

Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27

Date: 14th November 2024

Report of: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

Report to: Council

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report presents the appended Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27 and sets out the strategic direction of Leeds Community Safety Partnership (CSP), the Safer Leeds Executive, which has responsibility for holding partners to account in keeping communities in Leeds safe by tackling crime and disorder.

The Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27 will replace the Safer, Stronger Communities: Leeds Plan (2021 - 2024) and forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. As such, its adoption is in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework procedure rules for consideration by Executive Board prior to formal approval by Full Council.

This strategy will contribute directly to the Best City Ambition, specifically in relation to the Wellbeing pillar and the focus on keeping people safe and feeling safe.

Fundamental to this approach will be connecting the wider social and economic determinants that impact on safer and stronger communities and the interdependencies and cross-cutting nature of community safety issues, regardless of the presenting crime. We will look to do this through effective partnership collaboration with communities and through joint work with local connected boards (e.g., Health and Wellbeing Board, Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership, Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board) and key West Yorkshire boards, including the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and our wider valued and trusted voluntary and community sector.

Recommendations

Full Council is requested to:

- a) Adopt the Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27 attached as Appendix 1 to this report and recommend to Full Council its formal adoption.
- b) Note that the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment will lead and implement the Strategy which will supersede the Leeds Community Strategy 2021 - 2024.
- c) Note that the strategy forms part of the budget and policy framework and it is not eligible for call-in.

What is this report about?

- 1 The Safer Leeds Executive has a statutory requirement to prepare and implement a Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy. Locally, this strategy will be known as the Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27.
- 2 In line with the Team Leeds approach, we recognise that no single agency can address the complex risks, threats and harm alone. The following are committed to working collectively through the Safer Leeds Executive in line with the agreed terms of reference and information sharing protocols:

Leeds City Council, West Yorkshire Police, Public Health, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service; West Yorkshire Probation Services, HMP Service and the Voluntary & Community Sector.
- 3 The plan sets out the overarching ambition of the Community Safety Partnership: 'People in Leeds are safe and feel safe in their homes, in the streets and the places they go'.
- 4 The approach used to develop the refreshed strategy has changed since the last iteration, placing more focus on the Problem-Solving Triangle which is an established community safety methodology. Interventions should wherever possible seek to eliminate at least one element of the triangle leading to a reduction/eradication of the community safety issue. The focus on these three areas is fundamental to our overall approach to tackling community safety effectively.
 - Victim - Keep People Safe
 - Offender - Deter and Disrupt Offending
 - Location - Community Cohesion and Resilience
- 5 Building Trust and Confidence in community safety services and in our partnership working arrangements is critical to ensure people have confidence in providing community information and reporting incidents and crime. Without this we will be unable to deploy our resources effectively intelligently and will not be able to address the already significant issue of under reported crime.

The Community Safety Strategic Assessment completed early in 2024, identified the following strategic crime and disorder issues, and we will seek to address these through the Delivery Boards and key deliverables included in the strategy:

- Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Hate Crime
- Illicit Drugs and Substance Use
- Neighbour nuisance and ASB
- Theft and Neighbourhood Crime
- Violent and Sexual Crimes (incorporating Organised Crime and Urban Street gangs)
- Reducing Offending Behaviours

