



Scrutiny

27 September 2022

Report of: Cllr Malise Graham MBE, Portfolio Holder for People and Communities (Deputy Leader)

Crime and Disorder – Annual Update

Corporate Priority:	Excellent services positively impacting our communities Connected and led by our communities
Relevant Ward Member(s):	N/A
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	N/A
Exempt Information:	No

1 Summary

- 1.1 As part of its remit, the scrutiny committee is the Council’s designated Crime and Disorder Committee.
- 1.1.1 The Scrutiny Committee receives an annual update report to assist in the discharge of this responsibility.

2 Recommendation

That Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 **Consider the report and provide comments for consideration by Cabinet.**

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 To enable the Scrutiny Committee to fulfil its responsibilities in relation to scrutinising matters relating to crime and disorder, on behalf of the Council.
- 3.2 To enable scrutiny feedback to be shared with the Safer Melton Partnership as appropriate, via the Portfolio Holder for People and Communities.

4 Background

- 4.1 As part of its remit, the scrutiny committee is the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee under the Police and Justice Act 2006.
- 4.1.1 The Portfolio holder for People and Communities provided an update on Safer Communities as part of his portfolio holder update to the committee in April 2022.
- 4.1.2 The Scrutiny Committee also receives an annual update report to assist in the discharge of this responsibility.
- 4.1.3 This report provides an update on key thematic areas shown below:
- Partnership Working and Collaboration
 - CCTV
 - Anti-social behaviour management in housing services
 - Domestic Abuse
- 4.1.4 In addition, council officers and a police representative will be in attendance at the meeting to provide an update on crime trends including in rural areas, other relevant information and will be available to answer questions from the committee.
- 4.1.5 Committee members will also have the opportunity for continued dialogue and engagement with the Police and Crime Commissioner is to be arranged.

5 Main Considerations

5.1 Partnership Working and Collaboration

- 5.1.1 The **Safer Melton Partnership** is a locally focussed strategic partnership and was formed to ensure compliance with the statutory duties and responsibilities stated in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Police and Justice Act 2006, the Policing and Crime Act 2009 and in subsequent Home Office regulations which placed a statutory duty on each Local Authority, Fire and Rescue Service, Health Service, Police and Probation Services to work together to reduce crime and disorder in their area.
- 5.1.2 It brings together a variety of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary organisations with a shared commitment to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour across the Borough. The partnership engages with a range of local agencies and voluntary groups to achieve a multi-agency, evidence led approach to crime prevention and reduction.
- 5.1.3 Chaired by the Portfolio Holder for People and Communities, the partnership aims to:
- a) Enable a diverse range of agencies and organisations working together effectively.
 - b) Promote integrated working to increase community safety within the communities of Melton.
 - c) To maintain a safe and sustainable community.
 - d) To build public confidence in the agencies (partners) involved in creating a safer Melton for our communities.
 - e) To meet the requirements of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004) as amended and statutory guidance in relation to undertaking Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR's).

- f) To have cognisance of the need to take a multi-agency public health approach to tackling and preventing serious violence at a local level.
- g) To evaluate and monitor the performance of crime and disorder within the Borough and approve any action required to tackle areas of poor performance or insufficient resources as highlighted by the performance data or the strategic assessment.
- h) To communicate levels of crime and disorder in the Borough to partner agencies/organisations considering emerging trends and agreeing actions required.
- i) To maximise and manage funding that is received and ensure that they are managed effectively, efficiently and with propriety.
- j) To endorse the evaluation of relevant projects that the CSP has funded.

5.1.4 During 2022, the Safer Melton Partnership has begun a review of its delivery plan to ensure it is up to date, reflects the current context and includes tangible and deliverable actions.

5.1.5 A priority setting workshop was recently held with partners, leading to five key themes being agreed for the partnership to focus on. Further information on the rationale for each of these emerging priority areas will be provided at the scrutiny committee meeting:

- a) Drugs / County Lines
- b) Anti-Social Behaviour and Environmental Crime
- c) Rural Crime
- d) Hate Crime
- e) Violent Crime

5.1.6 The partnership will now commence more detailed work on its delivery plan, ensuring it remains aligned to the overarching strategic plan. If required, the strategic plan will be updated at the same time.

