

CITY OF DONCASTER COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT CRIME AND DISORDER OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 2023

A MEETING of the COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT CRIME & DISORDER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the , DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 2023 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Gemma Cobby

Councillors Nigel Cannings, James Church, Julie Grace, Debbie Hutchinson and Tracey Moran

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Bill Hotchkiss, Head of Service Community Safety
Nancy Byrne, Community Safety Officer
Chief Superintendent Ian Profitt South Yorkshire Police
Superintendent Peter Thorp, South Yorkshire Police

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gary Stapleton

		<u>ACTION</u>
34.	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	There were no items on the agenda.	
35.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	Councillor Cobby declared that she worked with the Voluntary Sector to prevent violence against women and girls.	
36.	<u>MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL DATED 27TH OCTOBER 2022.</u>	
	RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 th October 2022, be agreed and signed as a correct record.	
37.	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u>	

	There were no public statements made.	
38.	<u>CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE REPORT</u>	
	<p>The Panel received a presentation to accompany the report circulated with the agenda, providing an update on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime and antisocial behaviour data; • Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership (SSDP) priorities; • Safety for women and girls in Doncaster; • Safer Streets; and • Cost of living – impact on crime and disorder. <p>The following areas were addressed in detail:</p> <p><u>Tackling domestic and sexual abuse</u></p> <p>Young people and early signs of domestic abuse - with regard to conversations with young people on how to spot the dangers in relationships it was explained that further work with schools had been undertaken and additionally the Safer Streets team were providing information on anti-social behaviour and knife crime.</p> <p>In response to a Member’s question relating to whether information engagement was being undertaken with female football teams, particularly due to the expansion and increase in numbers playing, the Head of Service for Communities Safer Stronger explained that he would need to investigate and provide the information following the meeting.</p> <p>With regard to survivors of domestic abuse and moving on in life, it was explained that the survivor liaison service was undertaking incredible work and positive benefits were being identified through case studies but with regard to longer term progress further statistical work was required.</p> <p>It was noted that South Yorkshire Police would track repeat victims to identify the risks. It was stressed that that the “Right to Ask” and “Right to know” schemes required further publication so people were able to access information about their partners or ex-partners previous abuse or violent offending.</p> <p>Accommodation for people seeking a safe place to live – further work following the meeting was required on the number of St Leger Homes properties available for this purpose therefore the Head of Service for Communities Safer Stronger would provide the information following the meeting. It was confirmed that local authorities held links to secure out of area provision however, it was acknowledged that it was challenging for all providers due to the current shortfall in social housing provision.</p>	

Perpetrator programme – with regard to the success rate the Head of Service for Communities Safer Stronger would provide the information following the meeting.

Reducing anti-social behaviour – with regard to the “Real Help Scheme” it was explained that it provided funding for homelessness people and was hoped that this scheme would be equally as successful as the previous. The Head of Service for Communities Safer Stronger would provide the information following the meeting.

City Centre – the Chair outlined that there had been a number of anti-social behavioural issues in the town centre following lockdown easing. It was noted that work was ongoing with visibility maintained through City Centre Ambassadors. Discussions with other local authorities had been undertaken with diversionary activity ideas including a presence provided by St Johns Ambulance and the Territorial Army who provided a climbing wall through the summer months.

It was also noted that there had been a footfall increase in the City Centre both with retail and the night time economy.

Tackling serious and organised crime – with regard to behaviours post covid and whether they had reverted to pre covid, it was outlined that crime recording data would show the current positions.

Emergency services demand – it was noted that it remained high with multiple factors driving the current position.

Policing – in South Yorkshire it was noted that the Force had increased it's personnel reaching a capacity larger than ever before, however two thirds of the workforce had less than 3 years service highlighting the difference in experience and capability.

Firearms – in response to a member outlining concern with regard to the increase in firearms, it was explained that during Covid there were differences in how people had committed crimes. It was noted that from February 2022 19 firearms offences had reduced over the 11 month period to 8 offences. With regard to proactive work being undertaken, since September 2022 South Yorkshire Police had:

- executed 51 different warrants across a number of properties, 38 led to the recover of narcotics including over 1000 cannabis plants and class A drugs with 40 arrests;
- stopped and search 443 vehicles,
- 127 stop searches leading to a further 27 arrests and notably recovered 6 firearms (including 3 handguns) off the streets of Doncaster.

