

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting: 9th June 2015

Subject: Community Safety Strategy

Responsible Officer: Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director,
Strategic Commissioning

**Scrutiny Lead
Member area:**

Exempt: No

Wards affected: All

Enclosures: Community Safety Strategy 2015-2018

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report brings to the Committee's attention the draft Community Safety Strategy for 2015 -18 and invites the Committee to make comments to Cabinet for consideration before the Strategy is recommended to Council for adoption.

Recommendations:

The Committee is recommended to send comments on the draft Community Safety Strategy to cabinet.

Section 2 – Report

Introduction

2.1 The Community Safety Plan shows how the Council and partners will work together to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and make progress to making Harrow the safest borough in London.

Background

3.1 In the past, Community Safety Strategies have focussed on the volume crimes that attract a lot of Police, Council and public attention such as burglary and vehicle crime. These continue to be important but this strategy recognises that, for the community as a whole, there are even more significant issues including terrorism and radicalisation, the potential for child sexual exploitation and gangs. To help prevent high profile, community changing events, as well as addressing more everyday crime, Harrow needs to be a strong, united community and, therefore, this strategy is underpinned by work to enhance community cohesion and support.

3.2 Crime causes damage - be that physical, economic or social. The damage caused to each individual and to the wider community by crime is unacceptable. Crime causes fear which reduces confidence and resilience in communities. We all have the right to live our lives free from that fear. By tackling crime we improve the lives of offenders, their families and the communities in which they live. We can turn lives around - to make a positive contribution. By reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour we help build strong, resilient communities, in which people can thrive and reach their potential.

3.3 In recent years, there has been a downward trend in the levels of recorded crime. Nonetheless, dealing with criminals effectively is crucial. We must also understand why people commit crimes in the first place. We will only build a safer and stronger community by tackling the root causes - deep-seated issues such as people's relationship with drink, drugs, violence and deprivation. We want all people to be able to realise their aspirations, playing a positive role in a community that they feel a genuine part of. And we want

all people to understand that getting involved in crime or behaviour that leads to crime is unacceptable.

3.4 Resident involvement in keeping Harrow safe and making it safer still is the key to our success.

Volume Crime in Harrow

4.1 The latest local crime figures show that, for 2014 compared with 2013, crime in Harrow fell by 1% which reduced the number of crimes for each 1,000 people from 51.1 to 50.6. For the MOPAC 7 crimes, Harrow's reduction was 9.1% with 25.7 crimes for each 1,000 people – down from 28.3. These figures show that Harrow's crime rate is substantially below the London average.

4.2 The most notable reductions in crime locally have been in Robbery down 39% in the last year, theft of a motor vehicle down 18%, theft from a motor vehicle down 13% and Burglary down 12.5%. Set against this encouraging picture, there has been small rise in criminal damage of almost 4% and a rise of just over 6% in violence with injury. Much of this is attributable to increased reporting of domestic abuse, although there may also be an actual increase in abuse, but there has also been an increase in street violence.

4.3 This is the latest in a long series of community safety strategies that has been able to report a reduction locally, across London and nationally in reported crime which is also confirmed by a fall in crime found by the Crime Survey for English and Wales. The impact of a crime on individuals, families and businesses is not diminished but the number of individual, families and business that suffer from the loss and distress of being a victim of crime has reduced substantially over recent years and we are anxious to maintain this trend.

4.4 The detail of actions proposed is set out in the Appendices attached to the Strategy. These actions are presented under the groups responsible for their delivery as this should improve accountability as well as allowing Safer Harrow to provide a better overview of the actions that are being implemented, the connections between different programmes and the identification of gaps in or duplication of provision. This is the added value that Safer Harrow provides.

Legal Implications

5.1 Under s.6 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, the Council with other partner authorities (chief of police, fire & rescue authority, probation service, CCG and Local Health Board) has a duty to formulate and implement a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), a strategy for combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area and a strategy for the reduction of re-offending in the area.

5.2 In formulating the strategy, the partner authorities must have regard to the police and crime plan for the area.

5.3 Under Regulations, the partner authorities must set up a strategy group who are collectively responsible for preparing strategic assessments and preparing and implementing the partnership plan. The partnership plan shall set out the following:

- (a) a strategy for the reduction of re-offending, crime and disorder and for combating substance misuse in the area;
- (b) the priorities identified in the strategic assessment prepared during the previous year;
- (c) the steps considered necessary for the responsible authorities to take to implement the strategy and meet those priorities;
- (d) how the strategy group considers the responsible authorities should allocate and deploy their resources to implement that strategy and meet those priorities;
- (e) the steps each responsible authority shall take to measure its success in implementing the strategy and meeting those priorities;
- (f) the steps the strategy group proposes to take during the year to comply with its obligations in respect of community engagement, considering the extent that people in the area can assist in reducing re-offending, crime and disorder and substance misuse, and publicising that partnership plan.

5.4 Under s.17 of the above Act, it is also a duty of the Council (and other partner agencies, including police, fire & rescue, GLA, TfL) when exercising its functions to have due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour), misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances and re-offending.

