

REPORT A

Heads of Service Overview

This is a brief overview of performance from each Head of Service who reports data to this Scrutiny

Wendy Walters – Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration & Policy)

Crime statistics

Crime levels have increased overall this year compared to the same period last year. During April – September 2015, levels of recorded crime went up by 7.1% amounting to a rise of 267 crimes from 3,786 to 4,053. Increases were seen across Dyfed Powys, with the change in Carmarthenshire being the lowest percentage increase across the Force area.

Reductions have been seen in vehicle crime (down 21% and 45, to 169), miscellaneous crimes against society (down 36.9% to 41, a fall of 24), public order offences (down 63 and 32.3% to 132) and drug offences (3.4% fall and down 19 to 542). Increases have been seen in domestic burglary levels (up 4.2% to 125, an increase of 5), burglary non dwellings (up 20 to 166, an increase of 13.7%), sexual offences (up 29 to 156, an increase of 22.8%), arson and criminal damage (up 49 and 7.2% to 727) and violence against the person (up 177 crimes and 20.3% to 1,051).

Increases seen in certain reported crimes continue to be in line with national trends and, it is believed, are as a result of the introduction of a new way of recording crime more accurately from January. For example, the rise in violent crime generally relates to recording of counter allegations, and the rise in sexual offences is a mixture of historic offences being recorded together with increased confidence leading to an increase in current reporting levels.

The police are now required to record crimes within 24 hours compared to the previous 72 hours. This has impacted on crime figures as more allegations are being recorded before officers may have been able to prove that the crime did not occur. Forces are also no longer measured against detection rates and a wider range of 'outcomes' for dealing with a crime has been introduced nationally to ensure more accurate recording.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents have continued to fall but in the last six months, a dramatic reduction has been seen. There were 3,435 incidents reported, a fall of 24.3% and over 1,000 incidents (1,101) compared to the same period last year.

Progress to date on Community Safety Partnership (CSP) initiatives

CSP action groups continue to be proactive tackling key priorities and progress made in relation to some of these include:

- Reducing reoffending remains a key priority and collaborative work across agencies has continued to mature and improve as a result of the co-located police and probation Integrated Offender Management (IOM) team. The IOM scheme to tackle our key offenders - `Trawsnewid/Transform` has continued to perform well this quarter with the team of Police and Probation officers working with a number of partner agencies to focus on the identified cohort of offenders.

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Developments this quarter have included regular criminal justice meetings with local substance misuse service providers and the launch of `Supported Compliance` in the county which is a programme of early intervention visits to offenders sentenced to Community Orders, Suspended Sentences and Prison Licences, carried out by Neighbourhood Policing Teams. The latest performance data (12 month period ending in June) for the IOM cohort recorded crime shows that crimes reduced by 231 committed by the cohort, with an associated cost of crime saving of over £1.2 million.

- The CSP is also working with partners to ensure the effective implementation of the powers which came into place with the introduction of the ASB, Crime and Policing Act in October 2014. This Act introduced fundamental changes to ASB powers, repealing a number of existing powers, and replacing them with new powers. Discussions are taking place between partners currently relating to implementing process for the new Community Protection Notice, Public Space Protection Order and Community Trigger.
- There has been promotion of campaigns and current initiatives progressed by the CSP's multi-agency action groups to tackle local priorities. There has been good media coverage of work to raise awareness of cyber crime, a violent crime campaign and an initiative for people going away on holiday. The Police are urging people to support a campaign calling time on violent crime by making an online pledge to 'never commit or condone alcohol-fuelled violence or aggression, or any violence fullstop'. The #PaulsPledge campaign is led by Paul Pugh, a 34 year old man still suffering the effects of a vicious, unprovoked attack that happened on a night out eight years ago. The initiative aims to encourage people to stop and think about the consequences of violence for the victim and the offender. This Ammanford initiative has now been rolled out across Dyfed Powys and into South Wales. Another initiative, Holiday Watch`, is a security equipment loan scheme established by the Police with the support of the CSP. The scheme aims to reduce burglaries and the fear of crime. Boxes containing security equipment are loaned to members of the public who have poor security measures or a high level of fear of a crime happening when they are away on holiday. In relation to cyber crime, Trading Standards Officers continue to offer advice and investigate cyber crimes through the Council's digital forensic unit – the only one in Wales. This has included raising awareness about only using secure websites, not clicking on links you are not sure of and not providing personal data.
- Consideration is being given to the duties placed on partner agencies by new legislation - Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act. These are key areas which will be progressed in partnership over the next six months.

