

**Stoke-on-Trent
Community Safety Strategy
2024-2027**

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Foreword

This plan outlines the strategy and priorities for the Stoke-on-Trent Community Safety Partnership for 2024-2027.

We have refreshed and refocussed our priorities following a detailed local assessment of crime, disorder and ASB in the city, which was supported by the results of comprehensive community consultation.

There have been a number of new government policies and strategies, as well as legislative changes since the last Strategy, some of which have placed additional duties on community safety partners, and this new Strategy will ensure that these developments are reflected locally through robust multi-agency plans and joined-up working.

Within this Strategy there is an increased focus on violence and anti-social behaviour, setting out what we will do to tackle this, in recognition of the level of harm and fear that these can bring to communities. This reflects the national focus on serious violence and anti-social behaviour as outlined in the government's ASB Action Plan and in the measures around serious violence set out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

We will also have a clearer focus on modern slavery, which is a serious violation of human rights, and on Community Cohesion, Hate Crime and Tackling Extremism, reflecting the issues and priorities of the diverse communities that make up our great city.

Vulnerable people and children and families remain at the centre of our approach, and we will be supporting the wider partnership approach to keeping people, especially young people, safe from harm in our communities.

The Community Safety Partnership approaches the next three-year plan from a sound foundation of achievement. However, challenges remain, and we want to do more. By working together in partnership with agencies and local communities we can tackle the root causes of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour, and break the generational cycle to build a safer, stronger and more confident city.



Chief Superintendent
Elliott Sharrard-Williams
Staffordshire Police

**Chair of the Community Safety
Partnership Board**



Councillor David Williams
Cabinet Member for Community Safety
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Stoke-on-Trent City Council

**Vice-Chair of the Community Safety
Partnership Board**

Introduction

The 2024-27 Community Safety Partnership Strategy reflects on the achievements over the last three years, identifies current and future priorities and potential challenges, and outlines our approach over the next three years.

Our vision is to “**create a safer, stronger city**” by reducing crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse.

The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) placed a statutory duty on every local authority in England and Wales to formulate and implement a strategy to reduce crime and disorder and combat the misuse of drugs in their area. It also introduced a duty for Local Authorities to work with the key partners including police, health and probation services.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 amended the duty to include the requirement for local strategies to include a priority to prevent people from becoming involved in serious violence and to reduce instances of serious violence, which has been reflected in this document.

We recognise that the successful implementation of this Strategy depends on robust and effective partnership working. Membership of the Community Safety Partnership Board therefore consists of representation from a range of stakeholders and organisations including:

- Probation Service
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council (including children’s services, public health and housing)
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board
- Staffordshire Commissioner’s Office (Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner)
- Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Staffordshire Police
- Youth Offending Service
- Voluntary Sector

The Strategy will be supported by a multi-agency Delivery Plan underpinning the priorities. The outcomes identified in the Strategy are aligned to a robust performance framework to enable impact to be measured. Performance will be monitored by the Community Safety Partnership Board. The Delivery Plan will be reviewed annually to reflect any changes in trends or locations in relation to crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.

The Strategy sets out how other key priorities for the city will be led by their responsible statutory bodies, and how the Community Safety Partnership Board will hold those bodies accountable for delivery.

At an operational level, the Strategy will be supported through well-established multi agency meeting structures, including Local Partnership Meetings that identify and address emerging themes in their areas, tactical meetings in relation to identified high demand locations and placed-based meetings focussed on hot-spot areas.

Achievements: Community Safety Strategy 2020-23

Multi-agency partnership arrangements have strengthened significantly over the period of the last strategy, with a much wider range of partners now actively involved in developing interventions to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and address the broader priorities of the Community Safety Partnership Board. Partners now involved in supporting the work include Environmental Crime, Building Control, Changing Futures, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Family Support Workers and the Youth Offending Service.

Crime, vulnerability and risk data from Staffordshire Police has been overlaid with Council data from Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Environmental Crime and Property and has identified the high demand priority areas across the city.

