

TITLE OF REPORT: Community Safety Priorities – 6 Month Update

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Wellbeing and Learning**

Summary

This report provides Housing, Environment and Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) with a brief overview of the key activities that have been co-ordinated and delivered by Gateshead Community Safety Board within the last six-months to address the strategic priorities outlined within the strategic Partnership Plan 2020/23. The report also highlights the impact of, and some of the potential emerging themes, Covid-19 in relation to crime and disorder within Gateshead.

1 Background

1.1 The Community Safety Board is a standalone statutory partnership made up of five Responsible Authorities – namely: Gateshead Council, Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, the National Probation Service and NewcastleGateshead Clinical Commissioning Group. The Board's purpose is to 'ensure partner agencies and services work together to make Gateshead a safe place for everyone'. Its core functions are to:

- address crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour and behaviours which adversely affect the environment);
- combat the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and
- reduce re-offending.

1.2 The Board has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act to produce an annual intelligence-led Strategic Assessment (an assessment of need based on data) along with a Partnership Plan (which formally sets out the areas that will priorities and the activity that will be undertaken locally by the Board). A copy of the Partnership Plan 2020-23 has been attached as Appendix 1.

1.3 As a reminder, the strategic themes that were agreed by the Community Safety Board for delivery in 2020-23 are:

(1) Violence, Exploitation and Abuse

- Serious Violence (including Criminal Exploitation and Knife Crime)
- Domestic Abuse (including Violence Against Women and Girls)

(2) Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities

- Anti-Social Behaviour (Youth, Adult and Place-based ASB)
- Locality-based Tasking and Problem Solving Arrangements

(3) Community Cohesion and Resilience

- Hate Crime and Tension Monitoring
- Preventing Violence Extremism, Radicalisation and Terrorism

1.4 These are the areas in which the Board felt we can collectively make a bigger impact by working together; however, the Board also remains flexible enough to be able to respond proactively to any new and emerging risks and threats not linked to these priority areas. Covid-19 has meant partners have had to react to presenting need, which has led to reconfiguring and re-prioritising of services to ensure the continued delivery of important frontline services.

2 Crime Performance

2.1 The table set out in Appendix 2 shows performance of crime and disorder within Gateshead from 1st April through to 30th September 2021.

2.2 In the first six-months of 2020/21, recorded crime in Gateshead has reduced by 1% (-131 fewer reported crimes) compared a 3% increase across Northumbria (1,728 additional crimes). Crime levels in Gateshead continue to remain on par with local authority areas across South of Tyne and Wear and the rate of crime per 1,000 population remains comparable to our 15 Most Similar Family Group national average.

2.3 Crimes against the person have increased on last year – with violence rising by 4% (+140), robbery increasing by 15% (+7) and sexual offences up 30% (+77). Violence against the person accounts for more than a third of all recorded crime in Gateshead during the period; albeit, most offences are classified as violence without injury. Theft-related offences such as vehicle crime has fallen by 38% (-238), burglary reduced by 3% (-14) and pedal cycle thefts down 35% (-41).

2.4 Demand-related calls to Northumbria Police relating to public safety-type issues (such as mental health, suicides and substance misuse has increased in the last 12 months) with more complex and multiple needs being identified. Police and Council have also seen increased reporting of anti-social behaviour.

2.6 Feelings of safety and perceptions of how the Council and partners work together to tackle community safety issues remains positive. Public confidence surveys have shown local people have a positive perception of how the Police and Council are working together to tackle issues alongside increased numbers of people who feel ASB is being taken seriously. In addition, the numbers of people reporting positive perceptions of Police visibility in their community has also increased in recent months.

Thrive

2.7 A review of the locations in which crime and ASB incidents are committed has shown more than half of all crime that takes place in those neighbourhoods that are classified 'Extremely' or 'Very Vulnerable' under Thrive agenda categories – and has increased proportionally compared to last year.

Crime	Vulnerable - Extremely	Vulnerable - Very	Just Coping - Only Just	Just Coping - Getting By	Managing	Thriving
2020	22.97%	27.26%	14.39%	15.05%	10.72%	9.61%
2021	25.25%	26.44%	14.90%	14.59%	9.98%	8.84%

In addition, there has been increased complaints of anti-social behaviour within those neighbourhoods that are deemed 'Thriving' and 'Managing' areas under Thrive agenda (with many complaints relating to potential tolerance issues such as noise, young people gathering in street/parks and lower-level ASB).

