

Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee – Meeting held on Tuesday, 31st March, 2026.

Present:- Councillors Khawar (Chair), Hulme (Vice-Chair), Ajaib, Mann, Matloob, Mohindra and O’Kelly

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillor Manku

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Tomar and Muvvala

PART 1

53. Declarations of Interest

None received.

54. Minutes of the Meetings held on 4th & 10th February 2026

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2026 and 10 February 2026 be approved as a correct record.

55. Safer Slough Partnership Annual Update

The Lead Member for Environment and Environmental Services, who was standing in for the Lead Member for Communities, Sport, Leisure and Public Protection, highlighted the following areas of the report.

He stated that the report provided assurance regarding the performance, progress and statutory responsibilities of the Safer Slough Partnership (SSP) for the period 2025-2026. It outlined partnership work across crime reduction, community safety and multi-agency collaboration and provided updates on the four key priorities of the CSP (community safety plan).

- Partners included TVP (Thames Valley Police), SBC (Slough Borough Council), Fire and Rescue, ICB (Integrated Care Board) and the Probation service;
- Its aim was to reduce crime and disorder, substance misuse, re-offending and serious violence while improving public safety and confidence;
- The SSP met 4 times a year and governed work undertaken by multi agency sub-groups;
- overall levels of reported crime had reduced by 2.8% and 3.4% for victim-based crime for the period 2024-2025;
- Slough remained a priority area for TVP due to its higher comparative rates;
- there was strong progress and partnership work, built safety Langley won Laycock problem solving award and had been shortlisted for an LGC award (local government chronicle);

Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee - 31.03.26

- the safer Cippenham programme had been launched using lessons learned from the programme in Langley;
- community engagement was expanding with dedicated community safety engagement officer in place;
- responses to the Annual Safety Survey had doubled on the previous year and indicated improved perception of safety by residents;
- the domestic abuse (DA) partnership was strengthening and there were 107 DA champions had been trained. Work to reduce violence against women & girls, men and boys was progressing well as was the safe accommodation;
- prevention and youth focussed work, and interventions were led by the PCC, SCF and youth justice team;
- the violence prevention partnership, hospital navigated scheme (this had been extended for 3 years), youth futures panel, school pilot programmes were successfully embedding early intervention models;
- the serious violence strategy and action plan were being implemented with robust governance;
- there were more knife crime and violence intelligence briefings;
- a Roma engagement project had been launched;
- Street guardians and mobile safe spaces schemes were progressing well and there was a designated safe space in every ward;
- the Community Safety Summit in 2025 had been well-attended and successful;
- In summary the SSP was performing strongly despite financial and capacity constraints. In conclusion :-
- overall crime rates were falling, partnership structures were demonstrably effective, Slough was innovating in areas such as DA response, youth violence prevention and community engagement though some gaps remained around areas such as serious violence enforcement tools, work was being undertaken to resolve these issues. The SSP was moving in the right direction and was aligned closely with the Council's corporate priorities;
- a report on the community safety survey and the needs assessment of the priority areas would be provided at a future meeting.
- the representative from TVP (Thames Valley Police) advised that the TVP Moving from local police areas to local command units (LCU) – the force had been re-organized into five separate command units, with Berkshire East as a command unit for the first time. Slough remained a priority within the new structures, which focussed on the importance of working closely with partners and had a more flexible workforce with the benefit of moving quickly to hot spots or areas of concern.

With regard to performance and delivery, could officers provide baseline data for each of the priorities and improvement targets? What intervention mechanisms were in place if delivery fell behind schedule?

Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee - 31.03.26

- The SBC Community Safety Partnership Manager advised that the relevant KPIs (key performance indicators) could be found in appendix B of the report. Baseline data could be provided after the meeting.
- **Action:** Baseline data would be provided to the Committee after the meeting.

How would community engagement (especially with hard-to-reach groups) be used to shape the plan? How would residents' feedback be incorporated into the plan.

