

SAFER SUNDERLAND ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to share the progress made by the Safer Sunderland Partnership (SSP) in 2019-20. This added value multi-agency activity is contributing towards achieving the long-term outcome of making Sunderland a city which is, and feels, even safer and more secure, where people can enjoy life without the concerns of being a victim of crime or being harmed.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Safer Sunderland Partnership is statutory. Membership of its Board consists of 6 responsible authorities:

- Sunderland City Council
- Northumbria Police
- Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS)
- National Probation Service (NPS)
- Northumbria Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)

In 2019 the Board invited further membership from GENTOO and the Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit

- 2.2 The Safer Sunderland Partnership is supported by a number of delivery networks or related partnership groups (City, Area Command and Force Level) such as;

- the Sunderland Domestic Violence Partnership (SDVP)
- Local Multi-Agency Problem Solving (LMAPS) and Vulnerability Investigation Problem Solving groups
- The Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit
- Operation Sentinel – standing multi agency operation to tackle Serious and Organised Crime

- 2.3 The Safer Sunderland Partnership had 2 key strategic priorities for 2019-20

- i. **Prevent crime and disorder, reduce re-offending, support community cohesion and maintain high levels of feelings of safety**
- ii. **Protect and support our most vulnerable people and places from harm so that Sunderland can be a safe, dynamic, healthy and vibrant city**

- 2.4 Underneath the 2 priorities, there were 4 key work areas around which its 2019-20 delivery plan was structured:

- (i) WORK AREA 1: Domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG)

(ii) WORK AREA 2: Citywide and local area problem solving with a focus on LMAPS and responses to crime, community safety and cohesion issues

(iii) WORK AREA 3: Newer and emerging threats and harms that impact on safeguarding and feelings of safety such as serious organised crime; sexual exploitation; modern day slavery; trafficking; cyber-enabled crimes; and preventing violent extremism and radicalisation.

(iv) WORK AREA 4: Partnership collaboration which covers both statutory duties and strengthening partnership working

2.5 Section 3 of this annual report provides a summary of some of the progress made against key improvements actions in the Safer Sunderland Delivery Plan 2019-20.

2.6 Crime data – overall total crime in Sunderland reduced by 5% in 2019/20, a reduction of 1633 recorded offences and performance followed the Forcewide trend across key offences. We know that COVID lockdown did reduce recorded offences however only potentially impacted performance for around a week from 23rd March 2020 when the Prime Minister asked the public to stay at home.

Sunderland	2019-20	2018-19	Change compared to 2018/19 average	
Total crime	31,265	32,898	-1,633	- 5%
Violence against the person	9,827	9,897	- 70	- 1%
Violence against the person - With injury	2,869	2,563	+ 306	+ 12%
Most serious violence against the person	183	183	+ 0	+ 0%
Less serious violence against the person	2,686	2,380	+ 306	+ 13%
Violence against the person - Without injury	6,958	7,334	- 376	- 5%
Robbery	184	141	+ 43	+ 30%
Sexual offences	800	934	- 134	- 14%
Vehicle crime	1,800	1,876	- 76	- 4%
Vehicle interference	197	170	+ 27	+ 16%
TFMV	1,153	1,309	- 156	- 12%
TWOC	450	397	+ 53	+ 13%
Criminal damage	5,295	5,274	+ 21	+ 0%
Burglary	1,823	1,852	- 29	- 2%
Burglary dwelling	1,309	1,243	+ 66	+ 5%
Burglary OTD	514	609	- 95	- 16%
Theft and handling	6,340	6,619	- 279	- 4%
Shoplifting	2,797	2,833	- 36	- 1%
Theft from the person	196	151	+ 45	+ 30%
Theft of a pedal cycle	259	335	- 76	- 23%
Other theft and handling	3,088	3,300	- 212	- 6%
Drug crime	534	511	+ 23	+ 5%
Fraud and forgery	36	73	- 37	- 51%
Public disorder	4,232	5,309	-1,077	- 20%
Miscellaneous crime	394	412	- 18	- 4%
Possessions of weapons	267	305	- 38	- 12%

