

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet 27 March 2019
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Report title	Black Country Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2019-2022	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Hazel Malcolm Public Health and Wellbeing	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	John Denley, Director of Public Health	
Originating service	Community Safety	
Accountable employee	Lynsey Kelly	Head of Community Safety
	Tel	551341
	Email	lynsey.kelly@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel	10 April 2018
	Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board	18 January 2019
	Public Health Leadership Team	5 March 2019
	Strategic Executive Board	12 March 2019

Recommendation for decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

Endorse the Black Country Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2019-2022 and support its implementation.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To seek endorsement of the Black Country Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2019-2022 and support for its local implementation.

2.0 Background and Context

- 2.1 Managing repeat offenders is a key national priority – it is estimated that around half of all crime is committed by individuals with previous convictions with an estimated cost to the taxpayer of £9.5 to £13.0 billion per year. A high number of offences are committed by a very small group of individuals.
- 2.2 Whilst the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out requirements for development of strategic plans to prevent crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and re-offending in the locality, the Policing and Crime Act 2009 also places a specific requirement on Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to formulate a strategy to reduce reoffending by adults and young offenders. Governance, development of strategic plans and implementation is therefore the responsibility of Safer Wolverhampton Partnership (SWP).
- 2.3 There have been significant changes in the partnership landscape in recent years; the national reorganisation of Probation Services under the Offender Rehabilitation Act 2014, the internal restructure of West Midlands Police and changes to the Black Country Magistrates Court system, has impacted on the cohesive approach to the management of offenders, and consequently, their reoffending.
- 2.4 In addition, the shift in focus towards harm reduction and earlier intervention/prevention, growing resource constraints and capacity challenges across partners have prompted a review of current structures and the partnership approach to reduce reoffending.
- 2.5 Wolverhampton has a long-established history of being amongst the top performing authorities for reducing reoffending, along with other West Midlands authorities. Whilst SWP Board has committed to reducing reoffending as a strategic priority for several years, which has been evident in successive Community Safety strategies, these changes in national policy and regional/sub-regional reorganisations has undermined efforts to maintain a strong local performance framework.
- 2.6 SWP Board assessed the rationale for change and approved the development of a Black Country strategy, with an aligned Black Country delivery structure; this was subsequently agreed by the three other Black Country CSPs. Several factors influenced this decision, namely:
 - The close geography and demographics of the Black Country area
 - Offending behaviour spanning across local authority areas
 - Financial and capacity constraints, and organisational changes across partner agencies

- The need to align to the strategic ambitions of the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) with opportunities to attract resource to support delivery
- To provide value for money, improve intelligence and allow for joint commissioning
- To improve coordination of multi-agency delivery in the management of offenders to identify areas of good practice and challenge under-performance

3.0 Reducing Reoffending Strategic Priorities

3.1 Wolverhampton has led the development of this strategy in collaboration with CSPs across the Black Country and the key organisations responsible for delivery; namely, the National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company and Youth Offending Services. These agencies have provided performance data, and this, combined with local knowledge and intelligence from West Midlands Police has informed the following priorities:

- **Prevention:** Development of a model which will provide early identification and interventions preventing offending and re-offending.
- **Reducing Reoffending:** Strengthening pathways to prevent the cycle of reoffending.
- **Reducing the Risk of Harm:** Management of high-risk offenders and targeting of key cohorts to reduce reoffending and the seriousness of offences committed.

3.2 Each priority has a list of identified outcomes.

Priorities	Outcomes	Early Areas of Focus
Prevention	<p>Development of a prevention model to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earlier identification and engagement into support – focus on youth offending • Improved use of civil interventions • Increased victim resilience (including children where appropriate) • Improved communication and awareness • A ‘whole family’ approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen risk-management for victims • Develop links to family support networks • Improve information sharing across case management forums • Increase employment/training offer • Share learning of Youth offending interventions and link to regional research
Reducing Reoffending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced repeat offences (adult and youth) • Strengthened pre-release support • Improved care pathways to challenge attitudes and behaviour • Increased successful court outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve drug/alcohol treatment and mental health access • Develop accommodation options with local providers • Develop female-specific pathways • Increase financial stability

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced volume crimes 	
Reducing the Risk of Harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of risk-based model for volume offenders • Reduced escalation of risk • Disruption of organised criminality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen offer of behaviour change programmes • Increase use of screening tools to identify most appropriate interventions

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Following development of the draft strategy, consultation on the document was widely advertised via partner agencies, community networks, communities of interest, Councillors and social media with opportunities for comments fed in via survey monkey, post or email. As part of the consultation process, the views of Wolverhampton's Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel were actively sought on 10 April 2018 and suggested revisions were incorporated into the strategy.

