

**TITLE OF REPORT: Community Safety Board – Strategic Priorities 2023/24**


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**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This report provides Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an overview of some of the key activities that have been co-ordinated on behalf of Gateshead Community Safety Board since April 2023 to tackle the strategic priorities outlined within Partnership Plan 2023/24.
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to seek the views of the Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC and for members to identify any key issues/areas they wish to scrutinise in detail at a future meeting.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 As a reminder, the Community Safety Board is a standalone statutory partnership made up of representatives from Responsible Authorities (including police, local authority, fire and rescue, health, and probation service). These agencies work together to protect local communities from crime and disorder and help people feel safe. The Board's core statutory functions are to:
- address crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour and behaviour which adversely affects the environment).
  - combat the misuse of drugs, alcohol, and other substances.
  - reduce re-offending.
  - tackle serious violence.
- 2.2 The Board also has a statutory duty under 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 sets out the priorities and activity that will be undertaken by the Board to address its core statutory functions). A copy of the Partnership Plan 2023/24 has previously been presented to Committee.
- 2.3 The strategic themes/priorities agreed by Community Safety Board for 2023/24:

STRATEGIC THEME 1: Tackling Serious Violence	STRATEGIC THEME 2: Thriving Communities	STRATEGIC THEME 3: Protecting People from Harm
Serious Violence & Knife Crime Domestic Abuse & VAWG Serious & Organised Crime	Anti-Social Behaviour Locality Working Reducing Re-offending	Hate Crime & Tensions Preventing Radicalisation Combatting Drugs
<b>STRATEGIC THEME 4: Strengthening Governance &amp; Accountability Arrangements</b>		
Community Safety Review	Strategic Assessment	Information Sharing

### 3 Crime Performance

3.1 The table below shows crime and disorder performance in Gateshead from April through to July 2023:

Offence Type	Current (Apr-Jul23)	Previous (Apr-Jul22)	Change (Vol)	Change (%)
All Crime	6,854	6,614	+240	+4%
Violence against the person - Without injury	1,835	1,680	+155	+9%
Violence against the person - With injury	787	786	+1	+0%
Violence - Other	52	54	-2	-4%
Sexual offences	246	220	+26	+12%
Theft and handling	1,261	1,177	+84	+7%
Criminal damage	930	899	+31	+3%
Public disorder	738	725	+13	+2%
Vehicle crime	392	503	-111	-22%
Burglary	335	367	-32	-9%
Drug crime	137	103	+34	+33%
Other	141	100	+41	+41%
Adult-related ASB	1543	1475	+68	+5%
Youth-related ASB	544	448	+96	+21%
Total ASB	2087	1923	+164	+9%
Deliberate Secondary Fires	332	380	-48	-13%

Source: Local Authority LALO Report provided by Northumbria Police Corporate Development Department (Apr-Jul23)

3.2 Recorded crime in Gateshead has increased by 4% (+240 crimes) which is lower than 7% increased experienced across Northumbria. Violent offences continue to account for the highest proportion of crime in Gateshead and increased by 6% on last year. Theft and handling, drug-related crime, sexual offences, and offences of criminal damage have increased in this reporting period compared to last year – reductions reported in vehicle-related crime and burglaries. There has been an 13% fall in the number of deliberate secondary fires reported in Gateshead. ASB has risen by 9% (three-quarters of all reported ASB committed by adults). Youth-related ASB increasing by 21% (+96 incidents).

3.3 The Safer Communities Survey is used to help capture resident perceptions and feelings of safety across Northumbria in relation to crime and disorder. The latest results (covering Apr-Jun23) shows that Gateshead experiences low/poor results for several of the recorded measures compared to Force average – including:

#### Perception of Neighborhood (Ghd vs (Force))

- 38% (28%) feel their neighbourhood has got worse in the last 12 months.
- 29% (24%) think ASB is a very or fairly big problem in their neighbourhood.
- 29% (35%) think the Police presence in their area is about right.
- 92% (95%) feel very or fairly safe living in their neighbourhood.

