

**Report for: Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 June 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Community Safety Strategy 2023-26
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Shumailla Dar, Interim Assistant Director of Strategy & Partnerships
<b>Scrutiny Lead Member area:</b>	Scrutiny Lead Members for Resources, Councillors Samir Sumaria and Rekha Shah
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All
<b>Enclosures:</b>	<b>Appendix 1</b> – Draft Community Safety Strategy

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

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This report sets out the rationale for an updated Community Safety Strategy which reflects the position of the current Administration and is aligned to the new Corporate Plan. The strategy sets out six community safety priorities in keeping with the flagship action to ensure Harrow is clean and safe.

### **Recommendations:**

The committee is requested:

1. To consider the new Community Safety Strategy
2. To provide comments to Cabinet to inform their decision on the Community Safety Strategy.

### **Reason for recommendations:**

The strategy is a statutory requirement of the Borough's Community Safety Partnership, Safer Harrow Partnership.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introductory paragraph**

Harrow Council is committed to restoring pride in Harrow by prioritising putting residents first, working to create a clean and safe borough and supporting those in need. We will deliver on the flagship action of a borough that is clean and safe, ensuring that residents and visitors to Harrow are and feel safe. Harrow is one of the safest boroughs in London and we will strive to maintain this position while reducing the fear of crime.

The three-year strategy set out in this report provides a clear vision and comprehensive delivery plan for how the Safer Harrow Partnership will deliver our community safety priorities, how each priority will be measured, and progress monitored. Working with our statutory and VCS partners as well as residents, communities, local businesses and all our stakeholders will be instrumental in keeping the people of Harrow safe from crime and repeat victimisation and help us achieve our outcomes.

The Council vision is: Restoring Pride in Harrow.

The three Council priorities are:

- A council that puts residents first
- A borough that is clean and safe
- A place where those in need are supported.

## **Background**

Producing a Community Safety Strategy is a statutory requirement, and it is important this remains current and reflects changes in the borough. In addition, this updated strategy will allow the new Administration to set out its priorities for community safety in Harrow. The three-year strategy set out in this report provides a clear vision for how the Council and its partners will deliver this overarching priority of a safe borough, aligned to the flagship action of a borough that is clean and safe.

The Safer Harrow Partnership is responsible for this strategy through a multi-agency approach and is accountable for its effective implementation. In order to ensure that the priorities in this strategy are implemented, a number of workstreams will be established which will report back to the main group. All progress under each workstream will be monitored through quarterly reporting to the Safer Harrow Partnership in order to achieve the best possible outcomes.

The strategy outlines six community safety priorities for Harrow, and how each of these priorities will be measured, and progress monitored. These priorities were identified through the analysis of Harrow-specific data and trends and were proposed by statutory and non-statutory partners at consultation workshops, and as such they are based on insight and evidence.

The six priorities for Community Safety in Harrow are:

- Tackling and reducing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Reducing incidents of burglary / motor vehicle crime / robbery
- Reducing the number of violent incidents in the borough
- Tackling and reducing offences and harm caused by drugs
- Tackling Hate Crime
- Perception of crime

### **Tackling and reducing Violence Against Women and Girls**

The Safer Harrow Partnership is dedicated to tackling all forms of VAWG as part of our commitments to make Harrow a clean and safe borough, and to support the most vulnerable. This will also impact feelings of safety for women and girls in Harrow.

The Safer Harrow Partnership will work collaboratively to prevent and reduce incidents of violence against women and girls (VAWG) including domestic abuse and continue to work to pursue perpetrators utilising all available legal tools. We will also enable survivors of domestic abuse to access support services which provide the required help. We continue to engage with women and girls to identify locations where they feel safe or at risk and increase the number of safe spaces in Harrow.

### **Reducing incidents of burglary / motor vehicle crime / robbery**

These high-volume crimes are visible and decrease feelings of safety for residents and as such, it is a focus of this strategy to implement initiatives that will reduce these crimes and increase feelings of safety in Harrow.

We will continue to collaborate as a partnership to share information and data to identify hotspot locations and oversee continued partnership working between the police and relevant council teams to support targeted initiatives.

### **Reducing the number of violent incidents in the borough**

To deliver a Harrow that is clean and safe, it is essential to address the issue of violence in the borough. This includes knife crime, which encompasses all criminal offences committed using a knife or a bladed article as a weapon.