5.2 A large proportion of work on community safety is undertaken at partnership level. In addition to case specific collaboration with partners, other relevant partnership groups include:

5.2.1 **Joint Action Group (JAG):** A multi-agency meeting, chaired by Melton Borough Council, with a wide range of agencies involved. This group oversees cases where a multi-agency response is required, and where there is significant community or individual impact. For example, the JAG considered the appropriate multi agency response to address the increased crime and disorder issues attributed to a small group of young people earlier in the year.

5.2.2 **Adults at Risk:** A multi-agency meeting to enable shared learning, resolution and ensure appropriate case management where significant vulnerability or support requirements are identified through our case work.

5.2.3 **Senior Officers Group and Countywide Strategic Partnerships:** These countywide meetings provide a forum through which key legislative, policy or commissioning changes can be discussed and reviewed.

5.3 **Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board:** The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed extra duties on local authorities to protect and support people at risk of and experiencing

domestic abuse. Collaboration around the Leicestershire response is coordinated via this partnership. Further information can be found at section 5.8 of this report.

5.4 **Chief Housing Officers Group (CHOG):** This is a well-established district council partnership which enables collaboration on key strategic housing issues, working with other partners where possible.

5.4.1 Led by this group, in 2022, a range of partners agreed a **prison release and ex-offender homelessness pathway protocol** which enables effective information sharing and collaboration to reduce the risk of homelessness upon discharge from prison. This protocol support Local Authorities to exercise their statutory duties as laid out in the Housing Act 1996, Part 7 (as most recently amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) and incorporates the Duty to Refer (for homelessness support) that exists for other statutory partners. The operational protocol aims to:

- Provide agencies / organisations working with this client group with a defined pathway process which clarifies partner responsibilities for assisting an offender who will be homeless upon release, or an offender who is under supervision and at risk of homelessness.
- enable and encourage effective joint working between appropriate agencies / organisations.
- enable and encourage better information sharing at key points within the pathway.

Through effective implementation of the protocol, this is intended to ensure that prisoners and offenders (18+) are:

- enabled to engage with statutory and non-statutory support at the earliest opportunity, thus improving housing outcomes and reducing inequality of access and;
- provided with holistic advice and support around their housing options prior to and following their release from prison.

5.4.2 The Council's CHOG representative (Strategic Lead, Housing options and Homelessness) will also sit on a recently formed steering group, ahead of the opening of **HMP Fosse Way**, a new Category C prison within Leicestershire. HMP Fosse Way will be operated by Serco and is due to open in May 2023.

5.4.3 Relevant partners (locally and regionally) also work together to monitor instances and impacts of community tensions and associated responses. At the time of drafting this report, East Leicester has experienced significant levels of disorder resulting in a significant police response, supported by coordination via the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) as a strategic partnership. The LRF is a well-established partnership and enables partners to respond quickly and effectively to a range of emergencies or associated issues that may have a significant impact on communities (for example, Covid, Homes for Ukraine, Flooding).

5.5 **Visibility and Engagement with our Communities:**

5.6 The Council has committed to increased focus and presence within communities and in particular, in priority neighbourhoods. Some examples include:

- a) A range of council teams (housing options, tenancy services, community safety) are represented at the **Fairmead Partners Group**, led by the Police. The group aims to address antisocial behaviour and crime and to improve community cohesion and resilience.
- b) Officers, members and partners have begun to carry out **estate walkabouts**, which have seen positive engagement from members of the public. Estate walkabouts are an important way for us to understand what is happening in local communities and any changes or improvements that are needed. They also provide an important opportunity for the Council to engage with tenants of council properties.
- c) The Council has coordinated a range of **community events** focussed on community cohesion, health and wellbeing. Examples of events include an Easter Fun Day, Let's Get Moving Melton and Breaking Boundaries. Attendance and feedback have been positive for each of these events, with community safety and other teams playing a key role.
- d) The Community Safety Team are also conducting a **month of action** over October and November of this year with a multi-agency approach addressing several issues such as anti-social behaviour, enviro crime whilst focusing on public engagement.
- e) **Visibility and awareness of the work we do**, particularly around crime, environmental crime and anti-social behaviour is important in improving public trust and confidence. These are emotive and often high-profile issues, which can have lasting impacts for communities. Officers have been asked to take a more proactive approach to raising awareness including through social media. Officers welcome feedback from the committee on how we could improve awareness, engagement and visibility of work to keep communities safe and whether the messages being shared are reaching our communities.

