



## **Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel**

**28<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

### **SAFER STREETS FUND**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This paper provides an update on the Safer Streets Fund successes across Devon and Cornwall funded by the Home Office from January 2020. It provides information on the three funding rounds to date and expected plans for the future.

#### **2. The Safer Streets Fund**

##### *Background*

- 2.1 The Safer Streets Fund (the SSF) was launched in January 2020 and was part of the government's 2019 election manifesto commitment to tackling crime. There have been three rounds of the SSF to date and it is expected that a further round will be launched shortly for 2022-23.
- 2.2 The first two rounds of the SSF were focused exclusively on preventing acquisitive crime in areas with high crime rates for burglary, robbery, vehicle theft and theft from the person. The third round was focused on personal safety and tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG) and was launched in June 2021 as part of the government's wider response to tackling VAWG.
- 2.3 The precise scope, remit and process for each of the SSF rounds has varied but there are common features. In all three rounds there has been a requirement for initiatives to be focused on a small defined geographic area and has allowed funding for environmental changes, such as enhanced CCTV and street lighting, as well as wider crime prevention initiatives, including training. The SSF allows for a maximum of three bids to be submitted within a policing area which are rated in order of priority by the Police and Crime Commissioner (the Commissioner). For the second and third SSF rounds bids could be submitted by either the Commissioner or a local authority but there remains a maximum of three bids per policing area and the Commissioner was responsible for determining the priority order of bids.
- 2.4 The funding is allocated by the Home Office through a primary, secondary and tertiary assessment process with all primary bids considered first. If funding remains in the national fund after primary bids are assessed then secondary bids are scored and considered and so on. Funding awards have been for a single financial year (or part of a financial year) requiring all works to be completed by the end of March.



2.5 The Panel has been regularly updated over the past 18 months on the progress of SSF projects within Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. A brief outline is set out below of each of the three bidding rounds and the initiatives which have received funding.

#### *Local Approach*

- 2.6 The Commissioner has recognised the importance of Safer Streets approaches in her new Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 in supporting the delivery of Safe, Resilient and Connected Communities across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Since its launch the Commissioner and the OPCC have worked closely with local authorities, Devon and Cornwall Police and wider partners to identify and maximise the opportunities provided by this scheme for our communities and will continue to do so.
- 2.7 The first two SSF rounds focused on acquisitive crime have had specific crime rate eligibility criteria. Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have some of the lowest crime rates nationally for these crime types and as such only a small number of locations were eligible for consideration. The third SSF round which focused on VAWG did not have a specific crime rate threshold. The Commissioner, in discussion with Devon and Cornwall Police considered a range of evidence to identify the areas with the greatest need in which the funding would deliver the greatest impact. This process identified that the focus should be on our university towns and cities, in particular given the short time window for delivery between November and March.
- 2.8 The development of SSF bids is a resource intensive process which typically operates over a 6-8 week bidding window. It involves: significant data analysis to determine eligible locations and to understand the nature of relevant offences; partnership engagement on the selection of bid areas and decisions regarding prioritisation, community engagement on proposals; and the conducting of street lighting and CCTV surveys as well as Environmental Visual Audits by trained Designing Out Crime Officers to assess areas of risk and recommend interventions for identified locations.
- 2.9 To date our bids for the SSF programmes have focused on three broad strands of activity:
- a) environmental improvements (such as improved CCTV and street lighting)
  - b) crime prevention (including target hardening, new Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and crime prevention training)
  - c) community strength and resilience (helping communities to reclaim public spaces and enhance community pride through park improvements, murals etc and training to support the community to adopt restorative approaches to community issues).
- 2.10 Delivery of the SSF projects has been managed locally by local authorities and the OPCC using a partnership approach. Multi agency project boards have been set up to involve partners and community groups in shaping and steering delivery and to lead specific areas of each project. Successful bids report on a quarterly basis to the Home Office on their delivery.
- 2.11 The SSF is a valuable crime prevention investment opportunity. It has provided over £1.6 million of Home Office funding to the four local SSF projects in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly over 2020/21 and 2021/22 as part of the Government commitment in the Beating Crime Plan. These funds have enabled investment in new key infrastructure, new crime prevention initiatives and community strength programmes in some of the highest crime areas in our policing area.

2.12 Each round of the SSF is being independently evaluated by the Home Office. The impact of the SSF initiatives in preventing crime will be assessed over a three-year timeframe, although it is recognised that data comparisons will be impacted by restrictions relating to the pandemic during 2020 and 2021.

### **3. Safer Streets Fund 1 - Stonehouse, Plymouth (Stronger North Stonehouse)**

3.1 The OPCC worked with Devon and Cornwall Police, Plymouth City Council and wider partners to prepare and submit a bid for North Stonehouse in Plymouth which had a primary focus on burglary. In July 2020 it was announced that the bid had been successful with £546,000 awarded for North Stonehouse, with work required to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

3.2 A collaborative project delivery team, led jointly by the OPCC and Plymouth City Council, brought together Devon and Cornwall Police, Neighbourhood Watch, Make Amends and local community organisations to deliver the Stronger North Stonehouse Project. There have been three core strands of activity:

- *Environment*: investment in additional CCTV and improved street lighting across North Stonehouse, including in Victoria Park and Patna Park
- *Crime Prevention*: a series of initiatives including crime prevention training and toolkits, the establishment of new Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, launch of a Feel Safe Scheme by Neighbourhood Watch providing security and repairs for vulnerable residents and a programme of target hardening for properties which have been previously been subject to burglary.
- *Community Strength*: a series of small projects to assist the community in reclaiming its public spaces, including small grants for park improvements and community projects, a graffiti clean-up programme, the installation of way markers and establishing a new community network to support ongoing action on community safety and resilience.

