

## STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT 2018/19

### Purpose

The Safer Crawley Partnership's (SCP) annual Strategic Assessment will enable the partnership to set priorities, direct the focus and efforts of partnership resources in the short, medium and long term for 2019/20 based on evidence and to link with the priorities set by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

### About Crawley

The population of Crawley currently stands at 106,597 (2011 Census). The largest age group in the borough is 30-44 years (23.8%) followed by 45-59 years (18.5%) and 25-29 years (8.5%).

There are 42,727 households in Crawley (2011 Census), in terms of housing tenure 25,228 (59%) are owned, 10,194 (23.8%) are social rented and 6,214 (14.5%) are private rented.

12,129 (28%) of households are single person households, and of these 4,468 were aged over 65 years.

72.1% of the Crawley's population identify themselves as White British, 6.8% as 'Other White' (the top six 'Other White' groups are Polish, Western European, European Mixed, Baltic, Other (unspecified) and Eastern European) and 19.7% of the population come from Black and Minority Ethnic groups.

Crawley is made up of 14 neighbourhoods, three of these neighbourhoods Broadfield, Bewbush and Langley Green are areas with high Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) scores.

### Safer Crawley Partnership purpose

To tackle crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, alcohol and substance misuse and any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local community and reduce re-offending so that people in Crawley are safer and feel safer.

### Current context

In terms of crime data, between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 there were a total of 10,871 crimes in Crawley (excluding Gatwick). In the corresponding period the previous year (from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017), there were 10,021, representing an increase of 850 crimes or 8.5%.

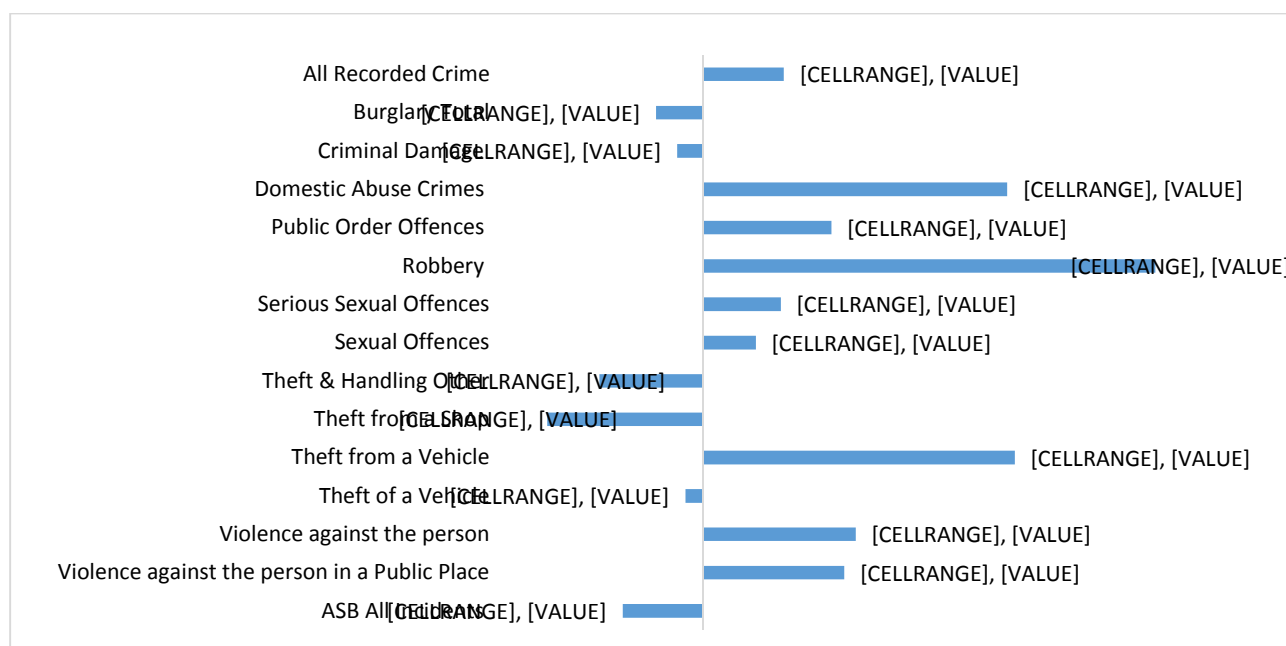
The table below shows the actual number for 2018/19 compared to 2017/18, the difference and percentage change.

