

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Council
Date:	24 th April 2025
Subject:	Recommendations of the Cabinet from its meeting held on 14 th April 2025: Safer Slough Partnership Community Safety Plan 2025/28
Chief Officer:	Tessa Lindfield- Director of Public Health & Public Protection
Contact Officer:	Lisa Spall – Community Safety Manager
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	NO
Appendices:	Appendix A: Safer Slough Community Safety Plan 2025/28 Appendix B: Equality Impact Assessment Appendix C: 2024 Strategic Assessment (Slough) Appendix D: Minutes of the March 4 th Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee Meeting

1. Summary and Recommendations

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory responsibility on Local Authorities in line with key statutory partners (Police, Probation, Fire services and Health) to produce a three-year partnership plan to tackle crime and disorder in the Borough.

This report was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 14th April 2025 and it was agreed to recommend approval to Council. The Community Safety Plan is part of the Policy Framework (Article 4 of the Constitution) and approval is a function reserved to full Council.

1.1 Recommendations

Council is recommended to approve the Slough Community Safety Partnership Plan 2025-28.

1.2 Reason

The reason for the decision is to respond to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which places Statutory obligations on Community Safety Partnerships to produce a three yearly (or rolling annual) Community Safety Plan. The Community Safety Partnership Plan (also referred to as a Crime and Disorder Reduction Plan) is a statutory document, approval of which is reserved to Full Council.

1.3 Commissioner Review

This report has been reviewed by Commissioners and agreed that it can be considered.

2. Report

2.1 Partnership and Governance

The Safer Slough Partnership consists of; Slough Borough Council, Thames Valley Police (Slough Local Police Area), The Probation Service (South Central), Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS), Slough Children's First and representatives from Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, along with a range of partners from Slough's Voluntary and Community Sector. The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection sits on this partnership board.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 place several duties on local authorities, the police and key partners to develop and implement strategies and plans setting out how they will tackle community safety and serious violence issues. Slough's Community Safety Partnership Board (Safer Slough Partnership Board) oversees the delivery of these core functions and has oversight of the Community Safety Plan presented in this paper.

2.2 Context

The delivery of Slough's Community Safety Strategy 2018-2022 was hampered by the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic; however, the partnership has continued to work together to tackle issues of most concern to residents.

The Safer Slough Partnership (SSP) then conducted a review in 2024 as to how it operated. The result was the strengthening of the Safer Slough Partnership Terms of Reference and the determination to embed a consistent approach, using robust strategic assessments and developing and delivering outcome focussed plans that would ensure the wider partnership are all involved in making a Slough a safer place. The outcome of the review was taken to Corporate Improvement and Scrutiny on 4th March 2025 where it considered the Safer Slough Partnership, its progress to date and measurable outcomes.

2.3 Links to other strategic partnerships

Following this refresh of the Safer Slough Partnership, it also confirmed overarching responsibilities and oversight of the following boards:

- Prevent Management Board and the Channel Panel
- Domestic Abuse Partnership Board, (including Slough related Domestic Homicide Reviews)
- Serious Violence Steering Group

The Partnership has also aligned itself with the following boards to support the delivery of outcomes to address combined priorities:

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Safe in Slough (Safeguarding) Partnership
- Slough Youth Justice Management Board
- Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel (OPCC).

The strategic priorities of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and allows us to work collaboratively with them and to access grant funding to deliver this work locally. The OPCC priorities include; Serious violence, Domestic abuse and Anti-social behaviour.

The Safer Slough Partnership vision is that we will: 'Work together to prevent all violence'. We are committed to changing people's attitude to violence, ensuring early signs of violent behaviour are recognised and responded to. We will deal robustly with violence when it has occurred.

The OPCC is moving towards a new model of 'Local Prevention Partnerships', which will have active local leadership and a strong focus on children and young people. The partnership will have one year to establish these and will look to Slough Children's First as a key partner in leading this.

