

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Community Safety Board – Progress Update

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### Summary

The Community Safety Board is required to attend the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee (OSC) on a six-monthly basis to provide an overview of the activities undertaken to address its strategic priorities, as set out in the statutory Partnership Plan for 2015/16.

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## 1 Background

- 1.1 The Community Safety Board is a standalone themed partnership that has the legal obligation to address the key crime, disorder and substance misuse (drug and alcohol) issues that are impacting upon the Borough. The Board also has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce an annual intelligence-led Strategic Assessment and Partnership Plan.

## 2 Strategic Assessment and Partnership Plan

- 2.1 As a reminder, the Strategic Assessment is a detailed analysis of the key crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour issues within Gateshead in order to assist in setting future community safety priorities for the Board. The eighth Strategic Assessment was completed in December 2014 and identified four themed priorities for the Board to address over the next twelve-months

## 3 Partnership Plan

- 2.2 As a reminder, the Partnership Plan brings together the analytical findings from the Strategic Assessment, along with the key activities undertaken by the Board in the previous twelve-months to set out the strategic priorities that will be delivered upon in the forthcoming year. The strategic priorities endorsed by the Board for 2015/16 were:
- Tackling Crime and ASB  
 Tackling Adult-related ASB; Acquisitive and Violent Crime; Environmental Issues; Fear of Crime; Embed ASB Tools and Powers
  - Addressing Re-offending  
 Impact of Transforming Rehabilitation; Older Offenders; Prevention and Early Intervention through FamiliesGateshead; Youth Crime
  - Protecting Vulnerable Groups  
 Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub; Operation Encompass; Domestic and Sexual Abuse; Hate Crime; Victims First Hub; Sexual Exploitation
  - Addressing the Drivers of Crime and Disorder  
 Drug-related Deaths; Novel Psychoactive Substances ('Legal Highs'); Alcohol-related Crime and Disorder; Recovery (Treatment); Welfare Reform

## **2 Current Performance**

- 2.1 Between April and August 2015, the level of recorded crime experienced within Gateshead increased by 22% (with an extra 833 crime reported to Northumbria Police). Particular increases have been noted in violent crime (up 38%; 311 crimes), domestic-related burglaries (up 34%; 51 crimes), criminal damage (up 38%; 272 crimes) and serious acquisitive crime (up 20%; +99 crimes).
- 2.2 Although the number of crimes is increasing, Gateshead remains one of the best performing Community Safety Partnerships within its Most Similar Family Group of 15 CSPs; whilst the rate of crime per 1,000 residents continues to be lower than the average for the Northumbria Force area.
- 2.3 The volume of anti-social behaviour reported to Northumbria Police has fallen by 13% (down 680 incidents). Reported incidents of youth-related ASB across the Borough have fallen by 11%, while there has been a 38% downturn in reported incidents of alcohol-related ASB (-224 incidents).

## **3 Strategic Priorities – Update**

- 3.1 This section provides an update of Community Safety activity within Gateshead. It sets out progress and/or actions that have been implemented in the last six-months and highlights future workstreams that are currently being developed to address any emerging themes/trends.

### **Tackling Crime and ASB**

- 3.2 ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2015 – the Act came into effect in April 2015 and brought about the biggest change to ASB legislation for over a decade. A number of new Tools and Powers were introduced to support both Gateshead Council and its partners to tackle ASB issues caused within the Borough. Community Safety has been working closely with a wide range of agencies and internal services to ensure a holistic and coordinated approach is adopted.
- 3.3 Refresh of ASB Strategy, Graded Response, ASB Practitioner Framework – A number of practice guidance documents linked with the specific ASB Tools and Powers have been developed for frontline practitioners and residents in order to raise awareness of the new ASB legislation. Further details will be provided to members in the presentation.
- 3.3 ASB Development Group – the Group, established by representatives from Community Safety team, continues to meet on a monthly basis and provides an opportunity for all ASB Leads throughout the region to come together to discuss the ASB Tools and Powers and to explore the potential options for future collaboration and joint-working across local authority areas. This has included sharing of best practice in relation to training for frontline practitioners as well as policies and procedures.
- 3.4 Public Space Protection Order – Gateshead Council is currently applying for its first Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) following high volumes of motorcycle and youth-related disorder linked to a bridleway path stretching from Wrekenton through to Kibblesworth. Northumbria Police are currently in the

process consulting with residents in relation to the impact and effect that the PSPO would have on the local area.