Financial Implications

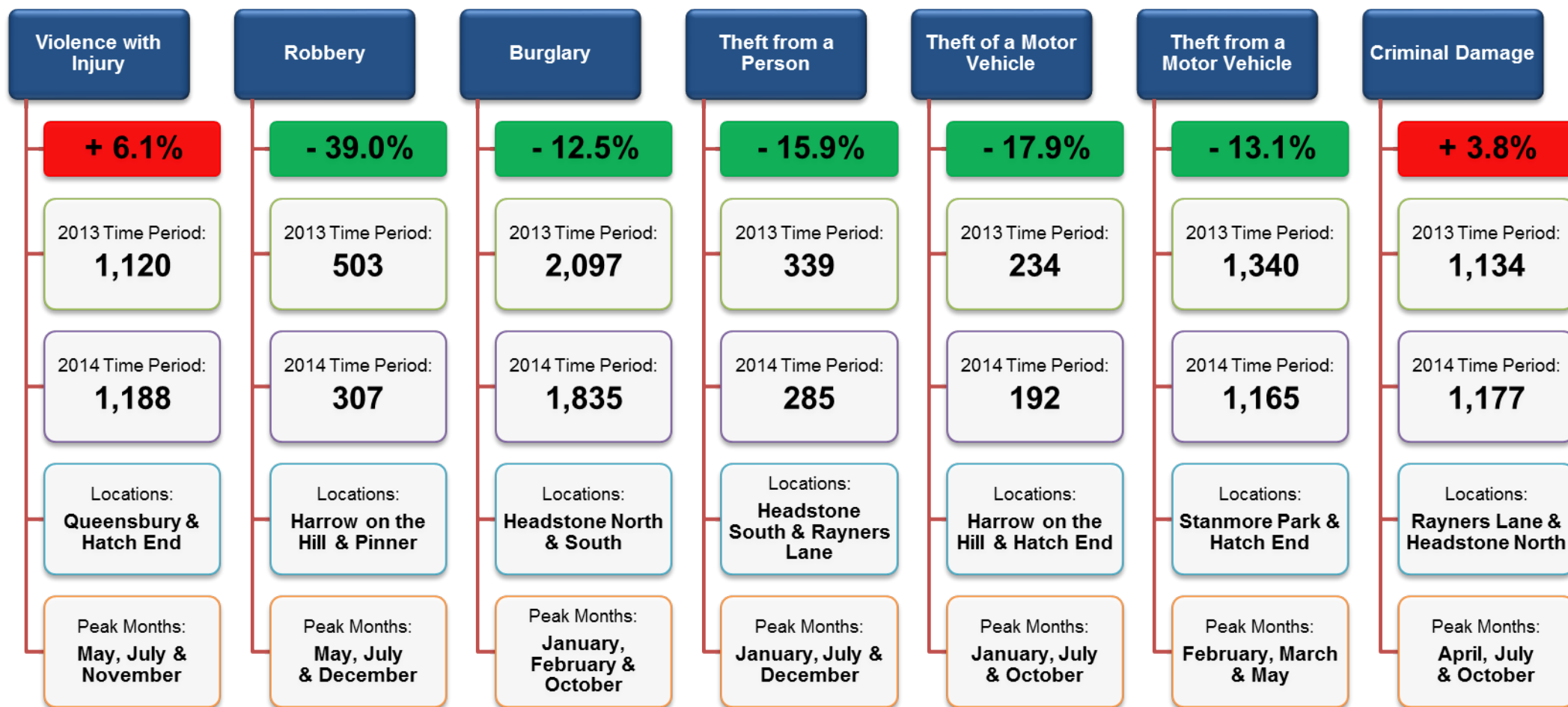
6.1 All of the work identified in this plan to be undertaken by the Council will be funded from existing budgets and approved grants.

Performance Issues

7.1 The Council's Corporate Performance scorecard references residential burglary and incidents of domestic violence as indicators amongst the MOPAC 7 crimes that the Mayor has tasked the Police across London to reduce by 20% by 2017. The performance in Harrow to the end of January 2015 is set out in the table on the next page.

MOPAC Crimes in Harrow 2013 & 2014

All figures stated below were taken from the MET Police website that was available at the end of January 2015.



This shows substantial reductions across 5 of the 7 MOPAC crime types including outstanding performance with regard to robbery and motor vehicle crime.

Risk Management Implications

8.1 The projects referenced within the Community Safety Plan and particularly those funded by MOPAC grants, will be added to the relevant service Risk Registers

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? Yes

9.1 The Community Safety Plan is based on an analysis of crime reports in the previous period and highlights the areas that need the most attention. The Plan for 2014-17 prioritises the “MOPAC 7” high volume/high public impact crimes of Burglary, Violence with Injury, Vandalism; Theft from the Person; Robbery; Theft of a Vehicle and Theft from a Vehicle: as well as Anti-social behaviour, Domestic Violence and reducing reoffending. The aim is to make Harrow the safest Borough in London within the timescale of the Plan which will require a reduction of almost 2,500 crimes a year against a total for last year of 12,228. Reducing crime benefits all residents of the Borough either directly, by reducing victimisation, or indirectly by lowering the fear of crime.

9.2 The Strategic Assessment has highlighted in a number of cases the protected characteristics of the most likely groups to be affected by crime such as young men who are at most risk of robbery and that the age of victims seems to be decreasing with a significant increase in victimisation the 11-15 year old group. At the same time, the age of suspects is also predominantly young.

9.3 Older people are at comparatively low risk of being the victims of crime.

9.4 Domestic violence continues to be a higher proportion of crime in Harrow than in any other London Borough and the victims are predominantly women. As well as the continuing efforts to support victims, there is a new project to promote healthy relationships in adolescents which it is hoped will have a long-term impact on the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence.

The Equality Impact Assessment has not noted any disproportionate adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics arising from the Plan.

Council Priorities

The Community Safety Plan directly addresses the Corporate Priorities

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
- Making a difference for communities
- Making a difference for local businesses
- Making a difference for families

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Steve Tingle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 27 th May 2015		
Name: Linda Cohen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 27 th May 2015		

Ward Councillors notified:	NO
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Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Mike Howes, Senior Policy Officer, 020 8420 9637

Background Papers: Community safety Strategy 2014-17