



Report for: Cabinet

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| Date of Meeting: | 29 June 2023 |
| Subject: | Community Safety Strategy 2023-2026 |
| Key Decision: | Yes - it affects the whole Borough |
| Responsible Officer: | Shumaila Dar - Interim Assistant Director of Strategy and Partnerships |
| Portfolio Holder: | Cllr Anjana Patel - Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety |
| Exempt: | No |
| Decision subject to Call-in: | Yes |
| Wards affected: | All |
| Enclosures: | Appendix 1 Community Safety Strategy Appendix 2 Community Safety Dataset Appendix 3 Reference from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (6 June 2023) |

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out six key priorities for community safety in Harrow, informed by data analysis and consultation, which will contribute to the Council priority of a place that is clean and safe.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to:

1. To consider the new Community Safety Strategy and recommend to Council for approval;
2. To authorise the Interim Assistant Director of Strategy & Partnerships following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Safety, to make any minor amendments to the strategy as necessary prior to the matter going to Council.

Reason (for recommendations):

The strategy is a statutory requirement of the 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

Options considered

1. Approve the Community Safety Strategy

This is the preferred option.

2. Do not produce a Community Safety Strategy

This option was rejected because the strategy is a requirement under *The Crime and Disorder Act 1998*.

Background

Producing a Community Safety Strategy is a legal requirement and it is important it remains current and reflects the 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 Appendix 1 to 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 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 has been strong, however, racist and religious hate crime is an area of concern for our diverse community and is a problem that has a great 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. However, 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.

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.

Environmental Implications

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.

Data Protection Implications

Harrow Council is bound by a Data Sharing Agreement with its partners. This provides a commitment by the Parties to ensure that their contractors, managers and staff involved in the sharing of information ensure that it is shared safely and securely and shared in a way which respects an individual's right to privacy and in compliance with all applicable legislation, including the GDPR.

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.
No

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

| Risk Description | Mitigations | RAG Status |
|---|--|--------------|
| The Council fails to meet the legal requirement of producing a Community Safety Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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. | Green |
| There has been insufficient consultation and engagement with stakeholders on the strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The actions in the strategy were identified and formulated through consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and relevant council officers and stakeholders including an assessment of financial viability and timescales for deliverability.▪ There has also been engagement with a range of stakeholders, including undertaking two consultation workshops, one for Members and another for VCS and statutory partners where follow-on/additional feedback was also sought and incorporated on an initial draft.▪ The Portfolio Holder has additionally been kept updated with progress and the timeline throughout the consultation process. | Green |

| Risk Description | Mitigations | RAG Status |
|---|--|---------------------|
| <p>The resources required to deliver the strategy are not specified, and/or, subsequently become insufficient to deliver it</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The strategy is based on existing resources and will be reviewed and monitored to mitigate any changes. ▪ The actions in the strategy were identified and formulated through consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and relevant council officers and stakeholders including an assessment of financial viability including resources. Resources will be continually reviewed to ensure it is adequate to achieve the deliverables. | <p>Green</p> |
| <p>Levels/sources of external funding also prove to be insufficient to deliver the strategy</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The strategy is based on existing resources and will be reviewed and monitored to mitigate any changes. ▪ The actions in the strategy were identified and formulated through consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and relevant council officers and stakeholders including an assessment of financial viability including resources. Resources will be continually reviewed to ensure it is adequate to achieve the deliverables. | <p>Green</p> |
| <p>The progress and success of the strategy cannot be quantified or measured and is not monitored or reported in a timely way</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Strategy has an operational delivery plan setting out the outcomes, the lead responsible agency and the measures that will be reported on. ▪ Delivery against the Community Safety Strategy will be routinely reviewed, and progress reported quarterly, | <p>Green</p> |

| Risk Description | Mitigations | RAG Status |
|---|--|--------------|
| | enabling adjustments or remedial action to be taken. | |
| The strategy lacks flexibility and cannot adapt to changing circumstances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delivery against the Community Safety Strategy will be routinely reviewed, and progress reported quarterly, enabling adjustments or remedial action to be taken. | Green |

Procurement Implications

There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. However, any procurement that is required to deliver the actions detailed in the Community Safety Strategy will be conducted consistent with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Contract Procedure Rules and will be supported by the Corporate Procurement Team.

Legal Implications

Article 3 of the Council's Constitution sets out the policy framework of the Council. The Community Safety Strategy is a requirement under *The Crime and Disorder Act 1998*. The strategy should therefore be approved by Council.

Financial Implications

The Community Safety Strategy is funded within the existing 2023/24 budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Some of the community safety priorities may be enhanced where it is possible to apply for external funding which will be at no further cost to the Council.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The equalities impact will be revisited on each of the proposals as they are developed. Consideration of the duties should precede the decision. It is important that Cabinet has regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material such as consultation responses. The statutory grounds of the public sector equality duty are found at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and are as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) *eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*
- (b) *advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
- (c) *Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*
Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- (a) *remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;*
- (b) *take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;*
- (c) *Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.*
The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- (a) *Tackle prejudice, and*
- (b) *Promote understanding.*
Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

The relevant protected characteristics are:

- *Age*
- *Disability*
- *Gender reassignment*
- *Pregnancy and maternity*
- *Race*
- *Religion or belief*
- *Sex*
- *Sexual orientation*
- *Marriage and Civil partnership*

The development of a new Community Safety Strategy will support delivery of our equalities duties across the borough. Key priorities of the strategy include tackling hate crime and having a borough that is a place where those in need are supported. In order to achieve this, multiple datasets support identification of those groups who are not experiencing the same level of outcomes as others, enabling specific and targeted plans to be developed over the 3-year delivery window to improve outcomes.

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: 26/05/2023

Statutory Officer: Isha Prince

Signed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 25/05/2023

Chief Officer: Alex Dewsnap

Signed by the Managing Director

Date: 26/05/2023

Head of Procurement: Nimesh Mehta

Signed by the Head of Procurement

Date: 25/05/2023

Head of Internal Audit: Neale Burns

Signed on behalf of the Head of Internal Audit

Date: 08/06/2023

Has the Portfolio Holder(s) been consulted? Yes

Mandatory Checks

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

EqIA carried out: YES

EqIA cleared by: Jennifer Rock

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Glenn Palmer, Policy Officer, 07926 072880,
Glenn.Palmer@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: None

Call-in waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee - NO