

Why do an audit and strategy

Issues for consideration

1. The statutory requirements to undertake an audit and develop a strategy
2. The purpose of the audit and strategy process
3. Balancing local and national priorities
4. Undertaking a drugs audit (review) and the Performance Management Framework for the National Drug Strategy

1. The Statutory requirements

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (CDA) as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002 (PRA) places a duty on specific agencies, known as responsible authorities, to work together and with other agencies within the community, to tackle crime and disorder and misuse of drugs (substance misuse in Wales). Working in partnership, these responsible authorities are required to carry out an audit to identify the extent of these problems within their community, and develop strategies that deal effectively with them. These statutory requirements are contained in sections 5 and 6 of the CDA 98 (as amended by the PRA 2002).

The new legislation means that partnerships are required, for the first time on a statutory basis, to complete joint crime and drugs audits. In determining what matters to include or not to include in their strategy for tackling substance misuse, the responsible authorities for an area in Wales shall have regard to any guidance issued for the purposes of conducting an audit and strategy by the National Assembly for Wales.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan, published on 14 October 2003 sets out why tackling anti-social behaviour and changing the culture which lets it go unchallenged is so important. As part of the drive to deal with anti-social behaviour, partnerships will also be required to audit the extent of anti-social behaviour in their area and include priorities to address it in their strategies.

2. The Purpose of the audit and strategy process

The requirement to undertake an audit and produce a strategy is to ensure that responsible authorities:

- are aware of the nature of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour and the misuse of drugs in their area;
- are able to identify the methods of developing and implementing effective action to reduce these problems and deploy resources accordingly;

- formulate and publish a strategy, that responds to the expressed needs of local communities, sets out the findings of the audit, and sets out actions for addressing priority areas and targets; and
- undertake annual planning activity informed by a clear picture of where funds need to be allocated.

Partnerships should not see the audit and strategy as simply the fulfilment of a statutory requirement. While this might be the driver for the activity, being aware of the extent of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour and the misuse of drugs locally should be a continuous process and the strategy a living, working document. Together, the audit and strategy provide an opportunity to engage with local communities, review activity and performance, plan for change and ensure that the priorities identified are put within the broader context of community plans and strategies. The objective of increasing community engagement in crime reduction, community safety and drugs initiatives partly arises from the direct value which public involvement can bring, providing information and resources. More fundamentally, it reflects the goal of helping people have greater control over their lives and their environments.

The problems experienced by local people are rarely single issue. They are often genuinely cross cutting, both in scope and solution. Therefore, there needs to be strong effective links between activity identified and undertaken in the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies and activity to support communities tackle crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour and the misuse of drugs. Partnerships will need to work closely with LSPs and other local partnerships such as Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs) and Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) on these cross-cutting issues, identifying joint approaches and strategies for tackling them and ensuring the most appropriate use of resources. It is particularly important that partnerships understand the relationship between deprivation and crime and drugs problems and target their activities to tackling the problems of those communities, where the audit shows this correlation to be a significant issue.

The audit and strategies process should form part of the planning already taking place in local drug misuse partnerships and through this process local partnerships should ensure that there is a thorough understanding of the problem and of the needs of their area in order to develop strategies. Drug Action Teams (DATs) have previously undertaken this in their normal business planning and review processes, which for the purposes of this document will be called the Audit. The drugs audit should build on the needs analysis work currently carried out by partnerships and also the wealth of experience within local partnerships, national guidance, good practice, and commissioning standards that can contribute to local information collection.

This toolkit is provided for the development of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour and misuse of drugs audits. However, a separate section on drugs (linked to the “What should my audit look like, Methodology section of this toolkit) outlines in more detail the way the audit and strategy process links to the National Drug Strategy Performance Management Framework (PMF). It also offers some potential drugs specific data sources that partnerships might

like to consider to ensure that their strategy is based on an accurate assessment of the size and nature of the drug problem locally.

3. Balancing local and national priorities

The information from the audit and consultation phase should be used as the basis for setting the priorities for action within the strategy. The audit should inform decision making in relation to the formulation of the strategy and help determine objectives with long-term and short-term performance targets.

