

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Report of	OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER
Subject	NIGHTTIME ECONOMY
Date	MONDAY 3 JUNE 2019 - 2:00 p.m.
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Purpose of Report

1. To assure the Police and Crime Panel that work to address the problems raised by the night time economy are being addressed effectively and to highlight the wider challenges that drive the problem.

Recommendation

2. The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report and to consider the role of each member's own organisation in addressing the issues raised by the night-time economy.

Background

3. The Police and Crime Plan says "I will focus on measures to reduce harm from the Night Time Economy (NTE) and will support treatment services and other partners in continuing to support the Police licensing team to seek licence reviews of problematic licenced premises."¹
4. This report reviews progress in achieving this aim.

Current position and Objectives

5. The operational order, Operation Nightwatch, establishing the programme of activities to address night-time economy offences was issued in March 2018. This brought together all of the police initiatives across LLR into a single strategic approach. At that point NTE crimes were still showing an upward trajectory peaking at around 650 NTE crimes per month in January – March 2018. The trajectory indicated that NTE crimes would rise to around 800 per month by March 2020².
6. The key aim of the operational order was to reverse this trend and reduce the overall volume of NTE crimes with a particular focus on violent crime, whilst achieving flexibility and capacity to tackle other reactive and harmful demands across LLR in line with Force strategic priorities. The approach adopted by the operational order was a targeted one, focussing on gathering intelligence and directing resources at key times to urgent areas of demand. Prior to that operational deployment for NTE work had been very resource intensive, drawing primarily on

¹ Page 11 Police and Crime Plan 2017 - 2021

² NTE crimes are defined as: criminal damage, drugs, violence, sexual offences, weapons offences and public order in city/town centres between specified times on Friday and Saturday nights.

police officers who were withdrawn from other activities to address NTE matters.

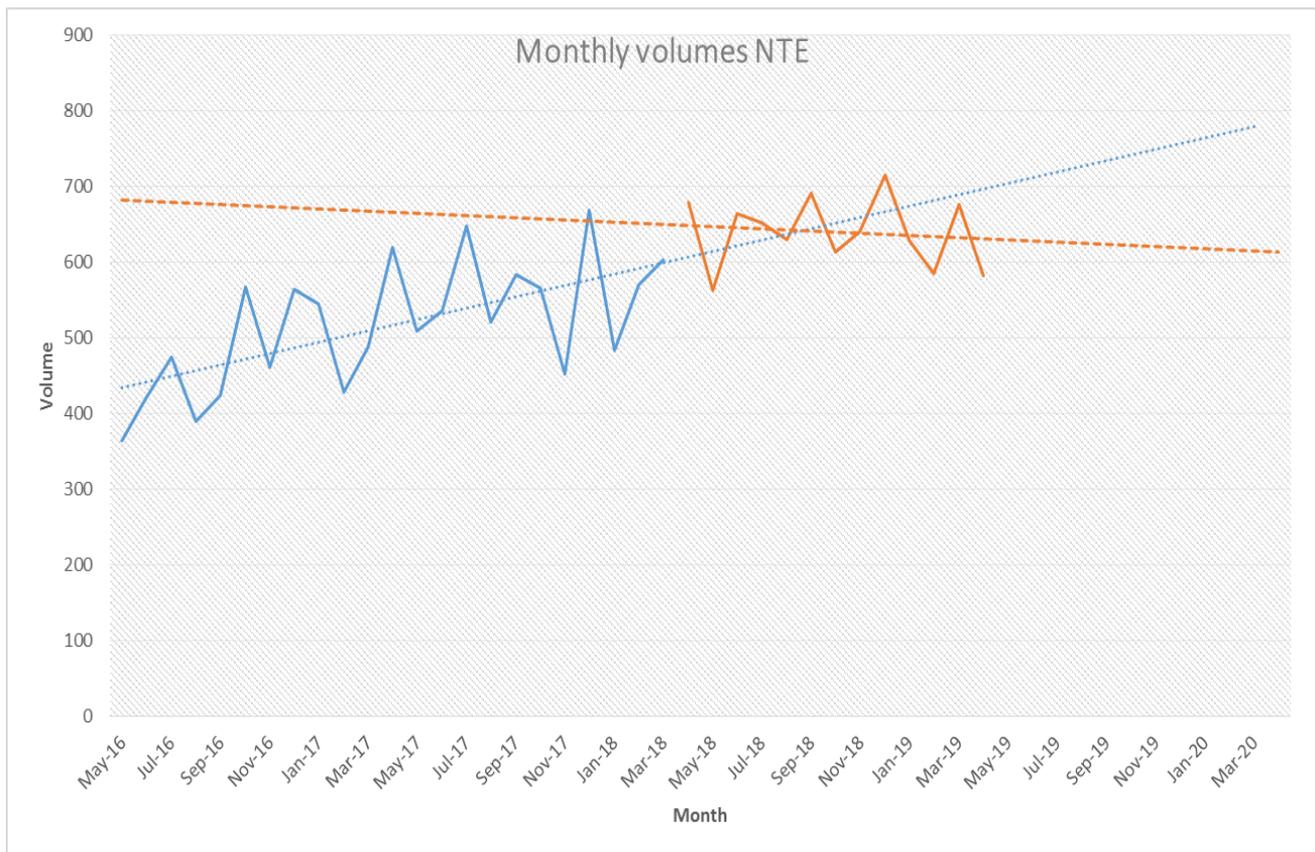
7. Similarly the operational order emphasised the importance of adopting a preventive approach to NTE, particularly by managing the police response to licensed premises, which are often seen as the source of the harmful behaviours associated with NTE. The overarching intention articulated in the order was to work with partners to create a “safe, vibrant and enjoyable environment by minimising crime and disorder associated with the Night Time Economy.”

