

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Report of	CHIEF CONSTABLE
Subject	KNIFE CRIME
Date	WEDNESDAY 26TH JULY 2017
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Purpose of Report

1. In March 2017 Leicestershire Police adopted Knife Crime as force threat following a sustained increase in serious incidents involving bladed weapons.
2. This report provides an update on the activity since that date and the governance around the delivery of interventions.

Executive Summary

3. A Gold Group was convened in response to the increase and a control plan was proposed that focused on Prevent, Protect, Prepare and Pursue.
4. The strategic aims were set as:
 - Preserve life and reduce knife crime
 - Safeguard and protect people at risk of becoming a victim of knife violence
 - Deter People away from carrying knives and becoming an offender
 - Enhance public and partners confidence
5. Intelligence analysis of the issue identified that the increase was not down to one type of crime but was focused on three city based Neighbourhood Policing areas with an impact on Charnwood and Hinckley to lesser extents.
6. A multi-agency gold was convened and chaired by Andy Keeling (Chief Operating Officer, Leicester City Council) and ACC Rob Nixon on 28 April 2017 where it was agreed Supt Shane O'Neill would co-ordinate a joint knife crime prevention response.
7. The Knife Crime Prevention group convened on 18 May 2017 and the control plan compiled the following attendance from partner agencies. This plan focuses on the 4 P plan areas of;
 - **Prevent** – reduce the carrying of knives
 - **Protect** – those at risk of being subject to knife crime
 - **Pursue** – deal with those carrying knives or associated with criminal networks

- **Prepare** – ensure partnerships deal effectively to reduce impact of knife crime
8. Leicestershire Police have also formed a dedicated team of investigators (Operation Spartan) to proactively disrupt those representing the most risk from intelligence and reported crimes.
 9. A multi-agency pursue panel is being formed to tackle the most harmful individuals by ensuring all disruption opportunities are taken to remove this ability to cause impact on our communities.
 10. Governance for all aspects will be through the Force Tactical and Tasking process which senior representatives from partner agencies attend.

Introduction

11. Serious crime reported and raised community concerns showed that Leicestershire was experiencing an increase in knife crime in line with national trends. The impact on community confidence and the significant resources being deployed to knife related crime was being reported through stakeholders and the media.
12. A Gold Group was convened by ACC Nixon and a knife crime co-ordinator, Ps Glen Icton, was appointed for Leicestershire Police to ensure operational consistency in deployments and effective use of proactive powers.
13. A control plan was created in line with the nationally recognised Prevent, Prepare, Protect and Pursue.
14. Intelligence analysis of the issue identified that there has been a sustained increase in knife crime over a 2 year period.
15. The analysis showed the increase was significant in West, Central and East Leicester for different crime types showing it was a single issue creating the problem. Key age groups involved were 18 to 24 years and then 11 to 17 years.
16. This impact was also apparent in Loughborough and Hinckley areas of Leicestershire to a lesser degree than Leicester City.
17. A proactive prevention operation (Operation Anvil) and associated anti-knife campaign was initiated under Operation Anvil to promote the use of stop search through intelligence led deployments.
18. Initial education packages have been created and provided to schools and prevention messages have also been circulated by Leicestershire Police corporate communications team.
19. Leicestershire Police also formed a proactive investigation capability (Operation Spartan) led by DCI Rob Widdowson that is focusing on the individuals most likely to cause harm with knives based on recent intelligence or criminal activity.
20. A multi-agency pursue panel is being formed to tackle these individuals from a holistic viewpoint in trying to remove them from causing harm while disrupting their links to criminality leading to incidents of violence.

Updates

21. The Knife Crime Prevention group has now met twice and includes members from City Youth Services, County YOS, Child Safeguarding, City Safer Leicester Partnership and Police, Headteachers and EMAS.
22. The Prevention Group has taken a whole family approach to tackling this issue with the aim of intervening and diverting those at risk of carrying a knife and seeking peer pressure in making carrying a knife unacceptable.
23. Operation Anvil patrols have been carried out in Leicester City, Hinckley, Coalville and Loughborough promoting preventative messages and using the knife arch as a discussion point with the public.
24. The outcomes of these preventative patrols are measurably more impactful on the public debate around this issue than the prevention messages alone.
25. Names of the habitual knife carriers have been shared across agencies and a review of interventions is taking place to reassess what more can be done with early interventions or YOS.
26. Educational packages have been developed for use in schools, in the short term, with development of a more detailed package for the October term delivered by other agencies and speakers. The aim is to cascade training to volunteers and other community groups to reach youth clubs and others in the key age categories.
27. There is an overlap between the risks presented by knife carriers, Urban Street gangs (USG) and Organised Crime Groups (OCGs). Task and finish groups were commissioned to address how these risks are identified, reported and actioned across the agencies seeking to intervene and divert from this activity.
28. The Leicester Royal Infirmary A&E has engaged in supplying information about injuries they assess as caused by knives and will be used to better inform the intelligence picture around the targeted messaging.
29. Volunteer agencies have been identified as an important delivery to key age groups of 11 to 17 year olds, and 18 to 24 years. The group will be seeking grass root networks to support delivery of educational packages and promote the OPCC funding opportunities.
30. Leicestershire is taking part in the National Anti-Knife crime programme (Op Sceptre) between 24 and 29 July 2017 where we will be seeking support from all partnerships in sharing the key messages.
31. The initial enforcement action through Operation Spartan, against 17 named individuals, led to 16 arrests and 11 warrants being carried out, with knives and other weapons located including a loaded firearm.
32. Operation Spartan after its initial enforcement activity has now identified 23 individuals who are actively linked to USG or OCG activity where violence may become a factor.
33. These details have been shared with partner agencies through the Force Tactical Process with a multi-agency pursue panel is being formed to tackle

these individuals. This will deal in a holistic way in reducing the harm caused while disrupting their links to criminality leading to incidents of violence.

Ongoing Governance

34. Monthly updates of the reported knife crime will be provided to the force tactical assessment to track progress against the strategic objectives of reducing offences chaired by ACC Rob Nixon. **Appendix A** shows the current situation until June 2017.
35. The Force Tactical meeting has representatives from City and County Councils, and child safeguarding in attendance to ensure full representation made and identify areas for improvements.
36. Updates to the current response in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland have also been reported at the Strategic Assurance Board and request for update at the Police and Crime Panel on 26 July 2017.

Recommendations

37. The Police and Crime Panel acknowledge the multi-agency approach taken locally to tackle the increase in knife crime in LLR, which reflects the increase nationally.
38. To support the communications messages that Leicestershire Police are producing by raising awareness internally and externally to maximise the reach of the messages.
39. Support the preventative activity particularly deployments into schools and organisations for young adults to maximise the consequence messages around knife crime.
40. Support the activity of the multi-agency pursue panel in dealing with those causing or likely to cause most harm through their criminal activities.

Implications

The impact on community confidence is clear from the previous incidents and the necessity for a joint agency approach is necessary to educate and prevent people carrying knives in the first place. A single agency approach would not resolve this nationally recognised issue.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Current Knife crime trend to June 2017

Background Papers

None

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