

Shropshire Community Safety Partnership

Crime Reduction, Community Safety & Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2017-2020

(DRAFT PRIORITIES)



February 2017

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Introduction

Why develop a Strategy?

Every three years the Shropshire Community Safety Partnership is required to produce a strategy to help tackle crime and improve community safety. This strategy is based upon an assessment of available crime data which assists in the identification of the key priorities for the Partnership. The Partnership examines the types of crimes that have occurred and where, and identifies if these crimes have increased or decreased so that it can recognise emerging trends and prepare to manage them. Alongside this, the Partnership examines other social and economic data in order to see the bigger picture and to understand other factors that may have an impact upon crime and safety.

The partnership recognises that during the lifetime of this Strategy issues might change and different concerns could arise. The partnership will use the information it is given to ensure it maintains a good understanding of the issues which need to be addressed within Shropshire.

This strategy does not wish to replicate the strategies of its partners, particularly those of the West Mercia Police Force and the Office of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, but it does aim to ensure that the priorities of each strategy are complementary to one another and, wherever they can be, aligned. Additionally, the Partnership will seek to learn from evidence of good practice established elsewhere by liaising with other Community Safety Partnerships.

The Vision of the Partnership

The Shropshire Community Safety Partnership and its members are committed to maintaining and delivering safer and stronger communities and the continued development of Shropshire, making it a place that people want to live, work and visit.

The Mission Statement of the Partnership

The Shropshire Community Safety Partnership will work together for the benefit of everyone who lives, studies, works, visits, and socialises in Shropshire and its towns, in order to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and improve feelings of safety.

The Shropshire Community Safety Partnership is made up of a large number of agencies, including the Shropshire Council, West Mercia Police, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, the National Probation Service; the Community Rehabilitation Company, Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and key partners in the voluntary sector.

The Community Safety Partnership Board works particularly closely with the West Mercia Police and the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner. As such, we have attempted to ensure that our Partnership priorities, as set out in this Plan, are aligned with the Plans of our partners.

For information, the objectives of the West Mercia and Warwickshire Police Alliance strategy and the West Mercia PCC Plan are set out, in brief, below.

West Mercia and Warwickshire Police Alliance strategic assessment 2016-17

Emerging trends in West Mercia

“Sex-tortion”

Media reports suggest that this crime is rapidly increasing and that the actual number of crimes is far higher than the reported number. National data indicates that the majority of victims of this crime are younger men.

Cyber and Cyber enabled crime

Cyber enabled crimes may be considered as ‘traditional’ crimes that can be increased in scale and reach by the use of computers. These offences include fraud and theft. Cyber dependent crime are offences that can only be committed by using a computer. These acts include the spread of computer viruses or other ‘malware’, hacking and the distributed denial of services (DDoS).

Child sexual exploitation

There is no single offence of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) so capturing accurate data and knowing the scale of the crimes associated with CSE is dependent on the appropriate use of a Police ‘CSE marker’. Knowing the signs of CSE and safeguarding victims remains a priority.

Sexual offences and rape

Across the West Mercia and Warwickshire Police service there has been, over the last two years, a significant increase in the number of rapes and sexual offences reported to the Police. An increase in the reporting of sexual offences and rape may be attributed to a greater degree of confidence in the Police response. Nationally, rape is considered to be a significantly under-reported crime. Hence, the true number of cases is unknown and so any increase in the number of cases reported and recorded may be interpreted as a positive development.

Domestic abuse offences

The key task is promoting partnership working and increasing confidence in reporting.

Demand for emergency mental health support

This issue remains challenging for the Police. A disproportionate number of people processed through the criminal justice system have mental health needs when compared to the population in general. This issue is recognised as a priority by all partners and work will be undertaken to resolve it.

In addition, the West Mercia Police Alliance have produced a ‘Vulnerability Strategy’ that aims to see beyond a crime incident and to take account of other circumstances that affect our communities – encouraging staff to be ‘professionally curious’ so that risks can be anticipated and acted upon to help to prevent harm in future.

The National Crime Agency has also developed a report concerning gang violence and organised crime. The Partnership in Shropshire will pay particular attention to the delivery of the recommendations produced by this report.

