



PURPOSE: Report to the Police and Crime Panel (25/10/19)

Title: Progress report following the Deep Dive Scrutiny Report of Dyfed-Powys Police's Approach to Tackling Illegal Drugs

Executive Summary:

In April 2019, the PCC presented to the Chief Constable his recommendations following a deep dive into the Force's approach to tackling illegal drugs. The report identified some key successes and recognised the Force's commitment to tackling the harm that drug misuse brings to communities. However, it also highlighted some vital gaps in the Force's awareness and utilisation of substance misuse support services to break the cycle of reoffending and decrease repeat demand on frontline officers. The report posed some questions regarding the potential for Dyfed Powys to learn from drug related approaches elsewhere across the UK and worldwide.

Recommendations included a focus on engagement with partners, maximising the use of existing processes such as stop and search and testing on arrest as well as implementing new processes to ensure substance misuse related offending is tackled appropriately and effectively, ensuring the implementation of best practice and shared learning from pilot projects, action plans and approaches taken in other areas.

The below report contains detailed responses to each of the recommendations.

Recommendation:

That the Police and Crime Panel note the contents of the report.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys

I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the NOLAN Principles for Conduct in Public Life.

Signature:

Date:

Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner to Members of the Police and Crime Panel

Progress report following the Deep Dive Scrutiny Report of Dyfed-Powys Police's Approach to Tackling Illegal Drugs

1. Purpose of Report

Prompted by the emergence of serious organised crime and county lines issues across the Force area, the canvassing of public opinion regarding priority areas for scrutiny, and an increase in recent national press, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) undertook a 'deep dive' review of how Dyfed Powys Police tackles illegal drugs. The report was provided to the Chief Constable on 25th April 2019, who endorsed each of the recommendations.

The purpose of this report is to review the progress made by Dyfed-Powys Police against the recommendations of the report in the subsequent 6 months.

2. Outcome

The review, concluding in April 2019, found:

- The Force understand the issues faced by the communities of Dyfed and Powys in terms of the effect of illegal drugs and impact of organised crime groups. However, this has not resulted in less Class A substances being available throughout the communities, nor has it affected the demand for such substances.
- There has been extensive work undertaken to address the issue of illegal drugs in the Dyfed-Powys area. This is demonstrated by the rise in trafficking offences between 2016 and 2018; with an increase of 49% over this period. This increase is resultant from a series of drug disruption operations; targeting those individuals involved in the supply of class A drugs, as well as those who form part of an organised crime group.
- Substance misuse support services offer proven results in the reduction of both offending behaviour and substance/alcohol misuse needs, however these are underused leading to repeat offenders not receiving the treatment they require and increasing repeat demand on front line officers. There is a need for greater awareness amongst police officers of the services and processes available to them, in terms of supporting those with substance misuse needs.
- There is a need to review other drug related approaches from both within and outside of the United Kingdom. The use of Drug Consumption Rooms must be reviewed in terms of their effectiveness in reducing drug related harm and their effect on engaging hard to reach drug users.

3. Situation

The review contributed to the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan by supporting the following priorities:

- Tackle the harm caused by substance misuse (Priority 1 – Keeping our communities safe)
- Work with communities and partners to disrupt serious and organised crime activity (Priority 3 – Protecting our communities from serious threats)
- Ensure that the public receive a visible and accessible service (Priority 4 - Connecting with communities)

The review aimed to identify:

1. The Force's current response to tackling illegal drug use;
2. The Force's effectiveness in tackling illegal drug use;
3. The consistency with which the Force drug policy is applied;
4. The impact on local communities of the Force's approach to tackling illegal drug use; and
5. Local drug treatment services and their effectiveness.

Through:

1. Identifying the current Force strategy in addressing class A drug use across Dyfed-Powys;
2. Identifying the uptake of processes used to identify and treat those affected by substance misuse;
3. Identifying the level of resources being deployed in direct response to illegal drug use;
4. Highlighting areas of good practice and any areas where improvements could be made; and
5. Seeking the views of both the public as well as service users on illegal drugs and the Force's effectiveness in addressing them.

4. Choices and Consequences

The perceived gap in adequate partnership working between the Police and substance misuse service providers means there is a lack of a consistent joint approach in how those affected by substance misuse are treated. This hampers the ability to provide a consistent and sustainable joint approach. The implications of this may result in a lack of:

- joined up approach to consistently address drug related issues;
- resources available when planning drug disruption operations; and
- suitable support and advice on the most effective means of addressing drug related matters.

The reduction in the level of stop searches conducted in Ceredigion leaves a potential gap in identifying individuals who may be in possession of illegal substances as well diverting them into treatment. This coupled with a perception of drug related intelligence not being acted upon could impact the ability for a comprehensive drug intelligence picture to be formed in this area. The implications of this may result in:

- potential for reduced drug related intelligence picture;

- possible increase in drug related activity due to reduction in proactive stop searches; and
- missed opportunities to refer individuals into treatment for assessment and identification of criminogenic needs.