This partnership and data-driven approach enabled the city to successfully bid for all five rounds of Safer Streets funding, securing a total of £2.8m of investment. Activity was focussed in high demand locations and has delivered situational crime and ASB initiatives in a number of areas across the city. Significant improvements have been made to CCTV, lighting, gating schemes and home security and natural surveillance in greenways and parks has been improved. In addition, preventative work was delivered in schools across the city, and an enhanced service was provided in the night time economy in the city centre as part of the Safer Women at Night programme of work

The Violence Reduction Unit, supported by a multi-agency core team and a dedicated communication lead has been successfully introduced and established. As part of this, a Serious Violence Strategy has been developed which is governed by a Serious Violence Executive Board made up of senior leaders, and supported by a robust Action Plan

The Knife Angel visited the city in April 2022 and was supported by a range of activities including lived-experience sessions within schools, community events, community safety sweeps in parks and a legacy-building Community Safety Youth Conference to maintain the momentum of the work.

Changing Futures, which was established in 2021, is an innovative programme focussing on engaging people with multiple disadvantages who have had contact with the criminal justice system through intensive early intervention support and is a significant step forward. In addition, services to prevent rough sleeping across the city have been enhanced, including a Rough Sleeper Team and an outreach service delivered by the commissioned Community Drug and Alcohol Service.

Regular high-profile domestic abuse awareness campaigns have taken place, supported by a wide range of partners. In addition to universal campaigns, themed campaigns on issues such as controlling and coercive behaviour, campaigns targeted at under-represented groups such as LGBT and elderly victims, and seasonal campaigns around key events such as Christmas and the football World Cup have taken place.

Strategic Assessment and Consultation

The Strategic Assessment was based on a wide range of information and data sources from the City Council, Staffordshire Police, health services and other partners to identify the key strategic priorities and the groups of people at highest risk in the city.

This data identified the prevalence, incidence, level and type of crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse issues across the city as well as trends and areas of repeat demand and seasonality issues.

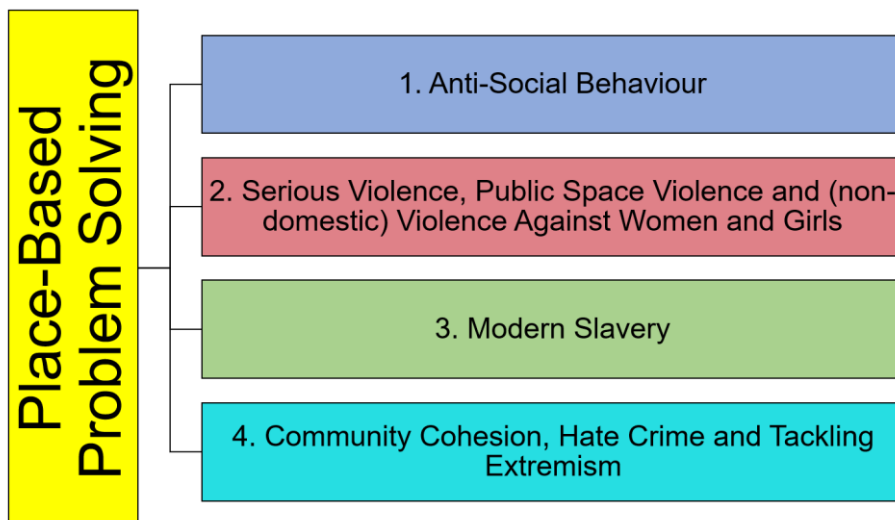
A comprehensive consultation was held throughout July and August 2023, seeking the views of residents, partners, stakeholders, business owners and elected members on the priorities identified in the Strategic Assessment.

There were over 750 responses to the consultation, over half of which were from face-to-face surveys or events held across the city, in town centres, resident's association meetings and places of worship. An online survey was also widely publicised, and a series of young person's engagement events were held.

The results of the consultation demonstrated overwhelming support for the priorities identified.

Strategic Priorities

Based on the evidence, the following priorities have been identified, which are underpinned by the Place-Based Problem Solving approach:



Supporting Priorities

The Strategic Assessment also identified the following supporting priorities, which will be led by other statutory multi-agency partnerships. Further detail is provided in the Governance and Accountability section of this report.

