

## **SAFER STOCKTON PARTNERSHIP**

A meeting of Safer Stockton Partnership was held on Wednesday 22 January 2025.

**Present:** Cllr Norma Stephenson (Chair), Cllr Pauline Beall, Andy Evans, Marc Stephenson, Jen Moore, Mandy Mackinon, Darren Lane, Chris Dunwell, Sharon Cooney, Sarah Bowman-Abouna, Eddie Huntington, Kay Nicolson and Adam Bateman.

**Officers:** John Devine.

**Also in attendance:**

**Apologies:** Cllr Steve Nelson, Jon Wrintmore, Majella McCarthy, Karen Hawkins, Leanne Maloney-Kelly.

### **SSP/4724 Evacuation Procedure**

The Evacuation Procedure was noted by members.

### **SSP/4824 Introductions/ Apologies**

Members made Introductions and noted the Apologies.

### **SSP/4924 Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting from Wednesday 22nd January 2025 were agreed as a true record.

### **SSP/5024 Update on DHRs**

Members were given an update on the current Domestic Homicide Reviews underway. Three had been undertaken recently with one now complete, the other two had yet to formal start and members were reminded that they could be asked to participate.

Officers also noted that the Stockton Community Safety Plan was being reviewed, and Officers would look at including member of the partnership going forward.

Members Noted the Update.

### **SSP/5124 Recorded Crime & Disorder Report**

This report provided an overview on recorded crime, anti-social behaviour incidents and domestic abuse in the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees for the 12-month period of December 2023 to the end of December 2024.

Officers highlighted several sections of the report for members, Officers focused on the reductions which had been outlined in the report. Some examples of which were Police Generated Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour, Criminal Damage and Burglary (Residential & Business),

However, Officers also highlighted the following increases, Arson, Trafficking of Drugs and rape. The December figures showed a large number of reductions, but all Officers and partners were aware of the serious nature of the increase in crimes such as Arson and Rape. The Police were continuing to work with all relevant partners to see reductions in those areas.

Members agreed with Officers that the general reduction in overall crime was progress and would be glad to see the trend continue in the coming months.

Members AGREED to note the report.

#### **SSP/5224 Operation Nightfall**

Members were given an update report on Operation Nightfall which was concentrated within the Ropner Ward. Since the operation had started in January 2024 over a hundred patrols had been undertaken by Officers, which had resulted in a significant increase in the intelligence reports. This had enabled Officers and Partners to address the needs of both the community and those vulnerable individuals.

Relationships and ties with the local community had enabled significant strides to be taken, such as working closely with A Way Out to provide vulnerable individuals involved in the on street sex work support that they need to come forward.

As the operation continues Stockton Borough Council and Cleveland Police, alongside A Way Out would continue to focus on the long-term solutions to address the underlying causes of on street sex work. The approach of Operation Nightfall had been to prioritise harm reduction, and safeguard everyone involved. This included sex workers, residents and the wider community. Prosecutions of those seeking those services in the area were pursued with a focus on protection those at risk and addressing any behaviour that would undermine the community's safety.

Officers praised the work of all involved partners and invited members to further discussions to ensure that success of Operation Nightfall going forward. Officers from A Way Out also informed members that working towards securing drop-in sessions with a pilot set to take place in the coming months.

Members Agreed to note the report.

#### **SSP/5324 Community Tension Monitoring**

This item was deferred to another meeting due to Officers being unable to attend the meeting.

Members Agreed to defer the report.

#### **SSP/5424 Project Harmony/ Shield Update**

Officers began by giving Members a brief overview of Project Harmony, and how it was a part of a Home Office initiative using the Clear, Hold, Build strategy.

As mentioned in the Operation Nightfall agenda item project Harmony is focused around the Ropner Ward, and it the work to build relationships in the area were begun

through Project Harmony. Members were informed that as project Harmony continued into 2025 Officers would see the interlinking of the Community Safety and Community engagement portfolios, with Officers approach being around building up residents to feel empowered in their community. Officers provided an example of this with the resident's associations within the ward, which Officers and partners regularly attend.

Officers were continuing to work closely with the neighbourhood policing team and the newly formed Selective Licensing Team, as well as local housing providers like Thirteen & Accent Housing to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour. Members would be aware that ASB was decreasing across the area, however the perception of crime hadn't followed but by working with partners members hoped that would change.

Operation Shield was then discussed with Members, Officers explained that the operation was currently being developed with regards to Stockton Town Centre. The operation was undertaken following consultation with the public and their concerns around crime & anti-social behaviour, shoplifting and aggressive begging. As members and partners would be aware the some of the previously mentioned issues were related to substance misuse which could be drugs or alcohol, Operation Shield would seek to address these issues using realistic and effective legislative measures. This would take the form of PSPOs, joint patrols with Police and other partners while also acknowledging the link between addiction and housing insecurity, poverty and unemployment which can all be drivers to crime.

While specifics of the operation were still in development Officers highlighted a success story of the proposed joint working, five wanted persons had been apprehended by Police working with CCTV operators and Town Centre Officers.

Members AGREED to note the updates.

## **SSP/5524 Selective Licensing**

Officers gave a brief overview of the scheme, which was approved by Cabinet in May 2024 and was then introduced from 1st November 2024. The scheme is scheduled to run for five years. The scheme would be applied to privately rented housing in the three designated licence areas within Stockton. It would also include smaller HMO's (Less than 5 people) but organisations like Thirteen etc would not come under the Selective Licensing Scheme.

The introduction of the Selective Licensing scheme was aimed at improving several identified issues. Some of these issues were significant or persistent problems caused by Anti-Social Behaviour, high levels of crime and high levels of deprivation.

Across the three licence areas in the borough almost a thousand applications had been received. With Officers noting the amount for each area, Central Stockton had received 275 applications, North Thornaby had received 182 applications, and Newton had received 105 applications.

Officers highlighted the mandatory conditions set out in the Housing Act 2004, a gas safety certificate had to be supplied within 14 days upon demand, Electrical installation certificates/reports were required to be supplied within 7 days upon demand, Smoke & Carbon Monoxide alarm declaration as to the condition, positioning and testing alarms to be provided with 14 upon demand.

Further discretionary conditions were also brought to members attention, some examples were, that management would be undertaken by a fit and proper person, that neighbours hold details of the license holder, yearly inspections were undertaken and that license holders co-operate with ASB/ Police and other associated agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour.

Officers were keen to stress that the Scheme had not been operation for very long and would bring back further updates to the Committee.

Members noted the report.

#### **SSP/5624 Prevent (CT) Update**

Officers and members were aware that the Prevent Scheme had been in the news following the South Port attacks. Following the perpetrator pleading guilty and it being disclosed that he had been a subject of the Prevent Programme when he was 13.

A report would be published on the lessons learned and Officers would be taking part in a review of the Scheme. The Chair noted that this was an example to all why the Prevent Strategy should be taken seriously by all partners.

Officers explained that the Prevent Strategy was just one of the various ways the Council and Partners can intervene and divert people from becoming radicalised.

Members noted the update.

#### **SSP/5724 Any Other Business**

Members requested that an update on Substance abuse be added to the forward plan.

#### **SSP/5824 iQuanta Report**

Members were presented with a restricted report that provided an overview on crime comparisons against other similar CSPs utilising iQuanta.

This report was a restricted document due to the statistical information only made available as an intelligence tool for partnerships until released by the Home Office.

AGREED that the report be noted.

#### **SSP/5924 SC Performance**

Officers were unable to give the update to members due to illness, but the draft document would be circulated to members following the meeting.