

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

13 February 2019

SUBJECT: Serious Violent Crime

<p><b>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT</b></p> <p>1. This report provides an update on how West Yorkshire Police are responding to Serious Violent Crime.</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <p>2. That the PCC uses this report to scrutinise West Yorkshire Police's response to serious violent crime.</p>
<p><b>POLICE AND CRIME PLAN</b></p> <p>3. Serious Violent Crime is now featured within the refreshed Police and Crime Plan under Major Threats and serious violence. The PCC has said he will continue to oversee and support the response provided by regional teams, local partners and neighbourhood policing teams in identifying and preventing serious violence within our communities.</p>
<p><b>KEY INFORMATION</b></p> <p>The Government's Serious Violence Strategy is centred on 4 main themes: tackling county lines and misuse of drugs, early intervention and prevention, supporting communities and local partnerships and law enforcement and the criminal justice response. Taking the strategy and current public concerns into account, the PCC has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviewed the West Yorkshire Police response to Knife Crime with the Chief Constable</li><li>• Being assigned to the Home Office Government Task Force on Serious Violent Crime</li><li>• Is part of the Association of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Serious Violence Task and Finish group</li><li>• Supported weapons amnesties and WYP lead campaigns across the serious and violent crime arena.</li><li>• Supported Programme Precision a Partnership response to Serious Violent Crime.</li><li>• Provided funding through the Partnership Executive Group fund for investment in the Huddersfield University and Leeds/Kirklees YOT project exploring the linkages between inappropriate use of social media and violence amongst young people and for initiatives such as the GANGS project – a series of sessions in schools in West Yorkshire which challenges the myth of the glamour of street gangs.</li><li>• Grant round 14 of the Safer Communities Fund was launched in 2018 to tackle serious and violent crime from all angles including prevention, early intervention, diversion, protection and education, 49 groups received funding totalling £211,509.34, projects will complete in October 2019.</li></ul>

- Grant Round 13 also provided nearly £30,000 to local community initiatives to tackle violence in West Yorkshire, including the Leeds Street Team, Street Doctors, Global Diversity Positive Action (Kirklees), and West Yorkshire Police's Knife Crime Prevention programme.
- Received £1,121,395 from the national Early Intervention Youth Fund. Specific projects endorsed and co-ordinated by the Police and Crime Commissioner will be supported over a two year period to help divert children and young people away from violent crime.
- Responded to the Home secretary's Announcement on new powers to tackle Knife Crime 31 Jan 2019
- Will be working with the Home Office to host a West Yorkshire Partnership Event involving partners who are working together to tackle Serious and Violent Crime (March 2019).
- Funding a 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Coordinator to support voluntary sector Partners in all areas, including vulnerable young people, substance mis-use and community support work.

#### **PARTNERSHIP CONTRIBUTION**

Early Intervention Youth Fund - The PCC working together with West Yorkshire Police, Community Safety Partnerships, Youth Offending Teams, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service and the Prison Service will lead delivery of a holistic programme of early intervention projects with the aim of preventing serious violence within our county. Partners have identified a number of key connected strands of effective targeted programmes, initiatives and community co-productions for those individuals and communities at high risk of serious violence.



## Chief Officer Team Briefing for COM

February 2019

**Title:** **Serious Violent Crime**

**CoT Sponsor:** **ACC Hankinson**

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### **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on how West Yorkshire Police is delivering the Serious Violent Crime Strategy 2018 (SVCS).

After a decade of decline; Serious Violent Crime (Homicide, Knife, Violent and Gun crime) has been increasing since 2014 in all areas of the UK and Internationally.

It is suggested that a reduction in the following service areas are partially responsible;

- Enforcement
- Health treatment
- Interventions; such as youth clubs and diversionary tactics

However, experts suggest that a lack of enforcement and intervention does not fully explain the rise in trends evident within developed countries.

The below have been recognised academically and are worthy of noting when considering increases;

- Since 2010 onwards, smart phones have become more commonplace - social media is more prevalent with an estimated 42 million people making use of social media platforms within the UK alone. This exponential increase in use of phones has increased abilities to contact services, record and retain evidence.
- A growing membership of gangs online and retaliation videos have increased, without earlier intervention, further attacks are predictable and expected.
- Cocaine use can be attributed to violence in users. Police enforcement to disrupt drug supply chains, creates uncertainty and volatility, which can lead to serious violence amongst dealer networks.
- 'Social norms' have changed over years, people are far more comfortable being outspoken, displaying aggressive behaviour.