Work Undertaken

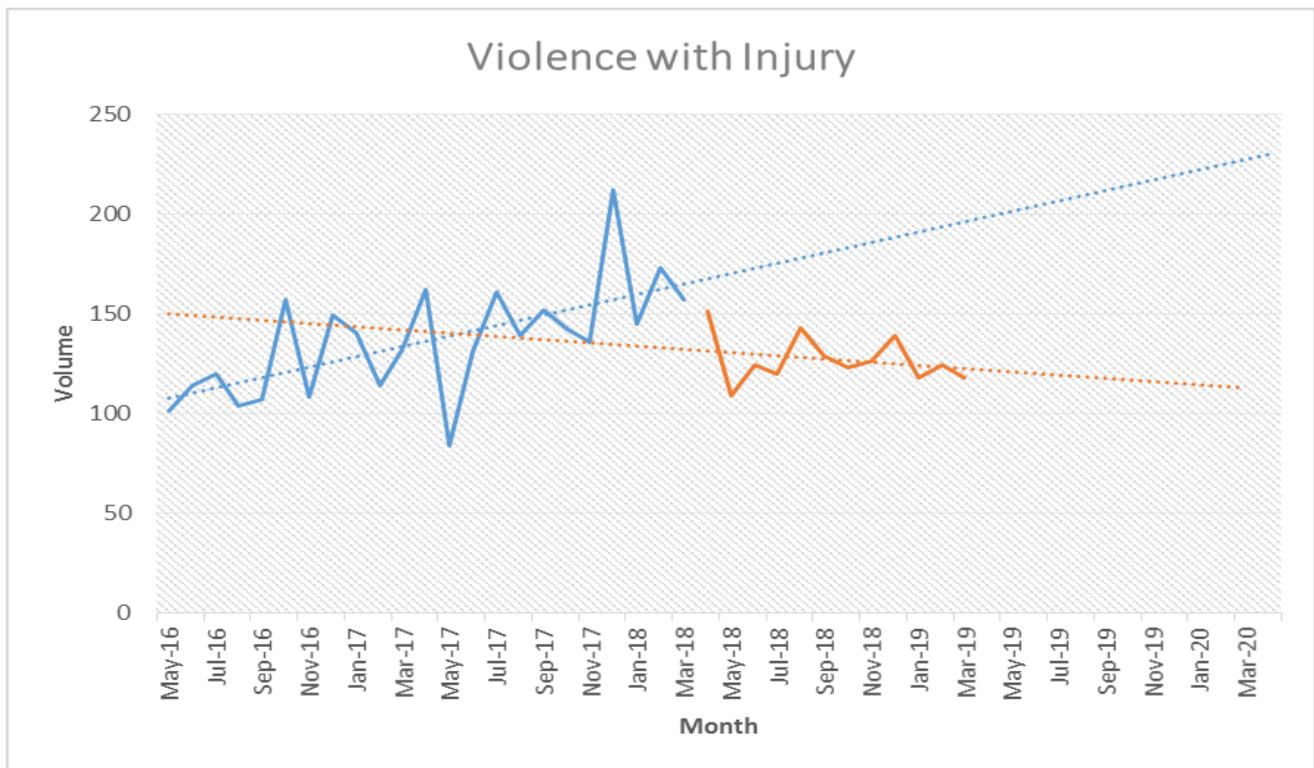
8. A range of activities have been undertaken focussing on Leicester city centre and Loughborough, Hinckley, Melton and Ashby town centres. The specific tactics are as follows:
9. Gathering intelligence and analysing findings to identify hotspots – the aim is to deploy resources only where required rather than put a lot of emphasis on generic police patrols, which, according to evidence on NTE policing, are not an effective way of counteracting the problem. This allows the police to have a very speedy, targeted response to NTE harm-related incidents at the earliest point and disrupt the activity. This approach is supported by a tactical plan which assesses the level of threat using crime pattern analysis, forecasting tools, seasonal trends and police intelligence. There are four categories of threat and the level of policing resource varies according to the level of threat, Category A being the lowest and Category C-IR being the highest.
10. This approach is effective as long as there is a resource to draw on but if overall response is high then there is a limit to how quickly the police can react to NTE issues. In Leicester city this has been addressed by deploying resources from the local neighbourhood policing area.
11. A lot of the work is preventive in nature and highly dependent on work across partnerships, consistent with the core themes of the Police and Crime Plan. For instance:
 - deploying a communication strategy to raise awareness amongst the public of the danger and harm caused by drug misuse;
 - maintaining and implementing a force drug strategy to disrupt Class A drug supply;
 - greater use of Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) and violent offender orders for individuals with a high likelihood of committing violent offences;
 - develop and utilise Community Tension Monitoring (‘CTMs’ from Leicester City Council) and information sharing with local authorities across LLR;
 - sharing intelligence on high risk individuals at Joint Action Group meetings and developing multi agency plans to mitigate risk;
 - disrupt individuals likely to be involved in serious violent offending, particularly through the use of Pursue Panel Meetings;
 - deploy multi-agency problem solving methodologies when specific hotspots and/or high risk individuals have been identified;
 - more targeted approach to deploying experienced senior investigating officers for football commitments and other pre-planned major events;
 - enabling police officers to undertake immediate treatment and transport individuals to hospital when this is the most efficient response;
 - use of street pastors to defuse incidents, minimise harm and provide immediate support for individuals.

