Safer, Fairer, United Communities for Staffordshire

2013 – 2018
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Achieving safer, fairer, united communities has to be a joint effort. Public agencies, the voluntary sector, businesses and communities themselves all need to work together to achieve success. This is going to be difficult, but doing it would benefit the everyday lives of most of the population.

This strategy is about how different organisations and the public go about making a real and sustained difference to reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and the most serious regional organised crime, as well as the risk of terrorism. It’s about never losing the aspiration of being crime free, or at least securing really significant reductions overall. It’s about policing that’s more visible, and people across Staffordshire having the confidence that it’s ‘there’ on demand when they need it because it’s not just about being safer, but also about feeling safer.

One size doesn’t fit all so we’ll ensure there are local solutions for local people. Policing, community safety and the wider criminal justice system must reflect the needs and circumstances of each local area. For example, Stoke-on-Trent’s localities have different challenges to Staffordshire’s districts and boroughs which themselves are each different.

The best help for victims is helping them avoid becoming a victim in the first place. This new ‘agenda’ signals greater focus and investment to intervene early and to prevent crime, anti-social behaviour or other issues before they happen. It means the police, local authorities and other agencies joining up better to tackle what causes crime, not just the effects of it. I’ll also encourage, support and sometimes provide money for communities through the Commissioner’s People Power Fund to implement local solutions which address identified community safety issues.

But if someone does become a victim, it’s about treating them as an individual, not a statistic. It means simplifying and making it easier to use the myriad of services they find themselves involved with. The very services that are there to support them can be complex, fragmented and anything but user friendly. For example, people’s experience of the courts and criminal justice system can be as taxing and traumatic as the original incident, for both witnesses and victims.

Wherever people live they have a right to expect as safe an environment as possible. Being accustomed to higher crime levels in an area, and therefore accepting, it must be challenged. Parts of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire have higher levels of crime, but that doesn’t mean it should be accepted as the ‘norm’, or that the area is less important. The causes and effects should be tackled with greater rigour than before in those places.

We need new ways to provide information that’s joined up, and communicate it in a meaningful way, and at a time that suits you, me and everyone else. Too many people who become involved, for whatever reason, with policing and criminal justice find they have to fit ‘the system’ rather than ‘the system’ fitting them. This can even be true for police officers and other professionals working within ‘the system’ itself.
As well as being incredibly frustrating, it’s costing tax payers far more than it should do and the quality of service as well as the outcomes for everyone involved could be so much better. It’s time to raise the bar.

Tackling reoffending is critically important to making a lasting impact on reducing crime. The approach to prolific and repeat offending will be tough and uncompromising. That said, where offenders are willing and able to mend their ways for the long term, they must be supported by all relevant agencies to make that life change permanent. The evidence is clear that ‘breaking the cycle’, which is often generational, really works. By managing and working with offenders and families that are chaotic or have dysfunctional lives, crime will reduce faster, wider and for the long term. Intervening earlier with people at risk of slipping into this kind of behaviour will also lessen the burden on public services in the future, meaning tax payers will pay less and the social impact on communities that crime and wrong doing has will diminish for us all.

Every agency contributing towards the priorities set out will also need to be transparent and open in both day-to-day operations and how they make decisions. Given the challenging economic climate that everyone faces over the coming years, it is even more important to be open, honest and straightforward about decisions and priorities. It’s important that the public is confident in how their money is spent and confident it’s being spent effectively.

The challenge is getting the ‘whole system’ to work better for all of us. Whilst there have been successes in joint working, the opportunity to do that much wider than ever before now arises for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent because of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) role. The role is not an answer in itself, but the statutory influence the PCC carries across policing, criminal justice and community safety means that there is an opportunity to raise ambitions, provide a consistently joined-up approach that serves people better and uses shrinking resources more effectively than ever.

It requires sector wide improvement and change, not just tinkering around the edges to make bits of the system better. Obvious, lasting success will only happen if everyone plays their part and raises their collective ambition for sea change, not small change. It won’t be easy because of the sheer breadth of public and other agencies that need to commit to this. Crucial to making it happen are the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Probation Trust, NHS and Mental Health Trusts, Courts & Tribunals Service, Youth Offending Service, Further Education, Job Centre Plus, town and parish councils, district and borough councils, housing associations, community, voluntary and business sectors, Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire County Council and Stoke City Council, Prisons, other blue light services and other parts of the National Offender Management Service as well as the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner. Government Departments also need to show new flexibility to secure better results for Staffordshire people.
This is not ‘pie in the sky’ or blind ambition. The evidence is there that organisational silo working and lack of focus on outcomes that matter to real people, along with a tendency by some to adopt an ‘it’s always been done this way’ culture, does get in the way of more effective services serving our population better and more cost effectively. I also want everyone involved to be honest and brave by stopping things that haven’t worked in the past, or don’t join up properly, in favour of starting things that do.

I am, however, certain that Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are better placed than any other part of the country to do something really significant over the next few years. There’s tremendous work and real innovation already going on and the ambition to do better I’ve found during the first few months in Office is clear. It simply needs sparking. I promised to say it how it is, and be honest and frank about the things that work, the things that don’t work and things that need to change to meet the challenges and aspirations at the heart of this strategy.

It’s a genuine and unique chance for all ambitious and willing partners to step up for the benefit of people who live here, do things differently where that needs to happen and aim higher than ever before to secure a safer, fairer, united future for all our communities.

Matthew Ellis - Police and Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire

“It’s not NHS, CPS, Police or Council money... it’s all public money.

Scrap silo thinking, work to common goals - spend better, achieve more”
Introduction

Being bold and innovative to achieve results is at the heart of the Safer, Fairer, United Communities strategy.

“It’s now time to raise ambitions and take innovation a step further than ever before. This strategy sets out how this can be done together, and how everyone has a part to play.

Anyone or any organisation with an interest in making Staffordshire safer will be encouraged to get involved, and commit to their part in making this happen.”