3.0 Summary of Achievements Against Improvement Actions in 2019-20

- 3.1 A domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG) needs assessment was completed in May 2019. It will be used to inform a joint VAWG commissioning plan in 2020-21.
- 3.2 In December 2019, the Council's Cabinet approved the extension of the core domestic abuse provision from Wearside Women in Need, to March 2021. Provision for domestic abuse victims with complex needs was delivered through a partnership approach and included:
- Complex needs assertive outreach workers from WWiN and Changing Lives
 - A crash pad to provide emergency accommodation
 - The Sanctum scheme to provide supported dispersed accommodation for those victims for whom a refuge was not a suitable option. Changing Lives secured 14 units of accommodation, primarily from Gentoo but also other social landlords
 - The Northumbria-wide consortium (6 local authorities and domestic abuse providers) successfully bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for funding to continue this complex needs provision enabling it to continue in 2020-21.
- 3.3 The CCG has provided grant funding to Wearside Women in Need to supplement their national homelessness grant to help develop a therapeutic recovery centre for women with high, multiple needs for whom current provision is often inaccessible and/or ineffective. In 2019-20 all of the development work took place for the project. It involves an intensive programme of structured engagement alongside therapeutic work offered on a 121 and group work basis.
- 3.4 A procurement framework has been developed to provide specialist support to Black and minoritized women including outreach/drop-in, training, and accredited groupwork. Work was also done to set up a sanctuary scheme (home security and wrap-around support) to offer victims an option to stay in their own homes where it is safe to do so. This work will now go live in 2020-21 (delayed due to Covid-19).
- 3.5 Sunderland is a national Change That Lasts pilot area and to date 80 early help staff have been trained to become **trusted professionals**. Multi-agency staff trained in the accredited domestic abuse practitioner standard reported significant improvements in their competencies and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner delivered a series of workplace Domestic Abuse champions training throughout 2019-2020. Sunderland currently has 164 champions across 34 agencies.
- 3.6 A Domestic Homicide Review in relation to 'Carol' was published at <https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/12189/Domestic-homicide-reviews>. Two further statutory homicide reviews were completed and submitted to the Home Office in 2019-20 and will be considered by the Home Office Quality Assurance Panel in 2020.
- 3.7 Operation Encompass: The Next Steps was delivered by the project's 12 school safeguarding liaison officers in 2019-20 (Funded by the Home Office). In Sunderland, 111 of the 116 schools engaged across key stages 1-4, where it delivered 576 PHSE sessions on healthy relationships to 13,736 children. From these sessions there were 45 disclosures / advice or referrals (18 were domestic abuse-related). There were also 236 drop-in sessions held with 86 schools and of those, 19 were given

advice, 18 made a disclosure (14 of which were domestic abuse). The project has received further Home Office funding to continue in 2020-21.

