

To: **Cabinet**
12 November 2024

Community Safety Plan 2024-27

Executive Director of People

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan 2024-27. It is a statutory requirement to compile and implement a 3-year plan for combatting crime and disorder in the area and this has been compiled following local crime and disorder data, stakeholder consultation feedback and resident consultations.

2 Cabinet member for the Environment, Community and Housing

Introduction

- 2.1 This report seeks approval of the proposed CSP Plan 2024-27.

As the cabinet member responsible, I emphasise the alignment of the proposed plan with the borough's priorities.

The report recommends that the Council approve the CSP 2024-27 as detailed in the annex.

The Plan is based on a comprehensive review of local crime and disorder data, partner feedback and resident consultation which will be reviewed annually. Progress against the aims outlined in the Plan will be reported quarterly to the CSP Performance Meeting as well as to the annual public Overview and Scrutiny Crime and Disorder Committee.

The Plan is a statutory requirement.

- 2.2 Borough priorities: Engaged and healthy communities:

Residents have a safe and affordable place to live.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 **That the Community Safety Plan 2024-27 be recommended to Council for approval.**
- 3.2 **That the Executive Director: People be authorised to make any minor textual changes prior to submission to Council.**

4 Reasons for recommendation

- 4.1 The CSP Plan 2024-27 is based on:
- local crime and disorder evidence
 - feedback from a CSP stakeholder workshop and consultation event on 23 April 2024

- a 4-week resident consultation on recommended priorities and locations of crime and disorder
- Bracknell Forest resident feedback to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Local Crime Survey

It is noted that the recommended priorities comprise crime and disorder which are:

- most prevalent or most requested for focus by partners and residents, or
- are increasing in trend, or
- where preventing a crime of high harm to keep existing levels low, is important, or
- where we are required to do work through a government duty.

5 Alternative options considered

5.1 No alternative options have been considered as the plan is a statutory requirement which has been based on evidence, stakeholder feedback and resident consultation.

6 Supporting information

6.1 Crime and Disorder Data¹

Key findings from police-recorded headline data for 2023/24 compared to 2022/23 are summarised below:

Crime type	Percentage increase/decrease and numerical values
Victim-based crime	+5% (7475 to 7843) Bracknell Forest had the lowest percentage of recorded crime in Berkshire between 2018 and 2023. The rate of crime per 1,000 of population is in the middle of the table of the 6 local authorities. The increase in the rate of crime over the last 6 years has been the highest of the 6 local authorities.
Violence against the person	+1% (2852 to 2878)
Sexual offences	-16% (311 to 262)
Personal robbery	+17% (36 to 42)
Burglary - residential	+25% (85 to 106)
Burglary - sheds/garages	-25% (73 to 55)
Vehicle crime	-7% (617 to 575)
Arson and criminal damage	-13% (790 to 685)
Drug offences	+46% (116 to 169) Drugs offences (both possession and supply) over the last 6 years have seen fluctuating levels which are similar to levels in

¹ The sources of this data was all based on Thames Valley Police products which are not public documents.

	2018. The numbers recorded do reflect proactive police work e.g. if an operation takes place over a weekend, for example, there will be an increase in recorded crime as well as increased reports of drug offences. There have been 12 reports to the Streetsafe ² platform over the 6 years of reports of signs of drug or alcohol use.
Possession of weapons offences	+35% (49 to 66) These numbers do reflect proactive police work, similarly to drug offences as well as increased reports of weapons offences.
Public order	-22% (855 to 665)
Hate crime	-8% (317 to 293)
Domestic crimes	+9% (1273 to 1383)

6.2 CSP Stakeholder Consultation Event

This event, which was well-supported by colleagues and partners from organisations and agencies that have a stake in crime and disorder prevention and reduction work, considered data evidence as well as their organisational experiences to identify priority areas of crime and disorder. The workshop outcome was that the following priorities would be put forward to public consultation, noting that other crime and disorder types would still remain entirely in view and that work to address those would comprise ‘business as usual’:

Priority 1: Crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) hotspots including drug dealing and public drug use and e-scooter/e-bike use

Priority 2: Town centre crime and ASB

Priority 3: Domestic abuse

Priority 4: Serious violence

6.3 Public consultation

6.3.1 Bracknell Forest Community Safety Partnership consultation

An online and paper consultation ran for 4 weeks from 18 July to 22 August asking residents the following:

Do you agree with the above priorities that the CSP is recommending for its 2024-27 plan?

