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## CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Committee** COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date and Time of Meeting** WEDNESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2022, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact [scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)

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My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr Jenkins

14 Feb 2022

Chairs of the Community Safety Leadership Board & Delivery Group

*Sent via e-mail*



Dear Chairs,

**COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12 JAN 2022 –  
PREVENTING SERIOUS VIOLENT CRIME IN CARDIFF**

On behalf of the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you for attending January's meeting to facilitate our consideration of how the Community Safety Partnership is working to prevent serious violent crime in Cardiff.

Serious violent crime can have a devastating, wide-ranging impact on individuals and communities. As confirmed at the meeting, of late, the city has seen a concerning increase in the number of individuals being stabbed, and as Elected Members we are acutely aware of the damaging, wide-ranging ramifications these, and other violent crime instances, can have on victims and communities.

It is clear, that partners must work together to understand and address this issue by sharing, through robust and timely means, relevant information. It is also paramount that partners work to provide a safe environment for all residents of Cardiff, and that a robust response is in place when issues arise. As discussed at the meeting, each of these key responsibilities for partners are of equal importance, and it is the role of the Community Safety Partnership to ensure these responsibilities are realised.

With all this in mind, and remaining mindful to the upcoming Violence Prevention Strategy, we wish to feedback the following comments and recommendations for your consideration.

## **Definitions and Impact of Violent Crime**

Due to the broad nature of offences classified as violent crime, we raised our concerns that this would undoubtedly result in significant demand and excess pressure for responsible bodies. Which in turn, could impact their ability to effectively realise core responsibilities, and, most notably, hamper outcomes.

In addition to the scope of offences classified as violent crime, certain offences in this category, which could be of the more low-level nature, may generate high levels of public interest. As a result, this could again, present subsequent pressure and demand for responsible bodies and potentially lead to a misallocation of resource.

In line with this, we explored how the Partnership manages potentially, low level offences to ensure they do not impact resources and core responsibilities. From the response, we note this challenge is recognised by yourselves, and it is managed through a collective, aligned working arrangement between all responsible bodies. In addition, Members also heard how this aligned partnership working is also supported by the insight offered by the Violence Prevention Unit, whose work helps to ensure the right focus and resource is applied by relevant bodies.

Although the partnership working in place to manage this challenge is welcomed, Members do wish to stress the importance of remaining mindful to this challenge to ensure robust, effective outcomes are continually achieved, and responsible bodies resources are utilised effectively.

Providing victims with high quality, accessible support is vital, and we explored if there was a way of ascertaining data around individuals who have been through the criminal justice system but have not sought support. Although Members recognise this may be difficult to measure, we note, and welcome, the comments made at the meeting regarding the approach organisations take to proactively identify and encourage individuals to access services.

However, we believe this is a particularly useful avenue to explore to understand baseline trends and provide initial indication into reasonings why individuals may not

come forth for support. As such, we would strongly urge the Violence Prevention Unit to consider this further.

In addition, it was also pleasing to note organisations who offer support to individuals, proactively seek their satisfaction levels on how their case was dealt with, which is then shared with relevant bodies to inform future work.

### **Partnership Structure**

Regarding the structure of the Partnership, reference was made to the Regional Partnership Board, which can be perceived as complex and difficult for members of the public to understand. In addition, it could also be argued that complexity within such structures inadvertently distributes accountability and responsibility to such an extent that it results in confusion around who's responsible for what. We note from the response that partners within the structure feel the current arrangements are effective. However, we do wish to stress the importance in members of the public being able to understand the operations and working of the Partnership, and the need for it to remain accessible and transparent.

In line with this, we also explored how the work of the Partnership is evaluated and we note evaluation of its work will be used to inform the upcoming Violence Prevention Strategy.