Matthew Ellis
The nature of crime, keeping our communities safe and being able to respond to broader social issues is complex, so no single agency can achieve what needs to be done alone.

Staffordshire’s Police and Crime Commissioner is throwing down a challenge to all stakeholders and agencies to make Staffordshire safer by working towards the same agreed goals.

Local solutions for local communities are key to understanding that Staffordshire’s communities are not all the same, and a one-size fits all approach will not work. Staffordshire is a big and diverse county and improving community safety and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour will require different approaches in different places.
What’s needed?

A recognition of the needs and priorities of Staffordshire

Staffordshire by way of its geography, its people and communities and its infrastructure has, in the same way as other places, particular needs, areas requiring development and priorities that the PCC wants to reflect in this strategy:

The police and other organisations will develop the operational delivery plans that support the strategy. From this the Police and Crime Commissioner will gain assurance that all of the specific needs, development areas and priorities are acted upon. He will do this by making sure the approach taken is evidence and intelligence based. This will mean that the Chief Constable’s strategic assessment of policing need, community safety needs assessments and needs analysis across the sector has to be robust and strong in order to lead to well informed and appropriate action.

One area where the PCC has already identified evidence for improvement is in supporting people with mental health needs who come in contact with the police. This has resulted in plans for positive short term multi agency development work that delivers better support to police officers and others that become involved with people with mental health issues.

Mental health is not the only specific area where operational delivery plans should identify opportunities for improvement. This strategy will focus on four key priorities but within these there will be specific areas that require a similar approach, for example domestic abuse, sexual abuse, the night-time economy, alcohol and drug abuse, regional and serious organised crime, cyber-crime, business crime, rural crime. This list is not exhaustive but provides a view of the scale of the undertaking that will be overseen by the PCC.

A new and more mature relationship with Central Government

Decisions are needed that produce the right results for Staffordshire. National priorities must be addressed and the PCC will ensure that Staffordshire helps to deliver these. However the main focus will be on priorities and issues that are important to local people and communities.

The new Police and Crime Commissioner’s role means Staffordshire’s voice is heard clearer than ever before at a national level. That new voice at national level must be used to influence and shape policy and legislation so that it benefits the people of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Our approach in Staffordshire should set the standard for other areas of the UK.

On behalf of everyone involved, the Police and Crime Commissioner will:

- build a new and more mature relationship with Government seeking greater local autonomy and flexibility in the way finances are distributed to help deliver on the priorities set out in this strategy
- seek more flexibility around national commissioning arrangements, for example in national probation and offender management services
- be clear to Government when national input and flexibility is required to provide solutions to local problems.

This ambitious agenda is much broader than policing requirements, and through new freedoms and flexibilities there could be radical improvements in outcomes.
A strategy supported by robust delivery plans

A high level strategy is needed that sits as an overarching plan that sets out the vision of community safety. A suite of more detailed co-ordinated delivery plans will sit under this strategy and be responsive to the vision. A broad outline of these is shown below.

Galvanising of support

Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, the PCC will galvanise support and effort towards a common goal.

This includes:

- adopting a strategically collaborative approach to encourage everyone to work together to make Staffordshire safer
- being clear about who is best placed to deliver each part of this complex agenda and ensuring partners support each other in their efforts, whilst maintaining clarity on accountability
- commissioning more at a local level by shifting the balance of funding committed to prevention and early intervention.

Staffordshire Police has a big part to play. The Police and Crime Commissioner working with the Chief Constable, is critical to ensuring an improved and effective police service, but it’s not just about the police. With a wider focus, the PCC expects commitment from all relevant public sector agencies and the support of local businesses and local people to achieve real outcomes in a much more cost effective way.
Building on what has been done already

This strategy is co-ordinated with others across Staffordshire, particularly with the plans of the Health and Wellbeing Boards and the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. There is excellent work already underway through these plans and the PCC will support this.

There are examples where agencies across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are already at the forefront of national thinking. This strategy will build on these foundations and sets a benchmark for others across the UK to follow. This builds on previous successes, takes account of the views of local people and organisations and tackles important issues head on.

Matthew Ellis

All this is just the start. Following wider consultation, the task now is to develop a series of delivery plans, so that everyone understands what is expected and can hold each other to account through clear governance arrangements.

Key points:

- influence Central Government more than before to get the best for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent
- at a local level, all agencies and the public have a part to play in making communities safer, whilst spending tax payers money more effectively than ever before
- local approaches focused on the needs of local areas because one size doesn’t fit all
- delivery plans that get the job done and governance arrangements that provide clear accountability.
Policing and Crime

Performance and accountability

The Police and Crime Commissioner is responsible for providing an efficient and effective police service for the communities of Staffordshire, setting the vision and direction for the police.

The performance of the police has a real and lasting impact on the communities of Staffordshire. This means delivering reductions in crime and harm, as well as ensuring public confidence is high.

Performance of Staffordshire Police will be scrutinised by the PCC to ensure a holistic approach is taken in delivering improvements and recognising the areas that cause harm to communities.

Amongst the Police and Crime Commissioner’s responsibilities is the ‘totality of policing’ across Staffordshire and a requirement to ensure that the police contribution to meeting the broader outcomes of this strategy is efficient, effective and responsive. This means the PCC will:

- set the overarching vision and strategic objectives for Staffordshire Police
- set the policing budget and the amount of council tax for policing purposes (the precept)
- ensure the Chief Constable delivers policing priorities, in line with the direction set out in the Safer, Fairer, United Communities Strategy
- work with Staffordshire police and a range of other partners to reduce crime in Staffordshire.

Resources

The PCC must ensure that the right resources with the right tools to do the job are available to keep people safe. The longstanding recruitment freeze has been removed to introduce new blood to ensure the best policing in the future. Twenty eight new officers are to be recruited in 2013/14, with more planned for the year after. Better training and better technology for officers and enhanced powers for Police Community Support Officers will ensure the best use of resources. The introduction of an Elite Special Constabulary providing better training and wider scope will develop a high calibre core of volunteer officers, including 200 new “Community Specials”.

