



STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD
1st April 2014

Operation Sentinel

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Strategic Policing and Crime Board with a full update on Operation Sentinel.

BACKGROUND

2. The aim of Operation Sentinel is to enhance the service provided by West Midlands Police and partners to victims who are vulnerable, especially due to:
 - a lack of confidence to engage with statutory agencies, meaning they remain hidden and/or silent;
 - their cultural beliefs and behaviours; or
 - a fear for their safety.
3. The specific strands of Operation Sentinel are:
 - August: Child Sexual Exploitation
 - September: Honour-Based Violence/Forced Marriage
 - October: Human Trafficking
 - November: Female Genital Mutilation
 - December: Domestic Abuse
4. Having identified a significant risk around our organisational knowledge of, understanding of, and capacity to deal with the five business areas identified as 'strands' for Sentinel, the operation was launched at the end of July 2013. Whilst there were significant operational tactics that were deployed by Local Policing Units (LPU) and Departments to immediately address the aim and objectives, the main focus was on an 'educational uplift' for our staff.

5. Given the relatively low general level of knowledge around the strands, there was a heavy emphasis on providing information to officers that would assist them to identify these crime types; respond to them sensitively; and ensure robust investigations, maximising the opportunities to safeguard vulnerable victims and bring offenders to justice. This would support the aim of Sentinel in the longer term: creating the foundation for a continually improving response to become 'business as usual' for West Midlands Police.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING MECHANISMS

6. Activity plans designed by Organisation Service and Development Department (OSD) were submitted by Sentinel Bronze leads on a monthly basis. The plans were reviewed by the Coordination and Tasking Officer (CATO) and Silver.
7. OSD gathered updated performance data (in line with strategic objectives) on a monthly basis and submitted reports to the WMP Silver Lead DCI Kath Davis.
8. The plans were reviewed alongside performance information and a monthly summary report was submitted the WMP Gold, ACC Crime. This contained examples of Local Policing Unit (LPU)/Departmental activity; communications and media details; performance information; and raised any risks and issues.
9. In addition to the above, Sentinel Bronzes were asked to ensure that any public-facing activities were highlighted on the Force Events Calendar.
10. For every 'strand' of the operation, the following documents were produced as a method of reporting to Gold, LPU and Departmental Commanders, Sentinel Bronzes, West Midlands Office of Policing and Crime (WMOPC) and partner organisations:
 - Silver Report
 - Performance Framework
 - Performance Detail
 - Partnership Newsletter containing Sentinel aims and objectives, information on strand of focus for that month, examples of activity
 - Environmental Scanning Document
11. At the conclusion of Sentinel, OSD were commissioned to evaluate the activities submitted by Bronzes (as outlined above) for effectiveness.

LPU AND DEPARTMENTAL OUTCOMES

12. As outlined previously, OSD have produced a report evaluating the tactics deployed by LPUs and Departments for effectiveness (collated from Activity plans submitted by Bronzes).
13. The report presents the most popular type of activities undertaken; shows how effective Bronzes considered them to be; outlines the amount and type of activities that are to be maintained following the conclusion of the operation; and examines in more detail tactics relating to the top three primary activities ('Partnership Engagement/Joint Working', 'Victim', and 'Education').

14. Over the course of the operation, 500 Sentinel specific activities were recorded across the Force. The greatest number addressed Domestic Abuse (167 activities) and the lowest, Honour Based Violence (50 activities). *NB: the recording documentation only allowed Bronzes to select a maximum of 2 associated 'strands' per activity, so it may well be there were more strands addressed than were recorded.*
15. Over 75 different 'partners' (referred to as either individual organisations or types of agency) were associated with the activities, including Aquarius, Asian Women's network, Prince's Trust, STaR (Support, Time and Recovery) Support, GLA, Salvation Army, SWISH (Sex Workers Into Sexual Health).
16. Op Sentinel aims were also supported through several events organised by the PCC's office.
17. In October, a CSE and Human Trafficking Summit was hosted by the PCC. This summit looked at a number of issues including: how can partners come together to do more on prevention and early intervention; how can communities do more to flag up the issues; how can we improve our collective understanding of the problems and the issues; future strategic planning for all the statutory agencies including West Midlands Police; and the role and perspective of the voluntary sector and its interface with the statutory agencies.
18. In September, the PCC's office organised a Safeguarding summit on 6 September 2013 which again was supported by the Force and linked into the aims of Sentinel

