



# Community Safety Strategic Assessment

## Executive Summary

### Stafford Refresh Assessment

The Centre for Public Innovation

February 2025

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.

# 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:

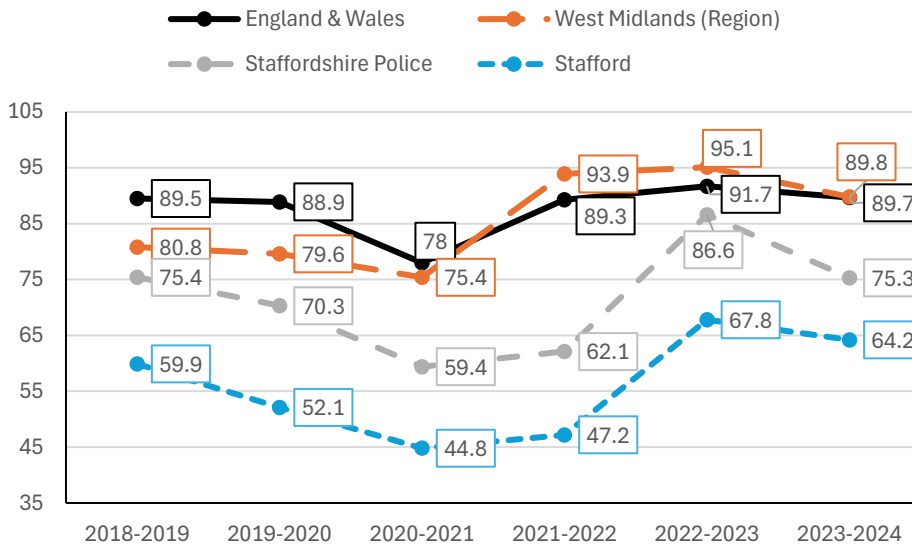
- An outstanding Police service,
- Supporting victims and witnesses,
- Preventing and protecting
- Impactful partnerships.

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 Stafford

The downward trend in the overall crime rate across England and Wales period is replicated in Stafford with the overall rates of crime **decreasing** from the high levels recorded in 2022-23.



Rates of ASB in Stafford six points **lower** than the national level of 17, and one point lower than across Staffordshire as a whole.

## Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

The **rate of ASB incidences in Stafford is one point below the force area average**, and six points lower than the national average (12 and 17 respectively).

There were 1,855 ASB incidents in Stafford in the 2023-24 assessment period and the current April to October 2024 data suggests a lower number of incidents for the current financial period if incidents continue at the same level as the first half of 2024-25.

We note that the Community Wellbeing Partnership has put in a wide range of measures to tackle the various manifestations of ASB.

## Local priorities

The most common offences locally are:

- Violence Against the Person (28.8 incidents per 1,000 residents)

- Theft Offences (17.9)
- Stalking and Harassment (12.1)
- Violence without Injury (8.8)
- Violence with Injury (7.9)

### *Violence against the person*

This category of offence constitutes 45% of all offending locally and so – by some considerable margin – is the **most prevalent type of crime**. Consistent with the picture regarding crime overall, violent crime is most prevalent in Stafford Town

### *Domestic abuse*

There is a **clear link between local rates of violence and domestic abuse** with 1,892 incidents of domestic abuse recorded in 2023-24 of which 82% involved violence against the person which indicates that Violence Against Women and Girls is a key issue locally.

### *Theft*

There were 2,476 theft offences in Stafford in 2023-24 giving a rate of 17.9 per 1,000 of population. The most common type of theft was “Other” theft which made up 33% of all thefts followed by shoplifting (24%).

The data on shoplifting indicates that there has been a **decrease in this offence** since 2022-23 (591 in 2023 24 offences down from 618) and that local rates (4.3 per 1,000) are substantially lower than regional and national levels (7.2 and 7.4 respectively). While the data is therefore positive local stakeholders reported concerns about levels of shoplifting and so there is merit in ongoing scrutiny of the issue to ensure that the positive downward trend can be sustained.

### *Drug offences*

There were 1,216 drug-related offences in 2023-24 of which almost four fifths (81%) related to possession of drugs.

While the **rate of drug-related offending is falling** (down 24% since the last assessment), we note that local stakeholder report concerns around drug crime in the area. This includes the use of Monkey Dust as well as around exploitation and county lines.

### *Road safety*

Data for Stafford indicates that, following a long period of falling road casualties in Stafford, there has been a recent rise (from 60 in 2022 to 73 in 2023 – see Figure 4). We recognise that the CWP has responded to specific issues (putting in place the PSPO for a section of the A34) but recent fatalities would suggest that ongoing monitoring of the situation is required to ensure that the upward trend is addressed.