

Communities – Evidence for Race Equality Commission Crime and Justice Hearing, 13 July 2021

1. Community Safety

The Community Safety and Safer Neighbourhoods Service is a multi agency partnership team consisting of officers from the local authority, South Yorkshire Police (SYP), South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYF&R), Probation Services, Mental Health Services and Housing.

The team was first established in 2016 with a view to improve our responsiveness and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour issues from occurring as a multi agency resource.

The service is currently being expanded but at present its staff is as follows:

- SCC 16 officers with 6.25 of staff identifying as BAME
- SYP 12 officers including 1 x Inspector, 2 x Sergeants with 2 staff identifying as BAME. In addition 2 Support staff with 0 identifying as BAME.
- SYF&R 1 officer
- Mental Health Services 1 officer with 1 member identifying as BAME
- Probation services 1 officer
- Housing Services 3 staff with 1 member identifying as BAME

Work takes place at all levels throughout the service led by the Head of Service.

Priorities from these meetings are reported through to Senior Officers in the Local Authority and partners and ensure a joined up approach. This is done quarterly via the city's

- statutory Crime and Disorder Partnership Gold Board
- the Serious Organised Crime Gold Board
- the Prevent Gold Board.

From April 2021, additional funding (£1.1m p.a.) has been identified to support and expand the work of the Community Safety Team, this includes:

- providing a multi-tenure anti-social behaviour (ASB) offer in order that all residents of the city are able to access support when a victim of ASB.. As this is a newly established team we do not currently have this data but are putting together a performance management framework where we will record both victim and perpetrators ethnicity wherever possible. In the past this service has primarily only been available to those living in social housing which has left many residents living in private rented accommodation, often some of the poorest accommodation in the city, without support.
- strengthening neighbourhood visibility by reinvigorating the warden's team with sustainable communities officers that will be a supportive presence on the streets, details of all vacancies were sent out to all community groups to ask to support recruitment. We did not fill all posts so will go out to recruitment again and are

working with HR colleagues on how we attract increased numbers of applications from BAME applicants.

- leading on multi-agency interventions to prevent crime and ASB via newly appointed Safer Neighbourhood Co-ordinators. These officers will work across all communities negatively affected by crime and anti-social behaviour. In addition to increased Council Funding there is also increased Home Office funding into the Prevent Team with additional officers -1 working with schools and 1 in community engagement providing training briefings, sharing information and support and identifying areas of concern in Sheffield, particularly the far right. The additional resource will ensure improved relations with all communities sharing information and priorities. A priority within the team is to build constructive relationships across communities and promote transparency about Prevent activity, which will help address community concerns about targeting. (eg through meeting with Equality Partnership and discussing regional referral data)

1.1 Crime and Disorder Partnership - Safer Sheffield Partnership (SSP)

The Structure of the partnership is at Gold, Silver and Bronze levels.

- The Gold level is chaired by the Commander of Police and the LA Chief Executive and membership is currently being reviewed with proactive action to target BAME members Discussions are taking place with the BAME group set up to look at the impact of Covid 19 on BAME communities.
- The Silver level is chaired by the Head of Community Safety and the SYP Partnerships Superintendent, membership which will be reviewed after the completion of Gold and again proactive action to target BAME members.
- Bronze is made up of a selection of priority theme groups as identified in the 3 yearly Community Safety Plan. This plan is updated annually following the annual analysis contained in the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment (JSIA). The information comes from police and all partners but with the introduction of the LAC's far more work will be carried out to understand local priorities. Current priorities are:
 - Protecting the Vulnerable in Sheffield (including groups looking at hate crime and modern slavery)- There's inevitably a prevalence of BAME people as modern slavery victims, many of whom have been transported from other continents.
 - Address Impact of Drugs within Sheffield.
 - Address Impact of ASB within Sheffield.
 - Address Impact of Crime within Sheffield using Police data.
 - Create Safer Communities in Sheffield (COVID Recovery / New Emerging Threats- an example of which is the emergence of county lines.

Cross Cutting Priority - Reduce Reoffending Across Sheffield

This engagement with LAC's and community groups on the plan and priorities will commence early 2022. We will use the Local Area Committee networks and communication streams / platforms to capture a diverse range of 'voices'.