- Alcohol-Related Harm
- Contextual Safeguarding
- County Lines

- Domestic Abuse
- Drug-Related Crime and Harm
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons - Mental Health

Priority 1 – Anti-Social Behaviour
Lead Agencies
Staffordshire Police, Stoke-on-Trent City Council (Community Safety)
Key Actions
<p>Additional resources which have been secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund for Town Centre Wardens, environmental crime officers and a partnership analyst based within the Staffordshire Police Knowledge hub, along with the new tools and powers associated with the new National Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan will be reviewed and aligned to the overall approach to place based problem solving and governance arrangements.</p> <p>The multi-agency meetings will continue to take place on a daily, weekly and monthly basis in order to identify emerging themes, repeat and high demand locations</p> <p>The seasonality framework will be reviewed in order to identify and develop interventions around predicted increases in crime and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Partners will continue work together to deliver activity around the night time economy in the city centre, including closer working with local licensing teams.</p> <p>Town Centre Wardens will be recruited and deployed, working in partnership with key stakeholders and supported by dedicated analyst.</p> <p>The Youth Offending Service prevention service will continue to work in close conjunction with the anti-social behaviour team so that children displaying anti-social behaviour are offered an intervention at the earliest point.</p> <p>Diversions activities will be central to our approach as we recognise that young people may be at risk of being drawn into anti-social behaviour or criminality. Additional funding is being made available via the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan for youth diversion and support. Activities will not be limited to sports, and will be co-developed with young people. Safe spaces for young people under the supervision of appropriate adults will also be provided.</p> <p>The early intervention support for young people will be reviewed and further strengthened.</p> <p>Cross-agency information sharing and governance is key to developing an effective and targeted multi agency response to deliver longer term problem solving, so governance and accountability arrangements will be reviewed and strengthened.</p>
Outcomes
<p>City-wide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced incidents of anti-social behaviour • Reduction in youth-related anti-social behaviour • Reduced incidents of environmental crime* <p>High-demand areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced incidents of anti-social behaviour in high-demand locations • Reduced incidents of environmental crime* in high-demand locations

* Environmental Crime as defined under this Strategy encompasses issues such as fly-tipping, graffiti and discarded needles. It does not include issues such as river pollution, poaching or illegal fishing.

Priority 2 – Serious Violence, Public Space Violence and (non-domestic) Violence Against Women and Girls

Lead Agencies

Staffordshire Police

Key Actions

Partners will work together to implement the new duties under the Serious Violence Duty.

We will develop, implement and monitor the Delivery Plan from the new Serious Violence Strategy.

There will be an ongoing commitment to the development and delivery of the Violence Reduction Alliance, including the development of a performance framework.

We will explore the opportunity to provide an enhanced support for 18-25-year olds at risk of committing serious violence, including support with emotional health.

A place-based approach will continue to be taken to target high-demand locations for public space violence, including town centre and parks.

We will look for opportunities to continue and enhance the night-time economy initiatives that have been piloted through SWAN (Safety of Women at Night) and Safer Streets funding.

Working with the Youth Offending Service, schools and other partners we will deliver knife-prevention awareness, including targeted virtual reality sessions and other innovative approaches.

The Youth Offending Service will explore the use of deferred outcomes and appropriate interventions for young people at risk of or carrying weapons.

Non-statutory reviews will be undertaken where the threshold for near-miss serious violent incidents has not been met.

The Navigator service within A&E (Accident and Emergency) for young people who present with injuries as a result of a violence-related injury will be recommissioned and expanded to include 18-25 year olds.

Outcomes

City-wide:

- Reduced incidents of serious violence
- Reduced knife and sharp object-enabled serious violence recorded by the police
- Reduced number of young people offending with crimes related to knives
- Increased number of children who receive a weapon-related intervention and do not go on to receive a conviction for weapon-related offending

High-demand areas:

- Reduced incidents of public place violence
- Reduced incidents of violence against women and girls in public places

Priority 3 – Modern Slavery

Lead Agencies

Staffordshire Police, Stoke-on-Trent City Council (Children’s Services, Community Safety)

Key Actions

We will raise awareness of Modern Slavery including how to identify it, how to report it, and the support services available to victims.

