

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
<b>DATE</b>	20 October 2016
<b>TITLE OF REPORT</b>	Thematic Report - Police Scotland, North East Division: Serious Organised Crime

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### 1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report seeks to provide members with information on Serious Organised Crime and the procedures developed by North East Division to reduce the risk of harm caused by Serious Organised Crime Groups, in particular drugs, to our communities.

### 2. **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to note the paper.

### 3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

### 4. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

### 5. **BACKGROUND**

There are currently 196 known Serious Organised Crime Groups (SOCGs) being investigated by police and partners in Scotland. The greatest prevalence of SOCGs continues to be in the west of Scotland where 67% of groups are located, 22% in the east and 11% in the north of the country.

The north west of England, predominantly Liverpool remains the primary source of supply for drugs into Scotland, followed by London. This trend is evident across each drug commodity identified where the north west of England appears to be an established gateway for drugs to Scotland.

Drug supply and distribution remain the most accessible and lucrative activities for Scotland-based criminals, with 67% of SOCGs involved. Cocaine and Heroin remain the most popular drug commodities for SOCGs in Scotland, followed by Cannabis. SOCGs are concerned in the supply of multiple drug commodities.

## 6. STRUCTURES

SOCGs in Scotland are investigated by both Divisional teams and Specialist Crime Division within Police Scotland. Within North East Division these groups are investigated by North East Division and by Specialist Crime Division.

Identified SOCGs are given an assessment by means of a mapping process which provides a 'score' as to the risk of Threat and Harm the group poses to the community. A further assessment is thereafter made as to the most appropriate team to investigate the SOCG based on the score obtained.

Over the last 12 months 18 SOCGs have been investigated within North East Division. 12 of these groups have been investigated by North East Division and 6 by Specialist Crime Division.

## 7. DRUGS

As previously stated drug supply and distribution remain the most accessible and lucrative activities for SOCG's throughout Scotland and also in North East Division.

Further context has been applied to the most common drug types as below:

### **Cannabis**

Between October 2015 and September 2016, there have been 1076 Cannabis offences (average of 90 per month). June recorded the highest number of offences (110) and September recorded the lowest (58) in the 12 month period. 'Possession' was the most common offence type associated with Cannabis, accounting for 89.9% of charges with 'Possession with Intent to Supply' being the second most common offence type.

When comparing the number of offences between October 2014 and September 2015, there were 1129 Cannabis offences. In this period, April recorded the highest number of offences (121) and the lowest number of offences in this period was recorded in February (73). 'Possession' was also the most common offence type, accounting for 80.8% of offences in this period.

There has been a 4.9% decrease in the number of Cannabis offences in the October 2015 to September 2016 period compared the same period in 2014-15.

### **Cocaine**

Between October 2015 and September 2016, there were 444 Cocaine offences (average of 37 per month). August 2016 recorded the highest number of offences (48) and January recorded the lowest (28) in this reporting period. 'Possession' again was the most common offence type associated with cocaine, accounting for 73.8% of charges.

When comparing the number of offences between October 2014 and September 2015, there were 375 Cocaine offences. February 2015 (35) recorded the highest number of offences, whereas June and July recorded the lowest (30) number of offences.

There has been a 15.5% increase in the number of Cocaine offences between October 2015 and September 2016 compared to the same period for 2014-15.

### **Diamorphine (Heroin)**

Between October 2015 and September 2016, there were 305 Diamorphine offences (average of 25 per month). November 2016 recorded the highest number of offences (44) and the lowest number of offences was recorded in January (17). 'Possession' again was the most common offence type, accounting for 60.9% of charges. 'Possession with Intent to Supply' accounted for 37.3% of offences.

When comparing the number of offences between October 2014 and September 2015, there were 252 offences. July 2015 recorded the highest number of offences, whereas the lowest number of offences was recorded in February (12).

There has been a 17.3% increase in Diamorphine offences between October 2015 and September 2016 compared to the same period for 2014-15.

### **Diazepam**

Between October 2015 and September 2016, there were 208 Diazepam offences (average of 17 per month). February recorded the highest number of offences (30) and the lowest number was recorded in September (6). 'Possession of drugs' again was the most common offence type, accounting for 90.8%.

When comparing the number of offences between October 2014 and September 2015, there were 214 offences. January recorded the lowest number of offences (10) whereas July recorded the highest (27).

There has been a 2.8% decrease in the number of Diazepam offences between October 2015 and September 2016 compared to the same period for 2014-15.

### **General Trends**

There are no stand-out trends in terms of months that have the highest or lowest number of offence types. The number of offences per drug type is relatively consistent with mild fluctuations before returning to monthly averages. The start of a calendar year (January, February) recorded the lowest number of offences for numerous drug types.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

Over the last 12 months, North East Division, Specialist Crime Division and their partners have significantly disrupted the activities of 11 SOCGs operating within the Division which had been assessed under the mapping process. Numerous other smaller groups have been disrupted by conventional policing under Operation Aspen. Almost all of these groups have had links to Aberdeen City.

As part of this ongoing work, 263 Drug Search Warrants have been executed within North East Division since January 2016. As a result, Cocaine with a potential street value of £163,110, Diamorphine with a potential street value of £216,220, 'Crack'

Cocaine with a potential street value of £195,720 and Cannabis with a potential street value of £369,850 has been recovered in Aberdeen City.

In addition to this, cash in excess of £150,000 which is believed to be linked to Serious Organised Crime has been recovered.

Since April 2015, North East Division officers have made 200 arrests directly linked to Serious Organised Crime.

We, along with partners will continue to robustly target the SOCGs who prey on the most vulnerable in our communities to make Aberdeen City and North East Division a hostile environment for them to operate.

9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/A

10. **REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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