Suspect prioritisation platform for persons wanted on warrant

A Power BI generated platform to improve efficiency by enabling the force to visualise data on wanted on warrant persons and using this data to drive performance.

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Key details

Does it work?	Untested – new or innovative
Focus	Prevention Reoffending
Topic	Neighbourhood crime Offender management Operational policing
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Region	East Midlands
Partners	Police Criminal justice (includes prisons, probation services)
Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.
Start date	October 2024

Key details

Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Offenders

Aim

To provide efficiency to offender management, specifically around wanted persons, by prioritising offenders using a range of factors such as the grade of warrant and the Cambridge Harm Index (CHI).

Intended outcome

The intended outcome of the suspect prioritisation platform are to:

- reduce the number of outstanding warrants
- improve business processes involved in the administration of warrants
- improve the accessibility of information to officers to enable them to prioritise activity

Description

Historically, court warrants were sent to the local area for action to be taken. The crime admin system tasked a particular locality, however there was a general lack of information easily available to officers unless they had the skills to interrogate the system.

Courts of all descriptions issue warrants for a range of reasons, these are graded A, B and C in line with a national protocol owned by the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) Criminal Justice Courts portfolio lead. These factors include the type of court that issued the warrant and the type of offence for which it relates. Once those warrants are issued, it is for the local police force to act to execute the warrant, arrest the nominal and take the action as directed by the issuing authority.

The management of nominals who are wanted on warrant is a prioritised area for Nottinghamshire Police. The force were not satisfied that they had the right information, resource and accountability aligned to ensure warrants were executed effectively. It was felt there were too many outstanding

warrants, and arresting suspects/offenders associated with them was taking too long. The force also felt more could be done using crime and intelligence systems available to them to enhance the grade allocated by the court. As a result, it was decided to implement a task and finish group to improve this process.

The force has delivered activity through a task and finish group that has examined every part of the process. The following are members are involved:

- force head of crime
- force head of criminal justice
- police national computer (PNC) manager
- NICHE subject matter expert
- force intelligence subject matter expert
- representatives from local policing
- project and change officer

Before any new processes could be adopted, a significant data refresh programme of work was undertaken. Every outstanding warrant was reviewed and with consideration of the type of warrant and the enquiries that had been done to date, the force sought to establish:

- whether the is suspect/offender alive
- if the offence they are wanted for is still in a position to be prosecuted should it come to trial (for example availability/support of key witnesses, known address of witnesses)
- if the suspect/offender is permanently abroad and if so, is extradition appropriate?
- should an application to withdraw the warrant be made?

It is the decision of the Crown Prosecution Service to make an application to the court to withdraw a court warrant, the force have designed a pro forma that provides the required information for the application. This pro forma has been adopted by the NPCC criminal justice courts lead.

At the same time, a policy was developed by the force on how warrants would flow through the system, including a flow chart explaining the key responsibilities at all levels. It was decided to enhance the warrant grading by using an enhanced matrix to inform the grade. This took into consideration the wider context of the individual wanted on warrant, such as any orders they may be subject to and the type of linked offences. It is the responsibility of staff within the warrants team

to complete this activity, which has ensured consistency in decision making.

An important aspect of this project was to be clear about who was responsible for discharging this work; in the case of Nottinghamshire Police this is the neighbourhood policing inspectors (NPIs).

Once this work was complete, the data and insights team delivered a Power BI dashboard. This negated the need for officers to interrogate the crime admin system and provided a simple list of warrants that were outstanding in the area. This information has subsequently also been delivered as part of a wider initiative called 'Team Packs', which provide performance information for a particular neighbourhood area.

In the second iteration of the dashboard, the data insights team created an information dashboard that could draw a range of factors together to provide additional information that could prioritise this work, for example the harm score of warrant offences. The force worked with policing partners and providers linked to the Power BI software and learning was drawn from work being undertaken within the serious organised crime portfolio.

The new dashboard incorporates a range of factors that help local decision makers to keep track of and prioritise resources towards the riskiest wanted people in the area. The dashboard draws information from the Niche (police management software) 'occurrence' that has a person associated and has a classification of 'wanted on warrant'.

