

Committee: **Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee**
Date of meeting: **6th January 2020**
Report Subject: **Community Safety Hub**
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Nigel Daniels**
Report Submitted by: **Chief Inspector Amanda Thomas, Gwent Police
Helena Hunt, BGCBC Professional Lead for
Community Safety**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	17.12.19	17.12.19			06.01.20			PSB SSG

1. Purpose of the Report

To provide an overview of the progress made by the Blaenau Gwent Community Safety Hub that was set up to help partners operating in Blaenau Gwent to work together around community safety issues affecting the local area.

2. Scope and Background

2.1 The Blaenau Gwent Community Safety Hub was established April 2019 following a report to the PSB in early 2019. The report recommended that some of the PSB's community safety statutory functions be discharged via the local Hub.

2.2 The hub is located on the top floor of Ebbw Vale Police Station providing adequate meeting facilities and provisions to assist in the daily running of business.

2.3 This report covers the period April 2019 to November 2019, and will focus on the ways in which the Hub has assisted in meeting commitments set out in the 'Blaenau Gwent We Want' Well-being Plan 2018-2023 and the ways partners within the Hub have discharged the following community safety statutory functions:

- Reduce crime and disorder in the area;
- Tackle anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment; and respond to Community Trigger requests;
- Combat the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and
- Prevent Terrorism and Violent Extremism.

2.4 The Hub also provides focus on the Policing priorities set by the Police Crime Commissioner for Gwent Police:

- Crime Prevention.
- Supporting Victims.
- Community Cohesion.
- Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).
- Efficient and Effective Service Delivery.

A review will be undertaken within the New Year that will be benchmarked against other local Partnership Hubs to ensure a consistent approach is undertaken. It will provide an opportunity to share good practice between the hubs. It will also look at the partnership tasking process and that of the Serious Organised Crime Group Meetings.

A survey will be sent to all partner agencies that will provide feedback (positive / negative). This will provide an insight into good working practices, evidence based approaches to enhance future collaboration opportunities and identifying future risks.

The future risk register may provide data that will allow us to plan for the working practice of the future.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

Option 1

- 3.1 Note the progress made to date by the Community Safety Hub and provide suggestion for further enhancement to the hub moving forward.

3.2 **Option 2**

Accept the information as presented.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

- 4.1 The Community Safety Hub is a development principle that falls within the category of Safe and Friendly Communities – one of the five ways of working under the Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015. The Council has made a firm commitment to continue to develop and strengthen engagement with communities, and the Corporate Plan 2018-2022 makes reference to engagement as key in its delivery.

4.2 **Blaenau Gwent Well-Being Plan**

- The best start in life for everyone.
- Safe and friendly communities.
- To look after and protect the natural environment.
- To encourage and enable people to make healthy lifestyle choices in the places that they live, learn, work and play.
- To forge new pathways to prosperity.

4.3 Corporate Plan Priorities

Social Services

- To intervene early to prevent problems from becoming greater
- To put effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect people from harm
- To develop a partnership approach to reducing and alleviating the impacts of Poverty

Education

- To improve pupil outcomes, progress and wellbeing, particularly for our more-able and our most vulnerable learner

Strong & Environmentally Smart Communities

- To improve the access to and quality of open spaces for the benefit of our communities, businesses and visitors

Efficient Council

- To continue our programme of public engagement and respond in a timely and effective way to feedback
- To be a strong and effective partner and collaborate where possible to deliver financial, business and community benefits.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

The Community Safety Hub currently has no defined budget. Opportunities are being explored to identify a potential fund that would support 'Weeks of Action' and Legal Costs for punitive sanctions i.e. Injunctions etc.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

There are no risks associated with this report.

5.3 ***Legal***

Historically, Gwent Police and the Registered Social Landlords have fully funded any legal fees associated with punitive sanctions through the courts. Due to reduced capacity and budgets, this arrangement is no longer viable. Opportunities to secure a funding for legal action are being explored.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

The Council's primary contribution to the Community Safety Hub is the support provided by the Community Safety Officer and the Professional Lead for Community Safety. These contributions and the contributions made by other officers of the Council are within core business of those officer roles.