The audit will have identified priority crimes, areas or themes, such as incidents of anti-social behaviour and the extent of misuse of drugs, and priority groups, such as young people or victims of domestic violence. The audit should therefore be used as the key tool for setting strategic targets on crime reduction. Strategic targets on drugs misuse are agreed with Government Offices against the Performance Management Framework for the National Drugs Strategy. The Government also expects local authorities and their partners to help deliver key national priorities and to take account of these when undertaking audits and developing strategies. There are a number of critical priorities and targets related to crime and disorder that form part of the Home Office Public Service Agreement targets. There are also national priorities for key partners such as those set out in the National Policing Plan 2004-07. Contained within both is the need to tackle anti-social behaviour and the continuing need to reduce burglary, vehicle crime, robbery and drug related crime. Where the partnership audit identifies high incidents of these problems in an area, the Government would expect those partnerships to highlight these as priorities in their crime and disorder and misuse of drugs strategies and discuss and agree relevant targets with the Government Office for their Region or Welsh Assembly Government.

4. Undertaking a drugs audit (review) and the Performance Management Framework for the National Drug Strategy

In respect of drugs, the National Drugs Strategy has a new Performance Management Framework which embeds key performance indicators (KPIs) for the four themes of the National Drug Strategy in the performance management frameworks of relevant government departments. KPI data is collected by the Home Office from other government departments and fed back to Government Offices for the Regions who negotiate targets and milestones with partnerships against the KPIs and local priorities (see the Performance Management Resource Pack (drugs) for further details)

Much of this guidance is intended to help partnerships complete a crime audit and some of it will be useful to both crime and drugs audits. However, there are some differences that need to be considered. In particular, the new Performance Management Framework for the National Drugs strategy mentioned above and in more detail in the Performance Management Resource Pack. The Performance Management Framework (PMF) for the National Drug Strategy has been developed taking into account the requirements of the new statutory framework including audit, producing three-

year strategies and annual reporting. The requirements of the new statutory framework are therefore in line with the PMF for the National Drug Strategy that reduces the burdens of reporting and prescriptive planning previously placed on local partnerships.

For example, Key Performance Indicator data will be collected by the Drug Strategy Directorate in the Home Office from appropriate government departments and this will be delivered to Government Office staff by local partnership area on a quarterly basis. Local partnerships will as far as possible not have to collect KPI data. Local partnerships will negotiate local targets and milestones against the PMF Key Performance Indicators and local priorities with Government Office Staff. It is progress against these agreed targets and milestones that will be the basis of the annual report. Remember that data and progress against the KPIs is collected at government level and not at partnership level.

However, effective planning is essential at a local level and partnerships will need much more detailed information for themselves and their local stakeholders. This audit guidance and specifically the drug annex is provided for local partnerships that require more in-depth guidance to assist them. Some partnerships will already have extensive information gathering systems and not need this support and others may still be considering what information they need at a local level. It is therefore not intended to replace existing local practices, needs analysis or market mapping, nor is it intended to be in any way prescriptive about how an audit (review) should be completed. It is intended to provide partnerships with the tools to aid the development of their audits and strategies and should be used in full or part as seen fit.

Drugs and crime agendas are becoming increasingly integrated at local, regional and national level. It is essential that during this transitional period the crime reduction and drugs strategy performance management frameworks act to reinforce delivery of both agendas.

Where the toolkit does not apply to the misuse of drugs, references to the Performance Management Resource Pack (PMRP) for the National Drugs Strategy are set out clearly. In particular this applies in the chapters What should my strategy look like? and Monitoring and Evaluation which explain how partnerships should set strategies, targets and priorities and evaluate and monitor these. The process for setting targets and milestones against key performance indicators and local priorities on drugs is already an agreed key element of the Performance Management Framework for the National Drugs Strategy. It is therefore this framework that should be used to agree targets and monitor process and this is made clear in the guidance. The PMF also contains detailed guidance on developing local plans and a checklist as to what the local planning process should address.

In the light of the specific differences on drugs, and the fact that this is the first formal requirement for a drugs audit, a separate section on drugs is provided at Annex B of this guidance. This explains more clearly the way in which the audit and strategy process links to the National Drug Strategy Performance Management Framework (PMF). It also offers some potential drugs specific data sources that partnerships might like to consider to ensure that their

strategy is based on an accurate assessment of the size and nature of the drug problem locally

Further Information

Home Office (2003) [Civil Renewal: A New Agenda](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/inside/speeches/index.html). The Edith Kahn Memorial Lecture - www.homeoffice.gov.uk/inside/speeches/index.html

Home Office (2003) National Drug Strategy Performance Management Framework Resource Pack www.drugs.gov.uk

Home Office (2003) Self-Assessment Framework for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Drug Action Teams – www.crimereduction.co.uk/selfassessment/

Home Office (2003) Together: Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour - www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/antisocialbehaviour/index.html

LSP Delivery toolkit - www.renewal.net

TSO (1998) Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain - www.drugs.gov.uk/ReportsandPublications/NationalStrategy