Crime Reduction

Crime will continue to be tackled using all of the tools available to Staffordshire Police and it’s partners including the effective deployment of CCTV cameras and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) software. ANPR has proved crucial in the popular Cars Behind Bars campaign which has seen hundreds of insurance dodgers have their vehicles seized across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

Organising people and resources for the future (Stage 2 transfer)

The Police and Crime Commissioner currently employs all support staff in Staffordshire Police. The creation of the Police and Crime Commissioner role means there is a need to decide how staff and resources are used in the most effective way by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable. The arrangements will be agreed formally with the Home Office for implementation by April 2014. For Staffordshire, the proposal submitted to the Home Secretary follows the ‘maximum transfer’ route whereby nearly all of the current staff group employed by the Police and Crime Commissioner transfer to the Chief Constable on 1st April 2014.
Strategic policing requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) identifies the national threats that Staffordshire Police need to address and ensure that they are prepared for. These threats include terrorism, public order, serious organised crime, major incidents that threaten public safety and large scale cyber-crime.

The PCC must ensure that sufficient resources are made available to meet these threats and that the Chief Constable maintains a state of readiness to respond and is able to demonstrate the effectiveness of what is in place at any time.

The Chief Constable shares his strategic assessment of capacity, capability, consistency and connectivity with other forces and agencies to counter the risks highlighted in the SPR, in order that the PCC can meet his obligations. Given the nature of the SPR and the dynamic nature of the risk areas it is important that there is regular debate and discussion to ensure that the PCC and Chief Constable are comfortable with the readiness and effectiveness of any response required – this is allowed for therefore, in the governance arrangements between the OPCC and Staffordshire Police that have been developed.

Accountability

The Police and Crime Panel have a clear statutory role to examine and make recommendations on various aspects of the Commissioner’s activity, in particular powers include:

- To review the draft Police and Crime Plan
- To scrutinise the PCC’s Annual Report
- To review and scrutinise decisions and actions by the PCC
- To review and veto the PCC’s proposed Council Tax precept levels
- To review the PCC’s conduct.
- To confirm the Chief Constable’s appointment.
- To appoint an acting PCC, if required.

The Panel is made up of representatives from Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the eight District / Borough Councils of South Staffordshire, Lichfield, Tamworth, Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Stafford, Newcastle Under Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands.

Key points:
- crime continues to reduce in Staffordshire, but should be better
- galvanising cross agency support for doing this is essential
- the Chief Constable is accountable for the delivery of policing priorities
- the PCC will be scrutinised by the Police and Crime panel and it is accountable to the people of Staffordshire
Priorities 2013 – 2018
Focusing on what matters to local people

The PCC has set out four clear priorities:

Early intervention
“tackling root causes before they become a problem”

Supporting Victims and Witnesses
“making it easier for victims and witnesses to receive the support they need”

Managing Offenders
“preventing offending in the first place and reducing the likelihood of reoffending”

Public Confidence
“making sure everything that happens contributes to individuals and communities feeling safer and reassured”
Priority

Early Intervention

What’s known

Evidence shows that the best way of preventing crime and having a positive impact on community wellbeing, quality of life and safety is to stop problems from arising in the first place. It is necessary to intervene early in the lives of individuals and families who have started to experience problems and supporting them to make new life choices and lift their aspirations. Being able to develop the approach to early intervention is therefore vital and when successful can impact positively on everything else involving the other priorities within the strategy.

There are a number of interrelated factors that can heighten the risk of individuals and families becoming involved in criminal or anti-social behaviour, if not addressed soon enough.

**The family can influence criminal behaviour** - The first few years of a child’s life are crucial for development. Unstable parental situations, poor parenting, domestic violence, alcohol and drug misuse, poor mental health and poor living conditions all impact on criminality. Problems can be addressed at an early stage and often this stops them becoming more complex and damaging.

**The community and the environment can also impact on criminal behaviour and wrong doing** - High rates of crime and anti-social behaviour are more likely to occur in areas of deprivation. It is necessary to influence ways to ‘design out crime’ in our communities. Through careful planning of housing and other amenities.

**Aspirations, education and employment can affect the likelihood of criminal behaviour** - Leaving school without qualifications and not having a suitable job to go to, when combined with other social disadvantages, can lead to criminal behaviour.

**Behaviours** - A person’s early life experiences and their behaviour at a young age often sets their life course; anti-social behaviour, low-level criminality and substance misuse are also known to be major factors in leading to offending or dysfunctional behaviour in later life. By ensuring that prompt actions are taken to identify and then address these matters, generational life cycles can be broken.
It makes real sense to rethink our approaches, and shift our focus towards intervening early to tackle the root causes of crime before they become a problem.

There is a strong evidence base that highlights the benefits of intervening early - leading to improved outcomes for our communities, and cash savings down the line.

*The Next Steps, An Independent Report to HM Government, January 2011*

“Our intention is to provide a new focus on intervening earlier, thereby ensuring that opportunities exist for everyone, from young children, through to teenagers and young adults and for families as a whole.”