3.5 Safer Neighbourhoods – some activity that has been undertaken by partners as part of the Safer Neighbourhoods model includes:

- A Task and Finish Group has been set up in relation to Springwell in direct response to concerns that have been raised around youth-related anti-social behaviour, specific problematic individuals and families residing on the estate as well as prevailing substance misuse issues.
- Work has been ongoing to address rising levels of anti-social motorcycling. This includes identification of perpetrators and taking enforcement action, where necessary; while a multi-agency information leaflet has been produced which has been circulated to hotspot areas.
- Operation Sentinel has been launched in South Gateshead in order to help protect those who are most vulnerable to burglary and to raise awareness with partner agencies. This has included briefing sessions with agencies as well as visiting in excess of 150 properties to provide crime prevention and home safety checks.
- Two Operation WAYS (We Asked, Your Said) have been undertaken in Central and West. Surveys have been undertaken in Carr Hill, following ongoing reports of anti-social behaviour in the area, as well as in Winlaton, where Gateshead College students surveyed residents looking at the crime and anti-social behaviour experiences and feelings of safety.

3.6 Central Engagement Team – Northumbria Police have established a dedicated team in order to enhance engagement across Gateshead with key community leaders and groups. The team will have dedicated lead officers assigned to community groups and work closely with partners to enhance feelings of safety and promote early identification of community concerns across Gateshead.

3.7 Perception Survey – The latest Safer Communities Perception Survey (April to June 2015) shows that the vast majority of Gateshead residents continue to feel safe and secure living in the Borough. The results continue to highlight that local residents are more concerned with addressing quality of life issues as opposed to crime/disorder problems:

- Almost nine in every ten respondents feel completely, very or fairly satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live;
- 97% state they felt safe living in Gateshead which is similar to last year;
- Gateshead residents are more likely to have a better perception of the Criminal Justice System than respondents across Northumbria;
- Three-quarters of respondents felt the Police and Council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their local area, and
- Perceptions of anti-social behaviour being a very or fairly big problem in local neighbourhoods are higher with perception of crime lower.

### **Protecting Vulnerable Groups**

3.8 ARCH – The number of hate crime reports since April 2015 has increased by 18% (up 18 additional incidents) compared to the same period in 2014. Racism continues to be the most reported incident type and is present in more than

three quarters of all hate-related incidents reported within Gateshead. In addition, the ARCH Hate Crime Recording System has recently been revised to incorporate an improved case management function. The refreshed system allows greater information sharing and allows for a broader range of data to be collected on victims, perpetrators and outcomes of hate crime. A range of e-Learning tools have been circulated to existing users to provide training on the new system; whilst a re-launch of ARCH has been planned to coincide with the national Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2015.

- 3.9 IDVA – The Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) Team continue to engage with and provide specialist support to all high-risk victims of domestic abuse. To date, there have been 817 referrals into the service, which is a rise of almost 57% (an additional 300 clients on the same period last year).
- 3.10 Home Office Innovation Fund – In conjunction with Northumbria Police, Safer Communities was successful in a bid to the Home Office Innovation Fund to strengthen measures to support the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. This included extending the current provision until March 2017 as well as developing innovative work linked with serial victims of domestic abuse. This has included commissioning additional co-located staff from a range of partner agencies to support complex and vulnerable individuals.
- 3.11 Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse – Northumbria Police are working closely with Community Safety in relation to the implementation of a Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) designed to address the offending behaviour of domestic abuse perpetrators. The new approach will include:
- Introduction of a MATAC meeting to identify actions to try and curb offending behaviour (including enforcement, preventive and support elements\_.
  - Identification of perpetrators (using RFG – 'recency, frequency and gravity' of offending behaviour) and production of in-depth subject profiles of offenders.
  - Implementation of 'live' monitoring / tagging offenders on a voluntary basis which will be able to assess the proximity of victims and offenders.
  - Working with housing providers to identify opportunities for domestic abuse to more closely linked with tenancy arrangements.
  - Perpetrators programme to be developed and rolled out across Northumbria to ensure that all areas have some form of provision available
- 3.12 Operation Encompass – As a reminder for members, Operation Encompass is the initiative that has been established to share information with schools to be able to support children who are affected following a domestic abuse incident. Key statistics since April 2015:
- 375 separate incidents of domestic abuse being reported to schools, of which 850 children were identified as being present and/or within the property at the time of the incident taking place.
  - Of the 375 incidents, the highest proportion took place in South Gateshead (27%) and Central Gateshead (23%)
  - Incidents reported to the top five schools account for more than a fifth of all domestic abuse incidents.
  - The average age of the children involved are 8.7yrs;