The dashboard now displays:

- total warrants that have not been finalised
- the number of warrants with a person classification
- harm score using the Cambridge Crime Harm Score
- details on when the information was last refreshed
- addresses linked to nominals
- warning markers associated with the nominals listed
- those individuals that are untagged in the community

The force has also now developed and deployed additional functionality within the dashboard including persons 'untagged in the community'. This an area of suspect management that is often overlooked, whereby an order has been made to tag a subject, but that person has failed to comply, or other factors have led to that person not being tagged. Whilst powers exist to act and ensure that

person is tagged, this work is often unseen and therefore not well managed. Nottinghamshire Police are taking the same approach and ask local teams to ensure persons of risk are effectively managed.

Governance

Governance of outstanding warrants is achieved in a number of ways:

- Neighbourhood policing inspectors – The force's policy is clear in that it is the responsibility of the local NPIs to drive performance. There is no detail as to how they will achieve this, it is left to local decision making. There is a local multi-agency problem-solving meeting (MAPS) that includes outstanding warrants aimed at utilising all community intelligence to locate and apprehend wanted people. Local inspectors are also required to return the number of outstanding warrants on any given day as part of the force daily management meetings. Higher risk cases can also be raised here.
- Divisional performance meetings – chaired by local chief inspectors, superintendents or chief superintendents, this meeting oversees a range of performance metrics for the area, one of which is wanted people.
- Improving investigations meeting – this is a task and finish group that has led the improvement work in all areas of warrant management.
- Criminal justice board – chaired by an assistant chief constable, this meeting provides strategic oversight of the current performance with any risk areas covered in more detail.
- Earning trust and confidence board – chaired by the deputy chief constable, this is the highest level of internal police governance. Any particular area of risk can be discussed here.

Additionally, specific cases can be discussed at the force tasking meeting; this process can provide access to specific enforcement and intelligence functions that are available at force level. The dedicated activity and ongoing governance processes have enabled the force to decrease the total number of people who are wanted on warrant by approximately 50%.

The full dashboard is available for use within the force area.

Expected improvements include:

- defining appropriate ranges of warrants that are outstanding in any one particular area
- enhancing the wanted-on-warrant process to include all police wanted persons

Future additions

- addition of all wanted persons, specifically those wanted by police (police national computer, PNC, wanted) and power arrest wanted
- consideration of inclusion of custody data within the dashboard
- consideration of inclusion of all offences, including finalised, within the total harm score

Overall impact

- during the time the project has been running, the force have reduced the total number of outstanding warrants by approximately 50%
- there is now a clear policy of who owns this work
- there is clear accountability of the workflow from the moment the warrant is issued to when it is executed
- there is clarity on roles and responsibilities within this structure
- there is effective data that is overseen at an operational and strategic level as to the current performance in this area

Learning

- Dedicated task and finish group led at a strategic level – the force recognised that this work was multi-faceted and required a combined effort to produce results, therefore the dedicated task and finish group was created.
- Partnership working – with an increased focus on warrant activity, the force recognised pressures may be felt by partners, including the Crown Prosecution Service in terms of increased case management of older cases, applications to withdraw warrants, and other criminal justice activity. It was vital to engage and work with partners to secure their support.
- Recording wanted on warrant on the crime administration system – the force benefited from having a specific place to administer warrant activity through the crime management system, in this case NICHE.
- Data cleansing – the force recommend spending time to review warrants and ensure only those cases that needed to be progressed were displayed on the system. It meant a clearer picture of data that was relevant was accessible by staff when the dashboard went live.
- Governance – establishing the correct governance at the start of the process would be advantageous. This can be achieved by considering what pinch points exist within the system and

ensuring there is effective governance across these. Partnership working is vital.

- Actionable activity – many warrants cannot be executed as the wanted person is residing abroad or outside the force area. Many force areas struggle to engage in requests to arrest persons who are wanted in force area A, but living in force area B. The assumption from the other force is the risk sits with the originating force; however, Nottinghamshire Police suggest this should be a collective effort if the wanted subject resides in a different force area.
- Challenges outside the control of the force – it can sometimes take weeks for warrants that have been issued to be notified to the force, allowing time for the wanted person to leave the county or country. National work would be required to improve this challenge.

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