



STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD 4th March 2014

ACC Crime Portfolio

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Strategic Policing and Crime Board with an overview ACC Crime Portfolio for West Midlands Police.

BACKGROUND

2. It was agreed at the Strategic Police and Crime Board in October 2013, that this report should focus on:
 - Tackling Gangs and Organised Crime; and
 - Tackling Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking

TACKLING GANGS AND ORGANISED CRIME

3. Within the Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID) there are four areas of business that tackle gangs and organised crime, led by Detective Superintendent John Denley. These are the Serious and Organised Crime Unit (SOCU), the Economic Crime Unit (ECU), the Gangs Task Force (GTF) and the Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) teams.
4. Details of the make of up and functionality of these teams were provided to the October 2013 Strategic Policing and Crime Board.

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

5. The WMP approach to tackling gangs and organised crime, led by Detective Superintendent John Denley, is currently being reviewed in light of the new National Serious and Organised Crime Strategy.
6. This provides an opportunity to review our organisational effectiveness in relation to the Policing and Crime Plan, the Strategic Policing Requirement and the Comprehensive Spending Review.

7. The aim is to build on the strong foundations of the department to develop a more holistic approach to tackling the cause and consequences of gang activity and organised crime based on the “four P’s” of the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy:
 - PURSUE: Prosecuting and disrupting serious and organised crime
 - PREVENT: Preventing people from engaging in serious and organised crime
 - PROTECT: Increasing protection against serious and organised crime
 - PREPARE: Reducing the impact of serious and organised crime
8. The Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) program has defined the remit and structure of SOCU and ECU to appropriately meet the needs of the above requirements. Other investigative teams are currently being reviewed under the Service Transformation program.
9. The Service Transformation program has identified the need to create and Emerging Trends Team (ETT) which will be amalgamated with the GTF to improve the organisational response to new and growing threats posed by organised crime.
10. The ETT aim is to focus on local to global criminality by:
 - targeting emerging threats as identified by Force Intelligence,
 - targeting serious and organised crime trends crossing LPU boundaries that require additional support,
 - supporting the management of investigations that present the greatest threat and risk and have been assessed as a priority, and
 - supporting investigations to locate vulnerable missing persons or dangerous offenders
11. The workload of the ETT will be determined through Force tasking processes.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

12. Firearms:
 - Since the summer disorder of 2011 there has been a significant reduction in firearms offences. Intelligence suggests that following the high profile and lengthy firearm convictions under Op Barton, there is now an increased fear of detection for firearm possession and use amongst offenders. As a result, offenders are utilising different means to store their weapons to make it harder for police to link firearms to offenders
 - Robbery and protection is driving demand for firearms. Whilst there continues to be significant reductions in firearm offences, robbery still accounts for the greatest volume, with the firearm used as a threat as opposed to being discharged

13. Drugs: Recent media reporting has highlighted the use and danger of Khat and other new psychoactive substances (NPS), commonly referred to as legal highs. Draft legislation has been produced to classify Khat as a controlled substance and much debate continues regarding the most appropriate legal framework for minimising the risk associated with NPS.
14. Organised Crime: The new serious and organised crime strategy and the WMP investigation restructure will ensure that we maximise our contribution to the Police and Crime Plan by reducing crime and better protecting people from harm. The challenge will be to achieve this while also meeting our responsibility to deliver better value for money and meeting our budgetary requirements.
15. Separate Force Strategies and Priority Plans are being developed for firearms, drugs and organised crime to ensure that the above risks are effectively mitigated. Each strategy is led by a Detective Superintendent from the FCID, who is responsible for developing and implementing short, medium and long term tactics to tackle each of the threats.
16. The force strategies for each of the above threats have been designed and quality assured to ensure that they meet all of the objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan.

KEY PROJECTS

17. WMP recognises that there are considerable complexities and threat emanating from serious, organised and complex crime and that it is prudent to challenge and review our existing processes on an ongoing basis. Bespoke command structures and processes are required to effectively coordinate the contributions of specialist departments, LPU's and partners to tackle the ongoing threats posed.
18. Operation Astana is a bespoke piece of work being undertaken in the Coventry area with the following objectives:
 - Our top priority is to meet our objectives under Article 2 of the Human Rights Act (The Right to Life)
 - The intention is to maintain and build confidence with WMP and the wider criminal justice system.
 - We will do this by bringing offenders to justice
 - We will build alliances with partners and stakeholders and maximise our use of civil interventions
 - Using the "4 P" model of Prepare, Pursue, Prevent and Protect we will create both long and short term strategies aimed at tackling organised crime within Coventry
19. A more detailed update regarding Operation Astana can be provided in the closed session.

