

# Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny



## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

29 July 2015

### Briefing Note – Crime & Disorder, Overview & Scrutiny

#### Summary

On the 3 February 2011 it was agreed that as part of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee role, that in meeting their responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009, a bi annual report from the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) would be provided. The report would focus on the levels of CSP performance and whether crime has increased in the light of reduced resources, and if so what measures have been taken to meet any shortfall in performance. The report was to advise the Committee of work undertaken, thereby informing Overview and Scrutiny of further review or scrutiny that may be required.

#### Community Safety Partnership – Performance Overview

The CSP continue to prioritise issues that are most likely to affect people in their day to day lives, including violent crime, anti-social behaviour, domestic burglary and vehicle crime, ensuring that our town and communities are safe places in which to live and enjoy themselves.

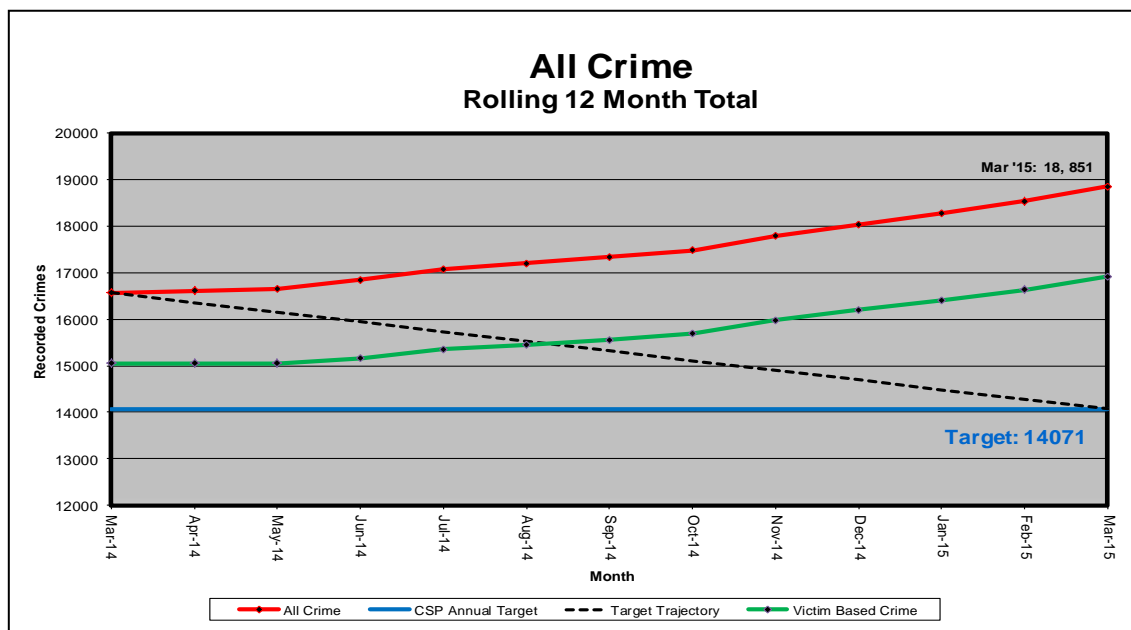
Performance overall has been mixed for 2014/15, continuing to achieve reductions in some crime types but seeing reduced performance in others. The partnership continues to see good reductions in Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC). There is a small reduction in recorded Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), and victim satisfaction for the ASB Unit is exceeding targets, but there has been a small increase in reported criminal damage. However, overall crime and specifically violent crime have seen large increases.

#### Actual Performance – April 2014 to March 2015

There's been an increase in overall crime in Northampton of 13.8% (+2282 crimes) from the baseline during the year. However, there have been reductions in three of the key crime types, particularly theft from person.

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Overall crime is used as a proxy measure for crime relating to drugs and alcohol misuse. Victim based crime has been shown in the graph below to illustrate the changes in crime which closer aligns with CSP work, and the symptoms of alcohol & drug abuse. This crime group has also seen an increase of 12.4% (+1860 crimes). The increase in the volume of violence offences has impacted on overall crime and victim based offences.



Northampton has seen a 59.7% increase in violence offences (+1742 crimes) this year. There have been significant changes in recording practices in relation to violence offences which have had an impact on performance during this year. There has been a 50.8% increase (+701 crimes) in domestic crimes and a 49.2% increase (+518) of those classified as domestic violence this year. In comparison, domestic incidents have decreased by -2.9% (-113 incidents).

SAC has reduced by 13.1% (-387 crimes) in 2014/15. There have been good reductions within all four crime types; particularly domestic burglary (-16.9% / -197 crimes). Vehicle crime combined has seen a reduction of -11.0% (-159 crimes) during the year and robbery a decrease of -9.3% (-31 crimes). All sectors within Northampton have seen reductions.

