

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny

Date: Wednesday 19 September

Wards: All

Subject: Update on the work of Safer Merton

Lead officer: Neil Thurlow

Lead member: Cllr Edith Macauley MBE

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Recommendations:

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1. Members note the content of the report and make comments as they wish.
 2. Members continue to support the work of the Community Safety Partnership and Safer Merton
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report is brought to O&S to update on work undertaken by Safer Merton, and the wider Community Safety Partnership (CSP) over the last 12 months and to highlight key areas of work being delivered for the remainder of financial year 2018-19.
- 1.2. The report also captures updates on the work of the MOPAC Victims Board which is attended by the head of service as Community Safety lead for victim care across London
- 1.3. The report seeks to inform members around the key work streams of Safer Merton and the outcomes that have been achieved. This report also seeks to highlight the current challenges facing the service and wider CSP advising members of what work is being undertaken to mitigate these challenges
- 1.4. The report is made at the request of the O&S committee and is a headline report which supports the more detailed quarterly service updates which are provided to all members via email from the Head of Service
- 1.5. There are no decisions to be made within this report rather a request for members to continue supporting our work, promoting this within the community and to provide a presence, where possible, during our two major campaigns for autumn 2018. These campaigns being
 - 1.5.1 Hate crime awareness week – Saturday 13 to Friday 20 October
 - 1.5.2 16 days of activism – Sunday 25 November to Monday 10 December
 - 1.5.3 Details of both campaigns are contained later in the document

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. The Safer Merton service has been expanded since the last O&S report. We have created, via MOPAC funding, a new role – Victims Champion. This role is responsible for the management and delivery of victims care work focusing on ASB, VAWG and hate crime. This new role is allowing us to increase our enforcement opportunities in line with manifesto pledges and

the wider needs to tackle non-law abiding citizens. This role is also improving our victim care ensuring that their voice and needs are central to our work

- 2.2. In addition to the creation of this new role, Sunday 01 July saw the councils public realm CCTV provision returned to this service area. The return of CCTV, from parking services, recognises the linkages between the CCTV service and the Community Safety Partnership enhancing the opportunities for more collaborative prevention, engagement and enforcement of crime around the borough. Fixed CCTV is no longer used for parking control [ANPR operates separately] and this change is now appropriate.
- 2.3. The CCTV service will be subject to minor restructures in the autumn as we seek to create a new post and employ a new CCTV Manager who will undertake day to day management duties as well as playing a key role in our ambitions to secure additional, external CCTV monitoring contracts
- 2.4. These additions to service now mean that Safer Merton delivers work in the following areas:
 - 2.4.1 **Victim care.** Managed by Temitayo Oketunji
 - 2.4.2 Victim care is broken down into three areas of work which have achieved the following:
 - (i) Anti-social behaviour (ASB).

The ASB team has dealt with and resolved 874 cases in the last 12 months to date. There have been a number of warning letters issued, Acceptable behaviour agreements signed and mediation agreed to.

The team has been working with the Police and other partners to agree a process for applying for civil injunctions against perpetrators.

Since October 2017, there has been a borough wide street drinking Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) which has been proactively enforced around Mitcham Town Centre since June 2018. This has resulted in Community protection warnings, Notices (CPW/N) and fixed penalty notices (FPN) issued.

Thirteen (13) brothels were identified in this period and closed using interventions and relevant legislations.

The team is currently developing a process for applying for premises closure orders against problematic premises under the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014.