5.7 **Engaging with Young People**

5.7.1 Together with partners, the Council has sought to engage positively and proactively with young people across Melton to empower and listen to the needs and views of young people, respond proactively to instances of antisocial behaviour and to develop a positive and proactive response the support the prevention of crime and antisocial behaviour. Some examples are included below:

- a) Through partnership, collaboration and a genuine focus on co-production, **Action Melton Youth (AMY)** has developed over the last few months and is starting to gain momentum and direction. AMY is focussed on hearing the voices and views of young people and enabling their feedback, ideas and experiences to shape the things that matter to them.

AMY representatives recently visited the Council offices to discuss a range of issues such as housing, climate change and democracy with council teams. Additionally, during a Q&A session representatives were able to share their views on things they would like us to focus on – community safety emerged as a key theme from this discussion.

Led by Access All Areas CIC, it is intended that AMY will meet four times a year as a youth council, with more focussed sessions in between. To support this and ensure that the views and voices of young people can genuinely contribute to the development of key areas of work, a thematic framework for AMY is currently in development. One

of the themes for discussion by young people is Safer Communities and will provide AMY representatives with an opportunity to consider key questions such as:

- What makes a community feel safe?
- What make us feel safe in Melton?
- What makes us feel unsafe in Melton?
- What issues are young people talking about / most concerned about in Melton?
- How do stay safe online?
- How can we give young people a voice in creating safe communities?

This session is likely to take place in Spring 2023. To ensure there is a 'so what' attached to this, it is proposed that the feedback from AMY representatives is shared directly with the Safer Melton Partnership and helps the evolution of the associated delivery plan for the partnership.

- b) Collaboration between the Council and Police has enabled the successful development of the **Fairmead Football League**. After its initial success in take up and to engage with and involve young people, this football league is to continue. It is also identified as a proposed project within the UK Shared Prosperity Fund investment plan.

5.8 **CCTV**

5.8.1 The Council has a CCTV system in place however it is now over 26 years old. It no longer offers an effective or value for money solution.

5.8.2 As part of the approval of the Capital Programme, reference is made to the likely need to invest in CCTV equipment / modernisation of CCTV, subject to approval of a business case. The business case is well developed and is due to be considered by Cabinet and Council later this year. Through the modernised system, the Councils aims to enable:

- a) Businesses to have meaningful engagement with a CCTV control room to protect their businesses from shop theft and any other criminal activity in the town centre and identified hotspot areas.
- b) Police to have access to additional tools to collate and gather high quality evidence to address criminal activity within our local community.
- c) Residents to feel safe and allow them to have meaningful access to the data should this be required.
- d) Enhance Melton Borough Council's reputation to be a safe place to visit and live in.
- e) Support the review of the SMART scheme and Pubwatch in tackling crime and supporting the night-time economy
- f) Increasing public confidence in Melton as a safe place to live and work
- g) Increase visibility and impact of enforcement action

5.8.3 The Council was also successful in securing money from the Government's Safer Streets Fund, which has enabled immediate improvements through the installation of four mobile CCTV cameras, which are located within hotspot (high crime) locations.

5.8.4 The Council is currently exploring value for money and effective service delivery options for monitoring.

5.9 **Domestic Abuse**

- 5.9.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed extra duties on local authorities to protect and support people at risk of and experiencing domestic abuse.
- 5.9.2 Whilst many of the new responsibilities fall within the remit of Leicestershire County Council (LCC) as a Tier 1 Local Authority, all Councils across the county are required to work in partnership to enact the support functions related to domestic abuse. New burdens funding has been allocated to county and district councils to support this.
- 5.10 Responsibilities for Melton Borough Council include:
- Automatic priority need status to be given to anyone approaching as homeless and fleeing domestic abuse
 - Where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an assured shorthold tenancy) this must be a secure lifetime tenancy
 - The Council will be required to assist LCC through collaboration and local leadership to ensure the [Domestic Abuse Reduction strategy 2022-2025](#) is implemented across our area of Leicestershire.
- 5.11 The Council has received new burdens funding of £32,364 in 2021/22 and again in 2022/23 to enact the new responsibilities owed by a local district / housing authority. This will support staffing costs in the housing options service, ensuring we fulfil our legal obligations in relation to the new commitments. During this time, the council will ensure a focus and commitment to increasing awareness and response to domestic abuse across the teams and a focus on treating domestic abuse as a priority.
- 5.12 All district and borough councils across Leicestershire are asked to work towards achieving accreditation with the '[Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance](#)' (DAHA) which will ensure a set of rigorous policies, procedures and practices are in place and embedded by April 2023. This accreditation is being funded by LCC subject to completion of the required elements by the deadline.
- 5.13 The thematic lead for the response to Domestic Abuse will be the strategic lead for housing options and homelessness. The lead officer will ensure the work is monitored and consistently applied across the council
- 5.14 The Leicestershire Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy 2022-2025 has five priorities:
- a) Early Intervention and Prevention
 - b) Targeted Support
 - c) Reachable Services
 - d) Safe Accommodation
 - e) Strong Partnership
- 5.15 Melton Borough Council will be actively involved in the following ways:

