



Internal Audit

FINAL

Dacorum Borough Council

Assurance Review of Community Safety Partnerships

2020/21

March 2021

Executive Summary

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The diagram shows a circular gauge with 'Substantial Assurance' in the center. The gauge is surrounded by the text 'Adequate & effective governance, risk and control processes'. To the right, a legend indicates four levels of assurance: Substantial Assurance (green), Reasonable Assurance (yellow), Limited Assurance (orange), and No Assurance (red).

ASSURANCE OVER KEY STRATEGIC RISK / OBJECTIVE

N/A

KEY STRATEGIC FINDINGS

- The Strategic Assessment Report identified some key risks that the Partnership are progressing.
- A three year action plan has been developed which will provide good forward direction for the Partnership.
- A number of officer and partnership groups have been established to provide control and governance over community safety.
- Possibly the partnership could be more active in seeking funding for supporting Community Safety events.

GOOD PRACTICE IDENTIFIED

- Community Safety is well advertised and promoted throughout the Borough.
- There is good partnership participation which is driven by the Council and the working groups.

SCOPE

To assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal controls in place at the Council for managing Community Safety. The audit focussed on the following key areas: Strategies are in place for the reduction of crime and disorder, and for combatting the misuse of drugs in the area, in accordance with statutory requirements; There are adequate governance arrangements in place to assist in the delivery of actions identified in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan; Guidance is provided to local residents to raise awareness of Community Safety issues; Grant schemes and other available funding are suitably identified and applied for, with spending outcomes adequately reported; and there is adequate performance monitoring and reporting to the CSP and Council Members in respect of crime and disorder reduction and progress against action plans.

ACTION POINTS

Urgent	Important	Routine	Operational
0	0	1	0

Assurance - Key Findings and Management Action Plan (MAP)

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
1	Delivery	Given how important Community Safety is to the community the Council should continue to seek grant funding from the many bodies who would benefit from this communal service.	The Community Safety Team continue to seek grant funding to support the implementation of the joint action plan.	3	<i>Agreed. The community safety partnership will continue to apply for external funding on projects that will benefit the wider community. Community safety events are a good way to engage with residents and businesses throughout Dacorum. There may be opportunities in the future to work with local supermarket and shops to promote targeted community safety issues relevant to them, which could encourage businesses to become involved through their corporate social responsibility.</i>	01/03/22	Community Safety & Children Services Team Leader

PRIORITY GRADINGS

1 URGENT Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

2 IMPORTANT Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

3 ROUTINE Control issue on which action should be taken.

Operational - Effectiveness Matter (OEM) Action Plan

Ref	Risk Area	Finding	Suggested Action	Management Comments
No Operational Effectiveness matters were identified.				

ADVISORY NOTE

Operational Effectiveness Matters need to be considered as part of management review of procedures.

Findings



Directed Risk:

Failure to properly direct the service to ensure compliance with the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation	Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
GF	Governance Framework There is a documented process instruction which accords with the relevant regulatory guidance, Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation.	In place	-	-
RM	Risk Mitigation The documented process aligns with the mitigating arrangements set out in the corporate risk register.	Out of scope	-	-
C	Compliance Compliance with statutory, regulatory and policy requirements is demonstrated, with action taken in cases of identified non-compliance.	In place	-	-

Other Findings



There is a current (2020) Strategic document (Strategic Assessment Report) which provides the future strategic direction for the Community Safety Partnership. The topics include:

Serious Crime Trends	Violent Crime Trends	Quality of Life (People & Communities)
- Burglary Residential	- Violence against the person	- Hate Crime
- Robbery	- Sexual violence (Rape)	- Criminal Damage
- Vehicle Crime	- Domestic Abuse	- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery	- Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)	- Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation
- Cybercrime and Fraud	- MARAC	
- Doorstep Crime	- Stalking and Harassment	
- Terrorism & Extremism	- Knife Crime	

Other Findings



The Strategic Assessment Report identified a number of recommendations for the Partnership to progress:

CCSU Recommendations – Dacorum

Emerging risks;

