



City Management and Public Protection Policy and Scrutiny Committee

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Title:	The Safer Westminster Partnership
Report of:	Mark Wiltshire
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Public Protection and Licensing
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Community Safety
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1 Executive Summary

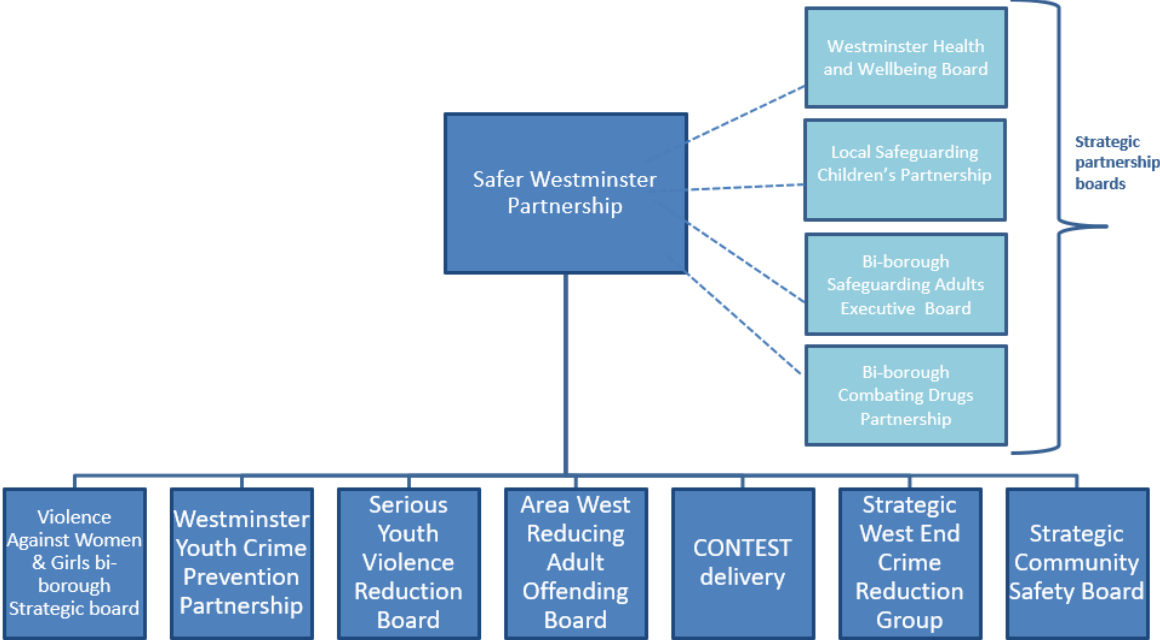
- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the Safer Westminster Partnership and the progress it made in delivering the Safer Westminster Partnership Strategy 2020/23.

2 Community Safety Partnership

- 2.1 Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) were set up under Sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and are made up of representatives from the 'responsible authorities' which are:
- Police Service (Metropolitan Police Service);
 - Local Authority (Westminster City Council);
 - Fire and Rescue Service (London Fire Brigade);
 - Integrated Care Board; and
 - National Probation Service.
- 2.2 The duties of Community Safety Partnerships are to;
- Produce yearly Strategic Assessments and partnership plans;
 - Share information and have an Information Sharing Protocol;
 - Report on work and progress on a yearly basis;
 - Formulate and implement a strategy to reduce re-offending;
 - Formulate and implement a strategy to reduce serious violence.
 - Conduct Domestic Homicide Reviews in relation to incidents of domestic homicide.

2.3 In Westminster the Community Safety Partnership is called the Safer Westminster Partnership and its aim is to ensure the responsible authorities work together to create strategies and practical interventions to reduce crime and disorder in Westminster.

2.4 This is the governance structure of the Safer Westminster Partnership showing its interrelationship with our strategic partnership boards.



3 Safer Westminster Partnership Strategy 2020/2023

3.1 The vision of the Safer Westminster Partnership Strategy 2020/23 was *'Making Westminster safer by working in partnership to reduce the risk and harm of crime and ASB, focusing on protecting the most vulnerable within our communities'*. Underpinning this vision were two cross cutting principles:-

- Intervening early with families and young people to reduce their risk of victimisation and prevent offending
- Working in collaboration with partners to focus on the key contributing factors that reduce victimisation and offending.

3.2 The strategy is based upon evidence from our annual strategic needs assessment and is reviewed and refreshed annually to respond to any new and emerging trends. This evidence base identified five priorities:

- Protecting the most vulnerable in Westminster from becoming victims or offenders of violence or exploitation;
- Working with the most problematic offences to reduce their re-offending;
- Making the West End a safer place for visitors, residents and businesses;
- Enhancing the partnership response to countering terrorism;
- Focusing on what matters most to residents, businesses and visitors.