12. The preventive approach is most clearly seen in the enhanced work undertaken on licenced premises across LLR, which also involves a wide range of partners via the Licensing Committees. Broadly speaking this involves the Force identifying the areas which generate the highest volumes of NTE crimes and working with the licenced premises in those areas to ensure that their practices minimise the risks of harmful behaviours e.g. reducing underage drinking and the effective management of intoxicated individuals.
13. The licensing approach is supported by a specialist team which works with partners to monitor existing licenced premises and address applications. This involves appealing licences, applying for closure orders, applying for variations and many other activities. In preparing this report the activities of the licensing team have been reviewed for one of the NTE areas. This demonstrates that the team effectively resisted licensing applications in 73% of new cases. In the remaining 27% of cases the licensing applications were often approved with additional conditions applied to the licenced premise. The team is supported by licensing single points of contact (SPOCs) at each Neighbourhood Policing Area (NPA) to enhance contextual understanding.
14. The licensing approach also involves the identification of saturation zones. Saturation zones are areas wherein there is a clearly evidenced correlation between the numbers of licenced premises and the volumes of NTE crime and a decision taken with partners to resist any expansion in licenced premises through a presumption of rebuttal of applications for new premises licences, club premises certificates or material variations.
15. Six saturation zones have been identified across LLR and, as well as managing the volume of licenced premises, policing activities have also been targeted during those areas at the specified NTE periods.
16. The conditions applied to licensed premises are designed to address the issues associated with individual settings. For instance, in one current venue the conditions apply for a period of nearly two months, require a minimum number of door supervisors, all trained to a specified standard, wearing required high visibility clothing, and maintaining contact with the police and local authority CCTV via City Watch radio. In this particular setting a number of the door supervisors are also required to wear police body worn videos. In setting these conditions the police are effectively ensuring that each licensed premise can manage its own issues with minimal police presence, albeit in direct contact with the police should problems arise.
17. The work undertaken by the police to achieve each of the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan is monitored on a quarterly basis against a rating scale. The overall assessment against the NTE objective is rated as green.

18. The key test of the effectiveness of the NTE strategy is the impact that it has had on NTE crimes. The overall impact can be seen in the graph below.



19. The solid blue line shows actual NTE figures by month for the period May 2016 to March 2018. The variations from month to month are affected by the numbers of weekends in the month, so the dotted blue line is a better indicator of the overall trajectory, which was heading relentlessly upwards to March 2018. The solid orange line shows the monthly pattern from the point that Operation Nightwatch came into effect. Again the dotted orange line shows the actual trend in NTE crimes. This is clearly in a downward direction, albeit at a slow rate. This suggests that the targeted approach described above has been effective in reversing the trend of growth in NTE crimes and has done slightly better than stabilising the situation, without deploying additional resource.
20. However, the basket of crimes that constitute the NTE group are not all of the same weight and show variations in levels across different crimes. The approach adopted by Operation Nightwatch has been specifically targeted at the most serious violence generated in NTE and at rapid deployment at such incidents to maximise public safety. This can best be indicated via an analysis of the most serious type of offences – violence with injury.
21. The graph below focusses solely on the levels of violence with injury, which includes ABH and GBH and other forms of assault. As can be seen, up until the deployment of Operation Nightwatch the pattern of violence with injury offences was following a steeper upward trajectory than the overall pattern of NTE crimes. Equally the trend from March 2018 is clearly showing a much steeper downward trajectory with the overall volumes reducing to May 2016 levels by March 2020. This is of course a much more dramatic improvement than these figures suggest bearing in mind the more rigorous application of crime data integrity recording from 2018 onwards, when the inspectorate indicated a 21% shortfall in recorded crime. The trend is continuing downwards despite the uplift generated by crime data integrity measures.

