

# MANAGING CHANGE AND PROTECTING OUR TOWN

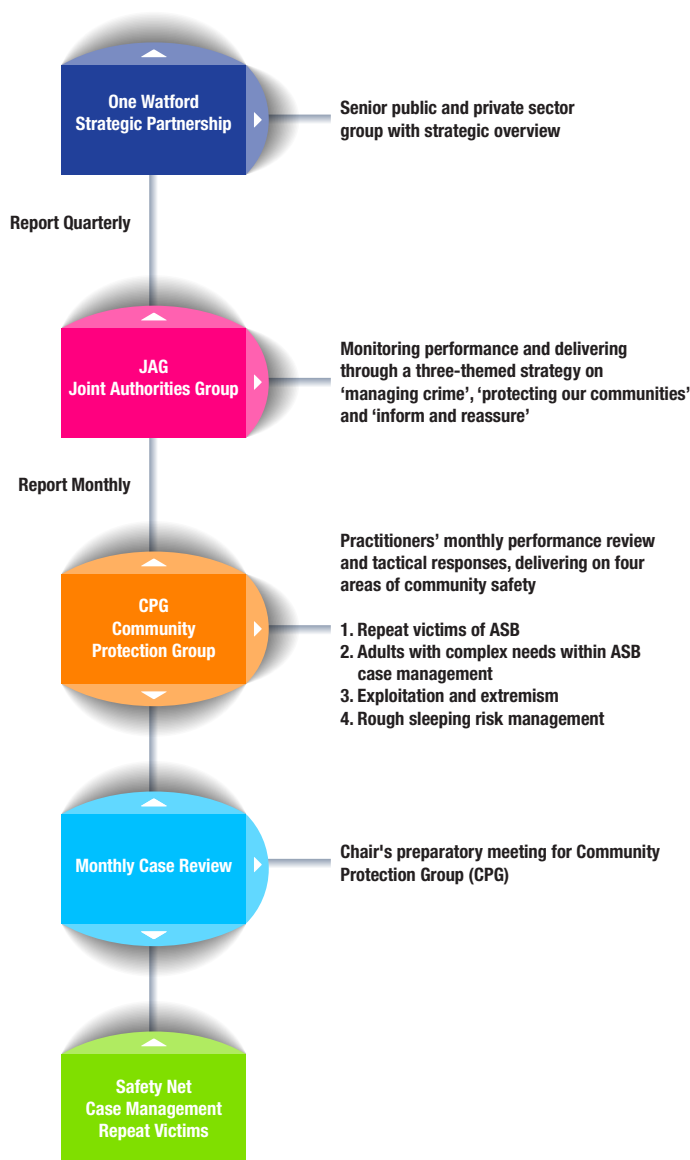
## THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (CSP)



The CSP is a three-tier organisation. At its head is One Watford, the strategic partnership's chief officer group, which meets bi-annually to agree and monitor the delivery of the strategic objectives for community safety.

The Joint authorities group (JAG) is tasked with delivering on the agreed strategic priorities. The strategic priorities are managed through three distinct, interlocking themes. The JAG reviews the local crime profile under the title of 'updating crime'. From this they identify and meet any specific emerging issues under the theme of 'protecting our communities from harm'. This partnership work is publicised through the third theme of 'reassure and inform'.

### Watford Community Safety Partnership reporting structure



A major part of the delivery of these plans is the work undertaken by the Community Protection Group (CPG).

This document centres on the working practices of that group, and is also the group's terms of reference.

## UNDERSTANDING WATFORD

Watford is a thriving town, located some 15 miles north of central London, with a population currently estimated at just fewer than 100,000.

The town is not only home to a young and growing population, it is also a destination for around half a million people within 20 minutes travelling time, who use the town as the shopping, transport, and entertainment hub of the county.

Watford is the fifth most connected town in Britain and soon, with the addition of the Metropolitan Line Extension, accessing Watford using one of its four train stations will be even easier.



Major new development for the town means it is changing dramatically, with a new shopping and entertainment centre, a new road and more rail infrastructure, as well as a new housing estate and hospital complex. The town already has a bustling day and night-time economy, which will all be enhanced by these new developments.

One of the major effects of all these rapid changes will be increased population. Watford is already the most densely populated non-metropolitan borough in the country. This also entails increasing diversity across the borough.

At the last census (2011), the non-white British population made up 38% of residents. The borough has a growing Eastern European community, as well as an existing second and third generation Asian population. More recent data and information indicates that this level of diversity is likely to increase.

Hertfordshire County Council's 2015 school census shows that around 150 languages are spoken by Watford children within the school system. National Insurance registrations up to September 2015 show that Watford has a high number of EU2 (Bulgaria and Romania) registrations.

Watford also has the highest National Insurance registrations from south Asia in Hertfordshire. Over the years, Watford has benefited from good community relations. However, the CSP is aware that protecting this diverse, changing population is critical to keeping our community safe and healthy.

The Community Protection Group (CPG) is a monthly partnership meeting. It draws together expert analysis and multi-agency solutions to manage emerging risks and issues facing individuals and the wider community.

The CPG traces its routes, membership, and methodology back to the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group (ASBAG), whose previous sole focus was the case management of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB).