In the YTD, the team have tasked CCTV to certain hotspots which has achieved successes like disrupting and deterring ASB in Morden Park House, York Close and the enforcement of the street drinking PSPO.
 - (ii) Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA).
 - a) 16 days of activism

16 days against Violence & Abuse – planning has started for this. There is a focus of sexual violence and there will be a training day working with UK says NO more campaign and the Rape Crisis Support centre.

b) No more campaign

UK says No more campaign – The campaign will be advertised over the 16 days against violence and abuse and they will be supporting our 16 days. We have been asked to be a judge to look over films being submitted for their 16 films for 16 days. We have also been invited to be part of their partner focus group to share ideas and network.

c) Ask Angela

Ask Angela is a simple code-word campaign for people feeling unsafe on a date. It encourages people to discreetly ask for help by going to the bar and 'Ask for Angela' - a phrase aimed at alerting bar staff to the cry for help so they can help defuse the situation. The campaign now covers the whole borough and as part of this we will look to sign up and roll out Women's Night Safety Charter.

d) One Stop Shop

One Stop Shop – will be 8 years old in September and since it opened in 2010 we have seen over 2,500 people walk in. Since April there has been 101 people walk in for support and advice. On average 6 people attend weekly. The One Stop Shop is advertised via the council social media regularly. All police officers advise victims of DVA to attend when they have been called out to an incident.

e) MARAC

The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference continues to be busy and deals with 20 – 30 cases every 3 weeks. The MARAC steering group will be meeting after the summer to monitor the MARAC and improve the process.

f) Domestic Homicide Reviews DHRs

There is currently one DHR running at the moment and we are at the start to commission a chair for another one. For Merton Domestic homicides are low and we strive to provide the best service and let our residents know about those services so we support victims and reduce the risk of serious harm or death

g) Key successes/interventions

In January we went live with a new case management system to log MARAC cases and this has improved the security of the

victim's information but has also allowed us to record information better. We can now record and understand how many complex cases we are dealing with. We can also record Claire's Laws better.

(iii) Hate crime.

a) Hate crime week 2017

2017's campaign saw a successful week of events during which in excess of 1000 people engaged face to face and with significant online media presence running into the several thousands.

We also launched the 'Merton Stops Hate' branding and a new hate crime leaflet, alongside the relaunch of the hate crime pages on the Merton website.

The hate crime strategy group was formed and is chaired and run by third sector agencies. This continues to meet quarterly and ensures community engagement and direction.

Hate crime training was delivered to all front line police officers to ensure a wider understanding of hate crime and its manifestations.

b) Hate crime post creation and appointment

Merton used LCPF (London Crime Prevention Fund) funding for an existing member of Safer Merton staff to work as hate crime co-ordinator for two days a week. In addition, hate crime is part of the portfolio of work of the newly appointed victims champion role.

c) Work undertaken by police on attachment

Merton has benefited from great partnership work in this area. A police officer has previously been embedded in the service to lead on the delivery aspects of this work. With the formation of the police BCU we await confirmation as to whether this will continue going forward.

2.4.3 **Analysis and intelligence lead working.** Managed by Kelly Marshall

The statutory requirement of a Strategic Assessment to support the community safety partnerships was delivered and identified the key crime priorities of Residential Burglary and Theft of Motor Vehicle. Additional priorities set by MOPAC include knife crime and violence against women and girls. To support these aims the Domestic Violence Profile was refreshed and separate reports focussed on Sexual Violence, Knife Crime and Hate crime have been completed. These reports provide the evidence to support priority setting and the commissioning of services.

The unit continues to provide monthly briefings for the respective council leads and support the teams' information centre. Other work undertaken includes the review of the existing information sharing agreements post the implementation of the GDPR regulations and an on-going evaluation of the Local Alcohol Action Area which is focussed on Mitcham town Centre and the night time economy in Wimbledon. This work will provide the evidence for any future public space protection orders which have superseded the old borough wide controlled drinking zone.

The unit continues to engage with the police in the new BCU model which joined Merton with Kingston, Richmond and Wandsworth in May including attending the monthly tasking meeting and has also developed a relationship with Trading Standards to signpost key fraud and artifice burglary offences.

