

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET – 18 February 2021

TELFORD & WREKIN SAFER COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR: NEIGHBOURHOOD & ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

LEAD CABINET MEMBERS: CLLRS SHAUN DAVIES & RICHARD OVERTON

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 Results from the 2020 Telford & Wrekin residents survey illustrate that 77% of respondents stated that they either ‘Strongly agree’ or ‘Tend to agree’ that their neighbourhood is a safe place to live. However while this is a high percentage, the responses demonstrated a significant variation across different areas of the borough.
- 1.2 While the Borough of Telford & Wrekin has seen robust economic growth and the creation of jobs, not all of our neighbourhoods have accessed the benefits of a strong economy. There are also communities that, while they do not have the greatest levels of social disadvantage, do have crime and a greater reporting of anti-social behaviour challenges. If tackled, this would enhance community confidence and aspirations while addressing the fear of crime.
- 1.3 The Council together with West Mercia Police, supported directly by the Leader of the Council and John Campion the Police and Crime Commissioner, have an effective partnership that is focused on tackling all forms of crime to ensure our neighbourhoods are great places to live, work and visit. The partnership is recognised as best practice through recent Peer Reviews and has:
- Secured £500,000 joint investment into enhancing our CCTV infrastructure and new viewing suite in Oakengates;
 - Secured £550,000 investment for the Brookside Safer Streets project;
 - Successfully migrated Parking Enforcement Powers from West Mercia Police to the Council in January 2020;

- Hosted the Knife Angel in 2020 in support of our joint work to reduce Knife Crime;
- Introduced partnership boards that are focused on joint tasking and crime prevention activity;
- Undertaken joint enforcement operations throughout the year

1.4 This report provides an overview of the proposed £1.5m investment into the new Telford & Wrekin Safer Communities programme. This new programme will see the Council allocate £1m with the Police and Crime Commissioner contributing a further £500,000.

1.5 The Safer Communities programme will seek to address the root cause of crime and not just the crime itself. Telford & Wrekin Council and partners are committed to making the borough a safer place to live, work and visit; this is demonstrated through a recent increase in the number of Telford & Wrekin Council Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers. The increase is as a result of partnership working with Town and Parish Council's through the jointly funded Community Action Team collaboration. In addition, West Mercia Police have increased the number of police officers in the borough by 60 since 2016; the borough will continue to see growth as part of national increases and commitments made by the Police and Crime Commissioner. This resource increase provides supports the Safer Communities programme to enhance community confidence and aspirations while addressing the fear of crime.

1.6 The Safer Communities programme will cover two years and start in April 2021. However, it is envisaged that engagement and monitoring will extend beyond the delivery programme with social regeneration continuing well into future years. The Council will appoint a dedicated team of Neighbourhood Co-ordination Officers who will engage with key stakeholders, including ward members and the local community, to help to steer this programme to ensure it delivers outcomes that the community would welcome.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet endorse the approach and investment into the new Telford & Wrekin Safer Communities programme as outlined in this report.
- 2.2 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Enforcement, Community Safety & Customer Services in consultation with the Director for Neighbourhood and Enforcement Services, to approve the areas identified following the data review to benefit from the Safer Communities investment.
- 2.3 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Enforcement, Community Safety & Customer Services in consultation with the Director for Neighbourhood and Enforcement Services, to finalise the series of social measures that will help to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Safer Communities investment programme.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	All neighbourhoods are a great place to live Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	Borough wide programme
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	The programme will commence from April 2021 with a two year completion timeframe.	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The Council's budget strategy for 2021/22 has allocated a total of £1million to support the Safer Communities Programme over the next two years. In addition to this £0.5million has been earmarked by the PCC to support the programme. By the end of the current financial year, £0.5million will have been spent on CCTV enhancements which has been funded through a combination of the Council's capital programme and PCC money.

		<p>There is also £0.55million available from the Police to support the Brookside Safer Streets Project.</p> <p>MLB 21.01.21</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes/No	<p>Under s.5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council, together with a number of partners, including the Police, have a duty to create a strategy to reduce crime and disorder in its area; this includes anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment. The proposals contained within this report will contribute to those strategic aims. Legal advice will be provided, as necessary, in relation to any individual proposals arising out of this report.</p> <p>AL – 25/01/2021</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	<p>This investment will help to support local wards that suffer from high levels of ASB and acquisitive crime whilst helping to address some of the root causes of crime. Other partners such as our local housing providers, landlords, schools, local businesses and the third sector all have a part to play.</p>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	Yes	<p>The safer communities programme is borough wide with a focus on key locations that will be informed by crime data and data held by the council.</p>

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. Background

- 4.1 The inequalities in access to employment, health, affordable and quality housing and higher levels of crime and antisocial behaviour are attributes that can, in most cases, be symptomatic of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Such areas can collectively pull on limited resources disproportionately compared to a wider area/population. Addressing inequality is a priority for Telford & Wrekin Council and our partners.
- 4.2 The Council is committed to creating a better borough and is working with partners to reduce crime and provide a safe place for residents to live and work. The Council has allocated £1m towards the delivery of a borough wide safer community programme that will continue to build on the successful partnership with West Mercia Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner. This programme is supported by £500,000 from the Police and Crime Commissioner giving a total project of £1.5m over two years from April 2021.
- 4.3 Along with partners, the Council has created multi-disciplinary teams who work together to tackle issues of crime, disorder and quality of life within our towns and communities. These teams are brought together through the Community Safety Partnership and our approach, led by data and intelligence sharing, has enabled the Council and our partners to have a robust approach in striving towards a borough that is a safer place to live, work and visit.
- 4.4 The Safer Communities programme, as outlined in this report, will focus on key locations however, the joint investment will benefit the borough as a whole. Lessons learnt from the Brookside Safer Streets Project will be used to inform this programme while developing a series of key social measures to assess the impact of the investment.