Police Resources consist of the Blaenau Gwent Crime and Disorder Reduction Officer and the Local Neighbourhood Police Sergeant. Their attendance and contribution align with their daily core business.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

The Community Safety Hub opens for business every Tuesday and Thursday based in Ebbw Vale Police Station. The Community Safety Hub is proving to be an invaluable resource, providing a multi-agency problem-solving, evidence-led approach to partnership tasking, that seeks to protect, support and empower victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Council's grant funded Community Safety Officer is located in the Community Safety Hub every Tuesday and Thursday and actively supports the function of the Hub, the effective case management of perpetrators of anti-social behaviour and the discharge of key work programmes.

A partnership tasking meeting is held every fortnight that will discuss and action plan issues that require a multi-agency approach. Additionally, a Serious Organised Crime Partnership Meeting has been formed to discuss those individuals that have the capability to cause a significant impact criminally within the community.

6.1.1 **Multi-Agency Partner Attendance**

There is an increasing range of partners who are pro-actively participating in the Community Safety Hub, collaborating on a wide range of crime and anti-social behaviour cases many which relate to safeguarding. The effective discharge of these cases rely on the co-ordination of partner's skills, knowledge and resources. The main partners involved since April include:

- 3rd Sector: Victims Support, Crime Prevention Panels, Women's Aid, Barnardos
- Police (Neighbourhood Policing, Crime and Disorder Reduction Officer, Police School Liaison Officer, Prevent Extremism, Quartz Team (Child Sexual Exploitation), Misper (Missing Person) Team, Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking Team and Licensing Team.
- Local Authority
 - Community Safety, Community Cohesion Leads.
 - Social Services (adults and children).
 - Education (Safeguarding in Education Manager, Strategic. Safeguarding Lead, Senior Education Welfare, School Head Teachers etc. Inclusion Manager, Head of Strategic. Transformation, Youth Service).
 - Environmental Health.
- South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.
- Registered Social Landlords (Tai Calon, United Welsh, Linc Cymru, Melin).
- Health (School Nursing, GP Surgeries, Community Mental Health, Senior Occupational Therapist.)
- Probation.
- Department of Works and Pensions (DWP).
- Office Police and Crime Commissioner Gwent.
- Elected Members: Community Safety Champion.

6.1.2 Key Crime Outcomes

- Blaenau Gwent Council has an 8-zone fixed CCTV estate. This CCTV has assisted the Police with 8 criminal investigations, which include a fatal, serious violent assaults and vehicle crimes etc. since September 2019.
- Positive outcome from Operation Lamont, a cross border operation involving Trading Standards and Police from Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Powys. 6 Warrants were executed (4 in BG), 4 arrests relating to supply of Viagra, counterfeit tobacco and cigarettes.
- Positive outcome from Operation Gale: Police / Trading Standards investigation into illegal Sky subscriptions – 1 arrest (and a further arrest in England).

6.1.3 Anti-Social Behaviour Outcomes

- There has been a 23% reduction in ASB reported to Police compared to 2018/19.
- 26 parents of young people were sent Warning letters for Anti-Social Behaviour.
- 11 young people's behaviour continued and they received tailored supported to desist in those behaviours.
- PSPO: 6 'hotspot' areas introduced in May 2019 – whilst no Fixed Penalty Notices were issued to adults, young people are referred into the ASB process for intervention and support.
- There were no Community Triggers invoked during the reporting period.

6.1.4 Substance Misuse Outcomes: Tackling Drug Supply

- 13 Drugs Warrants executed in BG area, leading to 5 arrests; working in partnership with Registered Social Landlords where appropriate: 4 Ebbw Vale – 6 Abertillery – 3 Tredegar. In cases such as these, further partnership work may be required with DWP, Housing Benefits and Council Tax.

6.1.5 Preventing Terrorism / Violent Extremism

There is a statutory requirement to support those at risk of radicalisation through a multi-agency panel called Channel, which is Chaired by the Professional Lead for Community Safety. The following cases have been supported since April 2019:

- 5 cases (adults) relating to the Far Right and Right Wing Extremism
- 1 case (young person) related to ISIS inspired narratives

Two further adult cases are currently being assessed for Right Wing involvement.

