

Step seven: Develop an annual plan

Step seven will enable the group to think longer term and consider how the system can be further developed, including using some of the tools in part two of this guide.

It may seem inevitable that tensions monitoring is a reactive process, responding to changing events and circumstances, fire-fighting and countering situations after they have arisen. There is indeed a considerable element of this, especially given the complexity of community dynamics and the multiplicity of factors affecting how people feel and interact.

However, the learning from situations where there has been community breakdown suggests very strongly that not only were the signs there, often for a long period of time, but that earlier interventions were possible.

It is therefore suggested that, in order that the Tensions Monitoring Group becomes something more than a 'here and now' group, there is an annual plan to look at the longer term issues and support the early and upstream approach. It would involve inputs from the wider partnership and applying a greater breadth of knowledge to the thinking.

This annual plan would use some of the **tools in part 2** of this guide.

Annual Plan

Every month would include:

- An Experienced, Evidenced and Potential Tension Assessment
- Community Impact Assessments on specific forthcoming events or activities
- Review of the national, regional and local returns from the previous period
- Specific interventions arising from these

Built across the plan should be a planned programme to:

- Review of the depth and reach of community engagement
- Consider specific communities of interest or geography and particularly vulnerable or excluded communities, new arrivals, priorities for attention

Twice yearly

- Receive reports on population changes and demographic trends

Annually

- An annual forward look - 'horizon scanning' for longer term developments which will impact on community dynamics. (This is a new requirement in the Crime and Disorder Act Review)
- Review processes, systems and lessons learned and build into business plans

Annual forward look

This would consider longer term trends and changes ahead and the risks and impact on the community. It could be done in conjunction with the annual review of the Community Plan and would usually be undertaken by the Local Strategic Partnership.

The annual forward look should follow the guidance relevant to the Crime and Disorder Act Review and also use the structure of the Community Impact Assessment. It should consider such issues as:

- Demographic change including economic migration
- Major physical regeneration projects
- Opening or closing of public institutions, shops and places of worship
- Coming or going of major employers
- Progress in 'closing the gap' for the poorest neighbourhoods
- Other long term changes, developments and trends
- Residents' views from perception surveys
- Presence and activities of known extremist groups or influences

It will include positive opportunities and benefits for the community and would aim to assist in devising plans and interventions to ensure that all sections of the community were equally able to take advantage of those opportunities and benefits. Equally, where one section of the community is likely to be disproportionately affected by change, such as the threat of closure of a large employer or a school, specific measures will be necessary to mitigate the impact for those people affected. The Forward Look may consider developments in the next 3 to 5 years - and be reviewed and updated annually.

Review processes and systems

At least once a year it is important to review what's working well and what could be better. Clearly, if the systems are falling down, earlier review will be necessary. The review could follow the format of this guide by asking the questions:

- Is the group functioning well? Are we fulfilling our remit? Do we have all the right people involved? Are they at the right level? Is it chaired by the right person? Is there adequate support for the lead officers?
- Is there commitment and buy in? Has understanding grown? Is further training needed?
- Is the EEP system well established now? When did it work well? When not so well?
- Did the Community Impact Assessments lead to better interventions?
- Are the governance arrangements satisfactory?
- Are the reporting arrangements operating efficiently? Is feedback happening at all levels?
- How did our annual plan go? Did we stick to it and what did we learn?
- What are our achievements? What could we have done better?