

**AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
REPORT OF THE AVON & SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
24 OCTOBER 2013**

POLICE AND CRIME NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2013 - UPDATE

Introduction

This report provides an update on progress towards developing the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Needs Assessment 2013. The Assessment is being developed in consultation with key stakeholders to inform the Police and Crime Plan refresh for 2014-17.

Background

The first Avon and Somerset wide partnership Police and Crime Needs Assessment (PCNA) was produced in 2012. The process brought together research, analysis, knowledge and intelligence across the Avon and Somerset in order to present a consolidated picture of the issues, risks and threats shared by respective agencies.

The document was used primarily to inform policy development and strategic planning for 2013-17 and provide prospective Police and Crime Commissioners with a shared understanding of the local crime and community safety environment.

A refresh of the Police and Crime Needs Assessment is currently underway, building upon the process initiated in 2012 and maximising opportunities brought about by the new police and partnership environment. The OPCC continues to develop more integrated planning arrangements with the Constabulary and OPCC and closer working relationships with key partners in Health, the Voluntary and Community sector through this process.

The Police and Crime Needs Assessment comprises two main elements:-

- a) An assessment of the issues, risks and threats that are likely to impact upon crime and community safety services across Avon and Somerset between 2013 and 2017
- b) A profile of local need for crime and community safety services with a focus on specific areas of commissioning responsibility and the commissioner's police and crime priorities.

Both aspects of the assessment will be used to inform commissioning decisions across Avon and Somerset over the coming three years.

Initial findings

Preliminary findings from the 2013 PCNA indicate that the current priorities remain relevant and supported by multi-agency focus. Momentum is also gathering in response to these priorities, with some early successes already evident.

The PCNA highlights a number of significant areas of risk and aspects of service that that could be strengthened within the 2014-17 Police and Crime Plan. They include:-

- Work to **engage and empower communities** to resolve issues of local concern - particularly with regard to ASB, road safety and reducing crimes of local concern
- Improving the combined partnership focus on tackling issues and areas of greatest need – despite significant activity, there is currently no strategic co-ordinated focus on **priority areas and neighbourhoods**
- **Safeguarding from serious harm** – ensuring clarity of agency roles and responsibilities and improving picture of risk, particularly by improving victim and third party reporting, community intelligence, information sharing and research and analysis
- **Young people** - increase confidence and engagement with young people and review and respond to gaps in services.
- Tackling **organised criminality** and keeping ahead of **new criminal opportunities**, particularly with regard to advances in technology and social networking
- **Prevention-focus** to reduce potential harm and demand – including co-ordinated responses to gaps in treatment and diversionary activities, and tackling the drivers and facilitators of offending, particularly

The more comprehensive summary of the draft Police and Crime Needs Assessment findings is shown at Annex 1.

Next Steps

The OPCC is currently consulting key partners on the content and recommendations of the draft Police and Crime Needs Assessment 2013 in preparation for a final draft, which will be presented to a Partner and Practitioner Event on 30th October.

The Partner and Practitioner event will include representation from partners across police, community safety, criminal justice, public health, Clinical Commissioning Groups, community and voluntary sector and the Police and Crime Panel. It will be an interactive session and provide an opportunity to:

- Review, discuss and consolidate key findings
- Consider next steps and multi-agency responses to the issues identified
- Set out the Commissioner's approach to the Police and Crime Plan refresh

- Update partners on key Change Programme / Operating Model developments

The outputs of this event will be used to support the refresh of the Police and Crime Plan. A summary of key milestones is shown below.

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| • September – October | Partnership consultation PCNA |
| • 30 th October 2013 | Partner and Practitioner Event |
| • October – January | Refresh Force Police and Crime Plans |
| • November – February | Develop Local Authority Police and Crime Plans |
| • 8 th November 2013 | Force-level & local plan template |
| • 22 nd November 2013 | First draft force level plan |
| • 29 th November 2013 | Police and Crime Plan Workshop |
| • 17 th January 2014 | First draft local authority-level plans submitted |
| • 22 nd January 2014 | Review group considers draft plans / feedback |
| • 5 th February 2014 | Police and Crime Panel review draft plan |
| • 7 th February 2014 | Finalise local plans |
| • 10 th Feb – 10 th Mar | Public and partner consultation on revised plan |
| • 21 st March 2014 | Police and Crime Panel ratify plan |
| • March – April 2014 | Issue and publicise Police and Crime Plans |

Recommendations

The panel is asked to note the report and key milestones and co-ordinate feedback on the draft Police and Crime Needs Assessment via the nominated representative.

ANNEX A. DRAFT POLICE AND CRIME NEEDS ASSESSMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Needs Assessment 2013 has been developed in collaboration with local crime and community safety partner agencies. The assessment outlines key issues, risks and threats that are likely to impact upon the crime and community safety environment between 2014 and 2017. Findings should be used to inform planning and policy development for 2014, including the refresh of force and Local Authority level Police and Crime Plans.