3.3 The Project Team included several local community groups based in Stonehouse who led on the delivery of key aspects of the community work strand. This included the Sparks Fund for community projects providing 'small sparks' funding of up to £250 and 'big sparks' grants of up to £3,000, which was managed by Nudge Community Builders and the graffiti clean-up and mural installation project which was led by Cliik, both of which are charitable community benefit societies based in Stonehouse delivering a range of projects and initiatives for the area.

3.4 Delivery of many aspects of the project were challenged by the pandemic restrictions which were in force for much of the delivery period, with approaches and activities evolving and adjusting to deal with the changing environment. This included a switch to virtual training and workshops as well as the launch of a printed North Stonehouse Journal newspaper to ensure that local residents could be consulted and engaged in the initiatives being delivered through the programme when face to face engagement was not able to take place.

3.5 In July 2021 the Panel was advised that the Commissioner and Plymouth City Council had come together to provide some additional funding and resources to support the continued operation of Stronger North Stonehouse project up until June 2022. This additional support was provided in recognition of the impact that the pandemic had on delivery of some of the original plans for the project. This additional support has for example enabled the development

of the new Stronger North Stonehouse Network, face to face training in areas such as crime prevention and restorative justice and supported the delivery of community events and engagement opportunities.

- 3.6 Further information about all of the initiatives under the Stronger North Stonehouse Project can be found at [www.strongernorthstonehouse.co.uk](http://www.strongernorthstonehouse.co.uk) and in the Stronger North Stonehouse Journal [www.stonehousevoice.org/stronger-north-stonehouse-journal/](http://www.stonehousevoice.org/stronger-north-stonehouse-journal/)
- 3.7 The work carried out within Stronger North Stonehouse has been transformational in terms of the relationships between statutory agencies, partners and the local area. It has helped and supported the local community to deliver community safety improvements that they wanted to see, with projects steered and led by community representatives and consultation. Its positive impact has been recognised nationally with project leads invited to speak at national conferences to highlight the approach and best practice case studies on North Stonehouse published by the Local Government Association.

#### **4. Safer Streets Fund 2 – Exeter (Safer Central Exeter)**

4.1 The second round of SSF (SSF 2) was launched in January 2021 for delivery in 2021/22. The fund provided up to £20 million across England and Wales for preventative initiatives focused on acquisitive crime.

4.2 Exeter City Council and the OPCC worked with Devon and Cornwall Police and wider partners to prepare and submit a bid to SSF 2 in March 2021 for the city centre area. In June 2021 it was announced that Exeter City Council had been successful in its application and were awarded £432,000 for delivery of the project by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. Combined with match funding investment from partners the total bid value was in excess of £550,000 and will support a series of investments and projects across the city centre area which has been branded as Safer Central Exeter.

4.3 Investments being made through SSF 2 in Exeter include:

- *Environment*: additional CCTV cameras across the city centre and mobile CCTV camera capacity to enhance capable guardianship and improvements to street lighting in key locations such as Mary Arches Street.
- *Crime Prevention*: a series of initiatives including crime prevention training and toolkits, the establishment of new NHW Schemes and a Student Watch Scheme, launch of a Feel Safe Scheme by NHW providing security and repairs for vulnerable residents and target hardening for residential properties. The project also involves a series of proactive policing days focused on acquisitive crime.
- *Community Strength*: a series of projects to assist the community in reclaiming its public spaces, including small grants for park improvements in Northenhay Park and community projects and a graffiti clean-up and mural programme,

4.4 Delivery of the project is being led by Exeter Council through the Exeter Community Safety Partnership and involves a range of partners including the OPCC, Devon and Cornwall Police, Neighbourhood Watch, Unlimited Church, the University of Exeter and the Exeter Businesses Against Crime Partnership.

- 4.5 In January 2022 the Home Office confirmed that Exeter would receive an additional £50,000 in top up funding for the final three months of the project. This additional funding has been secured to: deliver more street lighting in identified locations, including Sidwell Street and South Street; lighting enhancements in the high street area to encourage greater occupation and deter offenders; and a murals programme in a number of city centre alleyways to deter future graffiti. This additional award takes the total Home Office funding awarded to the Safer Central Exeter Project to £482,000.
- 4.6 Further information about all of the initiatives which are being delivered through the Safer Central Exeter Project can be found at <https://exeter.gov.uk/clean-safe-city/community-safety/safer-central-exeter/> with regular updates on the project being provided through social media and a Safer Central Exeter Newsletter.

