

BRIEFING REPORT

Adults and Health Committee

Date of Meeting:	27 th March 2023
Report Title:	Safer Cheshire East Partnership Annual Report (2022-23)
Report of:	Helen Charlesworth-May, Executive Director, Adults, Health, and Integration
Report Ref No.	AH/43/2022-23

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1.** This is the Annual Report of the Safer Cheshire East Partnership (SCEP). (Appendix 1) The report provides a comprehensive overview of how Strategic Partners worked together during 2022/2023 to reduce crime and increase reassurance to members of the public across Cheshire East. The report also describes the purpose, aims and priorities of the Safer Cheshire East Partnership and evidences activity, challenges, and achievements during this year including reference to any on-going impact of COVID influencing Crime and Disorder responses in Cheshire East. Finally, the report includes a number of examples of how impact has been measured as part of its core business and project delivery, providing information describing how the Strategic Aims of SCEP have been implemented and how financial support provided by the Police and Crime Commissioners Office is directed to support identified priorities agreed by SCEP Partners.
- 1.2.** The purpose of the report is to evidence the Safer Cheshire East Partnership is undertaking its statutory responsibilities. This report also provides an opportunity to evidence how SCEP is fulfilling the functions to protect and support our communities and provide the reassurance that Cheshire East is a safe place to both work and live.

2. Background

- 2.1.** SCEP is a statutory partnership under The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and brings together 5 statutory partners (Cheshire East Council, Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Probation and Health) to understand and address Community Safety issues. Further Senior representation is also provided from Housing, Voluntary and Faith Sectors and other agency invites subject to agenda topics i.e. Prison Service. It has responsibility to lead Community

Safety arrangements across the Cheshire East footprint and to oversee and coordinate the effectiveness of SCEP work and of its member and partner agencies.

- 2.2. SCEP reports to both CE Leaders Board and provides information to CE Scrutiny Committee on areas of key activity. In addition, SCEP will take reports through the CE Committee process to provide information and/or seek approval on key areas of work.
- 2.3. In addition to producing this Annual Report, SCEP also has a duty to produce a 3-year Strategic Intelligence Assessment (SIA) which uses data, intelligence, and analysis to identify SCEP priorities. Key priorities this year identified Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), Serious and Organised Crime (County Lines) and the exploitation of children and adults, Fraud and Anti-Social Behaviour. (Appendix 2 'Executive Summary of the SIA).
- 2.4. A Funding and Commissioning Plan exists to performance manage projects being delivered against SCEP priorities with regular quarterly reports provided at SCEP meetings.
- 2.5. Multi Agency Subgroups also have been established to focus on specific work areas directed through government i.e. Channel Panel, Combating Drugs Partnership and Serious Violence Duty.
- 2.6. The report also references a wide range of internal departments within Cheshire East Council who are responsible for areas of Community Safety as their core business and regularly contribute to SCEP agenda items and are represented in the subgroups delivery to impact on identified priorities.
- 2.7. SCEP has a statutory duty to commission Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR's) where it is established that a death has occurred resulting from Domestic Abuse for agencies to consider the circumstances and where learning can be identified to mitigate the risk of similar incidents occurring in the future. During this year SCEP has reported on an unprecedented 4 DHR's.
- 2.8. SCEP meets on a quarterly basis. However, there are many activities and subgroups which meet regularly throughout the year to support the work of the Board. A vital function of SCEP is to consistently work with other Strategic Partnership Boards and there are strong connections with the Adults Safeguarding Board, the Domestic Abuse Partnership, the Children's Safeguarding Partnership, and the Early Help Board.

3. Briefing Information

- 3.1. It should be noted that this Annual Report captures activity between April 2022 and March 2023, though there is reference to an overlap where funding allocated during 2021-2022 in which some projects were unable to commence until this year due to the impact of the COVID pandemic.
- 3.2. SCEP has continued to meet virtually using Microsoft Teams though a 'face to face' meeting in October 2022 was arranged at Safety Central which included a tour of the Cheshire and Fire Rescue facilities for partners ahead of the meeting. The Board has continued to adopt a consistent approach to agenda setting for Board meetings. This has enabled key information on all

areas of Community Safety to remain focussed and topical to keep members informed of any emerging themes, risk, or threats. It has also allowed to take account of changes in legislation or new directions of work identified by the Home Office.

