

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE GROUP - 17 SEPTEMBER 2020

Present:

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| Cllr Adele Barnett-Ward (Chair) | Lead Councillor for Neighbourhoods and Communities, in Chair for Nick John |
| Cllr Jason Brock | Leader, RBC |
| Cllr Tony Page | Deputy Leader, RBC |
| Cllr Raj Singh | Observer, RBC |
| Anthony Brain | Community Safety Manager, RBC |
| Kelly Reed | Thames Valley Police, Victim Reduction Unit |
| Ash Smith | Thames Valley Police |
| Giles Allchurch | Brighter Futures for Children |
| Catherine Marriott | Office of the PCC |
| Kathryn Warner | PACT |
| Jo Middlemass | Anti-Social Behaviour Team Manager, RBC |
| Deborah Glassbrook | Director of Children's Services, Brighter Futures for Children |
| Paul Gresty | Brighter Futures for Children |
| Joanne Anderson | Reading Borough Council |
| Melanie Smith | Probation Service |
| David Munday | Consultant in Public Health, RBC |
| Julie Quarmby | Committee Services, RBC |

Apologies:

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| Zelda Wolfle | Assistant Director of Housing & Communities, RBC |
| Nick John | Thames Valley Police |
| Dave Turton | Thames Valley Police |
| Natausha VanVliet | PACT |
| Vicky Rhodes | Strategic Lead for Early Help, Brighter Futures for Children |
| Jeanie Herbert | PACT |
| Chris Juden | Reading Magistrates |
| Donna Gray | Safeguarding Children, Brighter Futures for Children |
| Lou Everatt | Thames Valley CRC |
| Kate Stockdale | Reading Borough Council |
| Nicola Bell | Manager, Willow Project |

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

2. HOSPITAL NAVIGATOR SCHEME, VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT

Kelly Reed, Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), submitted a report on the Hospital Navigator Scheme. The report explained that the scheme aimed to provide point of contact for people who were victims of violence, in particular young people under the age of 25 and victims of domestic violence, within the Accident & Emergency setting. The scheme anticipated that the Navigators (most of whom would be volunteers) would build trust with patients who presented at hospital as a result of existing issues including substance abuse, mental health issues, poor diet or personal care and violence itself. When in hospital, there was a reachable moment when the patient could be reflective and open to intervention. The Navigator would ask for consent to refer the patient onto a third sector organisation who could provide the specialist support required to navigate them back into the community, building resilience and offering mentoring in an attempt to prevent further incidents which could lead them back into hospital.

The report added that the project also incorporated the Community Initiative to Reducing Violence (CIRV - pronounced 'Serve'). This was a multi-agency programme designed to introduce clients to a suite of interventions in an attempt to divert them away from violent offending. Clients would be identified either through Regency, Frequency and Gravity (RFG) data, local multi agency meetings (predominantly Under 18's) or through the Police Tasking process and would have a history of being involved in violence with intelligence suggesting they posed a current risk of causing serious harm. Once a client had been identified, they would be approached by either a mentor, or a person from an outside agency with which they already had a good rapport. If the client refused to engage, then the Police and partner agencies would conduct a two-week period of enforcement and disruption. Once the client had engaged, they would complete a Needs Assessment where the issues in their life were identified and they would be supported by a mentor and a dedicated Police Officer to remove the blocks in their life and work towards gaining training and employment.

Kelly reported that it was hoped to have the navigators in place by December, a peak month for violence. The VRU was also looking at how to fund the scheme going forward, once the original funding stream stopped.

The Group discussed the presentation and the following points were raised:

- Anthony Brain noted that this scheme would be incorporated into the Crime Reduction Plan;
- The VRU would provide regular updates via the Violent Crime workstream.

AGREED: That the report be noted and the Hospital Navigation Scheme be welcomed.

3. YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

Giles Allchurch submitted the latest version of the Youth Justice Plan for information. He explained that the key points of the Plan were:

- Trying to reduce the number of first-time entrants into the Youth Justice system;
- Developing an information pack for young people at risk of violent relationships, to help them to learn how to have a healthy relationship;
- Working with the Management Board to audit the work being carried out to ensure that it met national standards;
- Asking service users and their families about their experiences of the service to help to improve the provision.

Giles also reported that going forward, the Youth Justice team would be working alongside schools to try to divert young people from entering the system, and also carrying out work to identify and address disproportionality within the young people entering the service.

The Partnership noted that whilst there appeared to be a large increase in youth violence and other serious crimes, Reading was a small Youth Offending Team area, and that a small number of additional incidents could make a relatively big difference to the statistics.

AGREED: That the Youth Justice Plan be noted.

