

CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL	Agenda Item No. 2
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Report of Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

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TACKLING CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - SUPPORTING COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS IN PROBLEM SOLVING LOCAL ISSUES

1.	PURPOSE
1.1	To provide the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel (the “Panel”) with details of the Police and Crime Commissioner’s (the “Commissioner”) approach to supporting Community Safety Partnerships in problem solving issues that are of concern to the local community.
2.	RECOMMENDATION
2.1	The Panel is recommended to review the action taken by the Police and Crime Commissioner and to support the Commissioner in this work.
3.	TERMS OF REFERENCE
3.1	Item 6 – to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the Police and Crime Commissioner in connection with the discharge of the Commissioner’s functions. Item 8 - To support the effective exercise of the functions of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
4.	BACKGROUND
4.1	Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (the “Act”) the Panel has a role in scrutinising the Police and Crime Commissioner’s (the “Commissioner”) in the exercise of his statutory functions.
4.2	As well as the Commissioner’s duties for holding the Chief Constable to account, the Act places wide-ranging statutory duties and powers on Commissioners relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in co-operation with community safety partners; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with criminal justice agencies and making arrangements so that their functions provide an efficient and effective criminal justice system.
4.3	<p>The levers in the partnership arena are different from policing. The legislation does not provide for a holding to account role, rather reciprocal duties, and powers for co-operation. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual duties for co-operative working; • Having regard to respective priorities; • PCC powers to convene community safety and criminal justice partners and ask for reports; and • PCC power to make grants. <p>The local landscape is complex with a wide range of partners, each with specific duties. Good partnership working is, therefore, key. The PCC and the OPCC are uniquely placed to provide system leadership, facilitating and enabling agencies to work together effectively.</p>
4.4	<p>The Commissioner is required to produce a Police and Crime Plan (“the Plan”) for each term in office, which outlines how he will deliver against his statutory role set out in the Act. Since re-election, the Commissioner has engaged with residents, communities, businesses, and partners, and consulted on the new (or in some cases continuation of) priorities.</p> <p>The purpose of the consultation was to better understand what issues matter to our communities, and then use this information to shape the local priorities. Much like in the first Plan, the Commissioner’s role in ensuring the voice of residents is listened to and acted upon will very much be at the heart of the new Plan.</p>
4.5	<p>Each area within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has a Community Safety Partnership (“CSP”) made up of local partners including from the police, local authority, fire service, health service and probation. These are known as the “Responsible Authorities”. CSPs can address local issues that policing alone cannot solve, such as bike theft, fly tipping, anti-social behaviour (“ASB”), and vandalism.</p> <p>One of the key responsibilities of CSPs is to produce a Community Safety Plan. These plans focus on priorities of local importance and set out what collective actions can be taken to add value to the day-to-day work undertaken by individual agencies and organisations to make communities safer. CSPs will often be supported by ‘Problem</p>

	<p>Solving Groups' ("PSGs") which will bring tactical partners together to deal with individual issues in a joined-up way. As part of the 'Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour' theme, the new Plan includes a clear commitment to continue to support the CSPs to address these issues.</p>
4.6	<p>Well-established countywide delivery groups ranging from the Domestic Abuse/Sexual Violence Strategic Board to the Prevent Boards provide support and leadership around higher harm issues. Due to the complexity and wider impact of these crime types, a countywide approach was identified as appropriate.</p> <p>The Countywide High Harms Board, chaired by the Commissioner, is used to provide strategic direction and leadership across four priority issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drugs; • Serious violence; • Serious and organised crime (SOC); and • Violence against women and girls (VAWG).
5.	SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING
5.1	<p>As outlined above, core to the Commissioner's approach and the Police and Crime Plan is listening to local people and ensuring their concerns are understood, and proactively addressed.</p>
5.2	<p>The OPCC are proactive in responding to local issues of concern through correspondence and calls with members of the public, local councillors, and local MPs. The Commissioner has also undertaken a range of visits to understand the issues that cause concern among our communities.</p>
5.3	<p>Between 2022 and 2025, the Commissioner will have invested over £820,000 into the county's six CSPs. This has enabled them to employ dedicated problem-solving co-ordinators and have access to a Safer Communities Fund to tackle local issues of crime and disorder.</p>
5.4	<p>All six areas have now taken up the offer of funding to enable CSPs to step up their response to local issues such as ASB and fly-tipping. The posts are hosted in the local authority and provide additional capacity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and communicate with local communities to better understand the issues they are concerned about in day-to-day life; • Respond to these issues in a co-ordinated way through local problem-solving arrangements; • Deliver visible and appropriate local responses to issues such ASB; and

- Develop links with road safety initiatives.