- 3.3. It is significant that within Cheshire East Council, Community Safety is located within Adult Safeguarding and whilst this appears to be a unique arrangement across Cheshire LA's does provide a natural fit to support a number of work areas directly linked to exploitation. Evidence of this professional relationship can be evidenced through the referrals received into the Adult Safeguarding arena with Channel Panel, Fraud, Exploitation of Adults, learning from DHR's and Training to raise awareness of Community Safety concerns to name just a few. As an example, during National Safeguarding Adults Week in November 2022, (*referenced in the Annual Report*) SCEP funding secured the delivery of bespoke training around Exploitation and Extremism to a targeted group of front-line staff from Cheshire East including Library Staff, Environmental Health, and Housing Officers along with guests from external partner agencies. In addition, the Boards dedicated Safeguarding Trainer, has a dedicated role supporting Community Safety and includes within presentations issues relating to Human Trafficking, On-Line Safety, and other forms of Exploitation.
- 3.4. A number of SAB Board partners joined members of the Safer Cheshire East Partnership in March and November 2022 as part of the Serious and Organised Crime Boards Day of Action. These multi agency events aimed to raise awareness about Safeguarding and Community Safety and to hear how Cheshire East Residents may have been impacted by these issues.
- 3.5. SCEP has retained a supportive and encouraging role to organisations, providers, and practitioners during the pandemic, recognising the longer-term impact of COVID on all Front-Line Staff.
- 3.6. Finally, this is the first SCEP Annual Report which has been produced to evidence the work of all partners across Community Safety and as part of Adult Safeguarding the desire to be consistent with other Annual Reports provided.

4. Implications

4.1. Legal

- 4.1.1. SCEP is a statutory partnership under The Crime & Disorder Act 1998

4.2. Finance

- 4.2.1. SCEP is supported by an annual funding allocation of £147.566 provided by the Police and Crime Commissioners Office with strict funding guidance processes in place for partners of SCEP to complete timely applications for consideration.
- 4.2.2. The Annual Report provides a breakdown of the PCC funding allocation and provides a summary of where funding has been approved and directed by SCEP partners. A process is in place for SCEP and the PCC to receive regular quarterly performance reports relating to delivery, progress and more importantly impact on how funds are being utilised.

4.2.3. The funding supports a range of projects which meet the priorities identified in the Strategic Intelligence Assessment and consistent with those identified through the PCC Crime Plan.

4.2.4. The PCC does not usually accept funding applications to support SCEP administration and this resource should be provided by the Local Authority.

4.3. Risks

4.3.1. The work of SCEP relies heavily on the contributions of partner agencies and it is evident how an increase in workloads has placed additional pressures on SCEP partners. It should be highlighted, therefore, the risks associated in being able to maintain these required levels of support.

4.3.2. Examples are demonstrated in the Report of two new areas of work which have been directed through the Home Office this year. Namely the Combating Drugs Partnership and Serious Violence Duty. These are examples of where additional resources will be required as spotlight will be placed on SCEP partners to meet the demands to changes in legislation.

4.3.3. An increase in the number of Domestic Homicide Reviews whilst has an increase on partner capacity serves as an indicator as to the conditions currently being experienced within local communities.

4.3.4. These examples increase the levels of risk being managed within SCEP and there is a requirement to communicate these and similar issues raised in SCEP with other Strategic Partnership Boards and with Senior Managers within the Council.

4.3.5. Within the current Governance arrangements SCEP reports through the CE Health & Social Committee to highlight issues of main concern and for decisions relating to resource implications.

4.4. Human Resources

4.4.1. Linked to the risks highlighted in 4.3, the increase in demands will have a direct impact on the capacity of officers working within Cheshire East responsible for SCEP workloads.

Access to Information	
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Appendices:	Safer Cheshire East Partnership Annual Report 2022/2023 Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2022-25 'Executive Summary'
Background Papers:	None.