## ONGOING WORK AND DEVELOPMENTS

As highlighted in the strategy, a successful approach to reducing violent crime will not be achieved through arrests alone and relies on effective, often localised, partnerships to reduce offending and risk.

Within the Serious Violent Crime Strategy (SVCS), a number of recommendations from government office or best practice opportunities exist, these initiatives will be fully explored within West Yorkshire where possible.

- **Overarching Force Strategy 2019 - 2020**

During a Violent Crime conference held by the Home Office in 2018, speakers outlined different approaches to reducing violent crime. One method presented was to tackle the increase of violent crime like a disease, which should be treated with a Public Health approach as seen in Scotland's successful Violent Reduction Unit (VRU). Established in 2005 the VRU was set up to stem a tide of knife crime which saw Glasgow labelled as 'Europe's murder capital'. A key message from the VRU is that serious violent crime is not just a policing issue, but also a public health one. By working closely with health, education and social work, offences of murder have more than halved from 137 in 2004, to 61 deaths in 2016.

West Yorkshire Police have adopted the strategic headings outlined below. The terminology, which is more common place within a health environment is in place of the usual; prevent, protect, prepare and pursue elements.

1. **(PREVENT & PURSUADE) Interrupt transmission (preventing retaliation – mediate & calm conflict, blending prediction of violence with visibility and enforcement)**

- We must make best use of predictive analysis to model where resources are best placed.
- We should seek alternative methods to interrupt offences, such as previous offenders who can speak / communicate within communities to highlight the pitfalls of crime.
- Social Media platforms should be used proactively to calm conflict and also remove potentially hostile uploads.

2. **(PROTECT) Prevent future spread (assess higher risk - change behaviours & provide treatment)**

- With partners, Intensive engagement within communities and outreach (from within the community) should be committed to those at the highest risk of being a victim or a suspect, to break offending cycles.

### **3. (PREPARE) Change / challenge norms (lower community tolerance & increase community support)**

- Ensure that multiple messages of the same acceptable behaviours are consistently communicated.
- Education and awareness campaigns should be aimed at all generations.
- Community engagement needs to take place, and campaigns such as '*not in my neighbourhood*' used to challenge lowering tolerance levels.

### **4. (PURSUE) Data and Monitoring (intelligence, information and outcomes)**

- Interventions need to be supported by an accurate understanding of the problem which contains partnership information built upon accurate data and a suite of outcomes which are relevant to the wider partnership.

The move away from using pure enforcement language seeks to engage key partners and also encourage and empower communities to be active and understand the parts they can play.

There is a growing comprehensive action plan behind the strategy which captures the opportunities presented within the SVCS. There are also plans for each of the strands of serious violence (Knife, Homicide, Gang/Drugs etc.) with short term measures and interventions, such as top 10 hotspot locations, subjects and victims to problem solve at a Neighbourhood level.

In the last month, the strategic leads for Firearms Crime, OCG/Drugs crime, Domestic Abuse, Knife Crime and Homicide have all met to agree the overarching strategy and next steps. Each of the five Policing Districts have now also identified a senior officer to be a single point of contact for all serious violent crime matters.

By working together, duplicity will be reduced and the aims of the SVCS will be more achievable.

- **Early Intervention Youth Fund (EIYF)**

A number of successful bids were submitted to the EIYF through the Office of Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

Each District, with partners, have successfully applied for funding to invest locally. The interventions form part of the SVCS, deterring young people away from violent crime.

Moving forward there will be more opportunities to apply for funding when the Youth Endowment Fund is released; nationally £200 Million is allocated to be spent within 10 years.

As part of the West Yorkshire Police commitment to the EIYF, a mapping exercise is planned, to understand not just public sector interventions, but also third sector and commissioned services. This will assist in identifying gaps in provision of service, making our approach more targeted to where interventions are required, not necessarily which organisation can write the best funding application.

## **STRATEGIC RISK IMPLICATIONS**

As well as finances, a further risk to the success of achieving reductions in violent crime could be that partners in many areas are working to capacity. Also interventions are often commissioned for a short period of time to bridge a gap created through austerity, this approach could impact upon the ability of grass roots organisations within communities to flourish and self-sustain.

A suggestion to mitigate this risk, would be to draw all partners together (CSP's, statutory and voluntary) under an OPCC led violent crime conference. We would seek to achieve a level of commitment, ideas, and innovations. Forging stronger relations moving forward, to deliver a longer term plan, as well as shorter term projects which will bring about swifter reductions.

Districts are starting the above conversation with key partners at Health and Wellbeing Boards to understand commitment levels and capacity to approach serious violent crime new ways.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATON**

Nil