Executive Summary

Positive Futures – Concept and Hypothesis

Positive Futures empowers young people, aged 11 to 15, living in economically challenged communities, to identify quality of life and Anti-Social Behaviour problems and solutions that they share with police and other stakeholders, who give them the tools to fix it.

The project tests two hypotheses:

1. Engaging young people at this critical age will positively change their views of policing.
2. It is more efficient and effective to identify and solve these types of issues at a community level.

Background

The idea came from a conversation between a Surrey resident, who was the Chair of National Neighbourhood Watch, and the then Chief Constable of Surrey Police, Gavin Stephens.

The core fundamentals are:

- Focus on economically challenged communities
- Engage young people aged 11 to 15; any later and they will have made their own life decisions
- Empower them to identify the quality-of-life issues that matter most to them, with police in an enabling and supporting role
- Present these issues and solutions to local stakeholders who can act on them
- Involve the whole community so solutions become fully owned and sustainable

Tests

This review covers the four tests that have been placed.

The first three were in:

- **Spelthorne** — graffiti and lighting under the M3 underpass
- **Maybury** — local park and various issues
- **Tadworth** — Preston Park and various issues

These tests were researched and reported by Professor Jon Garland at Surrey University.

Following his presentation, a fourth test was started on the **Old Dean Estate** near Camberley, again focusing on the local park. This test built on the findings of the previous three and was researched by Dr Iain Britton.

Learnings – Positives

1. In the first two tests the young people were enrolled via their local schools; in the last two via community youth clubs. Both worked.

2. The absolute number of young people was not an important factor. What mattered was measuring against the hypothesis. Both Surrey University and Dr Britton believe a minimum number of 10 is needed to have a measurable impact. This was achieved with the exception of the last test at Old Dean.
3. The young people in all four test areas agreed on the same issues and solutions. These were the right scope of problems.
4. The project must be community led. This was applied in the Tadworth and Old Dean tests, which now provide the model to take forward.
5. Local police resources played a strong enabling and supporting role. They shared the OSARA problem-solving model, were a visible presence during scoping, and the DOCO visited each site to provide recommendations.
6. The Tadworth and Old Dean tests helped define the right resourcing structure:
    - A project lead working with young people (youth club worker)
    - A supporting individual with experience and skills
    - Stakeholders who help deliver the solutions
7. The total paid costs of all four tests, including an allocation of police costs, is £34,727. There are currently £26,852 of unfunded activation costs, which includes the provision of £6,000 of PCC funds to cover the Maybury Park work. The section on the economic evaluation of the four tests covers this in more detail.
8. The Tadworth test had two phases. Initial activation was limited, but following learnings from Old Dean and the McLaren recognition event, Preston Park has seen a series of positive actions showing “what’s possible”.
9. McLaren hosted a recognition event for the young people at Old Dean and Tadworth, allowing them to present their work and tour the facility.

Learnings – Modifications and Insights

1. While the resourcing model for Tadworth and Old Dean was broadly the same, the degree of activation differed. Tadworth stakeholders showed strong ownership, drive and leadership.
2. Youth club workers were paid for their project work in addition to salary. Future clarity is needed on scope and expectations, as approaches differed between Tadworth and Old Dean.
3. The young people’s energy was infectious. Slow activation reduced momentum. Tadworth’s second phase shows the value of moving at pace.
4. Sequential rollout requires a project manager working closely with Surrey Police to maintain progress.
5. Business engagement opportunities emerged across the three years of testing:
    - McDonald’s — free food/drink and employment opportunities
    - BP — meeting space
    - Shepperton Studios — potential recognition venue
    - Procter & Gamble — interest in the project
    - McLaren — active support
6. Forty-five young people took part; 25 were girls. Those now aged 15 will soon be eligible to vote. The project could link to other programmes or include skill-building opportunities.
7. The Cadets are also testing Positive Futures, and both programmes can run in parallel.