

Report to:	TOURISM ECONOMY AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Mr John Greenbank, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser (Scrutiny)
Date of Meeting:	30 March 2022

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (CSP)

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update on the work undertaken by scrutiny members on the review of The Blackpool's the Community Safety Partnership.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the update, the recommendations made and identify any further work to be undertaken on the Community Safety Partnership.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure the Committee has an overview of ongoing work.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 The Council's Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee acts as its statutory Crime and Disorder Panel. As such it is required to meet at least once a year to consider crime and disorder issues.

ongoing engagement in communities with representatives of the CSP. The CSP would also seek to ensure that police representation was present at meetings so that crime and disorder issues raised could be addressed.

- 6.13 It was recognised by the Panel that the Police had faced significant challenges during the pandemic. This included the enforcement of Covid regulations that often changed due to Government policy. Connected to this was the rise in cases of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) which had increased in part due to reporting of regulation breaches. There was also reported concern that the Police and services were unaware of the scale of unreported crimes, such as domestic abuse, that had occurred during the pandemic.
- 6.14 In order to resolve the rise in ASB during the pandemic Blackpool Council's Public Protection team had worked with the Police out-of-hours. This had led to a reduction in the reported levels of ASB in 2021 to being the lowest ever recorded in Blackpool.
- 6.15 The Police had also assisted the Council in moving all Blackpool's homeless into hotel accommodation during the pandemic to protect them. This had allowed Council social services to engage with many of them, but had also created issues with the accommodation such as violence and substance abuse that require Police intervention.
- 6.16 Road Safety remained an ongoing concern in Blackpool and as such had been identified as a priority in the CSP Plan. The PCC had expressed a desire for more speed and traffic monitoring cameras in Lancashire and the CSP was considering what other interventions could be undertaken to address the issue. This included the possibility of more traffic calming measures across Blackpool.
- 6.17 The Issue of Begging in the town centre was also discussed. In order to address the issues the Public Protection team worked with the Business Improvement District and Police. It was noted however that the BID did not share any data it collected regarding begging, which could restrict the ability of partners to address the issue.
- 6.18 Methods of addressing begging included the use of Criminal Behaviour Orders and Civil Injunctions. Of these legal methods Civil Behaviour order had been shown to be difficult to impose and enforce, particularly during the pandemic. This was in part due to a reluctance of the Crown Prosecution Service to prosecute in begging cases. Civil Injunctions resulted in more successful outcomes and included tougher sanctions if breached, such as imprisonment for persistent offenders.
- 6.19 Where begging was shown to the result of wider challenges in an individual's life, such as homelessness, the Council would also seek to use their engagement with public protection to refer them to services for help.

- 6.20 It was highlighted that the use of civil injunctions had assisted in reducing begging related ASB by 25% in 2021.
- 6.21 “Don’t Beg” signs had also been used across the town centre by the Council to discourage begging and create a safer feel for visitors. Although some areas of the town centre remained a challenge, it was reported that the signs had been successful.
- 6.22 The Council also remained in contact with communities and businesses across Blackpool to gain feedback and ensure that the work of the CSP addressed the addressed their needs. This engagement was managed through the Council’s website and direct engagement at meetings.
- 6.23 Ongoing challenges faced by the CSP were also highlighted to the Panel. These included;
- 6.24
- Cannabis Cultivation. Whereby gangs could register an address for Council Tax under a fake name and then use the property for the cultivation of cannabis. This caused significant damage to the property involved and harmed the communities in which they were located. Officers therefore were looking at how these abuses of the Council Tax system could be resolved.
 - County Lines. The use of young and vulnerable people to facilitate the drug trade in Blackpool was an ongoing problem. Criminal gangs would use such people to transport drugs and other illicit material into and out of the town, exposing them to significant threat.
- 6.25 Following the meeting officers informed the Panel that the draft CSP Plan would be considered at a February 2022 meeting of the CSP’s BSafe Board before approval by the Council’s Executive in March 2022.
- 6.26 The Review Panel recommended that the TEC consider the update on the meeting and identify an areas for additional scrutiny regarding the CSP in Blackpool.
- 6.27 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

7.2 Financial considerations:

7.3 None.

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Risk management considerations:

9.1 None

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

11.1 There were no sustainability, climate change or environmental considerations raised at the review panel meeting.

12.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None