COMMUNICATION OUTCOMES

19. For each strand of Sentinel, a variety of information literature was created, including posters and aide memoires with specific messages for various audiences, internal and external, including signs to look out for and reporting mechanisms.
20. The intranet pages were key to spreading the messages of Sentinel and over the course of the operation there were 10,174 visits to the site as well as 8153 views of Sentinel related Newsbeat articles. These pages contained resources for staff including guidance; contact details for Force leads; access to policy and procedure; videobox training from various specialists and victims; and links to relevant partner organisations.
21. Externally, there were 7502 visits to the Sentinel site over the course of the operation; 104 questions submitted to webchats which were hosted by specialists in each Sentinel strand; 5327 views of Sentinel related videos on WMP Youtube site; and use of 'Thunderclaps' (method of raising an issue to be further shared across social media platforms) to spread Sentinel messaging that were supported by 787 people, meaning a total reach of 794,592 people. A common theme of external feedback was praising WMP for highlighting, debating, and tackling the Sentinel strands.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

22. The primary activity developed and delivered by the Learning and Development Department was the Sentinel supervisors training. Q3 2013 mandatory

supervisors training (sergeants and inspectors) was entirely devoted to Sentinel, with Public Protection Unit specialists giving inputs on Female Genital Mutilation, Public Protection case studies and an interactive input from Geese Theatre Company. The innovative use of Geese to explore the Sentinel strands and the issues that emerge for police and partners when responding to vulnerable victims, received an overwhelmingly positive response from participants.

23. 983 supervisors were trained over 20 events.
24. Across the Sentinel strands, the number of participants who identified themselves as 'knowledgeable' or 'very knowledgeable' increased from 58.5% before the training, to 90.9% after. The number of participants who identified themselves as 'confident' or 'very confident' to deal with the strands of Sentinel increased from 64.7% before the training, to 90.6% after.
25. A significant majority of 91.7% stated that they would use what they had learnt from the day, with 94.3% stating they would recommend the day to others.
26. Feedback clearly indicated that participants thought the training should be offered to a wider audience, in particular 'frontline' officers.

HEADLINE OUTCOMES AGAINST STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

	Strategic Objective	Headline Outcome
1	Increase our organisational knowledge and understanding of 'vulnerability'	Training delivered to almost 1000 supervisors. Following the training there was an increase in knowledge around the Sentinel strands from 59% to 91%. This training will be cascaded from supervisors to other WMP staff
2	Evaluate tactics to ensure we have an evidence based approach	There were 500 Sentinel specific activities (in addition to 'business as usual') recorded by LPUs and departments during the operation. All activities were reviewed on a monthly basis and then subject of overall analysis at the conclusion of the op. This has established which activities were most successful, enabling the Force to maximise future tactical effectiveness.
3	Improve our ability to assess threat and risk and take proportionate action	Training delivered to supervisors saw the confidence of those trained to respond effectively to the Sentinel crime types increase from 65% to 91%. More crime reports have the Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage 'Special Interest Markers', meaning officers recognise the nature of the incidents and highlight them appropriately.
4	Enable ourselves to make dynamic and empowered operational decisions	A review of Sentinel incident logs was completed by the Force Contact department. Issues with understanding and subsequent decision making were identified and addressed in a training product delivered to Contact Centre staff including all call-handlers. All Sentinel incidents were flagged during Force Daily Management Meetings to ensure an appropriately robust response.
5	Increase reporting levels especially from	Reporting levels of Domestic Abuse offences has increased. The volume of Domestic Abuse Non-Crime incidents for

