

# Building Communities Together Partnership

Update for HWB Steering Group  
August 2024

## Membership

**Chair:** Nigel Lynn Chief Exec, WBC; **Deputy Chair:** Supt. Andy Penrith

**Statutory Partners:** West Berkshire Council, Thames Valley Police, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Probation and Health (Public Health and Integrated Care Board)

The BCT Partnership also has representatives from: Community and Voluntary Sector, Healthwatch, Registered Housing Providers, Education, Faith Sector and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

## Current Activity

- The Partnership met on 16/07/2024.
- Needs analysis remains outstanding; this is requirement to inform the Partnership Plan (see 'Challenges').

### Serious Violence

- The next meeting of the Serious Violence Steering Group will take place in early September and will be Chaired by Chief Inspector David Whiteaker.
- Under the Serious Violence duty, a yearly needs analysis will be completed by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. 2024/25 alongside a review of the current plan (by the end of November 2024). This is dependent on the receipt of needs analysis work which is need to inform the Serious Violence Strategy for 2025/26 (see 'Challenges').
- 27/06/2024 the quarterly report was sent to the OPCC for inclusion in the TVP compilation report prior to submission to the Home Office.
- Focus for the next quarter is on reviewing the needs analysis for serious violence for West Berkshire to identify any new trends or areas of focus in our strategy / delivery plan, and identifying ways to sustain any interventions or posts that are externally funded as current Home Office funding will end in April 2025
- Funding confirmed for the Serious Violence co-ordinator post until November 2025 via OPCC grant funding.
- Key work being developed at the moment links to a repeat of the schools' survey; work to be done with schools re Drugs referral policy; and a focus on understanding more about the risk factors associated with schools exclusions.
- Problem-solving work continues with The Nightingales Estate which has continued to be a hotspot for violence, albeit reducing. This also links to the Safer Streets work referenced below.

### Safer Streets Fund

- Work on each of the five interventions continues.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> clear-up day took place on 30 July 2024. Representatives from both the OPCC and Home Office attended, and the project received some very positive feedback: ‘We came away with such a positive impression of the projects and could really see how much hard work and passion goes in to each one from both your teams and the delivery partners’.
- CCTV is expected to be installed shortly.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour**

- Work in this area is currently extremely limited – see ‘Challenges’.

### **Prevent**

- Annual Prevent benchmarking has highlighted areas where West Berkshire is not meeting its statutory duty.
- Draft Prevent Local Risk Assessment was discussed at the Prevent Steering Group 13/08/2024, after some minor amendments this will be sent to the Home Office to ensure that it meets the statutory requirement.

### **Channel**

- Channel Panel meeting held 14/08/2024.
- 2 cases discussed with agreement that one case can now close after successful intervention.

### **Domestic Abuse**

- 2024/25 funding confirmed for WBC under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021; MOU has been signed.
- Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023-27 consultation period has concluded. The Strategy and associated Action Plan has been to Corporate Board (13/08/2024) and will now progress to Ops Board before going to Executive for approval.

### **Modern Slavery**

- The next Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement covering 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 to be completed and submitted, subject to sign off by Chief Executive.

### **Community Forums**

- Arranged for 10 September 2024 at Thatcham Rugby Club Henwick from 6-8:30pm and will address various Planning-related challenges and opportunities within our district. Topics that will be discussed include:
  - Difference between CIL and S106
  - Update on Local and National planning changes
  - West Berkshire’s online and digital planning services
  - Nutrient Neutrality
- Future Forum being arranged for November 2024.

### **Members’ Community Bids**

- The processing of claims from the last Members Bids Panel continues.
- Funding of Members Bids for 2024/25 has been agreed.
- 2024 Members Bid round to commence 1 November 2024.

## **Future Actions**

- Future District Parish Conference scheduled for October.
- Serious Violence needs analysis to be completed and will inform the Serious Violence Strategy 2024/25.
- BCT Partnership needs analysis to be completed and will inform the BCT Partnership Plan.
- Work to improve fulfilment of Prevent statutory duties.

## **Challenges**

Current uncertainty around the provision of analytical work from the OPCC which will impact needs analysis work that needs to be done ahead of developing the Serious Violence Strategy 2024/25 and the BCT Partnership Plan.

## **Staffing pressures within BCT Team:**

- Senior Community Co-ordinator Resolution post is currently vacant as the postholder is Acting BCT Team Manager. The majority of multi-agency anti-social behaviour related case work is no longer being done but any legislative requirements under the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014 are being prioritised.
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Officer has recently resigned with only employee related work being addressed by HR. Remaining community related EDI work is currently 'on hold'.
- Senior Principal Officer is long-term sick.
- Community Coordinator (Prevention) will leave WBC in early September 2024 which will place considerable pressure on ensuring that a number of statutory duties continue to be fulfilled. Work is underway to recruit to the role.

## **Statutory Duties:**

- Annual Prevent benchmarking has highlighted areas where West Berkshire is not meeting its statutory duty. Areas for improvement have been identified and are to be addressed.
- Community Coordinator (Prevention) continues to fulfil the DA Safe Accommodation duty via overtime.