The Safer Harrow Partnership will maintain close working relationships between the council, police and voluntary sector partners in order to raise awareness of violence and address this issue. This will see a robust strategic partnership approach to adolescent safeguarding, and the delivery of early intervention programmes aimed at reducing violence, gang-related activity and exploitation.

### **Tackling and reducing offences and harm caused by drugs**

The intent to supply, possession and use of illegal drugs in Harrow has implications for community safety as well as public health in the borough. This issue is closely linked to other criminal activities including burglary and robbery, gang-related activity, and violence. In addition, where it is clear that the use of drugs is taking place, it can decrease feelings of safety. Therefore, this is an issue we are prioritising and are committed to tackling through undertaking the following actions.

We will increase the number of people that are supported in Harrow with substance misuse issues through our providers. We will tackle the exploitation of young people by working with partners to create diversionary activities and opportunities to reduce the number of young people being drawn into crime, and will target known hotspot locations where drugs are used and / or distributed.

### **Tackling Hate Crime**

Community cohesion and resilience in Harrow is strong, however, racist and religious hate crime can be an area of concern for our diverse community with the potential to have an impact on feelings of safety in our borough.

Therefore, we will continue to work with our communities and local partners towards a goal of increased community cohesion. To do this we will promote hate crime reporting through a variety of diverse communication channels (including different languages and media) and provide robust support for victims of hate crime through better police support.

### **Perception of crime**

One of our priorities is to increase feelings of safety in Harrow for all residents and visitors. Current data demonstrates that Harrow remains one of the safest boroughs in London, but at times this may not align with perceptions of crime

and feelings of safety in Harrow. Therefore, we need to ensure that residents and visitors are not only safe, but also *feel* safe.

We will work with our partners on targeted initiatives to increase feelings of safety and reassurance.

## Ward Councillors' comments

Not applicable.

## Financial Implications

The Community Safety Strategy is funded within the existing 2023/24 budget and MTFS. Some of the flagship actions may be enhanced where it is possible to apply for external funding which will be at no further cost to the Council.

## Performance Issues

Performance will be tracked through the Community Safety Strategy Delivery Plan and quarterly reporting on the priority areas to the Safer Harrow Partnership. Progress on the delivery can come back to Scrutiny if required.

## Environmental Impact

The creation of a new Community Safety Strategy within this report is an important aspect of delivering one of the priorities for Harrow over the next decade: A borough that is clean and safe.

## Risk Management Implications

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **Yes**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

The relevant risks contained in the register are attached/summarised below:

The following key risks should be taken into account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

Risk Description	Mitigations	RAG Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The actions in the strategy were identified and formulated through consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and relevant</li></ul>	

<p><b>The Community Safety Strategy fails to deliver the Council's priority of a safer borough</b></p>	<p>council officers and stakeholders. This included an assessment of financial viability and timescales for deliverability. Delivery against the Community Safety Strategy will be routinely reviewed, and progress reported quarterly, enabling adjustments or remedial action to be taken.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Insufficient engagement with stakeholders</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been considerable engagement with a range of stakeholders. The Portfolio Holder has been kept updated with progress and the timeline throughout the process. There have been two consultation workshops, one for Members and another for VCS and statutory partners. Not only has this informed the strategy but additional feedback from partners has been sought and incorporated on an initial draft.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Failing to meet the legal requirement of producing a Community Safety Strategy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producing a Community Safety Strategy is a legal requirement under <i>The Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i> for all Community Safety Partnerships. This risk can be mitigated by approving the strategy, as per the above recommendation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Green</b></p>

## **Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? **Yes**

No adverse impacts were identified by the Equality Impact Assessment.

## **Council Priorities**

While the Community Safety Strategy touches on the three council priorities identified in the Corporate Plan, the strategy is most closely aligned with priority two – a borough that is clean and safe.

1. **A council that puts residents first**
2. **A borough that is clean and safe**
3. **A place where those in need are supported**

## **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

**Statutory Officer: Sharon Daniels**

Signed on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

**Date: 26/05/23**

**Statutory Officer: Isha Prince**

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

**Date: 25/05/23**

**Chief Officer: Alex Dewsnap**

Signed by the Managing Director

**Date: 26/05/23**

## **Mandatory Checks**

**Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards**

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Glenn Palmer, Policy Officer, 07926 072880

[Glenn.Palmer@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:Glenn.Palmer@harrow.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:**

None