	2017/18	2018/19	Difference	% Change
All recorded crime	10,021	10,871	+850	+8.5%
Burglary total	550	523	-27	-4.9%
Criminal damage	1,151	1,120	-31	-2.7%
Domestic abuse total (crimes & incidents)	2,503	2,989	+486	+19.4%
Public order offences	795	902	+107	+13.5%
Robbery	97	143	+46	+47.4%
Serious sexual offences	294	318	+24	+8.2%
Sexual offences	361	381	+20	+5.5%
Theft and handling other	2,463	2,196	-267	-10.8%
Theft from a shop	1,103	923	-180	-16.3%
Theft from a vehicle	465	617	+152	+32.7%
Theft / Unauthorised Taking /	109	107	-2	-1.8%

Aggravated Taking of a Vehicle				
Violence against the person	4,096	4,752	+656	+16%
Violence against the person resulting in injury	1,176	1,361	+185	+15.7%
ASB all incidents	3,340	3,059	-281	-8.4%

The chart below shows the percentage change for various crime types compared to the same period the previous year. The actual increase in the number crimes recorded is also shown.

**Crawley Crime Change – Police Performance Year Comparison  
1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 and previous**



**Statement of Context- District Commander for Crawley**

Crime reflects social change and as much as it provides challenges it also advances policing. We now have a greater understanding of the extent of child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and serious sexual offences. We have also seen increasing confidence for many victims to report these crimes, allowing us to respond and improve public safety and bring offenders to justice.

Threats from serious and organised crime is increasingly identified locally, in our own neighbourhoods; but can only be combatted effectively by working collaboratively, regionally, nationally and internationally. There is no ‘one size fits all’ pathway into serious organised crime, with vulnerable individuals of any social or economic standing being drawn in. Financial gain is not always the principal motivation for criminality - people can be forced, coerced, debt-bound or groomed into committing offences. Some individuals are poorly educated and have been raised in an environment where criminality may be seen as the only viable option. Others may be entirely unwitting in their exposure to the risks, having been seduced, groomed and then exploited they can often not see themselves as victims.

The exploitation of vulnerable members of our community is not restricted to drugs-related organised crime but their exploitation in drugs supply chains increases their exposure to drug-taking and violent crime.

County Lines is a national issue involving the use of mobile phone lines by groups to extend their drug dealing business into new locations outside of their home areas, A County Line enterprise almost always involves exploitation of vulnerable persons; this can involve children and adults

Locally individuals and groups aim to establish and operate a line within an area outside their home area in order to sell drugs to users at 'street level'. This often involves a group expanding their operations into 'Home County' areas, setting up a secure base and using runners to conduct their business

These bases are achieved in a number of ways, most commonly by exploiting local drug users. This is achieved either by paying them in drugs, by them building up a drug debt or by using threats and/or in often the case violence in order to coerce them; this is commonly known as "cuckooing". , it is clear that these organised crime groups are increasingly targetting vulnerable people locally. Although support and safeguarding plans have been put in place some are unwilling to support agencies or police. This is an example of where local and regional resources are currently being used to target the most vulnerable around threat harm and risk as above tackling low level volume crimes.

Those controlling the drug supply need to establish a local base for the storing and movement of drugs and cash and take over premises to do so. This 'cuckooing' of accommodation can exploit those in social housing, financial difficulties or debt. When present, certain individual/business attributes and vulnerabilities will catalyse or motivate criminality.

These include factors such as addiction, greed or financial hardship. When encountered in particular familial, social and employment opportunity networks, the likelihood of their exploitation by OCGs can increase significantly. There is a need to identify adults and children who are vulnerable to being exploited, be that criminal exploitation, modern slavery, trafficking or sexual exploitation.