- 3.8 The Domestic Abuse Health Advocate pilot trained clinicians and other surgery staff in 10 GP practices in Sunderland. In 2019-20: GPs in the pilot practices routinely enquired about domestic abuse with 3710 female patients. Of these, 43 felt able to disclose current abuse, and 44 disclosed historical experiences of abuse, many of which are likely to have ongoing impacts on their health and well-being. There is a legacy of 26 active champions across the 10 GP practices and the project has received continuation funding from the CCG for a further 12 months.
- 3.9 The early help offer for those living with domestic abuse increased significantly in 2019-20 with new services commissioned around:
- accredited group work options for children and adult survivors.
 - A trauma informed counselling and therapeutic service for children.
 - Increased capacity within the perpetrator behaviour change programme to take early help referrals leading to 48 additional referrals including 7 Self Referrals.
- 3.10 The perpetrator behaviour change programme continued in 2019-20 with 16 successfully completing the rolling programme and 36 men have developed enhanced motivation to change their behaviour. 36 female partners of the men on the programme were supported by Impact Family Services and assessed as having reduced risk and report feeling safer. 17 men were assessed as having reduced risk and the need for child protection interventions reduced. Barnardo's delivered the Pause project in Sunderland 2018-20, commissioned by Together for Children with the aim of providing support to women with complex needs and inter-linking need who have had multiple children removed from their care.
- 3.11 Northumbria Police led on the **Domestic Abuse Whole Systems Approach** project which concluded in March 2020 and was funded through the Home Office. Some of the interventions delivered included:
- A coercive control training programme
 - Peak time partnership DVSA (domestic violence support and assistance) response
 - Domestic Abuse & Criminal Justice liaison workers
 - Family Proceedings & domestic abuse self-help material and on-line resources for DA victims going through family proceedings
 - Child & family court liaison workers
 - MATAC (multi-agency tasking and coordination) across the region to identify and target the most harmful and serial domestic abuse perpetrators. This has seen a 65% reduction in re-offending in relation to domestic abuse related offences and a 61% reduction in re-offending of all offence types.
- 4.0 Citywide and local area problem solving with a focus on LMAPS and responses to crime, community safety and cohesion issues**
- 4.1 **Neighbourhood Enforcement** – a significant development for partnership working in late 2019 was the creation of a new Council Neighbourhood Enforcement Team. This brought together the existing anti-social behaviour team and environmental enforcement teams and capacity was also increased. Creation of the team provides opportunity for joint work with partners and communities at street and neighbourhood level and is leading a frontline response in the Community Resilience approach. The team was developed following the “Let’s Talk” consultation exercise which was the largest engagement exercise ever carried out in the City. Building on the 12 streets Hendon and Southwick.

- 4.2 The “12 streets” initiative focussed enforcement and early intervention activity in 2 pilot areas of the City, Southwick and Hendon with significant results through short term focussed activity. Community engagement was a key part of the initiative and agency action in the community was supported by local consultation and feedback throughout the initiative which ran between 28th May until 31st August 2019.
- 4.3 The section below outlines a snapshot of activity from the Southwick pilot for Police, Fire and Rescue, Council and GENTOO for the duration of the pilot. (Detailed reports on the 2 pilot sites are available upon request from the Community Resilience Service in Neighbourhoods Directorate)

Executed 2 warrants.
Carried out 33 additional foot patrols and received and actioned increased levels of intelligence.
Joint working between Police, Gentoo and Council to issue Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, Community Protection Warnings and Notices.
Attendance at Monkwearmouth School to discuss youth issues and links with Southwick Primary established.
48 home fire safety checks completed. 8 Business Premises Fire Safety Audits Carried out. 69 Anti-Social Behaviour tours carried out by Fire and Rescue.
1 x formal warning for passing waste to unlicensed carrier
1 Fixed penalty notice of £350.00 issued for unauthorised deposit of waste.
1 Formal ‘waste duty of care’ Warning issued to householder for transferring waste to an unknown/unlicensed carrier who subsequently Fly-Tipped waste.
1 Clearance/Investigation charge £114 issued to householder
2 warning letters and 2 section 46 notices for incorrect presentation of waste.
2 Fixed penalty notices for £150.00 for placing single refuse bags out in the street, not in a bin and not on a bin day.
Deep clean of area on 28 th May 2019 and 22 additional litter picks.
28 additional street cleansing visits and road sweeps and 14 additional compact sweeps.
Inspected 2 two houses in multiple occupation.
37 properties visited in relation to waste/untidy gardens, informal warnings given which has resulted in items being removed/relevant action taken.
24 letters sent to the owners and tenants of the 12 properties where the Stock Condition identifies a potential hazard.
1 tenancy warning notice issued for garden condition/rubbish and 3 housing inspections carried out
1 tenancy terminated and warnings for garden issues and 3 joint ASB interviews
Daily monitoring checks on key streets
Two Community Protection Warning’s, 1 Community Protection Notice and 1 Acceptable Behaviour Agreement served in partnership with Police.
Joint visit carried out to landlord of HMO.
Letter sent to landlords of HMO’s arranging further meeting regarding disorder at properties

The issues in the area have led to development of a longer term project focussing on wider health, crime and social outcomes and that project known as Southwick Altogether Raising Aspirations (SARA) and that will be launched in 2020.