We will increase the focus on Organised Immigration Crime, and strengthen the multi-agency response to this, both in terms of safeguarding victims and in pursuing offenders.

The membership of and engagement with the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Tactical Group will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are committed to supporting the work of the group, including operational planning.

The role of the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Tactical Group will be developed to include the opportunity for members to share knowledge, training resources and best practice.

A thematic review of Modern Slavery will be conducted in the city to identify key target areas/groups to inform the work of the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Tactical Group.

We will work to increase the intelligence flow between all stakeholders including the local authority, Police and support services. The intelligence flow will be dynamic and will be used to promote early intervention activity as well as participation in multi-agency operations.

We will support stakeholders and partners to review training offer and materials to ensure that front-line professionals are aware of their duties to identify and report Modern Slavery, including the role of the National Referral Mechanism.

The range of voluntary sector services available to support victims will be mapped on an ongoing basis to ensure that all victims can be referred or signposted by statutory bodies into additional support.

Agencies who do not have a Modern Slavery Statement in place will be supported and encouraged to adopt a Statement, or as appropriate depending on the size of the organisation/company, to adopt a Modern Slavery Charter.

Outcomes

City-wide:

- Increase in referrals into the National Referral Mechanism and Duty to Notify submissions for victims of Modern Slavery
- Number of intelligence referrals made to Staffordshire Police
- Number of agencies adopting a Modern Slavery Statement / Charter

Priority 4 – Community Cohesion, Hate Crime and Tackling Extremism
Lead Agencies
Staffordshire Police, Stoke-on-Trent City Council (Community Safety)
Key Actions
<p>We will renew the city’s Community Cohesion Strategy, which will run from 2025 to 2029. Community cohesion sessions will continue to be delivered to pupils to promote understanding between young people from different backgrounds and to build critical analysis skills.</p> <p>We will continue to deliver Community Cohesion activities by working with organisations and activities that promote cohesion and integration.</p> <p>There will be a focus on better monitoring and management of community tensions, working closely with Police, Housing Management Teams, Schools, the ASB Team and other partners.</p> <p>We will work closely with the commissioned United Staffordshire Against Hate service to reduce hate crime and ensure that support is provided to victims of hate crime.</p> <p>We will continue to deliver statutory Prevent responsibilities by developing and supporting the councils and the multi-agency Prevent Board Action Plan.</p> <p>The Prevent training material delivered within the City Council will be reviewed and refreshed on a regular basis to ensure it remains relevant and topical.</p> <p>We will ensure that the Channel Panel continues to be compliant with statutory obligations and Home Office requirements in relation to safeguarding vulnerable individuals and protecting the wider public from harm.</p> <p>In schools, we will support the Headteachers Prevent Board and deliver Prevent training to school staff to raise awareness of extremist ideologies and the support available for vulnerable individuals.</p> <p>The Prevent Board will review and deliver the recommendations in the 2023 Home Office Prevent Benchmark Assessment for Stoke-on-Trent</p>
Outcomes
<p>City-wide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced incidents of hate crimes recorded • Increase in the number of Prevent referrals • Number of children who receive community cohesion sessions in schools • Number of school staff who receive Prevent training

Governance and Accountability

The Strategic Assessment identified other priorities where existing statutory multi-agency partnership arrangements are already in place that are ensuring a coordinated approach across organisations at a strategic level. The Community Safety Partnership does not wish to duplicate work where governance arrangements are in place with appropriate strategic direction, delivery plans, performance frameworks and strong partnership engagement.

Supporting this, a strategic review of governance will strengthen and streamline governance arrangements, reduce duplication and clarify lines of accountability, and facilitate the better identification of risk and vulnerability.

The review will determine which bodies are responsible for leading on each priority area, as well as the reporting and assurance mechanisms between the lead bodies and those bodies who share the same priority areas. The review is broader than community safety and encompasses areas including children's and adult's safeguarding, and covers strategic, tactical and operational-level structures.

From the Strategic Assessment and public consultation, further priority areas were identified where existing partnership arrangements are already in place to facilitate and enable delivery, and where assurances will be provided to the Community Safety Partnership Board through link officers who sit on both bodies.