Key Points

- The long terms overall risk of crime and anti-social behaviour continues to fall across Avon and Somerset, as does overall demand on crime and community safety agencies.
- Changing economic trends, extensive welfare reform and cuts to key services, however, create potential for increased risk of offending and victimisation, particularly amongst young people and deprived communities. There are clear opportunities to improve local preventative activity.
- Safeguarding demands, particularly in relation to mental health, are increasing as a result of growing need, improvements in risk assessment and intelligence, and reductions in statutory provision of social care. There are opportunities to improve early intervention and agency responses.
- Unreported crimes and unmet need often carry the greatest potential risk to vulnerable victims, particularly in areas such as domestic and sexual violence and exploitation, hate crime, human trafficking and genital mutilation. Young people, women and people from black and minority ethnic communities are at disproportionately high risk of victimisation for these offence types. More can be done to build confidence amongst victims, witnesses and other third parties to reporting such cases
- Technological development and the growth of social media have led to a rapid increase in risks relating to cyber-crime, cyber-enabled crime, sexual exploitation, stalking, harassment and cyber-bullying. Community-level intelligence and technical capability are critical in tackling these issues.
- Organised criminality remains a primary driver of serious crime, harm and hidden harm with technological, social and economic conditions creating new opportunities for markets in stolen and counterfeit goods, drug distribution, domestic extremism and exploitation in particular. Although resource intensive, disrupting and dismantling of organised crime can have far reaching benefits.
- Alcohol and drugs remain primary drivers of demand, particularly in Bristol, and a shared partnership priority, despite gaps in co-ordinated agency responses. Harm related to the use of 'legal' and illegal drugs continues to drive risk and concern amongst vulnerable communities.
- The public's priorities and expectations are clear and have remained relatively unchanged over time. Anti-social behaviour, speeding traffic and parking are notable drivers of demand and the community safety issues with the most significant daily impact on local communities. More can be done to develop an understanding of the extent to which these issues are being resolved and to support and empower local communities to take action.
- Burglary and domestic and sexual violence are high impact crimes which levels of concern amongst local residents. Re-offending also remains a shared partnership priority particularly in the management of prolific and high impact offenders. National changes to commissioning arrangements, however, may present challenges to offender management and information sharing.
- The Criminal Justice System is operating at capacity and delivery of the efficiency programme to digitise and integrate technology, improve in case file quality and make appropriate and proportionate use of restorative justice and community disposals will be critical to improving outcomes for victims.
- Critical challenges facing crime, community safety and criminal justice agencies include reducing budgets, the changing commissioning landscape and maintaining and improving the public's trust and confidence.
- Avon and Somerset's population continues to grow and diversify. This presents challenges to service providers in providing visible neighbourhood services, maintaining an awareness of local culture and needs, and ensuring equality of access to key services

Cross Cutting Themes

The assessment identifies a number of cross-cutting themes which are central to delivering improved outcomes for victims of crime and ASB in Avon and Somerset. They include:-

- Partnership working - with a focus on the most problematic issues, cases and localities viewed as one of the main drivers of crime reduction over recent years, highlighting the benefits of a sustained commitment to key multi-agency partnership approaches (integrated offender management, troubled families). There are significant opportunities to extend these principles in areas such as case and risk management.
- Prevention focus – There are significant opportunities to improve the coverage and co-ordination of local preventative services (youth diversion, Bobby Van, targeted education, advice and signposting) and make wider use of predictive analytics to inform resource allocation.
- Information, analysis and research – Developing a holistic picture, capturing intelligence, ensuring victims receive the services they need and maximising safeguarding opportunities all rely on the accurate recording of data. There are clear opportunities to improve quality, consistency and sharing of information and invest in research and analysis to improve understanding of hidden harm
- Cross-agency co-ordination and strategic planning can significantly improve the management of risk and demand across agencies and reduce duplication of effort. This will be particularly important in responding to changes in offender management commissioning arrangements and managing demand within the criminal justice system.
- Reviewing roles, responsibilities, commitments at individual, agency and multi-agency levels, particularly with a view to effectively managing demand at first point of contact. This may include extending the remit of the police to prosecute certain specified offences and broadening role profiles to provide a more seamless service for victims of crime and ASB
- Young people remain the group most vulnerable to offending, victimisation, harm and serious harm. They are also a group significantly less likely to report their victimisation or trust the police.

Key Recommendations

- **Develop and improve processes for engaging and empowering communities to resolve issues of local concern, particularly with regard to ASB and road safety.** Improve the understanding of outcomes being delivered for the public in these areas and use the commissioning process to ensure partnership activity is targeted in areas of greatest need. Foster improvements in partnership working and embed a culture of shared responsibility.
- **Increase focus on safeguarding from serious harm.** Invest in understanding risk, prevalence and hidden harm by improving victim and third party reporting, commissioning research and analysis supporting improvements in information sharing and community intelligence. Ensure agency roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and ensure that appropriate action is taken at the first point of contact to prevent demand upstream. Work to established shared definition and approaches to vulnerable victims. Increase confidence and engagement with young people. Invest in technology and expertise to keep ahead of new criminal opportunities.
- **Build and retain capacity and resilience** particularly in maximising opportunities to collaborate and integrate services. Implement impact assessments where decisions to retract or cease services are likely to impact significantly on the delivery of shared outcomes. Develop a co-ordinated framework to identify and share good practice and gaps in training and collectively plan for changing demand.
- **Invest in prevention to reduce potential harm and demand.** Tackle drivers and facilitators of offending, particularly alcohol and organised crime. Review and respond to gaps in treatment and diversionary activities, particularly for young people. Support pro-active target hardening and new technologies for predicting victimisation. Engage communities in crime reduction.
- **Improve confidence in and the victim experience of the Criminal Justice System.** Focus, in particular on keeping victims informed, improving efficiency and effectiveness within the Criminal Justice System, reducing re-offending; and maximising available enforcement tools

More specific conclusions and recommendations are set out in each substantive chapter of the full Police and Crime Needs Assessment.