

SAFER COMMUNITIES

Introduction

Under the umbrella of the Derbyshire Partnership Forum (DPF) Derbyshire already has well developed partnership arrangements in place. Revised governance and constitutional arrangements have been developed for the DPF, DPF Board, DPF Executive and each of the six thematic partnerships

The Safer Communities Board (SCB) is a thematic partnership and its role is to give leadership and direction to tackle crime, disorder and substance misuse. The remit of the SCB also meets the new statutory regulations which require a county level group to identify priorities in a Community Safety Agreement feeding into the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and to help to co-ordinate the work of district and other partnerships tackling community safety issues. Priorities are identified through an annual Strategic Intelligence Assessment process undertaken at district and county level. The SCB manages a budget drawn from Area Based Grant allocated to Derbyshire County Council (DCC). It supports funding of a number of key priority posts supporting county-wide projects as well as retaining a performance management fund which can be allocated to partners who need prompt assistance to tackle areas of under performance in relation to LAA targets. The SCB works well and partners are committed to delivering its priorities.

The SCB is supported and advised by the Safer Communities Tasking and Advisory Group (SCTAG) which comprises senior level officers from the partners represented on the SCB. The SCTAG is responsible for the performance management functions of the Board and is supported by the Safer Derbyshire Research & Information Team (SDRI).

Summary

1. Derbyshire is one of the safest counties in the country. We are now in our sixth consecutive year of crime reductions, overall crime having fallen by 20.9% from 62,923 in 2003/04 to 49,340 in 2008/9. This equates to 65.7 crimes per 1,000 population.
2. Consultation with Citizens Panels has identified that communities have reduced concerns about anti-social behaviour with perceptions of concern having fallen by 7.58% over the last four years.
3. Indicators chosen to support LAA priorities are outcome focused and reflect the issues identified by data analysis. Targets demand incremental improvement. Those relating to reducing assault with

injury are challenging – having achieved a 21.6% reduction in the financial year to the end of March 2009 against the LAA target a further reduction has been determined by the Government of 4% over two years against the March 2009 baseline.

4. Serious acquisitive crime (domestic burglary, vehicle crime and robbery) has reduced by 40% over the last six years. Having secured significant reductions in serious acquisitive crime the Partnership is facing further challenges in relation to maintaining low levels of domestic burglary and vehicle crime in the current economic climate.
5. Alcohol misuse and the impact this has on hospital admissions is highest in Bolsover, Chesterfield and High Peak and work is underway to identify the underlying reasons for this. Alcohol features as a factor in a number of crime types: anti-social behaviour, assault including domestic violence and sexual violence. Alcohol consumption by young people is of particular concern in relation to crime and nuisance, long term health implications and vulnerability.
6. Police data in relation to domestic violence indicates that the percentage of repeat incidents for the last 3 quarters (April 08 - December 08) has decreased from 37.1% to 36.1%.
7. The number of first time entrants to the youth justice system has fallen significantly. The Regional Youth Justice Board conducted a comparative study with similar services in 2008 and reported that “prevention activity should be seen as a success.” The report also found “excellent performance with relatively low levels of re-offending”. The target (95%) for those young offenders in need of suitable accommodation was exceeded (95.7%). There has also been a drop in the number of looked after children offending from 40 in 2006/7 to 25 in 2007/8. The rate of looked after children offending for 2007-8 was 9% compared to 15% and 16% the previous two years.
8. Derby & Derbyshire Road Safety Partnership co-ordinates road safety work amongst key partners (County Council, City Council, Police, Fire and Rescue Service, NHS, Peak Park and Highways Agency) and reports into the SCB. Its key target is to reduce all killed and seriously injured (KSI) in road traffic collisions. In the calendar year 2008 the Road Safety Partnership was successful in reducing serious road casualties by 13.6% in the county and has met its challenging PSA2 target.

Progress, Outcomes and Gaps

9. Violent crime in relation to the night time economy and domestic violence continues to be a major focus for the Partnership and a concern in communities. The Partnership has strong links with the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) which shares priorities around domestic violence and serious sexual violence. The County Council's Community Safety Manager leads the LCJB Victim & Witness Theme Group.
10. DCC, via the SCB, has secured funding for four Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) across the County until 2011 to manage support for victims who are at high risk of serious harm or homicide through the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs). Since implementation in September 2008 and the end of March 2009 the MARACs have supported 202 victims across the county. Safer Derbyshire is managing a significant training programme for multi-agency frontline staff to raise awareness of domestic violence and specifically in relation to MARACs. A joint city and county Governance Board has been established. Derbyshire Constabulary has aligned 55 additional staff to public protection duties including domestic violence and the Partnership is taking forward co-location opportunities.

This initiative is also supported by Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service who provide anti arson letter slot protection devices, additional smoke detection and special safety advice to those victims perceived to be at risk of an attack by fire.

11. In addition DCC, via the SCB, has funded two Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) working with Derbyshire Rape Crisis. The ISVAs work with victims of sexual violence and specifically support victims who report violence and undertake forensic examination at the County's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). Support includes ongoing counselling services provided at the SARC and signposting to other services.

There is a need to map the care pathways of victims of domestic and sexual violence to improve knowledge and awareness of those involved in providing support services and those developing policy and strategy and in order to identify gaps in services. This piece of work will be progressed by the Sexual Violence Group a sub group of the LCJB led Victim & Witness Theme Group.