RECENT SUCCESSES

20. Operation Kalko – A 53 year old Prison Officer was convicted of five counts of misconduct in a public office and supplying cannabis to prisoners. She is currently awaiting an anticipated custodial sentence.
21. An investigation was launched into a Coventry OCG named “P1” who were suspected of trafficking cocaine. This involved officers monitoring a lorry travelling from Holland via the Channel Tunnel into the UK and then into the Midlands. The cocaine was brought into the UK on eight separate occasions from the Netherlands by a Lithuanian lorry driver over a period of 14 weeks last year. Following an lengthy trial and Proceeds of Crime application, the leader of the OCG, Truman Jones was convicted of importation and supply of class A drugs. He was sentenced to 17 years imprisonment and has been ordered to pay back £50,000 or face more time in jail. Other key gang members were also convicted and have been ordered to payback over £133,000.
22. Operation Grey – An operation targeting the head of an international OCG importing heroin into Birmingham. The investigation resulted in the recovery of over 40 kilos of heroin worth £3.5 million and the seizure of over £500,000 in cash. In total, twenty offenders were jailed for over 200 years with the head himself being sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. The OCG now face the risk of further terms of imprisonment under the Proceeds of Crime Act legislation unless they pay back their criminal benefit, likely to be in excess of £1,000,000.
23. All of the above examples demonstrate the daily business of FCID working in partnership with LPUs and other departments and agencies to tackle the harm caused by gangs and organised crime groups.

DRUGS STRATEGY

24. A WMP drug strategy has been prepared and compliments the National Drugs Strategy.
25. On 4th March a partnership launch event will take place involving LPUs, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), West Midlands Office of Policing and Crime (WMOPC), statutory and voluntary agencies. The day will involve inputs from a variety of speakers looking at different aspects of drugs. There will be an input on the forensic strategy for Cannabis, Op No Deal, Drugs Intervention Programme, Substance Misuse Referral Team, Legal Highs, Offender Management, Cannabis Disposal Team, The Princes Trust and Changes UK. In addition agencies have been invited to run stalls to advertise the services they can provide around drug misuse. The event will be supported by publicity to launch the strategy internally and externally under the project name of Themis.
26. The Strategy reflects the national strategy and seeks to address 3 key areas:
 - Reducing Demand
 - Restricting Supply and
 - Building Recovery

27. To achieve this, the strategy is split in to four key areas:
- Prevention
 - Intelligence
 - Enforcement and
 - Reassurance
28. The strategy will support the Police and Crime plan by providing a local and force approach to tackling drug supply and use, working with communities and agencies to create stronger partnerships. Restricting supply and demand will reduce crime and offending as well as protect people from harm.
29. The strategy includes training for our staff as well as raising awareness within schools and communities, supporting the forces commitment to social responsibility and delivering better value for money.

TACKLING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

30. Detective Superintendent Bacon became the WMP lead for Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking in 2013.
31. The migration of the Force lead for Human Trafficking to the Public Protection Department has improved the understanding of the interdependencies between these areas of serious criminality.
32. WMP has continued to develop the strategic approach of the organisation in working with partners and improving the service provided to victims and potential victims of these crimes. An example of this being Operation Sentinel which in November 2013 focused on the issue of Human Trafficking and highlighted the responsibilities of 'First Responders' (including Police) to support victims through the National Referral Mechanism and of the types of trafficking and effect on victims. A live 'Twitter-feed' and supporting media campaign received positive feedback.
33. The Force has seen an increase in victims for the crimes that fall into these categories and is providing more comprehensive support and guidance to the police teams who are investigating these cases. This being achieved through the completion of mandatory on-line training, additional Operation Sentinel training for all front-line supervisors and through the provision of a quick reference guide for officers.
34. All cases of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) are managed and investigated by specialist teams within the Public Protection Department (PPD), with the initial response being provided by local policing response teams in accordance with the College of Policing Guidance.
35. Once a victim has been identified and safeguarded the specialist investigation teams will take over the victim care and support role, carrying out victim interviews and complete the criminal investigation.