Early Intervention and Prevention	Upskilling of front-line officers/staff. This involves Housing Options officers all being trained to a high level to create resilience within the team. (Levels to be determined in a training plan like safeguarding)
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	<p>Increased awareness and confidence to report may lead to increase in staff disclosure for victims and perpetrators. The Council will need to ensure a safe and appropriate response to support staff</p> <p>Promotion of the DA Toolkit and identification of Domestic Abuse Champions across the different teams within the council</p> <p>Automatic priority need status to anyone approaching as homeless because of domestic abuse. This is already in place; staff are aware of the legal requirements but are not confident at completing risk assessments. As a result, the initial contact is not as strong as it could be.</p> <p>Working with our contracting partners such as Axis to assist with early identification of domestic abuse</p> <p>An officer group to work towards accreditation for DAHA has been put together including officers from tenancy services, case management, HR and Community Safety</p>
Targeted Support	To ensure that support is delivered to the groups where it is needed by feeding into county-wide consultations regarding demand and access.
Reachable services	<p>Training of front-line staff using the principles of Making Every Contact Count (MECC)</p> <p>Building and developing partnerships to deliver services across our borough and to the right sectors of our communities</p>
DA Act (Part 4) – Safe Accommodation	<p>Working with our district and county colleagues to become accredited through the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) and working towards a housing reciprocal agreement. This would ensure clear policies and procedures are set across the councils that are fair and transparent and addresses the right support for people affected by domestic abuse.</p> <p>A commitment to further training on legal policies regarding security of tenure, right to a permanent home and advice on how to live safely and independently.</p> <p>This will need support from senior leadership and members to reiterate this is a priority and ensure training and awareness is completed.</p>
Strong Partnerships	<p>Representation at the DA local Partnership Board. This is already in place.</p> <p>To ensure data collection is consistent with our district colleagues and IT systems can capture this.</p>

	<p>Demonstration of strong internal partnerships. This involves close working with Human Resources, Housing Options, Legal, Communications, Case Management, Tenancy Services, Community Safety and Customer Services to ensure a consistent, systematic approach is embedded across the council as everyone's responsibility in line with the wider principles of safeguarding</p>
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5.16 **Managing Anti-Social Behaviour in Housing**

- 5.16.1 Effective tenancy management is an important function for the council as landlord, to ensure that tenants have a good quality homes and neighbourhood to live in.
- 5.16.2 This includes responding proactively to helping tenants who are experiencing anti-social behaviour. Managing anti-social behaviour (ASB) promptly and effectively can improve the quality of our customers lives and the environments that they live in, and if left unchallenged, (ASB) will have a detrimental effect on our customers lives, and the reputation of the neighbourhoods that we manage.
- 5.16.3 The importance of this was reinforced in the Government White Paper; The Charter for Social Housing Residents and the Council will be required to be able to provide assurance of its compliance in this area in the future. The white paper notes that landlords should 'tackle anti-social behaviour by enabling tenants to know who is responsible for action and who can support and assist them if they are faced with anti-social behaviour'.
- 5.16.4 Collaboration between our Community Safety and Housing Teams is positive, but there is a need for greater clarity of role and responsibility to improve the offer for tenants. This is an area of focus for the council. There are some positive examples of collaboration between teams and with the police, which provide the basis for learning and continued improvement and development.
- 5.16.5 An anti-social behaviour policy for tenancy services will be developed, to better guide and support housing staff when dealing with anti-social behaviour (in addition to building confidence in preventing escalation and in enforcing the terms of the tenancy agreements already in place). In addition, the Council will progress more effective and accessible methods for tenants to report antisocial behaviour alongside opportunities to case manage housing ASB cases through existing housing case management systems and will implement staff training to ensure ASB can be managed promptly and effectively, whilst also setting out what we will and won't investigate, to help to manage expectations.
- 5.16.6 The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services has emphasised the importance of these improvements and is directly supporting the housing team to achieve these.