12. Safer Derbyshire Research & Information Team has identified a cohort of 39 repeat violent offenders who are currently being

tracked in relation to identifying factors which influence their re-offending. The cohort covers a mixture of night time economy alcohol related assaults and domestic violence offences. The Partnership, in conjunction with the LCJB, is currently considering the introduction of an Integrated Offender Management model to specifically to manage these offenders. There are significant savings to be made from tackling repeat violent offenders as well as the impact on communities, particularly town centres, feeling safer.

13. Alcohol harm is a major concern across the Partnership. Understanding the detail around alcohol harm including underlying causes and appropriate actions at a district level has been slow in developing. However, work is now being undertaken by Public Health looking at alcohol harm in under 18's across the county and there is a further piece of work looking at the underlying detail in terms of hospital admissions (NI39) by age, gender and geography. There have been increases in admissions to hospital for females in Bolsover and Chesterfield and under 18's in Bolsover, Chesterfield and High Peak. The Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) is currently engaging the eight CDRPs across the county to share information relevant to the area and discuss practical steps which could impact on positively on the target to reduce admissions. Commitment from partners to tackle this area of concern is high.
14. Derbyshire has included a local target in the LAA on adult drug users in effective treatment. Figures indicate that Derbyshire is on target up to December 2008, with a provisional 4.4% increase from 2007-08. Unfortunately, average improvement for England is 5.6%, which poses a threat to treatment funding. A current challenge facing the county is a shift away from opiate/crack use on the part of young people and young adults and a move to the use of on or more of alcohol, amphetamines, cocaine, cannabis, ecstasy (AACCE) and other illicit drugs. Work is underway with drug treatment providers to increase the number of drug users in effective treatment:
15. Anti-social behaviour (ASB), both real and perceived, continues to be the top priority across the eight CDRPs. DCC Area Based Grant, via the SCB, together with funding from Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service (DFRS) funds a full-time ASB Officer in each district. Further DCC Area Based Grant allocations are made to districts to fund diversionary and/or enforcement activities. The SCB's performance management fund has also made a number of grants for CCTV in order to tackle ASB.

DFRS runs a successful Youth Engagement Scheme (YES Project) aimed at targeted young people not attending school, at risk of criminality or committing anti-social behaviour. The project is designed to build self esteem and develop an appreciation of the communities they live in. So far 67 young people have completed the scheme and passed out. One young person, whilst attending the course, was able to come out of a behavioural unit and move back into mainstream education. Another young person is now a junior instructor for the Fire Cadets. Funding has been secured from the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership and the Working Neighbourhoods fund and this will enable the scheme to be fully funded until 31/3/2012.

The County Council's Adult Social Services Dept manages a successful programme of intergenerational projects. The Beth Johnson Foundation promotes the Derbyshire model as good practice particularly as it involves Community Safety. They aim to improve relationships between the generations by involving both young and old in activities together thus helping to reduce fear of crime, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and calls for service.

16. By March 2008 all 101 neighbourhoods in Derbyshire had a Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT). SNTs are a dedicated local team making each area safer, cleaner and a more pleasant place to live in. Priorities are identified by the community at regular neighbourhood meetings.
17. The County has a successful Prolific & Other Priority Offender (PPO) Scheme, the 'Reach Project' with operational groups at district level identifying those offenders who cause most harm in their communities. The scheme's main focus is serious acquisitive crime, particularly dwelling house burglary. In the year April to Dec 2008 we secured reductions in re-offending by an additional 60 convictions, well above our milestone target. A recent Home Office evaluation of the Drug Intervention Programme, which is a significant service in relation to reducing re-offending, reported the programme as excellent. After three PPOs were arrested at the beginning of February 2009, dwelling house burglaries committed in Alfreton virtually stopped.
18. Over recent months there have been increases in serious acquisitive crime in Bolsover, Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire High Peak and South Derbyshire impacting on performance against the LAA target. The SCB has made several allocations of

funding from its performance management fund for CDRP led projects such as targeted 'Smartwater' property marking, target hardening and awareness raising activities in relation to vulnerability from insecurities.

19. During the school summer holidays in 2008 the Youth Offending Service secured external funding to deliver an arts based programme. Twelve young people who were all serious and/or persistent offenders and who had either been to custody or were at risk of a custodial sentence attended for 6 weeks. They participated enthusiastically and undertook activities that they would not previously had the opportunity to engage in. They focussed on visual arts, music production and film and drama. The activities were backed up with basic skills in numeracy and literacy. All 12 completed the programme and were given an externally accredited Bronze Arts Award. The Derbyshire programme was recognised by the Youth Justice Board and Arts Council as one of the most effective arts programmes delivered to young offenders in 2008. *'Re-offending levels were encouraging and it is proposed run the programme in 2009'*
20. Hate Crime remains under reported in the County. The Police, County Council and City Community Safety Partnership has funded 'Stop Hate' a 24 hour third party reporting line which also signposts victims to support services for a period of 12 months up to October 2009. Whilst numbers remain low they are a considerable improvement on the previous third party reporting tool, which only captured six reports over four years.

The DCC Community Safety Unit is working with the Learning Disability Partnership to support training for 'reps on board' (Choice & Control Charter) to cascade training to others on how to recognise hate crime and how to deal with it.

21. Under the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy the County has produced a 'Prevent' plan which has been agreed by the SCB. The plan outlines Derbyshire's approach to preventing violent extremism, the aim of which is to stop people becoming or supporting violent extremists.