6.1.6 Safer Schools

There have been 5 multi-agency Safer School Partnership meetings, aimed at keeping some of our most vulnerable learners safe. The types of vulnerabilities and risks of harm include, but are not limited to criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, radicalisation, serious violence including knife crime, criminal damage etc.

6.1.7 **Threats to Staff**

There has been an increasing number of threats to staff, which include threat to kill. These cases have all been dealt with swiftly and robustly through close partnership working. Key cases have involved the Police, Community Safety Team, Social Services, DWP, Housing Benefits, Housing Options, Council Tax, Youth Service, Head Teachers, Health and Safety.

These cases have led to reviews of policies, procedures and working practices across the Council and Schools.

6.1.8 **WASPi Information Sharing Protocol**

Sensitive information shared between partners within the Hub is done safely and legally in compliance with the requirements set out in the Wales Accord of Sharing Personal Information 'Information Sharing Protocol'.

6.1.9 **Future Developments**

There is an opportunity to encourage more multi-agency collaborative meetings to utilise the resource and facilities available in the Community Safety Hub. We will be looking to develop a robust Partnership Tasking process early in 2020, which will feature in the next report. This will form part of the review. There is also plans to review the current Anti-Social Behaviour Referral Process.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

- Reduced crime and anti-social behaviour
- Reduced Victimisation
- Reduced offending and re-offending
- Increased confidence in Policing

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

As set out earlier in the report, the Community Safety Hub delivers its positive outcomes through close consultation, engagement and participation of a wide range of partner agencies.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The investment of time and resources is carefully planned as part of a wider long term strategy of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Every case that is dealt with is underpinned with a strong preventative focus i.e. prevention of crime, or where a crime does take place we implement a plan to prevent a further crime, further offending or further victimisation.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The Community Safety Hub is a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary resource, that relies on close collaboration of its partners to effectively discharge community safety business.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

The nature of the multi-agency work encourages all partners to pool knowledge, skills and resources to tackle the agreed issues. In this way we apply an integrated way of working towards any community safety problem.

6.8 ***EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

There is no EqlA required to support this report.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The work undertaken within the Community Safety Hub will be monitored through reports to the Public Service Board and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee.

Case Study: Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse

Problem

Domestic violence and abuse, anti-social behaviour involving drunkenness, noise, intimidation and neighbourly nuisance, victimisation.

Victims

- Partner of the Offender was a victim of domestic violence and abuse
- The neighbours either side of the offender's partner who witnessed and experienced the anti-social behaviour, nuisance and noise nuisance as well as feeling intimidated.

Offender

Moved to local area from England of no-fixed abode. Male was alcohol dependent with no diagnosed mental health issues. Began a relationship with a local woman.

Location

- Nice quiet mixed tenure residential area of Blaenau Gwent
- No crime or anti-social behaviour previously reported

Reported Incidents

Spring 2019: Reports from neighbours of problematic ASB given to a Registered Social Landlord. April 2019, problems begin to escalate and reports of ASB are made to the Police.

Case is raised one Tuesday in the Community Safety Hub and arrangements are made within 2 days for a multi-agency meeting; where sensitive, personal information from all partners is shared, including details of the offender and the victims.

Partners

Registered Social Landlord, Neighbourhood Policing, Response Policing, Social Services, BG Community Safety Team, Third Sector Domestic Abuse Services, Victim Support.

Outcomes

- Reduced Offending and Victimisation: since August 2019, there has been no further offences and the individual has not come to the attention of partners.
- Referral to Social Services re the Domestic Abuse for the female partner.
- Public confidence in police and partners: Support provided to the neighbours.
- Injunction sought and granted through the Courts. Offender went on the Breach the Injunction and was taken back to court for punitive sanction. The offender was later convicted and sent to prison for possession of an offensive weapon in the South Wales Police Force area.

Benefits of the Hub:

Quick, decisive and robust response to increased reports to the Police and Registered Social Landlords.

Legal and safe sharing of personal information.

Co-ordinated and timely multi-agency response with resident's wellbeing prioritised.

S115 Meetings considerably reduced, thus reducing the necessity to travel to other locations and time management of staff involved.