

**CABINET  
15TH JULY 2014**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT  
NO. CEX1401**

**MERGER OF NORTH HAMPSHIRE COMMUNITY  
SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) were established as statutory bodies under Sections 5-7 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. CSPs are required to have representatives from 'responsible authorities' – the district councils, and from statutory partners - Police, Fire, Probation Services, County Council and Clinical Commissioning Groups. The partners are required to work together to develop and implement strategies to protect their local communities from crime and to help people feel safe. They work out local approaches to deal with issues including antisocial behaviour, drug or alcohol misuse and re-offending.
- 1.2 Over the years, Rushmoor's Community Safety Partnership has proved successful in delivering a range of priorities to make the Borough safer. In recent years, changes in national and local frameworks have resulted in closer working at both county and local levels and recently work has been undertaken to support closer co-operation between the three Community Safety Partnerships operating across North East Hampshire (Basingstoke and Deane, Hart and Rushmoor).
- 1.3 As a result, this Report proposes that the three district based Community Safety Partnerships are merged into one strategic partnership for North Hampshire, serviced by the officer team of Safer North Hampshire.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In the summer of 2012, the authorities received a report with the outcomes of a review of the Community Safety Partnerships and the teams that support them in Basingstoke and Deane, Rushmoor and Hart. The report included recommendations seeking to make working arrangements more efficient and effective, improving the service delivered to residents across the area and seeking to forge closer working arrangements between the Community Safety Partnerships. As a result, a shared community safety service known as Safer North Hampshire came into effect on 1st November, 2012.

- 2.2 The Safer North Hampshire team has both operational and strategic roles. The operational focus is primarily dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) casework, managing intervention programmes for offenders through multi-agency working, with particular priorities of reducing repeat victimisation and repeat offending. At a strategic level, the team, primarily through the Community Safety Manager and Analyst roles, delivers a range of activity across the three districts, including publishing a joint strategic assessment and partnership plan, producing monthly incident analysis reports for the Community Tasking and Coordinating Group in each district and coordinating the three Community Safety Partnerships. The team provides effective synergy to a wide range of community safety activities right across the area.
- 2.3 A recent review shows that the shared service arrangements for the officer team are working well and has delivered a number of improvements, particularly with regard to processes and partnerships, without significantly diminishing the scope of the strategic services offered. Given that the shared service is now embedded, it is now considered desirable to progress the formal merger of the three community safety partnerships.

### 3. **MERGER OF COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS**

- 3.1 Over the last year work has been undertaken to move towards the merger of the three CSPs, although it is recognised that there is still the option of retaining the existing arrangements. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as amended in 2012, the Police and Crime Commissioner can only merge CSPs together where such a move would be in the interests of one or more of the following criteria:
1. reduce crime and disorder
  2. reduce reoffending
  3. combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances
- 3.2 The proposal to merge the three CSPs would be in the interest of all these criteria. It would bring a strategic approach to addressing the issues that have already been identified as common across the three areas, and bring consistency of message and response from all agencies in the Partnerships. Partnership resources would be maintained across the Safer North Hampshire area and, where necessary, could be enhanced to address specific priorities in local neighbourhoods through the targeted deployment of resources or campaign information. (local authorities' interests with regard to the financial contributions to the officer team of Safer North Hants would continue to be safeguarded through a Deed of Delegation.)
- 3.3 A merger of CSPs legally has to have certain characteristics, namely that there must be
- Unanimous buy-in from all responsible authorities;
  - Clear evidence of benefits arising from the merger;
  - Clear commitment to focus on Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) priorities;

- One Overview and Scrutiny body across the 3 districts; and
  - Unanimous agreement of all responsible authorities if the agreement is to be dissolved.
- 3.4 The PCC for Hampshire, Mr Simon Hayes, has indicated he is supportive of a merger in principle, subject to evidence that the arrangements fulfil the criteria set out in the legislation. A Combination Agreement setting out the legal framework for the operation of a merged CSP would need to be signed by the relevant parties and approved by the PCC. The CSP would also have Terms of Reference setting out its governance structures and procedures for its strategic activity across the three districts. Each council would be represented through its relevant portfolio holder (in Rushmoor's case the Cabinet Member for Business, Safety and Regulation) and by the Safer North Hampshire Community Safety Manager as the lead officer for each authority. A representative of each of the statutory partners would also be a member of the CSP.
- 3.5 The structure chart at Appendix 1 shows how the CSP would relate to community safety forums retained at a local level and with the operational groups working on specific issues. It also shows that council priorities will be fed into the work of the CSP via the Safer North Hampshire officer team, and that the CSP will be accountable to a joint overview and scrutiny committee which is a requirement of the Combination Agreement.
- 3.6 Where CSPs operating beyond the boundary of just one local authority area are proposed, the legislation (Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act, 2006) requires that the local authorities will establish a joint overview and scrutiny committee to discharge duties under the Act with regard to the decisions and functions of the one CSP. The governance framework for the joint overview and scrutiny committee, comprised of councillors from Basingstoke and Deane, Hart and Rushmoor, is now being developed to ensure proportionate political representation and operating protocols. The draft Terms of Reference for the joint committee is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.7 As part of the arrangements, consideration of other crime and disorder and community safety matters would remain with the individual authorities. In Rushmoor's case, this means that the Borough Services Panel would continue to carry out its on-going monitoring of community safety issues within Rushmoor.
- 3.8 The alternative is to retain the three CSPs in each district. While they have been operating effectively and cooperation between the respective areas has been good, a merged CSP offers greater potential for achieving improved strategic outcomes. Retaining the three CSPs is therefore not the favoured option, but they would remain in the circumstance that one of the responsible authorities was not in favour of the merger.
- 3.9 Operational multi-agency meetings addressing priorities at a local level will still continue.

