

In depth discussion – Violent Crime

1. Members will recall that we have Violence Reduction Group that steers our work on violent crime including our alcohol campaign Think B4U Drink. It provides the highlights of the analysis carried out by the Community Safety Analyst and is to be used to inform our in depth discussion topic which is Violent Crime.
2. The analysis that is attached is used by the Violence Reduction Group to direct activity, monitor trends and inform licensing reviews. This report is prepared for each VRG meeting and has been developed for this meeting to look at the period of April to October 2008
3. During this time we have seen a reduction of 15% in Violence Against the Person offences to 1,781 against 2,094 in the same period last year. This equates to a 3.6% reduction in Assault occasioning Actual Bodily Harm, a 3.4% reduction on common assault and battery and a 57% reduction on activity causing harassment alarm and distress. The latter is mostly due to Operation Exodus, which uses section 27 notices, which are effective in removing people from the area before they cause trouble.
4. We know that the majority of the offences (1,263) are carried out during the hours of 6pm to 6am and that 22% (391) of these incidents occurred on a weekend evening. This is particularly worrying given the loss of Neighbourhood Renewal funding that has been providing additional police overtime hours. Without this funding or a replacement we will see a reduction of uniformed presence on the streets at these key times.
5. 26% of violent crimes were committed under the influence but only 9% were on licensed premises. The highest percentage 43% (772) are Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm.
6. 28% (492) of these violence offences were domestic violence related and again most of these offences occurred during night-time hours (72%, 348). Actual violence was used in 93% (455) of offences leaving just 37 offences of threats and harassment.
7. The main area of concern is Stockton Town Centre followed by Newtown ward. Whilst this ranking remains the same for DV offences it alters when wards are ranked for night -time offences, with Stockton Town Centre remaining the highest followed by Mandale and Victoria, then Newtown. Also Parkfield and Oxbridge and Billingham North are ranked higher for night time violence whereas Bishopsgarth and Elmtree and Billingham East go up the ranking for day time violence.

8. We know of a number of repeat locations the highest being Zanzibar Night Club followed by the Police Station and then Finkle/High Street. The Violence Reduction Group have steered work with Zanzibar and they now use polycarbonate glasses and do not give out glass bottles. Offences within the club are now showing a downward trend from 8 in the month of April to two in September.
9. Looking at levels of violence across the Cleveland Police Force Area, Middlesbrough has the highest level followed by Stockton, then Redcar and Cleveland with Hartlepool at the rear. This reflects the same pattern for the previous year.
10. Our ranking on iQuanta for our most similar BCU is encouraging we have moved from 7th to 5th making us the second best performing BCU in the Force area, behind Redcar.
11. Statistics from Accident and Emergency are not included in this report as the data is still not available.
12. Members will recall that in March 2005 we agreed a number of principles that we will use to trigger our in depth discussions:
 - a) What do we know about the issue?
 - b) How reliable/complete is our information base?
 - c) What are we doing about the gaps?
 - d) What more could we do about the gaps?
 - e) Who bears the economic costs and the savings?
 - f) What have we tried so far?
 - g) How much has the intervention cost?
 - h) Do we think that we have been successful?
 - i) Have we been able to evaluate impact?
 - j) What else may be worth trying?
 - k) Can we afford these other possible interventions?

In this instance we need to also consider the loss of NRF funding that will impact on uniformed presence on the streets and the potential loss of Domestic Violence funding also through the NRF and the impact that this may have.

Community Safety Manger
4th December 2008