Due to the success of these roles across the County, the Commissioner has extended the funding for these posts for a further 12 months until March 2026.

5.5 The CSP Problem-Solving Posts work across a broad range of community safety issues and have the flexibility to respond to the needs of their respective CSP area. CSPs have reported on how this additional funding is having a positive impact on community safety.

Examples of the CSP problem-solving activity going on across the county include:

Cambridge City CSP

In Cambridge City, residents frequently report and/or raise concerns about ASB, both to the Police and the ASB Team within Cambridge City Council. To better address community concerns, the CSP Problem-Solving Co-ordinator has facilitated monthly multi-agency meetings to identify ASB hotspot areas within the city, tackle ASB and criminal behaviour, and develop preventive measures.

One concern that was raised was ASB, vandalism and threatening/violent behaviour on buses in the city. The CSP has been proactive in addressing this concern through:

- Raising awareness about ASB, how to report it, and developing bespoke ASB posters for local buses.
- Exploring the installation of assault screens to protect drivers.

Beyond the bus initiatives, neighbourhood police officers and PCSOs also engage in targeted patrols in areas with high levels of ASB. This provides opportunities to meet with the public, understand their concerns, and encourage them to report ASB via the appropriate channels.

East Cambridgeshire CSP

In East Cambridgeshire, members of the public were reporting instances of hate crime and sightings of hate-related graffiti. Funding secured from the Safer Communities Fund enabled promotional resources such as posters, pin badges, and bookmarks to be created to raise awareness about hate crime. These resources have been provided to organisations that have signed up to become Hate Crime Reporting Centres. Although developed by East Cambridgeshire CSP, the resources have been supplied to Hate Crime Reporting Centres across the county.

Fenland CSP

In Fenland, residents reported that they had experienced long-standing issues with fly-tipping in two laybys along Coldham Bank. Funding secured from the Safer Communities Fund has been used to address these historic issues with fly-tipping. A grab lorry was used to remove 22 tonnes of waste while litter picking was carried out by Council staff. Once the areas were cleared, reflective anti-fly-tipping signs and CCTV cameras were installed in the layby to act as a longer-term deterrent. This action has contributed to a significant improvement in the area, as demonstrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Fly-tipping along Coldham Bank in Fenland: (a) Before and (b) after CSP problem-solving intervention.

Huntingdonshire CSP

In Huntingdonshire, residents identified that they found it difficult to report ASB, particularly when it did not meet the reporting threshold held by the police. To improve ASB reporting, a community intelligence submission page has been developed to allow local people to provide feedback information about their community. Along with the development of the intelligence submission page, the CSP Co-ordinator is taking an active role in promoting a partnership response to ASB and other crime.

The CSP Problem-Solving Co-ordinator has also led on the development of Town and Parish Newsletters. These newsletters highlight the work of the CSP, share good news stories, and promote events that are being held locally to allow the residents to share concerns they may have about their communities.

South Cambridgeshire CSP

In South Cambridgeshire, parents raised concerns around a lack of understanding about County Lines, exploitation, and how to identify risk/vulnerability indicators. In response to this, the CSP Problem-Solving Co-ordinator has linked up with the National County Lines

