

Recommendations

To improve the effectiveness of violence reduction at a local level the Home Office should:

1. In line with the changes that it has made to the provision of general policing grants, set funding plans for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships at least three years in advance, so Partnerships can plan strategically for the use of these funds rather than simply use money on measures which have only a short term impact on the risk of violent crime. It should also use the new Local Area Agreements to encourage Partnerships to undertake long term interventions aimed at tackling the root causes of violent crime.
2. Support better data sharing within Partnerships in line with Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act to enable them to focus their activities on the factors most likely to increase the risk of violent crime in their local area. In particular, the Home Office should work with the Department of Health and the Department for Children, Schools and Families to help them communicate to Primary Care Trusts and schools representatives in Local Authorities the benefits of collecting and providing anonymised data sets on victims of violent crime who present at Accident and Emergency Departments, and on children excluded from school. This should include explaining how such data sharing can be achieved without breaching data protection legislation. For example, the Home Office could design and roll out a tool which local areas could use to predict the costs that could be avoided by different partners by reducing violent crime, and run regional workshops to bring partners together to discuss how to resolve data protection issues.
3. Help Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to make effective use of the additional data which they should receive as a result of the introduction of the Crime and Disorder (Prescribed Information) Regulations 2007. The most cost effective solution should be considered. This could include encouraging the police to dedicate more of their analytical resource to analysing information on violent crime from all organisations within the Partnership to inform local strategy and operations, encouraging Partnerships to share existing analysts at a regional level to be dedicated to analysing violent crime, and providing additional training to equip analysts to identify the primary risks relating to violent crime in their local area.
4. Arrange with the Department for Children, Schools and Families to collect national data from the police and schools on the number of Safer School Partnerships in existence, their location, the different models in operation, and their effectiveness.
5. Raise awareness amongst Partnerships and the police about how the Licensing Act has been used successfully in some areas to reduce alcohol related violence and ensure that all areas are using the Act to its maximum potential to reduce the risk of violent crime by, for example, extending the good practice that has been put in place in some cities to the surrounding towns.