We wish to again stress the importance that in the interest of transparency, the Partnership's reporting arrangements, and detail of its evaluation process, is clearly set out within the upcoming Violence Prevention Strategy

In addition, we welcome the recognition provided at the meeting that to ensure no overlap or duplication occurs, a potential refresh of the Partnership's structure is being considered. In line with this upcoming review, we wish to **recommend** the Partnership's structure, remains as streamlined as possible and removes any unnecessary complexity for it to remain transparent, accountable, and readily understood by members of the public.

## **Decision making**

With regard to decision making, we explored how decisions toward tackling violent crime, may not always be informed by data, but may sometimes occur in response to a singular crime which had severe ramifications, particularly on public perception.

During the discussion it was interesting to note that when decisions or responses have been made on the back of a particular incident, it has in turn led to an increase in reporting and subsequent data.

In line with this, and in conjunction with the upcoming review on the Partnership's structure, we **recommend** when all bodies within the Partnership are identifying actions required, they log if the decision has been made objectively using data, or subjectively in response to a particular incident. We believe capturing this information will strengthen the Partnership's accountability and serve as a useful tool for the Partnership to analyse, understand and remain consciously aware on whether decisions have been made subjectively or objectively and their subsequent outcomes.

## **Prevention Work**

The work of the Partnership's early intervention programmes detailed at the meeting was interesting to note. Members were also assured that the Wales Police School Programme, which engages with over 90% of schools, includes topics such as the carrying and use of weapons in a bid to prevent such activity occurring.

However, many of the schemes and initiatives referenced at the meeting, and in the meeting's papers, were not familiar to Members. This clearly indicates a need for the Partnership to strengthen its communication on the services available, and how such services are accessed. We believe stronger direct communication with both Elected Members and the wider public, must be a key element of the upcoming Violence Prevention Strategy. In addition, communication between Elected Members and the police must also be improved for the benefit of both parties. As such, we **recommend** streamlined processes are introduced to ensure regular and direct communication between Elected Members and their local policing inspectors. Along with providing information on serious instances, this communication must also include general updates, planned initiatives and staff changes.

During the meeting, we also explored the potential correlation between victims of violent crime and family breakdowns and, as we have done previously with Welsh Government, we wish to reiterate the need to ensure that within the Welsh Government's, 'Resilient Communities' body of work, the concept of 'Resilient Families' is strengthened. We therefore **recommend** the Partnership ensure robust support is in place across partners to prevent family breakdowns, or ensure adequate support is available should this issue arise.

The importance of information sharing in the field of prevention is fundamental, and we wish to encourage, information gathering being used to increase police officers' presence in an area. With the hope this could prevent instances arising.

Although it is appreciated instances are not always easy to pre-empt, we feel robust systems for information sharing, to help inform the work of the police (and other partners), is key. We therefore **recommend** the Partnership explore how the Community Safety Intelligence Dashboard is utilised to inform police presence.

### **Police Operations**

The information provided at the meeting on what can be achieved through police operations was notable, and it was interesting to explore how decisions around police operations are made.

Members welcome that horizon scanning is consistently utilised to inform operations, with potential, forthcoming, or emerging issues also escalated through the Partnership's framework. Further to this, we note the decision making around where operations are deployed tends to be intelligence and demand led.

Though the achievements of police operations are reassuring, when a police operation, or intensified focus within a particular area disperses, the underlying issues and subsequent ramifications can remain in the community. Although resource constraints are recognised, we wish to reiterate the importance of responsible bodies not mounting away infrastructure immediately. As this provides the impression to residents, that a particular issue is no longer a priority, or being addressed.

It is crucial that residents understand tackling the cause of an issue remains a priority and this must be clearly reiterated and displayed. Within the discussion it was interesting to note University research has shown “15-minute patrols” can reduce serious violence by 14%, and this is currently being piloted across the city. As a result, we **recommend** more patrols across the city’s wards take place.

