

Swindon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Bulletin

Swindon Community Safety Bulletin 2018



Key Points:

- This Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) draws together information on a range of crime and safety issues in Swindon. The Swindon Community Safety Partnership (CSP) will use this JSNA to develop a strategy to improve community safety and quality of life.
- This JSNA makes five overarching recommendations for Swindon CSP, as well as specific recommendations on each issue covered. These can be found at the end of the bulletin.
- In relation to child criminal exploitation (CCE) by County Lines¹ networks, Swindon saw a significant surge in the use of local children being exploited as drug runners in 2017. Between June and November 2017, 68 children in Swindon were identified as being exploited or at risk of exploitation by County Lines.
- Wiltshire Police recorded 4,582 domestic abuse (DA) incidents in Swindon in 2016/17. Swindon consistently has a higher proportion of repeat high risk DA cases compared to national levels.
- Knife crime is particularly prevalent among males in the 10-17 year-old age bracket; this age group has accounted for over a third of all knife crime offences in Swindon from 2015-2017 (248 offences of a total of 720). Knife crime includes possession of a knife, use or threatened use of a knife.
- Regarding Violence Against the Person (VAP) incidents, the most frequently occurring victim and offender profile respectively in the Wiltshire and Swindon Force Area consists of males under 16 years of age. The number of VAP offenders in Swindon in this category increased by 45% from 365 in 2015/16 to 531 in 2016/17.
- The typical cybercrime offender profile in the Wiltshire and Swindon Force Area consists of males of 16 years and under (likely due to child-on-child cyber-enabled sexual exploitation).
- In Swindon in 2017, 7,537 anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents were recorded, up by 4.5% compared to 2016.

What is a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)?

A JSNA helps us to understand:

- the current health and wellbeing needs of local people;
- how their needs are being met;
- what we think their future needs are likely to be; and
- how their needs can be best met.

We want to understand Swindon's changing population, what is going on in Swindon and what makes a difference to people's health and wellbeing so that we can plan for the future. The Swindon Health and Wellbeing Board oversees the development of JSNA's and any resulting recommendations.

1. County Lines is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines".

Introduction

The Local Government Association has defined community safety as

“an aspect of our quality of life in which individuals and communities are protected from, equipped to cope with, and have increased capacity to resist, crime and anti-social behaviour.”

Swindon CSP is a local alliance of authorities that has a statutory responsibility to reduce crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and re-offending.

The aims of this report are to draw together information on a broad range of issues that are relevant to community safety for a wide audience of stakeholders and to inform strategy development for the CSP. Three main themes were explored:

- Exploitation of vulnerable people;
- Public protection;
- Violence (including violence against women and girls and violent crime).

A number of other topics were also investigated, including anti-social behaviour and cybercrime.

The Swindon CSP also deals with domestic abuse and substance misuse, and there are separate JSNAs on these topics available on Swindon's JSNA website (<http://swindonjsna.co.uk/>).

Exploitation of the vulnerable

Criminal exploitation by County Lines

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines”. The criminal exploitation of young or vulnerable persons is classed as a defining component of County Lines activity by the National Crime Agency (NCA). Children are used by County Lines to deal and run drugs and money because they are less likely to be known to police and more likely to receive lenient sentences if caught. One of the key ways in which vulnerable adults, in particular Class A drug addicts, are exploited by County Lines networks is through the practice of ‘cuckooing’, in which gang members take over the home of a vulnerable adult through force or coercion to use as a base in the local market.

- The prevalence of Opiate and Crack Users (OCUs) in Swindon remains stable – there were an estimated 1,147 users in 2011-12 and 1,153 at the latest estimate for 2014-15. An estimated 60% of these (i.e. 688 users) are in effective treatment.
- Between September 2016 and September 2017, Police identified 45 drug networks operating in Swindon, four of which were domiciled County Lines and three of which were “home grown dealers”. Intelligence indicates that at least 22 out of these 45 drug networks used children as runners.

- Swindon saw a significant surge in the use of local children being exploited as drug runners in 2017. Previously, underage runners were mainly from outside Swindon, in particular from London. Between June-November 2017, 68 children in Swindon were identified as being exploited or at risk of exploitation by County Lines.