The OPCC links Thames Valley's ASB Framework with an annual ASB Conference and a community grant which can be applied for by resident organisations, linking the community sector into funding specifically looking at helping to tackle ASB and motor vehicle crime.

2.4 Options considered

There is a statutory requirement upon the local authority to have a Community Safety Plan in place, as part of the policy framework of the council. As such, no other options were considered.

3 Background

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places obligations on Community Safety Partnerships to produce a three-yearly (or rolling annual) Community Safety Plan. The Community Safety Partnership Plan (also referred to as a Crime and Disorder Reduction Plan) is a statutory document.

The Community Safety Plan is the partnership foundation that sets out the Safer Slough Partnership four priorities:

- Substance misuse,
- Domestic abuse,
- Anti-social behaviour
- Serious violence.

3.1 Delivering the Crime and Disorder Act requirements

The statutory requirements are supplemented by best practice guidance from the Home Office: Guidance for Effective Partnerships 2007. These requirements set out how a CSP should approach the development and review of their Community Safety Plan.

3.2 Our Approach

18 July 2024 - Stakeholders within Safer Slough Partnership were initially engaged via the Safer Slough Partnership Board to gather relevant views as to their partnership contribution and commitments to the Community Safety Plan 2025-28.

OPCC analysts were commissioned to produce a Berkshire wide Strategic Assessment that included Slough. A redacted version of this assessment with Slough data can be found at appendix C.

June to August 2024 – The Community Safety online survey was launched to capture views on local priorities for community safety. Service providers were engaged to help to reach communities such as street homeless populations. The survey focused predominately on ranking of the key issues by residents. The response to the survey was modest (207) but the findings of this survey were then considered alongside the relevant priority issues. Key issues for residents included evidence of drug dealing in the neighbourhoods and litter/ fly tip anti-social behaviour.

3.3 Key findings from the survey:

Answers options

Levels have increased	Levels have stayed the same	Levels have decreased	Other
-----------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------	-------

Question	%	Most Popular Answer
Do you think that the level of crime and disorder in your local area has changed over the last 12 months?	82	Levels have increased
Do you think that the level of anti-social behaviour in your local area has changed over the last 12 months?	81	Levels have increased

Answer options

Not a Problem At All	Not A Very Big Problem	Fairly Big Problem	Very Big Problem	I Don't Know
----------------------	------------------------	--------------------	------------------	--------------

Question: In the past 12 months, how much of a problem do you think the following issues have been where you live or work? Please tick one option for each category.	%	Most Popular Answer
Burglary – domestic	42	Very Big Problem
Burglary – shed / garage	42	Very Big Problem
Child exploitation	63.4	I Don't Know
Drug dealing / taking	73.7	Very Big Problem
Criminal Damage	48.8	Very Big Problem
Knife Crime	62.9	Very Big Problem
Violence against Women & Girls (Honour based violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, sexual violence & exploitation, stalking, sexual harassment)	44.9	I Don't Know
Violent crime	50.2	Very Big Problem
Hate Crime (race, religion, sexuality, disability etc)	39	Very Big Problem
Flytipping	76.6	Very Big Problem
Begging and vagrancy	42.9	Very Big Problem
Rubbish / Litter	75.1	Very Big Problem
Parking	56.1	Very Big Problem
Supply / Selling of drugs	51.2	Very Big Problem

August 2024 - Initial draft scoping meetings were held with Thames Valley Police
August 2024 - Initial draft scoping meetings were held with Royal Berkshire Fire Service.

Key findings were reported to the January 2025 Safer Slough Partnership Meeting for consideration and discussion, having been a postponed item from the October 2024 Safer Slough Partnership meeting.

Oct 2024 - Police and Fire colleagues consulted on draft.

Oct 2024 - Cabinet Member for Public Health and Public Protection consulted on the draft.