5. Brookside Safer Streets Project

- 5.1 Working in partnership with West Mercia Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Council submitted a joint bid for the maximum £550,000; this bid focused on measures to improve security and reduce acquisitive crime in Brookside. The funding was awarded in August 2020 and the project is currently concluding delivery of physical enhancements with monitoring and evaluation continuing through 2021.

5.2 Securing the maximum available funding has enabled investment into a range of measures for Brookside that is proven to reduce crime and improve life for residents. The investment has included:

- Improvements to street lighting in key areas;
- Enhancing home security;
- CCTV improvements and new installations;
- Alley gating to some footpaths;
- Introduction of a new Neighbourhood Watch group

5.3 In delivering this project, a group of representatives from the Council, West Mercia Police and the community was set up to help shape the project of investment. One of the outcomes was a police appointed volunteer to support the establishment of a Neighbourhood Watch group.

5.4 As part of the evaluation and monitoring of this project, the team have worked in partnership with the Institute of Society and Community at Wolverhampton University. The University have undertaken research to highlight the knowledge and awareness regarding crime and violence in the local community and the perceived effectiveness of responses to it as a result of the Safer Streets Project.

5.5 Along with lessons learnt from the Brookside project, the outcome of the University research is being used to inform the new borough wide Safer Communities programme.

6. Safer Communities Programme

6.1 The Safer Communities programme will seek to address the root cause of crime and not just the crime itself. At this stage it is envisaged that this programme will seek to provide the foundations for social regeneration. In approaching the programme in this way, investment decisions as part of the Safer Communities Programme will be data and community led. Both the Council and West Mercia Police have a variety of datasets that will be reviewed to help prioritise specific areas for targeted support, these may include but are not limited to;

- Education including school attendance
- Levels of economic activity (youth and all age unemployment)
- Anti-social behaviour and environmental crime (e.g. fly tipping)
- All aspects of crime including knife and inquisitive

- Housing (private and social)
 - Health inequalities, Wellbeing & isolation
- 6.2 Once this data has been collated and analysed, local areas will be identified and a multi-agency action plan developed which will identify opportunities for investment from the new Safer Communities fund.
- 6.3 The Safer Communities programme will ensure that the places where people live now and in the future, create new opportunities, promote wellbeing and reduce inequalities so that people have better lives, in stronger communities, and achieve their potential. All of which is underpinned by a strong sense of belonging.
- 6.4 The impact of the Safer Communities Programme will be assessed through the development of a series of key social measures that relate to the agreed activity and location; these measures will be reviewed alongside current data that is monitored by West Mercia Police on all aspects of crime. The measures may include but are not limited to:
- School Participation
 - Attendance, exclusions, NEETS
 - Strengthening families
 - Number of Child Protection Plans
 - Number of Looked After Children
 - Offending
 - Number of adults receiving criminal sentences
 - Number of juveniles receiving criminal sentences
 - Rates of domestic abuse
 - Economic activity
 - Levels of youth unemployment
 - Levels of all age unemployment
 - A&E admissions
 - Knife Crime
 - Levels of anti-social behaviour and environmental crime
 - All aspects of crime and exploitation including knife and inquisitive
- 6.5 Utilising the datasets to identify priority areas that is combined with measures that demonstrate the impact of this programme will maximise the opportunity from this investment. The Safer Communities programme will enable other Telford & Wrekin Council investment programmes such as Stronger Communities, Pride in Our High Streets, Environment and Enhancement and, the jointly funded Community Action Team (partnership with Telford & Wrekin Council and Town/Parish Councils) to deliver place based investment that is based on local need and priority.

6.6 The Council will appoint Neighbourhood Co-ordination Officers to deliver the Safer Communities programme. These officers will not only work in partnership with the local community and elected representatives but across the Council drawing on the specialist support of the wider organisation as required. This is likely to include but not limited to Job Box, private sector housing, education, family support and public health.

7. Next steps

7.1 As outlined in this report, working in partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner, on review of the available data sets and following community engagement the locations and opportunities for additional investment will be prepared for approval. This will include engagement with local ward members, the local community and Town/Parish Councils. Once the areas have been identified and agreed, individual neighbourhood action plans will be developed.

7.2 Working in partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner, a multi-agency project board to oversee the investment programme will be established and dedicated resources appointed to deliver the programme. This board will report into the joint Officer and Member 'Place Board' that is chaired by the Leader of the Council.

7.3 Together with the research obtained from the Institute of Society and Community at Wolverhampton University, lessons learnt from the Brookside Safer Streets programme will be collated/reviewed to inform the approach taken for this investment.

7.4 Further updates to Cabinet will be provided following completion of year 1 of the Safer Communities programme.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

None.

9. PREVIOUS MINUTES

None.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Brookside Safer Streets Fund – Environmental Visual Audit.

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