These results highlighted the robustness and determination of Policing being undertaken across the area.

Substance and alcohol misuse – in response to a question, it was outlined that where substance misuse was the prime reason for criminal activity, under this priority funding received from the national drugs strategy to increase the criminal justice intervention services could be used. With regard to addition data relating to its expansion, this would be provided following the meeting.

Purple flag status – it was reported that work had been undertaken with the best bar none scheme however not as many licensees have purple flag. However good partnership relations were in place with licensees welcoming the scheme, and would be a real success when in place.

It was noted that during December 2022 with the football world cup and seasonal celebrations, there had been a notably low volume of evening disturbances.

Violent Crime – particularly relating to knife crime, it was reported that when there was more success with recording data, the figures could increase. There had been a downward trend in the number of knives reported, with the exception of November 2022, which could have been the result of a particular investigation that had been undertaken. With regard to “Knife Angel” educational work had been undertaken with the localities team in the central area relating to the negatives of carrying a knife and impacts. This work would continue to early 2024.

Safety for Women and Girls

“Ask Angela” scheme – with regard to the uptake from hospitality venues it was reported that it was a voluntary scheme and had been relaunched with 18 venues taking posters to display in the City centre. It was however noted that there was only so much room venues had to display posters therefore the relaunch would display wider information linking it to domestic abuse and drink spiking awareness. One brewery did not take part but had stated it already had promotional material addressing it from a different angle. It was noted that at the last licensee event a 20 minute training session was held and the training video was available to view on the City of Doncaster website.

Best Bar None Scheme – the specific figures on take up were unfortunately not available for the meeting. There was however, a current focus for Bawtry’s licensed premises with two events arranged for all licenced premises to get the benefits of being Best Bar None accredited. One of the conditions would be that all staff were trained on the “Ask Angela” scheme.

“Get Home Safe” scheme – It was reported that following the last meeting of the Community and Environment Scrutiny Panel this item was now on the Safer Doncaster’s theme group agenda to address in

the near future.

Taxi Marshalls – the Panel noted that they were funded through the Crime Reduction Unit Grant but it had not been finalised for 2023/24 at the date of the meeting and was dependent on VRUs from the Home Office. The Marshalls were provided by an independent security company and worked on a shift rota.

Travel Safe Partnership – it was confirmed that a Police Liaison officer was a member of the thematic group and there was a commitment to continue focus, hard work and a consistent message for Doncaster.

Safer Streets

Additional lighting – the Panel noted the additional solar lighting to footpaths provided in two parks. Results from surveys said people felt safer when walking dogs, jogging and walking. The lighting does not have any running costs and other Local Authorities had approached Doncaster to look at work undertaken.

CCTV – with regard to where additional cameras would be sited it was noted that every locality had benefited from the £750,000 investment awarded to Doncaster. Some areas would see 4 to 5 additional cameras, which would be progressively rolled out.

Bicycle theft – in response to a question, it was acknowledged that during the Covid pandemic, bike theft increased significantly because everyone wanted one and availability was limited.

Cost of Living – A Member raised concern that due to people struggling with bills had there been an increase in shop lifting, for example. It was explained that some people who committed this crime were targeting a wider range and more shops than they would usually visit. It was noted there were always new offenders but when arrested the prosecution took into account their background before deciding whether to prosecute.

General points

Dog attacks – in response to a query relating to how dog attacks on humans and other dogs were dealt with and whether there had been an increase, and explained that there was increased learning and success. For example, if South Yorkshire Police or any partner attend a property and there was a child safety risk from an animal then necessary action would be taken. It was noted that dog aggression goes beyond the banned list of dogs, but about a dog being out of control which ultimately could be seized and kennelled until a course of action was agreed. Owners could also be prosecuted depending on

	<p>the circumstances.</p> <p>It was noted that the Children’s Safeguarding Board was aware of the position and was undertaking monitoring.</p> <p>A Councillor suggested he was aware that Royal Mail held a database of dangerous dogs and wondered if it would be worth exploring it with them.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the report and discussion, be noted.</p>	
39.	<p><u>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN AND COUNCIL'S FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS</u></p>	
	<p>The Senior Governance Officer presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan and Council’s Forward Plan of Key Decisions. She reminded the Panel that if there were any items they wished to put forward for inclusion on the Scrutiny Work Plan for 2023/24, to forward them to herself and the Chair.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u>: That the information, be noted..</p>	