West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)

Safer West Mercia Plan: 2016-21

The vision of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia is comprised of five key strategic objectives. These objectives and the aims are set out below:

1. Putting victims and survivors first

The PCC will, amongst other things, aim to: complete a victims needs assessment; establish and lead a Victims Board; make sure victims and survivors get effective services

2. Building a more secure West Mercia

The PCC will, amongst other things, aim to: increase the proportion of hate crimes reported to the police; focus attention on the most serious crimes committed against individuals and the most vulnerable in our society; make sure the Safer Roads Partnership responds to community concerns as well as working to reduce deaths and serious injuries on our roads; provide oversight and support to West Mercia's Reducing Reoffending Strategy

3. Reforming West Mercia

The PCC will, amongst other things, aim to: support the health and wellbeing agenda within the Police alliance of Warwickshire and West Mercia; monitor the National Specialist Capabilities Programme and respond to any changes arising from it; join up services and commissioning with partners where there are operational and financial benefits

4. Re-assuring the communities of West Mercia

The PCC will, amongst other things, aim to: make sure police follow custody rules and treat detainees safely and fairly; develop and publish a Communications and Engagement strategy; involve, engage and empower communities in the delivery of the plan; work with local people and partners to give visible reassurance on frontline neighbourhood policing.

5. The resources of the Office of the PCC

The PCC has a pivotal role in the commissioning of services related to victims, community safety and crime reduction, which may expand in the near future if police and crime commissioners take on responsibility for court based victims and witness services. In this regard, the PCC will, amongst other things, aim to: implement an outcomes based commissioning framework with its Community Safety Partnerships.

The Partnership will also take particular account of the priorities established by the Shropshire Health and Wellbeing Board and draw upon the data and intelligence they have gathered to determine their objectives. This will focus upon local developments concerning drug and alcohol use, but will also examine data concerning changes to the local population in order to enhance the connection with the Vulnerability Strategy produced by the West Mercia Police.

A brief synopsis of our existing priorities for 2014-17:

Priority 1 - Reducing Serious Harm

Reducing Offending and Re-offending:

Reducing re-offending is a statutory priority placed on Community Safety Partnerships. Part of the response to this priority in Shropshire is the offer of a service that targets those who are most at risk of re-offending. This is referred to as 'Integrated Offender Management' (IOM) which provides an overarching framework that brings together a range of services to prioritise interventions with offenders who cause crime in their locality.

Substance Misuse and Alcohol Misuse:

This matter is driven by the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), a formal partner to the CSP Board. Drug misusing offenders in treatment use less illegal drugs, commit less crime, and generally improve their health and well-being. This has a positive impact on them, their family and friends and the community they live in. There are a number of strands associated with this priority:

Reduce Demand.

- To ensure drug using offenders receive the intensive treatment they need, a systematic approach has been adopted to refer clients into the correct service. The partnership has supported schools to deliver PSHE programmes to provide good quality drug and alcohol education. This, in turn, helps Schools to identify children and young people affected by drug and alcohol use (including use by their parents) to ensure they get the support they need.

Restrict supply.

- Work with police colleagues and ensure treatment resources are available to support any proactive dismantling of local markets.
- Develop a local drugs problem profile to support commissioning and co-ordination of services.

Build Recovery

- Ensure local services are recovery focused and that people within the criminal justice service have access to a range of services to include mutual aid and peer support to promote sustainable recovery.

Alcohol use:

- The DAAT has produced an alcohol strategy for Shropshire which sets out a series of actions to tackle alcohol misuse over the next 3 years and contribute to the reduction of the volume of violent crime with an emphasis on addressing the harm caused by alcohol. This strategy has been the subject of a separate engagement process.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is considered to be an under-reported crime. The priority of the CSP is to increase the number of reports of this crime by ensuring survivors are confident of a thorough and complete response from the services that are available to support them. Shropshire has a County Domestic Abuse Forum that consists of a wide range

of agencies. The Forum has a dedicated website which gives information and advice to those who may be victims of domestic abuse. More information on the approach to Domestic Abuse is available on the Freedom Shropshire website:

www.freedomshropshire.org.uk

Arson

Arson is the number one cause of fire in Shropshire. Deliberate fires can be started to conceal another crime, such as theft, murder etc. and those where the perpetrator stands to gain financially, such as cases of insurance fraud. Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service lead this work with partners in order to reduce the number of fire crimes committed and has worked with the Police and justice services in particular to ensure that those committing fire crimes are brought to justice. Partnership working is key in tackling the problem of fire crime in Shropshire and a number of highly successful schemes have resulted in a dramatic reduction in the incidence of fires.