The Safer Sheffield Partnership receives annual Local Authority and Police and Crime Commissioner funding to support work to reduce crime and disorder, as well as help build community resilience. Over 2020/21, the Partnership funded approx. £315k on a range of interventions that positively impact on BAME communities. These include:

- Funding the Partnership Hate Crime Officer.
- Providing tailored support to BAME communities to increase reporting and support around hate crime/incidents reports.
- Work started on strengthening the network of third-party reporting centres.
- Spotting and responding to emerging trends.
- Delivering hate crime awareness sessions (e.g.) in schools.
- Improving operational responses.
- Unity Gym's Positive Choices project.
- Sharrow Community Forum (increasing positive interventions).
- Brendan Ingle Foundation, 'Fighting Back' (improving integration and social inclusion).

The Partnership also funds a dedicated Partnership Analyst to monitor the effectiveness of interventions and provide recommendations for future work to address the impact of crime and disorder issues.

2. Hate Crime

The partnership funds a Hate Crime Co-ordinator employed by SYP this role is a partnership officer, jointly tasked by the SYP Inspector in the multi agency team alongside the SCC Community Safety Partnership Manager.

The hate crime partnership group has produced a hate crime action plan for the city. The Action Plan is appended and below are examples of some of the priority actions:

- Produce an operational project plan to review potential new and existing third party reporting centres in Sheffield by 31.8.2021
- Data sharing protocols to be developed across the partners.
- SYP and SCC (media teams) to review options and pathways for a media release to communities in Sheffield.
- Hate Crime coordinator, SYP and SCC (media teams) to design a Hate Crime Communications Campaign that raises awareness of hate crime and challenges attitudes/behaviours that cause it.
- Office of the PCC to review hate crime victim/perpetrator profile data and consider an anti-hate crime education campaign in schools to help young people tackle all aspects of hate crime. An example of such a campaign can be found via the following link. <https://neconnected.co.uk/schools-back-hate-crime-campaign/>
- Delivering a longer-term project to help local people find out more about hate crime
- The LAC's will create the vehicle for local solutions by connecting residents, relevant community organisations and services (inc. partners).

In addition other work taking place in Communities outside of the Hate Crime priority group includes:

Counter Extremism – built excellent relationships with Mosques and wider faith leaders to get crime reduction and prevention safety messages out e.g. 'punish a Muslim day'; supported religious sites Mosques, Madrassa's Churches, Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Sikh Temple and Sikh Gurdawa to obtain funding from the 'Places of Worship' fund to support information, advice and guidance to their communities. Work was also carried out with BAME communities to access funding from Building Safer Britain together and worked with

both the Orthodox Jewish Community and the Sheffield & District Reform Jewish Community who accessed funding via the National Council of Synagogues and the Community Security Trust, work carried out by Home Office funded resources. The Home Office have changed what they are prepared to fund but we are working with them re linking into work done on Prevent.

- Seconded our Cohesion and Migration lead Officer into the Violence and Reduction Unit (VRU) to ensure all BAME groups have a voice. We have also produced a VRU action plan looking at the causes of violent crime and our actions to tackle this and gaps in those actions where we may target funding Attached Proactively supported development of Police Independent Advisory Group, and supported Roma representation in this group alongside Pakistani, Chinese, Arabic and Transgender representatives.
- Agreed a citywide process regarding the removal of hate crime graffiti across the city to ensure we are photographing, recording and reporting it to SYP and not just removing graffiti. Examples are hundred handers posters in Bramall Lane area and removal of hate posters in Tinsley working with local voluntary sector and police.
- Created a neighbourhood house in Page Hall to provide a base for neighbourhood policing team and local authority officers working in the area

3. Interventions leading to reduced BAME interactions with the CJ System

Preventative work taking place is also highlighted in other sections.

From October 2020 the Community Safety and Safer Neighbourhoods Service moved into the Communities Service to ensure a consistent joined up service across SCC to develop work that proactively supports communities post Covid, preventing the vulnerable including BAME being targeted and criminally exploited. This included resources connected to Fortify, the Partnerships approach to the disruption of organised crime.

The additional investment provides the opportunity to increase our prevention and early intervention work with BAME communities, particularly in areas disproportionately affected by crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Community Safety Team, in conjunction with the introduction of the Local Area Committees, will improve engagement with BAME groups by being in and of our communities, working in partnership, improving responsiveness, with the aim of increasing confidence in the council and its partners to address crime and ASB.

We will encourage representation from Voluntary Sector BAME groups to join the Community Safety Partnership Board to ensure we are focused and informed of the issues facing BAME communities regarding crime and the criminal justice system and how we strengthen our prevention and early intervention offer as a partnership. Working with the BAME group set up to support the Covid response.