The current IT systems which support the test on arrest process are not adequate and result in a lack of suitable oversight of this process. The implications of this may result in:

- lack of treatment being offered to suitable offenders;
- substance misuse services spending exhaustive amounts of time attempting to contact service users due to missing details on arrest referral forms;
- potential for repeat offenders, resulting in additional demand for police officers; and
- difficulty in quality assuring process, including ensuring that data is effectively and safely transferred to substance misuse providers.

The lack of understanding of how the police use intelligence and what constitutes 'actionable intelligence' can have an impact of public confidence in the police. The implications of this may result in:

- lack of public confidence in the police in terms of their ability to act upon drug related intelligence;
- reduction in the volume of drug related intelligence provided to police officers by members of the public; and consequently
- reduced understanding of the local drug intelligence picture.

5. Actions and Review

The Force had undertaken a peer review of the approach to Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) in the summer of 2018, with areas for development including embedding partnership engagement and enhancing the role of the lead responsible officer within basic command units. Actions already underway to enhance the Force's response to illegal drugs included:

- Serious and organised partnership boards established within each BCU, feeding into the regional SOC boards.
- County lines awareness training delivered to partners
- Draft partnership SOC strategy currently under consultation
- Re-commissioned drug market profile to provide current market profile to inform decision making
- Proactive Priority Teams introduced 7 staff in total (2 in each BCU, but 1 in Ceredigion) in addition to force drug officers and neighbourhood tasking teams to support agile proactive disruption
- County line inputs delivered to secondary schools, railway staff, sports clubs, hotels, skateboard parks, taxi drivers - to raise awareness and request for intelligence.
- Local authority, housing officers, landlords forums and county councillor awareness raising events
- Training for local responsible officers delivered by Home Office

Delivery of the review recommendations are monitored at Force Gold Operations Board chaired by the Temporary ACC, who in turn is held to account by the Chief Constable at Force Executive Board. In addition the Force's response to SOC is monitored via the Public Service Boards and the regional SOC board.

The Force were required to provide a formal update to the Commissioner on the progress made since the publication of the deep dive. At a meeting of the Policing Board on 15th July 2019 the Force provided the below update. Further detail was requested for some recommendations and has been incorporated into the below.

	Recommendation	Position as of September 2019
1	<i>Engage with partners at an early planning stage when delivering drug disruption operations to ensure buy in, including crime stoppers to run targeted intelligence gathering.</i>	<p>During operation Regent the Force adopted a new approach to partnership engagement during a covert operation. This included a strategic and tactical partnership meeting to share intelligence particularly in relation to vulnerable people. An evaluation of Operation Regent gathered partners' views and identified that partners felt informed throughout the operation and the enforcement phase. It was recognised that due to the covert nature of such operations there can be a reluctance to brief partners in relation to details of enforcement. This can impact on partners' ability to ensure sufficient resources in areas such as referral demand.</p> <p>Learning has been shared through Force covert tasking. Partnership is achieved throughout investigation activity through partnership tactical meetings, and sensitive strategic partnership briefings in all operational enforcement plans at an early stage. This approach was taken during the recent Operation Moose enforcement phase with success.</p>
2	<i>Develop a consistent 'drug supply and treatment' protocol between DPP and specialist substance misuse providers.</i>	<p>The Area Planning Board (APB) play a crucial role in co-ordinating and delivering a joined up strategic partner response to drug and alcohol support. Supporting and complementing the work of the Serious Organised Crime Boards in tackling County Lines is a key priority within the Area Planning Board Strategy from 2019 onwards and is within the new Welsh Government Delivery Plan, particularly in relation to prevention. In line with this, the APB will be holding a Prevention Summit in December 2019, co-chaired by the Hywel Dda Health Board Director of Public Health and the Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner, to look at cross partnership approach to prevention, including County Lines. Work will be focused on building individual and community resilience and increasing protective factors for those most vulnerable and at risk. The APB has also received additional funding in 2019, some of which has been invested within the early intervention and prevention agenda, including increased funding for a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services psychologist and early intervention service to target young people most at risk, such as those who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences or other safeguarding and vulnerability issues.</p> <p>Local management, engagement and intelligence sharing processes are in place between drug</p>

		<p>services and police within each county to ensure action is taken in relation to missed appointments and other issues raised by service providers.</p> <p>At a service level, Dyfed Drug and Alcohol Services and the Hywel Dda Health Board Community Drug and Alcohol Team link in with County Line and Serious Organised Crime operations in a shared effort to tackle violent crime and County Lines.</p> <p>Note: Area Planning Boards exist on a Health footprint, therefore a similar approach is proposed to be taken with Powys Area Planning Board.</p>
3	<i>Provide update on Test On Arrest action plan created as part of the 2017 Continuous Improvement Event.</i>	<p>This recommendation and action plan has been adopted by the Force Strategic Custody and Criminal Justice Board. The Force are currently exploring options for system changes to improve the referral process and raising awareness of the test on arrest process. Research has been conducted nationally which demonstrates disparity with some forces utilising the process, others not and some looking to re-introduce. The Force struggles to get meaningful data from the providers which they are progressing. Breach numbers are low and courts very rarely sentence for breaches of this nature. Service providers have given feedback that many of those referred are already clients they work with or are familiar with due to the local nature of our communities.</p> <p>In addition the Force is engaging with the OPCC regarding the re-commissioning of drug support services to ensure processes align.</p>
4	<i>Implement pathfinder across the Force to support two tier approach.</i>	<p>The OPCC commissioned Pathfinder pilot has been reviewed and is currently being re-tendered to launch Force wide on 1st November 2019. The revised approach will automate referrals to partner agencies to ensure streamlined and efficient processes for front line staff to improve engagement with the scheme. Procurement processes are underway with service provider selection taking place in early September. Oversight of delivery is managed via the Force Strategic Custody and Criminal Justice Board chaired by the temporary ACC.</p> <p>The Force will adopt the 2 tier out of court disposal approach for adults in November 2019 to coincide with the Pathfinder launch. Processes are in design phase, and will be presented to the Strategic Criminal Justice Board on 15th October 2019.</p>