"Operation Oxide" is the local based operation in Crawley which targets the wider drug networks and associated harm and violence. This is an established Operation in the local area involving a partnership approach around minimising the harm to vulnerable individual and facilitate multi-agency safeguarding plans. This has led to a number of targeted arrests and significant disruption to those involved in drugs supply and has included significant seizures of cash, assets and a number of arrests e.g. April 2019 six men jailed for a total of 30 yrs over supply of Class A drugs.

Improved compliance with the National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS) continues to contribute to the increasing levels of total recorded crime, and this is consistent with the overall national picture During the last 12 months the recorded number of opportunistic crimes such as theft, and anti-social behaviour continue to fall ( Crime for the Rolling Years 01/06/2018 to 31/05/2019 and 01/06/2017 to 31/05/2018 5.9% reduction ASB, Crime of theft and handling reduced by 8.5%) while Domestic abuse ,stalking and harassment continues to rise ( DA Crime for the Rolling Years 01/06/2018 to 31/05/2019 and 01/06/2017 to 31/05/2018 increased by 28.7 % ). Domestic abuse (DA) represents one of the most significant threats to life both in terms of volume and completeness of response, placing significant demand on police resources. Domestic abuse includes emotional abuse, financial control, Isolation from friends and family, Sexual abuse – forced or coerced and physical abuse

Accepting unknown levels of under reporting, reports of domestic abuse have increased significantly. These increases are roughly in line with increases seen in the reporting of Sexual violence. Some of this growth may be due to changes to recording practices and improved public confidence. It is unclear however, and unproven, whether the increases in reporting can truly be attributed to increasing public openness or whether domestic abuse is simply taking place more frequently.

The threat of terrorism, which include extreme right wing activity keeps morphing as new tactics emerge, and requires us to be more resolute than ever in seeking to prevent such attacks, but also prepare to respond, often to unthinkable tragedy.

The internet and the explosion in technology has given rise to new opportunities for criminals, such as 'phishing' and 'ransomware' attacks. The widespread use of social media has fuelled the increase

in fraud, data theft, grooming, child sexual exploitation, stalking and harassment and has given rise to new challenges such as cyber-bullying, online abuse and incitement to hate.

Together with domestic abuse, these “high harm” crimes are complex in nature and staff intensive while police officers dealing with them are rightly subject to high levels of personal accountability and public scrutiny.

Crime is becoming increasingly transnational. Serious and organised crime groups have been quick to exploit international borders and the discrepancies between legal frameworks and policing responses.

Hidden, online marketplaces in the ‘Dark Web’ are increasing in volume and severity, where drugs, firearms, large scale fraud, human trafficking and modern slavery are traded in cryptocurrencies; and where images of child pornography are readily shared on an industrial scale.

