

# Leeds Neighbourhoods & Partnerships policing update to Scrutiny Board 2024

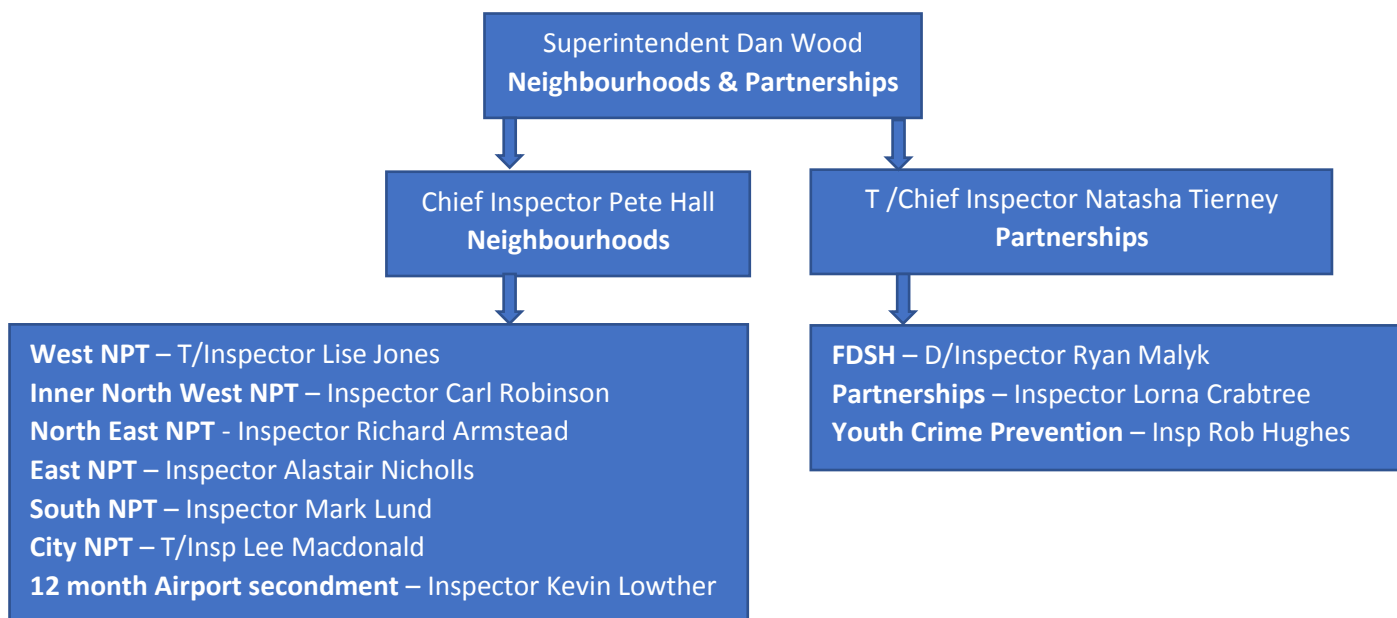
The purpose of this report is to provide a short overview to the Board of the current efforts, successes and challenges associated with Leeds District's Neighbourhood and Partnerships work to support community safety in the city.

## Force Crime Performance

Recorded crime remains on a positive downward trend in West Yorkshire. The latest figures for the 12 months to May 2024 report that 283,862 crimes were recorded across the Force which is a 9.1% reduction on the previous 12 month period, a fall of more than 28,000 offences.

Many offences are reporting positive reductions in both the long and short term. These include violence against the person offences, theft of motor vehicle, some theft offences including bicycle theft and theft from person and large reductions are being reported for public order (which have been impacted by crime recording changes). Really positive reductions are also being reported for residential burglaries and criminal damage. Increasing crime numbers are however being reported for both theft from vehicle and vehicle interference whilst the upward trend in shoplifting has continued in West Yorkshire and has been seen across virtually every other Force in the country.

## The current policing leadership structure for Neighbourhoods & Partnerships:



## People

I am delighted to continue to lead on Neighbourhood Policing and Partnerships, having been in post since February 2022, and I have a broad background in neighbourhood and partnership policing.

Chief Inspector Pete Hall continues to lead the Neighbourhood Policing teams which go from strength to strength. Our small but highly effective Neighbourhood Impact Team have been used in various communities over the past 12 months, particularly when their impact is especially needed to combat concerning spates or trends in crime. Whilst they have predominantly been focused on threat areas in the east of Leeds, more recently they have turned their attention to Little London & Woodhouse, to good effect.

