

News story: Closer partnerships needed to fight serious and organised crime

Ben Wallace, speaking to an audience of law enforcement and public and private sector representatives at the Home Office's Serious and Organised Crime Conference in Birmingham, said officers needed to share more intelligence with local government representatives in an effort to tackle crime bosses.

The Minister underlined how multi-agency partnerships around the country could help to dismantle serious and organised crime groups, with effective joint working already taking place between local authorities, police forces and sectors within the Government Agency Intelligence Network, such as HMRC and the Environment Agency.

But he called for the level of information sharing and collaboration to be taken to new heights.

The Security Minister said:

We know that crime bosses will look to exploit any avenue that they can tap into in order to make massive profits or launder their dirty money.

Our own research indicates organised crime groups are now looking to benefit from public sector contracts and we must do everything possible to clamp down on this abuse.

That's why I'm asking each police force around the country to work more closely than ever with local authorities and other important partners in their patch – sharing information on known crime groups, identifying attempts to profit from public sector contracts and closing down bogus suppliers.

The Security Minister referred to a Home Office pilot which saw local authorities and police forces in seven areas collaborate to examine the extent to which major crime groups are looking to exploit public sector contracts.

This pilot not only identified the areas particularly at risk of being targeted by crime groups, but also demonstrated how effective partnerships between local authorities and forces could be in disrupting those involved.

Ben Wallace referenced the work as he asked forces to carry out more detailed assessments of the crime groups operating in their area and to share these with local authorities so links can be found with suppliers who bid for public procurement contracts.

The Minister explained this level of information sharing could significantly improve the fight against serious and organised crime.