		Stakeholder briefings will be delivered to the Quality Assurance Panel prior to launch.
5	<i>Review the effectiveness of Drug Consumption Rooms in reducing harm.</i>	<p>Drug consumption rooms have been successfully trialed outside of the UK. In order to consider this approach in Wales support would need to be obtained from Ministry of Justice, CPS and the Home Office for legal dispensation. In addition careful analysis of the local drug profile in Dyfed Powys would need to be considered to ensure this approach would be suitable for the type of drug use, demographics and methodology of use in our area.</p> <p>The Force is committed to supporting the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner in evaluating the evidence base to work towards the long term objective if research supports its use in the local area.</p>
6	<i>Engaged with area planning boards to support wider prevention agenda.</i>	As referenced in recommendation 2 the Area Planning Board is engaged in creating a county lines action plan to address wider prevention.
7	<i>Ensure best practice highlighted within drug related deaths key learning and research is being adopted within force.</i>	The content of the National Aids Trust 'Drug related deaths in England report' has been incorporated into the Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) partnership strategy and action plan. In addition the learning is being shared with local SOC boards. Following the spike in incidents in Llanelli a few years ago, a drug death overview group was convened with senior police representation. An action plan was created and completed. This included the roll out of Naloxone, multi-agency drug death reviews where appropriate and increased support services. This group was led by Hywel Dda Health Board but due to restructure and staff shortages they have been unable to support the meeting since October 2018. We have engaged with them as part of the Serious and Organised Crime strategy work and they recognise this is an area they need to prioritise, particularly given the recent Office of National Statistics drug death figures. DCI Gareth Roberts is working with them to re-invigorate this work through the SOC boards.

8	<p><i>Review stop search outcomes to ensure these are being appropriately and consistently applied.</i></p>	<p>Stop and Search is a useful and effective tool but a powerful one which must be utilised with care and fairness. Research in Force and nationally has shown there is a lack of confidence from officers in using this tool due to government scrutiny of its use.</p> <p>Stop and Search is governed by the Ethical Use of Police Powers Group. This group has embedded new audit processes which include local inspector and an independent inspector reviewing the quality and necessity of up to 25% of searches each month. Findings are fed back individually and to the group regarding organizational learning.</p> <p>The Commissioner's Quality Assurance Panel (made up of independent residents) review stop and search incidents on a regular basis. They consider written records and corresponding Body Worn Video footage in order to make a judgement on whether they considered there were reasonable grounds for the search and that the individual had been dealt with fairly and proportionately.</p> <p>To support officers a 'buddy' scheme has been introduced in Powys and Ceredigion to increase officers' confidence and knowledge in relation to stop search, this is due to be replicated across the Force area.</p> <p>Through this process some anomalies have been identified within the Force's stop search outcome data. An outcome will be applied at the time of conducting the search but there is no mechanism to update this at a later stage should further developments occur. This can lead to an apparent disconnect between the number of positive searches and outcomes. Solutions are being considered by the Ethical use of Police Powers Group.</p>
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9	<i>To conduct an evaluation of the Digital Media Investigator (DMI) pilot in Pembrokeshire to identify possible benefits of roll out across the Force.</i>	<p>A full review of the DMI pilot and the capacity and capability of the Digital Communications and Cybercrime Unit (DCCU) has been conducted and presented to T/ACC Evans. It is nationally recognized that the increase in volume of complexity of digital media and data is creating significant issues for law enforcement. In order to increase capacity a number of recommendations have been adopted which include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased local capacity through upskilling local Force intelligence officers to perform DMI functions • Increased local capacity for mobile telephone examination with support of Force Crime Scene Investigators subject to further consultation with staff and staff associations. • Increased capability through purchase of additional equipment to assist in triage and review. These purchases are being jointly funded by Force and OPCC.
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6. Appendices

- None

7. Background / Supporting papers

- Original report: <http://www.dyfedpowys-pcc.org.uk/media/7611/deep-dive-report-approach-to-tackling-illegal-drugs.pdf>
- Chief Constable's response: <http://www.dyfedpowys-pcc.org.uk/media/8326/letter-from-cc-to-pcc-re-deep-dive-review.pdf>