Work in the above areas will be supported and supplemented by the cross-cutting activity as detailed in the Community Cohesion and Resilience section of the strategy.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 6 The Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27 sets out the strategic direction of the Safer Leeds Executive and will guide the work of the Community Safety Partnership and its work with communities across the city.
- 7 Several Delivery Boards will take forward plans to deliver the strategy for the next three years (2024-27) and report progress to Safer Leeds Executive against the key deliverables through regular highlight reports. However, reporting against strategic community safety themes is often complex, and uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative data, along with professional judgement and the experience of professionals working in these areas to understand the nuances of effective performance and outcomes measurement. For example, improving confidence to report incidents of Domestic Violence, Hate Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour, etc, will lead to increased crime reporting, however this does not necessarily equate to an increase in the prevalence of these incidents. Performance is regularly reviewed and evaluated by the appropriate local partnership arrangements, supported by the work of the Performance and Intelligence Team. In addition, thematic areas of priority are overseen and held to account by the Safer Leeds Executive and further inspected as part of the regular Communities, Housing and Environments Scrutiny Board.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 8 This plan supports the Health and Wellbeing Strategy's outcome of: 'People will live in healthy, safe, and sustainable communities. Specifically, it links directly to the safer, stronger communities' active application of working with and for communities, families, and individuals, so people are safe and feel safe in their homes, in the streets, and the places they go. The impact of crime and disorder has a direct correlation with people's health and wellbeing, experienced by some members of the communities and different population groups.
- 9 This plan also supports the Inclusive Growth pillar and the ambition for Leeds to have a strong economy within a compassionate city. Specifically, it links directly to the safer, stronger communities' emphasis on early identification, prevention, and intervention, so as a city we can be responsive to local needs by working with individuals, families and communities before a crisis point and prevent future victimisation and offending.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 10 Before developing the strategy, the Community Safety Partnership has identified the key local crime and disorder priorities and activity through a strategic needs assessment. It has used data collected from residents of Leeds through the 'Your Voice' survey conducted by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to understand perceptions of safety and residents' main concerns relating to community safety. We have also engaged third sector partners and community groups to understand the key community safety issues whilst also seeking feedback from groups and networks that represent the diverse communities of Leeds, including the Religion or Belief and Disability and LGBT+ hubs.
- 11 The strategy has been developed in consultation with the Executive Member for Communities, Customer Service and Community Safety and the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment approved a Delegated Decision to authorise the release of the draft Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27 for a formal 6-week public consultation exercise on 22nd May 2024.
- 12 As part of due diligence and scrutiny, the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board received early sight of the draft Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27. On 18 July 2024, (in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework procedure rules), the draft strategy was presented to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) and supported as part of the formal consultation, prior to proceeding to this Executive Board for its consideration. Scrutiny Board supported the direction of travel for the proposed strategy, with a particular offer of support around the Hate Crime agenda. This has now been added to the Scrutiny Board work program and will be discussed in detail in December 2024.
- 13 Finally, partners and representatives from a range of stakeholders (Leeds City Council; West Yorkshire Police; West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service; Prison & Probation Service; the Voluntary and Community Sector, Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board, Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board; and the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership have helped ensure the strategy has been developed in an appropriately co-produced way.

What are the resource implications?

- 14 Resources are in place to progress activity against the delivery of the strategy, notwithstanding significant efficiencies being delivered over the last three years against the net managed budget for Safer Stronger Communities. Further savings requirements in support of the wider council budget challenges may result in reshaping/redesigning service delivery through the life span of the new strategy if required.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 15 National developments in relation to changes in legislation and developing governmental priorities have brought both challenges and opportunities for the city, which the strategy aims to address.
- 16 Several strategic operational boards are in place as part of the governance and accountability framework of Safer Leeds, to manage both the risks and threats presented

within the strategy as well as providing flexibility to adjust to any new national priorities and/or emerging local issues, linking to the corporate risk relating to community cohesion. In addition, connections to other relevant governance boards in Leeds and across West Yorkshire will be maintained and strengthened.

- 17 There are potential risks associated with the need for ongoing budget reductions and efforts will be taken to manage any resourcing reductions, so they have the least impact on capacity and capability as has been the case in recent years.

What are the legal implications?

- 18 This Strategy is made pursuant to the Council's statutory duty set out in s.5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 19 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.
- 20 The Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27 is a refresh of and supersedes the Safer, Stronger Communities: Leeds Plan (2021-2024) which features within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework as the Strategy forms part of the Budget and Policy Framework the recommendations are not subject to call-in. As set out above, as part of the Budget and Policy Framework procedure rules, the relevant Scrutiny Board has already been consulted on the initial proposals.

What other options were considered?

- 21 None, as the Community Safety Partnership has a legislative requirement to develop a refreshed 3-year community safety strategy and to ensure the strategy is informed by a locally produced Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and consultation.

How will success be measured?

- 22 A performance and accountability framework is in place to monitor and track progress against outcomes, performance indicators and activity, including regular highlight reports from the Chairs of the respective Boards.
- 23 Additionally, the delivery of the plan will be monitored through the preparation of an annual report which will provide a summary of key areas of work for each of the priorities. The final annual report for 2023/24 relating to the Safer, Stronger Communities: Leeds Plan (2021-2024) is included on the agenda for this meeting.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 24 The Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27 will be in place for the next 3 years; the Safer Leeds Executive will collectively be responsible for the implementation; however the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment will oversee the Council's part in delivery.

Appendices

- 1) Leeds Community Safety Strategy 2024-27
- 2) Equality, Diversity, Cohesion, and Integration Screening

Background papers

None