### **Review of 2018/19 priorities and identification of on-going issues within these priorities**

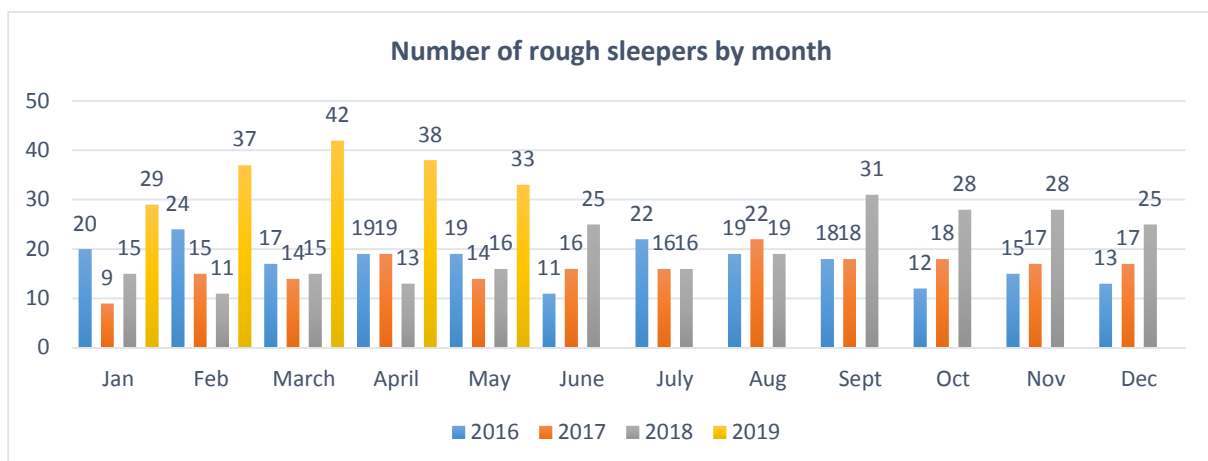
#### **Serious and organised crime**

- The SOC Group’s initial focus for 18/19 was on drug related harm with an overview into the wider SOC issues both nationally and within West Sussex. Much of the targeted work around drug supply is managed under Operation Oxide.
- Operation Oxide aims to identify and safeguard vulnerable individuals at risk of being exploited by OCGs in Crawley, proactively gain local intelligence, minimise community tensions and provide reassurance to the local community. Activity has included warrants, Closure Orders, multi-agency days of action against licensed premises and taxi companies, social media posting and leaflet drops, Youth Prevention Officers working with youth groups and schools, cuckooing visits, targeted directed patrol activity, stop and search and high visibility patrols and public engagement.
- Op Hogwarts has been part of Op Oxide focusing on the involvement of licensed vehicles and licensed premises involved in the transport and dealing of drugs. Joint premises visits and vehicle stops by council licensing officers and police have resulted in disruption activity and sent a clear message that this type of activity is not tolerated.
- Introduction of ‘direct input’ of intelligence from partners to the police, has provided an alternative way for partners to submit intelligence they hold in a faster and more efficient way, enabling Sussex Police to develop the intelligence picture. The police have provided training sessions to key staff from various partners regarding the process for submitting intelligence.
- Exploitation is inextricably linked with serious crime and organised crime groups, particularly in relation to ‘County lines’ which refers to drug networks, both gangs and organised crime groups, from large urban areas such as London using children and young people and vulnerable adults to carry out illegal activity on their behalf. Initially ‘County Lines’ wasn’t seen as significant threat for Crawley, however as disruption activity has had an impact on local organised crime groups, those locally-based dealers have been replaced by gangs from out of the area operating ‘County Lines’ into the town.
- The County Lines Intensification Week during January saw police and partners work to combat illegal drugs across Sussex. This was promoted under the ‘Fortress’ brand that Sussex Police have adopted from Hampshire which encompasses all the drug-related harm reduction work that is being undertaken. The aim of Fortress to make Sussex a hostile environment for drug supply.
- Regular attendance at the Police Weekly Intelligence Meeting has provided partners with the opportunity to identify vulnerable individuals and potential cuckooed addresses and ensure that they are supported as required.
- A loan sharks awareness session was delivered by the England Illegal Money Lending Team to representatives from statutory and voluntary organisations.
- The current priority for the SOC Group is young people – drug related harm and violence and the focus on the Prevent, Prepare and Protect element of SOC. The main focus is on building

the level of defence and resilience in vulnerable young people and identifying and supporting those a risk of engaging in criminality.

- Representative from two Crawley secondary schools are working on delivering a focused session for all year 9 students in Crawley, that will see raise awareness of the dangers to drug/knife crime, involvement in gangs/County Lines. The session will look to also promote positive lifestyles and the range of services, clubs and local groups that provide positive activities.
- The council are also under taking a review of youth and play, which will look at existing resources and assets to inform whether existing resources are meeting the needs of children and young people in Crawley.
- Sussex PCC and partners were successful in their bid to Home Office Early Intervention Fund, as part of the Serious Violence Strategy, securing £891,000. The Early Intervention Youth Programme (REBOOT) will be delivered from December 2018 through to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The programme is made up of three areas; Intervention (partnership protocol), Prevention (YMCA coaching) and Universal (the bolstering of positive diversionary activities via CSPs in identified high risk areas. The partnership protocol sets out a consistent approach for managing young people who come to the attention of the police for low level criminality and anti-social behaviour. The five stage protocol offers a new layer of support for those young people putting themselves in vulnerable situations. It is anticipated that only a minority of young people referred will progress through all the stages and that the majority will not progress past Stage 2 (Prevention Youth Officer visit with NHS mental health nurse and referral to YMCA coaching). The YMCA coaching services will provide a range of opportunities from experiencing supportive adult relationships to developing a sense of belonging, self-worth and opportunities to make a positive contribution to their community. Creating those opportunities for young people to access is going to be key. Making sure that Crawley offers a range of activities/interests that those identified through REBOOT want to participate in, is likely to mean investment in new and alternative youth provision is needed. Unfortunately Crawley wasn't identified as a high risk area, so did not receive additional funding, however YOS have secured over £18,000 to enhance youth activities in Crawley via Crawley Community Youth Services and Audio Active.