Child sexual exploitation

The Department for Education statutory definition of child sexual exploitation (CSE) is as follows:

“Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual.”

CSE may occur through physical contact or the use of technology.

The multi-agency reactive response and associated services from Children’s Service and Police regarding CSE in Swindon is well-established.

In 2017, Public Health England (PHE) published a public health framework² for addressing CSE which highlights the importance of adopting a proactive, preventative approach to this issue and how Public Health can support prevention and interventions.

- In 2017, 128 occurrences were flagged as relating to CSE in Swindon, constituting a 117% increase in CSE flagged occurrences over 2016. Police have attributed this increase to better Force wide awareness of CSE.
- In 2015 and 2016, 22% of the 642 sex offences involving a child victim (at the time of the offence) that occurred in Swindon had an online element – however there are considerable gaps in knowledge on this issue.
- Wiltshire Police report that Facebook is the most used social media tool for online grooming. The use of online chat facilities in gaming apps for online grooming, particularly of boys, is an emerging concern.
- In contrast to CCE, victims of CSE are predominantly young females.
- The Police, Council, and Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) have recognised that CCE is an emerging issue in Swindon and have made considerable progress in developing a multi-agency approach to addressing the issue over recent months. Namely, the remit of the multi-agency team that deals with CSE in Swindon (the OPAL team) was extended to include CCE as of January 2018, and an over-arching multi-agency Child Exploitation Strategy for Swindon has been drafted as of March 2018 by SBC.

Public protection

Road safety, trading standards (TS) and environmental health, housing and environmental crime were covered in this section.

- On Swindon's roads in 2016, there were 441 recorded road traffic collisions which resulted in 561 casualties, one of which was fatal and 72 of which were serious. The overall cost of these casualties to the Swindon community is estimated to be over £24.5 million.
- Young drivers in the 16-24 year age band are the highest risk road user group. In Swindon, over the four year period from 2013-2016, 16-24 year old drivers were involved in nearly a third of all crashes.
- In 2017/2018, 138 doorstep crime incidents were reported to SBC's TS team. Nearly a quarter (22%) of victims were repeat victims of doorstep crime. The majority (60%) were living alone and the average age of victims in Swindon was 75 years old.
- There are significant problems in parts of central Swindon with overcrowded and unsafe housing conditions, which are often linked with the high inward migration to these areas that has taken place in the last decade.



Violence

Violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is both a cause and consequence of gender inequality. Ending VAWG is a top priority for the UK Government, which has adopted the following definition of VAWG from the United Nations:

“Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”

The London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime has defined ten strands of VAWG, including; domestic violence and abuse, sexual violence, so-called 'honour-based' violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, prostitution and trafficking, stalking, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and faith-based abuse.

- It is estimated that 176 women were living with FGM in Swindon in 2016. At Great Western Hospital, 5 cases of FGM were identified in 2015 and 13 in 2016.
- Prostitution can be categorized into on-street or off-street sex working. On-street sex working is strongly linked to Class A drug use and County Lines. There are currently 33 known on-street sex workers in Swindon, all of whom are British females. Off-street sex working is linked with trafficking, organised crime, violence and coercion. It is unclear how many off-street sex workers there are in Swindon.

- Wiltshire Police recorded 4,582 DA incidents in 2016/17 in Swindon, which represents 60.7% of the number of incidents that would be forecast in Swindon based on it having the same rate of DA as seen nationally (7,533, taking persons as a proxy for incidents). This difference between the recorded and forecast numbers of DA incidents is comparable to that seen nationally, and is due to under-reporting of DA.
- Swindon appears to consistently have a higher proportion of repeat high risk DA cases brought to its Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) compared to national levels, as illustrated in Figure 1 below. In 2016/17 40% of cases in Swindon were a repeat case as compared with 26% in England and Wales.
- It is estimated that 20% of people experiencing DA in Swindon in any one year would have had children in their household who witnessed some or all of the DA.
- In Swindon, for the period January-May 2018, six modern slavery crimes have been formally recorded. Although this is double the number of crimes recorded in Swindon for the entire year in 2017, the relatively small number of crimes recorded reflects the difficulties in investigating modern slavery.
- The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. The small number of referrals being made by Wiltshire Police, compared to surrounding forces, may reflect difficulties in identifying British victims.

