

Business Crime Forum 11th November 2019

Management Suite, Cabot Circus

Attendees:

Mark Simmonds (Chair)	CFO, OPCC	Dave Holtby	WSM BCRP
John Wilson	Oris Forums	Gareth Williams	Yeovil BCRP
C/Insp Mark Runacres	Bristol	Supt Andy Bennett	Force Business Crime Lead and Bristol
Steve Bluff	Broadmead BID	C/Insp Leanne Pook	N Somerset
C/Insp Lisa Simpson	W Somerset	Insp Mark Nicholson	BWVC
Sgt, Adrian Fallows	S Glos	Sgt Nathan Beck	Yeovil
Paul Cox	Bath BCRP	John Smith	CEO, OPCC
Sgt Jon Raisey	Bath	Fran Inman	City Centre BID
Sam Holliday	FSB	Keith Rundle	Bristol BID
Victoria Matthews	Business West	Vicky Ellis	PA, OPCC

Apologies: Craig Carter; Andy Sharman; Heidi Coombe; Alice Porter; James Durie; John Hirst; Ruth Lambert

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes were agreed. Outstanding actions updated below:

Meeting Date	Action	Update
14/09/18	Review Op Heron	Standing item to be covered at Forums – via area updates and ASC updates
14/09/18 24/06/19	DISC integration with police systems (Niche). Charlie Newman from Littoralis would be able to help with the duplication issues regarding crime reporting/Niche/DISC	Carry forward Update – Andy S and Andy B have been engaging nationally about how DISC may be integrated with Niche.

2. Update from ASC

Andy Bennett updated on “Op Remedy” which is an uplift of 100 officers creating a focused cohort to tackle knife crime/drugs/burglary. In particular it was created to fill gap where the Constabulary were underperforming around burglary and to better act on intelligence around county lines. The Neighbourhood Policing (NHP) teams were struggling to bring enforcement activity against County Lines crime areas. Op Remedy is now staffed to 90 of the 100 officers and there has been significant

progress tackling burglary as well as numerous successes around county lines. Previously NHP were spending significant time on drug enforcement and Op Remedy has allowed the Constabulary to release NHP capacity into building the local relationships and local problem solving again – starting to see benefits to business crime around the patch now.

A&S (and other Forces) expect an uplift in police officer resources over next 3 years – based on government announcements but which could change following the general election. If confirmed, it is anticipated ASC will need to recruit around 1000 officers in the next three years to generate a net target uplift of 350-400 officers after leavers. Officer postings will be determined but the initial uplift will focus on “Patrol” (response officers). NHP will argue for an uplift in numbers to meet their demand. Model for NHP is considered robust and will produce demand reduction and better engagement with the community.

Currently in general election purdah period until 12 Dec 2019, then will go back in to purdah in March 2020 for May PCC election and Mayoral election.

It was generally noted by BCRPs that positive effects could be seen around the force area following Op Remedy and there was good support for the NHP model.

FSB noted they had called for extra an 80,000 police nationally based on average number of police per 1000 population – taking to 322 currently at 212

Business Crime Trends

MOS – recorded crime stats – 3% increase in business crime recorded (rolling 12 months) force wide but Somerset up by largest amount (8% and 11% in Somerset West). Business crime remains 15% of all ASC crime recorded.

Recurring high-demand hot spots remain an issue, including ASDA/Boots/ Debenhams/ Tesco/ Wilko.

ASC were asked about their plans to address these hotspots - AB – referred to the problem solving pillar of NHP and the need to feed business hot spots into ASC’s reducing strategic demand group – NHP can’t do it on their own. Recruited to central problem solving team to start addressing these issues and hotspots.

Lisa – some nationally large companies are not investing in prevention. Need to tackle this with security managers at area level.

Paul – this issue has been discussed nationally at BCRP forums and this will lead to engagement nationally with certain retailers.

Action: AB to update at next Forum on ASC (and partner) plans to better tackle business crime hot spots across the Force area.

Lisa – reporting is up in Somerset partly because of improved reporting offering online – so reporting increased and confidence to report has increased. LPA had most sustained abstractions throughout the year – believe on good trajectory with DISC programme.

Steve – are the figures shared with retailers? And BCRP? Retailers also need to look at possible solutions themselves – e.g. store layout and CCTV

MOS – seen improved online business crime reporting. More than 50% of business crime is now reported online. Over 1000 uploads of CCTV online – this is the future – will keep working to improve these systems.

Gareth – still a few problems receiving crime packs late after reporting – see actions agreed below

Paul – emerging problem that businesses at national level will not ‘multi click’ for reporting crime – so ideally need DISC to also be the reporting system. *(see c/f action above to seek interface between DISC system and Niche)*

3. Area Updates

Bristol – new BCRP created, serving two Bristol BIDS. An advisory panel is established and user groups are in place including NTE and Hotel & Hospitality. Going for accreditation this year – good support from Constabulary colleagues.

Issues remain in city centre with ASB/rough sleeping – peaks and troughs, gets better and then declines again. Streetwise help signpost individuals. MR – reported 30% reductions in ASB in Broadmead area through engagement with council and partners.

ASC resource levels in Bristol are still a bit light – looking to restructure and reconfigure to bolster numbers around Broadmead and exploring funded posts with the BIDs.

KR – Partnership working is quite slow- in terms of funding discussions for posts – looking at match funding two Bristol dedicated posts. ASC are able to provide the resource once agreed.

Broadmead now have a retail support ranger to work closely with PCSOs and police – paid for by BID. Helps detain/deter shoplifters since end Aug – good feedback from retailers and police. Yeovil have also got a similar post – seems to be working well.

