

Report to Cabinet

Monday 24 May 2021

Subject:	Request approval to enter into an agreement to accept a Safer Streets from the Home Office of £331,250, if the bid proves successful
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Maria Crompton - Community Safety
Director:	Katharine Willmette
Key Decision:	
Contact Officer:	Tessa Mitchell Business Manager Community Safety & Resilience tessa_mitchell@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to enter into a Safer Streets grant agreement with the Home Office, if SMBC are successful with the bid submitted on the 25th March 2021. The total cost of the project is £331,250, of which £66,250 is in kind, with £265,000 in additional funding applied for.
- 1.2 That Cabinet authorises the Head of Finance to sign the grant agreement
- 1.3 That the Director be authorised to implement and monitor the projects outlined in relation to this funding.



2 Reasons for Recommendations

2.1 In February 2021, following an initial Expression of Interest submission to the Police and Crime Commissioner, Sandwell was selected by the as one of 3 West Midland areas to bid for Safer Streets Funding. £20m is being made available for areas with persistent and disproportional neighbourhood crime to provide concentrated investment into ‘hotspot’ areas. All bids were subject to strict criteria as outlined below:

- (i) that areas have a defined, but not necessarily adjoined geography,
- (ii) that the intervention area is a suitable size to enable effective targeting, 500 to 3,500 households (or 1,000 to 9,000 residents),
- (iii) that the areas are persistently and disproportionately affected by one or more neighbourhood crime types.
- (iv) focus on Lower Super Output Areas
- (v) targeted focus on four neighbourhood crime types; domestic burglary; vehicle theft (theft of and from vehicles); theft from the person and robbery which meet the required benchmarks

Crime Type	Benchmark crime rate using police.uk data (crimes per 1000 population per year)
All Neighbourhood Crime (Burglary, Robbery, Theft from Person & Vehicle Crime)	18.30
Vehicle Crime	8.74
Burglary	7.91
Robbery	1.16

Based on the criteria in respect of LSOAs and data provided by the Police in respect of crime rates over an average of the last 3 years, West Bromwich Central and Abbey wards were selected for the purpose of this bid.



2.2 A full project appraisal has been undertaken by Strategic Finance (Appendix 2). The appraisal process recorded a 'satisfactory' score of 72%. Some risks have been identified resulting from the appraisal and action points recommended to mitigate these risks to reduce any risk to the Council:

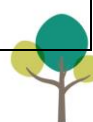
Recommendation	Action / Mitigation
That prior to entering into a funding agreement with the Home Office for delivery of the project, Strategic Finance review the terms and conditions of funding	This will be undertaken
That all estimated costs are reviewed for reasonableness to ensure they can be managed within the available funding.	Costs have been reviewed with WMP and the CCTV Team and are considered reasonable.
That additional council resources are identified to support any additional costs relating to the employment of the Community Crime Prevention Officer for which grant funding is not available.	This will be fully funded from the grant
That adequate evidence can be provided to the funder to support all match funding 'in kind' of officer time used on the project, along with a breakdown of direct and indirect costs.	This is included fully in the grant submission to the Home Office and they have not requested any additional information.
That adequate funding is identified from Housing Management's existing resources to fund future management and maintenance costs of the additional CCTV cameras.	8/10 additional cameras will be added to the existing 530. During the first year the warranty will cover their maintenance. From year 2 the CCTV system will have had a full system upgrade with anticipated cost savings. In 2022 the service is also due to tender for a new maintenance contract. It is expected that the maintenance of these additional cameras will be significantly if not fully covered as part of this work.



