



Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel

15th September 2023

Anti-Social Behaviour and Operation Loki

1. Purpose

This report provides the Police and Crime Panel with an overview of the actions taken by the Police and Crime Commissioner in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour.

This report is delivered to the Panel alongside an evaluation of Operation Loki which outlines key performance outcomes and next steps.

2. Background

2.1 Tackling anti-social behaviour is a current priority for the government, who released their Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan in May, as well as being a key part of the Police and Crime Plan. The Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan states that everyone has the right to live without fear of facing anti-social behaviour, to leave their home without fearing intimidation, to shop in a vibrant high street free from disorder and disrepair, and to use and enjoy their parks and community spaces.

2.2 The role of the Commissioner is to set the strategic priorities for policing through the Police and Crime Plan and to hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of an effective and efficient police service, and to secure resources for policing. Tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a priority in the Police and Crime Plan and is a strategic priority for Devon and Cornwall Police.

2.3 The tactical response to ASB is primarily delivered by neighbourhood policing teams who are geographically spread across the force. These teams include PCSOs and police officers who collaborate with local partners to deliver a partnership focused, problem-solving approach to ASB.

3. Salient Points

3.1 Investment in neighbourhood policing teams has remained a priority for the Commissioner. In July 2023, the Chief Constable also committed a further police sergeant and five police officers to each BCU within Devon and Cornwall, totalling 24 additional



officers to support neighbourhood policing and tackle anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood crimes.

3.2 PCSO numbers have been maintained, with a recruitment exercise and subsequent intake of 17 PCSOs being achieved in July 2023. Discussions for the next recruitment phase are underway.

3.3 A policing operation, called Operation Loki has been adopted by Devon and Cornwall Police to tackle ASB. Operation Loki, the evaluation of which is outlined below, will continue to be supported as a strategic priority, ensuring effective policing and partnership work is dedicated to prevention and intervention, enforcement and making communities safer.

4. Operation Loki:

4.1 Operation Loki focused on targeted neighbourhood policing within the Safer Streets areas. The operation initially ran for a period of four weeks, consecutively in six areas across Devon and Cornwall, (Torquay, Exeter, Barnstaple, Plymouth, Truro, and Falmouth). It was extended to Paignton for a further two weeks.

4.2 The strategic objectives were:

- proactive engagement with partners and key stakeholders,
- a visible and proactive policing operation utilising intelligence and information to influence policing tactics,
- focus on prevention and direct action, specifically around ASB and Violence against women and girls (VAWG) related offences,
- engage and connect with local communities to improve public confidence.

4.3 Each area tailored their activities to target specific local issues, deploying a range of policing tactics and powers. These included violence against women and girls, anti-social behaviour and drugs use and supply.

All Operation Loki areas					
ACTIVITY	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total
Person Search	54	57	76	58	245
Vehicle Stop	5	9	7	10	31
Licensed Premises Visited	48	28	19	20	115
Community Engagement events	190	185	135	156	666
Total est. number of persons engaged with	8,275	9,029	6,263	3,823	27,390
Arrests	43	51	33	29	156

Intel Submissions	120	94	65	87	366
SAFEGUARDING					
Public Protection Notices Submitted	30	26	17	19	92
Partnership Safeguarding Referrals Completed	33	16	15	14	78

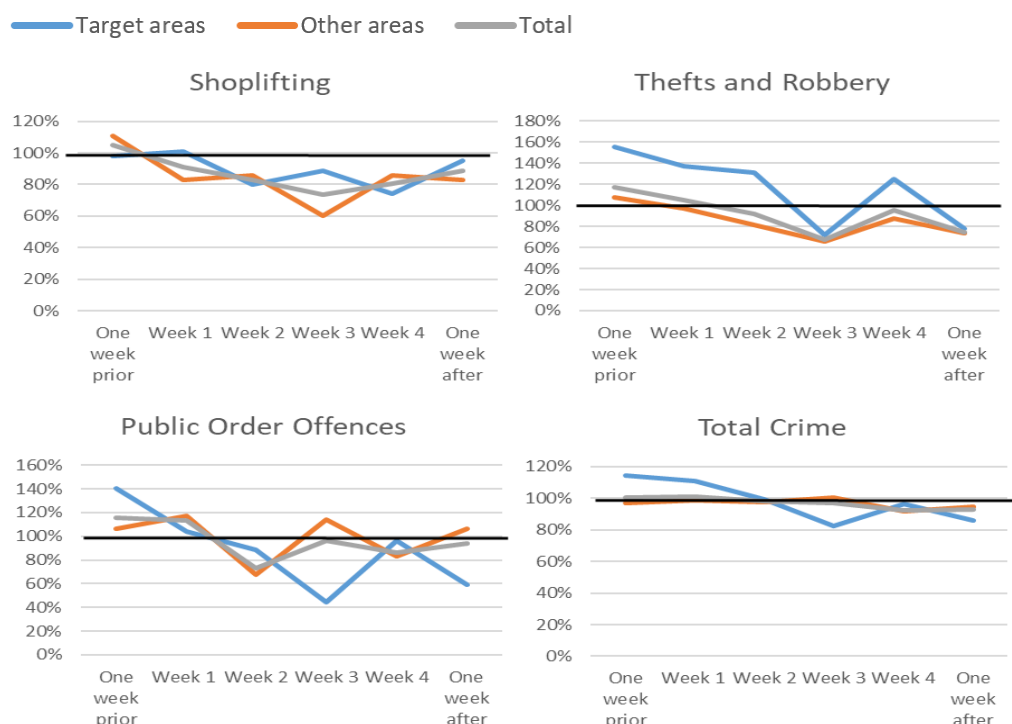
4.4 Many of the areas focussed their activity on specific locations within the areas i.e., a few streets, however, broader activity for specific themes outside of these areas also took place.

