

**ONE STOCKPORT SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (OSSP) AND  
CUCKOOING PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Joint report of the Director of Place Management and the Director of Strategy

**1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

- 1.1. This committee has a statutory responsibility to review and scrutinise community safety partnership activity and routinely receives an annual review and partnership update.
- 1.2. The One Stockport Safety Partnership (OSSP) was previously known as the Safer Stockport Partnership – the new name was adopted by the partnership’s board in September 2022 to bring consistency to the names of all our key strategic partnerships.
- 1.3. This joint report provides an update about the One Stockport Safety Partnership and provides an overview on the Stockport Cuckoo Project with the full report attached as an appendix.
- 1.4. The One Stockport Safety Partnership (OSSP) is the CSP covering the Borough of Stockport. The current **statutory** responsibilities of the OSSP include:
  - Engaging and consulting with the community about their priorities and progressing with achieving them.
  - Setting up protocols and systems for sharing information.
  - Analysing a wide range of data, including crime levels and patterns, to identify priorities.
  - Setting out a partnership plan and monitoring progress with its delivery.
  - Commissioning Domestic Violence Homicide reviews.
  - From January 2023, the OSSP have the governance for overseeing the evidence-led Serious Violence Plans.

**2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

- 2.1. At the heart of our Partnership is the One Stockport Safety Partnership Plan 2022-2025, which outlines our ambitions for community safety across the Borough over the coming three years. Our Plan has been refreshed following the launch of our shared One Stockport Borough Plan and is a key component to supporting our shared ambitions for our Borough. Our plan supports the Greater Manchester Mayor’s Police and Crime Plan 2022-25, whilst, reflecting the local context and challenges facing us in Stockport.  
Our OSSP Plan acknowledges the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic such as domestic violence, impact of loneliness and mental health and inequality as

long-term issues. The plan will support the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act and the Serious Violence Duty, which include the need for a problem profile and needs assessment, and to develop and publish a local strategy.

Our Community Safety strategic assessment, which underpins the priority areas for action outlined in this Plan, reinforces our recognition that crime and disorder is not spread equally across Stockport and disproportionately affects our most deprived areas.

The key strategic priorities for the next three years will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain fit for purpose. The three priorities for the refreshed plan are:

- Protecting Vulnerable People
- Public Safety and Protection
- Reducing Offending and Reoffending.

For each of the strategic priorities, it provides an annual action plan of key multi-agency activity and interventions to address the priority issues. Through our performance framework, we'll continue to keep track of our progress in delivering these priorities, identifying emerging issues and opportunities to make Stockport a safer place to live, work and visit.

## 2.2. Key Deliverables over the past twelve months:

- Develop our education programme to offer learning across a range of platforms, which will support the community by making it more confident to talk about domestic abuse and respond to it appropriately and safely.
- Raise awareness of hate crime and its impact – both public awareness and awareness within agencies, for example, through the GM “Let’s End Hate Crime” campaign brand and work to support Hate Crime Week.
- Develop a clear multi-agency pathway for responding to child criminal exploitation and County Lines, including clear practical guidance for individual cases comprising of the relevant roles of individual agencies (who does what, when and how).
- Proactive promotion of the application of Stalking Protection Orders and training relating to these orders, as well as ensuring that the victims of stalking and harassment receive the care and support that they need.
- Ensure OSSP and its constituent partners address the new serious violence duty set out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, and build on this to enhance our approach to serious violence.
- Implement effective early measures to prevent ASB occurring, including youth diversionary activities developed through the RTime model (a joint working approach involving Life Leisure, Stockport Council and Stockport Homes working in partnership) and developing Neighbourhood Action Plans to address ASB in those neighbourhoods identified as hotspot areas.
- Address the accommodation needs of offenders are a key priority. It is important to consider what can be done to secure more local housing for offenders, both short and long-term, to financially support offenders in housing

and to provide life skills support for offenders in accommodation to stabilise their tenancies and lives.

- Develop an enhanced schools-based and early help offer through Targeted Youth Support that is aligned to the placed-based and early help delivery models to contribute to locality and working and ensure that the education and wider early help offer for young people at risk is as robust as it can be.