- 3.13 Anti-Social Behaviour Volunteer Network – supported by the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Community Safety team together with the Volunteering team is currently recruiting a number of volunteers to help support victims of ASB in Gateshead. The project is still only in its infancy, but already, we have received significant interest from volunteers wishing to be involved.
- 3.14 Northumbria Domestic Abuse Practitioner Standard – Gateshead Council and Sunderland Council are developing a pilot with the PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner) to deliver training to a number of domestic abuse practitioners to a consistent 'Northumbria' standard that will allow them to support victims of any level of risk, from high to standard. It is hoped that this will help to ensure a more coordinated, seamless service for victims of abuse.
- 3.15 Prevent Duty Awareness Training with Schools – In order to support schools in meeting the statutory requirements introduced by the Prevent Duty, several sessions have been arranged during September 2015. Headteachers and designated safeguarding leads from all schools attended the sessions which included an overview of the new duty, alongside delivery of WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) training sessions.

### **Addressing the Drivers of Crime and Disorder**

- 3.16 Drug-related Death – The Drug-related Death Panel continues to meet on a monthly basis to discuss cases and explore possible learning outcomes from all drug-related deaths that occur within the Borough. There have been 5 confirmed drug-related deaths recorded in 2015 (7 awaiting toxicology reports) compared to 10 for the same period last year. The key issues arising from the Panel identify a greater need to educate and inform service users and wider public about the dangers of mixing a cocktail of drugs/alcohol.
- 3.17 Training – a number of training sessions have taken place since April 2015 in conjunction with the Adult and Young Peoples Substance Misuse Services (Evolve and Platform) to provide practitioners in Gateshead with information on drug and alcohol prevention as well as the emerging trend around legal highs. Attendance has been very good to date and further sessions are planned.
- 3.18 Substance Misuse Strategy – An event linked with the development of the combined Substance Misuse Strategy took place at the end of March 2015 and has resulted in a range of actions being identified to address drug and alcohol misuse in Gateshead. The event was well attended by a range of partner agencies and the findings will be used to formulate a Strategy and Action Plan that will be presented to a future CSB meeting.
- 3.19 Refresh of Licensing Policy – Community Safety and Public Health are working closely with the Licensing Team to support information sharing in relation to the refresh of Gateshead Council's statutory Licensing Policy 2015-20. Data on alcohol-related crime and disorder will be used to identify hotspot locations and to help inform future decisions on licensing applications and reviews.

- 3.20 Novel Psychoactive Substances Regional Conference – Community Safety is currently working with Platform in relation to organising a Conference on Novel Psychoactive Substances for regional partners and services. This follows a similar event held in Kirklees by CRI. An expert in the effects of legal highs will be presenting at the Conference which is expected to be held later in year.
- 3.21 Positive Requirements – Community Safety and Public Health have been working closely with Evolve and Platform to implement criteria linked with the Positive Requirements element of the ASB, Crime and Policing Act. As a result of these discussions, both partners have agreed to vary their existing contracts with Gateshead Council to ensure treatment service are able to legally pick up individuals that require positive requirements as part of any statutory order.

### **Addressing Re-offending**

- 3.22 The Probation Service is currently subject to significant reforms (as a result of national Transforming Rehabilitation agenda) which is having a fundamental impact on future service delivery around the reduction in offending behaviour in Gateshead. As a reminder for members, Probation Services within Gateshead now comprise of: Northumbria Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) and National Probation Service (NPS).
- 3.23 Despite the changes, there remains an ongoing commitment to risk assessment and management of offenders throughout Gateshead and both the CRC/NPS continue to work closely in partnership to protect the public from harm – and from a public perspective, there should be very little change – with partnership activities continuing to operate effectively. This includes:
- Integrated Offender Management continues to identify and proactively target our most prolific offenders using a co-ordinated multi-agency approach.
  - Neighbourhood Policing Teams continue to nominate individuals that are causing concern in local communities relation to crime and disorder.
  - Strong links continue to be maintained with local Prison Services – and work continues to be developed in relation to the 'Through the Gate' model.
  - Work continues to take place with 'non-statutory' offenders that are leaving custody to address their offending behaviour.
  - Young offenders are routinely discussed within IOM to support the transition process from youth to adult services – and enables Probation to be fully up to speed on the case prior to hand over.

## **4 Recommendation**

4.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) Comment on the progress made in relation to each of the four strategic priorities of the Community Safety Board;
- (ii) Continue to receive six-monthly Community Safety updates;
- (iii) Agree to receive further details in relation to work undertaken as part of the MATAC process (to address perpetrators of domestic abuse) as well as the emerging trends of drug-related deaths and Novel Psychoactive Substances within Gateshead.