#### Perceptions of Police and Council (Ghd vs (Force))

- 78% (82%) are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.
- 67% (80%) agree Police can be relied on to sort out problems.
- 63% (70%) think Police do a good or excellent job in their neighbourhood.
- 33% (42%) think Council do a good or excellent job in their neighbourhood.

#### 4 Progress to date

4.1 Each identified priority was allocated a Strategic Lead by Gateshead Community Safety Board to provide strategic oversight and direction and to deliver improved outcomes within their respective priority area. The Strategic Leads have provided the following snapshot of the activities undertaken in 2023/24:

### STRATEGIC THEME 1: Tackling Serious Violence

#### **Serious Violence** (*Strategic Lead: Steven Hume – Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit*)

- Revised Strategic Needs Assessment has been developed/agreed by Northumbria-wide Strategic Violence Reduction Board.
- Year 5 Serious Violence Response Strategy has been agreed and is currently being implemented across Northumbria – delivering a range of diversion, prevention, and enforcement activities to reduce violence in our region.
- Implementation plans for the Serious Violence Legal Duty have started within all 6 LA areas. This will include co-ordination of a series of consultation events that will bring together key stakeholders to develop localised Serious Violence Action Plans.
- Two-year seasonal violence funding agreed to provide additional interventions in key hotspot areas during peak times throughout the year (including commissioning of youth outreach and diversionary activities within hotspot locations).
- Delivered dedicated prevention sessions on knife crime and exploitation across most secondary schools in Gateshead.
- Established a Serious Violence Data Hub for the Northumbria region to help improve our collective understanding, sharing, and analysis of information.
- Police and Crime Commissioner has recently launched the 'Knives Impact Everyone' awareness campaign which aims to highlight the devastating consequences carrying a knife can have, as well as pointing people to support and advice.

#### **Domestic Abuse** (*Strategic Lead: Jill Lax – Northeast and Cumbria Integrated Care Board*)

- Gateshead Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (chaired by Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey) and Gateshead Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Group (chaired by ICB Designated Safeguarding Lead for Adults, Jill Lax) have been re-established to progress statutory work required as part of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Strategic Housing, with support from Community Safety, have developed a commissioning and procurement plan for domestic abuse supported accommodation, in line with the Safe Accommodation duties within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Community Safety have commissioned a further 3 Domestic Homicide Reviews and completed 2 x Domestic Abuse Learning Reviews with key partners.
- Gateshead Council continue to support the VRU with Northumbria-wide learning from DHRs to identify opportunities for joint projects, funding, campaigns, and strategic collaboration across Northumbria.
- Gateshead Council continue to offer an in-house Domestic Abuse Service, providing specialist support to victim/survivors of any gender, and their children. Gateshead Domestic Abuse Service also deliver a Behaviour Change Service which provides 1:1 intervention with perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- Gateshead Council has commissioned a 6-month strategic review of domestic abuse (ending December 2023) to ensure we are delivering an effective and sustainable model across the Council.

## **Serious and Organised Crime** *(Strategic Lead: Superintendent Pitt – Northumbria Police)*

- Continue to support disruption of Serious and Organised Crime activity through the delivery of multi-agency Operational Sentinel interventions.
- Attendance at Northumbria Serious and Organised Crime Governance Board to share best practice and intelligence to disrupt identified networks.
- Supported high visibility targeted patrols, problem solving and enforcement tactics within specific harm hotspot areas within Gateshead.
- In recent years, across Northumbria, we have seen an emerging picture of groups from similar residential areas aligning into what we identify as Peer Crime Groups or, in some cases, Urban Street Gangs – and are often associated with significant levels of violence (involving weapons) and drug supply. Operation Pecan was established to map out individuals/groups involved and to identify opportunities to disrupt.