	vulnerable communities	investigation has increased and is being sustained. The volume of Vulnerable Adult Non-Crime incidents significantly increased during the operation. Recorded Serious Sexual Offences have increased by 10% (year to date).
6	Improve the confidence and satisfaction of victims and witnesses who experience the criminal justice process	During the operation, Public Protection Unit supervisors completed dip samples of DA reports to test both for Quality of Investigation and victim/witness satisfaction (ensuring 'service recovery' where necessary). Accepting the limitation of the sample size, 100% of those surveyed stated they were satisfied with police action taken to date, with 88 % requiring no further information at that time (remaining 12% were referred back to the Officer in Charge to update). This work will lead to a Force review of how 'vulnerability' features within our Contact Counts procedures.
7	Reduce violent offending, particularly focussing on tackling persistent violent perpetrators	The proportion of All Domestic Crime recorded as 'Violence with Injury' has fallen in recent months. The detection rate for crimes with the 'vulnerable adult' offence type has improved. There has been an increase of 37.5% in the enforcement of Non-Molestation Order breaches.
8	Improve our criminal justice outcomes	The 'No Further Action - NFA' rate for prisoners arrested for a domestic incident improved during Sentinel. The use of the Sentinel marker on Custody Records (allowing custody staff to ensure appropriate investigative decisions were made and implemented during an offenders time in custody) improved throughout the operation.
9	Commission an intelligence requirement.	Intelligence 'Problem Profiles' were completed for all Sentinel strands. This will ensure the Force has a greater understanding of the issues and how they specifically affect the West Midlands. These products will be used to inform operational decision making.
10	Seek to address causal factors i.e. Alcohol, Drugs, Housing Policy - with particular focus on Mental Health	There has been an improvement in identifying 'themes' (such as domestic related, alcohol related, etc) for offenders being tested by the Drug Interventions Programme whilst in custody. This allows for specific referrals to support/address these issues. In addition, the Force has developed an innovative response around MH with joint working patrols.
11	Sustain and improve statutory and non-statutory partnership working – local and national	'Partnership Engagement / Joint Working' activities were the most popular type of activity undertaken by LPUs and Departments during the operation. Engagement included information literature, workshops, seminars, projects, enforcement activity, forums, supporting/influencing the allocation of resources, etc...
12	Market and communicate our results	There were 7502 visits to the Sentinel website over the course of the operation; 104 questions submitted to webchats which were hosted by specialists in each strand; 5327 views of Sentinel related videos on WMP Youtube site; and use of 'Thunderclaps' (method of raising an issue to be further shared across social media platforms) to spread messaging that were supported by 787 people, meaning a total reach of 794,592 people.

DELIVERY OF POLICE AND CRIME PLAN SPECIFIC

27. As per the above table, including:

Reduce the harm to vulnerable victims caused by domestic abuse

- The proportion of All Domestic Crime recorded as 'Violence with Injury' has fallen in recent months.
- There has been an increase of 37.5% in the enforcement of Non-Molestation Order breaches.
- The 'No Further Action - NFA' rate for prisoners arrested for a domestic incident improved during Sentinel.
- Reporting levels of Domestic Abuse offences has increased.
- The volume of Domestic Abuse Non-Crime incidents for investigation has increased and is being sustained.

Work with safeguarding partners to improve the outcomes for vulnerable people

- 'Partnership Engagement / Joint Working' activities were the most popular type of activity undertaken by LPUs and Departments during the operation. Engagement included information literature, workshops, seminars, projects, enforcement activity, forums, supporting/influencing the allocation of resources, etc...
- There has been an improvement in identifying 'themes' (such as domestic related, alcohol related, etc) for offenders being tested by the Drug Interventions Programme whilst in custody. This allows for specific referrals to support/address these issues.