### 2.3. Forward Look – Priorities for 2023/24

Delivery of the OSSP Plan 2022-2025, with activity relating to its three main themes:

- On the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023, [The Independent Prevent Review](#) was published nationally and highlighted 34 recommendations to improve our approach to reducing radicalisation. These will now be considered via our existing Prevent structures and filter into refreshing the Stockport Prevent Strategy and Stockport Prevent Partnership action plan.
- The recently published [Josh McAllister Review of Social Care](#) has led to a series of consultations around changes, which could impact on safeguarding children in domestic abuse households. We will be working with our Safeguarding Partnerships to respond to its recommendations.
- We will use our existing tactical meetings to improve multi-agency working and develop closer working relationships with GMP to improve our approach to tackling domestic burglary and car crime. Oversight for this will sit with the Partnership Delivery Group and we will strengthen our data led approach using a dashboard report to understand crime in our neighbourhoods, identify peak times of activity, hot spots, and trends.
- We will continue to implement our Safer Streets Programme focusing on detached youth work, diversionary activities implementing a better secure linkage of CCTV in Merseyway and providing improved cameras in the town centre and additional security guards at ASB hot spots (such as school holidays), we are piloting a mentoring scheme in partnership with Groundwork and Stockport College.
- The Serious Violence Duty (SVD) came into effect on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023. This is a statutory requirement, and The One Stockport Safety Partnership has the oversight for this, and we will be required to produce a Strategic Needs Assessment amongst other requirements, such as a Partnership Agreement and provisional delivery plans, to be in place by January 2024.
- We will develop and implement a refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2023-2026.
- We will develop and implement our annual Youth Justice Plan and Targeted Youth Support.
- We will implement the Adolescent Safeguarding Framework and develop further our adolescent offer to young people.

### **3. CUCKOOING PROJECT**

**3.1** Core Community Safety Grant funded a local pilot project to support victims of cuckooing. Cuckooing is when organised criminals take over the home of a vulnerable person for criminal activities, such as drug dealing, making or cooking drugs, storing weapons and stolen goods. The project involved a dedicated officer working alongside GMP and other agencies/teams to support victims of cuckooing, other drug users accessing the premises, and where appropriate perpetrators if they are drug and alcohol users. The objectives of the project were to be a specialist outreach service which would:

- Establish an increased understanding of the extent of the problem of cuckooing in Stockport
- Provide immediate support system to victims of cuckooing including visiting clients in custody, providing pay-as-you-go phones, practical help, and support
- Provide harm reduction and facilitate access to substance misuse treatment, wider health services, support, and recovery for victims
- Support the victim within with the criminal justice process
- Support GMP/ Council with partial or full Closure Orders if necessary
- Engage with other drug users using the premises via texting to offer access to prescribing services/ support
- Prepare other civil enforcement action including but not limited to Civil Injunctions.

Please see appendix 1 included, which provides a more detailed report of the Cuckooing/Exploitation Project Annual Evaluation– August 2023.

### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**4.1** The Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- a) Consider the OSSP Annual Update
- b) Note the priorities within each of the three themes in OSSP's 2022/23 delivery plan
- c) Offer any comments or reflections on the issues covered in the presentation.
- d) Acknowledge the content of this report and provide any comment on the Cuckooing report included in the background paper

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Cuckoo Report August 2023

Anyone wishing to discuss the report should contact Liz Smith on 07800618645 or by email on [liz.m.smith@stockporthomes.org](mailto:liz.m.smith@stockporthomes.org)

---

---

## **APPENDIX.1 – Cuckooing/Exploitation Project Annual Evaluation– August 2023**

### **1. Introduction**

In November 2021 the One Stockport Safety Partnership (OSSP) and Stockport Homes Group (SHG) Homelessness Service approved funding for an 18-month tenure neutral pilot project to support victims of cuckooing. The project commenced in January 2022 and involved having a dedicated officer who would work alongside the Police and other agencies/teams to support victims of cuckooing, other drug users accessing the premises, and where appropriate perpetrators if they are drug and alcohol users. The objectives of the project were to be a specialist outreach service which would:

- Establish an increased understanding of the extent of the problem of cuckooing in Stockport.
- Provide an immediate support system to victims of cuckooing including visiting clients in custody, providing pay-as-you-go phones, practical help, and support.
- Provide harm reduction and facilitate access to substance misuse treatment, wider health services, support, and recovery for victims.
- Support the victim with the criminal justice process.
- Support the police or Council with partial or full Closure Orders if necessary.
- Engage with other drug users using the premises via texting to offer access to prescribing services and other support services.
- Prepare other civil enforcement action including but not limited to Civil Injunctions.