**What’s going to be done?**

- **develop a Staffordshire wide Early Intervention Plan (EIP) that develops an approach which builds resilience in families and communities so that they can thrive and ultimately place fewer demands on public sector resources in the longer term**

- **create new opportunities for young people** – By rolling out the Staffordshire Young Police Cadets, providing an opportunity for at least 180 young people from diverse backgrounds, to develop new skills and self-confidence in the service of our communities. It aims to boost links between the police and young people and promote good citizenship. It isn’t about recruiting police officers – it’s about using a uniformed and disciplined environment to develop young people, shape their outlook and make a difference to communities

- **help the right people at the right time** - Identify families earlier who are at greatest risk of becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour and intervene sooner. Ensure that the right actions and support mechanisms are in place and build on the programmes that are already working in local communities. Families and children can be supported to lead more stable lives, increasingly free from the precursors to potential anti-social or criminal activities by using approaches such as Family Courts and Family Group Conferences

- **divert, through mentoring, those who are at risk of offending** – As a priority, mentoring programmes targeted at those people who may be at risk of engaging in criminal activity will be developed. These programmes will aim to inspire those taking part to make different life choices, lift their aspirations and contribute positively to their community. This could result in improved behaviour, better attendance at school and being a positive example to others

- **provide opportunities through positive activities** - Introducing new positive activities in sport, the arts and culture or any pastimes that will attract young people. These diversions will provide opportunities, a raising of expectations and a more positive and constructive outlook for them.
CASE STUDY

Staffordshire’s Young Police Cadets

The new Young Police Cadets for Staffordshire were a key election pledge of the PCC and will strengthen links between the police, young people and communities, and promote good citizenship.

Money for the scheme will come from business sponsorship, ensuring value for money for taxpayers, and the continuity of front line policing budgets. Each cadet will have their own police cadet uniform and work with members of Staffordshire Police to help keep communities safe and reassured.

This could mean giving out safety advice to local people or helping to find out about their concerns. They’ll also learn more about how we track down criminals, the equipment we use to fight crime, and have a go at operational personal safety training.

Cadets can also work towards Duke of Edinburgh bronze, silver and gold awards which could involve hiking, climbing and orienteering.
Supporting Victims and Witnesses

What’s known?

Being a victim can be truly damaging and have a lasting impact on feelings of safety and wellbeing. This is not only about the incident itself, but all too often the complexity, fragmented nature and quality of the services that the victim and their families can access, has an affect.

For witnesses carrying out their civic duty, services can be disjointed and unreliable meaning multiple court visits and poor support. Many witnesses say they would be less likely to become involved a second time.

The very services that are there to support both victims and witnesses can be anything but user friendly, meaning that the experience they have of the courts and criminal justice system can be as taxing and traumatic as the original incident.

The ‘Feeling the Difference’ survey asks 1,650 people every 6 months what they think about the police and other community safety organisations. It reveals that victims of crime are significantly:

- less likely to be satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
- less likely to feel safe in their neighbourhood after dark
- more likely to believe crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) is increasing, even if it isn’t
- less likely to believe the police will be there when you need them
- less likely to believe the police are dealing with what matters
- less likely to have confidence in the police

The Police, support organisations and the wider criminal justice system need to improve the experience and the quality of services that support victims and witnesses. The ‘system’ must fit the needs of individuals rather than victims and witnesses being expected to fit the ‘system’.

The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is a joined up partnership approach centred around the needs of the victim in a one-stop location where victims can receive medical care, emotional support and have the opportunity to assist the police investigation, including undergoing a forensic examination. It has improved the service and the treatment victims receive whilst also improving the quality of investigations into sexual assaults.
This will include:
- being professional, respectful and sensitive at all times
- tackling the evident weaknesses of the ‘system’, for example, by improving information, advice and support to individuals
- responding positively to victim and witness calls for reassurance regarding their safety and protection when participating in the criminal justice process
- expanding the range of justice options open to victims, for example community payback and restorative justice.

A system that fits the individual

Ensuring that victims, witnesses and their families are supported in a way that recognises their individual circumstances and places them at the very heart of all criminal justice processes, is vital.

Victims and witnesses must be treated as individuals, with the respect and empathy that their cases deserve, rather than as a number in an administrative system. Clearer ways for victims to access timely, relevant and seamless support and information from agencies will be introduced.

Mediation involving both offender and victim

The criminal justice system is not always the best way to deal with lower levels of wrong doing or crime. Restorative Justice offers the opportunity for victims to be in control; this will often be about recompense, sanction or closure. This will mean victims and offenders take an active role in determining the outcome of a case, where offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their action and to repair the harm they’ve done. This could be apologising, returning stolen money, or community service. The aim is to ensure that the sanction is a pragmatic solution shaped around the victim’s wishes without the need to go through the courts and more formal criminal justice processes.

A better criminal justice process

More responsive and efficient criminal justice processes are fundamental to ensuring better results for victims, including reducing delay in cases being taken to court. At present the management and administration of criminal cases is more focused on how the professionals involved carry out their roles rather than the needs of victims and witnesses. This needs to change and we will work with the police, the CPS, the courts and other key stakeholders in the judicial system to ensure the system suits people rather than people having to fit the system.

Avoid duplication and manage case files effectively

The criminal justice system currently relies too much on traditional and cumbersome methods involving reams of paperwork being transported from place to place and a disconnect in the sharing of information. This often leads to abandoned or delayed cases, blockages in the criminal justice process, inconvenience to everyone involved and costs to the tax payer that are far greater than they need to be.

Digitalising the criminal justice system so that technology is used to provide a faster, safer and more cost effective outcome is vital and will help to free up time, and allow much more effort and resource to be focused where it really matters - on front-line activity. This could mean electronic transfer of files between all those involved, more witness and victim interviews at home via digital media so that it’s more convenient for them, wifi in courtrooms and a ‘system’ that works in a more efficient, safe and cost effective way.
Protecting those who are more at risk of being a victim or a repeat victim

Some people are more likely to be a victim because of vulnerabilities. For instance, if they are elderly or disabled or even where they live. Those who have been victims may be at greater risk of becoming a repeat victim. Significant effort has been deployed into identifying and supporting those people. However, despite increased effort the evidence shows that this is not always working because of the sheer scale of the problem. The PCC recognises this and will put more effort into targeting support to those most vulnerable and preventing repeat victimisation.

CASE STUDY - MASH

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) brings together a range of partners involved in the safeguarding of vulnerable children and adults. It has shown how better and more timely information sharing can have a real benefit to ensuring the safety for some of the most vulnerable in society, and improving results. Through a joined up, Staffordshire wide approach, we expect all agencies to work collectively to ensure the right support is in place. Businesses who are victims of crime will not be forgotten, and through better information sharing we will develop a real confidence in Staffordshire as a great place to do business.

