



Safer Communities Torbay – An Overview

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 Safer Communities Torbay is the name given to Torbay's Community Safety Partnership (CSP).
- 1.2 Community Safety Partnerships exist by law (Crime and Disorder Act 1998) as a statutory partnership constituted of the Council, Police, Probation, Health and Fire Service. The Board meets on a quarterly basis and works to bring key local agencies together to co-ordinate and deliver multi-agency solutions to address various issues including, but not limited to: crime, re-offending, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and sexual violence, all forms of exploitation and substance misuse.

2. Statutory Requirements:

- 2.1 The key statutory responsibilities for Community Safety Partnerships are:
 - a) put in place a strategic group to be made up of senior representatives from the responsible authorities
 - b) prepare, implement and performance manage an evidence led, annual strategic assessment and three-yearly partnership plan for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area
 - c) consult the community on the levels and patterns of crime, disorder and substance misuse and on matters that need to be prioritised by the partnership
 - d) reduce reoffending
 - e) co-ordinate domestic violence homicide reviews
 - f) share information among the responsible authorities within the CSP
- 2.2 **Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)** – DHRs are a statutory review function of which the CSP are accountable for. The CSP facilitates the commissioning, smooth running and distribution of their learning and recommendations from the DHRs, ensuring that statutory guidance is adhered to. Exercise of this duty is variable, dependent on rates of threshold deaths within or directly linked to Torbay.

3. Additional Statutory Duties:

- 3.1 **Prevent Duty** – The Prevent Duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires all specified authorities to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Safer Communities Torbay undertakes this function on behalf of the local authority. This includes working with other specified authorities and Counter Terrorism Police in the identification and response to need, including the delivering key pieces of work aligned to the Counter Terrorism Local Profile. This includes 4 Prevent Board

meetings per year. 6 weekly meetings with the regional lead from Home Office, Homeland Security Team and specific project work as evidence and demand dictates.

- 3.2 **Channel Duty** – The Channel Duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires local authorities to provide support to people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. This support is to be offered through the Channel process with key partner agencies. Safer Communities delivers this on behalf of the local authority. This involves co-ordinating the Channel process. Chairing monthly Channel Panel multi-agency meetings where individual cases are heard, and a multi-agency plans to reduce risk are co-ordinated and reviewed. 6 weekly meetings with the Home Office Homeland Security Team (separate from above). Ensuring compliance with and completion of the annual Channel Quality Assurance Review. Regular Home Office training to remain up to date as required by the Duty.
- 3.3 **Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Duty (Domestic Abuse Act 2021)** – The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 established a new duty upon local authorities to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation. This is referred to as the Safe Accommodation Duty, although the duty itself is not a requirement to provide “safe accommodation”, but instead to assess the needs of and provide support to victim survivors and their children within safe accommodation. A Needs Assessment of safe accommodation and support provision across the area must be undertaken every 3 years and refreshed annually. The Needs Assessment will inform the development of a Safe Accommodation Strategy setting out how the identified needs will be met and associated commissioning plans.

The LA must set up a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Partnership Board to oversee the implementation and delivery of the Safe Accommodation Strategy; and to review and evaluate effectiveness of the Strategy. The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group hold this function in Torbay and is a sub-group of the CSP.

- 3.4 **Modern Slavery** – The Modern Slavery Act 2015 places a Duty on local authorities and other key agencies to act as ‘first responders’, meaning that they must both identify and refer victims of modern slavery through the National Referral Mechanism. Safer Communities Torbay leads on overseeing the functions around modern slavery to ensure a clear and consistent understanding an approach across the partnership to identify, address and report instances of modern slavery in Torbay. The Torbay and Devon Anti-Slavery Partnership drives this work and reports to Safer Communities Torbay.

4. Pending Statutory Duties:

- 4.1 **Serious Violence Duty (pending 2023)** – The Duty requires specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence (so far as it is possible to do so), and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence in the area. The aim of the Duty is to encourage organisations to share information, data and intelligence, and work collaboratively rather than in isolation to tackle serious violence.

- 4.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 will be amended to make serious violence a priority of CSPs. It has been agreed that the most effective way to deliver the Duty is through the CSP given the requirements outlined and as such the Safer Communities Team will lead the co-ordination of Duty for the partnership.
- 4.3 Safer Communities often act as the delivery mechanism for Duties placed on the local authority that relate to crime and safety. Future potential Duties where this may apply moving forward once Government guidance is received include:
- Offensive Weapon Homicide Reviews.
 - Duties under the Victims Bill.

5. Grant and funding mechanisms:

5.1 Central Government and the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner often use Community Safety Partnerships as the conduits to make applications for, administer and deliver against grant funding.

5.2 Recent examples of this include:

1) Safer Streets Fund:

£749,137.64 was successfully applied for to reduce VAWG crimes and ASB incidents and improve feeling of safety in public spaces in and around Torquay Town Centre.

2) Serious Violence Fund:

The Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner has awarded a total of £152,000 over 2 years to develop and deliver projects designed to improve understanding and reduce instances of serious violence in the local area.

5.4 In both these examples the funds needed to be applied for and are now being delivered under the CSP.

6 Reviews of the Community Safety Partnership:

6.1 Innovation Unit:

6.1.2 Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) were brought into existence in 1998 and the functions it must perform not materially changed since; however, the complexity of the need in communities and the way the system understands, identifies and delivers support has.

6.1.3 Safer Communities Torbay recognised that it (along with many CSPs) as a result of this there is a lack of clarity around purpose, position and direction and this presenting as more of a challenge as further additional duties are placed on statutory bodies that make up the CSP.

6.1.4 As such Safer Communities Torbay commissioned the Innovation Unit to take a critical look at the CSP to support development of a way forward that ensures an effective CSP

that is able to deliver as required both now and in the future. The papers linked to this report is the outcome of this work.

6.2 Local Government Association:

6.2.1 In 2023 the Local Government Association are planning a national review of Community Safety Partnerships but the detail and timescales at this point remain unknown.