If not, what types of crime and anti-social behaviour do you feel we should prioritise and why?

Are there any crime and anti-social behaviour problems in your area that you have reported to police and are still happening?

² StreetSafe | Police.uk (www.police.uk). StreetSafe is a service that allows you to report safety concerns in public places without giving us your name (anonymously). This includes issues like poorly lit streets, abandoned buildings, or vandalism, as well as instances where you feel unsafe due to someone following or verbally abusing you.

The brief but targeted questions were agreed by the CSP following previous community feedback about the length of CSP consultations. The CSP was also able to receive Bracknell Forest-specific data from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's ongoing Thames Valley consultation (summarised further under 5.3.2). Paper copies were also made available at Time Square, the 5 family hubs (including Braccan Walk) and all borough libraries. 149 online responses and 2 paper responses were received, and the results were as follows:

- 83% (n=125) of all respondents agreed with the proposed priorities
- 12% (n=18) disagreed with the proposed priorities
- 5% (n=8) did not respond to this question

Of the 12% that did not agree, the following priorities were suggested instead:

- Speeding, noisy vehicles and motorbikes (7 mentions)
- e-scooters and e-bikes (6 mentions) (although 3 were for it and 3 against it)
- Inconsiderate/illegal parking (3 mentions)
- Youth disorder (3 mentions)
- Drug use and dealing (4 mentions) (although 1 says 'kids smoking weed should not be included')
- Barking dogs (2 mentions)
- Car crime (2 mentions)

6.3.2 Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Local Crime Survey

Bracknell Forest resident feedback to the above continuous consultation was extracted for the time period 1 January 2023 - 1 January 2024, of which there were 69 respondents. When asked what crime and disorder issues residents directly experienced most often in the last 12 months, the most common were:

- Misuse of motorbikes/e-scooters
- Speeding or reckless/dangerous driving
- Parking issues
- Criminal damage/graffiti /fly-tipping
- Fraud/scams/rogue traders (including online)

6.3.3 Consultation conclusions

The key themes obtained from the two consultations is summarised below, together with how they have been taken into account in the draft priorities:

Feedback themes	Impact on priorities
<p>Speeding, noisy vehicles and motorbikes</p> <p>Misuse of motorbikes/e-scooters</p> <p>Speeding or reckless/dangerous driving</p>	<p>Anti-social vehicle use, as described in the adjacent column, will be included as a crime and ASB type which will be targeted under the 'Crime and ASB hotspots' priority.</p>
<p>e-scooters and e-bikes</p>	<p>This crime and ASB type was already proposed under the 'Crime and ASB hotspots priority'.</p>
<p>Inconsiderate/illegal parking</p> <p>Parking issues</p>	<p>Parking is a challenging issue to remedy, given the growth of number of vehicles per household and the limited parking areas that were originally planned for when Bracknell Forest was built. However, public awareness of what constitutes illegal and anti-social parking, where to report it and which organisation can support, will be undertaken by the CSP in 2024/2025. This campaign can sit outside of the CSP Plan priorities.</p>
<p>Youth disorder</p>	<p>Youth disorder falls within the 'Crime and ASB hotspots' and 'Town centre crime and ASB' priorities, for which there are dedicated multi-agency operational groups in place.</p>
<p>Drug use and dealing</p>	<p>This crime and ASB type was already proposed under the 'Crime and ASB hotspots priority'.</p>
<p>Barking dogs</p>	<p>Noise is a common ASB type that is reported. Issues relating to barking dogs are resolved by the PPP as they have powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which covers statutory nuisance.</p>
<p>Car crime</p>	<p>Theft of, and from, cars has reduced quite significantly in recent years. However, the CSP acknowledges how devastating tool thefts from vans can be for earning potential and the livelihood of those impacted. The CSP continues to work with locations where these thefts most often occur e.g. hotels and also</p>

