



STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT – 2009/10 Basingstoke and Deane Community Safety Forum

SUMMARY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Since 2007 the Community Safety Forum is required to produce an annual Strategic Assessment. The assessment uses partner data to establish an accurate picture of current and emerging crime and anti-social behaviour trends. The forum can then be aware of the local problems and alter their focus as problems in an area change. Assessments are also intended to assist the forum in revising the Partnership Plan.
- 1.2 The Strategic Assessment is based on data collected for the period 1 June 2008 to 31 May 2009. Six monthly and year on year comparisons have also been made.

2.0 PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

2.1 Total Crime

- 2.1.1 During the last full crime reporting year crime in Basingstoke and Deane increased by 3% (n374). However six monthly comparisons which take the most recent six months (Dec 08 to May 09) and compare them to the previous six months (Jun 08 to Nov 08) show that crime fell by 8% (n498). This suggests that after an increase in the earlier half of last year crime is beginning to stabilise and things have improved, despite figures being higher than the same time last year (+6%, n351).

2.2 Rowdy and Inconsiderate behaviour

- 2.2.1 Incidents of rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour, which is how the Community Safety Forum measures anti-social behaviour, fell by 14% (n786) in 2008/09.
- 2.2.2 The top location for rowdy and inconsiderate incidents was the town centre. It is expected that the high footfall of people and level of alcohol consumed contribute to this area experiencing a large number of incidents.

2.3 Criminal Damage

- 2.3.1 Criminal damage is the second most common crime type in the borough. However, offences were reduced by 4% (n128) last year and this reduction is greater than that achieved across 3OCU (-1%). The types of criminal damage most commonly occurring in the borough were to vehicles and dwellings.
- 2.3.2 Norden remains as the top location for damage. This is largely attributed to its size, its close proximity to the town centre in relation to the night time economy and because there has been lots of building and development work in recent years.
- 2.3.3 Arson is a form of criminal damage where property is destroyed or damaged by fire. Incidents of arson were reduced by 11% (n36) across the borough last year.

2.4 Violent Crime

- 2.4.1 Violence against the person offences fell by 7% (n192) in 2008/09, building on a 13% (n432) reduction the previous year. Reductions in this crime type in the borough were greater than that achieved nationally. The town centre continues to be the top location for violence against the person offences and this is likely to be attributable to the high level of alcohol consumed and large number of people in a concentrated area.
- 2.4.2 Sexual offences account for a very small percentage (1%) of crime in Basingstoke and Deane and reduced by 8% (n13) last year.
- 2.4.3 Unlike the other violence categories which experienced reductions, robbery increased last year (+46%, n32). However such offences accounted for less than 1% of all crime in the borough and it was not just in Basingstoke and Deane that robbery increased. There have been increases across 3OCU (+17%) and Hampshire (+15%).
- 2.4.4 In the borough crimes involving weapons are rare. Data shows that last year 2.3% (n62) of all violent offences involved the use of a knife and 0.7% (n19) involved the use of a gun.

2.5 Domestic Abuse

- 2.5.1 Domestic abuse can be any type of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse. It is measured in two ways. The first is the number of incidents reported to the police during a given period. Although on the surface a reduction is seen as a positive thing, because underreporting is highly prevalent, success is actually measured if the number of reports goes up over time as

this means that victims are encouraged to report their abuse. Last year there was a 3% (n16) increase in the number of reports of abuse to the police.

2.5.2 The other way of measuring domestic abuse is by looking at the number of repeat victims. Success is measured by a reduction in the number of repeat victims. In the past six months repeat domestic crimes reduced by 4%.

2.6 Substance related crime

2.6.1 Drug offences in the borough are continuing to increase and last year rose by 7% (n28). Nonetheless it is important to be aware that figures reflect police activity and not actual usage and detection rates are very high. Trends in the borough are also reflective of the national picture which shows drug offences have increased by 6%.

2.6.2 The number of alcohol related offences in the borough reduced by 6% last year. Across the borough offences peaked over the weekend, between 10pm and 3am and occurred most frequently in the town centre and around licensed premises.

2.7 Burglary

2.7.1 Burglary dwelling offences increased by 49% (n233) on the previous year. Six monthly comparisons highlight a 1% reduction, and because burglary is not particularly seasonal this suggests that after a large increase in the earlier half of the year, the number of burglaries has now stabilised and things are beginning to improve. Basingstoke and Deane is not the only area to have experienced an increase in this type of crime, across 3OCU (+24%) and Hampshire (+13%) burglary dwelling offences increased.

2.7.2 Burglary non dwelling offences also increased by 48% (n439). However six monthly comparisons, as for burglary dwelling, highlight a 24% (n185) reduction suggesting that the number of offences has levelled out. Again Basingstoke and Deane is not the only place to have experienced increases, the number of offences across 3OCU increased by 22% and across Hampshire by 16%.

2.7.3 Operation Nemesis is a force wide campaign targeting burglars in the county and is likely to have had an impact on the figures. Burglary figures are also highly dependant on which offenders are locked up or out in the community, as one prolific burglar can have a major impact on the figures.

2.8 Vehicle Crime

2.8.1 Vehicle crime in Basingstoke and Deane fell by 12% (n147) last year. While we have seen an 18% (n173) reduction in theft from a motor vehicle offences following on from campaigns to remove valuables from cars, theft of a motor vehicle offences have increased. An increase of 9% (n26) occurred in 2008/09.

2.9 Theft

2.9.1 Theft is currently the largest single contributor to crime in the borough and last year accounted for 23% of all crime. Overall trends in theft offences (+7%) are reflective of 3OCU (+8%) and the whole of Hampshire where this particular crime increased by 8% and 4% respectively. As a consequence of the large retail area, theft offences are concentrated in the town centre.

2.10 Fear of crime

2.10.1 The PLACE survey was conducted between September and December 2008 and more than 1,600 residents responded to questions about their local area and services. Overall results in relation to Community Safety were very positive and the extent to which residents felt various issues were a problem significantly reduced since the same questions were asked back in 2006.

3.0 **PRIORITIES**

3.1 As a result of the findings of the Strategic Assessment the priority crime types for the upcoming year are;

- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and substance related crime
- Fear of crime
- Wounding and violent crime (including domestic abuse)
- Criminal damage
- Burglary (dwelling and non dwelling)

4.0 **ACTIONS & OPPORTUNITIES**

4.1 The Basingstoke and Deane Community Safety Forum works together to reduce crime and disorder in the borough. Over the course of the year numerous initiatives have been undertaken to tackle the problems in communities. There are also various activities planned for the next year and more details of these can be found in the **Partnership Plan** document.