The well-established local partnership working continues to effectively target resources and multi-agency working to help keep crime and disorder low. Ongoing collaborative working remains essential and the commitment of partner agencies to such an approach will, no doubt, continue to bring benefits for our communities.

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Mario Cresci – Head of Street Scene

Waste Management

It is pleasing to note that our landfill diversion figures have significantly exceeded the set target, primarily due to the switch to a residual waste treatment process, placing the Authority well within its statutory landfill allowance limit.

However, the recycling performance for Q2 is lower than expected with respect to the headline overall recycling performance at an actual figure of 58.06% against a target of 60%. This position can be attributed to three main factors: the temporary loss of wood recycling as a result of a declaration by the regulators that our wood recycling outlets are no longer fully compliant with recycling protocols; temporary difficulties with delays to the exportation of residual waste for incineration; a delay in the treatment of hardcore at our Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) sites. It is expected that these issues will be addressed in the 3rd and 4th quarter to bring us back on target by the end of the year.

Following on from the food recycling participation surveys undertaken in 2013/14, we are currently rolling out a pilot scheme to assess if the use of food bin liners will increase the level of participation in our food waste recycling scheme; participation is currently estimated at about 39%. This pilot scheme will run from October 2015 to March 2016 initially, with about 15,000 properties included across the County. We will also continue to undertake a programme of door stepping work to encourage more of our residents to participate in all of our recycling initiatives.

Street Cleansing and Enforcement

The Q2 performance figures for the local environment quality indicators have exceeded the set targets. The percentage of highways and relevant land inspected that is of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness is reported at 99.9%, which is an excellent result. Similarly, the independently assessed Cleanliness Index indicator (LEAMS survey) is at 73% against a target of 67%. Both figures demonstrate that the service continues to perform to a high standard and strives to clear instances of fly-tipping as soon as practicable, with 98.9% of fly-tipped incidents dealt within 5 working days. Our response to clearing up incidents of dog fouling is also pleasing to note – an average response of 1.29 days against a target of 1.4 days.

The service continues to promote education, awareness and engagement initiatives, as these are viewed as proactive measures to tackle environmental blight. Also, the Enforcement Unit has continued its zero tolerance approach towards offenders and has achieved a high level of well publicised successes with respect to fines and prosecutions, often working in difficult circumstances. These proactive measures will become increasingly important as budget reductions will inevitably impact on the street cleansing function.

Public Lighting

It is disappointing to note that the figure for the average number of days taken to repair lamp failures is greater than the set target. This position is principally attributable to temporary mechanical issues with our fleet of specialist mobile platform access vehicles resulting in two out of four vehicles being unavailable for a period of time, whilst the problems were being resolved. Members will be aware from previous reports that this target has been consistently exceeded in previous years, and it is envisaged that we will close the performance gap by the end of the year.

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The Public Lighting section continues to replace defective columns on an ad-hoc basis, as problems are encountered. This includes the installation of LED lighting units (within available budget) as part of its long term investment strategy, thereby increasing the performance and service life of our lighting stock, whilst reducing energy consumption and maintenance costs.

Stephen Pilliner – Head of Transport & Engineering

The Transport and Engineering Division has continued to focus its work to facilitate the expeditious, safe movement of goods and people on the highway network. Progress has been made with actions outlined in the improvement plan relating to road safety, infrastructure development and sustainable transport developments.

The progress of a number of actions is dependent on influencing behavioural change with road users. We work with partners and stakeholders to deliver improvements on a highway network that is the second highest length of county network in Wales and where traffic volumes are the third highest in Wales.

