



COTSWOLD

District Council

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY - 1 DECEMBER 2025
Subject	COTSWOLD COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Paul Hodgkinson, Cabinet Member for Health, Culture and Visitor Experience Email: paul.hodgkinson@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Joseph Walker, Head of Economic Development and Communities Email: Joseph.Walker@Cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Joseph Walker, Head of Economic Development and Communities Email: Joseph.Walker@Cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To update Overview and Scrutiny on community safety activity and provide RAG rating against the 'Cotswold Community Safety Partnership' Plan for the period of November 2024 to November 2025
Annexes	Annex A – Action Plan
Recommendation(s)	That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Note overall progress of the Cotswold Community Safety Partnership2. Make any recommendations to Cabinet that the partnership should consider
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivering Good Services• Supporting Communities• Supporting the Economy
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO



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Consultees/ Consultation	Cabinet Member, Corporate Leadership Team, Director of Communities and Place
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** This report provides an overview of the 'Cotswold Community Safety Partnership' (CSP) work and achievements against its action plan over the period of November 2024 to November 2025.
- 1.2** The report appends the CSP Plan and priorities which can be found at Annex A.
- 1.3** The CSP priorities are:
- **Engage, involve, connect, empower and inform communities**
 - **Support Victims of Domestic Abuse**
 - **Serious Violence Duty**
 - **Prevent and reduce antisocial behaviours**
 - **Tackle Crimes of Local Concern**
 - **Create Safe Roads for all**
 - **Supporting children and young people**
- 1.4** The committee is asked to review overall progress of the Cotswold Community Safety Partnership and to make recommendations the partnership should consider.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The responsibilities of the 'Crime and Disorder Committee' are set out in Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 ("The Act"), which dictates that the responsible authorities (as defined by the Act) must consider the implications on crime and disorder of all their day-to-day activities. In its broadest sense the Act also brought about a duty to cooperate and led to the creation of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in each local authority area.
- 2.2** Terms of reference for the Committee's Crime and Disorder Committee were approved at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 01 December 2020.
- 2.3** It was proposed that an Annual Report be presented to the Crime and Disorder Committee, on the performance of the Cotswold Community Safety Partnership ("Cotswold CSP") together with the Action Plan at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in June 2021, to support the role and decision making of the Crime and Disorder Committee.
- 2.4** A first Annual Report was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 June 2021. This provided an overview of the Cotswold CSP's action plan and work of the period 2019-2021 as well as its Forward Plan for the year 2021/22. This was



followed by an update at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 04 October 2022, 31 October 2023 and 4 November 2024.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1** The last year has seen significant changes to the operation of the Cotswold Community Safety Partnership (CCSP). On the same day that O&S considered the last report on the CCSP operation, the first phase of the Publica review came into effect, where staff and service delivery transferred to the direct employ of Cotswold District Council from Publica. Community Safety was included in this process, coming under the responsibility of the newly established role of Head of Economic Development and Communities.
- 3.2** Also in November, Councillor Lisa Spivey stepped down from Cabinet. Councillor Paul Hodgkinson was appointed as Cabinet for Community Safety, and Chair of the CCSP.
- 3.3** Beyond the district council, the neighbourhood policing inspector, Simon Ellis, has moved on to a new role, and has been succeeded by Philippa Moore, who also holds the role of deputy chair.
- 3.4** Across other partner agencies, we have also seen some movement in terms of representation, both as personnel change roles, and due to the logistical challenge many organisations face in trying to support partnership meetings. The CCSP meetings are alternately virtual and face to face, to try to facilitate attendance, but also to develop the knowledge and relationships which underpin robust partnership working.
- 3.5** Moving on to the capacity and influence of the partnership – beyond the changes in personnel and partnership, we have also seen a reduction in resource. Historically, the partnership has received delegated grant resource or specific grants via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. During the last year, and up until the early summer, we have benefited from this activity, but there has not been new grant in-year. Delivery in recent years was supported by Safer Streets funding which has concluded, and by ASB hotspot funding, which has been reprioritised to other locations.
- 3.6** While this is a direct consequence of the lower ASB rates, and lower crime incidence in the district, which is of course something to celebrate, it does reduce the capacity



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and direct influence of the CCSP. The Partnership must instead seek to lever the capacity of its partners, and influence their service delivery which sits outside its direct purview.

3.7 The Council does not have a dedicated post focussed on community safety, with the work currently picked up across the Community Wellbeing team and by the head of service. We are working to address this, to provide capacity to work with partners to drive this area of work forward.

3.8 Contextually, in mid-November, the Government announced that the role of Police and Crime Commissioner is to be abolished, to take effect in 2028, at the end of the current term. By itself, this would fundamentally change the operating picture within Gloucestershire, but we anticipate that Local Government Reorganisation will also significantly change the Community Safety Partnership architecture in the County.

