

Report to	-	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date	-	18 March 2019
Report of the	-	Executive Director
Subject	-	Annual Report of the Safer Rother Partnership

Recommendation: It be **RESOLVED:** That:

- 1) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee make any recommendations arising from the report to the Chair of the Safer Rother Partnership for consideration; and
 - 2) the Council's work in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety be noted.
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Head of Service: Richard Parker-Harding

Introduction

1. The purpose of this annual report is to provide information on the work of the Rother Community Safety Partnership [known as the Safer Rother Partnership (SRP)] for the Committee to review, scrutinise and make reports or recommendations to the responsible authorities of the SRP, in line with the Council's statutory responsibilities, under the Police and Justice Act 2006.
2. The responsible authorities are: Rother District Council, Sussex Police, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, East Sussex County Council, Probation Service and Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group.
3. Councillor Mrs Kirby-Green is Rother District Council's nominated representative, Chair of the SRP and Co-Chair of the Joint Hastings and Rother Community Safety Partnership.
4. The report also includes information about the Council's own responsibilities and actions with regard to community safety and anti-social behaviour (ASB).

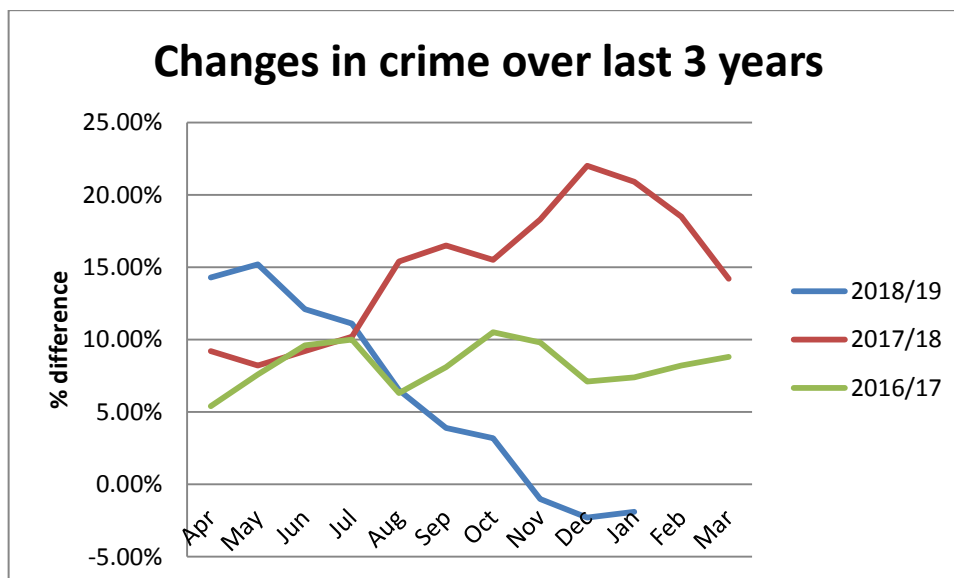
Performance of the Safer Rother Partnership 2018/19

5. The priorities of the Hastings and Rother Community Safety Partnership are:
 - the Street Community;
 - Violent Crime (including Domestic Abuse);
 - Youth Crime and vulnerable young people;
 - Road Safety; and
 - Partnership communications and reassurance messages.

6. There were 5080 crimes in Rother reported to Sussex Police during the 12 months to the end of January 2019, which is a 100 fewer reports on the previous 12 months and the decrease (-1.9%) is twice that for East Sussex as a whole. In comparison, Lewes saw the largest increase +3.8% (+198) and Wealden saw the highest decrease of 400 crimes (- 6.2%).

Total crime across East Sussex	% increase or decrease
Eastbourne	-1.2
Hastings	1.2
Lewes	3.8
Rother	-1.9
Wealden	-6.2
East Sussex	-0.8
Sussex	0.4

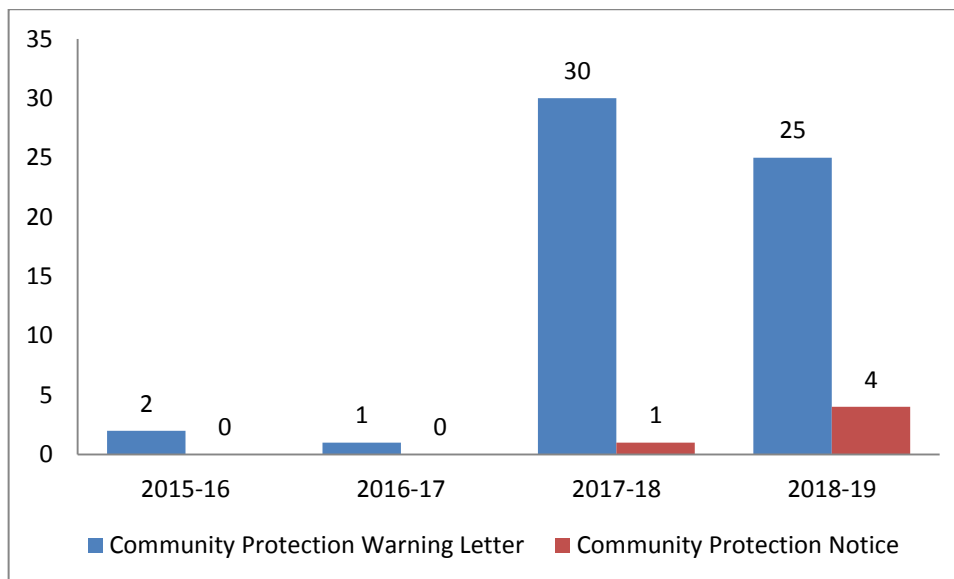
7. Over the last 3 years we have seen changes in the total crime reported to Sussex Police, which were similar to the countywide picture. In Rother, the highest % increase was in December 2017 (22%) and the lowest (-2.3%) in December 2018.