- 4.4 The Sulgrave Neighbourhood Project continues to operate though in 2019/20 on reduced footprint as work is mainstreamed into wider Washington area service delivery.
- 4.5 The Local Multi Agency Problem Solving Meetings or LMAPS continued to meet throughout 2019/20.
- 4.6 In addition in 2019 Police formed VIP (**Vulnerability/Investigation/Problem Solving**) meetings as a response to vulnerability – this multi-agency meeting works with a number of key partners around a small caseload of offenders and victims of concern who may not meet thresholds or be appropriate for existing safeguarding or Multi Agency public Protection arrangements. The meetings are proving key as we start to consider the criminal exploitation concerns that have emerged such as County Lines drug activity and drug debt bondage issues with a small number of vulnerable young people and adults.
- 4.7 Operation gryphon is the standing staged response to youth anti-social behaviour. During 2019/20 there were 522 recorded referrals across Sunderland;
- 37 referrals came from Sunderland Central
44 referrals came from Sunderland East
56 referrals came from Sunderland West
134 referrals came from Sunderland North
169 referrals came from Washington
82 referrals came from Houghton & Hetton
- 4.8 **COHESION** - The Partnership has continued to monitor cohesion threats which did not see any local significant protest activity in 2019/20 though local online activity and some stickering with anti-immigration messages across the city was featured. Brexit and the focus on environmental issues dominated the national protest agenda. In September 2019 a Sunderland man was jailed for 2 years and 3 months at his retrial for racial incitement during the 2017/18 protests in the City.
- 4.9 The Council and Northumbria Police continued to share its experience and learning from right wing cohesion challenges and a briefing session for elected members on was held in February 2020. In addition a similar session was held for over 70 local government and police delegates from across the north of England in the Council Chamber. The focus in Parliament on BREXIT and General Election in 2019 delayed much expected legislation and policy development such as the awaited Counter Extremism strategy from the Home Office. Sunderland's response to protests between 2016 and 2018 featured as a good practice case study in the Independent Counter Extremism Commissioners report "Challenging hateful Extremism" published in October 2019. The report is available at;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/challenging-hateful-extremism>
- 5.0 Newer and emerging threats and harms that impact on safeguarding and feelings of safety**
- 5.1 The Government 'Serious and Organised Crime Strategy' requires that a range of agencies work to disrupt Serious and Organised Crime (SOC). In Northumbria this is

facilitated by Operation SENTINEL. This brings a range of government agencies and local partners together on a regular basis. This includes work alongside the North East Regional Specialist Operations Unit and other agencies including the City Council, Fire and Rescue, Environment Agency, Probation Service, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority and the National Crime Agency (NCA) to utilise their skills and expertise. Notable actions across Northumbria and in Sunderland over the last 12 months have involved:

- Operations by the National Crime Agency, the regional Police forces joint initiative covering Northumbria, Durham and Cleveland police forces (i.e. NERSOU) and Northumbria Police which have led to significant custodial sentences being made by the Courts in relation to individuals based in Sunderland involved in drug supply and firearms offences.
- This work will continue to be supported by the Council and Safer Sunderland partners as a key priority as organised crime drives many locality crime and disorder issues. Whilst we have limited emerging evidence of County Lines drug and violence activity across the North East compared to many other areas of the UK, this remains a priority area for action to prevent it becoming established in the City.

