

# Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee



25 September 2023  
By Head of Housing and Community Services  
**INFORMATION REPORT**

Not Exempt

## Annual Crime and Disorder Update

### Executive Summary

This briefing aims to give a background to crime and anti-social behaviour across the Horsham District. It contains data covering the period January – December 2022 and is taken from the Safer West Sussex Partnership's (SWSP) Strategic Impact Assessment. That Assessment has used data from Sussex Police and the Office of National Statistics. Because of the way some of the data was recorded by the police, it is not possible to do a direct comparison with earlier years. As a result we have looked at how Horsham compares to other districts and boroughs and the percentage of the West Sussex total.

Horsham District Council has limited or no influence on crimes such as Homicide, Serious Organised Crime, Domestic Abuse, Road Traffic Accidents, Modern Slavery and Trafficking. However, the council can influence anti-social behaviour, neighbour disputes and offer support to younger and older people. The Council, in partnership with Parish and Neighbourhood Councils, enable seven warden schemes across the district. This positively supports the speed of addressing issues such as anti-social behaviour on a local level. It should be noted, however, that the role of the warden schemes isn't solely focused on crime, but also community support and local issues identified by the Parish and Neighbourhood Councils.

Working in partnership, representatives of the Community Services team are active in several forums and boards including:

- Horsham District Community Safety Partnership
- West Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership
- Police Partnership Tactical Tasking & Co-ordination Group
- HASBRAC (Hate and Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference)
- Safer West Sussex Partnership Executive Board
- Peer Group Conferences
- Anti-Social Behaviour Case Reviews (formerly known as Community Triggers)
- Local Community Network
- Anti-Social Behaviour working groups
- Hate Crime Engagement Partnership
- Neighbourhood Warden provision and steering groups
- West Sussex Suicide Prevention Partnership
- Horsham Partnership Advisory Board

Horsham is a relatively affluent district with lower-than-average crime levels, and deprivation among the lowest nationally. Vulnerability is lower than county and national levels and communities are typically more satisfied with their neighbourhoods than other areas of West

Sussex. Horsham was in 2022, and continues to be, one of the safest districts in the county.

### **Recommendation**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the report.

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

This report is a Statutory Requirement of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998).

### **Background Papers**

N/A

### **Wards affected:**

All Wards

### **Contact:**

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## Key Information

### 1. District Profile

- 1.1 The 2021 Census recorded the population of the Horsham District as 146,800 – an increase of 11.8% from 2011 and the third highest in West Sussex behind Arun and Mid-Sussex. This is higher than the overall increase for England (6.6%).
- 1.2 The Horsham District accounts for 17% of the West Sussex population.
- 1.3 The population is split as 51% female and 49% male.
- 1.4 45% of the population is of working age, between 25 and 59 years.
- 1.5 22% are under 19 years old.
- 1.6 91.2% of residents are satisfied with where they live. This is higher than the average across West Sussex (84.8%).

### 2. Total recorded crimes

- 2.1 Based on total crime per 1000 of the population, Horsham was the second safest district in West Sussex (49 crimes per 1000 population), behind Mid Sussex (44 crimes per 1000).
- 2.2 Compared to the total West Sussex figures and other districts and boroughs, Horsham scored as follows:

Crime type	% of West Sussex total	Rank in County
Total crime	12%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Violence against the person	12%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Arson and Criminal Damage	13%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Vehicle Offences	12%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Robbery	7%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Theft	11%	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Public Disorder	14%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Burglary	14%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Sexual Offences	15%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Drug Offences	9%	4 <sup>th</sup>
Anti-Social Behaviour (all types)	13%	4 <sup>th</sup>

### 3. Violent Crime

- 3.1 In a Violent Crime, a victim is threatened with or harmed by violence. Violent Crimes include offences such as assault, rape and sexual assault, and harassment.
- 3.2 Violent crime accounted for 56% of crime in the district. However, Horsham was the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in West Sussex and the severity of recorded crime in Horsham was the second lowest in West Sussex. (The severity score reflects the relative harm of the offence rather

than the number of offences.)