	<p>conduct ongoing awareness campaigns including the need for vigilance, secure locking mechanisms and removal of tools overnight if possible. Car crime is monitored closely by police at their daily meetings and, as such, it is recommended that this area of crime continue as ongoing work.</p>
Criminal damage/graffiti/fly-tipping	<p>Criminal damage has reduced significantly over the last 2 years and a response to it is part of daily police work. Graffiti and fly-tipping comprise environmental crime which is uncommon although unsightly and costly to remove. When graffiti does occur on public property, it can be reported to BFC who will swiftly remove it. The CSP has funded fly-tipping monitoring mobile cameras which is used to capture evidence and prosecute offenders. It is recommended that this work continue outside of the CSP priorities. Should the issue grow, and a hotspot emerge, it can be managed within the 'Crime and ASB hotspots' priority.</p>
Fraud/scams/rogue traders (including online)	<p>The CSP funds a Bracknell Forest Scams Officer who provides victim support and helps with recovery of funds (where possible). He also works with the victim to develop resilience to further attempts as a preventative measure. Work is also planned in schools to raise awareness among young people who are often targeted due to their high levels of online presence/mobile phone usage. Work is underway to ensure that cases that BFC and police become aware of are routinely referred into that service.</p> <p>In addition, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is funding the South East Regional Serious Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU) until 31 March 2026 to deliver training and raise awareness to the public of cybercrime. There will be a designated Thames Valley Officer within SEROCU to deliver the work across our area.</p> <p>Therefore, it is recommended that this work sit outside of the CSP Plan priorities.</p>

6.4 Overall conclusion

Considering the above evidence which have all been taken into account in the below recommended priorities, the CSP Plan 2024-27 should comprise:

- Priority 1: Crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) hotspots including drug dealing and public drug use, noise that is not normal household noise, anti-social vehicle use and e-scooter/e-bike use
- Priority 2: Town centre crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- Priority 3: Domestic abuse
- Priority 4: Serious violence
- Priority 5: Hate crime and disorder

7 Consultation and other considerations

Legal advice

- 7.1 The legal issues are addressed within the report.

S.6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced Community Safety Partnerships. It is the statutory duty of local authorities to work in partnership with the police, the fire and rescue authority, health partners and probation services to develop strategies for the reduction of crime and disorder including anti-social behaviour and combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the local area. The CSP Plan has been formulated taking into account relevant data and undertaking appropriate consultation. Although the CSP Plan will be in place for the next 3 years, it should be kept under review for the purposes of monitoring its effectiveness and making any changes that appear necessary.

Financial advice

- 7.2 There are no new financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Other consultation responses

- 7.3 N/A

Equalities impact assessment

- 7.4 The equalities impact assessment document is attached. However, a summary is that there is no expected negative impact on equalities through the introduction of the CSP Plan 2024-27.

Strategic risk management issues

- 7.5 The Community Safety Plan 2024-27 is a key strategy for addressing any major risks of community safety in the borough for the next 3 years. By assessing local crime and disorder and consulting with BFC colleagues and councillors, partners and the public on which types of crime and disorder should be prioritised, BFC is not only complying with its statutory requirements and responsibilities. The CSP will monitor performance against the priorities at their quarterly performance meetings. In addition, an annual public overview and scrutiny meeting is held each autumn to report on progress and share actions that are taking place to mitigate any risks to

achieving progress in the priorities. As required by law, priorities in the CSP Plan 2024-27 will be reviewed annually to ensure that they are still appropriate and relevant for the following year.

Climate change and ecological impact

- 7.6 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO₂. The reasons the Council believes that this will have no impact on emissions are that no additional meetings will be taking place requiring vehicle or public transport use. Existing online meetings will be utilised which will make use of electronic documentation.

Health and wellbeing considerations

- 7.7 The impact of crime and disorder on communities is multi-faceted and includes physical and mental health implications. Responses to these can result in emotional responses, social isolation and use of coping mechanisms e.g. substance misuse. This highlights the importance of prevention and support set out in a strategic plan which incorporates resident engagement so that resources can be allocated intelligently, direction is unified and potential risks of crime and disorder are mitigated.

Annexes

- 1 Community Safety Plan 2024-27
- 2 List of Priorities

Contacts for further information

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