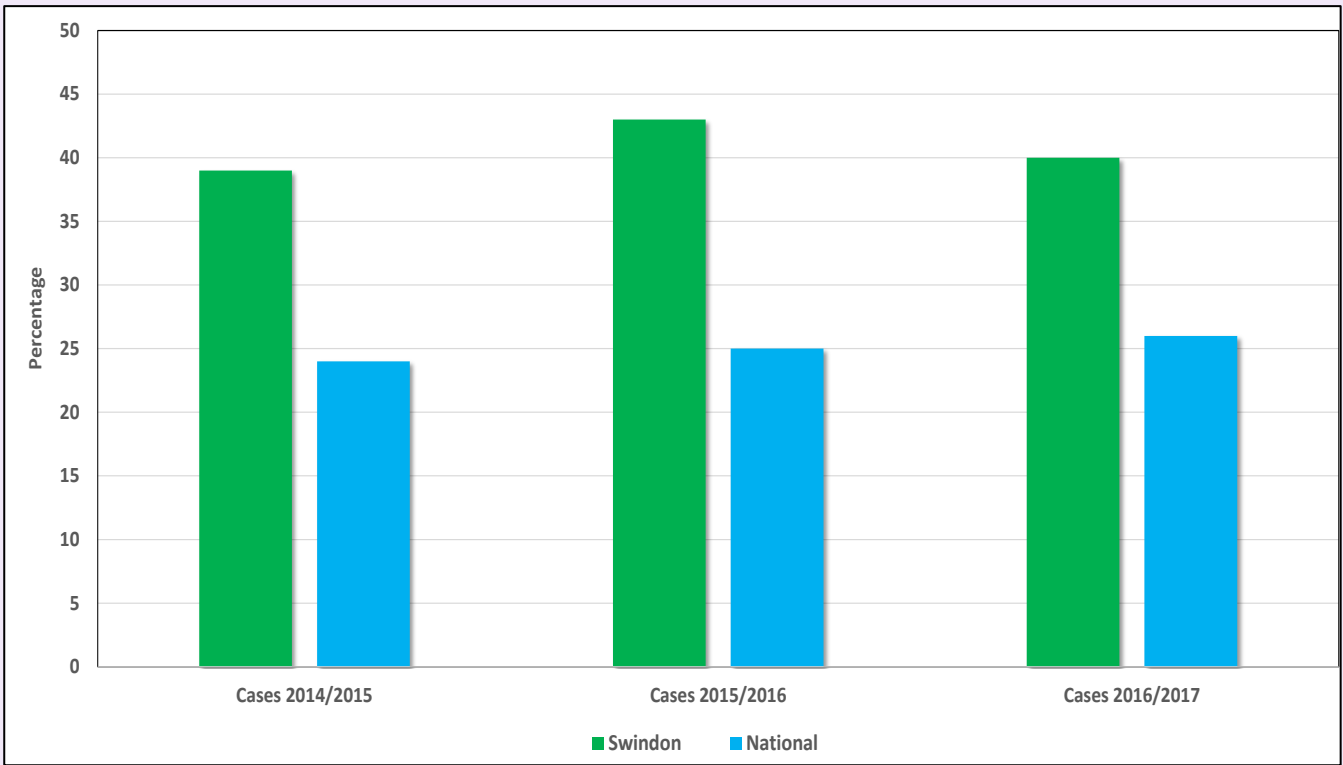


Figure 1: Percentage of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference cases that were repeat DA cases in Swindon compared to England and Wales over three years from 2014/15 to 2016/17

Knife crime and Violence Against the Person

Knife crime includes using a knife to harm another person, possession of a knife or verbally threatening to use a knife. Knife crime, particularly among youths, is increasing nationally. The year 2017 saw the most child knife deaths in England and Wales (39 in total) in nearly a decade. Knife crime has strong links with gang culture, drugs and public space violence.