4. PROGRESS BY PRIORITY

4.1 Members will recall that an action plan was provided at the last meeting. The priorities of the partnership remains as follows:

4.1.1 ENGAGE, INVOLVE, CONNECT, EMPOWER AND INFORM COMMUNITIES

- Public information is a mainstay of community safety. A lack of information or misinformation puts residents at risk. Moreover, fear of crime, in a district like ours which enjoys relatively low crime rates, discourages residents from engaging outside the home.
- Through the year, the Council's Community Wellbeing Team has organised a series of 'Strengthening Communities' events across the larger settlements of the district. These events, funded through the Integrated Care Board's Strengthening Local Community Fund, provide an opportunity for a range of partners to access local residents. The events have provided residents with direct access to voluntary sector partners, NHS services, and access to the local neighbourhood policing team. PCSOs have attended, to provide a visible police presence, with the mobile unit attending the event in Cirencester's St Michael's Park in August.



4.1.2 SUPPORT VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

- Overview and Scrutiny members will have seen that Cabinet considered the Gloucestershire Tackling Domestic Abuse Strategy at its meeting on 20 November. As a housing authority, the Council has a vital role in supporting victims and survivors of abuse in accessing housing. The Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service representative on the partner is a regular attendee and strong contributor to the partnership.
- During quarter 4 of 2024-25, we benefitted from the Rural Domestic Abuse Champions project run by GDASS. This project enabled training of representatives from the Council, from Publica and outside agencies, to increase awareness of domestic abuse and its presentation in rural communities. This project, run across the rural districts of Gloucestershire, concluded in June, as grant funding to continue it could not be secured.
- The GDASS contract with Green Square Accord was renewed by Gloucestershire County Council, providing continuity of service delivery.
- The CCSP has a role engaging in the review of deaths relating to domestic abuse, commissioning work where it relates to our own district, and supporting the partnership processes across Gloucestershire.

4.1.3 SERIOUS VIOLENCE DUTY

- The Serious Violence Duty is a new specific duty on public authorities, in addition and distinct from existing requirements around Community Safety Partnerships. It places a duty on partners to support endeavours to tackle serious violence. The CCSP was due to receive a detailed briefing on the duty within the year, but this has been rolled forward due to staff changes within the constabulary. The focus of activity within the county has been on specific hotspots, determined by hard data. Work has focused on Cheltenham, and has proved successful. Lessons learnt will be used by the police and partners where possible in responding to serious violence and repeat ASB.

4.1.4 PREVENT AND REDUCE ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOURS

- Through its Environmental Services Team, the council actively seeks to tackle Antisocial Behaviour (ASB). To this end, it works in partnership with the Police and partner Local Authorities through the 'Solace' partnership. This partnership brought together local authority experts and PCSOs, to uses the various powers and



capacity at their disposal to more effectively address ASB. Due to budgetary challenges, the Police have reviewed their staff commitment – since the summer, rather than supporting Operation Solace with dedicated PCSO posts, they have allocated a police officer single point of contact in each area.

- The CCSP is attended by Family Action, who hold the family support contract from Gloucestershire County Council, and by the Door, who provide detached youth work in Cirencester, Fairford and Tetbury. This early-stage engagement with young people and support for families is a critical action in trying to prevent ASB, by working with young people to provide advice and support, and to provide positive diversionary activity.
- The CCSP held its last meeting at SkillZONE, a community safety training venue in Gloucester operated by the Fire Service. It was a great opportunity to showcase this venue, which provides a facility to educate young people on a wide range of different safety scenarios. Chipping Campden School has taken advantage of the funded training the Fire Service offer, and the CCSP has committed to approaching other local schools to promote this opportunity.

4.1.5 TACKLE CRIMES OF LOCAL CONCERN

- Many of the highest incidence reported crimes in the district tend to be forms of acquisitive crime - shoplifting, burglary, car theft. The Home Office launched a campaign this summer to address crime on the high street, named the 'Safer Streets summer town centre initiative' - to address shoplifting, but also antisocial behaviour in larger centres. Within Gloucestershire, Safer Gloucestershire focused on the largest centres within each district, giving it the name Operation Shield. ASB Hotspot funding was targeted on those areas with the highest incidence to support this operation, but while Cirencester was identified as a location for Operation Shield, the Police were not successful accessing additional funds. The Neighbourhood Policing Team was able to dedicate additional patrols to the town, to respond to this initiative. With a visible deterrent in the town, there was no noticeable spike in targeted crimes or detection, but the Police report the operation provided a positive opportunity to engage with local businesses, helping build relationships to take forward after the operation.
- As noted in section 4.4, the Council has delivered a number of Strengthening Community events through the year. This included an event in Cirencester St Michael's Park on 5 August, which provided diversionary activities for young



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people, an opportunity for residents to access police staff so complemented the ambitions of Operation Shield. Similarly, the annual Phoenix Festival provides a fantastic opportunity for people to access free activities within their town centre, and an opportunity for organisations - including the constabulary, to meet local people.

- At the time of writing, planning is underway for Operation Shield Winter, a follow up operation to address high street safety and the night-time economy through the months of December and January. As with operation Shield in the summer, this initiative does not bring with it funding but presents an opportunity to share examples of local practice.