<b>Violent Crime</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of West Sussex</b>
Adur	2,165	6%
Mid Sussex	3,788	12%
Horsham	4,020	12%
Chichester	4,102	13%
Worthing	4,754	15%
Arun	6,100	19%
Crawley	7,325	23%

- 3.3 Sexual offences in Horsham were the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in West Sussex.
- 3.4 Serious Violence accounted for less than 1% of the district's recorded crime and was the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in the county. (Serious Violence includes crime types that cause, or are intended to cause, serious injury and includes homicide, knife crime, personal robbery, and gun crime, where these occur in a public place.)
- 3.5 Knife crime accounted for 10% of the county's total (3<sup>rd</sup> lowest). There were 20 gun related incidents in Horsham, which was the highest across West Sussex and accounted for 27% of total county gun crime.
- 3.6 Almost a quarter of Violence Against the Person crimes were committed by young people under age 25. The average age of young people involved in violence was 12 years.
- 3.7 The Serious Violence Duty, which came into effect on 31 January 2023, is part of the Government's broad approach to prevent and reduce serious violence. The key strands are a multi-agency public health approach to understanding the drivers and impacts of serious violence, and a focus on prevention and early intervention. Responsible authorities (also known as "duty holders") who are subject to the Duty include: local authorities, the police, youth offending teams, Integrated Care System, Probation, and the fire service. In addition to the Serious Violence Duty Section 17 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act has been amended to make preventing and reducing Serious Violence a statutory requirement for Community Safety Partnerships.
- 3.8. In 2022 the Community Safety Partnership agreed to focus on two key priority areas, accepting that having two priorities which were so broad in nature would make the best use of resources. It also reflects what the group can positively impact, separate to police priorities.
- Young people and mental health support
  - Vulnerable older people

#### **4. Drugs offences**

- 4.1 In 2022 there were 121 drug offences in Horsham District which accounted for 2% of total

crime in Horsham and 9% of all West Sussex drugs crimes. This comprised 93 instances of drugs possession and 28 instances of drugs trafficking and supply.

- 4.2 Horsham Denne Ward, along with Crawley and Chichester, was identified as a Class A drug hotspot.

## 5. Anti-social behaviour

- 5.1 In 2022 the number of anti-social behaviour cases in Horsham logged by the police was 1,308. This is 13% of the West Sussex total and the 4<sup>th</sup> lowest in West Sussex.
- 5.2. Of those 1,308 cases, 1,127 were logged as Nuisance, 114 were Personal, and 67 were Environmental anti-social behaviour.
- 5.3. The vast majority (86%) were regarding neighbour issues/disputes, and this was reflected in the emails coming through to the Community Safety inbox.
- 5.4. **Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review (formerly known as the Community Trigger).** If someone has made three or more qualifying complaints of anti-social behaviour to an agency (HDC, police or social housing provider etc) within the last six months and it has not been dealt with, they can escalate a complaint through the Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review. This was previously called the Community Trigger. If it meets the criteria, a multi-agency meeting is held, and recommendations made. In 2022, HDC received 15 applications through its website, of which 11 were accepted and recommendations made.

## 6. Emerging issues in the Horsham District

- 6.1 The following were emerging issues in 2022 (and continue to remain so) and were regularly discussed at Horsham Peer Group Conferences:
- A group within Horsham town location linked to crime (assault, harassment, drugs, and knife crime).
  - Public perception that young people were gathering in larger groups were all committing crime.
  - Fear of knife crime and belief that all young people carry knives. Driven by social media.
  - Misogyny expressed by young males of school age.
  - Hesitancy or disinclination to report crime.
  - Rise in neighbour disputes.
  - Street racing and car meetings.
  - A high number of sextortion (blackmail by threatening to publish sexual information or photos/videos) and courier fraud was reported. Reports to Action Fraud were the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in West Sussex. Op Signature cases (police campaign to identify and support vulnerable victims of fraud) were the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in the County.
  - Of note is a rise of catalytic convertors thefts; with Horsham accounting for the 20% of County crime (2<sup>nd</sup> highest across West Sussex).