The dedicated Off-Road bike team also deploy across the city as needed. We now have established PCSOs aligned to the team who greatly support the bikers work with intelligence gathering and coordinated activity.

I'm pleased to report that the core Neighbourhood Policing Teams received a budget uplift of almost 22 Constables for this financial year and this has been allocated out across all areas. By summertime we expect to be at this new uplifted strength – albeit it will consist of some newly recruited officers.

In terms of PCSO numbers, these do rise and fall throughout the year as we do see a number joining as police officers. We are currently at 179 PCSOs (against a budget of 194) but we have a further 10 new starters arriving in August.

In recent weeks there has been a change to the Partnerships Chief Inspector with Lucy Leadbeater moving to Bradford District on promotion. This role is currently being delivered by T/CI Natasha Tierney and a permanent replacement will be identified following the upcoming strategic planning day. Natasha's permanent role is the City NPT Insp and she has a wealth of knowledge in relation to partnerships and the city of Leeds.

We have had an excellent year of multi-agency delivery with the Safer Stronger Communities Team on key themes including serious youth violence, community cohesion and tackling anti-social behaviour.

## Neighbourhood crime and the current policing context in Leeds

Over the past year we have seen a mixed (but generally positive) picture in terms of the crimes recorded that most affect communities.

The headline figure is that crime is down 6.3% overall in Leeds, with pleasing reductions in arson, residential burglary, criminal damage, public order offences, theft from person and theft of motor vehicle.

Business and Community burglary remains an ongoing concern and the rise in offending has been driven by spates of crime in Outer South (mainly Morley) but predominantly the City Centre area. A common issue in this area of activity is convicted offenders only receiving short custodial sentences at court, resulting in them returning to offending in a matter of weeks. Breaking this cycle is an ongoing challenge.

A rise in rape and sexual offences may concern those reading this report, but can be largely attributed to more confident reporting, better police recording and the figures being somewhat 'artificially' inflated by a large-scale, international investigation involving online offending against multiple victims.

Shoplifting also remains an ongoing challenge. Readers may recall a large increase in shoplifting reported last year (+30.6%) and this has increased a further 17.4%. We strive to focus on the most harmful offenders in this crime type (e.g. 'series' offenders) and have achieved a significant number of Community Behaviour Orders on individuals but the volume of offending is a challenge for the resources we can apply to this issue.

Pleasingly, Theft of Motor Vehicle is down but unfortunately other vehicle crime is notably up. A significant portion of thefts from cars are where the owner has left it unlocked so we are continually striving to promote crime prevention messaging.

Small reductions in violent offences (both with and without injury) are very welcome and testament to the fantastic partnership work being done in this field. The city formally launched Project Shield earlier this year to deliver a co-ordinated response to tackling serious youth violence and protecting young people in Leeds.

Recorded Crime	Leeds		
	2023 to 2024	2024 to 2025	%age change
Arson	113	69	-38.9%
Bicycle theft	230	236	2.6%
Burglary - residential	774	703	-9.2%
- Burglary of a Home	587	547	-6.8%
- Burglary of Unconnected Building	188	156	-17.0%
Burglary - business and community	297	311	4.7%
Criminal damage	1519	1313	-13.6%
Homicide	1	3	200.0%
Miscellaneous crimes against society	433	385	-11.1%
Other sexual offences	308	431	39.9%
Other theft	1392	1340	-3.7%
Possession of drugs	398	381	-4.3%
Possession of weapons	154	167	8.4%
Public order offences	2422	1747	-27.9%
Rape	193	240	24.4%

Robbery	266	294	10.5%
Shoplifting	1510	1772	17.4%
Theft from the person	295	240	-18.6%
Trafficking in controlled drugs	149	143	-4.0%
Vehicle offences	1125	1312	16.6%
- Theft of motor vehicle	453	409	-9.7%
- Theft from motor vehicle	500	655	31.0%
- Vehicle interference	172	248	44.2%
Death or serious injury - Unlawful driving	4	15	275.0%
Violence with injury	1603	1523	-5.0%
Violence without injury	2832	2600	-8.2%
Stalking and Harassment (Inc. Malicious communication and Controlling beh.)	2955	2558	-13.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18973</b>	<b>17783</b>	<b>-6.3%</b>

## Successes / Developments

I have sought to base these, where relevant, on the priorities outlined in the Safer Stronger Communities Plan.