In line with the importance of police presence and operations, as Elected Members, we have seen numbers within local neighbourhood policing teams diminish over the years which results in a notable impact on the community. Although we understand the context and limited resource within this field, we do wish to stress the importance of neighbourhood policing teams’ upscaling their community engagement; to ensure greater public awareness of their work and soothe any community angst.

### **Male Victims & Domestic Abuse**

Within the meeting’s papers, Members were informed that men are most likely to be victims of violent crime in Wales, and on this basis, we explored why ‘violence against men’ is not stipulated as a priority area for the Partnership. Within the response, Members note this work is captured within the Partnership’s subgroups such as the Night-time Economy or Serious Violence and Organised Crime. Although this is noted, we do wish to reiterate the importance that the Partnership works to ensure no disparity occurs between the recognition, support, and services available for male or female victims and you continually demonstrate that services for both sexes are of equal importance.

In line with this, we are aware that as part of the Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023, a regional service for male victims was due to be launched by July 2021. However, at the Committee’s October 2021 meeting, Members were informed by the Council’s executive that the launch of this service had unfortunately been delayed.

Domestic abuse is a serious crime and Members sought insight from the Community Safety Partnership on why this service has been delayed, along with its expected launch date.

Although this update could not be provided at the meeting, since the meeting took place, Members have received an update from the Council's executive who advised the reasons for its delay were due to the altered scope of the service and the service launched in January 2022.

### **Eradicating Violent Crime**

I am sure I can speak on behalf of everyone in saying that ultimately, we want violent crime in Cardiff to disappear. However, it is acknowledged that unfortunately we do not live in an ideal world, and there are many key issues, intrinsically linked to the occurrence of violent crime.

However, we do wish to end our observations by reiterating the serious, wide-ranging ramifications violent crime can have on the city and to strongly urge that the Partnership continue to expand its preventative measures and ensures all responsible bodies consistently work with a strict, unyielding focus on preventing and reducing instances of violent crime in the city.

I hope you find the discussions held within Committee, along with the comments, observations and recommendations captured within this letter of use. For ease of reference, the recommendations captured within this letter, which require a response, are as follows:

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Partnership's structure remains as streamlined as possible and removes any unnecessary complexity for it to remain transparent, accountable, and readily understood by members of the public.
- When all bodies within the Partnership are identifying actions required, they log if the decision has been made objectively using data, or subjectively in response to a particular incident. We believe capturing this information will strengthen the Partnership's accountability and serve as useful tool for the Partnership to analyse, understand and remain consciously aware on whether

decisions have been made subjectively or objectively and their subsequent outcomes.

- Streamlined processes are introduced to ensure regular and direct communication between Elected Members and their local policing inspectors. Along with providing information on serious instances, this communication must also include general updates, planned initiatives and staff changes.
- The Partnership ensure robust support is in place across partners to prevent family breakdowns, or ensure adequate support is available should this issue arise.
- The Partnership explore how the Community Safety Intelligence Dashboard is utilised to inform police presence.
- More police patrols across the city's wards take place.

Yours,



**COUNCILLOR SHAUN JENKINS**

**Chairman - Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

cc. Tim Morgan, Superintendent South Wales Police

Daniel Jones, Deputy Director, Violence Prevention Unit

Charlotte Singleton & Suzanne Bocoum, Victim Support

Bernie Bowen-Thomson & Simon Borja, Safer Wales

Sian Sanders, Operational Manager Cohesion & Engagement

Jenny Rogers, Community Safety Manager

Mr David Hugh Thomas, Chair, Governance & Audit Committee

Chris Pyke, OM Governance & Audit

Tim Gordon, Head of Communications & External Relations

Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee Members

## COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

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### COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –PREVENTING SERIOUS VIOLENT CRIME IN CARDIFF

March 2022

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Dear Cllr Shaun Jenkins, Chairman – Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee,

Thank you for your letter following the Community Safety Partnership’s attendance at the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee in January 2022, covering the topic of ‘Preventing Serious Violent Crime in Cardiff’.

