



Creating a safer
Cambridgeshire

To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Constable

Date: 28 October 2020

POLICE AND CRIME PLAN COMMUNITIES THEME – CAMBRIDGESHIRE CONSTABULARY WORK TO DELIVER ACTIONS

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Business Coordination Board (the “Board”) on the Communities pillar of the Police and Crime Plan (the “Plan”) and performance update from Cambridgeshire Constabulary (“the Constabulary”).

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of this report.

3. Background

3.1 The most recent Force Performance Meeting was held on 15th September 2020 and reviewed performance in the 12 months ending August 2020. This report reflects the updates provided to that meeting.

3.2 Alongside an overall review of performance, the report will also update on the operational priority in the new Corporate Plan which aligns to the Communities pillar of the Acting Police and Crime Commissioner’s (the “Acting Commissioner”) Plan. This

is ‘Reduce Harm to Communities’, with the focus on hate crime, knife crime, drugs offences and youth gangs.

4. Performance Headlines

- 4.1.1 Call volumes continued to trend upwards in August. This was driven by an above average number of 999 calls for this time of year, suggesting that emergency call demand is no longer being suppressed as a result of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The month on month increase in 101 calls was smaller, compared to both the number of calls received in July and the size of the increase in emergency calls in August; this indicates that the long term downward trend in non-emergency calls which was evident pre-lockdown is likely to continue.
- 4.1.2 Grade of service has begun to deteriorate as demand has increased; and abandonment rates for secondary calls have also risen. While other contact channels are available (web chat, online reporting), the ability to switch these on and off quickly and direct the public at short notice to a different contact channel to ease bottlenecks has been built into contingency plans. Further marketing will be developed later in the year when the new digital desk function, incorporating web chat and social media, is launched.
- 4.1.3 The median time to respond to immediate graded incidents has risen in increments of 1 minute a month for the last 4 months, rising to 18 minutes in August. The median prompt grade response time rose to 120 minutes, with notable increases for key incident types; these include burglary dwelling and domestic incidents, and signal a return to the response times seen pre-COVID.
- 4.1.4 The new Incident Grading and Deployment procedure has now been signed off, and the new “Priority” grade will go live once the necessary system configurations have been completed. Aspirational attendance times for priority graded incidents will be one hour; the aspirational attendance times for prompt graded incidents will change to four hours. A formal escalation process will also be introduced in the Force Control Room to assist in identifying resources to attend outstanding immediate and priority graded incidents.
- 4.1.5 Levels of recorded crime were stable month on month, with the number of crimes recorded higher than the same month last year for the second consecutive month. The exception is Cambridge City where the long term downward trend in recorded crime continues; and monthly crime levels, although rising, remain lower than the same periods last year.
- 4.1.6 While the total number of recorded crimes has returned to pre-lockdown levels, the nature of demand has changed; acquisitive crime demand remains to a certain extent suppressed, but there have been increases in other offence types as lockdown restrictions have been relaxed (Violence against the Person; Domestic Abuse; Public Order Offences). Work is underway to better understand our demand, but it is recognised that the Constabulary need to deal with both severity and volume, while ensuring that risk and vulnerability are managed by putting the necessary mitigations into place.
- 4.1.7 Increased demand is impacting on key performance indicators, including Victim Care Contract (VCC) compliance, levels of supervisory oversight and investigative

throughput. This was evident across the majority of crime types during a peak annual leave period. However, improvements in suspect categorisation have been sustained, facilitating a more accurate assessment of risk and the volume of work outstanding. These all remain key areas of focus.

4.1.8 Despite a lower discrete month all crime prosecution possible outcome rate, the rolling 12 month rates held stable at 12.8%, with rates for both North and South areas significantly higher than their respective benchmarks. While there were fewer charges and community resolutions in August than has the case in recent months, there has been an increase in the number of crimes filed using outcome 22 ‘Diversionsary, educational or intervention activity being undertaken’; this is a key success of the ongoing work around the use out of court disposals to address offender behaviour.