What’s going to be done?

The Police and Crime Commissioner will ensure that victims have the opportunity to shape their case in a fair, joined up, person centred way through these priority actions:

- develop a single integrated system that fits around all victims and witnesses. At a local level, we will help shape a single gateway for all victims that provides a clear and simplified route to services.
- introduce a password protected internet case tracker to provide victims or witnesses with personalised information to keep them informed and up to date as to the status and progress of their case
- ensure that systems, training and procedures reinforce the need to treat victims and witnesses with respect, accounting for them as individuals as well as their circumstances. Victims will experience more timely contact from skilled staff and will be protected from potential harm
- promote and develop the role of Victim Champions more widely across Staffordshire as part of the support arrangements
- develop community resolution, Restorative Justice and other appropriate mediation along with greater scrutiny around how this type of sanction is applied.
FOCUS ON:
Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice schemes offer a tailored approach towards ensuring a better outcome for both offenders and victims. It means the most appropriate outcomes to the level and seriousness of the offence.

Restorative Justice is managed at three levels:

**Level 1** – usually for minor offences or non-criminal incidents like anti-social behaviour and can often be dealt with at the scene.

**Level 2** – is generally appropriate for more serious offences or if there are several victims, offenders will meet victims during a conference with a Neighbourhood Resolution Panel, made up of volunteers from the community. They will help talk through the issues and come to a resolution.

**Level 3** - for serious offences like burglary, robbery or even rape, Restorative Justice takes place post-conviction, usually while the offender is in prison. The victim will have the opportunity to meet the offender face-to-face to ask questions and explain the impact of the crime.

Research from the Ministry of Justice highlights that the majority of victims chose to take part in a face to face meeting with the offender when offered by a trained facilitator.

Typically, 85% of victims taking part in Restorative Justice are satisfied with the process, and the frequency of re-offending is reduced by around 27%. Experience shows that we can generate savings of £9 for every £1 spent on Restorative Justice.
Priority
Managing Offenders

What’s known?

Analysis has highlighted four key risk factors associated with offending behaviour.

**Substance misuse** – Over 60% of adult offenders have substance misuse issues directly linked to their offending behaviour and many offenders have needs in relation to both drug and alcohol misuse.

**Employment, education and training** – 20% of adult offenders and 40% of young offenders have issues with their employment, education or training directly related to, or showing some association with, their offending behaviour. For many, a poor education and an inability to get a paying job will result in offending and reoffending behaviour.

**Accommodation** – Almost 17% of adult offenders have difficulties obtaining permanent accommodation and just over 50% of young offenders have issues with their living arrangements, for instance, not being able to live at home, or obtain alternative accommodation.

**Mental health problems** – These issues are prevalent amongst both adult and young offenders. There is a strong relationship between mental health problems and certain types of crime, with higher-level-of-need-offenders associated with criminal damage, sexual offences and domestic burglary needing more support.

We need a joined up approach to prevent offending in the first place, to reduce the likelihood of re-offending, and to improve the wider life outcomes of offenders in Staffordshire.

All of those delivering this strategy will have a role to play, whether that’s through early intervention, or more targeted activity tailored to the circumstances of offenders.
Where offending does take place the aim is to manage it swiftly and efficiently, with appropriate justice being done and being seen to be done.

Through working effectively across relevant agencies to address offending, public protection will be strengthened, better outcomes will be achieved and the quality of life for Staffordshire’s people will improve.

There are no ‘typical offenders’ in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, and there can be many reasons and factors as to why people become involved in crime and anti-social behaviour. Profiling of offenders has identified a number of common factors though:

- the most prolific age range for offending is between 15 and 24-years-old
- men in this age group make up almost half of the total number of offenders in Staffordshire
- re-offending is generally higher amongst under-18 year olds than adults – 35.3% compared to 20.4%
- offenders are most likely to live in the most deprived areas and the areas recording the highest levels of crime.

**Preventing offending**

Focussing on preventing offenders from becoming prolific offenders will ensure that justice is effective. Key to this is tackling the root causes that have led people to offend, and support them to avoid reoffending. There are some excellent examples of schemes already in place to tackle persistent offenders, including the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Programme which is working with around 750 offenders across Staffordshire. Developing this approach further and learning from both within and outside of Staffordshire about what works is vital if the desired impact is to be achieved.

The evidence base about those actions that are most likely to reduce offending and reoffending is good; the IOM programme is working well within limited parameters. However, the challenge is still significant and only through a fully coordinated approach will this be met effectively.

**FACT**

Research shows that up to 25% of Staffordshire Police officers’ time is often used on dealing with mental health related incidents.

There are better equipped agencies to ensure that people with potential mental health problems receive care and support and are not criminalised because police officers have to attend such incidents. Those agencies need to be made fully responsible.

*Mental Health Review May 2013*
What’s going to be done?

The Police and Crime Commissioner will ensure a focus on prevention, efficiency through joint working and effective commissioning underpins everything that is done.

- get all public sector agencies to understand their responsibilities and meet their obligation in preventing offending and reoffending. Responding to the evidence about the key determinants, which create offending behaviour is vital; education, employment, housing and accommodation, mental health and drug and alcohol issues all require a multi-agency approach, but it is also essential that individual agencies take action

- ensure a tough and uncompromising approach to offending. Offenders will be brought to justice and there will be a particular focus on the management of prolific offenders if they can’t or won’t reform. If an offender is willing and able to move on from past behaviour, then the support necessary will be there to help them do that

- expand the approach to managing offenders to be broader, encompassing harm-based crime and intervening earlier to stop people becoming prolific offenders or progressing to more serious crime

- develop community resolution, restorative justice and other mediation approaches to tackle offending. This will lead to a better protected public, helping to prevent reoffending, and ensuring that offenders have a sense of ownership and understand the impact of their actions

- work with local businesses and the employment sector, for example Job Centre Plus, to provide meaningful opportunities for young and adult offenders to get jobs and become involved in work placements, matching their skills bases to any openings that may emerge

- give a particular focus to business crime and rural and wildlife crime and offending, areas that have not traditionally benefitted from a developed approach that has delivered better outcomes.
CASE STUDY
Integrated Offender Management

The vision of the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) programme is to reduce crime and enhance the safety of our communities by preventing today’s offenders becoming repeat offenders.