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner has supported calls nationally from MPs and the voluntary sector for a preventative approach to knife crime.

- Knife crime in Swindon is particularly prevalent among males in the 10-17 year-old age bracket. This age group has accounted for over a third of all knife crime offences in Swindon from 2015-2017 (248 offences of a total of 720), as can be seen in Figure 2 below.

- In Swindon, in 2015/16, there were 59 VAP offences in which a knife was used (1.7% of all VAP offences in Swindon) – this increased by 18.6% to 70 offences in 2016/17 (1.8% of all VAP offences in Swindon).
- In Swindon, VAP offences increased by nearly 15% from 3,410 in 2015/16 to 3,909 in 2016/17.
- In the Wiltshire and Swindon Force Area, the typical VAP offender and victim profile respectively consists of males aged under 16 years. The number of VAP offenders in Swindon in this category increased by 45% from 365 offenders in 2015/16 to 531 in 2016/17.

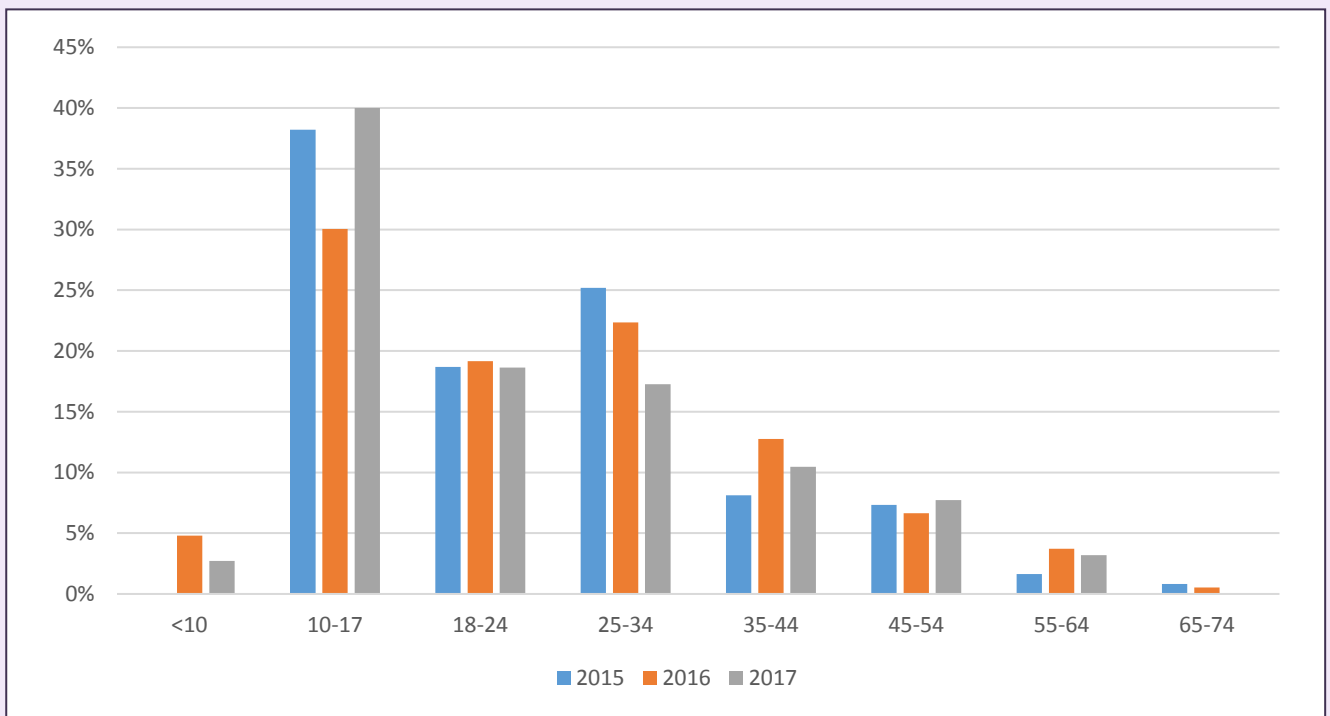


Figure 2: Proportion of all annual knife crime offences committed in Swindon by offender age group for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017

Anti-social behaviour

Reducing ASB is a key priority for Swindon CSP. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 defines ASB as; “Conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person, conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person’s occupation of residential premises, or conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.”