The methodology for dealing with ASB risks has been transferred to manage wider community risks. These are evaluated using the Police's standardised risk matrix, which assesses increasing risks and the threat of repeat victimisation and vulnerability. It is measured by a number of set factors and is a key part of the Safety Net (SN).

By reviewing the detailed assessment and its totalised rating, high risk cases are attended to by dealing with the motivating/aggravating factors. Once these are identified, they are then broken down into specific tasks for the relevant officers in the CPG.

The risk is reviewed within two weeks of the case creation, with an expectation that the risk will have dropped within a month. If the risk is escalated, it will be identified and referred to the correct specialist within the CPG, to enable more targeted partnership work to tackle it.

Using the SN system proved so successful that from April 2010 to April 2014, there was over a 40% reduction in reported ASB across the borough. This dramatic reduction fed into the wider county picture, which saw Hertfordshire become recognised as one of the top three counties in Britain for dealing with repeat victims of ASB /low level crime.

In autumn 2014, it was decided that emerging community safety issues also needed a partnership approach at a tactical level. For this, there was capacity to remodel ASBAG.

In March 2015, One Watford agreed a plan to convert ASBAG into CPG, dealing with the following emerging issues under the banner of 'Protecting Our Communities'.

CPG would, therefore, set out to tackle four themes:

1. ASB, focusing on those cases where there was a repeat victim, and risk around vulnerabilities of individuals.
2. Intervene, supporting those adults with complex needs, as both victims and perpetrators of crime and ASB. This is by direct referral to the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT), who would be permanent members of CPG.
3. Challenge those engaged in exploitation or extremism.
4. Monitor the most vulnerable sleeping rough within the borough, seeking to reduce that number by engaging with them and providing support to move into regular accommodation.

On 18 May, the first CPG meeting took place. Its performance review happens through the Community Protection Plan, included in the appendix and updated monthly at JAG. Its findings are reported quarterly to One Watford.

## **MEMBERSHIP AND METHODOLOGY**

As stated, CPG is formed from the same case management and attendees list as ASBAG. Membership is based on the dual approach of those with the power to intervene and offer a support package to create change and reduce the need for enforcement.

However, where there is an increasing risk of ASB escalating, intervention will become the main focus.

To enable a proportionate response to situations, an information sharing protocol (ISP) is required, which all members must be signed up to. Requests are dealt with by the chair and the Police ASB Coordinator (inset ISP doc) on a one-to-one basis, in line with the conditions of the ISP (which relate to the eight data principles). For those occasionally attending CPG in a specialist capacity, a confidentiality clause is read out. All attendees, whether signed-up to the ISP or not, sign this document at the beginning of every meeting. This also provides the attendees list for the formal minutes, which are produced and circulated one week before each CPG.

The aim of CPG is to undertake a monthly performance review of open SN cases and meet emerging issues with the appropriate case management plans. It also disseminates information about the four themes and takes referrals on the same subject.

## THE FOUR THEMES

Repeat victims and those with complex needs.

A risk assessment is always undertaken and recorded within Safety Net (SN) when CPG is managing an emerging case of repeat victimisation, complex needs, or possible exploitation. CPG agrees how cases are managed, with a monthly timeline and actions put in place to tackle the issue. Outcomes are clearly arrived at, with either:

- a de-escalation of the ASB followed by monitoring for a further month, ideally leading to closure of a case  
or
- more intensive support/intervention until de-escalation has occurred due to the complexity of the case or new offences being committed.

Cases where mental health is a factor pose the biggest threat of escalation and further victimisation, so it is crucial that the CMHT are advised as soon as possible, either taking the lead or providing clinical direction for further intervention.

Where a case has not been resolved, the victim may call for a review. This formal request process is part of the ASB Act 2014 and is called the Community Trigger.



CPG is responsible for reviewing all Community Triggers and responding to the complaint formally, ensuring the process is accurate and accountable.

## **EXPLOITATION AND EXTREMISM**

CPG is tasked with reducing the impact of exploitation and extremism by information sharing around vulnerabilities identified to both the individual and wider community. The group looks to seek support for the victims by identifying the appropriate agency to do this. The CPG collects information on behalf of the Channel panel. For further information on the Prevent agenda, please see the WBC website and click on the lets talk about it the 'LTAI' link.

## **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)**

Following the Rotherham report, work has been undertaken to improve cross service communication and reporting. In line with the 'hear something, say something' Police campaign, CPG has delivered training to partners and councillors. CPG works with operation HALO to prevent CSE. See the WBC web site for further information.

## **PACT OF ROUGH SLEEPING WITHIN THE BOROUGH**

CPG holds rough sleeping (RS) meetings at the end of normal business. For data protection and human rights reasons, the meeting is held in private and only members of the police and council, and support workers directly involved in the individual's case history, are present.

The aim of this smaller working group is to reduce risk factors around the most vulnerable and to engage with the hard-to-reach. A further aim is to help those in need to access New Hope's services. New Hope, the borough's specialists on rough sleeping, leads this part of the meeting, setting the sub agenda and identifying the most high risk cases for discussion.

Currently RS do not automatically go onto SN, primarily because of data protection. However, we are looking to address this, as full access to histories would provide additional and up-to-date information on what are often the chaotic lifestyles of rough sleepers.

**[newhope.org.uk](http://newhope.org.uk)**



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