This work also links to the evidence and information given to the Race Equality Commission regarding the development of youth services in the city especially working with communities, community groups and on a multi agency basis with the police, Violence Reduction Unit, health, social care and education to improve the outcomes for young people, particularly concerning criminal exploitation.

The Head of Community Safety has recently taken up the Chair of the Youth Justice Board and has along with the Board overseen the Annual Youth Justice Plan for 2021 and also the recent thematic inspection to identify how Youth Offending Services understand and meet the needs of black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system. She is Chair of the multi agency Channel Panel where partners come together to produce plans to support people vulnerable to the risk of radicalisation. Referral and case data is regularly reviewed to direct supportive early intervention activity (eg projects promoting online safety).

An example of our recent work in communities is below –

Case study Page Hall

Through holding events with Page Hall residents, community organisations, council services and partners organisations that work in the area; a set of priorities were identified which included ASB. Resident Forums and practitioner working groups discussing the ASB issues and potential solutions, agreed that there would be benefits to creating a 'partnership house' that could be used by South Yorkshire Police and offer other opportunities to SCC services and partners in the area including the VCF sector.

Housing Services agreed that an SCC property could be used for this purpose. The partnership house was opened on Wednesday 23rd June 2021 and SYP held their first 'drop in' for residents to discuss and report relevant issues without the need for calls to the 101 number. This service has been well received and is advertised on the SYP North East Twitter page.

3.1 Fortify

We also have a multiagency Fortify Team which includes representatives from organisations as required depending on the cases some of whom are from BAME backgrounds. The team works to address Serious Organised Crime that is made up of various partners led by SYP and SCC. As well as enforcement there is also prevention and disruption work that takes place.

The fortify Team also has Health Partners that run the Navigator Programme where if people are in hospital following a violent crime a navigator will go and talk to them and offer them help to leave the gang or change lifestyles as this is sometimes the best opportunity. There are 4 navigators one is BAME.

Throughout 2020/21, an area of the city has seen a marked increase in violent incidents linked to competing county lines run by local organised crime groups. The neighbourhoods are diverse, with a predominance of BAME communities. There are concerns that young people are being drawn in and exploited by the Organised Crime Groups (OCG's). Following a recent multi agency exercise a council Safer Neighbourhood Co-ordinator has been introduced and is co-ordinating an area plan to increase preventative interventions, including:

- regular meetings with schools to identify vulnerable children and families, predominantly from BAME backgrounds, requiring support.
- formation of a Neighbourhood Action Group to coordinate partner activity. This will include organisations, such as Mum's United and The Hubb who work with BAME individuals (as well as the community as a whole).

- increasing support to voluntary and community organisations, including supporting funding bids, such as supporting The Hubb to provide bespoke citizenship programmes.
- expanding and improving the network of activities for young people; and
- increasing community voice and influence by creating social media platforms, such as an app where members of the community can access key messages and post particular issues that would not otherwise be reported.

After an initial period, it is envisaged that the plan will move from a focus on crime and disorder to a community resilience plan led by the Local Area Committee, local partners and the community. The plan will be used as a template in other areas where similar issues may occur.

3.2 Reducing Reoffending

Reducing Reoffending is a priority for the Community Safety Partnership and following the amalgamation of National Probation Services and the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) into Probation Service we are working with the local Director to ensure this is a priority for all our theme groups.

3.3 The ASB Service

A new Anti-Social Behaviour Team is being established and this will ensure an effective and coordinated response to anti-social behaviour for all housing tenures with a recruitment drive aimed at the candidates from the communities they will work in.

Specialist Anti-Social Behaviour Resolution Officers will make use of the full range of tools and powers to address the highest priority cases across the city. This will include working with the Police, landlords and other organisations to ensure victims of racial harassment and hate crimes are supported and action is taken against the perpetrators. This work will be supported by both the ASB and Hate Crime Strategic Groups feeding performance back into the Safer Sheffield Partnership.

A team of 28 Sustainable Community Officers will work directly within communities across Sheffield and alongside the Local Area Committees and community groups to identify and address local priorities. These officers will provide a supportive presence on the streets for people to establish relations with and report when things don't look or feel right. We are targeting recruitment to these posts to ensure the service reflects all communities in Sheffield. Of the 28 officers 7 will be apprenticeship posts which will give employment opportunities in areas and increase knowledge and links with all partnership organisations such as SYP and South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue. There will be job shadowing and training offered with these organisations so that there are more opportunities for future employment.