



Report title: Overview of the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership and key work streams

Report to: Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 1 August 2023

Cabinet Portfolio Holder: Cabinet Member for Equity, Safety and Reform

Report of: Director of Neighbourhoods

Public or private: Private

Key Decision?: No

Published on the Forward Plan: No

1. Report summary

- 1.1 To provide scrutiny committee members with an overview of the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership, a description of the statutory responsibilities and key duties, as well as an update on the associated work streams, including any identified challenges and risks.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members of the scrutiny committee are recommended to;
- 2.2 Note the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership statutory responsibilities and key duties
- 2.3 Note the range of associated work streams and progress made to date
- 2.4 Support the Partnership's planned actions to mitigate the identified challenges and risks.

3. Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 All local authorities are required by law to have a Safer Communities Partnership.
- 3.2 The Partnership should be made up of representatives from the Council, Police, Fire and Rescue, Health and other partner organisations including voluntary groups.

- 3.3 The Partnership aims to tackle crime in Rochdale Borough and the underlying causes of it.
- 3.4 The Partnership uses a mix of prevention and intervention activities as part of its policing and community safety work.
- 3.5 The Partnership shares resources to deliver and commission services to implement effective approaches.

4. Alternatives considered

- 4.1 None, the functions and duties of the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership are statutory responsibilities.

5. Key information

5.1 Overview

- 5.2 The Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership is required by law to discharge various statutory responsibilities and duties stated in a range of legislation, primarily the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- 5.3 The key statutory duties and functions of the Partnership include; :

- 5.3.1 Undertaking an annual partnership strategic assessment (PSA) (this may also be known as a strategy threat assessment or strategic needs assessment)
- 5.3.2 Developing a community safety plan
- 5.3.3 Producing an information sharing protocol
- 5.3.4 Producing a number of strategies including;
 - Reducing reoffending
 - Substance misuse strategy
 - Serious Violence Strategy.
- 5.3.5 Undertaking community engagement and consultation
- 5.3.6 Commissioning domestic homicide reviews (DHRs)
- 5.3.7 Undertake a case review for ASB Community Trigger

- 5.4 The Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership meets quarterly, attended by senior managers from the responsible authorities; RBC, Greater Manchester Police, GM Fire & Rescue Service, Probation, Health.
- 5.5 In addition to the responsible authorities, wider partners are co-opted into the partnership such as Action Together, who represent local voluntary, community, faith and social enterprises.
- 5.6 Lead elected members are also required to attend the board.
- 5.7 The current Partnership membership is attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.8 The Partnership is accountable to governance structures within each partner organisation, including RBC Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Annual reports are expected but it is acknowledged that recent reports have not been submitted.

- 5.9 The Partnership is also accountable to the GM Police, Fire and Crime Panel.
- 5.10 The Cabinet Member for Equity, Safety and Reform represents the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership at the relevant Greater Manchester meetings and currently chairs the GM Police, Fire and Crime Panel.
- 5.11 This panel is also responsible for holding GMP, GMFRS and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (the PCC) to account. The PCC is a role currently fulfilled by the GM Deputy Mayor, Kate Green.

5.12 Priority Work Areas

- 5.13 The current Rochdale Safer Communities Plan in **Appendix 2** identified five priorities for protecting and strengthening communities and places.
- 5.14 The Plan has six themes around which the partnership work is focused.
- 5.15 There are currently five groups operating under the Partnership to deliver the priorities and themes;

5.15.1 Rochdale Domestic Abuse Partnership

Co-chaired by Assistant Director of Public Health and Detective Superintendent for GMP

5.15.2 Rochdale Reducing Reoffending Group

Chaired by Assistant Chief Officer, National Probation

5.15.3 Reducing Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Group

Co-chaired by GMP Superintendent responsible for neighbourhood policing and RBC Community Safety Manager / Head of Service

5.15.4 Rochdale Substance Misuse Priority Group

Chaired by Public Health Specialist, RBC

5.15.5 Rochdale Serious Violence Partnership

Chaired by Assistant Director, Public Health and Greater Manchester Supt Operations

5.16 Workstream Progress Updates

5.17 Partnership Strategic Plan

- 5.18 It is acknowledged that the current Community Safety Plan expired in 2022. It was intended that during financial year 2022-23, the partnership strategic assessment would be undertaken to inform the development of the next three year strategic plan. Unfortunately due to limited data analyst capacity within the key partner organisations, and a current under resourcing of RSCP programme support, the overarching data collection and analysis has not been completed.
- 5.19 It is hoped that this situation has now been remedied by the identification of resource to fund an analyst post and an additional Grade 10 post. A job

description for the analyst post has been developed and this post will be advertised as soon as the HR governance processes have been completed to confirm the pay grade and establish the post. Work is beginning to develop the Grade 10 post JD. It must be acknowledged that there will be some delay before the resource is functioning at full capacity.