5. Performance: Operation Loki

5.1 ASB generally decreased in the target areas, but this was often accompanied by a displacement to the surrounding areas.

5.2 Operation Loki appeared effective in generally decreasing acquisitive crime across the four weeks in the target areas without causing displacement to the surrounding areas, which also saw decreased levels of acquisitive crime.

5.3 Across the target and surrounding areas, total crimes including many offence types such as public order offences, shoplifting, thefts, and robberies steadily decreased throughout the Operation Loki periods.

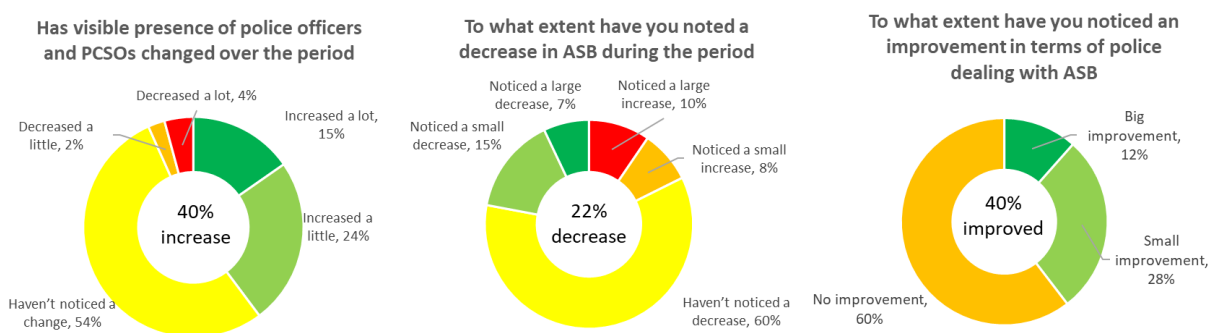


5.4 Drug offences generally increased in the target areas when there was a focus on drugs during Operation Loki as a result of proactive work.

Drug seizures across the Operation Loki Areas					
ACTIVITY	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total
Drug Seizures	20	27	28	32	107
Heroin	£160.00	£185.00	£10.00	£210.00	£565.00
Diazepam / Valium	£40.00	£20.00	£0.00	£0.00	£60.00
Cocaine	£1,250.00	£290.00	£0.00	£500.00	£2,040.00
Crack Cocaine	£160.00	£500.00	£25.00	£40.00	£725.00
MDMA / Ecstasy	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Cannabis	£55.00	£500.00	£100.00	£1,646.00	£2,301.00
Other	£60.00	£65.00	£70.00	£80.00	£275.00
Weapons	1	3	1	1	6
Total est. Seized Drug Value	£1,725	£1,560	£205	£2,476	£5,966

5.4 40% of the public surveyed during Operation Loki said that they had seen an increase in the number of police officers and PCSOs.

5.5 The areas where many people said they had seen an increase in police presence were also areas that people said they saw a decrease in ASB. This perception didn't correlate with the recorded ASB change in the areas.



(Note that this is not a representative sample and therefore won't reflect wider representative surveys)

5.6 Around 27,000 members of public were estimated to have been engaged with either individually, or at events.

5.7 Through social media engagement, the public expressed clear approval of Operation Loki and this type of neighbourhood policing. Facebook received greater views and engagement (1,508,503 people reached) than Twitter (318,048).

6. Next steps

6.1 One of the most successful tactics utilised beyond the more traditional methods during phase 1 was pop-up police stations. The next step will be to seek Safer Streets 5 funding to secure mobile police stations (Cornwall and Devon based) and provide logistical support for its deployment on a regular basis. This will also ensure a balanced and visible engagement opportunity for both rural and urban communities.

6.2 A variety of engagement tactics were utilised during Operation Loki with the creation of a public and partners survey providing good qualitative data. This has evidenced the importance of tracking changes to public perception. Extended capability through the Community Alert 4 app has been purchased to enable a better understanding of concerns the communities have, and the impact policing and partnership interventions have.

6.3 A programme of activity for professionalisation of the neighbourhood role is ongoing with ASB training for police and partners already having taken place at the start of the year. Two dedicated neighbourhood trainer posts have been created to support this programme.

6.4 In line with the national ASB toolkit, further work is ongoing to understand our enforcement of ASB related powers and how we can work in partnership to focus on stronger punishment for perpetrators of ASB, which includes the data, reporting and accountability of ASB. Current scoping is underway to provide legal and case worker support to assist with enforcement and explore intervention initiatives.

6.5 Prevention and intervention work continues as a fundamental facet to longer-term problem solving and improving our communities in relation to ASB. Operation Loki will therefore continue to operate across Devon and Cornwall, to ensure a visible policing response and provide an opportunity for wider engagement with our communities so we understand the issues that are affecting them.