

ESTABLISHMENT of SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD for WALES

Purpose

1. To update members on the establishment of a Safer Communities Board for Wales, a joint initiative between WLGA/local government and policing in Wales and to seek views on the proposed priority areas for focus and action by the Board for 2020-22.

Background

2. Welsh Government established a Safer Communities Programme in December 2017 to take forward the recommendations of the [Working Together for Safer Communities](#) Review. A Strategic Leadership Programme Board was also set up to lead the development and implementation of the recommendations on a 'task and finish' basis. The WLGA and Solace Cymru were represented on the Board, along with other key partners in the community safety arena.
3. To support the work of the Board and take forward the recommendations from a local government and policing perspective, joint funding between WLGA, policing in Wales and Welsh Government was provided for a Safer Communities Programme Manager, based in WLGA. Over the past 18 months, this post has met with and supported Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), both locally and regionally (where in existence) in reviewing and updating their priorities and approach, making effective links to existing partnerships in encouraging an increased focus on community safety. The postholder, Steve Carr, has also supported the development of business cases for a number of important recommendations from the Review Report, including seeking funding for scoping the establishment of a Community Safety Network to support and enable CSPs to improve their effectiveness and in obtaining agreement from a range of bodies for the establishment of an all Wales multi-agency data and analysis hub, which will particularly assist local government in its analysis of potential threats to safer communities given the demise of data analysts in local authorities over recent years, mainly as a result of reductions in budgets.
4. Welsh Government's Strategic Leadership Programme Board will hold its final meeting in March 2020 with a view to mainstreaming programme activity into 'business as usual'. It will also provide a final progress and achievements report to the National Assembly for Wales' Public Accounts Committee and the Auditor General.

5. The safety of our communities has remained a key priority issue for local government over recent years, reflecting the importance communities place on community safety, both in terms of locality issues, such as addressing anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood policing and national issues such as anti-terrorism and tackling serious violence. Following discussions between representative Police and Crime Commissioners and the WLGA Spokesperson for Community Safety, it was agreed to jointly establish a Safer Communities Board to help provide the necessary strategic leadership, oversight and direction for community safety partnership working in Wales – reflecting the joint local government and policing leadership prescribed for partnership working in the original Act. It will also ensure that the Safer Communities Programme is provided with the necessary governance to continue making progress in refreshing and reinvigorating community safety partnership working at local, regional and national levels.

Safer Communities Board for Wales

6. The overall purpose of the Board is to provide leadership, oversight and direction to a joint programme between local government and policing in Wales, involving other partners, with the aim of ensuring effective shared leadership is provided to support local partnership working that will support safe, strong and more confident communities.
7. Membership of the Board is drawn from a range of key partners in the community safety arena. The work of the Board will continue to be supported and facilitated by a jointly funded Safer Communities Manager for a period 2 years from April 2020, based in WLGA offices. A copy of the full (draft) Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix 1.
8. The inaugural meeting of the Board was held on 17th December 2019. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the role and purpose and outcomes hoped to be achieved through the Safer Communities Board. In addition to receiving updates on a range of on-going projects and receiving feedback on discussions from the Policing Partnership Board for Wales, there was an opportunity to discuss initial views on the outcome of the Thomas Commission on Justice in Wales and Welsh Government's response to date.

Forward Work Programme

9. The Board at their next meeting will discuss and agree a number of key areas to prioritise within their work programme for 2020-2022. Existing priorities already agreed include:
 - The continuation of activity to establish a Safer Communities Network
 - Progressing the agreement of a shared approach to an All Wales Multi-Agency Data & Analysis Hub approach
 - Securing increased resourcing for local and regional partnership working

- Establishing and maintaining links to related programmes of work, such as the Violence Prevention Unit; Early Action Together Programme; and ACE's Support Hub
- Establishing communication networks to ensure consistent messaging and better alignment with other boards, programmes and workstreams, avoiding duplication.

10. Members are asked to share their views or suggestions on issues they would like the Safer Communities Board to consider for inclusion in their forward work programme.

Recommendations

11. Members are asked to:

- 11.1 Note the establishment of a Safer Communities Board for Wales, led by local government and policing in Wales;**
- 11.2 Comment on and agree future work priorities for the Board as set out in para 9 and highlight any further areas for consideration; and**
- 11.3 Agree to receive future reports on the progress and discussions of the Safer Communities Board.**

Report cleared by: Cllr Matthew Dorrance, WLGA Spokesperson for Community Safety

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Appendix 1

Safer Communities Board

(Draft) Terms of Reference

The purpose of the Board is to provide leadership, oversight and direction to a joint programme between local government and policing in Wales, involving other partners, with the aim of ensuring effective shared leadership is provided to support local partnership working that will support safe, strong and more confident communities.

The objectives of the Board are:

- To provide shared national leadership to local authorities and policing in Wales in tackling and addressing community safety issues, including identifying new and emerging shared priorities for action and ensuring a supportive policy, practice and partnership infrastructure is in place to enable successful delivery, locally and regionally as most appropriate;
- To agree a programme of work on an annual basis and in the longer term to help deliver a shared vision statement for community safety in Wales, including prioritisation of the key community safety issues that need to be tackled and/or promoted in the year ahead and consideration of capacity and funding to progress issues on the ground;
- To agree a programme of work on key community safety issues to be tackled and/or promoted in the year ahead, including capacity and funding, and provide direction and oversight of the work of the Community Safety Programme Manager;
- To receive regular updates on progress from the programme manager and provide a steer to future work and direction as relevant;
- To promote a joined-up approach nationally and locally, establishing effective links to the Violence Prevention Unit, Early Action Together, the ACEs Hub, Police Liaison Unit, and other relevant or successor bodies to highlight the importance of prevention and early intervention approaches and ensuring that they are embedded in practice locally regionally and nationally in Wales;
- To keep each other updated about current and emerging issues that could have an impact on the delivery of community safety working across Wales;
- To advise, inform and influence Welsh Government, UK Government (Home Office, Ministry of Justice) and representative bodies in local government, policing and criminal justice etc., on matters of relevance to community safety from a policing and local government perspective;

- To identify, celebrate and promote effective practice and encourage the adoption, upscaling and mainstreaming of initiatives that are proven to be 'what works';
- To work closely with Welsh Government and other partners in the community safety world, making shared representations on issues of joint concern as appropriate and to highlight opportunities to promote the shared vision statement for community safety in Wales that emerged from the 2017 Review.

Operation of the Board:

The Forum will meet every other month. The Forum will be jointly chaired by a Police & Crime Commissioner and the WLGA Spokesperson for Community Safety.

The secretariat will be provided by the Safer Communities Programme Manager in accordance with the agreement between the WLGA and Policing in Wales.

Membership:

- Representative(s) of the Welsh Police & Crime Commissioners
- Representative(s) of the Welsh Chief Constables
- Office of Police and Crime Commissioner representative
- WLGA Spokesperson for Community Safety
- WLGA Chief Executive
- SOLACE Cymru Representative
- WLGA Director Social Services and Housing
- Representative of Fire and Rescue Services
- Representative of HMPPS
- Representative of the Third Sector

Other members can be invited by agreement, including for specific meetings or agenda items.

The Board will report progress and provide regular updates to the Policing Board for Wales, Policing in Wales (which includes all Commissioners and Chief Constables), WLGA political and officer forums and the All Wales Criminal Justice Board.