Our focus is on tackling the causes of offending behaviour to break the destructive cycle of crime, and enable offenders to make amends to their victims and communities.

The programme brings together local agencies and their resources to target the most prolific offenders and take the right action at the right time.

The IOM programme comprises a number of key elements including:

- Early Intervention – identifying opportunities to build in more effective pre-emptive work, giving a good start for children to prevent future criminal behaviour; specifically those who are recognised as being at risk of becoming next generation offenders.

- Short Sentenced Offenders (serving less than 12 months) – ensuring that targeted provision is given, at an early stage in sentences, as well as on exit, to provide relevant support to this group who currently pose the highest national rates of re-offending.

- High Crime Demand Families – breaking the cycle of crime in families with a history of inter-generational offending through strengthening family relationships and working closely across all agencies to help prevent offending.
What’s known?

Although crime is falling, fear of crime is increasing. This impacts on communities as well as individuals and quality of life. It’s a serious problem.

The results from the ‘Feeling the Difference’ survey show that around 13% of residents felt in fear of the possibility of being a victim of crime over the last 12 months (Wave 14, Autumn 2012). Survey findings indicate that there are four main factors influencing fear of crime in Staffordshire:

- A person may have been, or know someone who has been, a victim of crime
- Living in an area of high crime and/or anti-social behaviour
- A person may have been negatively influenced by the media, and/or
- Some people and communities feel particularly vulnerable and isolated (socially or geographically).

Fear of crime is increasingly difficult to tackle. Better protection for those people who are victims of crime or who are vulnerable to crime is essential, as is reassurance to local communities.

Increasing visibility and improving information, advice and guidance across the range of agencies involved in promoting safety will also be key.

Building public confidence

A responsive, public facing and visible police force is at the very heart of the PCC’s priorities. Public access to services needs to be built around a number of flexible communications channels, including face to face, emergency and non-emergency responses and clearly understood information.

A real effort to maximise joint working opportunities needs to be made through joined up information which is responsive to individuals, communities, businesses and organisations. The PCC will ensure that people are better informed, able to make the choices which suit them and have greater independence.

People in Staffordshire will feel safer and reassured through greater visibility of the police, better and stronger representation within communities and better information. All of the activities in this strategy, as well as the PCC’s on-going focus to minimise bureaucracy and modernise services and approaches, are concentrated on one clear underpinning goal – freeing up more time where it matters – for front line activity.
The recruitment of 200 new “Community Special Constables” to police on a part time, voluntary basis, only in the communities where they live rather than other parts of the wider area, provides local reassurance because the officers know the local community and the local community know them. Whilst not suitable in every area it will provide for rural communities a modern twist to the old ‘village bobby’ and would be in addition to a community’s local police officers. By investing in this extra new resource, the challenges of large sparsely populated communities can be addressed. A particular focus will be on rural crime adding to the development of rural and wildlife crime units.

The PCC will engage proactively across Staffordshire, asking people what really matters to them and their communities and shaping services, information and solutions accordingly. The relationship, involvement with and engagement of local people, partners and communities in determining local priorities is essential in ensuring that local needs are met. To this end the PCC has adopted an open door policy for all and will keep local people informed and updated through regular newsletters, public meetings, email updates and the wider media.

What’s going to be done?

The PCC is looking to improve public confidence through these priority activities:

- involve local people and communities in delivering improvements, recognising that knowledge and expertise is not only contained within those that work for statutory and other formal organisations for example, as is already taking place through Neighbourhood Justice Panels and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes
- increase visibility of policing, including the introduction of 200 new and extra “Community Special Constables” to police the communities they live in and ensure police vehicles are appropriately marked and liveried, reinforcing responsive and visible policing across Staffordshire
- provide local people and communities with accurate information regarding the true picture of crime and anti-social behaviour in their area and what is being done about it through the work of the PCC, the police, criminal justice partners, local authorities, the NHS and other partners. Ensuring that the people of Staffordshire are better informed and involved is key in increasing public confidence and reducing the fear of crime
- support those people that need specialist support, information, advice and guidance to get it in a timely and effective way. For victims of crime this will mostly be delivered through the proposed ‘victim gateway’ (see Priority 2: Victims) but for others it could be about safeguarding, advocacy, counselling, or signposting to activities that would help resolve a problem.
CASE STUDY
Using social media to boost Public Confidence

A key way communities can feel safe and reassured is by engaging with their local police in a way that empowers them to get involved. Social media helps inform communities and reassure them that the police are tackling the issues that matter.

Staffordshire Police are nationally recognised for their operational use of social media. Recently, the force used its Facebook and Twitter sites to appeal for help in finding a missing teenager. Within seven hours of publishing, 104,608 people had seen the appeal, it was shared 1,694 times and 248 community members gave the force feedback to let officers know where it had been shared.

A few hours later the teenager was found safe and well. The girl’s mother commented on Facebook: “...just want to say a massive thank you to everyone who shared her details & helped us get her home safe & sound ....thank you also to all police who have been fantastic.....I can’t even begin to tell you how grateful I am and am so relieved to have her back XX”.

Informed and involved communities are confident and reassured. Staffordshire Police will continue to build its digital engagement over the coming years.
Working Together

Safer, Fairer, United Communities and its key priorities are underpinned by four principles that inform the thinking behind all that is proposed. Being clear about what needs to be done, the outcomes that will be achieved and the action necessary is key to delivery.