	The CCPO will also be engaging with businesses in relation to developing a Business Partnership akin to West Bromwich BID who could also provide some financial support for the additional cameras.
That state aid advice is sought from Legal Services to ensure all grant funding is state aid compliant	Advice is being sought
That VAT/tax advice is sought from the Council's Tax Accountant.	This will be undertaken

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackling these types of crime will encourage families to stay in areas and to take ownership and pride in their areas reducing transience and transitions for children and young people.
	<p>People live well and age well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents feel safer in their own homes and communities leading to improved health and wellbeing.
	<p>Strong resilient communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents and visitors feel safer on our streets Supporting commercial premise occupiers to take responsibility for making our shopping areas safer and reduce crime Reduce neighbourhood crime (burglary, vehicle related theft, theft from the person, robbery) in areas that receive funding – making local areas safer and reducing demand on the police to focus on higher harm crimes. build community capacity - establish and encourage people to get involved and take ownership of their own areas. the public to feel safer and confident as part of partnership approach to reassurance and confidence



	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents and commercial premise owners take pride in their environments • Safer and cleaner local areas
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make commercial premises more attractive to new businesses in the area(s) attracting new ones and supporting existing ones
	<p>A connected and accessible Sandwell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both areas are on main through fares with transport links. Making these areas feel safe for residents, visitors and shoppers is important for regeneration and growth and to retaining residents in Borough.

4 Context and Key Issues

Background

4.1 The second round of Safer Streets Funding was launched by the Home Office in January 2021. £20m was made available to bidders, working in partnership to design and deliver local crime prevention plans in hotspot areas to reducing neighbourhood crimes through situational prevention. The objectives of the fund are to:

- Reduce neighbourhood crime (burglary, vehicle related theft, theft from the person, robbery) in areas that receive funding – making local areas safer and reducing demand on the police to focus on higher harm crimes.
- Continue to build evidence about the impact of targeted investment in situational prevention in high crime areas to strengthen the case for future investment, both at local and national level.
- Grow local capability to undertake data driven problem solving and capture evidence and practical learning about how best to implement situational interventions to prevent crime.

4.2 Each Police & Crime Commissioner was permitted to make three bids for their areas. Sandwell, along with the 6 other areas within the West Midlands region, was invited to submit an Expression of Interest for the funding and was advised on the that EOI would progress to a full bid.



- 4.3 Based on the criteria outlined above and crime data provided by the West Midlands Police Analysts, West Bromwich Central and Abbey wards were selected as the areas to be included in the bid. Both areas have high levels of income deprivation, unemployment, long term unemployment, child poverty, older people living alone and older people deprivation. (Source Sandwell Trends). All of which have been intensified by Covid and both are persistently and disproportionately affected by one or more neighbourhood crime types.
- 4.4 Both areas also have a number of similarities including: an older high street with areas requiring investment; some empty stores; offices and flats above; alleyways between stores and behind and graffiti and litter. Commercial premises form the main central shopping and business area arterial routes with genuine businesses working to attract customers to the area. Side streets, often at right angles off these form a grid to the surrounding area, consisting of established residential streets situated behind the businesses and reaching out to areas beyond. These consist of traditional terraced housing in various states of repair with some low rise and limited high-rise accommodation.
- 4.5 The areas are diverse, with higher than the Sandwell and National average for the BAME communities. There is a high Eastern European population concentration in both areas. Fear of personal crimes such as burglary and robbery have a significant impact on the community. Local social media pages share crime details almost instantly, which plays a part in increasing this fear. These diverse communities often don't receive targeted messaging due to language barriers and / or digital exclusion.
- 4.6 The bid is supported by a full Environmental Visual Assessment (EVA) (Appendix 3) carried out by an independent Police Design Out Crime Officer following partnership walkabouts in both areas
- 4.7 **Abbey** - the data used to support the bid is as follows:



E1009927 Abbey

	No. of offences	Average	Population of LSOA	Rate per 1,000	Benchmark	x Benchmark
Neighbourhood crime	329	109.67	1564	70.12	18.3	3.83
Vehicle Crime	95	31.67	1564	20.25	8.74	2.32
Burglary	113	37.67	1564	24.08	7.91	3.04
Robbery	91	30.33	1564	19.39	1.16	16.72
Theft from the person	30	10.00	1564	6.39	*	