4.2 A summary of feedback received is detailed below:

- The document was easy to understand but request for simplification of language and reduced terminology
- Document could be more concise with avoidance of repetition
- More detail needed on what interventions will look like
- Request for a strengthened 'single model' to link with children and family services and the wider community
- Proposed development of a minimum offer for housing and employment for offenders, given these factors significantly impact on reoffending levels

4.3 Responses informed revisions to the document which is attached as Appendix 1. Importantly, the decision to progress the suggestion of a minimum employment and housing offer was agreed, and these are now being progressed within each local authority area.

5.0 Strategy Implementation and Delivery in Wolverhampton

5.1 SWP also approved proposals for one streamlined partnership meeting covering the four Black Country authorities. Rationalisation from four to one partnership meeting would serve to strengthen strategic links with the West Midlands Reducing Reoffending Steering Group, maximise Black Country opportunities from regional developments and standardise and share good practice.

5.2 The Black Country Reducing Reoffending Steering Group has now formed to drive implementation of the strategy. A robust performance management framework is in

development for monitoring progress, providing a basis for scrutiny and professional challenge. Implementation plans will be developed for each area to address local variances such as local reoffending patterns, area-specific services or approaches.

- 5.3 A local delivery plan will be developed for each CSP area; the plans will have some common areas of focus but will also enable variances of approach to be adopted to address local need and ensure links with area-specific programmes.
- 5.4 In Wolverhampton, there are strong ambitions to drive forward implementation linked to local initiatives, with proposals including maximising the engagement with schools, reviewing the housing services response following implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018, strengthening links to the city's employment offer such as Workbox, scoping the introduction of interview guarantees, and aligning with the work of Public Service Reform.
- 5.5 Approval of Wolverhampton's Delivery Plan will be sought from SWP Board which has responsibility for monitoring implementation progress. Anticipated completion of the Delivery Plan is June 2019. Similarly, approval of the strategy will need to be secured from the remaining Black Country CSPs.

6.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 6.1 Initial consideration was given to developing a Wolverhampton Reducing Reoffending Strategy, however, an offer was made to include the rest of the Black Country to realise efficiencies and strengthen the Black Country's collective position. A streamlined meeting structure for the Black Country has also been established, addressing capacity concerns identified by partners organisations.

7.0 Reasons for decision

- 7.1 There is a statutory requirement to formulate a strategy to reduce reoffending by adults and young offenders. Development of the Black Country Reducing Reoffending Strategy fulfils this requirement. Additionally, key benefits arise from adoption of a Black Country approach, as detailed in section 2.6 of this report.

8.0 Financial implications

- 8.1 The strategy will be delivered through mainstream partner resources and allocated grant from the PCC. The PCC has provided a grant to support early intervention within Youth Offending Teams for 2019-2020; for Wolverhampton YOT, this equates to £66,000.
[MI/30052018/G]

9.0 Legal implications

- 9.1 Sections 5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 require the Council and other Responsible Authorities to formulate and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder in the area through the planning and delivery of their services.

- 9.2 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended) requires the Council along with the other Responsible Authorities to exercise their functions with due regard to do all that they reasonably can by way of preventing crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and re-offending in the locality.
- 9.3 The Policing and Crime Act 2009 places a specific requirement on CSPs to formulate a strategy to reduce reoffending by adults and young offenders. All these legal requirements are covered with the development of this strategy.
[RB/30052018/L]

10.0 Equalities implications

- 10.1 A full equalities analysis has informed the strategy development and will direct improved access to services. The strategy provides a positive opportunity to tailor provision for female offenders, and strengthen prevention measures for young people, particularly Black and Minority Ethnic young people, where disproportionate representation within the youth criminal justice system is evident. The varying needs of clients will be provided for and victimisation associated with protected characteristics such as gender, religion, disability and race more effectively addressed.

11.0 Environmental implications

- 11.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this strategy.

12.0 Human resources implications

- 12.1 There are no human resources implications associated with this strategy.

13.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 13.1 There are no corporate landlord implications associated with this strategy.

14.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications

- 14.1 The strategy takes positive steps towards improving the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the city's population, as the needs of both offenders and victims are assessed and provided for within the offender management pathways and linked support for victims. Improvements to the wider determinants of health also feature within the strategy.

15.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Black Country Reducing Reoffending Strategy 2019-2022