Achieving success across the key themes is challenging. Nevertheless, the teams continue to strive to:

- make a reducing resource base go further
- secure external funding wherever possible by submitting quality bids that are based on effective use of research, innovation and engagement with communities.
- Working in collaboration with neighbouring authorities through the Local Transport Forum and other organisations such as the Dyfed Powys Police, Go Safe Wales and the Mid & West Wales Fire Service.

The 2015/16 Improvement Plan includes a mix of engineering and behavioural change measures, and incentives to facilitate the safe movement of goods and people. A summary of the interventions are set out below for members.

1. Road Safety.

The Wales Government has established an All Wales Strategic Road Safety Group to support partnership working to deliver the Road Safety Framework for Wales, which was published in 2013. The group brings all partners together to develop a strategic approach to improving road safety by targeting and measuring educational, engineering or enforcement measures that can be monitored and measured for effectiveness.

The Authority is currently developing a Road Safety Plan which will reflect the national casualty reduction targets, as set out in the Road Safety Framework Wales.

Our work in partnership with the Police and other agencies will continue, as we seek to build on our previous success in reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on Carmarthenshire roads. We will also invest in computer software to improve the quality of management information that we will use to target education, engineering or enforcement interventions. Generally, there has been a reduction in the number of casualties on the highway network with 557 casualties in 2014 compared to 619 in 2013. There are certain groups of road users that do however remain a concern.

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For example, the number of motorcyclists killed and seriously injured in Carmarthenshire remains stubbornly high at 24 deaths at the end of 2014. The figure reduced from 28 in the previous year. The All Wales Road Safety Framework has set the following targets to 2020:

- A 40% reduction in the number of killed and seriously injured for older adults aged 65+
- A 40% reduction in the number of killed and seriously injured for young adults
- A 25% reduction in the number of killed and seriously injured for motorcyclists.

The performance at the end of 2014 for Carmarthenshire was:

- A 36.7% reduction in the number of killed and seriously injured for young adults
- A 40% reduction in the number of killed and seriously injured for older adults aged 65+
- A 31.9% increase in the number of killed and seriously injured for motorcyclists.

Further reductions have been achieved in the first half of the year for the number of motorcyclists and older persons killed and seriously injured. The Authority continues to strive to make further improvements through partnership working with the respective agencies.

2. Infrastructure Investment.

Working with the former SWWITCH partners, moneys secured through the Local Transport Fund, Safe Routes in the Communities, Local Road Safety Grant has enabled the Authority to make investment in infrastructure. The investment has improved transport infrastructure to provide access e.g.

- Carmarthen West Link Road
- Public transport infrastructure
- Walking and Cycling Infrastructure
- Phase 2 of the Cross Hands Economic Link Road,

3. Passenger Transport

Despite significant reductions in funding for public transport, the uptake of concessionary bus passes is still seeing a high uptake. The performance for the first half of the year of 80.5% is above anticipated target of 79%. The ongoing challenges relating to public transport, is likely to have a negative impact on this sector of users in the future.

To date, the authority has worked together with the bus operators, our neighbouring authorities and the Wales Government to provide and sustain the network as much as possible.

4. Internal Interventions

The Division continues to use a number of internal measures in promoting and developing sustainable travel options. Collaboration on the fleet replacement programme between our fleet section and service users aims to reduce the fleet by a further 2% by the end of the year. The replacement programme will also provide an opportunity to introduce more efficient vehicles, in terms of emissions and fuel use. Over £6 million has been committed to date on replacement of heavy commercial vehicles.

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The light commercial vehicles have also been ordered. In 2014/15 the authority has reduced the number of vehicles by 42, a further 20 vehicles are due to be removed from service in the forthcoming twelve months.

Robin Staines – Head of Housing & Public Protection

Public Protection services aim to improve public health, animal health and fair trading by the application of the National Enforcement Priorities for Wales and through developing, coordinating, educating and implementing public health, animal health and consumer protection policies. These ensure that everyone has an equal chance of a better quality of life in a healthier society and that animal health and welfare is preserved.