I hope that the session proved informative and comprehensive in explaining our partnership approach to tackling the emerging issues surrounding serious violence and the effects this has on our victims and communities.

In this letter, please find a written response from the Community Safety Partnership to the recommendations raised by committee members, reflecting the format of the letter received by the partnership.

#### **Response to recommendations and requests from members of the Committee**

- 1. The Partnership’s structure remains as streamlined as possible and removes any unnecessary complexity for it to remain transparent, accountable, and readily understood by members of the public.**

#### **Accepted**

The Community Safety Partnership’s governance structure has been simplified to take account of the growth in activity as the Partnership seeks to deal effectively with public concerns, taking a proactive and preventative approach wherever possible. The Leadership Board and Delivery Board are being merged to “do it once and do it well” and to avoid duplication and repetition. The arrangements have been established taking into consideration the existing partnership landscape, aligning with existing meeting structures where possible and providing good line of sight in order to be efficient and effective. As discussed at our meeting the current governance structure identifies the 4 priority workstreams, each with clear objectives. Members of the public will be involved

in activities and initiatives covered by each workstream and community engagement is key to ensuring the effectiveness of our “problem solving” approach. The Community Safety Board is accountable to the Cardiff Public Services Board which takes a real interest in the regular reports and escalation.

As we know the partnership landscape continues to evolve and so it is important that we continually reflect with partners on how we align our most effective ways of working, this acknowledgement will be built into the various Terms and References as good practice.

- 2. When all bodies within the Partnership are identifying actions required, they log if the decision has been made objectively using data, or subjectively in response to a particular incident. We believe capturing this information will strengthen the Partnership’s accountability and serve as useful tool for the Partnership to analyse, understand and remain consciously aware on whether decisions have been made subjectively or objectively and their subsequent outcomes.**

#### **Accepted**

The Partnership have developed an Area Based Working Matrix which records emerging issues, assesses the risks, records the solutions/actions taken by partners to mitigate the impacts. The Matrix also includes a category for recording the ‘source’ of the issues identified, as in how it has been reported e.g. the community safety inbox, public, police Councillors, National issue, Partnerships informed, data/trend and intelligence informed. The information is therefore both qualitative and quantitative and we will use this Matrix as a tool to strengthen our prioritisation process and also inform our impact analysis of the partnership actions/solutions we have taken to address local issues.

- 3. Streamlined processes are introduced to ensure regular and direct communication between Elected Members and their local policing inspectors. Along with providing information on serious instances, this communication must also include general updates, planned initiatives and staff changes.**

#### **Accepted**

The Community Safety Partnership is developing communication materials including a briefing document which will be disseminated via the Cabinet member with responsibility for Community Safety to all Elected Members on a quarterly basis. Specific updates following serious instances and ahead of planned activities will be arranged with relevant local ward members following a similar format to that coordinated through our Problem Solving Groups. Regular meetings will also be arranged and chaired by the Cabinet Member to brief appropriate Councillors on emerging issues. In recent months the Community Safety Partnership have held meetings of this nature regarding issues in

Clifton Street, in Caerau and in relation to the Cathays/Plasnewydd project. These meetings have proven very valuable and the Partnership are keen to continue this effective engagement. The pattern of communication with Members by South Wales Police is also evolving with an emphasis on very local communications as a result of the commitment to Neighbourhood Policing by both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable. The role of the PCSO is being evolved and developed as was explained at the meeting with the emphasis on communicating with the public, local problem solving and supporting local communities. The number of PCSOs is being increased through current renewal and recruitment following the Welsh Government decision to provide additional resources and there is an emphasis on strong regular contact between PCSOs and Councillors. There are some outstanding examples of positive engagement but the aim is to achieve regular contact, consistency and quality in the interests of local people.