ASB	Vulnerable - Extremely	Vulnerable - Very	Just Coping - Only Just	Just Coping - Getting By	Managing	Thriving
2020	24.20%	28.84%	14.98%	15.06%	9.18%	7.73%
2021	23.31%	27.26%	14.58%	15.67%	10.17%	9.01%

3 Progress to date

3.1 A snapshot of some of the key activities that have been undertaken this year by partners to address the priorities of the Board include:

Violence, Exploitation and Abuse

Serious Violence (including Criminal Exploitation and Knife Crime)

- Supported Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit with the refresh of the regional Insight Report and Violence Reduction Strategy for Year 3. The Insights Report highlights takes an evidence-led approach to identifying harm hotspots within our community around serious violence.
- Knife Crime Serious Violence GRIP Funding will be used high visibility targeted patrols and problem solving within specific harm hotspots within Inner West and Central Gateshead with an aim of to implement a step change in activity to suppress and reduce serious violence through
- Developing Problem Orientated Policing Plans (POP) for harm hotspot areas – working closely with Neighbourhood Inspectors to deliver local interventions.
- Knife Crime Awareness sessions have been delivered by the VRU Education Team to young people and practitioners in various settings – including schools – which has been well received.
- Implementation of Year 1 Project ADDER (including drug testing upon arrest) is progressing well. A Gateshead referral pathway is currently under consultation.
- A partnership analytical hub has been created to support the analysis of drug-related deaths to help steer partnership activity and enhance our approach to placed-based harm.
- Continue to support disruption of Serious and Organised Crime activity through delivery of Operational Sentinel interventions.

Domestic Abuse (including Violence Against Women and Girls)

- Gateshead Strategic Domestic Abuse Forum has been re-established and has started to progress some key areas of work required as part of the Domestic Abuse Act. This includes the ongoing development of draft Needs Assessment and Strategy to improve our support offer linked with Safe Accommodation.
- We continue to offer in-house Domestic Abuse Services in Gateshead providing specialist support to safeguard victim and children affected by domestic abuse. In addition, a local Behaviour Change Programme has been established that works directly with perpetrators to break the cycle of domestic abuse.
- Secured additional funding to deliver specialist Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) and Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworker (ISAC) training to upskill our Domestic Abuse Workers.

- Created a 'Moving On' Groupwork programmes developed specifically to help parents to understand impact of domestic abuse and strengthen relationships with their children. The programme is scheduled alongside existing Freedom and START Groupwork programmes.
- Continue to develop project with Accident and Emergency to support victims of domestic abuse and to upskill health staff to spot the signs of abuse.
- Continue to hold MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and MATAAC (Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination) meetings to safeguarding high-risk victims of domestic abuse.
- Started to explore how we can extend our community outreach in relation to domestic abuse with Edberts House, Beacon Lough Hub and GP surgeries.
- Produced a short film, working in partnership with Digital Voice, to empower local children to tell us how they have been impacted by domestic abuse and how their lives could be improved. This will be utilised in awareness raising, training and to inform future service delivery.

Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities

Anti-Social Behaviour (Youth, Adult and Place-based ASB)

- Started to plan our and undertake a multi-agency review of anti-social behaviour to ensure victims receive the best possible service.
- Commissioned EdgeNE and Platform, voluntary sector organisations, to deliver targeted Youth Outreach and Engagement activities in hotspot areas.
- Northumbria Police continue to address issues linked with motorbike disorder – and a range of activities have been carried out (including encouraging residents to report and test purchases at fuel stations alongside enforcement action).
- Started to develop a standardised approach in relation to Community Triggers which will allow victims to demand an independent review of their case if they feel no action has been taken by agencies to address their concerns.
- Funding has been secured, working with the Police and Crime Commissioner, for interventions designed to improve perceptions of safety (especially women) within transport hubs, parks and open spaces within the Borough.

Locality-based Tasking and Problem-Solving Arrangements

- Operational Planning and Tasking Group continues to operate effectively with strong representation from a range of statutory partners and Council services. In addition, Community Safety now regularly attend Northumbria Police's Threat, Harm and Risk Meetings to ensure that we are aware of broader crime and disorder issues affecting Central Area Command.
- Commissioned time-limited outreach work targeting hotspot locations for youth-related ASB, secondary deliberate fires, criminal exploitation and substance misuse issues. Harm hotspot locations identified by partners based on data, intelligence and historic seasonal trends.
- Continue to make best use of legislation to ensure that we are taking swift action when dealing with perpetrators and problem premises – this includes the use of Closure Orders, Community Protection Notices/Warnings (CPN/Ws) and Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs).
- Produced in-depth Problem Profiles to highlight specific crime issues in hotspot communities and neighbourhoods. These profiles provide data to help support the development of place-based prevention activity within the area.