8. The following crime types have seen decreases in the 12 months to the end of January 2019:
- All ASB categories Personal, Nuisance, Environmental;
 - Burglary, Serious Acquisitive Crime;
 - Theft of a motor vehicle, pedal cycle and from a person;
 - Vehicle interference; and
 - Criminal damage of buildings and vehicles.
9. There have been slight increases in reports of other crimes e.g. shoplifting (14 crimes), arson (18 crimes) and violent crime (252). Of the violent crimes recorded, 109 were reports of domestic abuse; the partnership assists victims of domestic abuse to access vital services.

10. The SRP delivered the following initiatives in 2018-19 to reduce crime and the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour:
- a) A significant amount of work has focused on rough sleepers and members of the street community. This has included commissioning Seaview and partners to identify rough sleepers in Rother, engage and support them to access services, including community support services e.g. housing, mental health and substance misuse and with other agencies to find alternative solutions. In addition, the partnership funded refurbishments to establish a community hub and Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) centre using a church community space.
 - b) Built on the previous year's campaign run in Rother to deliver White Ribbon – '16 Days of Action' at locations across Rother and Hastings, which included a social media campaign. This enabled economies of scale both financially and in staff time, consistency and quality across both Council areas and a more comprehensive campaign and communications system.
 - c) Community Safety staff organised and delivered training sessions on the tools and powers available to address ASB e.g. Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) and Community Protection Notices for Council, Police and social housing staff engaged in this work.
 - d) The PSPO (Number 2) to address Nuisance Behaviour and the Consumption of Alcohol in a Public Place was made in November 2018. Implementation has been achieved by:
 - Signs and literature (postcards and posters) have been distributed and displayed in the PSPO area.
 - Education on the PSPO itself, including the geographical areas covered and behaviours prohibited under the PSPO, has been carried out by Council and Police staff. Individuals have been signposted to support services and a given a verbal warning.
 - Continued behaviour after this stage 2 results in a written warning and advice and signposting to support services will be offered again.
 - Breach of the warning may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued or possible prosecution.
 - e) Since implementation, only one Warning Notice has been issued. Bexhill town centre businesses have been visited to discuss the PSPO and those begging, street drinking and sleeping in public areas have been spoken to and advised of the PSPO restrictions and the services available to them. Joint work is being carried out by Council officers, Rough Sleeper workers, substance misuse and mental health services, resulting in treatment and housing for a particularly hard to engage section of the community. Initial feedback has shown support from residents, businesses and visitors to Bexhill of the PSPO and the style of implementation.
 - f) Environmental Health and Licensing staff and Police continue to carry out successful operational and educational initiatives to address modern slavery and cuckooing across Rother. These schemes enable quality, consistent practice and are an excellent example of developing and expanding initiatives across both Council areas. The modern slavery project 'Discovery' has been recognised as excellent practice nationally.

- g) Inter-departmental work within the Council to address anti-social behaviour has resulted in the resolution of a wide range of cases. This work has enabled practical solutions, such as gating an air raid shelter and a fly tipping site, the installation, purchase and monitoring of CCTV at leisure facilities and public conveniences to address criminal damage, drug dealing and taking, rough sleeping and issues with young people involved in ASB/drug dealing.
- h) In addition, 2018/19 saw more Council officers use the tools and powers to address ASB and the commissioning of dedicated casework for victims of hate crime and anti-social behaviour. So far over 90% of the Community Protection Warning Letters issued have resulted in a successful conclusion without further action by the Council.



Emerging Police Issues

11.

- Rural Crime - including cross border crime, especially burglary and speciality thefts e.g. large plant and vehicles. This includes joint initiatives with Kent Policing and partner agencies in Rother.
- County Lines – drug supply and cuckooing in both urban and rural areas of Rother. In 2018/19 Rother has seen a significant increase in the issues relating to county lines and drug supply. This work will continue to focus on victims of cuckooing, the impact on the wider community and will include more joint work when county lines move/expand into Rother from Hastings and other areas.
- Cocaine use across Rother, including in rural areas, is seen by local Police as a significant issue that needs addressing with partners, including links to licensing, the community and support services.

Rother Priorities in 2018/19

12. Although work has been carried out during 2018/19, the following continue to be prioritised in Rother and interventions will continue during 2019/20:

- Delivering interventions under the ASB tools and power such as PSPOs and Community Penalty Notices.

- Drug supply and Cuckooing.
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking – Discovery.
- Rough Sleepers and the Street Community.

Conclusion

13. The SRP continues to deliver a wide range of interventions to deal with crime and ASB that impact on the quality of life for those living, working and visiting Rother.
14. There have been additional challenges resulting from the changes in levels and types of crime taking place in Rother in 2018/19. However, the strong working relationship and commitment to addressing issues across Rother has enabled the partnership to remain successful and deliver against new threats such as modern slavery and cuckooing.
15. These challenges are likely to continue in 2019/20 and prioritisation of resources based on need and risk is essential across all agencies. The Safer Rother Partnership continues to reflect those that need Partnership involvement.

Malcolm Johnston
Executive Director

Risk Assessment Statement

There are risks that are associated with the potential impact of reduced resources within partner agencies. It is important that the current efficient partnership working practices continue to be delivered by all agencies working to address crime and ASB.