

# Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny



**NORTHAMPTON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013

### Briefing Note: Vehicle Crime

#### 1. Background

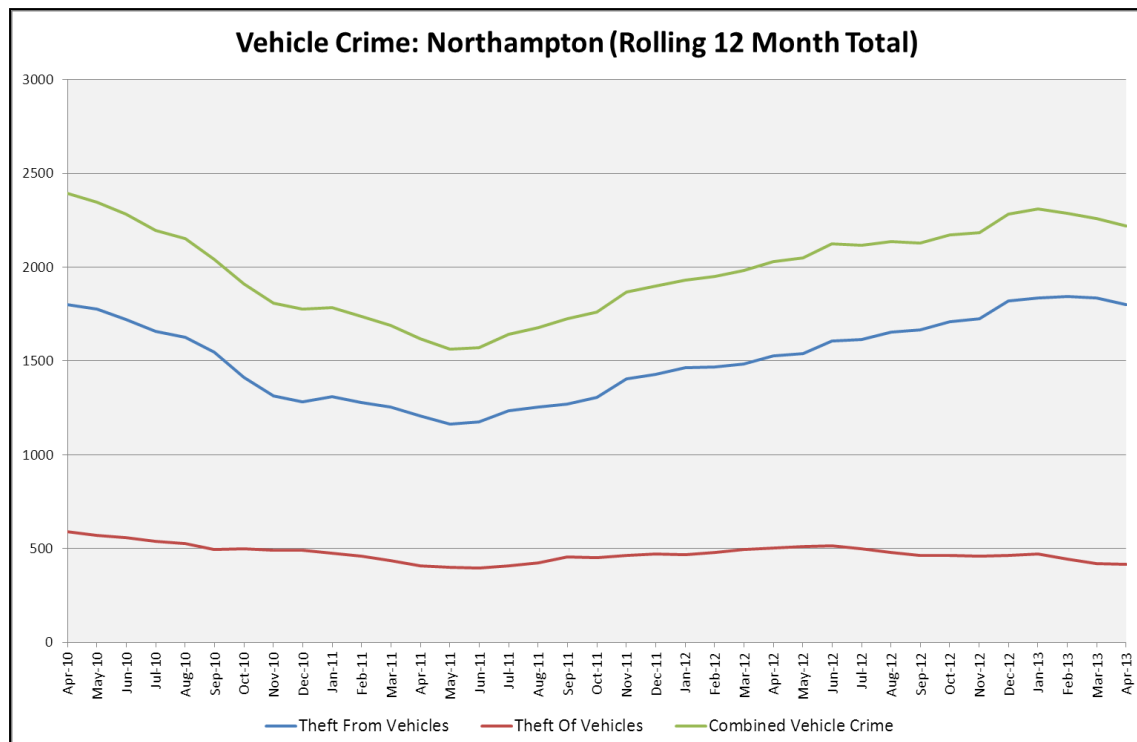
1.1 Vehicle Crime has increased significantly in Northampton Borough in the past two years. This is primarily due to thefts from vehicles (TFMV) increasing, as opposed to thefts of vehicles (TOMV). This is a countywide issue; however a large proportion of the increase is occurring in Northampton.

#### 2. Purpose

2.1 To provide the Committee with a general overview of the vehicle crime problem in Northampton.

#### 3. Current Situation

##### 3.1 Performance\*



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*\*As of April 2013 new Home Office recording standards now include Vehicle Interference (126) within the vehicle crime group. However for the purposes of this paper this is not included in the vehicle crime figures.*

- 3.1.1 After great reductions in vehicle crime from 2007/08 to 2010/11 (-56.3%, 2179 crimes), vehicle crime has steadily increased since July 2011.
- 3.1.2 There has been an increase of 35.1% (576 crimes) since July 2011, returning crime levels back to that of 2010, as shown in the graph above.
- 3.1.3 Theft from Motor Vehicles (TFMV) has increased by 45.9% (567 crimes) during this period, whereas Theft of Motor Vehicle (TOMV) has increased by 2.2% (9 crimes) in the same period.
- 3.1.4 In the past three months there has actually been a 3.9% reduction (-91 crimes) in vehicle crime, however burglary dwelling is now on the rise.
- 3.1.5 Northampton is ranked against 15 similar CSP areas for crimes per population by the Home Office. In regards to Vehicle Crime, the CSP are ranked 13 out of 15 for 2012-13. In 2011-12, the CSP were ranked 11<sup>th</sup>.
- 3.1.6 Northampton has a vehicle crime rate (per population) 41% greater than the county average.

## 3.2 Locations

- 3.2.1 The hotspot wards for vehicle crime in the past 12 months are Castle, Semilong, Spencer & St James.
- 3.2.2 However, in addition to these 'traditional' high crime wards, there has been a notable percentage rise in vehicle crime in low crime wards too, particularly on the South Sector of Northampton, such as East and West Hunsbury wards.
- 3.2.3 Following interventions by the police, involving significant reassurance and education campaigns in the area this spike has now died down.
- 3.2.4 Vehicles tends to be targeted when parked on the street, in driveways or in residentially based car parks. Thefts from local authority or commercial car parks is not a big issue, thefts in this location type have actually reduced.

## 3.3 Peak Times

- 3.3.1 TFMV tends to occur between 22:00 – 06:00, this has been the case for the past three years, no specific time of night can be identified, TOMV also tends to occur during the night but the peak is more diffused.
- 3.3.2 Seasonally, vehicle crime tends to peak in April, August and November in recent years.

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## 3.4 Items Stolen

- 3.4.1 Around one third of items stolen from vehicles tend to be vehicle parts/accessories (mainly SAT NAVs, registration plates, car stereos). Handbags/luggage, documents, cash and tools are also often stolen.
- 3.4.2 Whilst thefts of exterior car parts is difficult for victims to prevent, items stolen which have notably increased are items easily removable from the vehicle by owners, and vehicles left insecure make up a significant proportion of TFMV, indicating education/awareness is still a valid tactic for the partnership.

## 4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The partnership has agreed five Serious Acquisitive Crime (domestic burglary, vehicle crime & robbery) priority areas in-line with Northants Police priority areas to focus upon for 2013-14. These area boundaries are not aligned with ward boundaries but do span across the following wards; Castle, Semilong, Delapre & Briar Hill, Spencer, St James, Brookside and Talavera.
- 4.2 A partnership action plan has been agreed and is now progressing. For vehicle crime, this will focus upon offender management, increasing public awareness of vehicle crime risk and environmental improvements to improve defensible space.

## 5. Conclusion & Recommendations

- 5.1 The update is noted.
- 5.2 A further performance update on vehicle crime is provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the Community Safety Partnership briefing.

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