**Street Community (this includes homelessness, begging and street drinking)**



- Continued joint working to tackle the issue of homelessness, begging and street drinking through the work of the multi-agency Street Community Group. The group has continued to target a number of priority individuals who have persistently chosen to beg and sleep rough in the town centre and have refused to engage with local services.

- The multi-agency street community group continue to facilitate individuals off the streets and into accommodation, medical treatment facilities or assist them to return to their place of connection in the UK and abroad.
- Funding available to the street community group enables them to be innovative to supporting individuals to access support and accommodation.
- We have seen a significant increase in the number of rough sleepers over the last nine months with between 20-30 at any one time (see chart above) which we haven't experienced over the last few years. Also the number of rough sleepers has traditionally decreased in winter months and increased in the summer months. However this has not been the case over the winter, with 28 in November (17 the previous year), 25 in December (17 the previous year) and 29 in January (15 the previous year).
- Not all the individuals from the street community are currently homeless, there are and have been individuals who have accommodation that are choosing to sleep rough in the town.
- The majority of those within the street community have either addiction and/or mental health issue.
- With the number increasing there has been a change of focus and enforcement action has been taken with those who have not been willing to engage with support services. The aim is not to punish those individuals who are sleeping rough but to use the dual approach to encourage better engagement.
- Funding of £28,000 was provided to Crawley Open House to extend the Outreach Team provision from two part time outreach workers to two full time outreach workers. This has enabled the number of outreach hours to increase and the number of individuals worked with has also increased. The increase in hours has had a significant impact on the ability of the Outreach Team to locate, identify and support member of the street community. The increase in hours has also enabled a greater degree of flexibility in the shifts worked, enabling the team to better meet the needs of the clients and community.
- There is currently a high percentage of IV Class A drug users, which is a significant change for Crawley. Not all of those using are actively engaging with substance misuse services. The poor engagement from the street community with CGL (Change Grow Live) has resulted in many individuals off script.
- Discarded used needles and other drug paraphernalia continues to be an issue, with discarded used and unused syringes being the item most collected in Crawley. Work is continuing regarding how this can be addressed not just at a local Crawley level but countywide, with mapping of drug litter hotspots now being produced on a 6 monthly basis. Professionals working with members of the street community continue to educate about the safe disposal of needles and drug paraphernalia.
- Community Protection Warnings have been issued to a number of individuals in relation activities related to their rough sleeping and begging activity. Some of these have progressed to Community Protection Warning Notices being issued. Since 2015 the council and police have issued 21 Community Protection Warning Notices, of these six were progressed to a Community Protection Notice and of these two resulted in Criminal Behaviour Orders. Use of enforcement action has been successful for some of the individuals in changing their behaviour, however the full impact is yet to be seen for others that need to be progressed from Community Protection Warning to Community Protection Notice.
- The Community Wardens continue to actively enforce the town wide PSPO regarding alcohol consumption associated with antisocial behaviour by seizing alcohol from members of the street community. This action will continue as a way of discouraging this activity particularly in the town centre.
- The street community continues to be an issue for Crawley, with individuals sleeping rough in visible locations such as the High Street, Martletts and Queens Square, begging in the town centre and congregating in the Memorial Gardens clearly under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. This is having a significant negative impact on the look and feel of the town.