3.3 Crime levels have fluctuated enormously over the strategy period due to Covid 19 and the associated restrictions. However prior to the strategy and Covid, i.e. 2019/20, Westminster accounted for 8.4% of all crime across the MPS and over 2022/23 this has now increased to 9% of all crime. Over 2020/21 this reduced dramatically to 4.9%, showing how strongly correlated footfall is with crime particularly in Westminster and most notably in the West End, where a greater concentration of crime now occurs. In contrast police recorded ASB increased dramatically over the pandemic (mainly due to breaches of Covid 19 regulations)

and has now reduced to below pre-pandemic levels. Protecting the most vulnerable in Westminster from becoming victims or offenders of violence or exploitation forms a key strand of work for the partnership, particularly for the Violence against women and girls (VAWG) bi-borough strategic board, Westminster Youth Crime Reduction Partnership and Serious Youth Violence Reduction Board.

- 3.4 The Serious Youth Violence Reduction Board governance has been revised to strengthen the public health approach and to adhere to the new Serious Violence Statutory duty. Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), and much of the London Crime Prevention fund from MOPAC is being used to fund a variety of roles in the Integrated Gangs and Exploitation Unit (IGXU) and early intervention projects to reduce youth violence. This includes a prevention of exclusions pilot which has supported 24 pupils and bespoke trauma informed training is being delivered and the development of a 'Think Trauma' accreditation framework.
- 3.5 Integrated Gangs & Exploitation Unit (IGXU) is a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary team made up of council and police officers. The unit aims to reduce gang violence to create safer communities and is built on the principles of early intervention, information sharing and personal responsibility. It gives young people the opportunity to exit the "gang" lifestyle through a series of services and interventions. The integrated partnership approach brings respite to the community from such behaviour which affects their quality of life in the most disruptive way.
- 3.6 Those identified as being involved with gangs and the associated criminality, whether through police / community intelligence or through self-referral, are given intensive assistance to turn their lives around. However, should they fail to grasp these opportunities, and continue to engage in anti-social behaviour that impacts on the community, the IGXU will undertake a range of enforcement options to curtail this behaviour. Gang members, including those on the fringes, are given every opportunity to engage with the service and enforcement is seen as a last resort.
- 3.7 Operation Pancetta, a police operation fully supported by the council involved targeting a high harm gang linked to firearms offences, county lines drug dealing and exploitation in north Westminster. In the last 12 months (Feb22-Feb23) Metropolitan Police have seized four firearms, 61 rounds of ammunition, 43kg of cannabis, 5.5kg of cocaine, 3kg of heroin and approximately £50,000 in cash. An additional 37 people have also been arrested on suspicion of offences including weapons possession, drugs offences and violence.
- 3.8 A pilot public health approach has been targeted in Church Street, where a significant proportion of the IGXU cohort reside. Work has included a violence reduction pilot aimed at year 6 pupils, their parents and teachers. Over 2022/23 42 young people were worked with. A virtual relation wellbeing programme has been developed for community members affected by violence. A Community Capacity Building project called 'Helping Hands' gives community ownership over creating innovative opportunities led by the voices of young people directly and indirectly by youth violence has secured additional funding from the VRU to expand.
- 3.9 Advance and Standing Together successfully retendered for the VAWG Integrated Support (aka Angelou) and Coordination (MARAC and Domestic Violence Court) Services respectively continuing the excellent work under the previous contract. Over 2022/23 Angelou received 983 referrals for support. 98% of women reported a reduction in abuse due to support and advice received from the service as measured by closing assessments.
- 3.10 Work around modern slavery and exploitation continues in line with the Council's five year modern slavery strategy 'Ending Modern Slavery: Our Strategy for a Coordinator Community Response 2021 – 2026'. The local partnership has collected a year of anonymous data about modern slavery incidents occurring in the borough, and work is being undertaken to use the data to inform information campaigns targeted at potential victims of modern slavery in the coming year. To ensure officers are aware of how to identify and respond to modern slavery,

PP&L officers are completing mandatory E-Learning. The Council continues to work with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham, alongside BCU Police and third sector partners Tamar and Rahab to identify sexual exploitation in the commercial sex industry across the boroughs and develop responses to support vulnerable women and bring exploiters to justice. The council has only recently published its first Modern Slavery Statement ensuring that its commissioning and supply lines are free from modern slavery practices.