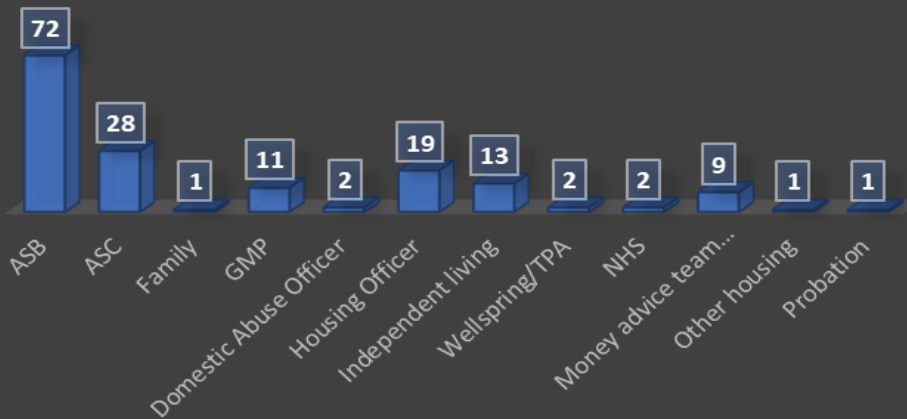
The purpose of this paper is to update as to the progress of the project.

### **2. Outcomes to Date**

Raised awareness with agencies and team about what cuckooing is and how to spot signs of cuckooing and exploitation. This has included attending a large number of team meetings, partnership events (including the GM Op Challenger Conference) The project has formed a focus group with GMP, Victim Services, Adult Social Care (ASC) and Safeguarding GMP. The project has developed a “Signs to look for” leaflet and referral forms, which have been shared with, GMP and all departments of SHG. There has been strong links made with the Wellspring and Cirtek house and the Team Leader for the project staffed a stand during Exploitation week speaking to members of the public to further raise awareness.

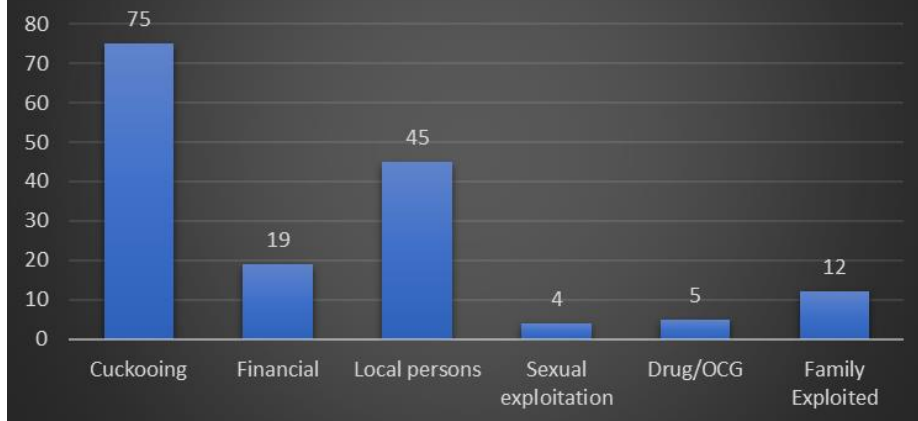
As a result of this increased awareness 161 closed cases of potential cuckooing or exploitation have been received from various team and agencies since January 2022. A breakdown of referrals can be seen below.

## REFERRALS RECEIVED JAN 2022 - AUGUST 2023



Whilst someone having their property take over is the most common type of exploitation case the project has dealt with, the officer has dealt with cases of family exploitation, financial exploitation, and sexual exploitation with a breakdown of the types of cases summarised below.

