

1 Background

1.1 The Council agreed the following motion at its meeting held on 26th July 2016:

“This Council resolves to work with Thames Valley Police through the Safer Slough Partnership to prioritise its response to counter the increase in serious sex crimes around the town and to reduce the fear of sexual offences across the Borough.”

1.2 Following agreement of the motion, Slough Safer Partnership formed a Task and Finish Group to provide insight and direct resources. This report provides an overview of the approach taken by the SSP; its priorities, outlines the success of the Task and Finish Group and sets out some of the longer term plans.

SSP focus – context

1.3 The Safer Slough Partnership (SSP) is the local statutory Community Safety Partnership for Slough. The purpose of the Partnership is to provide a strategic and co-operative approach for addressing local crime and anti-social behaviour within the Borough. The Safer Slough Partnership is chaired by the Chief Executive and co-chaired by the Police Borough Commander with representatives from statutory and community partners in attendance.

1.4 As the Local Authority whilst we can't control all crime and perceptions of crime, we can use our influence at the SSP to monitor, review and help shift partners toward collaborative interventions based on known risks in Slough and to develop sustainable solutions that stem from evidence and a foundation of research.

1.5 The SSP is focused to ensure that it has the capabilities, skills and mechanisms to oversee the work of the statutory and non-statutory agencies represented at the Partnership. Over the last 12 months, the SSP has focused on providing support and coordination of a multi-agency response to crime and disorder, while reviewing Board membership, the performance management framework and the number and focus of the operational sub-groups that sit under the SSP.

1.6 The SSP has developed a new one page strategy. The strategy under pins the focus of the board, sub-groups and supports corporate strategies (for example the TVP Policing plan and the SBC Five year Plan). The SSP strategic goals have been developed around three core themes. These three themes are strategic and therefore do not specify in detail the operational objectives, but underpin the focus of the priority groups sitting under the SSP (see figure 1).

| Theme | Specific Focus | Delivery Mechanism |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Violence – Protecting People | Domestic Violence | VAWG group |
| | | World Café Events |
| | Alcohol | DAAT Partnership Board |
| | Youth and Gang Crime | Youth Violence Group |
| | | Serious Organised Crime Group |
| Resilience – People and Place | Crime Prevention | Parks and Open space T&F |
| | | Serious Organised Crime Group |

| | | |
|----------------|--|---|
| | Fear of Crime and Perception of Slough | Intensive Community Engagement Communication and media group (TBA) |
| | | Performance Management Group |
| | Designing out Crime | Slough Plan |
| Emerging Risks | Cyber Enabled Crime | TBA |
| | Modern Slavery | Modern Slavery and Exploitation Group |

Figure 1

- 1.7 The creation of a new Performance Management Group, and a new performance management framework, provides the SSP with a valuable tool to manage the delivery of the strategy, oversight of the three key thematic areas and operational groups – Business as usual, Priority Delivery and Task and Finish Groups (See figure 2).

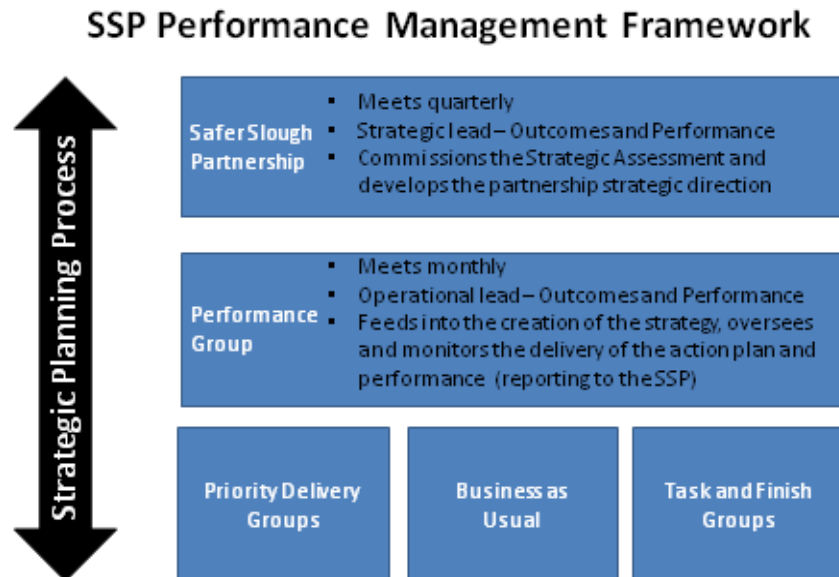


Figure 2

- 1.8 A review and consolidation of sub-groups has led to the formation of a number of new priority delivery groups.