Delivering the priorities of the Safer, Fairer, United Communities strategy won’t just happen because it should. The PCC will work to ensure that the approach in Staffordshire is underpinned by ways of working, or principles that enable delivery to happen. These are:

- commissioning and co-production
- partnership and collaboration
- transparency
- value for money.

Commissioning and co-production

The Police and Crime Commissioner’s (PCC) role is to determine the policing, crime and community safety objectives for the area and then work to ensure that these are met. The annual budget of the PCC is approximately £185.4 million of which £182.7 million is currently spent in directly commissioning Staffordshire Police. When set against approximately £7.5 billion spent in the public sector in Staffordshire every year, it is a relatively small, but vital sum.

It’s therefore important that the PCC is able to influence the commissioning and investment of other agencies in Staffordshire, and identify those actions that bring multiple benefits to local communities and partner organisations. The PCC places engagement at the very heart of commissioning – ensuring that all stakeholders have a voice and are integral to designing the right solutions.

An example of multiple benefits is effectively addressing drug and alcohol abuse, which will not only improve community safety and reduce crime, but also lead to far reaching benefits for both individuals and our communities, including reducing public sector costs and improving the life chances of those affected by substance misuse.

It is estimated that every £100 spent on drug treatment can prevent a crime from being committed, and that current drug treatment provision saves £960m to the public purse, and helps to prevent 4.9 million crimes in England every year.

The commissioning approach will be based on a thorough understanding of the needs of Staffordshire residents, communities and businesses, and link to the priorities identified in this plan. The intent is to support projects based on needs and on best practice that delivers sustainable, long-term benefits, promoting bold new approaches.
Because Staffordshire is diverse, with major urban centres and significant rural communities, commissioning, at a local level is essential, using intelligence from Community Safety Partnerships and other local stakeholders. The PCC will support those best placed to deliver the services needed, including community groups, the voluntary sector and statutory agencies.

Through effective joint commissioning that ensures the best use of the overall resource available, the PCC will bring together contributions, ideas and priorities in the best interest of Staffordshire.

**Partnership and collaboration**

There are many thriving and successful partnerships in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent that are working to make communities safer and address issues that impact on crime and community safety. Some of these are formal partnerships that bring different organisations together to deliver improvement; many are less formal and have also been able to deliver substantial change and improvement, often at a very local 'on the ground' level where partnership working can quickly solve problems and make change happen. The PCC is uniquely placed to work with these different partnerships and build on current successes, looking for improvement, establishing new initiatives, driving change and generally working with a spirit of cooperation and collaboration. He will do this in a very practical way that pushes more resource into local communities and utilises the expertise, knowledge and skills that exist at this level to determine how those resources are best used. More detail on this part of the strategy is provided in the Finance and Resources section.

The Staffordshire Strategic Partnership has a good track record of making a real difference and bringing partners together; clarifying their commitment, involvement and resources around its two key priorities:

- Staffordshire will have a thriving economy
- Staffordshire will be a safe, healthy and aspirational place to live.

The PCC will look to strengthen these relationships, working alongside the partnership forums that already exist, such as the two Health and Wellbeing Boards, Safeguarding Boards and the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The real value here will be in delivering improvements, and making a real difference. This approach relies on effective partnership and collaborative working to address crime and wider community safety in Staffordshire.

In taking the broad view set out in this plan, the PCC will also look to deliver improvement through sharing resources, intelligence, understanding and opportunities with partners. Too often partnership working is signed up to strategically, but this is not always carried through because of constraints and barriers. The PCC will challenge and address these issues when they stand in the way of progress.
Transparency

Every agency contributing towards the priorities of this plan will need to be transparent and open in both day-to-day operations and how they make decisions.

The PCC will ask the right questions and share information with local people about the use of public money. Given the challenging economic climate faced over the coming years, it is even more important to be transparent and straightforward about decisions and priorities.

Staffordshire Police are reviewing current arrangements for transparency and openness, considering the opportunities to make positive changes, whilst avoiding operational risks. It is also critical that there are similar approaches for all partners, and that scrutiny arrangements and engagement opportunities are truly effective.

The PCC will also ensure that the right processes are in place for managing conduct and complaints through Staffordshire Police with any trends and areas of concern reported and managed through discussions with the Chief Constable. Learning from these will be taken forward and lead to genuine improvements to processes and for the outcomes of residents, communities and businesses.

Through the Police and Crime Panel, the PCC is held to account for the key decisions that are made, as well as the development of strategy and policy related to community safety activity in Staffordshire.

The PCC is committed to providing clear, timely and honest communication on progress towards delivering the priorities and actions set out in this plan, and will report back in a timely manner around how we’re performing against them.

Value for money

The PCC has a duty to ensure value for money, as do those who provide services directly to the public. Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (2011) the Chief Constable has a specific duty to achieve value for money and this will be a key aspect of the Police and Crime Commissioner holding him to account. Both the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable will also ensure increased social value across everything that is done.

The vision towards a greater focus on early intervention will be fundamental in ensuring that services are not only more integrated, but that real financial savings are achieved.

The PCC will reduce bureaucracy and waste, and improve efficiency in all aspects of this plan, including procurement. The PCC will work with the different partners that are signed up to it to make the best use of all the resources that are available, and hold them to account for delivering outcomes and real benefits for Staffordshire. Collaboration and partnerships do have a real focus on value for money and this will be maintained and improved into the future.

The PCC will also ensure that procurement is effective and efficient, and that funding allocated for use by others e.g. through Community Safety Partnerships, achieves good results.

There is an opportunity to ensure that the support services, that underpin operations, offer the very best value for money, and help to achieve the improved outcomes set out in this plan. The PCC will investigate opportunities for shared services and facilities where these are appropriate, whilst ensuring the very best in quality. Will look at how shared facilities will be identified, to ensure improved access to services in the ways that suit them and how technology can be used to an optimum level.
Implementation

Realising the priorities set out in this plan will rely on the shared commitment and ambition of all local stakeholders. Intervening early and tackling potential problems at their root causes provide the chance to improve outcomes for our people, communities and businesses using collective resources in the most effective way.