- In Swindon, in 2017, 7,537 ASB incidents were recorded, up by 4.5% compared to 2016.
- A seasonal trend in ASB can be seen in Figure 3 below, in which incidents peak during the summer months.

Cybercrime

- There were 1,544 cybercrime-related occurrences reported in the Wiltshire and Swindon Force Area during the first ten months of 2017, a 12% increase from 2016. Online shopping fraud is the most common type of cybercrime.

- During the first ten months of 2017, there were 67 reports of cyber-enabled CSE that occurred in Swindon. The average age of victims in reports of cyber-enabled CSE across the Wiltshire and Swindon Force Area was 13 years and 85% of them were female. The average age of all cybercrime victims in the Force Area is also 13 years.
- The annual survey of online behaviour carried out among Year 10 school children in Swindon by the LSCB showed that, in 2014/15 and 2015/16, approximately 30% of pupils had been involved in sexting (by either sending, receiving or sharing photos/videos of a naked/partially naked child/young person). As a result, partnership agencies have produced and promoted clear guidance to schools and other organisations on the reporting of sexting.
- The most common cybercrime offender profile in the Force Area consists of males aged 16 years and under (likely due to child-on-child cyber-enabled CSE).

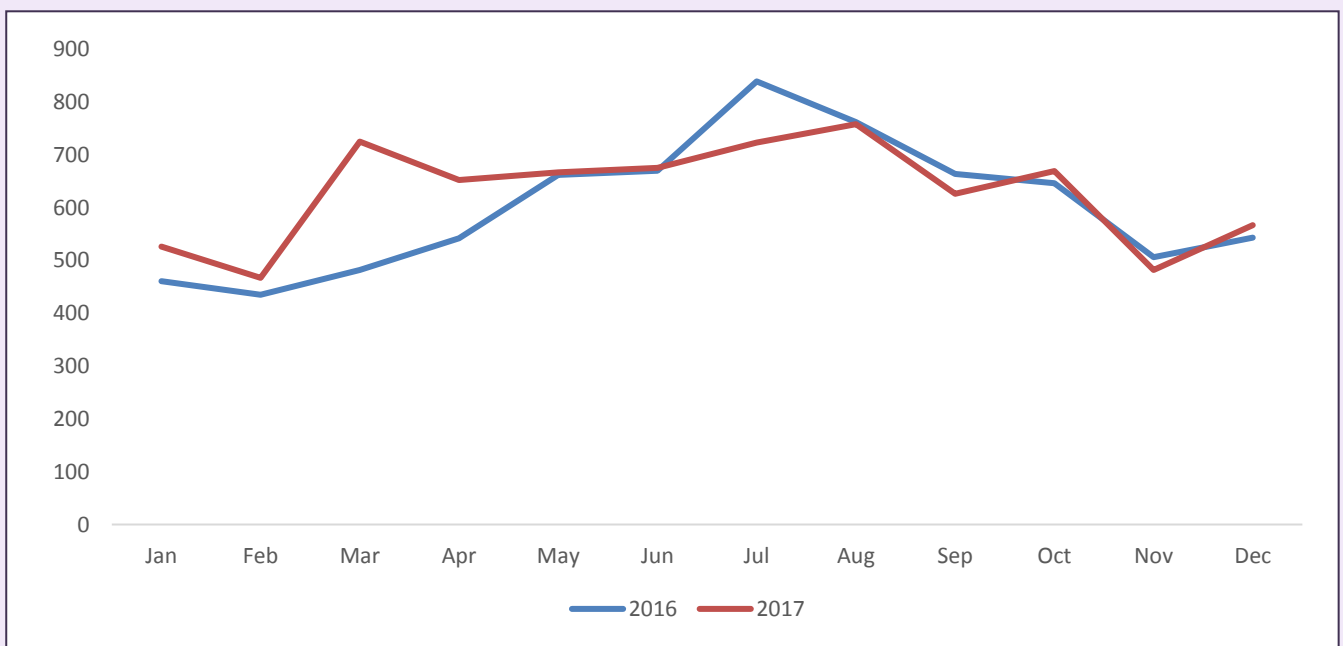


Figure 3: Monthly number of reported anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents in Swindon for the years 2016 and 2017

