

REDUCING RE-OFFENDING IN THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON ON TEES.

1. Introduction

1.1 The PPO Programme remains a key Government Priority for tackling crime and reducing re-offending. The Home Office Crime strategy *Cutting Crime-a new partnership 2008-11* published in July 2007 makes clear the need to have a continued focus on tackling the most prolific offenders through the PPO programme

1.2 The PPO programme is also strongly positioned within the Governments new suite of Public Service Agreements (PSAs). The programme will make a major contribution to PSA 23 *Make Communities safer*. PPO has the potential to contribute to all four priorities set out in the PSA delivery agreement-

- Reduce the most serious violence, including tackling serious sexual offences and domestic violence
- Continue to make progress on serious acquisitive crime through a focus on the issues of greatest priority in each locality and the most harmful offenders- particularly drug-misusing offenders
- Tackle the crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour issues of greatest importance in each locality, increasing public confidence in local agencies involved in dealing with these issues
- Reduce re-offending through the improved management of offenders

Clearly targets 2 and 4 should be the major contribution by the PPO scheme

1.3 This report outlines a proposal as to how the Safer Stockton Partnership can seek to further reduce re-offending within the Borough. The successful implementation of the DIP and PPO Programmes has illustrated that increased interventions has a noticeable impact on the reduction of offending by this cohort.

1.4 It is also relevant to consider other statutory agencies that have a responsibility for the reduction of offending, namely the Probation service with their delivery of interventions and in particular the DRR intervention which cuts across both the DIP and PPO client group. As of the 1st April 2008 the local authority and Police now have targets contained within the framework of APACs of reducing offending within the Borough. Included within that framework is a specific target of reducing re-offending by the PPO cohort by 16% during the current financial year

1.5 This report seeks to illustrate that whilst there is more cooperative working than ever before by the statutory agencies, there is potential scope for improvement by ensuring that there is a strategic and cohesive coalition, of all agencies, to ensure that we maximise the potential to reduce re-offending.

2. Current position

2.1 Within Stockton:-

The current DIP case load is: - 100 (approx)

The current PPO caseload is: - 42

The current Probation caseload is: - 870

The current DRR caseload is: - 50

Examination of the current Probation caseload reveals the following links to the DIP caseload:-

717 (82%) of the Probation caseload are not accessing DIP

67(8%) have been on the DIP caseload but are now closed

40(5%) are currently suspended from DIP caseload

46(5%) are currently active on the caseload.

There are approximately 1200 people accessing drug treatment within Stockton

- 2.2 Examination of arrests from the 1st April 2007 to the 31st March 2008 identifies that 110 individuals were arrested for acquisitive crimes on more than four occasions. Of those 110, 11 were under the age of eighteen and not eligible for the PPO scheme or indeed Probation. 19 are existing PPOs. However some 15 persons had been arrested on more than ten occasions and were not, and had not been nominated as PPOs. This evidence tends to suggest that a) the selected PPO cohort, by and large appears to be the right individuals, and b) by increasing the number of those on the scheme it should have the effect of further reducing offending
- 2.3 This is a snap shot of the current position and it is used to illustrate that we need further analysis to better understand the number of individuals committing crime.
- 2.4 Given the inextricable links between the mis-use of class A drugs and offending it is a reasonable assumption that all those on the DIP, PPO and DRR caseload are high crime causers, i.e. those who are committing crime to fund or sustain their drug addiction.
- 2.5 What has not been ascertained is how many of the 1200 or so in treatment are also potential high crime causers.
- 2.6 Of those current to the Probation Service, examination of the Probation criminogenic assessment tool, OASys, reveals that some 42% of the caseload have drug mis-use as an issue. Given that they are convicted and subject to an order/licence, again it is a reasonable assumption that their offending is related to drug mis-use to some degree or other.
- 2.7 The alignment of the DIP/PPO schemes has resulted in the formation of a Strategic Group and an Operational Group. To date is unclear as to how well this is actually working, particularly as to how the Operational group is being influenced and directed by the Strategic Group.
- 2.8 The Safer Stockton Partnership has a responsibility to ensure targets are met and this proposal seeks to be innovative and creative to meet this new challenge.
- 2.9 There are very close working relationships in Stockton between all agencies and this has undoubtedly been a major factor in the success that has been achieved. Currently all the schemes work independently with co-location not being a realistic possibility. Within the Probation service the DRR scheme is also managed as an independent unit.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is that all those identified “high crime causers” are managed in one unit, currently the PPO scheme. The actual determination of numbers will depend on the level of resources that agencies are prepared to commit to such a proposal.
- 3.2 There is no additional funding for this proposal and all costs would have to be met out of existing allocations and resources by respective organisations
- 3.3 Probation has offered, in kind, the continued use of their building, Advance House, which has the capacity to house this team
- 3.4 Probation would devolve the management of the DDR intervention to the team.
- 3.5 The proposal would mean that the DAT are asked to provide one dedicated key worker, the Police an additional Police officer and Probation have agreed to provide additional staffing levels commensurate with the agreed new caseload.
- 3.6 Consideration could also be given to the secondment of a member of the Community safety team who would be responsible for the early identification and introduction of ASBO/CRASBOs to this group
- 3.7 The proposed staffing level would therefore be:-
- Manager-1
 - Probation Officers/ PSO – (number to be agreed when caseload identified)
 - Outreach worker-1
 - Police officers-2
 - Drug worker-1
 - CST -1 ?
- 3.8 All the offenders would be managed by the above team who would seek to provide all suitable interventions to reduce re-offending, maintain their drug treatment provision, and attempt to motivate them to change their lifestyle and behaviour. They would signpost to all available drug services and seek appropriate interventions where required.
- 3.9 The governance would be through the DIP/PPO Strategy group with day-to-day management and supervision via the manager.

4. Benefits

- Increased number of offenders subject to intensive supervision
- One team responsible for the management of a group of high crime causers
- Reduction in the duplication of effort
- Improve working knowledge of various agencies and improve working relationships
- Focus on reduction in re-offending
- Effective and efficient use of time

5. Negatives

- Loss of resources from other duties

6. Conclusion

6.1 This proposal seeks to build on the excellent foundations that have been forged to reduce crime. However to succeed we now have to reach another level. With the formation of a dedicated team we can engage with a much higher number of offenders and therefore increase the potential to reduce crime even further by providing increased supervision and interventions.

This proposal is commended to the group for consideration.

Jeff Evans