**4. The Partnership ensure robust support is in place across partners to prevent family breakdowns, or ensure adequate support is available should this issue arise.**

**Partially accepted**

It is recognised that the Community Safety Partnership is aligned with relevant partners (I.e. Health, Child and Adult Services, Early Help Services, Education Services, Youth Justice Services) in a proactive space to have effective discussions surrounding emerging issues. Whilst there is space to discuss this issue of family breakdown within the context of serious violence via our model of SAFE, the broader perspective requires a more significant role from Children and Adult Services, and the Regional Safeguarding Boards in ensuring adequate support is available to prevent family breakdowns.

With this in mind, we recognise that this requires all partners to work together - the SAFE model is evaluating support services which includes family engagement and support. This will in due course provide us with an evidence based approach to understanding the complexities around issues such as family breakdown, allowing us to consider 'what works' and provide the right support at the right time.

The Partnership can play a role in identifying areas where there is a need to support families, but we need to ensure we are not duplicating already existing activity or planned activity in this space. Therefore a more suitable action would be for the Partnership to sight the Regional Safeguarding Board on the above recommendations and reflect on collaborative opportunities and more effective alignment.

**5. The Partnership explore how the Community Safety Intelligence Dashboard is utilised to inform police presence.**

**Accepted**

The Community Safety Intelligence Dashboard has been developed to strengthen a data-led and evidence-based approach to steer the work of the Partnership. At present the

Dashboard presents a geographical representation of police reported crime which dates back to 2019. Over the coming months we will look to expand the data sets in the dashboard to include other data rich sources from other service areas and partners, for example anti-social behaviour, drug litter and begging data.

The next step is to trial the dashboard with our partners and explore its use in our partnership forums such as the Problem Solving Group and at the more local level. The geographical representation of community issues will therefore be used to inform a partnership response which may include an increased police presence in certain localities.

## **6. More police patrols across the city's wards take place.**

### **Not accepted**

Whilst it is understood that a police presence provides an element of public reassurance in response to emerging issues, it is absolutely clear that the most effective solution to tackling community safety concerns is a prevention-focussed partnership approach, often described as a "public health approach" to crime and harm.

It is worth pointing out that Cardiff as a city is relatively safe, not least because of the work that was started by Professor Jonathan Shepherd in the 1990s. This work supported by the Council and South Wales Police, was based on asking how and why people ended up in Accident and Emergency with injuries caused through violence, and therefore identifying where and when to focus preventative police engagement. After nearly 30 years the problem of violence has not been eradicated but many incidents and injuries have been prevented through the application of those principles. The most recent threats have been associated with County Lines, and the same principles have been applied by the Violence Prevention Unit for Wales, through working with the Police, the Council and the Health Board. By placing experts within the Emergency Unit a particular focus has been placed on young people who have been subject to knife crime, allowing us to build an informed picture that can help us tackle and prevent further harm.

It is also important to note that Domestic Violence and Abuse continues to be a source of significant serious violence and even death in modern Britain. In Cardiff the number of women being safeguarded has increased significantly as a result of the IRIS programme promoted by the Commissioner and adopted by the Health Board. In addition the DRIVE programme seeks to target and challenge serious perpetrators of violence, again funded by the Commissioner and operated by South Wales Police and partners.

As we discussed at our meeting the involvement of all relevant agencies and, importantly, members of the community themselves is key. This includes elected members, social carers, parenting support, education, those delivering diversionary activity and health and wellbeing support services.

It is important to recognise that the response to Serious Violence requires a health-based approach, to fully understand and respond to the complexity surrounding these issues requiring strong partnership working in order to break long existing patterns and cycles of behaviour.

It is therefore key that the Partnership focuses on the wider role that partners have to play in readiness to address the upcoming obligations to the Serious Violence Duty.

Yours sincerely,

**Alun Michael**

Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales

**Lynda Thorne**

CLlr Lynda Thorne, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

**Sarah McGill**

Corporate Director, People and Communities

**Wendy Gunney**

Chief Superintendent, Cardiff and Vale BCU

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