5.0 Reduce Harm to Communities Operational Priority

REDUCE HARM TO COMMUNITIES							Current Month	Aug-19	Aug-18	Aug-17	Current v 3yr avg	Current v 3yr avg	Rolling 12 months	Baseline	Perf v Benchmark	
HATE CRIME																
Recorded Crime	148	126	85	104	Higher	Higher	1,332	1,330	Comparable							
Prosecution Possible Outcome Rate	12.2%	7.3%	11.8%	15.2%	Deteriorated	Deteriorated	17.8%	13.7%	Improved							
Victim satisfaction (whole experience)	81.3%	75.0%	50.0%	75.0%	Comparable	Comparable	78.2%	81.6%	Comparable							
KNIFE CRIME																
Recorded Crime (sharp instrument marker)	115	133	55	125	Comparable	Comparable	1,564	1,577	Comparable							
Prosecution Possible Outcome Rate (sharp instrument marker)	20.0%	24.8%	29.1%	40.8%	Deteriorated	Deteriorated	23.8%	22.9%	Comparable							
Recorded Crime (Possession of Weapons)	45	41	51	50	Lower	Comparable	653	670	Comparable							
Prosecution Possible Outcome Rate (Possession of Weapons)	28.9%	48.8%	45.1%	60.0%	Deteriorated	Deteriorated	46.1%	40.9%	Improved							
DRUGS OFFENCES																
Recorded Crime	134	136	129	116	Comparable	Comparable	1,956	1,649	Higher							
Prosecution Possible Outcome Rate	58.2%	61.0%	54.3%	73.3%	Comparable	Deteriorated	60.7%	60.6%	Comparable							
YOUTH GANGS																
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5.1 Hate Crime

5.1.1 148 *hate crimes* were recorded in August; the highest single month figure. This was driven by an increase in reported offending in both Fenland and Peterborough; and has halted the recent downward trend in the long term indicator. The long term indicator in South area is still trending upwards. Incidents and crimes are scrutinised daily to identify any that may be linked to Brexit; plans are already in place to deal with any such rise.

5.1.2 The rolling 12 month prosecution possible outcome rate continued to improve, rising to 17.8%; with improvements seen in both North and South areas. Proposals to implement out of court disposal options for hate crime offenders have had to be put on hold until pilots by West Midlands, Hampshire and Avon & Somerset Constabularies have been fully evaluated; until then, no other forces are being invited to apply to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) for dispensation, and must continue to refer hate crime disposal decisions to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

- 5.1.3 A consistent approach to the investigation of hate crimes has now been adopted across both North and South policing areas. While Criminal Investigation Department (CID) will continue to deal with all PIP2 (serious and complex) offences, other hate crimes will be dealt with by neighbourhood policing teams. It is hoped this will lead to further improvements in performance, and crimes being dealt with more swiftly given that neighbourhood officers carry less crime.
- 5.1.4 Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) style meetings for repeat victims of hate crime have been trialled and are now to be rolled out in both North and South areas as part of the PREVENT strand. Neighbourhood teams will be able to flag higher risk victims as well as repeat offenders into these meetings.
- 5.1.5 Ongoing work looking at how to tackle repeat victimisation and reduce vulnerability has identified taxi drivers as one of the groups most at risk of being targeted, particularly in Peterborough; information packs have been produced and are now ready for delivery.
- 5.1.6 A network of sign language users has been created to improve the way the organisation interacts with service users who are deaf.
- 5.1.7 Work to improve engagement with sex workers is aimed at encouraging them to report hate incidents; this will also facilitate a greater understanding and sharing of the reasons for under-reporting currently. Aspire are also working with sex workers in order to produce a training package for practitioners.
- 5.1.8 Tension monitoring groups in North and South have become excellent forums for discussions with the community to understand variances in hate crime. This has allowed the Constabulary to better respond to Black Lives Matter, COVID and Brexit related issues. Improving data capture around Community Impact Assessments will also allow for early identification of any cumulative community tensions.