4.1.6 CREATE SAFE ROADS FOR ALL

- Road safety is of course a key concern within Gloucestershire and given the district's extensive network of fast rural roads, is a particularly resonant issue within Cotswold. Clearly, the enforcement powers of the police are a key component in road safety – the Police have run Operation Spotlight across the County this summer addresses the so called 'fatal four' factors – speeding, drink/drugs, seatbelts and mobile phones.
- However, there is a wider role that partnership can support and deliver. Community Speedwatch is an example of how active citizens can add to the reach of the Police: recording excessive traffic speed prompts written warnings from the Police and also adds to the intelligence picture of where speeding is prevalent. Members may recall that the Council celebrated the contribution of volunteers by recognising a representative of Blockley Community Speedwatch as one of our Unsung Heroes in January 2025. Following partnership discussion, the Police Neighbourhood Team, Road Enforcement Unit and Press team have worked with Kempsford Community Speedwatch to produce a video to promote this area of work. This piece will be promoted via the Council's communications team and amplified by other partners.
- Gloucestershire Public Health has carried out an in-depth needs assessment of road safety. As it is based on sensitive data, the report itself has not been published, but the CCSP had opportunity to consider its recommendations. This work provides a better understanding of the dynamics of road safety incidents, in terms of both victims and other road users, so should inform better targeted interventions moving forward. Gloucestershire County Council is currently recruiting a Road



Safety Coordinator who will lead on this work, and who will be invited along to the CCSP as soon as possible.

4.1.7 SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- In creating the action plan, the Partnership considered this topic. There is already a Cotswold Youth Network, convened by World Jungle and chaired by Councillor Claire Bloomer. The health and wellbeing of young people is also a key priority for the health sector. With this in mind, the CCSP does not seek to lead activity on this topic but ensures that there is good representation from youth support partners so that issues regarding young people can be communicated at the CCSP.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

5.1 Not applicable

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1** Community Safety is a shared ambition and duty across a range of organisations. The Council's convening role continues to bring together a partnership of interested parties from across the public and VCSE sectors, including those direct responders such as Police and Fire, and those whose preventative work is vital in decreasing risk, such as youth workers and advocates for our vulnerable residents. During the year the Partnership has hosted successful and well attended meetings and been able to influence the delivery of activities that address local priorities.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** This report provides an overview of activity in the past year, so of itself, does not have financial implications. As noted in the overview, the Council does not automatically receive dedicated funding towards the exercise of its community safety duties. Instead delivery is focussed on influencing the design and coordination of partner activity to deliver positive outcomes and a shared intelligence picture.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** Section 5 of the Act established community safety partnerships in England (then known as 'crime and disorder reduction partnerships'). CSPs are statutorily responsible for reducing crime and disorder, substance misuse and re-offending in each local authority area. CSPs are defined as:



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"An alliance of organisations which generate strategies and policies, implement actions and interventions concerning crime and disorder within their partnership area".

- 8.2** The UK Police and Justice Act 2006 requires every local authority to have a committee with power to review or scrutinise decisions made – or other action taken – in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions. The committee can also make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions. For Cotswold District Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee fulfils this function.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1** Cotswold District Council is committed to support the CCSP in accordance with the duties specified in the Act, which in summary are 'Local authorities must do all that they reasonably can in the prevention of crime and disorder'.
- 9.2** The Cotswold CSP works with partners towards the ambition that residents are safe, well informed and resilient. Given the lack of partnership resources – both direct and through grant funding, there is a risk that partners through lack of funding/capacity/staff could disengage from the CCSP.
- 9.3** The CCSP seeks to mitigate this risk. The partnership structure is proportionate: the CCSP seeks to avoid meeting overload, through quarterly meetings and a hybrid approach. To deliver and plan specific activities, partners will meet outside of the main meeting. Agendas are designed to be informative and participative.
- 9.4** Locally, we have also been successful in recognising the synergy between community safety outcomes and community wellbeing. A stronger community is healthier and safer. We have benefitted from grants towards community health supporting the delivery of our Strengthening Communities events, that have given a range of partners from the NHS, Police and VCSE sectors, access to local residents.

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 10.1** The CCSP's principles and priorities are aiming to reach all geographical communities and different communities of interest. The partnership's work is inclusive of all the protected characteristics and backgrounds and targets support for vulnerable groups including young people and women and girls.



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10.2 Community Cohesion is a live topic of discussion within Community Safety, in the light of protests, increases in racial tension and racially aggravated events across the Country. Cotswold District has been fortunate not to have seen a significant escalation, but the partnership has taken the time to host a discussion on this matter, to ensure we are alert to the risk, and opportunities to defuse tension.

11. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Partnership is reliant on the coordination of partner activity and information sharing, which by themselves have limited climate impact. By meeting alternately virtually and in person, the partnership structure seeks to balance effectiveness with the reduction of unnecessary travel.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 None
(END)