4. IMPACT OF INCIDENT AT FORBURY GARDENS

Anthony Brain led a brief discussion on the impact of the recent terrorist incident at Forbury Gardens on services within Reading. The Partnership noted that a number of groups had been set up to help support people and communities, both those that had been directly affected, and where there were concerns over the impact of the incident. Ash Smith added that there

had been a massive impact on residents and communities and that TVP had appointed a Bronze Inspector to lead on reaching out to those affected as well as staff welfare support for those personnel who had attended the incident and dealt with the follow-up. Melanie Smith reported that the alleged offender was known to the Probation Service, and that counselling had been made available for those staff who wanted it. Deborah Glassbrook stated that BFFC had been working with schools on a programme of work to manage children's responses and reactions, although this had been somewhat affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

AGREED:

- (1) That the Partnership place on record their gratitude for the bravery of the police officers attending the incident;
- (2) That Deborah Glassbrook liaise with the TVP schools officers regarding the programme of work with children following the incident.

5. PRIORITY SUB-GROUP ACTION PLANS

Anthony Brain, Community Safety Manager, RBC, reported that, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Sub-Groups had not been able to meet since March 2020, although they had been able to carry out some cross-partnership work. The three Sub-Group action plans had now been collated in to one action plan, which had been circulated to the Partnership.

(A) Class A Drugs

David Munday, Consultant in Public Health, RBC, reported that, during lockdown, the provision of services for drug and alcohol treatment had been a particular challenge, as staff worked to ensure a secure method of delivering daily methadone prescriptions to users. David also reported that the number of people in contact or treatment for opiate-based addiction had increased significantly since January 2020. This was encouraging as it meant that more people had been engaging with services. David also reported that work would restart on the harm reduction programme during the autumn.

(B) Violent Crime

Ash Smith, Thames Valley Police, reported that the recent lockdown had affected the delivery of the initiatives to reduce violent crime, as it had not been possible to engage with target groups such as schools as had been planned and that as a result the strategy was being rewritten. Ash also reported that there had been an increase in knife crime, with four individuals being stabbed during July and August in Reading. There had also been an incident over the weekend of 12/13 September which was just over the border into West Berkshire. More funding had now been made available to provide an increased police presence and assist with community engagement.

(C) Adult Exploitation and Modern Slavery

Not discussed.

AGREED: That the reports be noted.

6. PCC UPDATE

Catherine Marriot, PCC, gave an update on the Early Intervention Youth Fund, which had funded a two-year programme for diversion and prevention of serious violence among young people, setting out what had been achieved over the period and on those actions that could be continued going forward. Catherine also explained that a report had been produced showing

how each Community Safety Partnership allocated the funding that it had received, and how the spending was being monitored. These confidential reports were circulated to the Partnership with the minutes of the meeting.

Catherine also reported that the elections for the PCC Commissioner had been postponed due to the pandemic and would now be held in May 2021. She explained that the policies of the successful candidate could significantly affect funding for the CSPs and suggested that it would be helpful for all partners to look at the impact on services should there be cuts of 10%, 25% or 50% to funding. The Partnership noted that Community Safety Partnerships were not classed as core funding streams and that financial support could not be taken for granted going forward.

AGREED: That the position be noted.

7. CRIME PERFORMANCE

Anthony Brain submitted the crime performance report as at the end of July 2020. He reported that there had been a decrease in crime during the period of lockdown but that incidents were beginning to rise again as restrictions had been lifted.

For all British Crime Survey crimes there had been a 12% decrease compared to the same period last year, with Reading's performance remaining average for the Most Similar Group of CSPs (MSG).

For burglary there had been a 10% increase over the same period and again the performance remained average within the MSG.

There had been a 4% increase in violent crime for the year to date, and Reading's performance remained average amongst the MSG. Anthony explained that, as expected violent crime had fallen considerably during lock down however since the restriction have been reduced there had been a significant increase in violent crime at a greater rate than in other MSG areas. Nick John, TVP, was working to pull together a profile of violence in Reading to identify the causes of the increase and to adapt plans to address the situation accordingly.

Anthony also reported that there had been a major increase in the number or cycle thefts in Reading, especially in the town centre where many people commuted by bike. Mobile CCTV had been deployed at the station, which was a particular hotspot, and there had been some success there. Councillor Page noted that Reading Borough Council had been promoting cycling and that the Council had a responsibility to investigate the provision of better, more secure cycle parking. He added that TVP should publicise their successes where possible to reassure cyclists that the thefts were being taken seriously and that cyclists should be encouraged to use appropriate locks. Catherine Marriott noted that a scheme to improve cycle security had been set up in Oxford, and that she would bring updates to future Partnership meetings.

AGREED: That the position be noted.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Ash Smith reported that a significant number of the crimes committed in Reading took place in Abbey and Battle wards and along the Oxford Road. TVP had met with interested parties to discuss what could be done to reduce crime and how best to engage with residents. A survey would be launched on 21 September 2020 to gain a clear picture of residents' concerns.

Ash also reported that Simon Wheeler had been seconded to visit licensed premises in the area, and had so far visited 18 shops. Ash noted that, subject to cover being available, Simon's secondment could be extended should the work he was undertaking be successful.

AGREED: That the position be noted.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETING

Future meetings for 2020/21 would take place on:

Thursday 12 November 2020;

Thursday 4 February 2021;

Thursday 22 April 2021.

All meetings start at 9.30am, venue to be confirmed.

(The meeting commenced at 9.35 am and closed at 11.05 am)