5.2 Knife Crime

- 5.2.1 The upward trend in the long term indicators for Possession of Weapons offences was halted at the start of lockdown; it is now beginning to rise again with a higher number of offences recorded in each of the last two months compared to the same time last year. The rolling 12 month prosecution possible outcome rate remains significantly higher than the year end benchmark, but the recent trend is downwards.
- 5.2.2 Stop Search remains an important tool in the fight against serious violence and knife crime. The number of stop searches for offensive weapons continues to fluctuate, but has accounted for a lower proportion of stop searches during lockdown, where the greater focus has been on drugs and going equipped.
- 5.2.3 With the exception of the first month of lockdown, the number of intelligence items related to Offensive Weapons has remained relatively stable, with a comparable number of reports in both North and South areas. However, there was a notable increase in the number of intelligence items in Peterborough in August; the highest single month total in over two years.
- 5.2.4 Implementation of the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 was postponed due to COVID19, but will be launched later this year. This introduces the offence of ownership of

specific items, such as knuckle dusters in a private address, and gives the police the powers to seize these items.

5.3 Drugs Offences

- 5.3.1 A higher number of drugs offences have been recorded since the start of lockdown, but recorded crime in August returned to levels more typical of those seen pre lockdown, with the long term indicator stable month on month. While this was true at both Constabulary and Area level, it is acknowledged that drugs offences are influenced by changes in police activity, and therefore are not an accurate reflection of the totality of offending.
- 5.3.2 Cambridgeshire has gravitated towards a harm reduction approach to drug enforcement; this seeks to mitigate the impact of the use of particular drugs rather than to seek a prosecution in all cases. Together with partner agencies, a number of harm reduction strategies have been pursued; however, there are five key strands to a potential successful harm reduction strategy which are *not* currently being implemented. These are Heroin Assisted Therapy; Supervised Consumption Centres; Substance testing facilities; evidence based educational interventions for Out of Court Disposals (OOCs); and drug testing on arrival.
- 5.3.3 These strands all require partnership work, and they are all problematic due to reasons of cost, complexity and legality. It has been recommended that options are explored further in conjunction with partners.

5.4 Youth Gangs

- 5.4.1 Since the start of lockdown there have been 11 youth related inspector dispersal authorities. Two of the four issued in August concerned a feud between two opposing groups of youths and were aimed at taking quick and proportionate action against anyone involved in drug related crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), disrupting the activities of local drug lines, and safeguarding vulnerable children who were being exploited and used to sell drugs.
- 5.4.2 All neighbourhood policing officers are currently receiving refresher training around ASB legislation and available enforcement options, including gang injunctions. Work remains ongoing to better understand the availability of specific diversionary pathways for youths who display an emerging risk or are already involved in gang activity; this will also be briefed out to officers to ensure there is full awareness of the options available for early intervention.
- 5.4.3 Early intervention work is paramount to reducing the number of young people being exploited by gangs. Pre-COVID19, outside agencies were able to attend schools to provide help and support to year groups identified as being involved in emerging gang related issues; such visits are now restricted, and digital presentations are not possible given the current ICT infrastructure. This has been identified as a strategic risk.
- 5.4.4 Local geographical teams have good working relationships with local care homes and attend them regularly; this ensures a constant flow of information with regards to concerns that staff may have. The MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) are also instrumental in identifying children at risk where there are opportunities for early intervention.

5.4.5 Various multi-agency forums facilitate discussions between the Constabulary and partner agencies, with actions tasked to the appropriate agencies to deal. This includes the creation of safeguarding plans, as well as engagement, monitoring, intervention and disruption activity.

6. Recommendation

6.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of this report

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Police and Crime Plan https://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/police-crime-plan/ Cambridgeshire Constabulary Corporate Plan 2020/21 https://www.cambs.police.uk/assets/PDFs/About/Transparency/AboutUs-OurForce-Corporate-plan-2020-21.pdf
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