28. In addition, the Force has developed an innovative response around Mental Health with joint working patrols.

LEGACY OPPORTUNITIES

29. The final Silver report (with appendices including OSD analysis & performance outcomes, Corporate Communications summary document, and Learning & Development summary document) was presented to ACC Crime on 27th February.

30. 13 recommendations were included in the report, all to serve as legacy opportunities moving forward. In addition, each LPU and department were asked to nominate Sentinel activities to sustain / further develop. A few examples of activity against each 'strand' are:

- **Dudley LPU - Domestic Abuse:** Partnership team is currently involved in the commissioning of a new service (funding secured) which will offer support to victims of Domestic Abuse. This is a follow-on from work highlighted in the DY Sentinel Action Plan, which sought to develop services for young victims of DA (*addresses Strategic Objective 6 and others*)
- **Birmingham South LPU – Child Sexual Exploitation:** Ongoing development of NHT 'ambassadors' to protect potential and suspected victims. Lasting relationships and protocols with some local hotel chains, which has resulted in some significant successes - in partnership with their national training managers - disrupting CSE suspects about to perpetrate offences (*addresses Strategic Objective 7 and others*)
- **Coventry LPU – Female Genital Mutilation and Child Sexual Exploitation Training:** Still in its infancy and involves leaders from a number of African communities resident in the main in the Hillfields area. Once the package is

developed it will be disseminated appropriately - Mosques, Somali communities, Gurdwaras, etc... (*addresses Strategic Objective 5 and others*)

- **Wolverhampton LPU - Human Trafficking:** Immigration/GLA/Police partnership creation looking at matters concerning illegal immigration as well as legal immigration that impacts human trafficking for employment purposes (*addresses Strategic Objective 11 and others*)
- **Operations Department– Honour Based Violence:** Commitment to identify potential HBV victims coming through airport. HBV/forced marriage awareness training; FGM national operation in May; learning from awareness day at Heathrow on 27/2/14 (*addresses Strategic Objective 4 and others*)
- **Birmingham North LPU - Vulnerability:** Referral Portal. At the start of December, BN implemented a web based referral portal for front line officers to forward details of members of the community that they came into contact with who had some vulnerability or need that required support. Aimed at situations which fall below the Safeguarding threshold, through the partnership team all referrals are assessed and forwarded to an appropriate partner to make contact and offer their services (*addresses Strategic Objective 10 and others*)
- Although falling outside of the operational period of Sentinel (due to a scheduling issue – it was originally planned for November), in February 2014 an **FGM study day** was held. The day was organised by the Force and supported by the PCC's office both financially and by staff.

Whilst Sentinel was always intended as an operation that would embed enhancements to service delivery as 'business as usual', consideration is currently being given to how the momentum generated throughout can be maintained/developed, in addition to the 'legacy opportunities' already identified. This will be subject of further Command Team consideration.

CONCLUSION

31. Operation Sentinel has achieved significant successes against the aims and strategic objectives set. Moreover, anecdotally but also supported by Learning & Development and Communications feedback, WMP staff had a high awareness level of the operation, what it involved, and what the expectations were of their participation. If there is to be any future iteration of the operation, this should be used as an opportunity for 'reality testing' the outcomes contained within this document and the appendices, and to further enhance service delivery to vulnerable victims. It is suggested that partners are consulted at an early stage as to the focus and methodology of further Sentinel work, and that the outcomes of the PCC summits also be considered.
32. Grateful thanks is extended to all those who participated in the operation, and Silver particularly commends the efforts of the Sentinel Bronzes who, with energy, effort and professionalism, drove the work across the Force.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

33. There are no financial implications. Op Sentinel did not have a budget – activities were managed as 'business as usual'.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

34. There are no legal implications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

35. The Board is asked to note the content of this report.

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