

Braintree District Community Safety Partnership

Annual Report 2020-21

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Foreword

The Braintree District Community Safety Partnership Annual Report outlines how local agencies have worked together to make the Braintree District a safer place and reduce the fear of crime during 2020-21.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a joint responsibility upon specific agencies and other partners within the community to develop and implement strategies to protect their communities from crime and help people feel safe.

It has been an unprecedented year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has meant that many of the community safety partners have had to concentrate their time and resources on dealing with issues relating to the pandemic. However we are proud that the all partners have risen to the challenge and have continued to work together and form new alliances to deal with the community safety issues that have presented themselves.

The Community Safety Hub has allowed partners to meet virtually on a regular basis and work together to deal with community issues such as anti-social behaviour, exploitation, domestic abuse and substance misuse issues.

We are proud of the achievements the Partnership has made and look forward to another successful year.



Cllr Wendy Schmitt

Chair, Braintree District
Community Safety Partnership 2020-21

Cabinet Member for Environment and Place
Braintree District Council

Tracey Parry

Community Services Manager
Braintree District Council

Responsible Authority Group

The Responsible Authority Group is the strategic group of the Braintree District Community Safety Partnership and consists of strategic and operational officers who are collectively responsible for addressing crime, disorder and community safety across the Braintree District.

These organisations include Braintree District Council, Essex Police, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Essex Community Rehabilitation Company, National Probation Service, Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (NHS), Eastlight Community Homes, Essex County Council (Education) and Community360 (voluntary sector).

The group has overall strategic responsibility for making sure that the priorities identified from the annual Strategic Assessment are outlined within the Action Plan, and the projects within the Action Plan are delivered.

Strategic Assessment

Each year the Community Safety Partnership is required to produce a Strategic Assessment report about crime and disorder levels in its area. The results of the Strategic Assessment are used by the Partnership to identify themed priorities for the coming year. The Partnership produces an Action Plan which describes how it will deliver on the identified priorities.

The Strategic Priorities for 2020-21 were:

- Tackle the trafficking of drugs in the community;
- Increase confidence in identifying & reporting hidden harms;
- Drive down violent & acquisitive crimes within the community.

Funding

The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex (OPFCC) allocated grants from its 2020–21 Community Safety Fund to all Community Safety Partnerships across the county. As in previous years the OPFCC set aside a proportion (4%) of this funding for Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs). This fund provides: co-ordination of the DHR process; administration of DHR panels; funding for independent chairs; lesson learning seminars; and monitoring and reporting on DHR recommendations implementation.

The funding formula is based on population size, deprivation and crime levels.

Braintree District Community Safety Partnership received a funding allocation of £17,739 for 2020-21.

Action Plan 2020-21

Braintree District Community Safety Partnership produces an annual Action Plan which underpins the priorities and sets out how local agencies will work together to meet the actions within the plan.

Actions include specific projects and initiatives put forward by partner agencies, which are then collectively agreed by the Responsible Authority Group.

Key Achievements 2020-21

A note regarding the COVID-19 pandemic

The delivery of the Community Safety Partnership Action Plan has not been immune to the various challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. This unfortunately has meant that certain projects - particularly those that rely on face-to-face engagement, or those delivered within education settings – have had to be postponed or redesigned. However despite this, positive opportunities have also arisen for closer partnership working and alternative ways to deliver projects to ensure Braintree District remains a safe place to live, work and visit.

Local Exploitation Group

The partnership has formulated a new Local Exploitation Group aimed at providing early intervention to vulnerable young people at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) or Criminal Exploitation (CE) before it escalates to a 'high risk' level.

During the COVID-19 pandemic it became apparent that there had been a noticeable increase in cases being heard at the Mid Essex Missing & Child Exploited (MACE) meetings – these are young people identified as being high risk of CSE or CE, or going missing on a number of occasions.

Whilst the group is still in its early stages, it has been agreed that a core group of key local partners - including Children's Social Care, Family Solutions, The Children's Society, Education, Youth Service, Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Service, Essex Police and Braintree District Council - will meet prior to MACE meetings to discuss issues and to determine whether any intervention can be implemented to avoid young people becoming involved in CSE or CE, and to escape potential perpetrators.

Aims of the group include:

Coordinate partnership work and identify disruption activities; identify local hotspots and vulnerable locations where young people are associating with each other; develop tailored and effective plans to deal with local hotspots; engage with young people as to what areas feel 'safe' or 'unsafe' for them and initiate action plans for these areas; and develop and deliver awareness campaigns aimed at children and young people, parents and carers, businesses and the wider community.

‘Say No to N20’ campaign

The Partnership warned the public about the dangers of nitrous oxide following an increase in reports of people using the drug across the district. Information was provided to education settings across the district, together with advice on how to seek support and report any concerns to the relevant agencies.

Key messages regarding the issue were also shared amongst partner agencies’ social media channels.

Mobile cameras to tackle crime and nuisance

The CSP has continued to fund the purchase of four more mobile cameras to be deployed to areas where there is believed to be criminal or anti-social behaviour occurring. The cameras are installed by the Council’s street-scene enforcement team following requests from multi-agency partners.

