

**By:** Superintendent Simon Thompson, Deputy Head of Strategic Partnerships, Kent Police.

**To:** Kent Community Safety Partnership (KCSP) – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016

**Classification:** For Information

**Subject:** Serious and Organised Crime Update

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**Summary** This report provides updates on developments to tackle Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) including Operation Scorpion that has been launched in Kent for multi-agency partners to tackle organised crime groups (OCGs) and the new interactive Local Serious and Organised Crime Profiles which will be the subject of a presentation at the meeting.

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## 1.0 Background / Introduction

- 1.1 In 2013, the Government launched a new Serious and Organised Crime strategy to better coordinate a national approach to reduce the level of serious and organised crime affecting the UK and local communities. The national strategy uses the framework that has been developed for national counter-terrorist work, often referred to as the 4Ps: prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in serious and organised crime (**Pursue**); preventing people from engaging in this activity (**Prevent**); increasing protection against serious and organised crime (**Protect**); and reducing the impact of this criminality where it takes place (**Prepare**). The serious and organised crime strategy sees councils and a range of partners playing an important role alongside the Police to tackle SOC and OCGs. Public sector organisations and law enforcement agencies have a duty to protect the wellbeing of their local communities including: councils, police, health, social care, education services and immigration enforcement.
- 1.2 The Local Government Association's guidance document 'Tackling Serious and Organised Crime: A local response' has said that established community safety partnerships (CSPs) are well placed to lead on the strategic coordination of this activity, with their statutory duty to: reduce reoffending; tackle crime and disorder; anti-social behaviour; alcohol and substance misuse; and any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment. These partnerships also have access to a wealth of powers that can disrupt the activity of local OCGs. The use of such enforcement powers against OCGs is sometimes referred to as 'the Achilles heel approach'. Partners also have access to critical community intelligence that may be directly or indirectly linked to OCGs.
- 1.3 OCGs are usually calculated, intelligent and complex outfits which are sometimes brutally violent. They deal in human trafficking, fraud, money laundering, armed robbery, vehicle theft and more. They will exploit new opportunities which arise such as cyber-enabled crime to commit old offences in new ways.

- 1.4 OCG offenders are individuals that live, work and socialise in the local communities. The impact of their criminality is far reaching and can be seen at a street level in the form of drug taking, anti-social behaviour, violence and theft. OCGs also identify and manipulate vulnerable individuals.
- 1.5 We must take every opportunity to identify these groups and disrupt their activity before they can do further harm. It is crucial that at a local level we work in partnerships to disrupt these individuals. Agencies that are involved in Community Safety will have information and intelligence regarding these OCGs and their activities. These agencies will also have a range of tactics and enforcement opportunities to incapacitate and dismantle these groups.

## **2.0 Operation Scorpion**

- 2.1 The Serious Crime Directorate (SCD) has launched Operation Scorpion in Kent. This is a priority operation for the Force, which will support officers and staff in working together and with our partners to tackle organised crime groups (OCGs). Efforts to tackle Serious and Organised Crime are managed through the 4P (PURSUE, PREVENT, PROTECT and PREPARE) approach, which will be familiar to many under the National Counter Terrorism Strategy. Kent has an excellent reputation in respect of the Pursue element. The focus of Op Scorpion is to further strengthen our approach under the other three headings (PREVENT, PROTECT and PREPARE).
- 2.2 The Op Scorpion plan will introduce the Governance structures, communication plans, Local Serious and Organised Crime Profiles, a defined 4P plan for each OCG and local SOC Partnerships. The Op Scorpion Team has been working with the Kent Community Safety Team to develop an online Toolkit to assist practitioners tasked with tackling OCGs and reducing the harm that they cause.
- 2.3 OCGs that have been assessed will be allocated a lead responsible officer (LRO) on Policing Divisions. This LRO will work with the Intelligence Team to develop a 4P plan to tackle the OCG. The LRO will engage with local and county partners in order to achieve a truly multi-agency approach to disrupting and dismantling that OCG. It is hoped that other agencies will also seek to nominate potential OCGs for multi-agency ownership, and also that such agencies may be the Lead Responsible Agency/Officer for OCGs.

## **3.0 Local Serious and Organised Crime Profiles**

- 3.1 The Home Office requires all Forces to develop Local Serious and Organised Profiles. Kent Police have developed an innovative Profile that has received excellent feedback from those who have seen it. These profiles will provide all agencies with an understanding of Serious and Organised Crime, where there are vulnerabilities and what intelligence is known or required. The profiles are broken down to District level and are easily accessible. The profiles also enable the sharing of best practice and ability for direct intelligence submission for both police and partner agencies. The profiles will be refreshed every three months.

## **4.0 Next Steps**

- 4.1 At the time of writing this report the Profiles are due to be launched internally in the week commencing 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. We are aiming to launch the profiles with partner agencies at the Kent Community Safety Partnership on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016. It is intended that the Profiles will be made available to partners via the Safer Communities Portal.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

- 5.1 To be truly effective in disrupting and dismantling OCGs, as well as reducing the harm that they cause to individuals and communities, it is essential that agencies work together to share intelligence and develop effective plans to prevent, protect, prepare and pursue such groups. Op Scorpion recognises that Serious and Organised Crime cuts across communities and either directly or indirectly affects all agencies. Such a far ranging challenge requires a partnership response to get to the root of Serious and Organised Crime.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Partnership is asked to note the contents of this report and also support Op Scorpion. It is also requested that Local Serious and Organised crime profiles are communicated and promoted by the agencies represented at the Kent Community Safety Partnership.

### **For Further Information:**

Simon Thompson  
Superintendent, Deputy Head of Strategic Partnerships, Kent Police  
[simon.thompson@kent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:simon.thompson@kent.pnn.police.uk)