### ASB and Public Order

The previously introduced Solving Problems in Neighbourhoods (SPIN) meetings (Superintendent-led meetings every six weeks to drive problem-solving activity in relation to identified locations of high demand, high vulnerability or risk of harm) are now fully embedded and are an effective method of deploying appropriate resources and formally problem solving both people and places. This model, introduced in Leeds, is now seen as best practice across the force and is being utilised in the four other districts.

The Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team (working in partnership) continue to deliver an exceptional level of service with Anti-Social Behaviour incidents having reduced 5.7% from the previous 12 months (May to May) and in particular Youth related ASB reducing by 9.7%. Nuisance motorcycle related ASB has also reducing by 11.6% and can be attributed to our Off-Road Bike Team; we are the only policing district in West Yorkshire to record a year-on-year decrease in such calls for service recently which is credit to the work of this team. That said, an area of focus for us over the next 12 months will be nuisance cars as we have seen an increase in reports of anti-social their use

Op Leodis has received numerous awards over the past 12 months including both internal and external awards. Their work has improved anti-social behaviour in a numerous of areas across the city.

Parts of east Leeds have been some of our main areas of focus over the past six months. Our dedicated Neighbourhood Impact Team has conducted a host of work in Harehills to make this community safer including executing 31 drugs search warrants and making 35 arrests - part of the 'Clear, Hold and Build' partnership initiative in this area.

### Domestic Violence and Abuse

The downward trend in domestic abuse is continuing with a 12% fall in incidents over the latest 12 months to May 2024 and a 11.5% fall in the latest 3 months. Leeds District now records just over 5,500 domestic incidents each year. The types of domestic incidents which are seeing reduced numbers are similar to those reported earlier for crime generally - domestic related violence against the person, criminal damage, public order and malicious communications are all seeing reductions compared to the previous year.

We continue to see an increase in Claire's Law referrals with a 38% increase recorded (where the police can disclose information to a victim / potential victims of domestic abuse about a partner's abusive or violent offending). This increase is mirrored across the Force and also nationally and can be attributed by the pro-active work to safeguard the vulnerable and prevent re-offending.

Both the Front Door and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) have seen significant increases in demand in relation to DA, Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Protection. The Chief Officer team have recently confirmed an uplift of staff into this area of policing to ensure effective safeguarding of vulnerable people.

In terms of developing partnership learning, wherever there is learning from Child Rapid Reviews, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews of Domestic Homicide Reviews, we have invested in an 'Embedding Learning Officer' to embed a learning culture and convey best practice to practitioners.

## Hate Crime and Community Tensions

The number of hate incidents recorded in Leeds District has been on a downward trend since autumn of 2022, however incidents are now on a more stable trend. Whilst incidents are currently still lower than last year (8.6% down in last 12 months) figures for the last quarter are relatively static in comparison to the same period last year.

In the last 12-month period all hate strands are falling with the exception of faith related incidents which have increased by 40.3% (192 additional incidents). A high proportion of the increase in faith related incidents relate to antisemitic incidents and anti-muslim related incidents since the hostilities which began on October 7<sup>th</sup> 2023.

Our Hate Crime Co-ordinators and Strategic Engagement officers continue to work across partnerships and communities and we continually see evidence of the trust this generates which can prevent significant community tensions. We are seeing significant improvements in this area and our Cohesion Sergeant, Mark Rothery, was successful at the West Yorkshire Police Awards for his work on cohesion in Leeds. A new 6 weekly Community Cohesion meeting is now embedded within the partnership which is co-chaired by Police and colleagues from the Safer, Stronger Communities Team. This meeting ensures the early identification of risk to cohesion in the city ensuring that a multi-agency response can be developed.

The Force has a dedicated response to the National Police Race Action Plan (regarding the policing of black communities) and in Leeds we have a dedicated Inequalities Officer who is leading on the city's response.

## Illicit Drugs and Substance Use

We continue to utilise custody-based drugs testing and have, over the past year, conducted drugs tests on 2140 detainees arrested for 'trigger' offences like burglary and robbery (53% of these tests were positive, i.e. cocaine and/or opiates). We conducted a further 881 drugs tests under an Inspector's authority for non-trigger offences and 7.5% of these were positive. All positive drugs tests in custody (a total of 3021 this past year and result in drugs services referrals and requirements for these individuals.

Our dedicated Neighbourhood Improvement Team (NIT) have had a slight budget increase of 1 officer and are continuing to do some excellent work across the whole of Leeds.