	<p>Co-ordination Centre and other organisations to host two training sessions for parents and community workers in an effort to reduce young people’s vulnerability to exploitation. Parent-focused sessions have been delivered to help residents understand what County Lines are and advise them on what to do if they suspect that a young person is at risk of exploitation.</p> <p><u>Safer Peterborough Partnership</u></p> <p>In Peterborough, concerns around ASB have been raised via neighbourhood policing teams, partners agencies and counsellor community groups, as well as direct from members of the community. The Problem-Solving Co-ordinator has engaged in multi-agency work to tackle ASB, particularly in the City Centre. This has involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extending the use of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs);¹ • Starting a graffiti log for partner agencies; • Supporting the installation of additional CCTV and lighting to provide reassurance to local communities; • Attending community engagement events as part of the Alliance initiative;² and • Assisting in the delivery of the Peterborough element of Safer Streets 5 (discussed in Section 6 of this paper). <p>The Co-ordinator has also linked up with local businesses impacted by ASB.</p>
5.6	<p>The Commissioner established the Safer Communities Fund in May 2022 to fund local initiatives which reassure people that CSPs are dealing with local issues of crime and disorder which matter to them. In July 2024, the Safer Communities Fund was relaunched and accompanied by refreshed guidance.</p> <p>CSPs can bid up to £5,000 for initiatives which provide a swift response to issues such as anti-social behaviour, road safety, bike theft and fly tipping. The updated guidance allows each CSP bid for up to a maximum of £10,000 in the 2024/25 financial year to address community-level crime and disorder in their area.</p>

¹ A Public Space Protection Order is an order issued by a local authority that prohibits specified things/activities being done in the restricted area. Section 59 of the [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#) provides further information about power to make orders.

² Alliance is a multi-agency partnership and community-led tactic designed by the Home Office to tackle organised crime and build long-term community resilience in areas most affected by serious and organised crime. Alliance is the local re-branding of the three-phase [‘Clear, Hold, Build’](#) initiative.

	<p>Details of previous awards are available on the Commissioner’s website: https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/commissioning-and-grants/small-grants/safer-communities-fund/.</p>
5.7	To support the sharing of best practice, the Commissioner meets with CSP chairs regularly. The OPCC also supports the Community Safety Officer Group identifying opportunities to share best practice and information on cross-cutting themes.
6.	Safer Streets Funding
6.1	The Safer Streets Fund is a Home Office fund that was established in 2020 and allows police forces and local authorities to invest in crime prevention initiatives.
6.2	In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, during his term in office, the Commissioner has supported the county in securing £2,255,599 of Safer Streets funding. In the latest funding round (Safer Streets 5), Cambridgeshire and Peterborough were allocated £820,000 (the maximum allocation) until March 2025. In each round, a requirement for match funding has meant the impact locally has been incrementally greater than the funding awarded.
6.3	<p>Safer Streets 5 was specifically launched to tackle neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls (VAWG), and ASB. Locally, the funding is being used to fund three core elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reduce ASB in Fenland, Huntingdon, and St Neots through the introduction of Community Engagement and Resilience Officers, carrying out extensive Neighbourhood Watch Programmes, and installing CCTV cameras. 2. To prevent and build resilience to burglary in areas of Peterborough through installing Ring Doorbells and other security measures on houses that have either been victim to burglary or are close to homes that have been burgled in the last 12 months. 3. To tackle VAWG in Cambridge City through the introduction of taxi marshals and open space guardians, raising awareness about VAWG among night-time economy staff through the delivery Business Against Abuse training, and enabling Rape Crisis to deliver VAWG training to bus drivers. This is the largest ever VAWG prevention programme in the county.
7.	Hotspot Response
7.1	Additionally, Cambridgeshire Constabulary has been given an extra £1 million to help combat ASB and serious violence across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. A new county-wide crackdown on ASB and serious violence means extra daily visible patrols are taking place in 20 areas in Cambridgeshire.

8.	CSP Accountabilities
8.1	Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 requires local authorities to have a crime and disorder committee with power to scrutinise the decisions and actions of the CSP in their area and to make reports and recommendations to the local authority and the Partnership. The Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 require Local Authorities to scrutinise CSPs at least once a year.
8.2	The previous Government had undertaken a review of the community landscape but steers from the new Government will shape the landscape going forward.
9.	Panel Support
9.1	Members of the Panel may wish to consider how they can support this work. For instance, do members of the Panel have links with the CSP in their area and do they approach their CSPs with local issues. Similarly, do they have links with the scrutiny of their local CSPs through local overview and scrutiny arrangements.
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS	
<p>Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/13/contents</p> <p>Police and Justice Act 2006 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/48/contents</p> <p>The Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/942/made</p> <p>The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/part/4/chapter/2/crossheading/public-spaces-protection-orders/enacted</p>	