

SAFER STOCKTON PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT 2013

1. Safer Stockton Partnership has a statutory requirement to undertake a yearly strategic assessment and this is the seventh annual report produced on behalf of SSP by staff within Stockton Borough Council.
2. The aim of the document is to provide the partnership with an overview of the current crime and anti-social behaviour issues in the borough, along with the harm caused by the misuse of drugs and alcohol.
3. It should be used by the partnership to supplement the 2013 consultation results and to consider if any emerging areas need to be included as strategic priorities.
4. This report has also been prepared as the partnership nears the end of its three year community safety plan 2011-2014 and this assessment should also be considered when identifying objectives and performance measures for the new plan 2014 – 2017 that will be implemented in April 2014.
5. The assessment draws upon research and analysis from a wide variety of partnership data between October 2012 and September 2013.
6. This document is not intended to provide detailed analysis of each crime type or issue, and should be used as a strategic tool for decision making by the partnership.
7. The report is set out in thematic chapters with victim, offender and location considered within each chapter. Alongside this, key findings and recommendations have also been identified.
8. A snapshot of the key findings are:-
 - Performance management data for Stockton shows that publicly reported crime has increased by 4% (+408 crimes) during the assessment period.
 - Despite this rise, the Stockton borough continues to perform well in many crime categories although there are still some areas of concern.
 - Increases are evident in theft offences (5.5%/+321 crimes) and criminal damage and arson (6.3%/+138 crimes), however there are good reductions in other key crime types: - Violence (-4.1%/-75 crimes), in particular violence with injury (-11.8%/-138 crimes) and domestic burglary (-21.9%/-133 crimes).
 - Shoplifting is one of the main categories of concern for the borough, with an increase of 23.3% (+303 crimes). The rise in shoplifting is also evident in Hartlepool and Redcar & Cleveland boroughs.
 - Despite rises in offences such as theft, the results of the public consultation that was conducted in summer 2013 shows that residents in Stockton do not see this type of crime as a priority, focusing on issues such as ASB and alcohol misuse.
 - Whilst there are areas of concern, the reductions in SSP priorities such as violence, is encouraging. Alongside this, offences of domestic burglary continue to reduce.
 - Incidents of anti-social behaviour have also shown a slight increase of 1.7% during the 12 month period (Oct 12-Sept 13) however the most recent six month period (April-Sept 2013) highlights a more concerning issue within ASB (13.6%/ +857 incidents) along with a projection of 2177 incidents for the end of March 2014.
 - Although there has been an increase in police reported ASB there have been significant reductions in other ASB related incidents, with deliberate fire settings reducing by 18.7% (-143 incidents).

- The increase in crime has resulted in the Stockton borough now being the second best performing authority in comparison to our peers, although this is only by a minimal amount (0.95) and is the first year that Stockton has not been the best performing borough.
 - However Stockton has seen the largest increase in population from 2001 in comparison to three other local authorities, yet crime has remained steady over the years and Stockton borough has maintained an excellent position of best performing partnership for over a decade and for the majority of the 2012/13 assessment period. The crime rate per 1000 population has also continually reduced.
 - The misuse of alcohol and/or drugs continues to play a major aggravating factor in crime and ASB in Stockton. This continues to be evident in offences of violence, including those that are domestic related. Drug offences have also increased however this is mainly linked to drug possession rather than trafficking. The number of opiate and crack users has also increased by 24% along with growing concerns linked to alcohol misuse in this area.
 - Alcohol and drug use also plays a significant role in offending, particularly those linked to acquisitive crime and repeat offenders, with males heavily dominating this category. This is a similar picture for both adult and juvenile offending. Young offenders also live within similar ward locations to adult offenders which are within lower deprivation wards with high crime levels.
 - The 12 month period has seen no changes in offending locations, with the top five wards accounting for 47% of all crime and 43% of all ASB in the borough. The main five wards have remained the same as previous year for crime although in slightly different ranking. It is also quite evident from crime and other partner data that the most deprived and vulnerable area for wide variety of issues, not just crime and ASB, continues to be within the Stockton town centre ward. This is followed by Mandale & Victoria and Parkfield & Oxbridge.
 - There are many challenges for the partnership within the forthcoming 12 month period, with government funding continuing to be cut, along with reductions of staff within many of the essential organisations and departments that form part of the partnership. This includes Stockton local authority having to make year on year savings in order to address the estimated shortfall of £12.3 million by 2017/18.
 - However the partnership has a well-established approach to service planning and delivery, along with collaborative approach to partnership working and community engagement and development. This will be driven by the revised community safety plan that is due to be implemented in April 2014.
 - In order to move forward and to maintain the success of SSP, it is recommended the partnership consider the findings from this report, along with the audit consultation results. These intelligence products will aid with the production of the 2014-17 Community safety plan. The performance measures for this plan should aim to incorporate a targeted approach of allocation of resources to people and places, based on the level of need, vulnerability and threat they pose to the success of the partnership.
9. This report is submitted to the partnership and pending approval, will be available to the public via the SSP website.