- 5.20 It is recognised that the Partnership does not currently fulfil its statutory obligation of having an up to date Community Safety Plan. In order to address this, a workshop was held on 24 July 2023 where partners discussed the development of a 12 month interim plan using the intelligence and data held.
- 5.21 Partners will collate the range of relevant data held to inform the interim plan and ensure that whilst it is temporary, it is evidence based and intelligence led.
- 5.22 Although the assessment and plan have not been completed, there has been a significant amount of work undertaken across the workstreams described below, which will feed into the assessment and the interim plan.
- 5.23 The interim plan will recognise and include the need to strengthen the partnership ways of working and improve clarity of governance, structures and responsibilities.
- 5.24 During the period of the interim plan, the Partnership intends to then undertake a thorough partnership strategic assessment, including public consultation, to inform the longer term plan.

- 5.25 Data Sharing Protocol
- 5.26 The data sharing protocol has been reviewed and refreshed and will be circulated to partnership organisations for comment. Once agreed all partners will sign the refreshed protocol.

- 5.27 Domestic Abuse
- 5.28 The Rochdale Domestic Abuse Partnership works to ensure that victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse have access to adequate and appropriate support from domestic abuse services to improve the outcomes for victims and perpetrators, including their children (including safe accommodation where necessary).
- 5.29 There is a current Tackling Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy **Appendix 3**. The strategy outlines the vision for Rochdale and how it measures success.
- 5.30 A comprehensive programme of work has been undertaken to review our current specialist domestic abuse service provision against the requirements of the statutory duty. A revised model has been developed, incorporating what was previously a disjointed model. This is now in the procurement phase, but once implemented will provide a single front door, joined up provision, and a greater focus on prevention.
- 5.31 The Rochdale Domestic Abuse Partnership has undertaken an extensive strategic needs assessment **Appendix 4**
- 5.32 This needs assessment has informed the revised model and spend plans over the next 3 years.

- 5.33 Reducing Reoffending

- 5.34 It is a priority that prisons, probation and youth justice agencies continue to enhance co-ordinated approaches to reducing reoffending.
- 5.35 The Integrated Offender Management programme delivers strong foundations for offenders to make a success of their lives including a stable home, employment and training opportunities (including unpaid work), connections to family and local communities as well as good health free from substance misuse.
- 5.36 The group co-ordinate rehabilitation, resettlement and supervision of prison leavers and those on community orders. They also support consequences for those who fail to comply.
- 5.37 Reducing Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- 5.38 Tackling neighbourhood crime (including burglary) and anti-social behaviour, Rochdale have a dedicated prevention hub . The prevention hub is a multi-agency response to tackling repeat locations of crime and reducing repeat victimisation and repeat offending at Agencies meet twice weekly to take a joint problem solving approach to designing crime out , reducing repeat incidents and mitigating risk
- 5.39 Crime statistics are shared with the RBC Community Safety Team and are used to inform the community safety team proactive interventions. RBC have two delivery teams responding to CSP . The PET prevention enforcement team .The PET team are co-located at the Police station and report into Housing and Public Protection. They are a multi-agency team that use a range of civil powers as well as criminal powers to disrupt criminality and seize illegal goods and proceeds of crime . The PET team also support the identification and response to vulnerable people. RBC have community safety officers and engagement officers who work to the Community Safety Manager at RBC.
- 5.40 Town Centre related crime and ASB are a priority across all Townships. Partnership discussions are taking place to ensure Rochdale Town Centre is a safe environment, particularly when the Town Hall Square is opened to the public.
- 5.41 Reducing Substance Misuse
- 5.42 Preventing the use of harmful drug and alcohol consumption requires emphasis on tackling the root causes of health and social harms, and also dependence.
- 5.43 Substances range from “traditional” drugs such as heroin, cocaine and cannabis but also include new psychoactive substances, nitrous oxides and misuse of prescribed and over the counter medicines.
- 5.44 Health Inequalities relating to substance misuse are evident, with vulnerable groups such as those excluded from school, young offenders and care leavers far more likely to experience substance misuse problems.
- 5.45 A comprehensive Substance Misuse Health needs Assessment was conducted in 2022. It found the drug and alcohol related mortality rate for

Rochdale, particularly in 2020 is significantly higher than the England average.