- a. **Theft from Motor Vehicles** – Police continue to proactively deal with this issue, the main thefts identified are catalytic converters from specific motor vehicles. Crime prevention is provided to the public, relating to theft from motor vehicles, on platforms such as social media and Neighbourhood Watch.
- b. **County Lines** – CSE, Weapon carrying, gangs – A County project has been utilised within Dacorum, for work with young people at risk of becoming involved gangs. The ‘SOS project’ intensively works with identified 11-24 year olds and focuses on work to reduce weapon carrying, involvement with drugs and the dangerous impact of Child Sexual Exploitation. The Police have also recently established a designated Children and Young Peoples, Schools and Gangs unit, that links in
- c. **Domestic Abuse** – A Domestic Abuse review is currently being carried out within the Borough, to establish the provision, opportunities and gaps within the DA service as whole. RAOG will oversee the review, along with recommendations. Following on from the review, a domestic abuse action plan has been formulated to track progress, which will be monitored by JAG on a monthly basis.
- d. **Shoplifting** – Shopliftings within Dacorum are mainly carried out by a small number of individuals, that are potentially street homeless or stealing to obtain funds for substance misuse. As a partnership the CSP are working together to ensure that individuals’ needs are met and they are signposted to relevant services in order to obtain the help they need. Police are very proactive in relation to the monitoring of known individuals and ensure that shops and businesses are aware of what to look out for.


Dacorum Community Safety Partnership Strategic Objective recommendations 2020/21

The following recommendations for the 2020/21 Strategic Objectives have been made on a local level, by The Community Safety Team at Dacorum Borough Council in conjunction with partner agencies working within Dacorum and contributing to the Dacorum Community Safety Partnership;


- 1) **County Lines**
- 2) **Domestic Abuse**
- 3) **Vulnerable individuals**
- 4) **Theft**

The above four recommendations for the Dacorum Community Safety Partnership have been incorporated into the action plan that is in place from 2020-2023 and is monitored on a rolling basis.

Other Findings

 The Council has a number of Groups and Partnerships set up to support good governance in the delivery of the Community Safety programme. The main two are:

- 1) **Responsible Authorities Officer Group (RAOG)** - This officer group is chaired by the CEO of Dacorum Borough Council. It is scheduled to meet bi-monthly with its primary aim to lead on the Community Safety Partnership and to hold the Partnership to account.
- 2) **Joint Action Group (JAG)** - This officer group is chaired by the Community Safety Lead Officer for Dacorum BC. It is scheduled to meet monthly and is the main body for overseeing the Partnership and the delivery of the Community Safety Action Plan.

 The Community Safety and Children Team Leader reports to the Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee at each meeting. The report details the performance for each quarter which includes the Childrens' Services and Community Safety Partnership. Due, however, to the pandemic, staff in the Community Safety Team have been deployed to assist with COVID 19 priority matters. The Community Safety Partnership joint action plan was presented in its draft form to the Dacorum Community Safety Partnership public meeting on the 21 October 2020.



Delivery Risk:

Failure to deliver the service in an effective manner which meets the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation	Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
PM	Performance Monitoring There are agreed KPIs for the process which align with the business plan requirements and are independently monitored, with corrective action taken in a timely manner.	In place	-	-
FC	Financial Constraint The process operates within the agreed financial budget for the year.	In place	1	-
R	Resilience Good practice to respond to business interruption events and to enhance the economic, effective and efficient delivery is adopted.	Out of scope	-	-

Other Findings



Local residents are kept informed of Community Safety issues and during the Summer and Autumn 2019, Dacorum Borough Council together with partner agencies from the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) held three events , one being in Hemel Hempstead (Northridge Way park), one in Berkhamsted (Canal fields) and one in Tring (Spider park). The events were advertised in a number of different ways. All schools in Dacorum were sent an electronic version of the flyer for the event and were offered the option of a hard copy if they wanted. Flyers and posters were delivered to health centres, children’s centres, community centres and preschools. Dacorum Borough Council ran a social media advertising campaign and the large screens at the Forum and in Hemel Hempstead town centre also advertised the events. The events were attended by over 600 people, of which over 200 were adults.



Dacorum have applied to the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner and the National Lottery for funding for projects but to date have been unsuccessful. Funds were received from OPCC for the booklet that is being produced. All funding issues are reported to the RAOG.

Scope and Limitations of the Review

1. The definition of the type of review, the limitations and the responsibilities of management in regard to this review are set out in the Annual Plan. As set out in the Audit Charter, substantive testing is only carried out where this has been agreed with management and unless explicitly shown in the scope no such work has been performed.