- Violence Against Women and Girls group (VAWG) – focused on Domestic Abuse, FGM, Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence. This group draws together the DA Strategic group, operational deliver group and the FGM LSCB sub group. This new group is focused on reducing violence against women (including sexual assault and rape, which equates to two thirds of reported incidents in Slough).
- Modern Slavery and Exploitation group – this is an emerging are of work for the SSP and aligns the SSP with the work of the Anti-Slavery Commission and the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner.
- Two groups focusing on Youth Crime – the Youth Violence Group focused on the operational delivery and support of young people and the Multi-Agency Serious Organised Crime Group, with a focus on gangs and disruption A process of forming specific task and finish groups to provide a short and focused response when needed has already provided tangible results at a time when partner resources are limited.

- 1.9 The changes to the SSP will enable the partnership to support agencies to focus on the risks faces by Slough residents from what are seen as traditional crimes to the unknown and unquantified emerging risks. The Performance Management Group provides an invaluable function of monitoring and horizon scanning, allowing the SSP Board to keep a strategic view of Slough.
- 1.10 A refocus of the operational groups (including a merger of groups) provides a specific focus where needed, while recognising the need for sustainability and collaboration.
- 1.11 While there are many challenges facing the members of the SSP, the review and subsequent changes to the SSP Board in membership and structure will provide the SSP with the skills, knowledge and ability to monitor, review and to best use of the resources available to deliver of local priorities for Slough.

2 SSP Task and Finish Group

- 2.1 The Safer Slough Partnership commissioned the formation of a Task and Finish Group, Chaired by Ketan Gandhi. To enable this group to be effective, Ketan commissioned research into Sexual Crimes in Slough. It was important to use intelligence led methods to focus on the right areas. Slough has 254 hectares of parks and open spaces making up 89 parks, sports grounds and recreational spaces. It was no surprise that this research identified Salt Hill Park as an area of focus while providing oversight on other areas.
- 2.2 The Task and Finish Group included Cllr Sohal and Cllr Bains. Unfortunately due to work commitments Cllr Bains was unable to attend the meetings, but instead was kept informed via email. The Fire Service, Police, Parks, Voluntary Sector, Youth Services and Community Safety and comments from Park users (research carried out by a local undergraduate student) made up a multi-agency problem solving group. An action plan was formed with short, medium and long term solutions.

Short Term

- 2.3 As part of a public reassurance campaign, we had police in the park on foot, on bikes and on horses. We fitted temporary mobile CCTV cameras, monitored by our CCTV control room. The Fire Service made random visits to the park during unsocial hours, using their high powered lights to scan the areas near the A4. Meanwhile, we tweeted and talked about what we were doing in the park at every opportunity.

Medium Term

- 2.4 The parks team worked to remove high hedging, dense foliage and improve the physical appearance of Salt Hill Park. Local groups engaged in activities in the park in the evening including poetry in the park. Regular inspections of parks have taken place to ensure maintenance such as cleansing etc is being undertaken to required standards. Green gyms have been introduced to a large number to our parks and this again contributes towards increased usage of our parks for positive activities.

Long Term

2.5 We have launched the 'love our parks' campaign which aims to raise the positive profile of our parks as well as encourage residents to become involved in schemes such as 'friends of' groups.

2.6 The original task and finish group morphed in to a wider Slough safe, clean and better marketed group as part of this group the following are key actions:

- Improved lighting in our parks and open spaces through integrating it into Sloughs lighting initiative.
- Work with the police to enhance offender profiling to be utilised to better prevent incidents.
- Make the cleansing and maintenance contract more specific re cleansing and reporting of incidents / damage.
- Identify solutions to enable easier reporting and recording of incidents.
- Continue to build on current events programme in parks.
- Develop a culture of 'local ownership' of our parks.

2.7 The VAWG group was formed to broaden the partnership focus from Domestic abuse to a wider view of violence to women and girls. This has led to the development of a shift from specialist services to operational and community intervention. The start of this is the formation of a Domestic Abuse Champion's Network, enabling more frontline professionals to take an active role in helping to reduce harm. The shift from Specialist to Professional will help to problem solve at an earlier level.

2.8 Working with young people is an area where we need to focus if we are to change gender perceptions. We have just commissioned a 4 year programme working in Primary and Secondary Schools to increase the resilience of the next Generation. This work will address a range of harms from CSE, Grooming, Online risks, Sexualisation and gang involvement. The work is at pilot stage at the moment, but will be made available to all schools in Slough over a period of time.

3. **Conclusion**

3.1 The SSP has taken the issue of Sexual Offences Seriously and this is now starting to show in a reduction. As with most reductions it is not just one intervention or project that makes the difference, but a number of small incremental successes.