## **STRATEGIC THEME 2: Thriving Communities**

### **Anti-Social Behaviour** *(Strategic Lead: Paul Thompson – Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service)*

- Working in conjunction with Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner – we have been involved in reviewing the regional approach to Community Trigger (which allow victims to request a review of their ASB case). There have been 24 x Community Triggers activated in Gateshead which has identified various recommendations to improve our current ASB processes.
- We have applied to Safer Streets Round 5 Funding to deliver interventions designed to improve perceptions of safety linked with transport hubs across the Borough – as well as a project that will deliver programmes for young people involved in deliberate fire-setting behaviour.
- Extended the current Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) prohibiting certain anti-social activities in public spaces. This includes specific orders covering Gateshead Town Centre as well as a Borough-wide PSPO linked with alcohol consumption and dog fouling.
- Community Safety has secured funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund that will provide a significant uplift to current youth outreach offer. This includes a mix of both peripatetic and target provisions, along with training, peer research and diversionary activities to help tackle youth-related anti-social behaviour.
- Completed a phase of testing of a redesigned method of responding to Anti-social Behaviour and of a different way of working, that has identified the improvements can be made in resident satisfaction and that the recurrence of ASB from repeated perpetrators can be reduced. Commenced the review of job profiles, roles, and responsibilities, that will lead to permanent change. This will allow for the creation of a 'single front door' and multi-skilled anti-social behaviour investigation unit that will speed the response and resolution of ASB, with longer lasting results.
- Members have agreed around £2million of additional funding to tackle the impact of environment on health, wellbeing, climate change, economic sustainability and in response to declining resident satisfaction with services. The funding will be used to support improvements in grounds maintenance, litter and waste removal, better communications with residents about environmental issues and support for those that want to volunteer, and engagement with and enforcement with those that persistently spoil the area for others. Officers are working with members to confirm the outcomes that could be achieved over the next two years.

## **Locality Working (Gateshead Council – Lead: Neil Bouch)**

- Developed blueprint for locality work in South Gateshead – Team Around Community approach based in partnership and relationships across manageable geographies.
- Developed and implemented 2 x locality plans that provide coverage for all 5 wards in South Gateshead. The next steps will involve more partners in the development and delivery of the plans.
- Developed and implemented a local network for VCS support in South Gateshead.
- Using LION data, we are developing a health inequalities approach to identifying neighbourhoods most in need and engaging relevant partners in conversations and project planning.
- Implemented working procedures and learning that have demonstrated the impact of locality working through a range of case studies.
- Achieved some colocation of services at Birtley Library and Wrekenton Hub including Housing, Locality, Police, Library, Connected Voice, Mental Health Peer Support, Citizens Advice, Employability Services, Family Intervention Team, Edbert's House.
- Recruiting a Project Manager that will support the roll out of locality work developing working arrangements and embedding the approach across the Borough.
- Working with a range of other services to further develop and enhance the approach: Family Hubs and Early Help, Adult Social Care, One Public Estate, Health and Wellbeing Board, Primary Care Networks, for example.
- Safer Streets Round 4 Funding (£210k) was secured to support the development of a multi-agency co-located hub in Birtley/Lamesley to work alongside local communities to tackle crime and ASB issues affecting their area. This has included development of co-located problem solving, target hardening, world cafes and business pledges.

## **Reducing Re-offending** (*Strategic Lead – Jo Dixon – Probation Service North East*)

- People who leave prison with strong foundations in place to make a success of their lives are less likely to reoffend. These foundations include a stable home, a stronger connection to family and local community, a steady job, and good health free from substance misuse. For women, this means a gender-informed approach to deliver better assessments and interventions.
- Employment and education are important for cutting crime. They provide opportunities for people in prison and on probation to gain independence and contribute to wider society. Prison leavers who get a job are up to nine percentage points less likely to reoffend. Probation Service alongside our partner agencies are seeking to improve the number of people leaving custody with employment and the number of people in employment after 6 months. At this time 33% of people leaving custody are in education or employment within 6 months of release
- Risk of reoffending is reduced if people can rebuild community and family connections and access safe, stable accommodation. Prison leavers without stable accommodation are almost 50% more likely to break the law again. In July 94% of prison leavers had settled accommodation within 3 months of release.
- New electronic monitoring technologies are being used to support compliance and are an important tool in providing punishment, effectively supervising individuals in the community, protecting the public and reducing reoffending.