Disclaimer

2. The matters raised in this report are only those that came to the attention of the auditor during the course of the review, and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all the improvements that might be made. This report has been prepared solely for management's use and must not be recited or referred to in whole or in part to third parties without our prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose. TIAA neither owes nor accepts any duty of care to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on our report.

Effectiveness of arrangements

3. The definitions of the effectiveness of arrangements are set out below. These are based solely upon the audit work performed, assume business as usual, and do not necessarily cover management override or exceptional circumstances.

In place	The control arrangements in place mitigate the risk from arising.
Partially in place	The control arrangements in place only partially mitigate the risk from arising.
Not in place	The control arrangements in place do not effectively mitigate the risk from arising.

Assurance Assessment

4. The definitions of the assurance assessments are:

Substantial Assurance	There is a robust system of internal controls operating effectively to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
Reasonable Assurance	The system of internal controls is generally adequate and operating effectively but some improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
Limited Assurance	The system of internal controls is generally inadequate or not operating effectively and significant improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
No Assurance	There is a fundamental breakdown or absence of core internal controls requiring immediate action.

Acknowledgement

5. We would like to thank staff for their co-operation and assistance during the course of our work.

Release of Report

6. The table below sets out the history of this report.

Stage	Issued	Response Received
Audit Planning Memorandum:	2 nd December 2020	4 th December 2020
Draft Report:	11 th February 2021	3 rd March 2021
Final Report:	4 th March 2021	

AUDIT PLANNING MEMORANDUM

Appendix B

Client:	Dacorum Borough Council		
Review:	Community Safety Partnerships		
Type of Review:	Assurance	Audit Lead:	Chris Harris

Outline scope (per Annual Plan):	<p>Rationale: The Council’s corporate priorities include ‘a clean, safe and enjoyable environment’ and ‘building strong and vibrant communities’. Efficient and effective governance arrangements for Community Safety Partnerships are key to ensuring that statutory duties surrounding Community Safety are met and that CSP priorities and targets are delivered, in order to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour to make the borough safer for all residents.</p> <p>Scope: To assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal controls in place at the Council for managing Community Safety. The audit will focus on the following key areas:</p> <p>Strategies are in place for the reduction of crime and disorder, and for combatting the misuse of drugs in the area, in accordance with statutory requirements;</p> <p>There are adequate governance arrangements in place to assist in the delivery of actions identified in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan;</p> <p>Guidance is provided to local residents to raise awareness of Community Safety issues;</p> <p>Grant schemes and other available funding are suitably identified and applied for, with spending outcomes adequately reported; and</p> <p>There is adequate performance monitoring and reporting to the CSP and Council Members in respect of crime and disorder reduction and progress against action plans.</p>		
Detailed scope will consider:	<p>Directed</p> <p>Governance Framework: There is a documented process instruction which accords with the relevant regulatory guidance, Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>Risk Mitigation: The documented process aligns with the mitigating arrangements set out in the corporate risk register.</p> <p>Compliance: Compliance with statutory, regulatory and policy requirements is demonstrated, with action taken in cases of identified non-compliance.</p>	<p>Delivery</p> <p>Performance monitoring: There are agreed KPIs for the process which align with the business plan requirements and are independently monitored, with corrective action taken in a timely manner.</p> <p>Financial constraint: The process operates with the agreed financial budget for the year.</p> <p>Resilience: Good practice to respond to business interruption events and to enhance the economic, effective and efficient delivery is adopted.</p>	
Requested additions to scope:	(if required then please provide brief detail)		
Exclusions from scope:			

Planned Start Date:	06/11/2020	Exit Meeting Date:	09/02/2021	Exit Meeting to be held with:	Matthew Rawdon and Joe Guiton
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SELF ASSESSMENT RESPONSE

Matters over the previous 12 months relating to activity to be reviewed	Y/N (if Y then please provide brief details separately)
Has there been any reduction in the effectiveness of the internal controls due to staff absences through sickness and/or vacancies etc?	N
Have there been any breakdowns in the internal controls resulting in disciplinary action or similar?	N
Have there been any significant changes to the process?	N
Are there any particular matters/periods of time you would like the review to consider?	N