It is split into two Sections, providing the following services:

- Environmental Health and Licensing Services, and
- Trading Standards Services.

Overall performance to date is satisfactory albeit with more pressures and demands. The teams ensure that work is prioritised according to risk.

Environmental Health and Licensing Services

Pollution and Public Health

There have been 1882 Service requests received dealing with Pollution (including complaints regarding odours, drainage, noise, fly tipping on private land, stray dogs etc); an increase of approximately 100 from the previous year. Officers have been flexible in approach to their work and have been undertaking training to enable them to utilise additional legislation as appropriate for anti social behaviour.

In addition to the response to service requests, officers are continuing with ongoing programmes of work such as the compliance checks for individuals and businesses requiring air pollution permits, private drinking water, bathing water and shellfish sampling.

The officers have found that there has been an increase of enquires for screening and scoping prior to planning applications for highly technical and complex businesses such as wind turbines or larger scale developments. We had received 66 planning consultations, 12 Pre-Planning consultations and 24 Screening and Scoping assessments. Each consultation and assessment takes considerable resources to ensure that the information is correct to avoid any future complications or issues.

The team have provided evidence that there is a requirement for the declared Air Quality Management Areas in both Carmarthen and Llanelli. The consultation is currently being undertaken. The Air Quality Management Area action plan for Llandeilo is being implemented where possible and monitored.

The Contaminated Land Strategy was approved by full Council earlier this year.

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There have been some lengthy investigations carried out by the team including Gestamp and enforcement leading to 2 court cases. These include a case involving a nuisance caused by dogs and an appeal privately owned wind turbine which was heard in Crown Court. We won both cases.

Food Safety and Health

At the 6 month point, the team have been instrumental in completing 81% of all due programmed food hygiene inspections.

In terms of Food Hygiene Ratings, Carmarthenshire stands firmly with 98% achieving a rating of 3 (generally satisfactory) or greater with only 37 premises scoring 0,1 or 2, all of whom have been subject to multiple visits by enforcement officers and enforcement action where appropriate in securing broadly compliant standards.

New legislation has been embraced, making it illegal to smoke in private vehicles when someone under 18 is present. Effective partnership working with Education, resulted in all schools being requested to deliver the message to in excess of 26000 pupils across the county. Working in conjunction with Leisure, over 62 information packs have been issued to local sporting clubs regarding goal post safety. The main aim being that to assist clubs in implementing risk based maintenance programmes, in order to safeguard those accessing such facilities.

Officers have been drawn into substantive investigations involving a motorbike racing circuit fatality; a serious incident involving a fall from height from a residential home; the use of a deferred action notice in respect of structural stability to a floor in a high street retail store; and also significant breaches observed in a local Butcher Shop.

The section has been successful in obtaining funding for the delivery of a day's training seminar in relation to Haccp Validation and verification, effectively working with some of our well known producers, striving to further improve food safety procedures, which will be delivered in the run up to Christmas. The team have also been involved in a National risk based consistency exercise.

Investigations have commenced and continue into allegations of shellfish poaching, particularly in the Three Rivers area of the County. This in turn has seen the division partake in a Welsh Government Joint Working Task Group. Commercial shellfish beds and shellfish waters continue to be sampled on a monthly basis and has recently been expanded to include dived hand gathered razor clams undertaken as part of a sanitary survey application in conjunction with CEFAS, FSA and Pembrokeshire.

The section has also made inroads into the investigation of 2 alleged illegal tattooists operating within the County, in addition to entertaining additional applications for both new tattoo and piercing premises and operators.

Officers have investigated 104 notifications of food borne infections and 9 associated outbreaks, all of which were perceived to be of viral origin.

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Licensing

The section has completed consultation exercises for both the Licensing Act Policy and the Gambling Policy. The reviewed documents are in the process of being approved through the political process.

