

**From:** CI Chris Downes

**Date:** 13.06.14

**To:** Safer Stockton Partnership

**Re:** Drug Related Offending

### 1. Introduction

- a. Reducing Drug related offending was the fourth key issue in the 2011-2014 Safer Stockton Partnership Community Safety Plan.
- b. The aims and objectives of this priority was to increase the effectiveness of treatment services and offender management in order to reduce the amount of drug related offending in the borough.
- c. This paper is submitted in order to provide a summary of the issues over the past three years which are relevant to reducing drug related offending in order to stimulate discussion at the Safer Stockton Partnership meeting in June 2014.
- d. Drug related offending has been retained within the revised Community Safety Plan 2014-2017 which was implemented in April 2014.
- e. Several of the key measures from 2011-14 have been retained for the forthcoming three years.

### 2. Background

Against the Partnership priority of Reducing drug related offending, the measures outlined by the partnership were:

- Carry out at least six drugs dog operations as directed by the reducing harm group.
- Maintain IOM approach for the most prolific of drug using repeat offenders.
- Increase the number of female drug users accessing and maintaining attendance at support services.
- Use peer mentors to work in drug using communities as part of rehabilitation and support.
- Increase the number of planned exits from treatment services.
- Improve the transition from the young people's service to adult services and thereby reduce drop out.
- Increase housing opportunities for drug users by maintaining a range of support services.
- Increase employment opportunities for drug users by providing peer support to complement job centre support.
- Using the IOM service – reduce drug related repeat offending.
- Encourage the use of narcotics anonymous in the borough

The focus of this paper is upon the issues surrounding the effectiveness of the IOM / Drug Treatment approaches along with an examination into what extent these approaches have had an impact upon reducing acquisitive crime in the borough.

### 3. Key Issues

**(a) Operational activity**

Between April 2013 and March 2014, Officers from within both the Stockton District and the newly formed Community Drug Enforcement Team (CDET) have proactively targeted Organised Crime Groups within the Stockton District.

Acting on intelligence from the Community, this has resulted in numerous arrests, recoveries and convictions:

In June 2013, Stockton Drugs Unit conducted Operation Eros (Test Purchase Operation funded by the Drugs and Alcohol Team (DAAT)) in which 37 persons were arrested for offences relating to Conspiracy to Supply both Heroin and Crack Cocaine throughout the Stockton and Thornaby areas. This resulted in entire drug networks being dismantled, sentences of up to 5 years imprisonment and 45 referrals into Drug Treatment being obtained for the DAAT. Excellent feedback was received from the Community during leaflet drops and positive media coverage received.

In August 2013, Officers from Stockton Drugs Unit and Newtown NPT executed Warrants at two addresses in Wembley Way which resulted in the recovery of ½ kilo of Heroin cut into street level deals and valued at around £28,000. This resulted in one male being charged with Possession with Intent to Supply Heroin. He is currently awaiting trial.

In September 2013, together with Crime stoppers, Officers from Stockton Drugs Unit and Stockton NPT conducted targeted leaflet drops and use of Social media in order to encourage the flow of intelligence regarding drugs supply in the Community with a view to improving knowledge of the Organised Crime Groups. This resulted in a more detailed picture of those involved and an increase in calls to both agencies.

In November 2013, the CDET was formed through the joining of the various Drugs Units within the Force. This has resulted in a larger response to issues raised by the Community and the identification of a number of Vietnamese ran Cannabis Farms identified throughout the District and the targeting of addresses causing anti-social behaviour through drugs activity. This resulted in a number of arrests and recoveries of Heroin, Crack Cocaine and Cannabis.