- Individuals being temporarily accommodated in B&Bs/hotels Crawley by other local authorities is also adding to the problem. Some of these individuals are chaotic and although not homeless are becoming part of the wider street community. When their temporary accommodation comes to an end, they are choosing to stay in Crawley rather than returning to their previous area.
- Begging and the generosity of the public and local businesses giving money or provisions directly to those begging or sleeping rough continues to be an issue in Crawley, this is enabling these individuals to sustain this lifestyle and not access the support services available.
- Diverted Giving awareness raising days were held in the town centre in June and November, which saw members of the Street Community Group speaking to the public about the benefits of giving to local services rather than giving directly to those who are sleeping rough and how they can get involved and help the local homeless community in the most effective way. There has also been regular promotion about diverted giving via social media to continue to raise awareness. The June event focused on the seating area at the end of the Broadwalk as this area had been taken over by the street community. Going forward the plan is to continue to have awareness raising days along with an on-going social media campaign.
- There has been an increase in support being offered to members of the street community and other vulnerable individuals in the form of providing food on a regular basis in the town centre, this has potentially contributed to the increase in visible rough sleepers in the town centre.
- Feedback from the BCRP (Business Crime Reduction Partnership – Crawley & Gatwick Business Watch) has highlighted the impact of the street community on their members. The increase in the number of individuals linked to the street community and the anti-social, aggressive and abusive behaviour associated with this group is impacting on the businesses and their staff. The members are experiencing a significant increase in shoplifting and rubbish/belonging associated with the street community littering shop entrances, fire exits and service yard areas. Customers from both retail premises and licensed premises have made comments regarding those begging and not wanting to be approached and asked for money.
- Specialist training was provided for partners regarding the use of enforcement powers (Community Protect Warning Notices, Community Protection Notices and Criminal Behaviour Orders) in relation to dealing with street community issues.

#### Current/future work:

- A coordinated action plan is being developed to tackle the current issues being experienced in the town centre that are impacting on both the public and businesses. This plan looks at what action can be taken by partners to prevent, disrupt, divert and enforce to tackle issues including shoplifting, begging, street community bedding/belongings, substance misuse and paraphernalia, drug dealing, alcohol consumption in public, misuse of public toilets/unsanitary activity and threatening and aggressive behaviour, all of which are having a negative impact on the look and feel of the town centre.
- Following the introduction of the ASBRAC a review of the multi-agency Street Community Group is being undertaken with a view to looking at a risk and vulnerability model.

#### **Protecting vulnerable individuals (this includes victims of hate crime and scams/fraud, those at risk of FGM, HBV, CSE or radicalisation or extremism and those with complex and multiple needs)**

- The partnership provided further funding for the Team Around the Person (TAP) project which had been the response to dealing with those individuals with a dual substance misuse/mental health issue, who created significant demand for police, fire, ambulance and other services. The TAP project took a different approach by providing a wrap-around service with the TAP Worker providing daily contact for a period of 6-12 months. Although the project was well received by professionals and there were positive outcomes for some of the clients supported by the TAP

Worker the project came to an end in November 2018 due to lack of on-going funding. The issues addressed by the TAP project were not unique to Crawley.

- Protecting vulnerable individuals cuts across the other two priorities of Serious and Organised Crime in relation to the exploitation of vulnerable individuals and Street Community due to chaotic and complex needs associated with this group of individuals.
- The partnership have continued to raise awareness of domestic abuse and hate crime support services available in the town and the ways to access help and support.

The delivery of Prevent work in Crawley continues to be a priority in safeguarding our residents from the risk of extremism. There is considerable ongoing work in the Borough to raise awareness of Prevent and ensure the positive engagement of partners. Liaison and coordination with the Safer Crawley Partnership is a strategic priority for Crawley Prevent Board.

- Training and Safeguarding: Prevent Duty and safeguarding training is an ongoing project and specialist training is a significant part of the implementation of the Prevent Strategy in Crawley. Training programme serves to give positive messages about the Strategy, deals with anti-Prevent narratives as well as informing agencies and the communities. It is therefore very important that the training across the sectors and the communities gives the same message on the freedom of speech, equality and diversity.
- Community Engagement: Community engagement is the core part of Prevent delivery in Crawley. There are regular Community Roundtable Events for community contribution to delivery. There are regular visits and regular briefings to community organisations by Prevent Education Officer and Prevent Coordinator.
- Funding: There is an increasing demand for community based projects by the communities themselves, which is an indication that the engagement work through projects is becoming more popular. There is no Home Office funding for projects in 2019-2020 which is a challenge in meeting the existing demands by the community.

