

Northampton Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9 June 2014

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

Overall 2013/14 has been a very positive year for the NCSP, achieving notable reductions in key crime types. For 2013/14, Northampton features in the top 10 CSPs (out of 326) in England and Wales for percentage reduction (in crimes per population) of victim based crime, violence against the person and SAC, further demonstrating the strong performance in relation to recorded crime.

Actual Performance – April 2013 to March 2014

There's been a reduction of 17.1% (-3423 crimes) in overall crime in Northampton. Criminal damage, violence and theft offences have reduced considerably for this period.

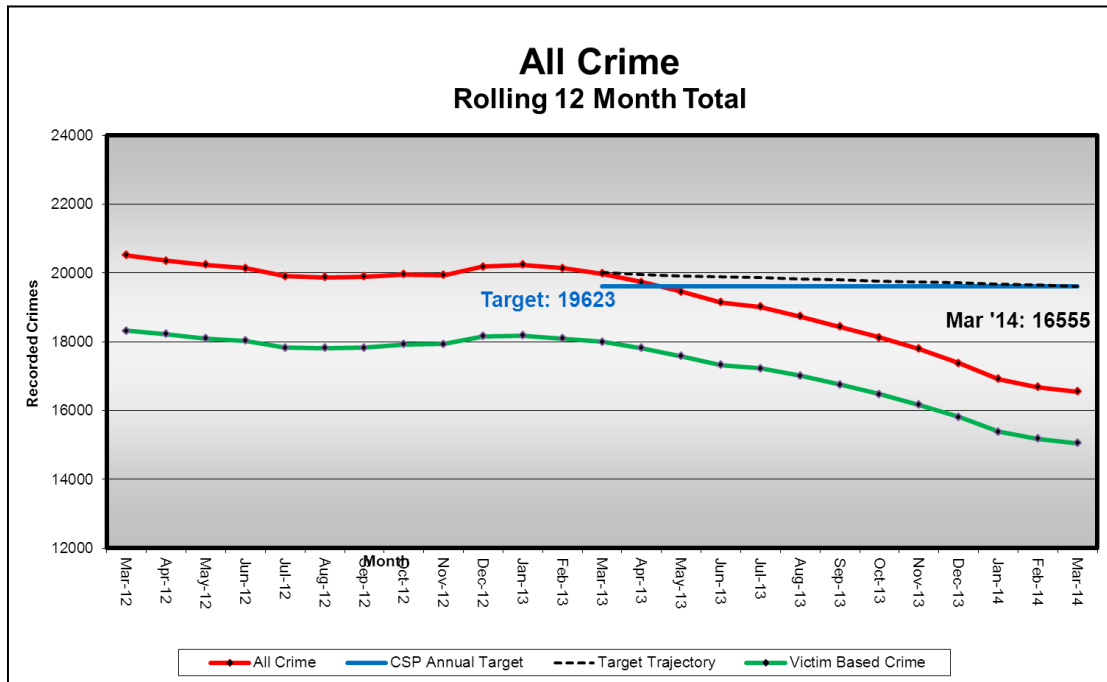
Overall crime is used as a proxy measure for crime relating to drugs and alcohol misuse. Victim based crime has been shown in the graph below to illustrate the changes in crime which closer aligns with CSP work, and the symptoms of alcohol & drug abuse, this crime group has also reduced by 16.4% (-2953 crimes).

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E-mail: scrutiny@northampton.gov.uk

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Northampton has seen a 17.4% (615 crimes) reduction in violent crime this year. All but one month (December) had fewer crimes than the equivalent month in 2012/13. Repeat victims of domestic violent crimes have reduced by 16.4% (51 victims). Reports of domestic crimes & incidents from first time victims have increased very slightly (+1.4%, 26) but not significantly.

SAC has reduced by 27.7% (-1131 crimes) in 2013-14. This is primarily due to low levels of vehicle crime and significantly undercutting the high volume of burglary dwelling last winter. After two years of continual increases there was 43.3% less SAC recorded in Northampton than five years ago, with consistently low volume throughout the year. Despite a reduction, burglary dwelling remains the key performance threat for the CSP.

Anti-Social Behaviour has seen mixed performance with a continued reduction in criminal damage (17.1%) and public perception (9.3%) but a slight increase in ASB incidents (9.3%). The Northampton Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (ASBU) handled 51 cases of serious and persistent anti-social behaviour between April 2013 and March 2014. The majority of these cases (32) related to adults, with just 19 involving young people aged 17 or under.

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| Crime Type | 2012/13 Baseline | 2013/14 Target Reduction | Year end performance |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| All crime | 19,978 recorded crimes | No Target Set | 17.1% reduction, 3423 less crimes than previous year |
| Violent Crime (including domestic abuse) | 3,529 recorded crimes | 5% | 17.4% reduction, 615 crimes less than previous year |
| Serious Acquisitive Crime | 4,080 recorded crimes | 10% | 27.7% reduction, 1,131 crimes less than previous year |
| Criminal Damage | 3,090 recorded crimes | 5% | 17.1% reduction, 529 less crimes than previous year |
| Anti-social behaviour incidents | 13,258 recorded crimes | 5% | 1.5% increase, 198 more 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 were Blackthorn/Goldings, The Mounts/Abington Square, Spring Broughs/Semilong, Far Cotton and Spencer/St James. A total of 676 properties received improved security measures to their home.
- Six Partnership 'Weeks of Action' focusing on crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental issues were held in all the five priority locations and also on the town centre.
- Specific multi-agency focused work on alcohol related violent crime (Police led).
- Target hardening for victims of Domestic Abuse being provided. 168 victims received security improvements to their home.
- 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.
- Awareness raising around domestic abuse continues.
- Work on anti-social behaviour cases continue with 5 orders being secured this year.
- Junior Warden schemes were rolled out in a further 4 primary schools.

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- Fourth year of Best Bar None - 24 licensed premises took part this year.
- Fortnightly, multi-agency Domestic Abuse Case Management Meetings focusing on level 1 & 2 cases are now embedded and working well.

Partnership Weeks of Action

Partnership Weeks of Action have been a key delivery model during 2013/14. 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.

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

- Crime prevention advice and home security advice
- 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
- Target hardening and home security improvements by Care & Repair
- Housing enforcement activity
- Police enforcement activity
- Community and Youth engagement/activity

Conclusion

The Community Safety Partnership has seen improved results against the targets compared to 2012/13 performance. Excellent reductions in overall crime continue with continued reductions in violent crime. Good improvements have been seen in Serious Acquisitive Crime (specifically vehicle crime) and partnership work continues to further improve this.

Community Safety Partnerships are placed in Most Similar Groups as defined by the Home Office as having similar characteristics. Northampton CSP is improving its comparative performance in this group, seeing an improvement in all but three of the eighteen crime types.

Brief Author: Debbie Ferguson, Community Safety Partnership Manager on behalf of Leader of the Council, Cllr David Mackintosh - June 2014

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