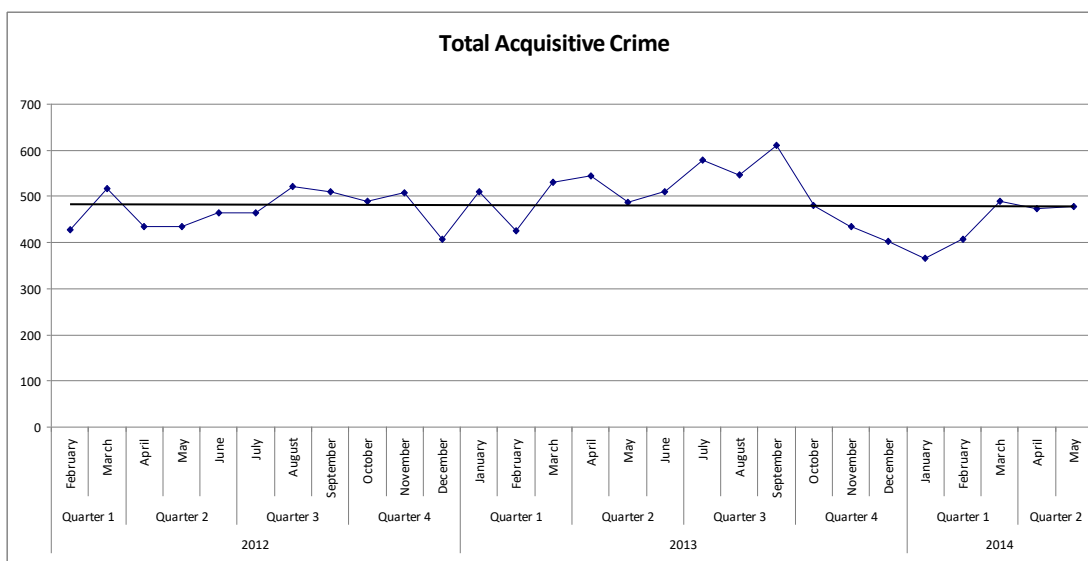
In January 2014, CDET and Thornaby INT Officers executed a Warrant at an address in Havelock Street, resulting in the arrest of four persons for Conspiracy to Supply following recovery of around £1200 of Heroin and Crack Cocaine in the process of being prepared for onward sale. All parties are due to be charged shortly.

February 2014, based on Community intelligence, Officers targeted five addresses in the Thornaby area resulting in seven arrests for Possession with Intent to Supply Heroin, Crack Cocaine and Cannabis, Burglary, Theft and Obstruct Police. The Operation focused on stolen items being sold in exchange for drugs and in turn causing anti-social behaviour.

### (b) Drug use and criminal activity

Whilst it is acknowledged that drug users will be engaged in crime types other than acquisitive crime, the data below focuses upon acquisitive crime in order that linkages between the drug testing data and crime figures can be made.

Acquisitive crime in Stockton has followed a slight reducing trend since February 2012. The graph below shows offences peaked in September 2013 after escalating throughout the Spring and Summer months, and then reduced again over the winter hitting the lowest point in January 2014. This is in line with previous seasonal patterns, therefore it can be expected that increases may occur over the next three to four months.



Whilst there has been mixed success in reducing acquisitive crime (reduced by 21% in last 3 years), the questions of how much these levels are affected by interventions with drug users and how much of the crime is committed by drug users continues to remain unanswered.

From the data collected via police crime recording systems, it is not possible to ascertain the proportion of this crime which is committed by drug abusing offenders.

However, the results obtained from drugs testing conducted after offenders are arrested for trigger offences can offer some insight into these issue.

### (c) Drug Testing Results

The numbers referred to drug treatment services by Arrest referral are falling and the number of those testing positive that are not already known to treatment services is in greater decline.

In 2012/13 there were a total of 1396 trigger offence arrests with a corresponding drug test. Since October 2012 those arrested for acquisitive crime and are currently engaging in drug treatment are no longer tested.

The proportion of trigger offence arrests tested has fallen from 98% up to Oct 2012 to an average of 46% following the changes. As a result of this targeted approach the proportion of positive drug tests has increased from 30% of all tests to 56%.

The next section provides an analysis of drug tests for Stockton Trigger Offences April 2013 to March 2014<sup>1</sup>.

- There were 1971 arrests for trigger offence in 2013/14 a very small drop from the 1975 recorded in 2012/13.
- 37% of these were successfully tested for drugs. This is a significant reduction on the 70% in the previous year due to the implementation of selective drug testing. In addition, the cancellation of the arrest referral contract and changes to drug testing equipment further reduced the number of tests undertaken in the final quarter of 2014. 42% of all trigger offences were tested in the first three quarters and only 21% in the final quarter. An in-house police team has been established to continue the drug testing programme but we are expecting fewer tests between April and July 2014 as this team is set up.