36. The policing response within WMP to reports and allegations of crimes that arise from incidents related to people smuggling, human trafficking, fraud related to immigration and within the relatively new category of 'modern slavery' is provided from the following departments and policing units:

- **Initial response:** LPU Response or Neighbourhood Teams
- **Victim support:** LPU Response or Specially Trained Officer (STO) if the reported crime involves an allegation of sexual assault
- **Victim account:** LPU Response or specialist department, dependent upon the nature of the investigation
- **Criminal investigation:** The responsibility for leading investigations of this nature currently sits within the following teams:
 - Child Trafficking (with or without sexual exploitation): Child Abuse Teams, PPD
 - Human Trafficking for sexual exploitation: Adult Abuse Teams, PPD
 - Human Trafficking or slavery/servitude related offences if the victim meets the criteria of a vulnerable adult (mental capacity): Vulnerable Adult Team, PPD

37. Please refer to the "Review of PPU Update" paper that has been submitted to the March 2014 Board for an overview of how the PPD will operate following the Service Transformation programme.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

38. Under the Service Transformation programme, the resources dedicated to dealing with CSE will be increased from six specialist detectives to a team of fifteen investigators and local co-ordinators.

39. This team will work with partners to identify and support victims, develop intelligence relating to offenders and work to bring offenders to justice.

40. Mr Stephen Rimmer has recently been appointed as the regions strategic leader on action against the sexual exploitation of children and other vulnerable people. The position involves developing joint working to tackle CSE by the seven local authorities that make up the West Midlands Area, WMP, the Criminal Justice System and the voluntary sector.

41. Mr Rimmer is supportive of the development of the regional strategic partnership (West Midlands Police and Local Authorities) approach to CSE as part of Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People (PVVP). A key element of this is linked to the development of the common standards for CSE.

42. Each of the seven Local Safeguarding Children's boards (LSCB) has a defined structure for CSE. Each Board has a Strategic CSE Sub-group with the Chair of each sitting on the respective LSCB. This structure ensures that there is multi-agency 'buy-in' and accountability for the effectiveness of safeguarding for those at risk of CSE.
43. The delivery of these groups is becoming more effective and reflects the additional focus and direction that is being given to the issue by all partners and LSCB Chairs. There is still a lot of work to do, but there has been significant progress.
44. The Multi-Agency Strategic CSE Working Group (Chair by Mr John Polykranakis, Chief Executive of Dudley Council) has commissioned a set of common standards that will be the basis for the approach to CSE across the West Midlands area. This work is currently ongoing with the group reporting to Mr Rimmer's PVVP Board.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

45. The key risks and concerns around CSE is that the implementation of truly effective operating model for identifying victims, potential victims, and offenders is not fully in place. There has been and continues to be a significant amount of work and drive across all of the multi-agency partners and voluntary/3rd sector organisations to mitigate the risk through the establishment of improved processes and service delivery which are outlined above.
46. In addition, there are current investigations within the Force area that involve extremely serious crimes against young people; these cases will come to court in the future and will undoubtedly receive wide ranging public attention.
47. The improved response to CSE supports the following elements of the Police and Crime Plan:

- Creating Stronger Partnerships – Child Abuse can only be successfully tackled through effective partnerships which improve outcomes for children. The current focus across all partnerships and the addition of Mr Rimmer's 'PVVP' strategy will ensure this succeeds. In addition, the approach to information sharing and the fundamental question of what is then done with information that is shared will also be addressed

The Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) strategy "See me, Hear me" will be adopted. A significant focus of this is the management and rehabilitation of offenders. Partners are committed to developing co-located multi-agency teams that will also work together to tackle offenders

- Reduce Crime and Offending – It is essential that victim's exploitation, domestic crimes, hate crimes, and others where victims are targeted because of their vulnerability are encouraged to come forward. The current internal WMP campaign, "listen to the voice of the child", underlines this and builds on the excellent focus that Operation Sentinel achieved

- Better protecting people from harm – WMP has already identified and tackled a number of OCGs involved in CSE and through vigorous enforcement, taken steps to dismantle them. Reducing harm to vulnerable victims is at the heart of policing and has been prioritised within the Service Transformation work around investigation

48. Other future risks undoubtedly lie in the potential scale of the problem as victims come forward and the impact that this may have on our ability to deliver a service.