- 5.2 The Partnership has continued to support the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) throughout 2019-20 who lead on tackling child sexual and criminal exploitation. This remains a key issue for the UK, a national policing priority, and throughout 2019/20 a continuing number of large historical abuse and "grooming gang" trials have been widely reported across the country. The **Missing, Slavery, Exploited and Trafficked Operational Group Meeting (MSET)** operational group considers cases of risk on a monthly basis. Community safety leads attend these meetings to support development both strategically and operationally including facilitating wider Council service disruption activity where required. This is in addition to providing and linking intelligence to locality risk areas identified through LMAPS Groups. Geographically there are no "hotspots", rather areas of vulnerability where young people gather such as retail, fast food and leisure outlets.
- 5.3 Following the adoption of a Modern Slavery Policy by the council agency awareness is on-going and work will continue in 2020/21.
- 5.4 Work has continued around the **PREVENT** agenda involving a wide range of partners across Sunderland and the wider Northumbria area during 2019-20. Staff training has continued to be progressed across agencies to help staff spot signs of radicalisation and how to respond to it. During 2019, more emphasis was placed on the Northumbria Prevent Coordination Group which is now well attended by a wider range of partners. For example, this has established a unified approach to Prevent referrals and developed an approach where Prevent leads can come together to discuss core business and disseminate best practice across all sectors. Briefing documents have been developed by Special Branch and disseminated to Prevent partners to help raise awareness with relevant staff of specific threats, including Far Right Extremism and Islamic Extremism.
- 5.5 Nationally the threat level remains at SUBSTANTIAL; an attack is likely. This indicates that an attack can happen at any time without warning. The Primary threat of terrorism in the UK emanates from Daesh (ISIL/ISIS) though far right extremist attacks in other parts of the world have been evidenced. Nationally 25 attack plots have been thwarted by Counter Terrorism policing and UK intelligence partners since 2017. Since November 2019 there has been 5 attacks attributed to individuals who

acted alone. On line radicalisation of vulnerable individuals remains a key threat in the UK and north east and underlines the importance of the PREVENT programme to support vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of radicalisation before they commit offences.

5.6 The Home Office published a National Prevent toolkit that has enabled partners in Sunderland to carry out an effective self-assessment through a benchmarking exercise. This, together with the Counter Terrorism Local Profile has helped to identify key improvement actions for inclusion in the city's Prevent Action Plan for 2020-21.

5.7 Sunderland has also continued to support the development of the Northumbria-wide CONTEST Board. This multi-agency group oversees at Chief Officer level, agency responses to delivery of the national counter terrorism strategy (CONTEST). One element of CONTEST is the Prevent agenda. The other elements it oversees are: Protect; Prepare; and Pursue. It is proposed to re-establish a Sunderland CONTEST Board in 2020/21.

5.8 A Home Office review of PREVENT was delayed in 2019 however is expected in 2020 as are new guidelines for local management of cases.

6.0 Partnership collaboration which covers both statutory duties and strengthening partnership working

6.1 The Partnership has continued to meet its core statutory duties around its strategic board; the annual partnership strategic intelligence assessment (PSIA); the partnership (delivery) plan; performance management; and information sharing. The Safer Sunderland written partnership agreement in place. The Partnership has a duty to cooperate with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

6.2 Strong links have been developed with the Violence Reduction Unit for Northumbria which was established in 2019 by the Home Office and is delivered through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Early impact of the Unit in its first year has been funding for a range of Sunderland organisations involved in diversionary work, creation of a Violence profile for Northumbria supported by a County Lines threat assessment for Sunderland. The Unit is preparing its response strategy and longer-term approaches to tackle serious violence across Northumbria.

6.3 Routine horizon scanning work continues and partners are regularly briefed around any issues that may impact on community safety in Sunderland covering: policy, economic-social issues, technological developments, environmental issues, legislation, and organisational changes.