Conclusions and overarching recommendations

There is increasing recognition of the value of a preventative approach to addressing crime and safety issues from both the policing and public health sectors. The Policing, Health and Social Care consensus statement³ published by the National Police Chiefs' Council in February 2018 set out a joint commitment to work together to address the shared risk factors for offending and poor health outcomes and to “embed prevention across the system” in order to achieve better outcomes.

This JSNA has identified that the unmet need across the spectrum of community safety issues reviewed lies primarily in prevention efforts.

The overarching recommendations for Swindon CSP based on the findings of this report include;

- Adopt a preventative approach to addressing crime and safety issues, and, as part of this approach, focus on engaging with children and young people (CYP), an identified key vulnerable group in relation to victimhood and offending, in schools, colleges and other community-based settings to deliver education on such issues.



- Regarding the prevention agendas in relation to CCE, CSE and VAWG, it is recommended that work continues within educational settings and as part of the Healthy Schools programme on the education of CYP about healthy relationships. Also, that the CSP contribute to this education as part of the Relationships Education (RE) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) courses that will become statutory in primary and secondary schools respectively from September 2019.
- The LSCB has a responsibility for the effectiveness of strong multi-agency approaches to the following forms of child exploitation; CSE, CCE, cyber exploitation, child victims of human trafficking and modern slavery and radicalisation of children. This JSNA recommends that the CSP work closely with the LSCB and the Local Safeguarding Adults Board (in relation to the transitioning of children to adults) to ensure that responses to child exploitation are coordinated and effective.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce VAWG in Swindon with a focus on the four pillars of the national VAWG strategy; prevention, service provision (including services for children), partnership working and a focus on pursuing perpetrators.
- Work towards closing identified gaps in knowledge on issues including CCE, road collisions, rogue trading and VAWG by increasing data sharing at an aggregate level between health agencies, the Police and the Council.

3. <http://www.npcc.police.uk/Publication/NEW%20Policing%20Health%20and%20Social%20Care%20consensus%202018.pdf>

Further recommendations by subject area

Public protection:

- Enhance collaboration and data-sharing at an aggregate level between public protection teams at SBC and the Police.
- Enhance relationships between Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and migrant communities and the Council and Police to address gaps in knowledge on issues such as overcrowded and unsafe housing conditions and the exploitation of vulnerable people.
- Based on practice in other areas, it is recommended that Swindon CSP join the Wiltshire and Swindon Road Safety Partnership.

Violence against women and girls:

- Address gaps in knowledge by (a) increasing 3rd party reporting of VAWG incidents at an aggregate level, in particular from health service providers and (b) increasing awareness among frontline professionals of the types, definitions and signs of VAWG.
- Provide education and training to frontline professionals on modern slavery, trafficking and off-street sex working to address significant gaps in knowledge on these issues in Swindon.
- Develop a partner-led, rather than Police-led, approach to the NRM referral process in Swindon to improve victim engagement and increase numbers of referrals.

Knife crime:

- As a member of Wiltshire and Swindon's Strategic Knife Crime Group, it is recommended that the CSP champion a preventative approach to addressing youth knife crime at this forum.

ASB:

- Swindon CSP's approach to dealing with ASB is mainly reactive – there is an opportunity for more prevention work to take place.

Cybercrime:

- Wiltshire Police have identified significant issues with the under reporting of cybercrime, including cyber-enabled CSE. Many schools in Swindon promote ways to report online CSE and CCE to pupils, including, for instance, the NCA's Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) command's online referral form. However, to date, there has been no central coordination or oversight of such promotion efforts. It is recommended that the CSP liaise with the LSCB to ensure there is a coordinated approach to encouraging the reporting of online CSE and CCE across schools and other agencies in Swindon.

This bulletin was published in July 2018 on Swindon's JSNA website (<http://swindonjsna.co.uk/>).