5.46 The needs assessment is being used as the evidence base to commission support and intervention services.

5.47 Reducing Serious Violence

5.48 Serious violence has a devastating impact on the lives of victims and their families. It instils fear in local communities and is extremely costly to society.

5.49 As well as law enforcement it is necessary to understand and address the factors that cause someone to commit violent crime. These can include coercion and exploitation of vulnerable individuals, children and young persons.

5.50 Tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a policing priority.

5.51 In February 2023 the Home Secretary included VAWG within the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) which recognises VAWG as a national threat alongside terrorism and serious and organised crime. The new serious violence duty (SVD) sets out requirements on policing and partners to develop coordinated responses to prevent serious violence, this includes VAWG. The community safety partnership have developed a multi-agency response to VAWG related incidents in public spaces, and will develop a VAWG four P plan in line with national requirements over the next 12 months.

5.52 Section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, was amended and created a new "Serious Violence Duty" for Community Safety Partnership to prevent and reducing serious violence.

5.53 This new duty requires all CSPs to take a 'public health approach' to tackling serious violence. A strategic needs assessment must be completed and strategy developed, informed by the findings, by January 2024.

5.54 As a result, a Serious Violence partnership has been formed, and work is underway, to complete a comprehensive strategic needs assessment to provide evidence to inform the strategy, future service delivery, and commissioning of services.

6. Finance

6.1 RBC provides revenue funding for core posts within the Community Safety Team. However both the Partnership, and the Community Safety Team, relies on grant funding to commission specialist services and support.

6.2 A number of grants are delegated from the Police Crime Commissioner's Community Safety, Voluntary and Community Sector and Hate Crime funding pots to the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership.

6.3 Spend plans must therefore align to both the Rochdale Community Safety Plan but also the GM Standing Together priorities.

6.4 The Safer Communities Manager (RBC), on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council and the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership, is responsible for budget management and financial reporting of these grants in accordance with the GMCA grant terms and Rochdale Borough council's financial and procurement rules.

- 6.5 The authority to spend, via delegated approval, falls to the Director of Neighbourhoods, Rochdale Borough Council. Spend is conducted in line with RBC's procurement policy and procedures.

7. Legal

- 7.1 Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) were set up as statutory bodies under Sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 7.2 Section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places on local authorities and the police a joint responsibility for the formulation of crime and disorder reduction strategies in each local authority area. It places a legal obligation upon the police, probation and health authorities to co-operate fully in this work.

8. Human resource

- 8.1 Unlike other local statutory boards, the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership does not have any dedicated staff members to coordinate policy and/or strategy development, undertaking of needs assessments, board management, performance management reporting, etc.
- 8.2 The partnership is reliant on goodwill of partner organisations to commit officer time and resources to fulfil partnership duties alongside their existing duties.
- 8.3 As public sector spending continues to be pressured, capacity within partner organisations to commit time and resources is reducing.
- 8.4 By comparison, the local safeguarding board has 5 dedicated posts (1 x FTE board manager, 3.5 FTE development officers and 1.5 business support officers) funded collectively by partners.

9. Sustainability impact

- 9.1 TBC

10. Other considerations (corporate priorities, risks)

- 10.1 There is lots of effective partnership work taking place to meet the aims and priorities of the Partnership, however, we need to develop a clear understanding of the interdependencies of the community cohesion strategy and existing statutory boards Prevent (Safeguarding partnership) Channel project (Adult Social Care). The new serious violence duty (SVD) sets out requirements on policing and partners to develop coordinated responses to prevent serious violence, this includes VAWG
- 10.2 Safeguarding interventions and performance reports are currently reported via the safeguarding board through the Director of Children's Services.
- 10.3 Serious organised crime is currently reported through GMP Operation Challenger governance routes.

- 10.4 It is suggested that safeguarding interventions and child centred policing data also be reported to the Partnership for information.
- 10.5 It is suggested that a 6th group is created under the remit of the Partnership to provide strategic direction for interventions related to tackling organised crime interventions.

Background Papers: None

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