

## **EPSOM & EWELL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

<u>Report of the:</u>	Chief Executive
<u>Contact:</u>	Kelvin Shooter
<u>Urgent Decision?(yes/no)</u>	No
<u>If yes, reason urgent decision required:</u>	N/A
<u>Annexes/Appendices (attached):</u>	None
<u>Other available papers (not attached):</u>	None Stated

### **REPORT SUMMARY**

**The Committee is asked to consider and agree to the combining of the current Epsom & Ewell and East Surrey areas into a single CSP.**

### **RECOMMENDATION (S)**

*Notes*

- (1) The committee agree in principle to the combining of the Epsom & Ewell and East Surrey areas to form a single East Surrey Community Safety Partnership.**
- (2) The Chief Executive be authorised to finalise the terms of a combination agreement with the other responsible authorities in the combined area and to enter into that agreement on behalf of the Council.**

## **1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy**

- 1.1 There are no specific references to Community Safety but the concept of a safe and secure community is implicit in all services the Council provides.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The Crime & Disorder Act 1998, amongst other things, imposed a duty on local authorities and chief police officers to formulate and implement a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the local authority's area. There was a requirement for the responsible authorities to consider a range of information and to consult other organisations prior to formulating their strategy. To do so we were required to establish a strategy group for the area. This was managed under the banner of 'Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership'.

- 2.2 Over the years the legislation evolved, to add to the “responsible authorities”, to include organisations such as the Fire and Rescue Service, the Probation Service and Clinical Commissioning Groups. The obligation to formulate and implement a strategy has also broadened to encompass the following matters:
  - 2.2.1 The reduction of crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour adversely affecting the local environment);
  - 2.2.2 Combatting the misuse of drugs alcohol and other substances in the area;
  - 2.2.3 Reducing re-offending in the area.
- 2.3 To reflect the wider partnership, and role, the name was changed to the ‘Community Safety Partnership’ (CSP).
- 2.4 In 1998 the funding of CSPs was mainly from direct Home Office grants to local authorities. The model of funding in Surrey saw this grant split between the 11 boroughs and districts and the County Council. In 2011 central government removed the direct funding from local authorities and placed community safety funding, and with it the decision on how it could be utilised, with the newly created Police and Crime Commissioners. The Surrey PCC chose to fund county wide projects and have a pot available for small grants that could be bid for by individuals and community groups.
- 2.5 Without the direct core funding from Government, all CSPs within Surrey have reviewed their community safety operations. This has resulted in a rethink of how the requirements of the legislation and local needs for maintaining a joined up approach to community safety could be achieved.
- 2.6 One of the options open to CSPs is to combine across local government areas. This is specifically permitted by the 1998 Act, as amended in particular by Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
- 2.7 To implement a combined area, all of the responsible authorities must enter into a combination agreement with the relevant local policing body. In respect of combination agreements, the “relevant local policing body” is the Surrey Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC). The PCC may only enter into a combination agreement if he considers that it would be in the interests of one or more of the following to do so:
  - 2.7.1 Reducing crime and disorder
  - 2.7.2 Reducing re-offending
  - 2.7.3 Combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances.
- 2.8 The Epsom & Ewell CSP explored this option to form the East Surrey CSP in 2013 along with the district and boroughs of Mole Valley, Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge. The option was taken up by the other three CSPs and signed off by the County Police & Crime Commissioner.

Epsom & Ewell undertook a review at the time of the East Surrey amalgamation and agreed not to amalgamate at that time but to monitor how the amalgamated CSPs operated in particular how they maintained a local focus. The option of joining the East Surrey CSP was kept open and this position was agreed by the East Surrey CSP.

### 3 Proposals

- 3.1 A further invitation has been received from the East Surrey CSP and East Surrey Police Division for Epsom & Ewell to consider amalgamation. Discussions held with the East Surrey CSP confirm the Epsom & Ewell CSP would retain its ability to address local issues through sub groups and at the same time be part of a wider, strategic body that considers county and wider issues such as counter terrorism, child sexual exploitation, cybercrime and serious organised crime. We will continue to hold Joint Action Groups (JAG), and Community Incident Action Groups (CIAG) as necessary.
- 3.2 The invitation to amalgamate was tabled at a meeting of the Epsom & Ewell CSP in September 2016 where representatives of all responsible authorities present agreed in principle to seek such an amalgamation. East Surrey CSP has also met and, again, the representatives of all responsible authorities present agreed in principle to extending the combined area to include Epsom & Ewell.
- 3.3 It is therefore proposed that the Chief Executive be authorised to finalise arrangements and enter into the required combination agreement.

### 4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial or manpower implications for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council associated with combining with East Surrey CSP. It is intended that the funds currently held by the Epsom & Ewell CSP will continue to be used for the benefit of Epsom and Ewell, and will, for example, continue to fund the administrative work arising from the CSP, and sub-groups.
- 4.2 ***Chief Finance Officer's comments:*** *It is important that suitable arrangements are made to ensure that the funds currently held by the Epsom & Ewell CSP remain available for current spending commitments, including in relation to administrative support, and are only pooled and used for purposes to benefit the wider East Surrey CSP area where this is considered to be the best and most appropriate use of the funds*

### 5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 The Epsom and Ewell CSP was formed pursuant to Part I of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as was the East Surrey CSP.
- 5.2 CSPs are permitted to combine under the 1998 Act. This requires the agreement of all responsible authorities in the combined area and requires the agreement of the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner.

5.3 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

5.4 ***Monitoring Officer's comments:*** *The legal considerations are set out in the body of the report. It should also be noted that, once a combination agreement has been completed, it can only be terminated by further agreement of all responsible authorities – one authority acting alone cannot bring the arrangements to an end. In particular, the PCC can only agree to termination of a combination agreement if he is satisfied that termination will be in the interests of one or more of the considerations listed in clause 2.7 above.*

## **6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications**

6.1 The action of amalgamating the Epsom & Ewell CSP with the East Surrey CSP will aid sustainability and add value to the Boroughs ability to tackle cross borough issues.

## **7 Partnerships**

7.1 The concept of a CSP is to bring together agencies within the area to find solutions to crime and anti-social behaviour. This partnership working will be maintained with the amalgamation.

## **8 Risk Assessment**

8.1 There is a risk that Epsom & Ewell issues could receive less attention than they can now under the current CSP. However, it is considered that this is unlikely to arise. It is mitigated by the intention to allow sub-groups to be established, and it must be remembered that each of the responsible authorities retains their statutory obligations to deal with issues in the Borough. Combining with East Surrey CSP provides a positive opportunity to work better with other responsible authorities and tackle the larger strategic issues.

## **9 Conclusion and Recommendations**

9.1 The position of the Epsom & Ewell CSP has become more difficult, in large part due to the lack of resources and capacity since the removal of the direct Home Office funding in 2011. It has also been increasingly difficult for all responsible authorities to engage with CSPs and meet their statutory obligations – working together across East Surrey should help address this issue.

9.2 The opportunity to amalgamate with neighbouring CSPs that form the East Surrey CSP allows the local work of the Epsom and Ewell CSP to continue and adds value in its ability to tackle strategic issues that have an area and county focus.

9.3 It is therefore recommended that the Committee agree to the Council entering into a combination agreement with the other responsible authorities.

**WARD(S) AFFECTED: (All Wards);**