- Officers advised for that there were around 150 different languages spoken in Slough. Posters in different languages had been used and information shared with under-represented groups through their community groups. A DA video had been translated into Urdu and Hindi; work had been undertaken with residents' groups on estates, as well as awareness raising events and action days. A lot of grass-roots work undertaken, for example the neighbourhood action group in Langley was run by local residents.

Incidences of anti-social behavior (ASB) in Chalvey were on the rise and because the police were not in a position to respond to every incident, residents had stopped reporting many of these which was negatively impacting on community cohesion.

- An officer advised that funding had been received from the PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner) for a Roma support project in Chalvey for 3 years. The project would include learning what access needs the community had and would include community cohesion. A steering group made up of Roma people living in the area would be tackling the ASB in the area. Many in the Roma community did not trust authority figures or groups and this project would help build two-way communication;
- a recent national crime survey showed 37% of people experienced ASB across the UK and this was under-reported. TVP had run an ASB campaign to improve reporting levels. TVP would be releasing ASB plan which was in line with national requirements. It would stipulate expectations in terms of neighbourhood policing. However, competing areas challenge for policing included prolonged protests, serious violent incidents. TVP engagement plan included 4 pillars:

-seldom-heard communities; ASBs; retail crime; engagement with youth. It was working to improve reporting and relationships with residents which would enable them to make a more targeted approach.

Many residents were not aware of the SSP, and much work remained to be done to raise awareness of it. With regard to road and traffic crime and dangerous driving – how did Slough compare to other authorities?

Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee - 31.03.26

- The SBC The strategic needs assessment was underway and the 4 priorities of the CSP would likely be the same going forward;
- **ACTION:** The representative from TVP advised that he did not have the data relating to traffic crime to hand but would provide it after the meeting;
- he added that each of 107 neighbourhoods in the Thames Valley area had listed 3 priorities which given by residents (e.g. alcohol-related ASBs and driving-related harm in the town Centre and thefts from motor vehicles), however, these were not priorities set by the police.

Why had 58% of referral orders been refused?

- **Action:** The representative from TVP stated he would provide this information after the meeting.

Drugs-related crime in the vicinity of the High street was closely linked to ASBs and other crimes which needed to be tackled on a daily basis. What could be done about this?

- The TVP representative advised that there was a dedicated Slough team of 10 officers to deal with these issues. There were hot spot patrols which were sometimes covert and other times overt. He appreciated visibility of police provided reassurance to residents.

The nature of the High street was changing with more people living there in poor quality housing. A more targeted model of policing was required for this area. Patrols were visible, however, what concrete impact were they having? Education and engagement with young people and their families should take place to ensure a more joined up approach across the partnership and to overcome the challenges of silo-working.

- the SSP was working more collaboratively and cohesively with partners. The changing nature of the High street would require a new approach. The issues on the high street were mainly alcohol and drug related. The safer towns team and the new Sergeant was familiar with issues and those involved;
- An officer from the Youth Justice Management Board stated that the Youth Justice Action plan helped build links and ensure the Partnership had good oversight of the process;
- 'clear, hold build' was an excellent model that had been shown to work and would be rolled out to different areas. Challenges included building trust with local communities;
- the questions on the annual survey had been changed and it had been circulated at different time of the year, to additional community groups, community centres and places of worship. To date 350 responses had been received, which was double the number received the previous year. Moving forward, officers would look into widening the circulation using more digital means and improving response rates.

Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee - 31.03.26

How would the findings of the report be shared publicly to ensure transparency and what role would scrutiny have in monitoring delivery of the plan over the next three years. Some data sets e.g. for drug-related crime had not been provided.

- **Action:** Some data sets had not been provided by the TVP and this was due to the loss of a data analyst. Negotiations were ongoing with the analytical team and this information would be provided at a later date;
- the community safety summit in 2025 was widely publicized to raise awareness of the work of the SSP. There was a dedicated community safety officer who would help embed the goals of the partnership.