#### **4. DISCUSSIONS WITHIN AUTHORITIES**

- 4.1 Each of the three authorities has discussed the proposed merger at their overview and scrutiny committee. Whilst some issues of detail have been raised, there has been general support for the proposed merger. The Borough Services Panel was comfortable with the approach but was keen to ensure that a local structure was retained for dealing with Rushmoor based items.
- 4.2 The Cabinet at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and Hart District Council have already considered the proposed merger and are recommending their full Councils to give approval.

#### **5. IMPLICATIONS OF THE MERGER**

- 5.1 The CSP is at the core of achieving community safety outcomes through partnership working. The proposals seek to make the combined efforts of all parties effective in combatting crime and disorder. The implications of the merger are broadly as follows:
- There are no adverse financial implications arising from the merger of the three CSPs. The structure of Safer North Hampshire has been established with a view to operating with one strategic CSP in the future. The Council's contribution to the Safer North Hampshire officer team is factored into the approved budget for 2014/15. The success of funding applications made on behalf of the Safer North Hampshire authorities shows that there are positive financial implications for delivery of community safety services by the integrated team.
  - When the Safer North Hampshire team structure was established, it was assumed that they would operate to one CSP in the future. Currently, the staff are being harmonised into Rushmoor's employment terms and conditions as the employing authority. There might be implications were the merger not to be approved given that some additional support may be required to separate CSPs.
  - The new arrangements are within the legal provisions for community safety partnerships, provided that the PCC approves the merger and he has already done this in principle.
  - The statutory partners of the relevant CSPs in each district will be considering the merger proposal and will need to formally approve the merger through their respective decision making processes. It is likely that the other partners will support this proposal.
- 5.2 Subject to the details being finalised, it is intended that the one strategic Community Safety Partnership for North Hampshire can be established during the autumn of 2014.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Given the way that community safety partnerships have evolved over the years and the successful working arrangements for the Safer North Hampshire team, it is considered that a formal merger would support all partners in their work to reduce crime and disorder, re-offending and combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.
- 6.2 The merger will bring a strategic approach to addressing common issues across Basingstoke and Deane, Hart and Rushmoor, and bring consistency of message and response from all agencies in the Partnership. The merger will also enable more effective ways of working for the representative organisations and for the officer team.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Cabinet is asked to recommend the Council to
- (i) endorse the merger of the three Community Safety Partnerships in accordance with the arrangements set out in this Report, including the appointment of the Cabinet Member for Business, Safety and Regulation as the Council's representative on the Partnership;
  - (ii) approve the appointment of, and governance arrangements for, a joint overview and scrutiny committee with Hart and Rushmoor to comply with the requirements of the Police and Justice Act, 2006;
  - (iii) authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Business, Safety and Regulation to sign the Combination Agreement, creating one Community Safety Partnership for North Hampshire; and
  - (iv) authorise the Head of Democratic Services to appoint representatives (in accordance with the political balance requirements) to the overview and scrutiny committee for 2014/15 following consultation with the Group Leaders.