The priorities set out in this plan need to be shaped to allow for the diverse nature of Staffordshire’s communities, and their own circumstances, whilst ensuring a better quality of life for everyone.

Alongside the priorities and activities set out in this strategy, the PCC will produce more detailed plans outlining how our priorities will achieve the overall vision. These plans will reflect how the PCC supports and works with a range of providers in designing the right approaches to ensure the best outcomes for our residents and communities.

In realising improved outcomes across Staffordshire in line with our priorities, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner will develop joint commissioning arrangements, and investigate the pooling and aligning of budgets across stakeholders to provide clarity across all partners over their contributions.

Commissioning for improved outcomes requires innovation and commitment to ensuring best value for money, as well as ensuring the social value of services we commission. By focussing on early intervention, the PCC will be working closely with and influencing, a whole range of agencies including those improving life chances for young people, ensuring people live in safe environments, tacking mental health issues and dealing with the effects of substance misuse.
Performance management

Partnership Performance

The Strategy sets out a vision for Staffordshire to work together and deliver real, sustainable improvements. This cannot be done in isolation. There needs to be a shared purpose across agencies, as well as clear lines of accountability to understand how the change will be delivered and by whom. The strategy is underpinned by four priorities that are broadly shared by public service agencies and have wide public support. These priorities also help to define a clear path from measurement to vision. The strategy can only be delivered by a shared understanding and contribution from partner agencies and this is demonstrated through local delivery plans linked to the strategy, each with defined success criteria that will be monitored and analysed to understand the level of impact.

Fewer targets more policing

In the past, police forces have been measured against a set of numerical monthly and annual targets that can lead to changes in behaviour and decision making in order to service a performance level that has been set in an arbitrary way. The PCC has removed the constraints that the target culture brings and will focus on scrutinising the force across a number of measures to ensure a holistic view is taken in delivering improvements and recognising the areas that cause harm to communities. This will not be limited to identifying a few crime types, as this often fails to recognise crimes where they may be more vulnerable or longer lasting effects on victims; This takes account of the level of harm and performance over a sustained period, rather than concentrating on short-term, fluctuating snapshots of crime levels.

This approach appreciates that in any series of data, there is a normal level of variation, which, if taken as isolated points will have the effect of providing misleading information. The PCCs approach is to evaluate performance as a longer term view, continually seeking to drive improvements throughout the system, rather than expecting a specific target level to be reached at the end of a financial year.

Accountability Framework

The Police and crime Commissioner will hold the Chief Constable to account through rigorous scrutiny and assessment of the performance information available and will use the data to help understand the direction of the force and the challenges faced as well as using it to help recognise the success in delivering against the strategy. While there will be regular formal meetings between the PCC and Chief Constable to review performance, finance and other challenges, public meetings will also be held quarterly to ensure transparency and visibility of the commissioner’s scrutiny process.
Finance and Resources

Expenditure

The total budget to fund policing and crime reduction is £185.4m. This has been distributed by the PCC to maintain continuity with the previous Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and not disadvantage existing service providers whilst the new Strategy is developed.

Income

The PCC is committed to ensuring the best value for money for all council tax payers across Staffordshire and made the firm decision to freeze Council Tax in 2013/14. The council tax precept has been frozen at £177.61 for a standard Band D taxpayer. The precept funds approximately 32% of the total funding available as shown in this pie chart.
**Community Funding**

The PCC has allocated a total of £1.3m in 2013/14 to local communities through his Community Fund. This is made up of two parts; allocated Locality Funding (similar to the previous Community Safety Funding arrangements) and a bidding based Local Policing Fund that supports local community safety initiatives that are supported by Local Policing Teams and their local partners.

- **Locality Fund**: £1,050,000
- **Local Policing Fund**: £250,000
- **Total**: £1,300,000

From 2014/15 onwards the PCC will more than double the funding available to local communities, supporting the move towards the commissioning of local solutions for local communities. Consultation with local partners on how this additional funding is made available will take place during October and November 2013, with implementation prior to the 2014/15 financial year so that spending can take place from 1st April 2014 onwards.

**Making best use of resources across Staffordshire**

Throughout this plan, the PCC has emphasised the importance of working in partnership to achieve improved outcomes for Staffordshire’s residents, communities and businesses. Making the best use of our resources is fundamental to this, and through identifying joint commissioning and working opportunities, partners across Staffordshire will work together to ensure that every pound of the £7.5 billion of public money in Staffordshire is used as effectively as possible and is used to support the local economy wherever possible. This could be through utilising local suppliers, developing consortia arrangements that are based in Staffordshire and employ local people and focusing on the work of voluntary, community organisations and small businesses that particularly support the rural economy.
Governance

Partnership governance structures for community safety and crime and disorder across Staffordshire have not yet been adapted to reflect the new role of the Police and Crime Commissioner. In the main, these structures reflect previous legislative requirements and are based on local government areas; in Staffordshire, the County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the eight District / Borough Councils.

Current governance arrangements are built on the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) regulations 2007. The 1998 Act requires responsible authorities (commonly referred to as a Community Safety Partnership (CSP)) in a local government area to work together in formulating and implementing strategies to tackle crime and disorder in their local area. The 2007 Regulations set out the way that CSPs should carry out their functions, requiring the preparation of:

- a partnership plan for their local area, setting out their priorities
- a county level community safety agreement, setting out how CSPs in the county area might more effectively implement priorities through joint working.

Reflecting the changes in the statutory environment, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2012 update the requirements from earlier legislation and guidance to require co-operation and joined-up working between responsible authorities and elected policing bodies (the PCC) both in developing strategy and exercising their functions.

The legislation and guidance does not prescribe how co-operation and joined-up working should be assured. However, the development of revised governance arrangements can assist in providing this assurance. Together with partners, the PCC is reviewing current arrangements and is looking to identify improvements that can assist the delivery of the Safer, Fairer, United Communities strategy.

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