A Member asked for more detail regarding the violence-prevention partnership project and work with young people at risk of criminality etc.

- the Young Futures and the Focussed Deterrent programmes had been merged. Each panel meeting had between 3-6 young people who all had different support needs and were allocated support accordingly. There was additional funding available for this work to continue. To date twenty young people had been through the panel, referred on from school, social workers etc. There was also a parenting programme. This programme was part of a pilot programme in the Thames Valley area and was progressing well.

What was being done regarding the VAP (violence against the person) rate and the pressures regarding young people transitioning to adulthood?

- The officer did not have this information to hand. **Action:** Data regarding VAP rates to be provided after the meeting.
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How were officers engaging with new developments such as those by Berkley Homes to ensure community safety.

What information was there regarding domestic homicides?

- the SSP team, the TVP and the Council's Planning team were engaging with Berkley Homes on the matter;
- to her knowledge there had been 2 confirmed cases of domestic homicides in Slough.

Could officers provide more information regarding budgeting and how monies were being spent e.g. the money for the Roma project?

- in the first year, the Roma project would include engagement events, outreach work and setting up the Roma steering group.
- The PCC monitored the funding and budgets. This information would be included in a future report;

Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee - 31.03.26

- **Action:** Budgeting information regarding how monies had been allocated and spent to be provided at a future meeting;
- **Action:** following a request from a Member, a member of the Youth Justice team to be invited to attend a future meeting.

The Committee agreed the following 2 additional recommendations:

1. Officers to carry out a review of the Community Safety Survey with CISC to consider any alternative methods of engagement with residents;
2. A member of the Youth Justice team to be invited to attend a future CISC meeting where the Safer Slough Partnership item was considered again.

Resolved – that:

Comment on The Safer Slough Partnership (SSP) and how it has continued to progress its core community-safety priorities since the last Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee, with notable improvements in anti-social behaviour enforcement, serious-violence reduction, and community engagement.

2.2 Note the Safer Slough Partnership's progress in delivering actions to address crime and disorder and in further developing effective multi-agency partnership arrangements.

2.3 Comment on the progress against the Key Performance Indicators in 2025/26 (Appendix B)

2.4 Note the TV Police update, and the performance of Slough in comparison to other local police areas in the Thames Valley data shown in Appendix D

2.5 We ask members to share their recommendations to help shape the work of the SSP and strengthen our wider community safety efforts. Your insights, experiences, and local knowledge are essential to ensuring that our priorities reflect the realities faced across our communities;

2.6 officers to carry out a review of the Community Safety Survey with CISC to consider any alternative methods of engagement with residents;

2.7 a member of the Youth Justice team to be invited to attend a future CISC meeting where the Safer Slough Partnership item was considered again.

(Councillor O'Kelly joined the meeting at 19.27)

56. Slough Local Plan

The Lead Member for Environment and Environmental Services provided a brief overview of the report, highlighting the following areas of the report:

- the report set out the direction and purpose of the emerging Slough Local Plan – more specifically how it would shape the future of Slough by deciding the siting of new homes, jobs, infrastructure and green spaces; while ensuring that development was sustainable and balanced and met the needs of both current and future residents within the methodology and legislative framework for this work;

Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee - 31.03.26

- further progress and a more detailed report would be presented to the committee in a year's time.
- the Director of Planning Services advised that the Leader was responsible for the Local Plan (and not the Lead Member for Planning, Parking, Highways and Transport).
- he added that historically the plans for runway 3 at Heathrow, (which in the past had prevented the LP from progressing further). Following the government's recent announcement that Heathrow runway 3 would now be reconsidered, officers had been obliged to reconsider their approach to the LP. There was a new more streamlined and more strategic process for evolving the LP.

Members asked the following questions and received the responses and comments below:

What did the Housing Plan look like?