This LSOA is top 40% of deprivation.
 IDACI score is top 40% of deprivation.
 IDAOP1 score is top 20% of deprivation

Secondary crime types

	No. of offences/incidents	Average	Population of LSOA	Rate per 1,000
ASB & PSW (1-year data)	171	171.00	1557	109.83
Violence	274	91.33	1557	58.66
Domestic Violence	59	19.67	1557	12.63
Hate Crime	22	7.33	1557	4.71

4.8 West Bromwich Central – data used to support the bid

E1010106 (West Bromwich Central)

	No. of offences	Average	Population of LSOA	Rate per 1,000	Benchmark	x Benchmark
Neighbourhood crime	384	128.00	1557	82.21	18.3	4.49
Vehicle Crime	147	49.00	1557	31.47	8.74	3.60
Burglary	108	36.00	1557	23.12	7.91	2.92
Robbery	76	25.33	1557	16.27	1.16	14.03
Theft from the person	53	17.67	1557	11.35	*	

This LSOA is top 20% of deprivation.
 IDACI score is top 30% of deprivation.
 IDAOP1 score is top 20% of deprivation

Secondary Crime Types

	No. of offences/incidents	Average	Population of LSOA	Rate per 1,000
ASB & PSW (1-year data)	344	344.00	1557	220.94
Violence	644	214.67	1557	137.87
Domestic Violence	109	36.33	1557	23.34
Hate Crime	63	21.00	1557	13.49



E1010107 (West Bromwich Central)

	No. of offences	Average	Population of LSOA	Rate per 1,000	Benchmark	x benchmark
Neighbourhood crime	326	108.67	1564	69.48	18.3	3.80
Vehicle Crime	103	34.33	1564	21.95	8.74	2.51
Burglary	129	43.00	1564	27.49	7.91	3.48
Robbery	37	12.33	1564	7.89	1.16	6.80
Theft from the person	57	19.00	1564	12.15	*	

This LSOA is top 10% of deprivation.
 IDACI score is top 10% of deprivation.
 IDAOP1 score is top 10% of deprivation

Secondary Crime Types

	No. of offences/incidents	Average	Population of LSOA	Rate per 1,000
ASB & PSW (1-year data)	263	263.00	1557	168.91
Violence	457	152.33	1557	97.84
Domestic Violence	117	39.00	1557	25.05
Hate Crime	28	9.33	1557	5.99

5 The Bid

5.1 The bid submitted to the Safer Streets Fund is made up of several elements:

- Installation of CCTV cameras** along Bearwood Road, Smethwick. This forms a significant proportion of the bid. The cameras will be linked to the Council’s 24-hour state of the art control room. The CCTV system is due a full system upgrade and a new maintenance contract will be tendered in 2022. Both of which should help absorb the costs of maintaining the proposed 10 additional cameras within the 500 we already have. There has already been investment in modernising street lighting along the road and this will complement the work we aim to undertake with businesses around security, blocking off alleyways, discouraging burglaries, vehicle crime including car cruising and theft of and from vehicles as well as having an impact on other crime such as ASB, begging and drug dealing. The multi-agency Commercial Centres Group Chaired by the ASB Team Manager which feeds into Tasking also demonstrates the need for additional cameras and presence to tackle these increasing concerns in this specific area.