#### *Safety of Women at Night Fund - Exeter*

- 4.7 In late July 2021 the Home Office launched a further funding opportunity, the Safety of Women at Night (SWAN) Fund.
- 4.8 The OPCC worked with Exeter Community Safety Partnership and a range of partners including CoLab, InExeter and the University of Exeter to support the development of a bid for the SWAN Fund. The bid focused on a number of measures including the relaunch of the Best Bar None scheme in Exeter, the development and delivery of education and awareness projects such as bystander training for people working in the night time economy and train the trainer programmes working with women and girls. The University of Exeter has led the bid and it was announced in November 2021 that the bid for £72,000 had been successful. The OPCC are now working with the University, the Community Safety Partnership and wider partners to support delivery of the project which is closely aligned with the Safer Central Exeter Project.

### **5. Safer Streets Fund 3 (VAWG) – Plymouth and Falmouth**

- 5.1 In early June 2021 the Home Office launched a third round of the SSF (SSF 3) for delivery by the end of March 2022. Unlike the first two rounds of SSF which focused on acquisitive crime, this funding opportunity was launched as part of the government's response to tackling violence against women and girls and provided up to £25 million in funding, with all 43 policing areas and British Transport Police eligible to submit bids.
- 5.2 The OPCC worked with Plymouth City Council and Cornwall Council to support the submission of two bids by the local authorities to SSF 3 in July 2021 covering Plymouth City Centre and Falmouth. In October 2021 it was announced that both bids had been successful and the OPCC are continuing to work with partners to support delivery of these projects.

#### *Plymouth*

- 5.3 Plymouth City Council was awarded £512,000 under SSF 3 for a range of projects and activities focused on Stonehouse, Plymouth Hoe, the Barbican, the city centre and the Mutley/North Hill areas of the city.
- *Infrastructure:* The funding is supporting a number of infrastructure initiatives, including the provision of additional CCTV cameras and enhanced street lighting in key locations as well as providing direct links for the public into the city's CCTV control room.

- *Crime prevention:* A significant focus of the project is on behaviour change and prevention with delivery of numerous education and awareness schemes underway within the city. These include Bystander Awareness Training for people working in the night-time economy (through a combination of one-off sessions and train the trainer courses to enable long term adoption), education in schools in partnership with the NSPCC and a Sex Worker Outreach project. A new Student Safety Programme and the launch of a Student Watch Scheme are also being delivered as part of the project led by the University of Plymouth and Devon and Cornwall Community Watch.
- *Community:* including graffiti clean-ups and the installation of murals in Mutley and Stonehouse to help reclaim public spaces as well as support for the city's long established street pastor scheme which plays an important role in helping to safeguard people within the city's evening and night time economy.

5.4 Delivery of the SSF 3 Project in Plymouth is being managed through a partnership approach under Safer Plymouth which brings together a wide range of partners, including Plymouth City Council, Devon and Cornwall Community Watch, the University of Plymouth, NSPCC, Street Pastors, the OPCC and Trevi House (a women's and children's charity based in Plymouth).

5.5 In January 2022 the Home Office confirmed Plymouth would receive an additional £23,000 in top up funding for the final three months of the project. This additional funding will be used to: support the operation of night time economy marshals over January-March 2022; deliver training and mentoring to support men and boys to consider issues relating to gender-based violence; and enhancing the use of lived experience in policy, practice and decision making, including supporting the Plymouth VAWG Commission's engagement with people with lived experience. This takes the Home Office award to Plymouth for SSF 3 for 2021/22 to £535,000.

#### *Falmouth*

5.6 Cornwall Council was awarded just over £33,000 for Falmouth and is working in partnership with Falmouth Town Council and the Universities to deliver the project.

- *Infrastructure:* installation of six upgraded CCTV cameras for the town centre.
- *Crime prevention:* a programme of Bystander Training for staff employed in the night-time economy. The Don't Be a Bystander programme was launched in late 2021 as part of the 16 Days of Action to End Gender Based Violence and provides a combination of one-off sessions and train the trainer courses.
- *Community:* support for student led awareness campaigns and support for women and girls through the Universities.

5.7 In January 2022 the Home Office confirmed that Falmouth would receive an additional £33,500 in top up funding for the final three months of the project. This additional funding will be used to: deliver lighting enhancements in Church Street Car Park; provide Healthy Relationships training for males aged 16-24 years; expand the existing bystander awareness training; deliver a new communications campaign focused on bystanders co-designed with university students; and to host a series of pop up 'Safe Spaces' for women and girls in February 2022 offering support, help and advice from expert practitioners. This takes the Home Office award for Falmouth for SSF 3 for 2021/22 to over £66,000.

## **6. Future Safer Streets Fund Opportunities**

6.1 The Commissioner has recognised the importance of Safer Streets approaches in her new Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 and has confirmed her intention to focus future bids on high crime areas within Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

6.2 In December 2021 the government published its provisional police funding settlement for 2022/3. The provisional settlement confirmed that the government has allocated £150 million per annum for crime prevention initiatives for the next three years. It is our current expectation that some of that funding will be directed towards a fourth SSF round in 2022/23 but we await further information from the Home Office to confirm this.

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