- Slough's housing requirement had been identified as requiring an additional 12,500 homes to be made available for the period 2026-2024 (this had been calculated by a standard methodology). It was important to draw a distinction between housing need and housing requests. There was a system for identifying potential sites for housing and employment. The Housing needs assessment would identify the mix of dwelling types to meet the needs of Slough. Previous projections had showed the need for family homes with gardens. However, there was not sufficient land to deliver this. Regulation 18 consultations had been carried out in previous years and had indicated that further expansion to north of the borough would be required as well as an assessment of all potential sites in Slough (including brownfield sites). All plans would be evidence-based and involve Member and community engagement.

How would the new framework work? How would displaced parking and issues arising from the CPZs (controlled parking zones) work in the local plan?

- With regard to environment and infrastructure, the Plan would focus on sustainable transport methods to promote modal shift. The new framework was a 30-month process with strict timelines and included scoping, early participation, defining strategic objectives, defining housing and employment needs. There was greater flexibility in terms of details, which would allow the policy to be continuously refreshed. The regulations also had very strict timescales which speeded up the overall process and reduced costs.

A Member requested that infrastructure, transport and parking issues at new developments be further investigated. **Action:** The officer undertook to look into the matter further and report back to the Committee.

Many family homes were being converted into HMOs (houses of multiple occupation) with proposals for further conversions.

Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee - 31.03.26

- The LP did not have the power to prevent Permitted development rights whereby family homes were being converted into smaller HMOs (there were over 2,000 of these in Slough). Plans for larger HMOs were regularly reviewed. There were some recent examples of Article 4 Directions used in a targeted way to restrict HMO developments. The conversion to HMOs was having a negative effect on the availability of family homes.

The implementation of the LP was a resource intensive activity and how would this challenge be met?

- This would be done through engagement with local health providers and doing a local health study which was being funded by public health funds. The Government had provided two rounds of LP grant funding in 2025 and 2026. Some of the costs were also reduced due to the lighter amount of evidence required. Economic development contributions could also be used for this evidence-based work. The Government intended to make the plans digital by default and funds had been provided for this also. Some of the work would be outsourced.

How would the new policies be underpinned by infrastructure to support business growth and how would these be funded? How did the LP accommodate sustainability?

- officers were in discussions with the education team, the NHS and other key partners to look at future projections of need and anticipated growth. There was a non-local plan element to identify the appropriate amount of levy to be paid for planning applications. The current infrastructure capacities would be compared to projected growth. All information and background information would be taken into account, this applied equally to developments outside the borough. There were local transport and walking and cycling plans. There was also funding for a local transport plan;
- with regard to sustainability and environment – the LP also had a local open space plans within it. New building control regulations would ensure the sustainability of any new developments and address environmental and pollution issues.

Was there a sufficient level of in-house expertise to accurately assess the viability of large developments?

- there were a number of review and claw back mechanisms especially for affordable homes. Early and late stage viability reviews could also be undertaken. He was confident in the ability of partners to ensure the correct amounts would be received;
- minerals and waste plans were county wide. Bins storage would be covered by guidance from the waste team. In cases of private contractors, developers would have to demonstrate they could do this. With regard to sewage etc., statutory consultees included infrastructure

Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee - 31.03.26

providers, utilities companies etc. and they would have a legal obligation to provide those connections and services. However, planning decisions and planning policy did not have a say over statutory providers as these were covered by separate legislation.

Action: A briefing note regarding the approach to parking at new developments and examples of policies encouraging sustainable transport, to be provided to the Committee.

Resolved – That:

1. Note the report and awareness of what a Local Plan is and its purpose
2. To agree that a progress report should return to CISC in 12 months' time to review the progress and direction in relation to a new Local Plan for Slough.

57. Attendance Report

Resolved – That the Members' Attendance Report be noted.

58. Date of Next Meeting - 28 April 2026

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.26 pm)