Somerset

LS – Safer Somerset still developing – circa 80 businesses signed up so far (Nov 19). Partnership working is adapting to the planned end of term of a seconded police resource.

Data sharing - Now looking to finalise the Information Sharing Agreement – getting a protocol agreed. PC – why not set up as individual entity? A number of issues with Sedgemoor acting as a data controller? PC suggest speak to Staffordshire to see how they have done it.

Butlins – has been an area of high force demand as one business – now they fund high visibility presence at peak times.

Bath

PC – rough sleepers still an issue – a number of initiatives underway – biggest complaint is leaving possessions in doorways in the mornings when they move on. Working to educate that is not appropriate and working on removing items. Working with local police team is “spot on”. Businesses are under reporting – PC is discussing with police and has a formula to tackle with a PCSO. TK Maxx nationally a problem and a trend was noted of American owned stores becoming risk averse. Youth Restorative Justice workshop continues to be extremely successful. Good to share this practice across the patch.

Jon Raisey – increase in work related to Extinction Rebellion – focussing on stores and businesses – new challenge. AB – having a dialogue in Bristol which works well.

Action: AB to assist with assisting engagement with Bath Extinction Rebellion.

FSB

Underreporting business crime is still an issue – of those who had a significant crime against business 21% did not report – of those 38% due to no confidence/38% no insurance claim/32% no time

Business West

Membership ranges from small traders to large conglomerates. Cyber crime is an issue and working with Business Declares – part of extinction rebellion – non protest – more education. MOS suggested an updated cyber crime prevention pitch from ASC to members again – Victoria to share dates to MOS.

WSM

Situation “good”. National BCRP accreditation achieved. Over 400 members (Circa 60 businesses) on DISC system now. Still significant crime underreporting – need to refocus on Heron and re-educate businesses, combat urban myths. One issue noted is length of time between reporting to ASC and police action taken. Need to focus more on prevention than currently doing? Working with superstore regarding huge amounts of loss. Asda and Tesco suffer more losses than all the rest of top 10 together. Police are seeking to address these hotspots...

Some big events but all gone well.

LP – got purple flag reaccreditation for WSM due again soon.

Reporting – actively encourage reporting, esp. prolific offenders. Op Remedy has helped in WSM with surge style activity focused on drugs/Burglary/gangs – but still a requirement for NHP with strong local police/business relationships. Resourcing always feels like a challenge in N Som.

Yeovil

Some improvement in day time economy crime issues due to partnership working and One Teams. SSDC slowed things up but hope as learn new positions will settle down.

Prolific and persistent offenders still a concern but Remedy has disrupted some of this. Local police aware of challenges.

Seen an increase in violence in shoplifters, in certain stores in particular. Concern around big stores – M&S having £10,000s stolen every few days since getting rid of security contract and change of policy/staff skills – BCRP is working with stores to try to address this. Boots had all security cut and this has caused some concern.

Police resources in Yeovil struggling at the moment due to vacancies/abstractions – police working on this. Extra funding by government via VRU has already seen some positive impact on the town. NTE going well – some incidents on social media but pub watch growing and partnership working going well.

4. Input from call centre - Katie Hancock

ASC Call centre is rated highly nationally – with a low abandonment rate for 101 calls – on average these are answered within 3 minutes – embrace a lot of technology to meet demand. Introduced “What 3 Words” for accurate mapping and call scripting to assist call handlers. Using medically restricted officers in call centre to assist. Assess all calls on THRIVE – into 1 of 5 categories – immediate/ priority high and low/scheduled/without deployment.

Detained shoplifter – aggravating factors would mean it would be immediate but otherwise would be priority high.

Prolific (shoplift) offenders – discussed how these are defined and dealt with.

Action: AB to review the definition of prolific offenders with IAU/Comms team and seek clarification.

IAU handles calls not flagged for attendance with a team of 100 people split over 4 shifts. Mostly staff, some medically unfit officers, carrying around 750 crimes at any one time. High volume, low level crimes. Reporting was encouraged and BCRPs will continue to support this message with stores. Can be done on a mobile phone – online form – sent through to be triaged by front office staff – so anything that would require attendance would be picked up and would send link to business for uploading CCTV.

BCRPs raised concern that there is no internet capability and no mobile phone policies in some stores and can take a couple of days to have a crime reference sent through.

Action: (Crime packs) AB – will review process and seek improves. In the meantime it would help if accredited members could hold a number of packs to send to their members – AB to clarify and consider crime packs being available as downloadable on DISC system. AB to work with businesses, KH and IT.

Action: KH to supply packs to Nathan Beck and Jon Raisey. Online reporting should speed up dealing with prolific offenders. KH to clarify the prolific offender threshold.

5. Body Worn Video Camera – Mark Nicholson

The Chief has the national portfolio for BWVC. Keen to embrace new technology – BWVC part of this. ASC refreshed mission and vision recently. Clips shown to demonstrate how useful technology can be in difficult situations. Every Force in country now has BWVC. Cameras due for refresh in next year – looking at new camera technology linked to Taser use. 1 in 7 Taser uses are not currently captured on BWVC – this would protect more public and officers. Technology available to live stream BWVC. Can be used for safeguarding too – statements for witnesses and suspects.

Action: MOS will investigate if old ASC BWVC cameras be purchased by BCRP partners (possibly via a tender process).

6. AOB – none.

MEETING CLOSED – NEXT MEETING TO BE ARRANGED BEFORE PCC PURDAH (MARCH 2020)

An invitation was issued to members of the business crime forum to visit ASC Comms Centre and have a tour. Next Business Crime Forum could be held at HQ and include a Comms tour?