To date, useful evidence has been used by police intelligence officers to disrupt the suspected supply of Class A drugs by known gang nominals from London; target prolific shoplifters; identify and deter identified individuals from causing anti-social behaviour; and to assist in gathering evidence to put in place enforcement action such as Closure Orders.

Horizon Project

In 2019 the CSP was successful in applying for funding from the Department for Work and Pensions to fund an Intensive Prolific Offender Caseworker for a period of 12 months to work with a cohort of 10 individuals who meet the criteria of being homeless, offending, with substance misuse issues, ill mental health and poverty as a common factor.

The project, which is managed and delivered by Phoenix Futures’ Full Circle, is a multi-agency model that provides intensive support for individuals with multiple and complex disadvantages. The service involves up to 10 clients selected for participation by the multi-agency staff in Braintree District. These clients are selected based on their complex needs, being known.

The aims of the project include finding ways to improve outcomes for clients; agree multi-agency support plans for each client; use a person centred approach to improve life chances and support the individual to secure appropriate accommodation; break cycles of established behaviour patterns to help individuals re-enter and maintain a place in their community.

Positive outcomes were achieved for most clients on the project (*Phoenix Futures’ report of the Braintree District Horizon Project, September 2019-2020*). The intensive nature of the Horizons Project meant that it was outreach based, responsive and reactive. Full Circle staff had the capacity to see clients more regularly and for longer periods of time than other specialised services, and could respond to situations when needed. On some occasions, this meant that several hours a day were spent with one individual if that was what was required. With the majority being housed and offending behaviour reduced there is a positive impact on the client and the local area.

‘J9’ Domestic Abuse training

The CSP commissioned the charity Safer Places to deliver ‘J9’ training – an initiative to raise awareness and to help victims of domestic abuse following the death of Janine Mundy, in Cornwall where she lived, in 2003.

To date the CSP has worked with Safer Places to deliver multiple training sessions to help raise awareness and increase knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse for staff in the public and the voluntary sectors including GP surgeries, veterinary practices, opticians, dental practices and community organisations.

Where the J9 logo is displayed it alerts victims that they can obtain information to help access a safe place where there can seek information and the use of a telephone.

Community Safety Hub

Multi-agency working is essential in the prevention of crime and disorder. The Braintree District Community Safety Hub continued to maximise the benefits of collaborative working with partners, and developed improved information sharing and closer working practices to tackle key issues identified in the CSP Action Plan, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner’s (PFCC) Police and Crime Plan, and from emerging crime trends and patterns.

Membership of the Hub has increased during the past year and includes representation from partner organisations of the CSP, other statutory services and the voluntary sector. A number of professional meetings have been held following initial discussions at Hub, particularly for more complex cases.

The Hub is coordinated by Braintree District Council who has the necessary community knowledge and oversight to set the agenda and coordinate the work of the hub to deliver against the Strategic Priorities.

Safe, Well and Secure visits

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service (ECFRS), supported by Braintree District Council, parish councils, Essex Police, Dementia Care, United in Kind and Community 360, visited 1,561 properties to offer personal safety advice and signpost residents to appropriate support services. 139 properties were also issued with smoke alarms.

During the year a total of 275 Safe and Well visits took place in the district whereby residents received home safety assessments. Officers also visited 48 vulnerable residents following concerns raised regarding potential hoarding, being bedbound or housebound, experiencing addiction issues or poor living conditions. In each of these instances officers attempted to engage with the individuals, and liaised with other partner agencies where necessary to help make them safer in their own home.

ECFRS Education Officers unfortunately were unable to enter schools for most of the year, however a number of virtual events were arranged including a Cyber Safety input delivered to 169 Year 6 students; a Hoax Calls/Anti-Social Behaviour input for 180 Key Stage 3 students; and a Hate Crime Assembly delivered to 660 students.

Moving Forward

Braintree District Community Safety Partnership has received a funding allocation of £17,739 for 2021-22 from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex (PFCC). In addition to this, in recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions, the PFCC has agreed to allow an underspend of £8,000 from 2020-21 to be carried forward into 2021-22.

In 2021-22 the Strategic Priorities of Braintree District Community Safety Partnership will be the same as the previous year:

- Tackle the trafficking of drugs in the community;
- Increase confidence in identifying & reporting hidden harms;
- Drive down violent & acquisitive crimes within the community

These priorities, along with the core responsibilities of the CSP – to reduce crime and disorder, to reduce re-offending and combat the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances – will inform Braintree CSP's Action Plan for 2021-22.

The Partnership will address these priorities through the identification of agencies and resources that are best placed to respond and deliver improvements.

Finding out more

If you would like further information about us and our services, please get in touch:

Braintree District Community Safety Partnership

c/o Braintree District Council
Causeway House
Bocking End
Braintree
Essex CM7 9HB

Tel: **01376 552525**

Email: communityservices@braintree.gov.uk

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