the ability to be flexible and take into consideration new and emerging issues enabling the Community Safety Team to flex as required.
20. Since the first Covid lockdown in March 2020 delivery of the Strategy was impacted as local priorities moved to support vulnerable people and as communities remained under lockdown incidents of crime and ASB reduced or changed.
21. Some key achievements and outcomes through the life course of the Strategy include:
 - The work on reducing violence against women and girls (VAWG), including consultation with this group and responding with investment in areas such as lighting in parks.
 - Ask for Angela across the County so women can ask for assistance in bars and restaurants if they feel unsafe.
 - Keep Safe Places which people can access if they feel unsafe whilst out in their localities.
 - ASB review and Sentinel work ensuring our processes and procedures are robust.
 - Supporting local delivery of priorities enabling local solutions for local issues.

The refreshed draft Community Safety Strategy for 2022 - 2026

22. Dealing effectively with crime and disorder matters requires a collaborative partnership approach. The draft Community Safety Strategy (attached as Appendix A) sets out details of the County Councils responsibilities and approach in dealing with these matters within the context of a two-tier local authority arrangement.
23. The Strategy includes:
 - i) The relevant legislation in relation to the County Council's responsibilities.
 - ii) An outline of the local partnership framework for dealing with community safety matters.
 - iii) The approach adopted to identify, manage, and monitor community safety matters, including scanning for new and emerging issues.
 - iv) An overview of the role of the County Council's Community Safety Team; and
 - v) An outline of the current shared crime and disorder priorities, as agreed by the LSCSB, which are to:
 - a) Identify and protect the most vulnerable.
 - b) Reduce crime and the fear of crime.
 - c) Reduce the incidence and impact of anti-social behaviour (ASB).
 - d) Reduce the harm from alcohol and substance misuse.
 - e) Reduce risk of harm to young people from cybercrime and bullying.
 - f) Increase reporting of domestic abuse and protect the most vulnerable.
 - g) Increase confidence in reporting of hate incidents.

Consultation

24. The draft Community Safety Strategy was subject of consultation with 'Stakeholders' between June and August 2022. This was undertaken via formal and informal means, the former being an online 'Snap' survey distributed to key contacts together with a copy of the draft Strategy and latest Community Safety Agreement. Recipients were asked to disseminate within their respective organisations and encouraged to promote feedback to engender a broad range of responses.
25. The 'Stakeholders' specifically included all members of the Strategic Partnership Board (SPB), Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board (LSCSB), members of the County Council's Senior Officer Group (SOG) made up of lead community safety officers from districts and statutory partners, the Community Safety Partnerships for the district areas, Leicestershire Police, the Combined Fire Authority, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, Leicestershire CCGs (and the Integrated Care Board as CCG's disband), the National Probation Service, Public Health, Rutland County Council and Leicester City Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Violence Reduction Network, members of key strategic groups such as the Anti-social Behaviour Strategy Group and the Hate Strategy Group.
26. This report forms part of the consultation, the feedback/outcomes of which will be utilised to inform additional development of the draft Strategy.

Resource Implications

27. There are no resource implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The Strategy can be implemented using existing resources within the Children and Family Services budget.

Timetable for Decisions

28. The County Council Cabinet approved the draft Community Safety Strategy for consultation on 24th of June 2022.
29. The outcome of the consultation including feedback from the Scrutiny Commission together with the final version of the Strategy will be submitted to the Cabinet on 16 September for consideration.
30. Subject to the views of the Cabinet, the final Strategy will be submitted to the County Council for approval on 28 September 2022.

Conclusions

31. The views of the Scrutiny Commission are sought in relation to the draft Leicestershire County Council Community Safety Strategy 2022-26. In two tier Local Authority arrangements the statutory duties placed on District CSPs and Responsible agencies to work together and identify priorities are relatively complex and require production of a Community Safety Agreement to identify shared priorities. To inform the Scrutiny Commission the report refers to relevant legislation

and provides background information concerning the role of the Police Crime Commissioner and Leicestershire Safer communities Strategy Group (LSCSB).

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

32. None.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

33. There are no identified direct equality or human rights implications (EHRIA) for the County Council as a partner agency within broader crime and disorder arrangements.

Background Papers

Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2022-26

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2021/10/29/Draft-Strategic-Plan-2022-26.pdf>

Report to the County Council – 19 February 2020 – Community Safety Strategy

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=6038&Ver=4>

Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Leicestershire County Council Community Safety Strategy 2022-26

Appendix B - Leicestershire Community Safety Agreement

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