23 January 2025 - Safer Slough Partnership board meeting was asked to consider and approved final draft version of the plan.

4 March 2025 - CISC reviewed the Safer Slough Partnership. (see minutes added in Appendix D)

3.4 How the Community Safety Plan will be implemented and managed

The Safer Slough Community Safety Plan will span 2025-2028 and the partnership will revise the plan on an annual basis to ensure the priorities chosen are still reflective of the Community Safety picture in Slough.

The priorities have been developed as work streams with a lead officer and action plan for each. The Strategic Assessment (Slough) informs the workstreams to aid them in developing actions. The Safer Slough Partnership carries out performance management of the plan, requiring the priority leads to submit a report on a quarterly basis to the Safer Slough Partnership Board.

The Safer Slough Partnership will also report into Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee with an update report annually. Following the committee there were four recommendations made that will be updated on to CISC, these were:

1. Identify outcome indicators by which the impact of the KPIs can be assessed.
2. Further information of who employs the street guardians and what qualifications do they have?
3. Requested evidence to show how the PSPO is being enforced and how the measures are being implemented.
4. Councillors wanted to know why Slough had received the lowest grant funding from the PCC for next year with one of the highest crimes and ASB levels in the country.

Going forward, the partnership will carry out an annual strategic assessment in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act and use this to inform further consultation with the community. The partnership will look to intensify this consultation and engagement work to reach further into communities. This will be in collaboration with CVS partners, to better understand the needs of different communities, in different parts of the Borough.

4. Implications of the Recommendation

4.1 *Financial implications*

The co-ordination of the Community Safety Plan is delivered from existing resources and there are no new direct financial implications relating to the Council from the recommendations of this report.

The delivery of the Community Safety Plan is joint funded from a combination of external funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) (formerly Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUC)) as well as Slough Borough Council General Fund, however, the indicative level of OPCC funding is expected to significantly reduce for 2025/26 as set out below:

Indicative Funding 2024/25 & 2025/26

Funding Source	Funding 2024/25 £000	2024/25 %	Funding 2025/26 £000	2025/26 %
OPCC	298	27%	79	9%
MHCLG	422	39%	422	48%
GF	371	34%	371	43%
Total	1,092	100%	873	100%

The overall funding available for 2025/26 is £873,000, which is 20% lower than 2024/25, due to the reduction in funding from OPCC. Therefore, the partnership will be required to reprioritise and rationalise resources to ensure that expenditure is contained within the reduced funding limits. This reduction in funding will require a considered review of all aspects of the Community Safety Plan.

4.2 Legal implications

Section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires responsible authorities to formulate and implement a strategy for reduction of crime and disorder in the area (including; anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, a strategy for combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area, a strategy for reduction of re-offending in the area and a strategy for preventing people from becoming involved in serious violence in the area and reducing instances of serious violence). In formulating the strategy, each responsible authority must have regard to the police and crime objectives set out in the police and crime plan for the police area.

Regulations require a strategy group to prepare a partnership plan setting out the above strategy, the priorities identified in the strategic assessment, the necessary steps to take to implement the strategy and meet the priorities and how resources should be allocated and success measured. In preparing the strategic assessment, the strategy group must make arrangements to seek the views of persons and bodies living or working in the area and there should be consultation, so far as is reasonable, with interested parties on the strategy.

When undertaking consultation, the decision-maker (in this case Full Council) must conscientiously take into account the responses to the consultation before making a final decision.

The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 requires adoption of a plan specified in the policy framework is not to be the function of the executive. The Crime and Disorder Reduction Plan under s.5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 is specified as part of the policy framework and adoption is reserved to Full Council, however Cabinet is entitled to review and formulate the plan for submission to Full Council.

4.3 Risk management implications

As the delivery of partnership interventions on the Community Safety Plan priorities is heavily reliant on grant funding there is a risk that this resourcing could change, this would require the partnership to prioritise activities, potentially impeding the ability of the partnership to tackle these issues affectively.