## 7. Neighbourhood Wardens

- 7.1. HDC manages seven Neighbourhood Warden Schemes across the district on behalf of

Parish and Neighbourhood Councils, who fund the service. Currently the scheme operates in Ashington, Billingshurst, Horsham Town, Pulborough, Southwater, Storrington, and Steyning, Bramber & Upper Beeding.

- 7.2. Wardens work alongside partner agencies to improve the quality of life for everyone and support vulnerable members of the community. They can help deal with social isolation, early intervention, contextual safeguarding and local issues.
- 7.3. They are accredited by the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme, and Sussex Police has delegated certain powers to them.
- 7.4. As well as providing a uniformed patrolling presence, working closely with the police, and dealing with anti-social behaviour, Wardens also establish diversionary activities for young people, attends local clubs and visits schools.

## **8. Perception v reality**

- 8.1 86% of reported ASB was down to neighbour disputes but the perception is that young people are responsible for all ASB.
- 8.2. There is a fear of knife crime and a belief that all young people carry knives. This is incorrect and partly driven by social media.

## **9. Public Space Protection order**

- 9.1. There is a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in place across the Horsham District. The Order came into effect on 1 April 2018 and lasted three years (the maximum allowed). On 1 April 2021, the Order was extended for a further three years (ending on 31 March 2024) and includes additional prohibitions. We have by far the most prohibitions in West Sussex.
- 9.2. In order to keep or add specific activities in a PSPO, there must be evidence that they are having a detrimental effect on the quality of life for those in the locality (or it is likely that activities will take place and have such an effect); is (or is likely to be) persistent or continuing in nature; is (or is likely to be) unreasonable; and justifies the restrictions being imposed.
- 9.3. Failure to comply with the Public Spaces Protection Order is a criminal offence. Offences carry a maximum penalty upon conviction of a fine (Level 3) of up to £1,000. Breach of a PSPO may be dealt with by a Fixed Penalty Notice if over 18 years. However, there are other ways to deal with these issues without them being in a PSPO, eg Community Protection Warnings and Banning Orders.
- 9.4. The conditions in force across the whole of Horsham District are:
  - Clean up dog fouling.
  - Keep dogs under control.
  - No anti-social use of vehicles.
  - No nuisance behaviour relating to alcohol.
  - No racing of, conducting time trials with, or exercising of a horse and horse-drawn vehicle on any dual carriageway.
  - No intoxication or possession of psychoactive substances.

In Horsham town centre additional conditions are:

- No unauthorised access or nuisance behaviour on buildings or street furniture.
- No unlicensed busking.
- No drinking of alcohol in The Causeway, Gardens of Remembrance and Mill Bay areas.
- No anti-social behaviour or nuisance behaviour in car parks and stairwells.
- No selling of periodicals which include a prize draw competition dependent on skill (excludes the Big Issue).

9.5. The current PSPO expires on 31 March 2024 and, after consultation with the police and the Community Safety Partnership, it was agreed to allow the PSPO to lapse. Should evidence come to light in the future of new or continued anti-social behaviours, a new PSPO can come into effect after public consultation if deemed necessary.

## **10. Relevant Council policy**

10.1 The work programme of the Community Safety Partnership supports the Council Corporate Plan by playing an active role in ensuring our district is a safe and enjoyable place to live. It also enables the Council to work in partnership with other agencies to tackle the causes of crime and disorder and improve the quality of life in our local communities.

## **11. Next Steps**

11.1 A further report will be provided to the Committee within the next 12 months in respect of 2023 data (calendar year).

## **12. Resource consequences**

12.1 There are no associated resource consequences.

## **13. Legal considerations and implications**

13.1 There are no associated legal consequences.

## **14. Risk assessment**

14.1 There are no associated risks.

## **15. Equalities and Human Rights implications / Public Sector Equality Duty**

15.1 None – information report.

## **16. Environmental implications**

16.1 None.

## **17. Other considerations**

17.1 There are no other considerations.