### **Public consultation**

An on-line survey hosted on the CBC website ran from 1<sup>st</sup> March – 5<sup>th</sup> April 2019, to capture the view of the public. There were 170 responses which represents a very slight increase in response rate over last year's survey which had 168 responses

The headline results were:-

- Serious acquisitive crime, drug abuse, and anti-social behaviour were again listed as the most important priorities for Crawley by respondents.
- Drug abuse was identified as the main priority to be tackled in six out of fourteen neighbourhood wards.
- Police were viewed as the organisation that should take the lead in tackling each priority, with the exception of domestic abuse which was the local authority.
- 94% of respondents would tell someone if they were concerned or worried about a person or something that was happening at an address or location that wasn't necessarily a crime, but didn't feel right.
- 40% of respondents stated they were either very worried or fairly worried about being a victim of crime, with the most common reason for this being due to respondents personally experiencing or witnessing crime take place.
- 15% revealed that they had been a victim of crime in the last 12 months with vehicle damage being the most common.



- Of those who had been a victim of crime, 92% reported it with the Police being the primary source of contact.

With regard to question 1 'Which priorities listed below do you think are the most important for Crawley?' a new priority being added which saw street drinking/begging removed from anti-social behaviour and added into a new 'Street community issues' priority which was described as including street drinking, begging and rough sleeping. This has had a slight effect when directly making comparisons against last year's results. However the overall trends can be distinguished, and antisocial behaviour, serious acquisitive crime, violent crime, and drugs are again the top priorities amongst respondents. However anti-social behaviour has dropped from the top priority to the third priority and street community issues was the 6<sup>th</sup>.

With regard to understanding what the greatest level of public concern was, it is clear that the respondent's greatest concern overall was drug abuse with 6 out of 14 wards choosing this as the main priority they were concerned about in their local area (Bewbush, Broadfield, Southgate, Three Bridges, Tilgate and West Green) although it was not necessarily the main issue for all neighbourhoods.

#### **Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner Priorities:**

The PCC has confirmed the four policing and crime objectives and 12 underpinning aims for 2017/21 as follows:

##### **Strengthen local policing**

- Ensure local policing services are accessible.
- Provide effective specialist capabilities to support local policing.
- Maintain engagement in the delivery of local policing services to improve public confidence.

##### **Work with local communities and partners to keep Sussex safe**

- Encourage and support local communities to prevent crime and disorder.
- Work with partners to reduce offending and reoffending.
- Catch criminals and prevent serious and organised crime and terrorism.

##### **Protect our vulnerable and help victims cope and recover from crime and abuse**

- Commission high-quality services which support victims.
- Prioritise access to services for vulnerable victims.
- Enhance our understanding and meet the needs of victims in Sussex.

##### **Improve access to justice for victims and witnesses**

- Ensure victims and witnesses have the most positive experience of the criminal justice system.
- Support vulnerable victims and witnesses.
- Maximise the use of technology to improve access to justice for all.

The Sussex PCCs continues to support crime prevention initiatives through the Community Safety Fund and in 18/19 providing funding to Streetlight UK, Crawley Community Youth Services for the Bewbush Boxing Club and Lord's Taverners for Wicketz - Crawley.

Consultation carried out by the Sussex PCC via summer engagement events and on the PCCs website asking the public what their top concerns were highlighted anti-social behaviour and feeling safe in public places as the top concern, with 75% of respondents choosing this.

#### **Safer West Sussex Partnership:-**

The priorities for 2019/20 are:-

- Child Exploitation
- Domestic abuse and Sexual Violence
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Modern slavery

- Preventing Radicalisation and Violent Extremism
- Serious and Organised Crime

**Proposed Safer Crawley Partnership priorities for 2019/20**

The information contained in the Strategic Assessment, confirms that, serious and organised crime, street community and vulnerable individuals should continue to remain as the priorities.

It is proposed that our Partnership priority areas of business for 2019/20 should be:-

- Serious and organised crime
- Street Community
- Protecting Vulnerable Individuals

June 2019