**Andrew Lloyd**  
**Chief Executive**

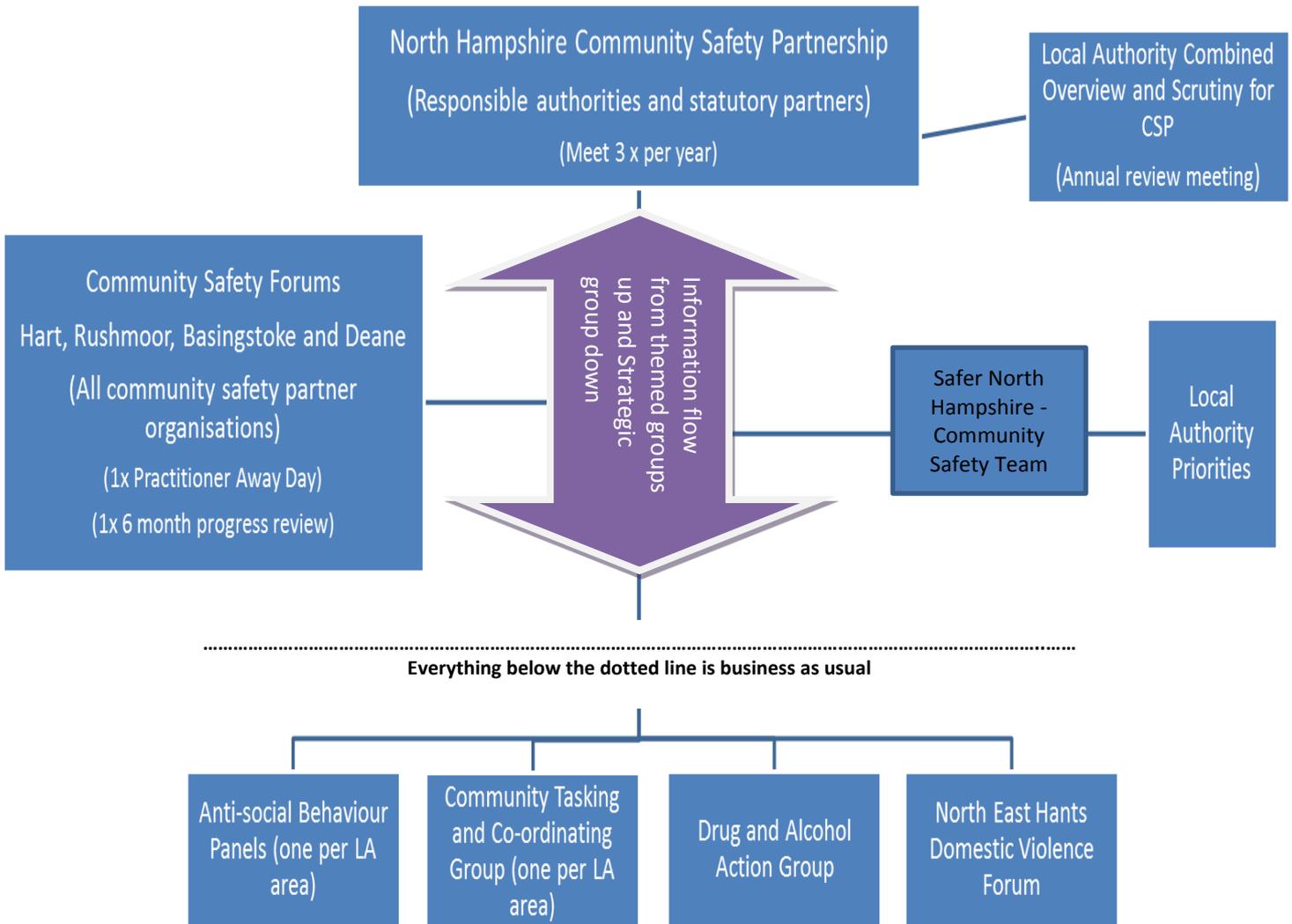
### **Contacts:**

Andrew Colver, Head of Democratic Services – 01252 398829  
Caroline Ryan, Community Safety Manager - 07584 490581

### **Background Papers:**

Presentation to Borough Services Panel – April 2014

**PROPOSED NORTH HAMPSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP  
STRUCTURE CHART**



**DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**BASINGSTOKE AND DEANE, HART AND RUSHMOOR COUNCILS  
CRIME AND DISORDER JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**1. Purpose of the Committee**

- 1.1 This committee is the Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

**2. Terms of Reference**

- 2.1 To scrutinise decisions made or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of the crime and disorder functions by the Joint Community Safety Partnership.
- 2.2 To act as a consultative body for the joint Community Safety Partnership and Police and Crime Commissioner responding to requests in relation to new and changed policies and services in relation to any matter within their purview.
- 2.3 To monitor and review the performance of the joint Community Safety Partnership.
- 2.4 To make reports or recommendations to the Local authorities, Joint Community Safety Partnership and Police and Crime Commissioner with respect to the discharge of the crime and disorder functions.
- 2.5 The committee shall prepare an annual report for the Councils.

**3. Composition of the Committee**

- 3.1 The committee shall consist of nine Councillors to be made up of three Councillors nominated from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Hart District Council and Rushmoor Borough Council respectively.
- 3.2 With the exception of Cabinet members and members of the Community Safety Partnership, any Councillor of the respective Council may act as a substitute for the nominated member.
- 3.3 Each council may change their nominated Councillor at any time.
- 3.4 The committee may co-opt external representatives or appoint advisors as it sees fit.

**4. Administration and proceedings of the Committee**

- 4.1 The administration and chairmanship of the committee shall rotate between the councils on an annual basis.
- 4.2 The committee shall follow the procedures of the hosting council.