2.4.4 **Community engagement.** Managed by Lee Roberts

2.4.5 Our work with Neighbourhood Watch and Junior Neighbourhood Watch continues to deliver success.

2.4.6 Over the last year we have maintained our position of watch membership covering a third of the borough and we have worked to support our neighbourhood watch committee to design, develop and launch a new website. This website will assist us in engaging a wider section of the community as we seek to better engage millennials into this effective and important community programme

2.4.7 We have launched a new website www.mertonnhw.co.uk which is delivering a more professional approach to neighbourhood watch

2.4.8 Our junior neighbourhood watch scheme served six schools across the borough with pupils undertaking sessions in personal safety, crime prevention, citizenship, stranger danger and more. The course ends with the students attending the civic centre to visit the CCTV control room and to meet the Mayor

2.4.9 **Community reassurance.** Managed by Sue Brady

2.4.10 The CCTV provision in Merton saw some 232 public realm CCTV cameras return to Safer Merton

2.4.11 The CCTV provision is delivered 24/7 via a team of eight officers. With the return to Safer Merton the service will build on its current good performance and outcomes to deliver greater asset to the borough by linking in closely with the work, and performance demands of the CSP.

2.4.12 The councils CCTV provision undertakes monitoring of Clarion Housings estate based cameras via a charged for, contracted service and we will, over the coming year, seek out further contracted provision to increase surveillance of the borough and to assist in the service generating income

2.4.13 The CCTV team have been instrumental in tasking and directing enforcement operations linked to a range of key business areas such as:

(i) The street drinking public space protection orders. Formal enforcement commenced in June for a pilot four month period. CCTV officers

have identified persons breaching the PSPO prohibitions and, at the time of writing some 11 FPNs have been issued.

(ii) Working to support the CSPs work on knife crime the officers have been tasked to be vigilant in key areas of concern. These tasking's have resulted in potential perpetrators being identified and weapons seize

(iii) CCTV were also part of a pilot initiated in Wimbledon to address night time economy crime concerns. This pilot ran from November to the first full week of January initially to cover the Christmas party season. Working with partners in businesses and street pastors, this work continues now as part of the boroughs Local Alcohol Action Area project

2.5. The MOPAC Victims Board

2.5.1 Outside of the delivery of service the Head of Service sits on the MOPAC Victims Board. The board, chaired by MOPAC victims' commissioner Clare Waxman is working to design and implement change to how victim care is delivered across London with a key focus on the criminal justice system and the process(es) which victims follow whilst they are within this process.

2.5.2 Work is being undertaken to understand how victims of crime access and/or are made aware of the Victims Code of Practice (VCOP). VCOP sets out, quite clearly, what offers of support should be made available to victims and, for those most serious crimes, what financial offers can be made also. There is a lack of VCOP awareness by victims as well as professionals

2.5.3 Work is also being undertaken to better track and understand the "victims' journey". When tracking cases of crime, through the CJS pathway, what becomes clear is that victims are victimised telling their story several times. The board is considering how this may be streamlined to reduce the burden being placed on the victim

2.5.4 Other areas of business include matters such as:

(i) Understanding how victims of crime are informed when their perpetrators are due to leave prison

(ii) Understanding and awareness of Restorative Justice and how this may be better used across the capital

(iii) Apathy to reporting and an acceptance that "nothing will be done"

(iv) Challenges in reporting

(v) How the devolution of the CJS process to MOPAC will impact on victims and victim care

2.5.5 This work, at this time, is very CJS focused and for local authorities we have little influence over this. However, where we play a key role is around the lower level, consistent crimes such as ASB and DV. Work is being done to ensure that we hear the victims' voice in all that we do and also understand and capture our victims' thoughts as they exit service.

2.5.6 Victim surveys, for those whom have received service, are to be developed for rollout in 2019

2.6. Wider challenges affecting Safer Merton and the CSP

2.6.1 Serious Youth Violence, with a focus on knife crime.

(i) This is London's single biggest crime issue at present with close to 90 homicides taking place in London at the time of writing.

(ii) Merton has seen increased numbers of knife crime incidents however these have not been at the same rate as the rest of London.

(iii) Merton has seen one murder occur due to knife use. This was in Mitcham town centre in the early hours of Sunday 20 May. The murder saw an adult male lose his life.

(iv) Thankfully we have not had any young people killed on borough but we have had young people seriously injured due to knife wounds. Police Assistant Commissioner Hewitt has called for Londoners to see every stabbing as a potential murder given the risks of every stabbing resulting in a loss of life.