Licensing Act

Between April and September 2015, we have processed 144 applications under the Licensing Act 2003 in relation to Premises and Clubs, 268 Temporary Event Notices and 54 applications for personal licences. We continue to hold regular Licensing Action Group meetings at which the Police, Licensing Officers and representatives of Public Health agree actions to tackle problems associated with licensed premises.

Taxi Licensing

Since April 2015 we have processed and issued 326 Dual Drivers Licences, 200 Hackney Carriage Licences, 59 Private Hire Vehicle Licences and 20 Private Hire Operators Licences. We have undertaken 245 spot checks on vehicles.

Gambling Act

Administer 324 Lotteries. 32 new applications processed
Administer 71 Gambling Related Premises. 52 annual fees processed.

Street and House to House collections

Since April 2015 the section has processed and issued 94 Street and House to House Collection licenses and Permits.

There have been exercises in implementing the licensing toolkit to calculate fees for services with locally set fees and a report with the reviewed fees is being prepared.

Trading Standards/Animal Health Services

Trading Standards have successfully completed 38% (60 visits) of high risk enforcement programme visits over the period; this is on the scheduled target. A further 275 medium risk visits were completed as programmed inspection or alternative inspection activity to the inspection regime.

We are also pro-actively promoting fair trading and Consumer Safety via our “e”- commerce monitoring strategy. We made 712 campaign and project based visits. This is mostly proactive work designed to supplement our routine inspection strategy and comprises internet site monitoring and intelligence based ‘e-visits’ (377 E-visits have been completed) which have resulted in a number of entry warrants being executed. Investigations carried out involve fraud, unsafe consumer goods, counterfeit goods, illegal dog breeding and pyramid selling schemes.

Significant criminal investigations are underway in the following areas of Consumer protection namely: Product Safety, Financial exploitation and scams and Unfair Trading, which will result in court proceedings.

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A total of 1,674 complaints and service requests were also made by members of the public to Trading Standards and Animal Health and acted upon within the Division's standard response time of 10 working days. 92% of these complaints and service requests were responded to within 10 working days.

The section has successfully completed 35% (64 visits) of high risk enforcement programme visits over the period; this is on the scheduled target.

There were 193 livestock mart visits completed, and this work continues to be a priority.

A total of 53/55 animal welfare licences were determined in the standard response time of 8 weeks, representing 96% success and 100% (15) complaints of animal suffering were dealt within 1 working day.

A total of 106 service requests for Animal Health were made by members of the public, 104 of which were acted upon within 10 working days.

The Animal Licensing section processed 20,976 Animal Movement Licensing forms between April and September 2015/16.

Staffs of the Animal Health section have worked diligently in developing a new Licensing Fee structure for all licensed premises and approval is going through the political process at the moment. The intention is that this will result in the recovery of all our costs in relation to the Licensing process.

151 critical interventions have been completed, where an immediate response is required to ensure public protection. These interventions are mainly focused on incidents where itinerant traders were exploiting vulnerable and elderly residents and where there is immediate danger to the public and /or animals (e.g. stray horses).

Trading Standards continues to conduct numerous other initiatives outside the scope of the performance indicators and has led many projects.

These include Money wise on- line, a Financial Literacy in schools, Door Step Crime / No Cold Calling Zones, second hand car safety project. It also continues to administer the service level agreement between the Authority and the Citizens Advice Bureaux.

In the last few years our department has seen an increase in complaints received regarding nuisance telephone calls. As a result we became the first authority in Wales to pilot a device known as 'Truecall' and the launch of this initiative took place this year. Truecall is a device which is attached to telephone lines and blocks nuisance telephone calls to vulnerable clients, and we continue to expand and market this scheme. Truecall is offered to consumers that have been victims of telephone scams and/or are vulnerable.

Truecall Nuisance call Blocker Project -

Blocked 99% of Nuisance calls since scheme started in 2013, 17'000 nuisance calls blocked in total.

We have 42 devices installed in consumers homes at present and have a further 178 devices to install.

Figures from Ofcom indicate that each nuisance call costs consumers 46 pence as proportion of national consumer detriment.

