

**Community Safety Partnership
Partnership Management Group**

13th November 2006

Proposed response to rise in recorded crime April – September 2006

Reason for report

To clarify the current position on the 22% rise in recorded British Crime Survey (BCS) crime in Milton Keynes between April and September 2006, seek to identify the reasons and to propose methods for tackling this problem.

Summary of the situation

During the last 6 months, the following issues have arisen:

- There has been a rise of 22% in recorded BCS crime in Milton Keynes
- This is spread across most categories of crime and across nearly all geographical areas. The rise was predominantly in April and May, but has since been improve.
- During the same period there was an adjustment in the method of collecting and recording the crime data by Thames Valley Police.
- Youth Offending referrals, deliberate fires and anti-social behaviour reports have not risen during the period – in some cases the trend has been downwards
- Prosecutions of alleged adult offenders have risen during the period.
- The information is rightly in the public domain, and there has been some interest from the press
- It is probable that the current crime rates will prove to be a new base rate for recorded crime. In that case, few of the crime reduction and PSA targets will be achieved
- If the news is not carefully and accurately handled it is probable that the situation will also have an adverse effect on fear of crime
- The Partnership has been accused by the Chief Constable of being insufficiently focused on developing robust solutions to the rise in recorded crime

Suggested way forward (summary)

These issues were discussed by the Statutory Officers' Support Group (SOSG) on 13th October. It was decided to develop an action plan as a matter of urgency in order to reduce the 3 priority offences of criminal damage, theft from vehicles and violence in public places. Between them, these crimes account for about 55% of recorded BCS offences.

Outcome of SOSG meeting, 13.10.06

SOSG recommended that the Partnership adopt a problem-solving approach to the matter.

1. Define the problem as precisely as possible
2. Define the necessary outcomes
3. Evaluate possible methods of achieving those outcomes
4. Define and cost the resources required
5. Take action
6. Monitor and evaluate against outcomes

Thames Valley Police has already defined the problem very precisely from recorded crime data. However it would be useful to bring in additional information from partner agencies, including council, fire service, YOT, DAT and Probation. It would be useful if this could be collated and independently analysed in as short a time frame as possible. Ideally this step should be commenced immediately. Internal Audit (MKC) has agreed to take this forward with immediate effect.

Outcomes will be suggested by the results of the analysis. However, whatever the results, there is no doubt that we should be committed to identifying and resolving crime hotspots, with particular reference to the “big three” volume crimes: theft from vehicles, criminal damage and violence in public places. A pragmatic reason is that these offences account for the bulk of BCS crime, and that a priority will be to bring these down rapidly.

We will have to accept that recorded crime levels are higher than originally anticipated. In that case, the Partnership will also have to accept that original targets are unlikely to be achieved, and move on to make a vigorous attack on the revised levels.

One method of tackling this is to set up a flexible, multi-agency task force consisting of police officers, council enforcement officers and wardens and possibly officers from housing, the youth service and other agencies. The task force may strike a balance between enforcement and preventative approaches. Its mission will be to tackle the volume crimes above, targeting the hot-spots.

Rather than set up another body to manage the Task Force, consideration may be given to developing an existing enterprise such as the SCU (Safer Communities Unit). Whichever structure is used, it is imperative that a multi-agency focus is retained.

Action plans should be completed to achieve target reductions in the crimes listed above. It is suggested that the target for each of these crimes should be a 10% reduction by 31st March 2007 on the figures for April – September 2006. The action plans will follow the police “EPIC” format: Enforcement, Prevention, Intelligence, Communication. Each action will have a designated lead officer who will manage delivery on behalf of the Partnership.

JATAC (Joint Agency Tasking & Co-ordination) could identify hot-spots and help to target resources appropriately.

Costs should be shared between the agencies.

The other BCS crimes account for about 45% of recorded crime. It is important that the emergency measures on the three volume crimes do not impede action in reducing the other BCS crimes. For this reason it is recommended that delivery groups should develop action plans for reductions as follows:

Reducing violence:	Robbery, wounding, domestic violence
Tackling anti-social behaviour:	Interference with and theft of vehicles
Keeping our eyes open:	Domestic burglary, theft

The other three delivery groups should support the revised strategy as fully as possible.

There should be clear accountability to the Partnership. It is suggested that this should be through a monthly Performance Group that may replace the Chairs' and Deputies' Group.

Recommendations

1. That the Audit plan be approved by the Partnership, enabling Internal Audit to focus on data analysis. It will also compare resources committed to the CSP with those received by partnerships in other areas.
2. That the CSP approves the draft action plan (EPIC) to reduce criminal damage, theft from vehicles and violence in public places.
3. That the Chairs and Vice Chairs Delivery Group be transformed into a monthly performance group, holding delivery groups to account against targets. The performance group should report directly to the PMG.
4. That the existing delivery groups should continue to focus on the longer term work of the Partnership.

Attached papers

1. MK BCU crimes year on year data (Excel spreadsheet)
2. MK crime since April 2006 – Graphical (Excel spreadsheet)
3. Internal Audit Terms of Reference
4. Priority crimes plan (EPIC)
5. Structure Chart - CSP

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27.10.06