The Community Safety Partnership Board will ensure that it has confidence and trust in the accountable bodies to deliver on the priorities in their areas. The relationship between the Board and the responsible body will be flexible and able to adapt to emerging issues or pressures, so that where required the Board may work with the responsible body to adopt an additional priority under this Strategy as part of joint accountability arrangements.

Priority Areas	Body/Board(s)
Contextual Safeguarding County Lines	Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership
Domestic Abuse	Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board
Drug-Related Crime and Harm Alcohol-Related Harm	Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Drug and Alcohol Partnership Board
Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons - Mental Health	Stoke-on-Trent Health and Wellbeing Board

Links with other Strategies and Plans

Supporting the governance and accountability arrangement detailed above, this Strategy is aligned to the following strategies and plans and will support their delivery:

- Staffordshire Police and Crime Plan
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Reducing Reoffending Strategy
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Adults Partnership Plan
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Serious Violence Strategy
- Stoke-on-Trent Community Cohesion Strategy
- Stoke-on-Trent Drug and Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy
- Stoke-on-Trent Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Stoke-on-Trent Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership Strategic Plan
- Stoke-on-Trent Youth Justice Plan

Substance Misuse - Prevention and Treatment

Reducing drug and alcohol misuse is a priority within the Stoke-on-Trent Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy. Outcomes include ensuring improved access to services, supporting communities to feel safer, and reducing hospital admissions. These objectives are also key elements within the new National Drug Strategy.

The Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Office oversees a Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Drug and Alcohol Partnership Board to take forward improvements in drug and alcohol prevention, treatment and recovery, alongside work to break drug supply chains and achieve a generational shift in demand. Updates on progress are included in quarterly reports to the Stoke-on-Trent Health and Wellbeing Board.

Family Support – Locality Working and Participation

Supporting families at the earliest opportunity is a priority that is reflected in the Early Help and Prevention Strategy, which is led by the Early Help and Prevention Partnership Board. By strengthening and empowering communities, delivery of the Early Help and Prevention Strategy will contribute to a reduction in social isolation, improved parenting capacity and an improved sense of community ownership. This in turn will help to increase safety within local communities, reduce occurrences of anti-social behaviour and exploitation, and increase resilience within local families and communities. Family Hubs will play a critical role in supporting local communities by providing safe and welcoming spaces for families, and improved access to local services to support those families with multiple complex needs and vulnerabilities.

The Stoke-on-Trent Participation Strategy aims to increase opportunities for children and young people to influence decision making on a range of issues that are important to them. Consultation with children and young people has shown that feeling safe in their community is one of the greatest concerns for young people in Stoke-on-Trent, and children and young people will continue to be engaged to ensure they are involved in the delivery of this Strategy.

Placed-Based Working

The management of place is a key and cross cutting theme of this strategy and will complement the work undertaken by all partners as we work to positively impact on the other priority themes identified within the strategy.

Underpinning this, data from a range of council services, including community safety, environmental crime, children's services, housing and adult social care has been mapped and overlaid with crime and vulnerability data from the Police Precision Policing document and the recent ASB Problem Profile to identify areas of persistent multi-agency high demand across the city

This approach, known as 'Making Great Places' will deliver multi-agency place-based problem solving and will focus on the identified high demand locations.

Additional partnership resources will be deployed as part of this work to make our high streets, neighbourhoods and green spaces safer places. This will be supported by partnership analytical capability that will have access to both police and council data sets to inform this work going forward.

People and Communities at Greatest Risk

In addition to identifying priorities for the city, the Strategic Assessment also identified those groups considered to be particularly vulnerable to experiencing crime, safeguarding concerns or being criminally exploited. These groups tend to be consistent over time, and there has been no change in the groups identified since the previous assessment:

- Residents (and offenders) with drug dependencies or previous drug-related offending
- Children (under 10s) in areas with high levels of Domestic Abuse and/or drug or alcohol-related offending
- Children and young people (aged 10-19) at risk of criminal exploitation
- Socially isolated adults with mental health needs
- Socially and geographically isolated older and elderly adults
- Socially isolated adults with alcohol and/or drug dependencies