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This is linked to the Financial Exploitation Safeguarding Scheme (FESS), designed to combat exploitation of vulnerable adults in relation to financial scams and fraud.

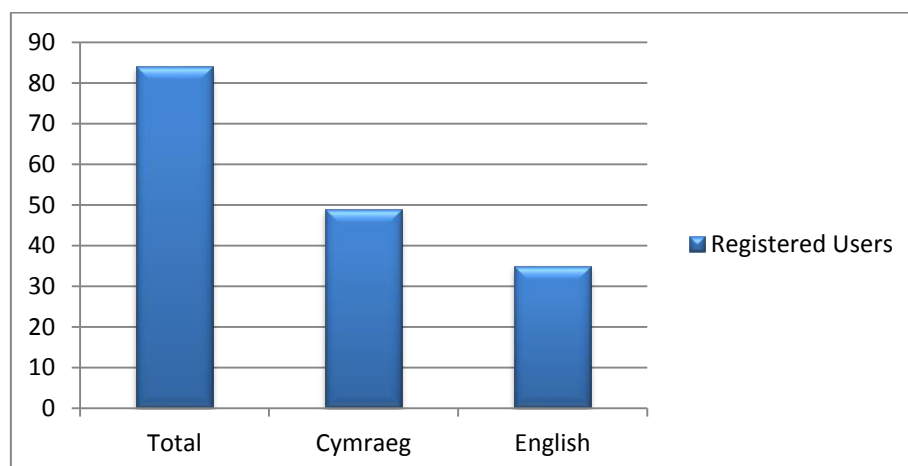
The scheme underpins and brings together Carmarthenshire County Council Trading Standards current portfolio of reactive and proactive measures to promote health wellbeing and independence in the home namely:

- National Trading Standards Board (NTSB) Scams Hub Intelligence Operating Model Led visits
- TrueCall Nuisance Telephone Call Blocking and Monitoring
- NTSB Royal Mail Staff Training Programme
- Local Authority No Cold Calling Zones
- Consumer Awareness and Education Campaigns
- Vulnerable Consumer Advice Interventions
- Moneywise Financial Education/ Literacy Programme
- Debt & Mental Health Interventions
- Financial Services and Public /Private/ Third Sector Safeguarding Protocols
- Intelligence led mapping/ forensic profiling

FESS enables these measures to be taken further by creating clear pathways and working relationships between social care services, public protection and the private sector extending the support offered to victims beyond the offering of any one given organisation/agency. The scheme thus provides for a multi disciplinary response to financial abuse and a package of measures that provide for more joint up and comprehensive social care interventions. The scheme is particularly timely in light of impending legislation and provides for the early detection, intervention, prevention and collaborative working in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the implementation of a support package containing both Trading Standards protective/preventative measures and those of other social care departments to promote health, wellbeing and independent living.

Money Wise online

Our online financial education resource http://adnoddau.canolfanpeniarth.org/GW_TSA/, was launched in Carmarthenshire during a series of teacher training sessions held in December 2014 and January 2016, with 84 users registering over 69 out of 106 primary schools in the county.



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In July 2015 we exhibited and presented the resources at the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) National conference in Bournemouth, and were awarded the prize for Best Local Government Exhibitor. The prize was awarded by the President of the CTSI, Baroness Christine Crawley and CTSI Chairman, Mark McGinty, who commended the team for their innovation.

In addition, we also won a free advert for the project in TS Today, the CTSI's monthly publication which featured in the October edition. Since the advert went to press, we have begun to receive enquiries from other local authorities looking to purchase a licence to use the website in their areas. The website is currently being trialled at a primary school in East Sussex.

As a result of exhibiting at the conference we received a request from the Chief Executive of CTSI, Leon Livermore to visit Carmarthenshire to see the resources in use in a class room. He will be accompanied on this visit by the Regional Policy Officer from WLGA, Simon Wilkinson. This is a great opportunity to also showcase our other projects.

With a view to expanding the reach of the Money Wise project, we have been working closely with a family centre, who has agreed to trial the website with their adult users.