4.4 Environmental implications

There are no climate change implications.

4.5 Corporate Parenting Implications

Nationally, it is recognised that care-experienced young people are approximately 5 times more likely to enter the criminal justice system than their none 'looked-after' peers.¹ The Safer Slough Partnership is compelled to identify the most vulnerable cohorts to facilitate the serious violence duty and then to work to implement programmes that aim to prevent these young people from becoming involved in serious violence and crime.

Slough Children's First are a key stakeholder of the Safer Safe Partnership and are committed to being outstanding corporate parents, championing our most vulnerable children in all that we do, so our looked after children are able to live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives.

As part of the new prevention partnerships, the partnership may need to consider approaches to preventing violence and serious crime that effectively support this specific group of young people.

4.6 Equality implications

Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome. The equalities impact will be revisited on each of the proposals as they are developed.

The Equalities Impact Assessment for the Slough Community Safety Partnership has been completed and is attached. This overarching Community Safety Plan is intended to have a positive impact on the whole Slough community. The individual strategies that sit beneath this overarching plan will address the specific groups affected and align actions and commissioning decisions accordingly.

Groups impacted by this plan

Anyone can be a victim of crime. The Safer Slough Community Safety Plan is a partnership document, which when implemented is intended to have a positive impact on the whole of Slough.

The plan identifies 4 key priorities:

Serious violence
Domestic abuse
Anti-social behaviour
Substance misuse

Each of these priorities has a strategy, with a separate EQIA completed.

We know that although crime can affect anyone, certain groups are more susceptible to being victims of certain types of crime.

Serious violence, in particular knife crime will disproportionately affect young men and those in BME communities.

Domestic Abuse disproportionately affects women who are 84% of victims.

Anti-social behaviour research suggests that young people are more exposed to asb than older people.

Those more exposed to ASB, those who live in more deprived areas or who have a mental or physical health condition were more likely to experience significant impacts from it.

Substance misuse

Work done by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) identified those groups most at risks from harm from using drugs.

These were:

vulnerable young people (including those not in education, employment or training [NEETs], those in care, young offenders);

- offenders;
- families (including those with parents dependent on substances, and those involved with the 'troubled families' programmes);
- perpetrators and victims of intimate partner violence and abuse;
- sex workers;
- people who are homeless;
- veterans; and
- older people.

As with other reported crimes the recorded ethnicity data on police data is poor with 44% of suspects ethnicity not recorded in Slough.

In Domestic abuse cases 64% of Victims have no ethnicity recorded making it difficult to get a true understanding about whether an ethnicity is disproportionately affected.

When excluding the unknown ethnicities in DA, White British are overrepresented when compared with Slough's population and the Asian population is underrepresented but the lack of ethnicity reporting makes drawing conclusions from this difficult.

This issue of data capture is an issue of national significance and is one that the Safer Slough partnership in conjunction with the OPCC, will seek to influence wherever it can.

4.6.1 Corporate Equality Objectives

The Safer Slough Partnership Community Safety Plan is also contributing positively towards corporate equality objectives:

Objective 1

Improve Outcomes for Children and Young People who are more likely to be disadvantaged based on their protected characteristics, including SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

We know from our partnership work to build a Slough Exploitation Strategy, that young people, particularly those who may have neurodiversity, can be susceptible to exploitation and so the partnership will work to raise awareness of this issue.

Objective 2

Work with partners, including housing providers, to target health inequalities and well-being between those from different protected characteristic groups.

By working to prevent serious violence the plan is contributing to reducing preventable deaths, particularly amongst younger people.

Objective 3

Work with partners to improve Community Safety, focusing on violence experienced by women and girls.

Women and girls are the primary focus along with children, for the Domestic Abuse priority, providing education and support direct to victims, but also training and supporting the partnership workforce will contribute to this objective.

5. Background Papers

None.