They are currently supporting work in the Harehills Clear hold build which has seen some fantastic results, including:

- 39.6 Years worth of custodial sentences.
- 59 warrants executed.
- £8.2 million pounds worth of cannabis seized.
- Op Braylock run by North West NPT. Operation Braylock is not only just in Leeds or force wide, but across county lines throughout the country. Their main aim is to tackle organised criminality and cannabis factories:
- Key figures of work achieved by Operation Braylock team across the past 12 months:
  - Total Arrests – 128
  - Combined sentences to date of those convicted – 142 years
  - Total revenue per Anum of cannabis plant seizures if they not found and seized- £99,179,992
  - Amount of Class A drugs seized: Over 300 bags of cocaine and crack cocaine.
  - 95 cannabis farms have been located and dismantled.

## Offending Behaviours

Early Help and Liaison & Diversion are strong, embedded systems that we use to great effect to divert offenders and support families. We have recently conducted a round of training to frontline officers about how they can refer families into these support services, along with Project Turnaround.

In terms of Integrated Offender Management, our Leeds Reducing Reoffending Board (RROB) was restructured and re-launched with a number of sub-groups. This group has now been running for a year and really has been successful in building a strong partnership which is sustainable for the future. CI Jon McNiff has taken on the portfolio of IOM in a recent change in structure.

## Organised Crime and Street Gangs

There have been a number of high-profile incidents in Leeds over the past 12 months, including the murder of Alfie Lewis in November 2023.

There has been a continued focus on tackling Serious Youth Violence and some innovative practice including the development of Project Shield which was launched as part of February's Intensification Month.

As part of a partnership intensification month tackling knife crime and serious youth violence, the Knife Angel was brought to Leeds in February 2024 and was located at the Royal Armouries.

Throughout the month partners delivered a wide range of additionality focused on Serious Youth Violence with significant commitment from statutory and non-statutory partners, including:

- Targeted inputs to 22 schools at the Royal Armouries using the Round Midnight Virtual Reality (VR) technology. This has been delivered to 312 young people who have all been identified as being at risk or involved with Serious Youth Violence.
- Universal inputs to secondary schools across the city - all 44 secondary schools in Leeds have been offered either year group knife crime assemblies, targeted group work or access to a bespoke presentation prepared by our Education Liaison Officer. These inputs have been delivered by our Safer Schools Officers and where a high school does not have an SSO, delivered by the Early Action PCs who are co-located in the Early Help Hubs. Every secondary school across the city received inputs on Serious Youth Violence delivered by Early Help Officers or Safer Schools Officers during this month. We estimate that over 5000 secondary school aged young people have received this input and as an example on one day alone 900 children received this input in one school.
- The Leeds Youth Engagement PCSO has focused primarily on Primary Schools targeting year 6 in over 50 schools. An appropriate age-related knife crime presentation has therefore been delivered to over 200 primary students focusing on early intervention and prevention.
- Innovation Early Help Projects including a 7-week anti Knife crime course at Herd Farm, working with a group of 12 at risk young people and VR Headsets used at Bumpy which is a charity who work with vulnerable, at-risk young people.
- Targeted Youth Justice interventions with high-risk young people involved in the Criminal Justice System through Serious Youth Violence.
- Extensive Youth Services engagement across the city focused on knife crime and SYV, over 1500 young people were engaged with during this month.
- Extensive third sector engagement across the city with universal and targeted delivery.
- Parental sessions were offered across the city delivered in partnership with WYP, Safer Leeds, The Safe Project, Barca and Crimestoppers to increase awareness and support parents.
- The Fearless Campaign from Crimestoppers was utilised extensively across media and social media platforms across the city.
- Upskilling of professionals across the month with dedicated sessions on knife crime and serious youth violence.
- LTHT have developed a new product (free of charge for schools / youth provisions) with a teaching package looking at knife injuries from different perspectives.
- Support and promotion utilising LUFC and Leeds Rhinos who promoted key messages using their wider communication network.
- Operational policing deployments including test purchasing, ASB and licensing operations.
- Knife Amnesty – Over 60 knives were recovered during the amnesty.

The event saw the launch of 'Project Shield' which is the Partnership response to tackling Serious Youth Violence. Project Shield was recognised and commended as an effective approach in the recent JTAI.



Moving forward, the focus is on ensuring the legacy through Project Shield and continuing to work in partnership to tackle this key issue and keep the young people of Leeds safe and feeling safer.