- 3.11 A small number of offenders are responsible for a significant proportion of crime and Starting Over (Turning Point) have been commissioned to provide additional support to the most prolific male offenders to reduce their criminogenic needs to prevent re-offending. Over 2022/23 they have worked with 69 clients. Over this year there were 10 successful completions which is an incredibly high success rate when working with such a challenging cohort.
- 3.12 Funding was secured through the Changing Futures programme and a subset of this work is called Artemis to improve the outcomes for men and women experiencing multiple disadvantages in Westminster who are in contact with the criminal justice system. Multiple partners are working together to co-design a number of experiments to test this approach. The aim is to create a permanent shift in the way the council and its partners across housing, health, public health and social care work together to achieve better outcomes for people experiencing multiple disadvantages.
- 3.13 The Strategic West End Crime Reduction Group chaired by the CEO of the Safer Business Network are co-ordinating partnership action to reduce crime and in particular violence in the West End. This has resulted in improvements in sharing of intelligence via a fortnightly operational group to have an evidenced based approach to reducing crime in the areas of most need. Consistent crime prevention messaging is being used such as the Look Up and Look Out campaign and promoting training on Ask for Angela and Welfare and Vulnerability Training.
- 3.14 Additional funding was secured from the Home Office via Safer Streets fund to improve the safety particularly for women in the night time in a concentrated area of the West End. This was to deliver a variety of initiatives including, expanding the Night Stars programme, development of night havens, delivering a behavioural change campaign and develop a business accreditation scheme. Over 2022/23 the Night Stars have helped over 400 people with 345 volunteering hours worked by Night Stars Volunteers. The service focuses on women's safety, community safety, delivering on street support, emotional and mental health support, arranging safe transportation and reducing Night Time Economy visitors' likelihood of crime victimisation.
- 3.15 Counter Terrorism work is delivered around four themes, Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. Prevent which aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism delivered training to 58 educational institutions, provided 34 workshops engaging 3,105 children and young people, 54 training sessions delivered to staff and 21 individuals were referred to Prevent. The Protect stream aims to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack delivered 148 ACT and 99 ScAN (See check and notify) training sessions reaching 2,622 and 1,167 attendees respectively. For the Prepare strand which looks to mitigate the impact of a major terrorist attack, 15 emergency planning exercises were held, and 25 major incidents or emergencies were responded to.
- 3.16 To focus on what matters to our residents, business and visitors, a survey will shortly be released to identify what and how our communities would most like to be updated in relation to Community Safety to help inform the next strategy. Council communications forward plan has been developed and there is a detailed plan for communications around serious youth

violence. A Safer Neighbourhood Board is still to be established and is hoped this will be introduced in time to bid for 2023/24 funding from MOPAC.

- 3.17 The Strategic Community Safety Board was set up to have a partnership approach to dealing with a variety of persistent ASB issues. A working group undertook communication and enforcement work to help tackle the noise nuisance and ASB perpetrated by Pedicab riders. 14 joint operations have taken place using the Control of Pollution Act 1974, enforcing riders who have been found to be playing amplified music past 9pm at a level likely to be an annoyance. Details of 55 riders have been taken and processed for prosecution, with 29 riders having gone to court already and fines issued exceeding £23,500 so far. Communications campaign material have been distributed, with 500 posters and over 1000 leaflets being given to businesses and riders themselves making visitors aware of the risks associated with riding on pedicabs in Westminster.
- 3.18 A Public Spaces Protection Order was implemented in January 2022 to help tackle the car meets that have been active in areas of St James and Knightsbridge and Belgravia. The PSPO is enforced using two acoustic cameras which are triggered by loud vehicles over 80DB. One is situated in Pall Mall and the other in Exhibition Road. Since its implementation, we have had 45 breaches and were able to obtain 37 Vehicle Registration Numbers from DVLA to issue FPNs. So far, 28 of these have been paid totalling £2,800. The MPS Traffic team have also targeted the area on the back of the PSPO and have had significant results including car seizures, dangerous driving enforcement and arrests for drug possession. Since the PSPO has been in place, we have had significantly fewer car meets and hope we continue to see a reduction throughout the summer.
- 3.19 Westminster Councils five year ASB strategy was launched in March 2023. Work is on-going to develop the associated action plan. Early successes towards the plan include a dedicated Children's Services ASB lead to help partners identify appropriate responses to local issues; the mapping of Children's and Young Adults ASB pathways and support referrals for troubled families; and a bid for a dedicated Mental Health ASB lead, to help the local partnerships navigate both primary and secondary care provisions.
- 3.20 Operationally, WCC has two ASB teams; one responsible for tenancy enforcement of our Housing stock, the other embedded into our front line delivery arm of Public Protection and Licensing (PP&L), enabling partnership case management of issues referred in to the Council by the Police and external partners. PP&L's ASB team are currently applying for seven Premises Closure applications, relating to various issues including cuckooing, Mental Health & ASB and drug dealing. They are also supporting the Integrated Gangs & Exploitation Unit by lending their expertise on enforcement procedures through the preparing of two closure applications for drug and weapon related activities.
- 3.21 Work is now on-going to develop the next Safer Westminster Partnership Strategy and to ensure it complies with the new requirements of the Serious Violence Duty. A workshop is being held on the 6th July to support this.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Report Author 07971024133
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Safer Westminster Partnership Strategic Assessment 2023



Strategic
Assessment 2023 Fin