Priority 2 - Supporting Vulnerable People

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB):

In order to address anti-social behaviour and make the reporting of ASB easier, the Partnership has established a single reporting number. To support the response to the contacts made to this number, a small team has been established which consists of officers from the Council and Police, which co-ordinates multi agency responses to ASB, and deals with perpetrators and supports victims.

Hate Crime:

Hate crime is commonly associated with prejudice against particular individuals such as those from minority ethnic groups or hatred based on homophobia. The number of incidents reported and recorded might rise due to initiatives undertaken by partners and/or improved engagement with the public. In such cases an increase in numbers should not be used solely as an indication that the situation has either deteriorated or improved. Good quality data will need to be collated for a number of years to establish a confident baseline.

Priority 3 - Public Reassurance and Community Engagement

Tackling Crime:

Domestic burglary, vehicle crime and robbery are crimes that can be disruptive and potentially very distressing and are often the result of opportunist criminal behaviour. Publicity programmes have been put in place to encourage people to take necessary action and to remain vigilant.

Increasing Public Confidence:

In the national and regional context, Shropshire is one of the safest places to live, work and visit. A key challenge for the Partnership is to ensure that any reductions seen in crime and disorder are translated into feelings of safety and confidence in towns, villages and communities across the County. The Shropshire Community Safety Partnership recognises that there is a need to tell local communities what is being done and why.

Our proposed priorities for 2017 – 2020:
THE CSP IS AIMING TO MAINTAIN THE THREE KEY PRIORITIES BUT CONTINUE TO ENHANCE THEIR IMPACT BY INCLUDING THESE PRIORITIES

Reducing offending and re-offending

Analysis of recorded crime figures shows that young men (up to the age of 25) are overrepresented in the criminal justice system. The Partnership will maintain its focus on its programme of support for young people, particularly those young people often described as being “on the edge of the criminal justice system”. We want to improve the outcomes and life chances for younger people and reduce the cost of crime to the public.

The action of the Partnership

- Key areas of focus under this priority could be extra support for looked after children; children and young people who are leaving care; young people who are part of gangs; young people exposed to violence and abuse and young people at risk of “sex-tortion”.
- The Partnership will continue to develop a service to ensure that young people “on the edge of the youth justice system” are effectively targeted with help and support.
- The Partnership will continue to implement its performance framework to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of cases moving through the criminal justice service.

Domestic abuse

Whilst there has been an increase in the number of reports of this crime, domestic abuse remains an under-reported crime and: “even if it were possible to put a figure on individual offences, and hence calculate a domestic abuse ‘rate’, this would not be a particularly telling reflection of the number of people at risk.”¹

The overall aim is to reduce the number of people who are victims of domestic abuse. In order to do this, of course, the Partnership will need to have a far clearer view of precisely how many women and men are victims of abuse. Therefore, the Partnership will continue to analyse incident and referral rates and attempt to calculate the level of under-reporting by monitoring the activity of commissioned domestic violence services; record incidents of domestic abuse where children are involved; identify and highlight events that are often associated with periods of high alcohol consumption (such as sports tournaments) and domestic abuse.

The action of the Partnership

- The Partnership will continue to ensure that risk assessment procedures are supported by all agencies and will provide training for all appropriate staff
- The Partnership will ensure that the local domestic violence services are supported to deliver an excellent and effective service based on sound evidence.
- The Partnership has conducted a Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) and, along with any Serious Adult Reviews and a review of other DHRs, it will aim

¹ House of Commons Library, December 2013

to learn lessons to help to prevent further domestic homicides and serious incidents.

- The Partnership will complete the production of its domestic abuse needs assessment and will review the evidence for domestic abuse perpetrator programmes. The Partnership will ensure that any perpetrator service will be provided for female as well as male perpetrators.

Hate crime

This crime can be motivated by disability, gender identity, race, religion or faith and sexual orientation. The overall purpose is to reduce hate crime and its impact on the people and communities of Shropshire.

The Partnership aims to prevent hate crime by helping to challenge the attitudes that underpin it and to intervene as early as possible to prevent hate from escalating. In so doing, the Partnership hopes to increase the reporting of this crime and improve access to support to overcome the harm that hate crime can cause. The Partnership intends to build the confidence of victims by identifying and helping to manage cases of reported hate crime, by continuing to support and improve the operational response and by dealing effectively with offenders.