In relation to the Police's response in more detail, there is a daily Project Shield risk assessment meeting which now attracts a variety of partners and was positively recognised within the recent Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) : *"The partnership's 'Project Shield' includes daily multi-agency information-sharing to provide an immediate response when children have been affected by serious youth violence."* This meeting is chaired by the Project Shield Sergeant who forms part of our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA). The architecture that was designed throughout 2023 to assess and respond to emerging concerns for young people is now well embedded and six weekly meetings chaired by the Project Shield Sgt are embedded across the city. As well as the safeguarding response there has been an increase to our investigative function with the embedding of the Precision – Serious Youth Violence Team (previously Op Bronzestoke) becoming a core team within Leeds District.

Partnership work within education settings (led by our Safer Schools Officers) has continued to develop, particularly with information sharing and understanding of risk. The use of the Partnership Intelligence Portal has increased significantly by educational settings. In the last 12 months, 146 submissions were made by education settings – over 13% of the total number. This was double the number of submissions from the previous year (67) and in the last quarter there were a total of 56 submissions from education settings. We also continue to sign schools up to our free Pol Ed resources.

### Exploitation and Radicalisation

Over the past 12 months, Leeds has seen small number of significant incidents related to Terrorism offences with a number of individuals arrested and convicted under relevant legislation.

Leeds continues to work in partnership to prevent radicalisation and work in relation to the early identification of risk continues to be promoted in educational settings.

Leeds has a really strong cohort of 71 Prevent 'champions' – officers and staff who are specially trained to understand the signs and vulnerabilities involved with those who may be exploited or radicalised and raise this awareness in the wider network of policing and partners. The champions receive regular inputs and we have just begun using a Teams channel to better understand how we can best support their vital preventative work. CI Jon McNiff also leads on our partnership Protect duty.

In relation to children and young people (U18) being missing, we have seen a reduction of 238 episodes year on year - an 8.5% decrease. Mid 2023 saw increases which have been reversed in the first half of 2024. We closely monitor the numbers of young people going missing from care placements, putting themselves at risk of exploitation or harm. Work is being developed with Childrens Social Work Services to manage placements more effectively when a child is in care. Our objective is to have a greater understanding of risk, improve inter-agency communications and focus on emerging threats and early intervention rather than intervening at a later crisis point.

## People with multiple needs

A key area for our continued focus is in relation to the police submission of Public Protection Notices (PPN) which is our referral process for persons in vulnerable situations to Adult/Child Social Care. PPN numbers have risen and then seemingly stabilised but there is work ongoing to develop a multi-agency triage process to ensure that cumulative risk is identified at the earliest opportunity.

We continue to deploy dedicated police officers to manage the risks associated with on and off street sex working across the city - this involves a multi-agency approach focused on safeguarding a vulnerable population group.

## Violence and sexual crime

Operation Jemlock continues to operate in Leeds. They patrol our violent crime hotspots with specialist resources. This has been recently supported with Neighbourhood officers now covering violent crime and ASB Hotspots. The Hotspots have been identified from analysis to indicate the best days and times for officers to visit the areas in order to reduce demand and prevent offences occurring.

In terms of sexual offences and violence against women and girls, we are working to a Force Strategy. 'Ask For Angela, Walksafe, Walk and Talk, Women's Night Safe Space, Active Bystander Training and ensuring safe spaces are examples of initiatives we have adopted in this area.

## Other challenges / Ongoing efforts

### Protest

Global events have resulted in a significant rise in protest related activity across the city for a range of causes and motivations. Often these events require a neighbourhood policing presence to gather information and intelligence, engage and reassure the public and prevent crime and disorder. We have to acknowledge that frequent deployments of this nature do divert neighbourhood officers from their core neighbourhood duties.

### Knife Crime and Robbery

Despite the aforementioned focus on knife crime (Project Shield), some elements of knife crime remain stubbornly concerning. Knife assault with injury is down almost 25% over the past 12 months but the more serious woundings are up 19% and a rise in knife enabled robberies (up 28%) is a significant concern. We have been successful in recently obtaining £40k of funding from the Violence Reduction Unit, which (boosted by other local funds) will be used to target activity against knife robberies.

### City Centre

The city centre can be an attractive environment for some young people to gravitate to, sometimes leading to issues of crime and disorder or a risk of exploitation. Insp Tierney is working closely with partners to strike the right balance for the city in terms of making it a safe place to congregate but also to address offending behaviours. The bus station / market has been a recent area of partnership focus and we are hopeful that the growing team of dedicated Safer Travel PCSOs can have a positive impact in the near future. There is also ongoing work to shape the Partnership's Youth Offer to help address these issues with early intervention, de-escalation and engagement strategies.

Superintendent Dan Wood  
Neighbourhoods & Partnerships  
Leeds District Police  
25/06/2024