Anti-Social Behaviour has seen a mixed performance this year; 81.5% were satisfied within the housing exit survey and 100% of Anti-Social Behaviour Unit victims/witness who could be contacted were satisfied with the support they had received. In addition, the perception of ASB problems taken from the public attitudes survey has reduced to 5.6% from 9.3% at the end of the last financial year. Recorded ASB incidents have seen an overall reduction of 2.8% (-429 incidents). The proportion of ASBU victims/witnesses that could be contacted (53.3%) has improved from last year (42.0%). The percentage of respondents to the public attitudes survey

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who agree that the Police and Council are dealing with ASB & crime issues has also increased from 53.8% (September 2014) to 55.1%.

<b>Crime Type</b>	<b>2013/14 Baseline</b>	<b>2014/15 Target Reduction</b>	<b>Year end performance</b>
All crime	16,558 recorded crimes	15%	13.8% increase, 2282 more crimes than previous year
Violent Crime (including domestic abuse)	2,913 recorded crimes	9%	59.7% increase, 1742 more crimes than previous year
Serious Acquisitive Crime	2,946 recorded crimes	16%	13.1% reduction, 387 crimes less than previous year
Criminal Damage	2,562 recorded crimes	5%	2.1% increase, 54 more crimes than previous year
Anti-social behaviour incidents	15,226 recorded crimes	5%	2.8 reduction, 429 less incidents than previous year

Specific pieces of work that took place:

- Priority location work in relation to serious acquisitive crime and target hardening for victims of burglary. Main areas for focus are Blackthorn, The Mounts/Abington Square, Spring Boroughs/Semilong, Spencer/St James. .
- Three Partnership 'Weeks of Action' focusing on crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues and 2 focused on drugs & alcohol. These weeks resulted in over 1,870 face to face interactions with local residents, 214 Home Fire Safety Checks and the removal of over 34 tonnes of waste.
- Community Payback undertook 29 specific projects during the year and also supported work during all five 'Weeks of Action'.
- Specific multi-agency focused work on alcohol related violent crime. Closer working between Police, NBC and NGH looking at frequent flyers.
- Development of Alcohol Outreach project for street drinkers and rough sleepers in partnership with the Bridge Project.
- Target Hardening of properties at risk of burglary continues. 139 properties had improved security measures implemented.
- Target hardening for victims of Domestic Abuse being provided. As at 30/09/2014, 92 victims received security improvements to their home.

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- Street Football continued in hot spot locations.
- School Pastors were launched at Northampton Academy, with regular patrols taking place on Thursdays' and pastoral support being provided as and when required. The team have been well received and feedback from pupils and staff has been positive.
- Castle Community Hub was re-opened (formerly known as Community Café), headed up by the local Police Sector, NBC Wardens and Housing. To date over 220 residents have utilised the resource.
- Killing with Kindness campaign continues, raising awareness around street begging issues, and encouraging people to donate to local charities who provide support for this group.
- Specific events held at University of Northampton and Northampton College, providing crime prevention and personal safety advice, support and guidance to students. Security marking of property was also undertaken.
- Implementation of a Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) in Kingsthorpe/St David's.
- Work on anti-social behaviour cases continues with 42 referrals being received by ASBU. This resulted in the 27 warning letters being issued and and 7 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders being granted.
- Junior Warden's scheme continues, with a further 4 primary schools taking part.
- Fifth year of Best Bar None - 20 licensed premises achieved accredited status this year.
- Funding has been allocated to domestic abuse support agencies to provide counselling and support for victims, perpetrators and their families.
- Language Café was established in Spring Borough's linking in with individuals who are experiencing difficulty in communicating, as English is not their first language. The first 6 months of the project saw 24 people taking part, with excellent results. 4 people have found employment, and the majority are now able to communicate at a good level and have more confidence in speaking with professionals.

## Partnership Weeks of Action

Partnership Weeks of Action have been a key delivery model during 2014/15. These 'Weeks' were held in the five priority areas as identified by the police and NCSP as high in Serious Acquisitive Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour. The areas also mirrored the authority's hotspots for fly-tipping and other social disorder.

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During the weeks there were a number of coordinated activities across each of the areas which included:

- Community Engagement
- Awareness raising around drug and alcohol abuse
- Crime prevention and home security advice
- Target Hardening & Home Security Checks
- Rubbish removal and community clean-up activities
- Community Payback carrying out landscaping improvements and other clean-up activities
- Fire Service carrying out Home Fire Safety checks and fitting smoke alarms
- Housing enforcement activity
- Police enforcement activity
- Promotion and education around recycling and the introduction of the Green Bag system and Euro-bins
- Family Fun Days – linking in with the ‘Our Place’ programme
- Youth engagement and sports activities

## Conclusion

The Community Safety Partnership has seen mixed results against the targets compared to 2013/14 performance. Good reductions in Serious Acquisitive Crime continued, especially in the area of burglary. There are issues around increases in overall crime and specifically violent crime, but it is felt that the change in national recording has contributed towards this. Nevertheless, the CSP do take this increase seriously, and are looking at all factors to ensure an effective multi-agency approach will be taken in addressing the matter in 2015/16.

Brief Author: Debbie Ferguson, Community Safety Partnership Manager on behalf of Councillor Anna King, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety – July 2015