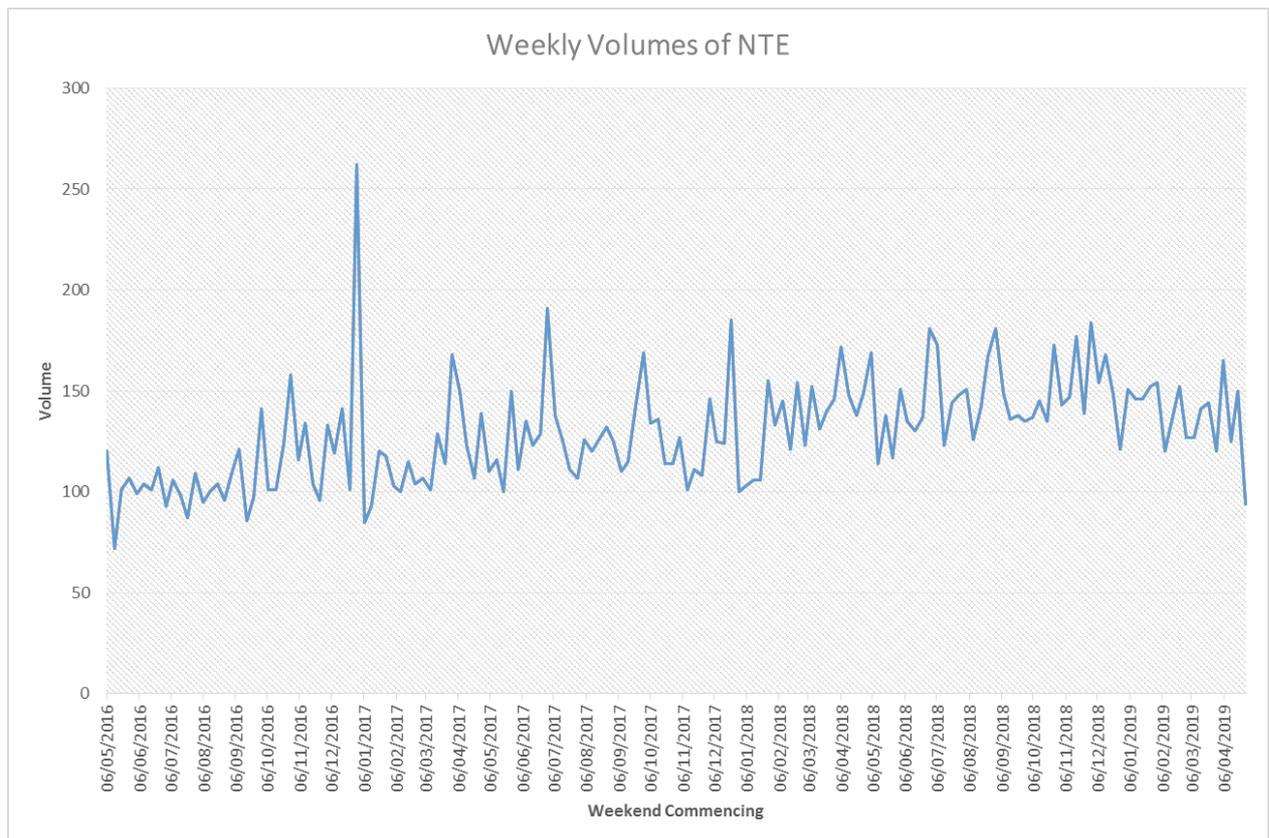


22. On top of this, the PCC has reviewed NTE work directly by observing various operations at first hand. The PCC and chief constable have also engaged directly with the public on the matter via one of their regular “What Matters to You” public engagement events, which was held at the clock tower in Leicester on a Friday night.
23. Whilst these achievements are positive and reflect a tightly planned operation, which is meeting its objectives, the wider context is more troubling. In reality the licensing trade is a growing business catering for high demand. But the harmful behaviours that are associated with the night time economy (NTE) also increase at the same rate as the increase in licensed premises and increased opening hours. Emergency admissions to Accident and Emergency departments are a good barometer of the difficulties generated by night time economy related behaviour and these are increasing at a rate of around 6% to 7%³.
24. Local data on trends in licensing has been hard to access at present, but national reports indicate a clear pattern of increasingly easy access to low cost alcohol and a strong correlation between greater access to alcohol and instances of alcohol related harm⁴. This rise seems to date from 2003 Licensing Act, which made it significantly easier to apply for off trade licenses. Other studies⁵ have demonstrated that greater activity by police and local authorities in challenging license applications seems to have a positive impact on crime and hospital admissions. Certainly that is the feedback from the police licensing team, which tries to impact on NTE figures by proactively contributing to licensing decisions. However, the team also points out that the pattern of demand is quite dynamic, with new challenges emerging through increasing applications for one-off events, often music festivals, which can generate crowds of around 10,000. The graph below demonstrates that NTE crimes have increased as alcohol has become increasingly accessible.