Hate crime is a priority for the Partnership because:

“Tackling hate crime matters because of the damage it causes to victims and their families, but also because of the negative impact it has on communities in relation to cohesion and integration. There is clear evidence, to show, that being targeted because of who you are has a greater impact on your well-being than being the victim of a ‘non-targeted’ crime.”²

There are a number of suggested actions contained within the Government Strategy on hate crime (Challenge It, Report It, Stop It) that address specific groups who are unlikely to report the crimes targeted at them. These groups and communities include:

- New migrant communities including asylum and refugee communities;
- Gypsy, Irish Traveller and Roma Communities;
- Transgender people;
- People with disabilities.

The action of the Partnership

- Work to remove any perceived barrier to reporting such as “a lack of access to making a report” and “victims fearing that they will be victimised further”.
- The partnership will aim to increase the number of cases heard at the Partnership’s Hate Crime Reporting Group and, where necessary, investigated by West Mercia Police.
- The Partnership will maintain the locations where people can report hate crime and work to build victims’ confidence to come forward and seek justice.
- The Partnership will continue to deliver hate crime awareness training;

² Challenge it, Report it, Stop it: The Government’s Plan to Tackle Hate Crime

- The Partnership will aim to establish a process whereby incidents are reviewed by the Hate Crime Reporting Group and all relevant agencies are invited to help resolve the problem.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The overall intention is to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation. This includes the emerging threat of “sextortion”.

The National Police Chiefs Council has a definition of CSE:

“Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person (or third person/s) receive ‘something’ (for example, food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain”.

Risk Factors

Any young person regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity and sexuality can be at risk of being sexually exploited. However, from the growing research evidence available there are a number of factors that can increase a young person’s vulnerability, including:

- Experience social exclusion as a result of poverty
- Have unsupervised use of social networking chat rooms/sites
- Have social or learning difficulties
- Have low self-esteem or self-confidence

The actions of the Partnership

- The Partnership will highlight the availability of the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) pathway for children and young people who are at risk of exploitation and for those who are victims. We will continue to work in partnership with West Mercia Police, the PCC and the Crown Prosecution Services in order to bring offenders to justice.
- It is hoped that the College of Policing will continue to promote best practice and learning in this emerging field of crime and share their learning with all CSPs

Stronger Communities and rural crime:

Rural crime is crime committed in areas of the county that are categorised as ‘rural’. All types of crime can, of course, be committed in rural areas, but the nature of the environment can, obviously, affect the nature of the crime. Hence, the profile of “rural crime” is likely to be defined by crimes committed against the agricultural and farming industries and crimes against wildlife and managed stock.

The actions of the Partnership

- Develop profiles of common rural and business crimes (if the data is available). Following on from the assessment and analysis of problems,

consultation will take place with local stakeholders to determine what, if any, action can be taken, tailored to the specific local issues.

- Support the use of principles of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) to help tackle rural and business crime and engage with business communities to promote crime reduction
- Monitor the incidence of wildlife crime across Shropshire (if suitable data is available)

Anti-Social Behaviour

The overall purpose is to reduce anti-social behaviour and its impact across Shropshire.

The number of Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) incidents, including ASB incidents involving young people, has been decreasing in recent years. However, there are different categories of anti-social behaviour and the frequency of these incidents has not declined equally across these categories. ASB incidents categorised as 'personal' appear to be falling at the slowest rate.

The actions of the Partnership

- Further develop the ASB response to ensure that data is accurate and reflects the level of ASB being committed across the County and to reduce the number of ASB incidents that may be counted twice (by both the Council and the Police)
- Ensure this data is transferred to the delivery programmes of the Town Centre Teams operating across the County

Alcohol, substance misuse and violence against the person – a cross cutting theme

The overall aim is to reduce the impact that drug and alcohol use has on the community and, in particular, to reduce the volume of violent crime that may be caused by alcohol consumption.

Alcohol is identified as an aggravating factor in numerous offences, particularly violence and injury, sexual violence, domestic violence and anti-social behaviour.

The actions of the Partnership

- The partnership will encourage all partners to consider the impact of alcohol as they incorporate evidence based responses to alcohol and substance misuse within their own action plans and ensure that these plans are in accordance with the strategy of the Drug and Alcohol Act Team (DAAT)
- The town centre of Shrewsbury is a focus for this work and the Partnership will support the town centre teams to deliver their services, particularly any alcohol and drug related programmes they commence.
- The Partnership will work with West Mercia Police to address the link between alcohol misuse and violence against the person by analysing the increasing number of violent incidents that are occurring within Shropshire to determine any trends for this particular crime. These trends and data will be shared with the DAAT and town centre teams and, consequently, enhance their plans accordingly.