- **Recruitment of a 12-month dedicated Community Crime Prevention Officer (CCPO) to work in both wards. The main focus of the role will be:**

- visit repeat victims and vulnerable householders of burglaries to advise on home security
- signpost to services that offers support to victims
- have access to home security packs if victims meet criteria
- have access to a home security budget for one off security measures i.e. installation of security measures, cutting of bushes, security lighting, fencing etc
- visit streets of concern to survey for design out crime measures – look at alley gating to entries etc
- organise cocooning visits to neighbours
- build community capacity - establish and encourage people to get involved and take ownership of their own areas, build social capital.
- visit all businesses along both high streets to offer advice regarding security and engage them in taking ownership for keeping visitors and their premises safe.
- Potential development of a Bearwood Business Group akin to West Bromwich BID

- **To support the CCPO in their work we are also requesting funding for the following:**

- Home security packs that will be offered to 100 vulnerable residents or repeat victims of burglaries, who meet the criteria identified by the CCPO based on vulnerabilities and affordability
- Alley gating for up to 20 sites identified by the CCPO with feedback from local residents, businesses, communities and the police.
- One off security measures when there are other security needs or installation costs on an individual basis for vulnerable residents – can include fencing, bush cutting, padlocks for sheds etc
- An environment security budget to address minor environmental improvements to increase safety in locations of concern
- Publicity/Printing/video for awareness campaigns to support publicity in different languages, a video that will include a victim's experience that can be viewed by schools, community groups and the public, a Support Your Neighbours campaign and two physical events during our Safer Six campaign in the Autumn of 2021.



5.2 The total cost of the project will be £331,250, of which £66,250 is in kind, utilising existing staff time and expertise across teams and agencies. £265,000 in additional funding will be brought into SMBC and administered by the Community Safety Team to deliver the project if the bid is successful. All successful bids will be part of a central project evaluation process which will also provide Sandwell with a local project evaluation.

A full copy of the proposal submitted to the Home Office is attached as Appendix 1.

6 Findings & Recommendations

- 6.1 The bid, if successful, will enhance community safety in two substantially deprived areas, disproportionately affected by these types of neighbourhood crime. The additional community engagement opportunities which will be supported by the CCPO role at this time, post covid, is also a timely and excellent opportunity. The bid has also been subject to a full Strategic Investment Unit Financial Appraisal Report which has scored it as 72%.
- 6.2 It is recommended that Cabinet approve acceptance of the funding applied for if the bid is successful.

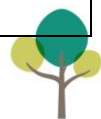
7 Alternative Options

- 7.1 The only alternative is to not accept the funding, if offered and not to make the improvements outlined in these two areas. This is not recommended.



8 Implications

Resources:	<p>Financial, staffing, land/building implications The funding will be provided by the Home Office. The bid includes in kind funding committed by both the LA and WMP to support the development of the project. This will be absorbed from existing budgets.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>Legal implications including regulations/law under which proposals are required/permitted and constitutional provisions The funding will be offered in line with Home Office funding requirements and administered in line with SMBC Financial procedures.</p>
Risk:	<p>Risk implications, including any mitigating measures planned/taken, health and safety, insurance implications</p> <p>Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour through partnership working is central to the delivery of the Community Safety Strategy 2019-21 and Strategic Assessment 2020. This is an opportunity to add additionality to this work through additional funding to deliver the specific project outlined. A full financial appraisal has been undertaken by the Strategic Assessment Unit which has rated the bid as satisfactory.</p>
Equality:	<p>Implications for equality (all aspects and characteristics) including how meeting Equality Duty, equality impact assessments.</p> <p>An EIA has been undertaken.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>Implications of the proposals on health and wellbeing of our communities Reducing and managing crime and anti-social behaviour and protecting its victims has a positive impact on health and wellbeing.</p>



Social Value	<p>Implications for social value and how the proposals are meeting this (for e.g. employment of local traders, young people)</p> <p>This project includes 2 of Sandwell’s commercial centres and improving community safety and reducing fear of crime in both will enhance opportunities for local traders and young people. The project also includes opportunities for engagement and inclusion.</p>
---------------------	---

9 Appendices

- Appendix 1 Sandwell Safer Streets Project Bid Submission
- Appendix 2 Strategic Investment Unit Financial Appraisal Report
- Appendix 3 Environmental Visual Assessment
- Appendix 4 Equality Impact Assessment

10 Background Papers

- Safer Streets Fund (2021-22) Prospectus