5.17 **Integrated People Offer**

- 5.17.1 The Council's Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 sets out a commitment to develop an integrated supporting people offer as part of a wider commitment to excellent services that positively impact on communities.
- 5.17.2 The Council already places emphasis on supporting and enabling communities, with many best practice examples. Additionally, over the last 12 months, the Director for Housing and Communities has aligned services and functions and has been working towards the progression of an integrated people offer including alignment and reshaping of council services, and increased partnership collaboration to best support and empower communities across the Borough.

5.17.3 To evolve this into a properly defined and integrated people offer, some further changes to roles and responsibilities are currently being progressed. It is important that this offer can be easily understood, accessed by our communities and able to respond to changing needs and service demands (for example, cost of living, refugee resettlement, ageing population, pandemic). The key strands of the Integrated People Offer are set out below:

- a) Supporting Communities
- b) Enabling Safer Communities
- c) Enabling Healthy and Active Communities
- d) Connecting and Enable Communities
- e) Empowering Communities

5.17.4 Further to the success of interim arrangements to improve and develop Community Safety and Neighbourhood Support by aligning with Environmental Enforcement. The interim arrangements enabled improvements and strengthened links between teams and partners and has enabled more proactive and preventative work to be undertaken. This has also enabled the development of revised priorities for the Safer Melton Partnership and progression of a business case for the future of CCTV.

6 Options Considered

6.1 Not applicable. As part of its remit, the scrutiny committee is the Council's designated Crime and Disorder Committee. The Scrutiny Committee receives an annual update report to assist in the discharge of this responsibility.

7 Consultation

7.1 Feedback from the Committee is welcome. There has been no formal consultation in developing this update report.

8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

8.1 Any feedback will be considered as part of future resource planning and shared with Cabinet.

9 Financial Implications

9.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

9.2 Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services

10 Legal and Governance Implications

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. Financial Implications reviewed by:

Legal Implications reviewed by: **Monitoring Officer, 21 September 2022**

11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

11.1 Equality and safeguarding considerations are a key component of any response to community safety.

11.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out for the associated Safer Melton Strategic Plan ([link](#)).

12 Community Safety Implications

- 12.1 The Council has a duty to enable communities and environments where people feel safe to visit, live and work. This report provides an update on some of the key activities underway and seeks to provide assurance regarding commitment to enabling safe communities.

13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 13.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

14 Risk and Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Failure to fulfil statutory responsibilities in relation to Crime and Disorder	2	3	6
2	Failure to work in partnership to achieve positive outcomes	2	3	6
3	Staff resilience, competence expertise exposes the council to risk of poor awareness and response / associated reputational risk	2	4	8
4	Ineffective management of ASB in tenancy services	4	3	12

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High				
	4 Significant			4	
	3 Low				
	2 Very Low			1, 2	3
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	Safer Melton Partnership in place. Attendance at countywide partnership meetings to ensure up to date policy and legislative awareness. Dedicated staff team, with expertise and opportunities for continuous professional

	development. Scrutiny committee annual review and opportunity to question officers and police representatives.
2	Local partnerships in place and impact / effectiveness kept under review. Priorities for the partnership reviewed in 2022. Strong leadership and commitment to collaborate at all levels of the organisation.
3	Dedicated staff team, with expertise and opportunities for continuous professional development. Integration of community safety with environmental crime, expanded remits and roles for team members to have broader knowledge. Integration of safer communities as part of wider people offer.
4	Policy, process and system configuration in development, led by experienced officer.

15 Background Papers

15.1 None

16 Appendices

16.1 None

Report Author:	Michelle Howard Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) Aysha Rahman People, Leisure and Culture Manager
Report Author Contact Details:	mhoward@melton.gov.uk / arahman@melton.gov.uk
Chief Officer Responsible:	Michelle Howard Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)
Chief Officer Contact Details:	mhoward@melton.gov.uk