**A close-up of a logo

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Community Safety Strategic Assessment

Executive Summary

Cannock Chase Refresh Assessment

The Centre for Public Innovation

The Centre for Public Innovation is a Community Interest Company that provides research, training, support and advice in the fields of health, social care, criminal justice and community development.

Our mission is to improve the outcomes of services for their users, with a particular emphasis on the most disadvantaged.

February 2025

## Executive Summary

### Context

Under the Police and Justice Act 2006 (England & Wales) local authorities are duty-bound to ‘provide evidence-based data to support Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in their planning and duties’.

It is a statutory obligation for CSPs to produce an annual localised Strategic Assessment providing a strategic evidence-base that identifies future priorities for the partnership and evaluates year-on-year activity.

This Strategic Assessment is being produced as a refresh assessment. The previous full assessment was undertaken and published in 2021/22.

### Strategic Context

The wider framework for addressing crime across Staffordshire is set by the Staffordshire Commissioner’s Office. The Commissioner’s priorities are:

* An outstanding Police service,
* Supporting victims and witnesses,
* Preventing and protecting
* Impactful partnerships.

Staffordshire Police have also set a number of priorities which CSPs should seek to align with where appropriate:

* Ensure safe and confident communities,
* Develop an exceptional workforce,
* Develop active and productive partnerships,
* Build an outstanding organisation.

### Overall crime in Cannock Chase

The key finding from this refresh assessment is that Cannock Chase is a low crime area**. Levels of crime are falling locally**, reflecting a trend occurring across Staffordshire as a whole.

Levels of crime in Cannock Chase are **lower** than the rate for the police force area and are **lower** than the rates for the West Midlands and for England as a whole.

Feedback provided by local stakeholders suggests that local residents do not always report feeling safe. Over a fifth of respondents to the police perceptions survey report that they will believe that they will become a victim of crime in the next year. Local people perceive drug-related activity to be a problem, which does not reflect the true picture as identified in crime data.

Therefore a key priority in the next year should be about **promoting the message that the district is one which is safe to live in**.

### Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

**ASB figures in Cannock Chase are** **low and dropping.** Rates of ASB in Cannock Chase are lower than the rates for the force, the West Midlands and for England as a whole.

As with crime local stakeholders report a disconnect between perceptions of ASB among residents and actual prevalence, as ASB is mentioned as a priority by 37% of respondents.

The CSP has put in place a range of measures to tackle ASB in the district including the recent extension of a PSPO.

### Local priorities

The most common offences locally are:

* **Violence Against the Person** (at a rate of 31.1 incidents per 1,000 residents) which includes:
  + Stalking and Harassment (13.1),
  + Violence with Injury (9.1),
  + Violence without Injury (8.8).
* **Theft offences** (19.7) which includes:
  + Shoplifting (6.8), and
  + Vehicle Crime (4.5).

#### Violence against the person

Almost half (45%) off all offending in the district is made up by offences of violence against the person. In turn, 42% of violence against the person offences are made up of stalking and harassment offences. This is followed by violence with injury offences which make up over a quarter (29%) of violence against the person offences.

It is possible that local rates of violence are being driven by domestic abuse incidents.

An important message to communicate locally is that **incidents of violence against the person have dropped 17% since 2022-3**.

#### Theft

The most common type of theft in Cannock Chase is shoplifting (which makes up 35% of theft offences), followed by ‘other’ theft (25% of theft offences) and vehicle offences (23%). Shoplifting has increased slightly (by 5%) and is now above the force area average.

There is ambiguity in the data around ‘other’ theft and so we recommend further analysis for this category to identify key trends within this category.

Even with the rise in shoplifting numbers, the key message is that that **the number of incidents of theft have dropped 18% since 2022-23**.

### Other priorities

#### Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

The **data shows that CCE is not a widespread problem locally**, however we note that this issue was independently referenced by a number of local stakeholders as a matter of potential concern. CCE could become an issue locally due to a number of local factors (such as the presence of good transport links) meaning that situation should be monitored locally and ongoing preventative activity undertaken.

#### Community cohesion and extremism

**Numbers of hate crimes are** **low** (with 128 incidents 2023-24) but we believe that there is value in ongoing scrutiny of this issue locally.

#### Knife crime

**Levels of knife crime in the district are** **very** low (with 60 incidents in 2023-24), although unlike most other crime types in Cannock Chase, it has increased recently. Noting that school-based activities are already taken place the rise in knife crime warrants ongoing monitoring.