- Undertaken a range of activity associated with seasonal trends (such as Darker Nights campaign, Bonfire Night etc) and responded to specific crime patterns (such as pedal cycle thefts, motorbikes etc).

Community Cohesion and Resilience

Hate Crime and Tension Monitoring

- Continued to deliver actions outlined in the Hate Crime Strategy and Action Plan for Gateshead 2019-22 focus on: increasing awareness of reporting, increasing referrals to victim support services and promoting hate crime education.
- Continue to roll out and support the Gateshead Hate Crime Champions Network to increase local knowledge on how to report hate crime and raise awareness of support available for victims. The network includes schools and colleges within Gateshead as well as public transport providers and private sector organisations – and is commended as best practice nationally.
- Northumbria Police's Central Engagement Team delivers a rolling programme of bespoke training to schools and education settings. In addition, Hate and Mate Crime training is provided for staff and frontline professionals within Council.
- Reviewed and improved our Online Hate Crime Reporting and Referral Forms to ensure a timelier response to individuals reporting hate crime.
- Funding has been received by Police and Crime Commissioner to commission Lawnmowers Theatre Group to develop a production to promote hate crime and Preventing Violent Extremism for those with learning disabilities.
- Ongoing relationship development with key community groups in Gateshead to increase confidence in Police and Council's approach to hate crime (especially in relation to asylum and migration multi-agency partnership work).

Preventing Violence Extremism, Radicalisation and Terrorism

- Carried out a comprehensive self-assessment relating to Prevent to help further reduce the risk of vulnerability to radicalization. This includes refreshing our risk assessments, offer targeted training and community engagement activities and re-establishing a local working group to oversee compliance with statutory duty.
- Embedded the new Channel Panel Guidance (published in November 2020) and returned our first annual Assurance Statement to Home Office.
- Continued to roll our various training sessions to raise awareness of Prevent, referral routes and to upskill frontline staff. Prevent training is now part of the corporate induction process within the local authority
- Special Branch have also carried out some targeted work in Gateshead schools to raise awareness of the signs of radicalization with teaching and support staff.
- Ran a further Channel HYDRA session with North-East Counter Terrorism Unit which provides a simulated scenario of a real-life Prevent referral to test local approaches and ability to address the case.
- Raised awareness of different ideologies, groups and risks linked with counter terrorist narratives with Council staff and supported Special Branch to establish a Prevent Champion Network across Northumbria

4 Recommendation

4.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) Comment on the activities undertaken in relation to the strategic priorities of the Community Safety Board;
- (ii) Continue to receive six-monthly Community Safety updates;
- (iii) Identify any issues/areas that OSC may want to scrutinise in detail at a future Committee meeting.

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Appendix 1

Gateshead Community Safety Board – Partnership Plan 2020-23



Partnership Plan
2020-23

Appendix 2

Crime Performance – LALO Report

1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021

Gateshead	2021-22	2020-21	Change compared to 2020/21	
Total crime	9,164	9,295	- 131	- 1%
Violence against the person	3,508	3,368	+ 140	+ 4%
Violence against the person - With injury	1,048	920	+ 128	+ 14%
Most serious violence against the person	101	70	+ 31	+ 44%
Less serious violence against the person	947	850	+ 97	+ 11%
Violence against the person - Without injury	2,460	2,448	+ 12	+ 0%
Robbery	53	46	+ 7	+ 15%
Sexual offences	330	253	+ 77	+ 30%
Vehicle crime	396	634	- 238	- 38%
Vehicle interference	53	126	- 73	- 58%
TFMV	232	393	- 161	- 41%
TWOC	111	115	- 4	- 3%
Criminal damage	1,462	1,402	+ 60	+ 4%
Burglary	447	461	- 14	- 3%
Burglary dwelling	322	323	- 1	- 0%
Burglary OTD	125	138	- 13	- 9%
Theft and handling	1,403	1,453	- 50	- 3%
Shoplifting	541	491	+ 50	+ 10%
Theft from the person	57	56	+ 1	+ 2%
Theft of a pedal cycle	77	118	- 41	- 35%
Other theft and handling	728	788	- 60	- 8%
Drug crime	196	210	- 14	- 7%
Fraud and forgery	2	6	- 4	- 67%
Public disorder	1,232	1,293	- 61	- 5%
Miscellaneous crime	135	169	- 34	- 20%
Possessions of weapons	106	98	+ 8	+ 8%