7.0 The impact this has had on the Safer Sunderland priorities and the partnership improvement / collaboration work area

7.1 The Safer Sunderland Partnership responds to its statutory duties and responsibilities to make Sunderland a safer city. The strategic partnership intelligence assessment (PSIA), delivery plan was completed in February 2020. There is intelligence-led decision-making and identification of strategic priorities through a comprehensive strategic assessment. The Assessment indicated that priorities and work areas remained relevant however emphasis on serious violence, serious and organised crime, criminal exploitation and drug availability should be areas for further consideration in 2020/21.

7.2 Briefings are routinely produced on new policy and legislation and the potential impact to partners and on the City;

- The Safer Communities Survey is carried out quarterly to monitor residents feelings of safety and perceptions of crime and disorder;
- The Council's Police and Crime Panel members are supported in their scrutiny role
- There is stronger, more efficient and effective partnership working to achieve shared outcomes, economies and scale, added value, greater collaboration and reduced duplication e.g. through the cross partnership Domestic Abuse Strategic Projects Group and through the cross-boundary working on Prevent, and serious organised crime.

8.0 Residents' Views

8.1 The table below summarises the changes in resident's perceptions of community safety in Sunderland over the last four years and whilst feelings of safety remain high, there have been some deterioration in perceptions and crime and anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months. The significant shift and uplift in Council and partnership neighbourhood environmental enforcement seems to be shifting perception about litter and rubbish. The perceptions of crime rising do not follow the reductions in offences covered earlier in the report, though we do know that there is a perception lag in survey results and will closely monitor the quarterly data and Partnership focus on anti-social behaviour in particular in 2020/21.

Safer communities survey measure: Sunderland	2018-19	2019/20
% of residents who feel safe living in their local area	96%	96%
% of residents thought anti-social behaviour was a fairly or very big problem in their local area	20%	25%
% of residents thought crime was a fairly or very big problem in their local area	12%	18%
% percentage of residents identifying at least one problem in their local neighbourhood stood	40% (319 out of 788 residents surveyed)	38% (215 out of 678 residents surveyed)
The top 3 community safety problems raised by residents	1. litter or rubbish lying around; 2. young people being rowdy or a nuisance; 3. Mini-motos/ Scramblers/Off-road motorbikes	1. young people being rowdy or a nuisance 2. Mini-motos/ Scramblers/Off-road motorbikes 3. litter or rubbish lying around

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1. The Partnership has maintained its strong and effective multi-agency working in a landscape where all community safety partners work within the context of continued budget pressures and change.
- 9.2 Nationally and locally the shift in focus on community safety issues away from traditional crimes (e.g. acquisitive crimes) towards exploitation of vulnerable people has continued and this is evident across the whole of the Northumbria Area. This has included work to tackle serious organised crime, sexual exploitation, modern

slavery, cyber enabled crimes, increased reporting of domestic and sexual abuse, other forms of violence against women and girls, and hate crime.

- 9.3 The partnership continues to make best use of multi-agency data and intelligence sharing in order to understand need and risk and ensure responses are multi-agency in their outlook. Good multi-agency problem solving is crucial in this and will continue as the bedrock of the Partnership's work.
- 9.4 Community safety performance across perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour have started to deteriorate slightly in 2019-20 but there are still high levels of feelings of safety being maintained. These perceptions will need to be monitored closely. Addressing community safety issues will also remain a key challenge and this is best addressed through the partnership approach that stays deeply rooted in problem solving.
- 9.5 The annual Safer Sunderland Partnership strategic intelligence assessment (which informs the strategic priorities for the year ahead) has indicated that the current priorities and work areas in 2019-20 still remain relevant for 2020-21 and a delivery plan is currently being drafted for consideration by the Safer Sunderland Board though has been subject to some delays due to the impact of the Covid situation.
- 9.6 The **Safer Sunderland Partnership webpages** had a full refresh in December 2019 www.sunderland.gov.uk/safersunderland

10. Recommendation

- 10.1 The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee are asked to note the key multi-agency improvement activity and achievements contained in the annual report and agree to accept the next annual report in July 2021.

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