49. In addition, there is the continuing prospect of historic cases coming to light, which although is extremely positive for victims and bringing offenders to justice, may also highlight (as has been experienced elsewhere in the country) that safeguarding practices have not always recognised such issues, often to the detriment of vulnerable victims.

TACKLING HUMAN TRAFFICKING (MODERN SLAVERY)

50. Detective Superintendent Bacon has appointed a co-ordinator, Detective Inspector James Foy, to support the development of partnership work and engagement with other law enforcement agencies. Det Supt Bacon will also assume leadership responsibility for Prostitution from April 2014 to ensure that the business areas are fully aligned.

51. A review of the existing strategy and guidance has commenced alongside the development of the Modern Slavery legislation and the College of Policing guidance. The strategy will require an ongoing systematic overhaul to reflect nationally recognised good practice. This is therefore work in progress which will continue to evolve.

52. Offences that fall within the current legislative framework for Human Trafficking and within Modern Slavery will be investigated by specialist teams within FCID and PPD. Any offences involving elements of sexual exploitation will continue to be managed by the PPD.

53. To ensure that WMP is engaged both Regionally and Nationally, regular meetings are held with the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC), which now forms part of the National Crime Agency (NCA) and is involved in further developing the regional response with colleagues from partner forces and national agencies.

54. WMP are also a member of the West Midlands Regional Anti-Trafficking Network. This forum meets monthly and serves the vital purpose of bringing together statutory, non-governmental and voluntary/charitable organisations who are engaged in supporting victims of crimes and tackling offenders.

55. The forum is independently chaired and provides partners with the opportunity to constructively challenge and collectively work together to identify problems and emerging issues.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

56. The key risks and concerns within Human Trafficking (and as it will be categorised in forthcoming legislation, Modern Slavery) is considered to be around managing the police, Social Care, National Crime Agency, and voluntary/3rd sector organisations collaborative working at a tactical level. We have seen recent examples of good work to rescue victims, but with cases likely to increase there is a need to develop a more effective multi-agency approach that reflects that as seen in respect of CSE.
57. The role of Local Adult Safeguarding Boards in relation to victims of Human Trafficking must be clarified and developed. There are currently issues around people who come forward but fall short of being defined as victims of 'trafficking' but still require support. There is no statutory support for such people and this is an issue that requires consideration and action.
58. The role of the National Crime Agency in 'taking the issue' to the countries of origin of those most likely to be victims is essential. If this is not achieved then the risk is that more and more victims will be found in the UK and agencies will continue to deal with the consequences, without having the option of influencing prevention.
59. The improved response to Human Trafficking (Modern Slavery) will support the following elements of the Police and Crime Plan:
 - Creating Stronger Partnerships – This issue must be tackled through effective partnerships which improve outcomes for victims
 - Reduce Crime and Offending – It is essential that victims of crimes of exploitation, domestic crimes, hate crimes, and others where victims are targeted because of their vulnerability are encouraged to come forward. Operation Sentinel highlighted the issues really well
 - Better protecting people from harm – Currently one potential OCG has been identified in the West Midlands and steps are being taken to deal with this group

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS SUMMIT (CSE AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING)

60. From a Police perspective, the summit was extremely effective in bringing together key partners, community members and voluntary/3rd sector organisations to outline the issues.
61. The development of the action plan has further focussed multi-agency attention on the issues.

RECENT SUCCESSES

62. WMP have conducted a number of policing operations into suspected Human Trafficking cases. Recent examples include:

- The execution of several search warrants and three arrests for 'running a brothel'
- Operation Troy – support provided to Welsh Police in arresting a number of suspects in the West Midlands for Trafficking offences
- Operation Solar – a complex investigation into offences involving organised theft and Human Trafficking

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

63. There are no financial implications known at this time.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

64. There are no legal implications known at this time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

65. The Board is asked to note that the portfolio holder recommends that the next crime update focuses on Force Intelligence following the implementation of Service Transformation for Investigation and PPU.

Detective Superintendent John Denley
FCID
Detective Superintendent Tim Bacon
PPD