(v) Community concern around this issue is heightened across the city and, as such, we will be seeking to continually keep Merton's residents abreast of the challenges, and our work to tackle this, in a manner which is designed to reassure as opposed to scare

2.6.2 Merton has seen continued challenges around short term brothels opening on borough. Over the last year we have seen 13 brothels open and close. Multi-agency partnership work has been undertaken where each brothel has come to light and, where closures of these premises were the outcome, this was done in line with safeguarding and human trafficking considerations. The use of short term lets seem to be a common factor in Merton's challenge and, as such, we are working with Police and partners on a wider BCU approach to tackling these matters

2.6.3 Residents are regularly contacting the Safer Merton service around their concerns relating to the 101 police number. Whilst Safer Merton cannot resolve these issues we work closely with police colleagues to raise this and have been advising residents to always call 999 where a crime is in action and to use 101, crime stoppers or their local SNT where crimes have ceased and/or there are slower time needs. We would urge members to repeat this messaging to residents also

2.6.4 London Crime Prevention Funding (LCPF). LCPF is provided by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) on two yearly cycles. The current cycle ends this coming March and we await our new settlement offer. MOPAC use a hybrid calculation tool to allocate funding amounts based on matters such as crime levels, deprivation, population size and projection etc.

(i) Merton used LCPF to fund the following

- a) 2x FTE Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs)
- b) 1x FTE gangs worker
- c) 1x FTE restorative justice worker
- d) 1x FTE child sexual exploitation worker
- e) 1x FTE victims champion
- f) 0.2 x FTE hate crime co-ordinator

(ii) At present the settlement for 2019-21 is unknown but is likely to be reduced compared to the current offer. As such work is being undertaken to

ascertain the risks around the funding, the risks around the posts and their future as we look to safeguard investment in our most complex and demanding areas of work (all of which fit with the posts provided)

2.7. Wider successes

2.7.1 The Borough Command Unit (BCU) is subject to many questions at the evenings O&S meeting due to Chief Superintendent Sally Benatar attending. However, members should be note that the engagement and openness of the SLT from the police has been a welcome feature in both planning for, and mobilising the BCU. This openness and willingness to engage and discuss co-designed working practice has ensured that the South West BCU has much stronger and robust relationships in place than is being seen elsewhere

2.7.2 The BCU does bring with it change and some challenge, all of which are being worked through. However, members should also note that one significant investment and improvement for Merton has been around the work of offender management.

(i) Offender Management sees the police, with partners, identify and grip our most complex and high volume criminals on borough. This work is constantly evolving which is both exciting for partners and invigorating for offenders whom, at this early stage, are engaging well and accessing services they may not have previously engaged with – the overall intention with any offender management work is to reduce their offending and return them to paid employment.

(ii) Members should feel assured that our most chaotic offenders whom reside and/or offend in Merton are being much better managed which will, over time, result in significantly improved behaviours and reduced offending rates

2.7.3 As a service we have been successful in recruiting Met volunteers to assist our service delivery. Over the year we have had three engage and assist us one working on neighbourhood watch, another on domestic violence and the third around ASB. Moving forward we will seek to utilise this resource in a greater manner

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. N/A this is an update report only

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. N/A this is an update report only

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. Relating to the planning of the two remaining campaigns members will be advised of the timetable of events on, or before, Friday 28 September for hate crime awareness week and on, of before, Friday 02 November for the 16 days of activism campaign

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. N/A there are no matters outside of business as usual required.

6.2. MOPAC are reviewing the allocation of LCPF monies which may impact adversely on Merton

- 7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**
- 7.1. N/A this is an update report only
- 8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
- 8.1. N/A this is an update report only
- 9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1. It is the statutory duty of the crime and disorder act which governs the work of Safer Merton and the service discharges the CSPs responsibilities around this.
- 9.2. There are no specific crime and disorder implications for the contents of this report which members require sighting on
- 10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 10.1. N/A this is an update report only
- 11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**
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- 12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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