#### Theft

- 55.4% of all arrests leading to a drug test were for theft. (54.8% in 2012/13 and 59% in 2011/12)
- 17.5% testing positive for cocaine (10.5% in 2012/13)
- 20.1% for opiates (11.7 in 2012/13 and 8.7% in 2011/12)
- 14.6% for both opiate and cocaine (7.2% in 2012/13 and 6.2% in 2011/12)
- 46% negative including overturned but this takes into account greater hit rate for the whole of 2013/14. (Comparable figure for 2012/13 was 70.88% negative including overturned results)

#### Burglary

- 15.7% of arrests leading to a drug test were for burglary. (19.3% in 2011/12 and 2012/13)
- 25.8% tested positive for cocaine (14.8% in 2012/13 and 13.5% in 2011/12)
- 10.2% for opiates (4.8% in 2012/13 and 4.2% in 2011/12)
- 10.1% tested positive for both (7.4% in 2012/13 and 3.7% in 2011/12)
- 52.3% of burglary arrests tested negative for cocaine or opiates. (73% in 2012/13 and 78.7% in 2011/12)

#### Key findings

- In 2012/13, 71% of all drug tests result in negative result. As a result of targeted testing this has fallen to 41.7% in 2013/14.
- Cocaine accounts for the largest number of positive tests 42.9% (where recorded, the split between powder and crack was 64.7% powder and 35.3% crack). Cocaine positive tests have fallen from 46% in 12/13 and opiate positives have fallen slightly from 31.5% to 30.8%. Those testing positive for both account for 26.3% of positive tests up from 22% in 2012/13 strongly suggesting that there remains a cohort of chaotic drug using offenders that are resistant to treatment programmes.

#### Multiple Offenders 2012/13

- Of the 1396 arrests, 916 individual offenders were involved
- This equates to 1.52 offences per offender ranging from 2 to 11 offences (2011/12: 1.53 offences per offender ranging from 2 to 19 offences)
- 221 offenders were arrested more than once and were responsible for just over 3 offences each ranging from 2 arrests to 11.
- Of these 80 individuals 36% had only negative tests. (2011/12 = 48.9% neg tests)

<sup>1</sup> Details provided by D Morton, Performance & Data Manager, CESC, SBC

- 15% had a mixture of positive and negative tests including both O & C (2011/12 - 21.4% had a mixture of negative and positive tests)
- 18% had only negative tests or positive for cocaine (2011/12 – 19.3%)
- 12% had occasional opiate positives and negative tests only. (2011/12 - 12%).
- (2.8%). Just under 11% tested positive for either opiates, cocaine or both at every arrest. (2011/12 – 1.5% tested positive on every arrest for Opiates and Cocaine)

#### Multiple Offenders 2013/14

- Of the 817 arrests (down 41.5% on 2012/13), 588 individual offenders were involved
- This equates to 1.4 offences per offender ranging from 2 to 10 offences (2012/13: 1.52 offences per offender ranging from 2 to 11 offences and 2011/12: 1.53 offences per offender ranging from 2 to 19 offences)
- 114 offenders were arrested more than once and were responsible for just over 3 offences each ranging from 2 arrests to 11.
- Of these, 23 individuals 20% had only negative tests. (2011/12 saw 48.9% neg tests and 2012/13 saw 36% with only negative tests but the move to targeted testing makes comparison unsound)
- 30.7% had a mixture of positive and negative tests including both opiate & cocaine (2011/12 - 21.4% had a mixture of negative and positive tests)
- 13% had only negative tests with occasional positive for cocaine use only (2011/12 – 19.3%)
- 33% tested positive for either opiates, cocaine or both at every arrest. (2011/12 – 1.5% tested positive on every arrest for Opiates and Cocaine)

#### (d) People in Treatment

In the last four years numbers in treatment are falling slowly and at the end of 2012/14 there were 142 fewer clients than in 2010/11 with 1224 individuals in treatment. However the proportion of those that are opiate or crack users in treatment fell 4% from 91% Q1 2010/11 to 83% the end of 2012/13. However a fall in the number of non-opiate and crack clients and continues successful exits from treatment of these clients over 2013/14 has reversed this trend. Opiate clients have increased as a proportion of all in treatment to 87.5%.

DAAT street survey results have shown a steady decline in the use of Heroin and Crack Cocaine. Despite this, numbers in treatment for historical heroin use remain by far the largest group (915 clients) with Cocaine (96), falling following a sharp increase in 2012/13 and Crack (34), down 35% from last year. Other opiates and Methadone however are also high with 143 in treatment (up 13.5%). Other drug types in treatment include Amphetamines (25) up 13% this year, Benzodiazepine (16), up 23% and prescription drugs (8). This data covers the period April 2013 to March 2014.