³ April 2019 Statistical Commentary

⁴ Studies referenced from alcoholpolicy.net – <https://alcoholpolicy.net/2017/05/alcohol-availability-england>

⁵ Same reference as above



25. Whilst there is a correlation between increases in licensed premises and levels of NTE crimes, there has also been a reduction in police resources at the same time. Bearing in mind the lag in recruitment for police officers/PCSOs there will not be a significant increase from this year's budget until late 2019 early 2020. So the period covered by the graph above has seen numbers of police officers at their lowest levels, following the period of austerity. The increased revenue generated by the growth in licensed premises has not been used to support the increased demand for police operations.
26. Austerity has also had an impact on the wider partnership resources available to address NTE issues at peak times. Effectively this means that police, ambulance and A&E departments bear the brunt of frontline activity with limited other resources to draw upon. From a police perspective, this means that the police have to abstract resources from other services to sustain NTE activity, inevitably impacting on more proactive areas of work such as neighbourhood policing.
27. In Leicester City the Business Improvement District is clearly a positive initiative to enable local businesses to support the development of the city centre via a collaborative partnership, which could remedy some of the NTE issues identified. On top of this the Street Lifestyles Operations Group (SLOG) aims to address the problems generated by street drinkers and others who spend considerable time on the streets, often begging for money.
28. The Police and Crime Panel also asked for information about how the PCC assures progress against the different elements of the Police and Crime Plan. This consists of a range of activities, which include the following:
29. Review of data and analysis of exceptions – as the panel is aware, the OPCC now includes a performance officer, a post which was vacant for a long period. This post reviews the data against the plan and against general police performance on a regular basis and identifies exceptions, which are followed up directly with the police. Recently this has included a review of the performance reporting methodology deployed by the police and the development of a

revised approach. The PCC attends key police performance monitoring meetings and has direct access to all the data.

30. Police and Crime Plan Tracker – all of the commitments articulated in the Police and Crime Plan are monitored via a “tracker” system, which identifies all of the activities undertaken by the police which address police and crime plan priorities and assesses the impact of those activities. A formal review is undertaken on a quarterly basis, but the monitoring occurs via a live system which extracts data from recorded policing activities.
31. Strategic Assurance Board – this Board takes place on a bi-monthly basis and reviews the work across the full range of performance. The tracker and the performance reports are considered in this meeting, but it also focusses on specific areas of operational activity or strategic development.
32. Chief Officer Team – this meeting occurs on a weekly basis and includes the senior management teams from the Police and OPCC. It reviews current operational activity and challenges and identifies issues for future problem solving.
33. Weekly PCC/Chief Constable meetings – these meetings identify areas of excellence as well as areas for development and plans for addressing them.
34. The above gives an indication of the more formal methods for achieving high levels of assurance, but the interaction between the Police and the OPCC occurs informally on a daily basis and demonstrates very high levels of collaboration and transparency.

Next Steps

35. The future strategic direction in managing NTE will initially involve a continuation and evolution of Operation Nightwatch. The operation is reviewed at regular intervals by a senior officer holding the portfolio. But a multi-agency review of the patterns and trends in NTE operations, with a view to developing a clearer multi-agency long term strategy would be a valuable next step. More generally the focus of the Police and Crime Plan is on the prevention of harmful behaviours and a multi-agency strategy is likely to focus on longer term changes such as education, safer environments and behaviour modification and management on top of the measures described above.
36. NTE is considered and addressed within the development of the new police Target Operating Model which will retain significant capability in the understanding of local issues and the close alignment of further uniformed resources where necessary. The Force’s Serious Harm Reduction Unit (SHRU) also provides opportunities for developing further problem solving through viable partnerships.
37. Clearer articulation of the role of each partner involved in addressing NTE related offending, particularly ensuring alignment across community safety partnerships.
38. Other options are being considered such as the use of a late night levy and early morning restriction orders, but these would require discussion with partners before taking further.

Implications

Financial:	NTE work is being delivered within the budget
Legal:	Relevant legislation in relation to licensing
Equality Impact Assessment:	Continually reviewed
Risks and Impact:	Risks are considered within the review process of Operation Nightwatch. No significant risks are currently identified
Link to Police and Crime Plan:	As identified in paragraph 2 above

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List of Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

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