## Types of Exploitation Jan 2022 - August 2023



Of the 161 cases dealt with so far, 129 have been positively resolved with the victim no longer experiencing exploitation. The multiple interventions in cases are wide ranging but in the main involve implementing effective wrap around support and target hardening measures, meaning victims are able to remain in their homes and are not forced to flee and present as homeless. The cost benefit savings attributed with this work for void costs alone equate to £289,114 after the cost of the exploitation role has been deducted.<sup>1</sup>

There are always exceptions to the rule and there have been 11 cases in which the abuse was so severe a move to another property or borough was the only outcome deemed safe enough.

<sup>1</sup> Average void costs (£4,659) multiplied by 68 cases remaining in the tenancy, less costs of delivering the service (£27,705)

The project has made effective use of warning systems for perpetrators and has used the Community Protection warnings/notices to exclude persistent offenders from perpetrators after they have been removed from the property. A summary of the outcomes and cases can be found below.

Outcome	No
Arrested/Conviction	4
Target Hardening & Wrap around support	68
CPW/N	14
Moved	11
Warnings issued	5
Perps excluded	11

There have been cases whereby the victim being cuckooed has refused to engage with the exploitation protection officer insisting that there is no exploitation taking place and as such these have been passed back to the Safer Neighbourhoods Officer to deal with a case of ASB and appropriate action taken to resolve. There are currently 26 cases ongoing.

The highest incidence of exploitation take place in Brinnington and Mottram Street but there have been cases across the Borough, and they are relatively evenly spread across those areas. Where a case of cuckooing is identified the officer delivers leaflets on cuckooing in the close proximity to that property in order to encourage others to come forward if they are experiencing similar situations.

Adswood	14
Bramhall	1
Bredbury	4
Brinnington	28
Cale Green	2
Cheadle/Cheadle Hulme	13
Central	3
Davenport	1
Edgeley	10
Hazel grove	2
Heald Green	1
The Heatons	7
Heavily	2
Hillgate	2
Lancashire Hill	10
Mottram street Estate	18
Marple	5
Offerton/Estate	7
Rectory Fields	2
Reddish	15
Romiley	7
Victoria Park	3
Woodley	4

The project has been identified as best practice and case studies have been provided to the Home Office about the work that has been done. Copies of these case studies can be found later in this document. Furthermore, the project was named winner in the GMP “POP” Awards in the Best Victim Centred POP<sup>2</sup> Plan category and funding has been secured to continue this work until April 2026.

### **3. Further Work to be done.**

Whilst project has made significant progress and has brought about many positive outcomes, there is still further work to be done. The project needs to make further use of the “top indicators” list to identify those most at risk of cuckooing and implementing support with tenancy ready, housing support and independent living teams before cuckooing takes place.

It is also being noted that the impact of cost-of-living crisis might increase incidence of exploitation as people struggle to pay bills, heat homes, and become more desperate to make ends meet. Therefore, working with customer finance identifying those in arrears with rent might also be an area of proactive work to try and reduce the risk of people resorting to illegal money lending scheme and the exploitation risks associated with such.

Further development work is taking place with Stepping Hill A&E managers to provide briefings on the role of the Exploitation Projection officer and how to spot signs of cuckooing and make referrals. The project is looking at how it can work with and benefit from the experience of “Catch 22”, a social business that provides offender management, violence reduction interventions and rehabilitation and victim services. Links are also being made with The Salvation Army and accessing their fully qualified intensive support officers to help victims overcome the trauma of their cuckooing/exploitation experience.

The project also needs to undertake a more thorough cost-benefit analysis to identify what tangible and non-tangible savings the work has produced to date.

There are challenges being experienced with the project being tenure neutral when it comes to target hardening measures as SHG cannot use Housing Revenue Account monies to pay for additional locks/security for cases that sit outside the housing management function. Further work to explore how that gap in support for private sector cases can be filled.

### **4. Recommendations**

It is recommended that:

- The content of this report be noted.

---

<sup>2</sup> POP stands for Problem Orientated Policing