#### (e) Drug use Trends

The information below reflects the findings of Street drug monitoring:

- Heroin use as the primary substance has stabilised after a long period of decline but this appears to be a result of fewer non-opiate clients in treatment rather than a significant change in behaviour in favour of primary heroin use. In support of this, heroin as a secondary substance remains prominent suggesting that poor quality has relegated its use to occasional.
- An increase in steroid use is linked to a broader range of clients accessing treatment.
- Cocaine use rather than crack appears to have increased the proportion reporting either crack or cocaine and this is likely to be a result of increased arrest referrals for cocaine use. Changes to arrest referral are now reducing the number of cocaine users in treatment so this trend is likely to reverse in 2014/15.

- Alcohol as a primary substance has decreased. This is against a trend in formally reported secondary and tertiary use. The cause of this is not clear.
- The sharp increase in reported Subutex use has dropped back to historical levels and is not recorded as a secondary substance this year.
- Benzodiazepine use has increased as a secondary substance and use is in line with reported trends in the availability of prescription drugs.
- As a whole, the number of clients reporting to be using a secondary substance in this survey has decreased. Drugs are now more readily available than in any of the previous surveys. 69% claim to be able to get their drug of choice within fifteen minutes with a further 26% (95% of total) getting them within thirty minutes. Those waiting over an hour have increased from a low of 3% last year to 5% but this is a result of people using the internet to order drugs.
- The average price of drugs appears to have increased compared to last year.
- The combination of comments on legal highs, M-Cat and tablet use account for 51% of all comments. M-Cat in particular appears to be growing in popularity as a heroin substitute with a significant increase in the numbers that claim to use it regularly.

### **Alcohol Usage**

Views have been expressed that young persons are tending to be more involved in abuse of alcohol and cannabis rather than opiates and cocaine. There is some data to support this view, both nationally and locally:

Young Persons Drug profile : NB new recording measures show all substances cited as being used therefore percentages exceed 100%.

(National)

83% in treatment for cannabis

59% Alcohol

11% amphetamines

1% heroin

(Stockton)

85% in treatment for cannabis

65% Alcohol

28% amphetamines

2% heroin (opiate use cited as being used at some point.)

There are no 18-19 year olds in treatment for Heroin or Crack (April 2014)

### **(f) Conclusion**

The provisions in place for drugs testing and referral appear to have provided positive results over the years with long term reductions in acquisitive crime and reductions in the proportions of persons testing positive for Opiates and Cocaine.

The trends observed in the testing data would suggest that the influence of opiates and cocaine upon levels of acquisitive crime is declining. The use of these drugs are still playing their part in driving

acquisitive crime, however, recent data shows that 71% of those arrested for acquisitive crime (and not already in treatment) are not doing so as a result of taking opiates or cocaine.

However there remains a small but prolific group of offenders that are arrested multiple times and regularly test positive for either opiates or cocaine and their treatment history shows only sporadic engagement in treatment services.

The ability to test for other non opiate or cocaine substances could increase the number of referrals into treatment for other substance misuse. However, the evidence that these other substances are the main (or significant) criminogenic risk factor in the individuals offending behaviour is not at all clear.

Cleveland police have cancelled the arrest referral contract in April 2014. This has reduced the number of drug tests and ended the programme of brief interventions and referrals for alcohol related offending. As the in-house team is established we anticipate that drug testing for trigger offences will return to normal in July 2014.

The numbers of known prolific offenders is such that it is possible to identify those that offend without a significant substance misuse problem, and those that probation believe would benefit from having a Drugs Rehab Referral imposed as part of reducing their offending behaviour and target testing accordingly regardless of crime category. The DAAT attempted to introduce a much more co-ordinated approach between drug treatment and probation that should increase the effectiveness of treatment and offender management. However, major changes to probation structures and centralisation of the IOM team have delayed this process change.

There are clear opportunities to redesign the integrated offender management model to closely manage the small but persistent cohort of drug misusing offenders. This would entail better integration of treatment and criminal justice interventions to encourage full engagement in drug treatment and bring targeted enforcement to those that are not persuaded by the current offer of treatment. Current processes are not effectively managing these offenders in a fully co-ordinated multi-agency approach.