## **STRATEGIC THEME 3: Protecting People from Harm**

## **Hate Crime and Tension Monitoring (Northumbria Police – Lead: Jamie Pitt)**

- Northumbria Police have refreshed their Hate Crime Strategy and Action Plan. Which includes activity to raise public awareness of hate crime reporting, increase referrals to victim support services and promote hate crime education.
- Continue to support the Hate Crime Champions Network which includes schools and colleges within Gateshead as well as public transport providers and private sector organisations.
- Ongoing relationship development with key community groups in Gateshead to increase confidence in Police and Council's approach to hate crime (including involvement in asylum and migration multi-agency partnership work).
- Central Engagement Team continue to offer Hate and Mate Crime training across the partnership and have provided tailored awareness sessions to VCS organisations.

### **Preventing Radicalisation (Gateshead Council – Lead: Adam Lindridge)**

- Refreshed the Prevent Risk Assessment for 2023/24 to assess the local threat level from terrorism and to identify actions to reduce risk of vulnerability to radicalization within Gateshead.
- Continue to deliver intervention/support to individuals at risk of radicalization through the statutory Channel Panel process. There have been 76 x Prevent referrals to date within Gateshead – and 14 x referrals since April 2023.
- Held a further development workshop/training event for Channel Panel to raise which provided 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 through the roll out of tailored training to raise profile of Prevent, referral routes and to upskill frontline practitioners.
- Developed a local Counter Terrorism Delivery Group to develop a greater alignment between Prevent Duty and Protect Duty (Martyn's Law) activity.
- Community Safety, working in conjunction with the Home Office, have reviewed local approaches to Prevent including referral process, training offer, and communications strategies. This includes a formal benchmarking exercise to assess compliance.

### **Combatting Drugs (Gateshead Council – Lead: Julia Sharp)**

- The Local Combatting Drugs Partnership is now in place on a Northumbria Police footprint, chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner, with Gateshead DPH Alice Wiseman, as the Senior Reporting Officer. A needs assessment and the national outcomes framework has informed the delivery plan for the partnership.
- We are now in Year 2 of 3 of the increased investment in substance misuse provision. Developments planned this year include increasing in-reach into settings such as the QE Hospital and supported housing provision; improving health outcomes for Gateshead residents who are experiencing difficulties access as a result of substance use; building capacity and diversity into the substance misuse workforce; improving access to residential detox and rehabilitation; and increasing numbers accessing substance misuse treatment. These developments build on the work begun last year where our focus was on pathways into substance misuse treatment from criminal justice settings.
- The numbers of cases reviewed in Gateshead Drug Related Death meeting, remain high, but stable. There have been 12 suspected drug related death cases reviewed since January. We do not know the exact cause of death at the point of our local review, however, the ONS Drug Related Death figures which are based on 3 year rolling data, are due to be published in October. These numbers will give a more accurate picture of deaths related to drug misuse in Gateshead.



## STRATEGIC THEME 4:

### Strengthening Governance & Accountability

- Allocated Strategic Leads to each of the priorities and refocused the Board workplan to ensure in-depth Deep Dives are carried out across each of the strategic priorities. This has resulted in greater scrutiny and challenge around partnership activity.
- Commissioned an independent consultant from the Local Government Association to provide a specialist review of Gateshead Council's Community Safety function. The findings will be presented to Community Safety Board in September 2023.
- Started preparations for the next annual Strategic Needs Assessment to help identify the strategic priorities for 2024/25. In addition, we have also started refreshing our local Information Sharing Agreements to ensure compliance with relevant information governance requirements.
- Discussions with Northumbria Police to look at how we can improve perception and feelings of safety concerns through increased communications and media coverage to outline the breadth of proactive work undertaken by the partnership in Gateshead.
- Working with Gateshead Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Youth Justice Service, and Gateshead Safeguarding Adult Board to explore opportunities to further improve alignment and minimise duplication across priority areas.

#### 5. Recommendations

5.1 Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC is 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 OSC may want to scrutinise in detail at a future Committee meeting.

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