

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

19 June 2018

**SUBJECT:** Violent Crime Update Report

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. This report updates the Force's current activity in response to serious violent crime in West Yorkshire, and in particular with regard to the Home Office's Serious Violence Strategy, released in April this year.
2. The report describes West Yorkshire Police's assessment of the problem profile for violent crime in the county, including work on domestic abuse, action against knife crime, liaison with schools, and operations to improve safety in the night-time economy.

**RECOMMENDATION**

3. That the PCC uses this report to scrutinise West Yorkshire Police's response to violent crime, in particular the early intervention projects in development to reduce these offences.

**POLICE AND CRIME PLAN**

4. Violent crime does not feature as a specific priority in the current Police and Crime Plan, but violence is an element of offending under a number of our priority areas, for example, domestic abuse, CSE, honour based abuse, and 'major threats'.
5. The refreshed Police and Crime Plan has revised the emphasis of the Major Threats priority to include serious violence, including crimes linked to knife and gang violence.

**KEY INFORMATION**

6. In the wake of the publishing of the Government's Serious Violence Strategy, and public concern about knife crime, gang activity, and the County Line offences, a range of preventative and enforcement activity is underway or in development:

**Recent OPCC activity:**

7. The meeting on knife crime with the Home Secretary in May, and your and Jayne Sykes' involvement in the APCC's Serious Violence Task and Finish group.
8. The support for last year's weapons amnesties, taking over 200 weapons off the streets of West Yorkshire.
9. The support for the GANGS project – a series of sessions in schools in West Yorkshire which challenges the myth of the glamour of street gangs.

10. Grant round 14 of the Safer Communities Fund has just closed to bids for projects which will tackle serious violent and knife crime in West Yorkshire.
11. Grant Round 13 has already 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.
12. Your £50k PEG fund investment in the Huddersfield University and Leeds/Kirklees YOT project exploring the linkages between inappropriate use of social media and violence amongst young people.

#### PARTNERSHIP CONTRIBUTION

13. West Yorkshire Police produced their **Knife Crime Strategy in June**.
14. In February, the police ran **Operation Sceptre**, their week of action against knife and violent crime. This included targeted enforcement work including; test purchases of knives to warn retailers who break the law; and intelligence gathering work to identify individuals involved in crime and anti-social behaviour. This operation is due to run again later this year.
15. West Yorkshire Police's **gang mentor project with the St. Giles Trust**, working to divert young people on the fringes of urban street gangs away from a life of offending.
16. In addition to this, the Force is keen to build a relationship with the organisation **Redthread**, who have successfully addressed gang-related violent crime in London and Nottingham, basing themselves in hospitals to support people admitted with injuries, and signpost them to organisations who can help them move away from gang activity.



**Title: Violent Crime update report**

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**Introduction**

This report seeks to address the following main points:

- (1) That West Yorkshire Police has a co-ordinated response to the threats associated with violent crime and
- (2) That West Yorkshire Police are in a position to exploit opportunities arising from National strategies.

**Context**

This report is written in the context of the publication of the Government's Serious Violence Strategy in April 2018. It is also written in line with the Force's 2017/8 Strategic Assessment.

The Serious Violence Strategy is clear that the national approach to serious violent crime is not solely focused on law enforcement and relies on effective, often localised, partnerships to reduce offending and risk. It describes four main areas of intended activity:

- Tackling County lines and the misuse of drugs
- Early intervention and prevention
- Supporting communities and partnerships
- Effective law enforcement and criminal justice

West Yorkshire Police's most recent Strategic Assessment reports heavily on the Force's performance and potential threats around violent crime.

The Force does not have an over-arching or specific violent crime strategy. Violent crime is a broad term and can refer to a wide range of offending, each of which will be relevant to one or more of the Force's five Strategic Plans.

For example, domestic crime will often fall into a violent crime definition and features heavily under the Protecting the Vulnerable Plan. Equally, assaults with injury in a night time economy context will fall under the Reducing Crime Plan and, potentially, the Providing Reassurance Plan.

Of the four main themes contained in the Serious Violence Strategy, all feature in the Force's Strategic Planning.

## **Force Problem Profile**

West Yorkshire Police has commissioned a problem profile on violent crime which was completed and circulated in March 2018.

This detailed report contains geographic, temporal and offender/victim analysis of all violence with injury offending across West Yorkshire through 2017 and a comparative analysis with previous years' crime data.

The problem profile highlights a number of significant features of violent crime in West Yorkshire:

- Alcohol/drugs
- Mental Health
- CSEA
- Urban street gangs
- Domestic violence
- Educational establishments
- Prison/health establishments
- Weapons

It also outlines key activity recommendations intended to effectively combat these features, all of which feature on the five Strategic Plans. This plan will be discussed at the LPGB in June with a view to developing specific tactics and interventions where appropriate.

## **Summary of Current Force Activity**

### **Early Intervention**

The Force has an Early Intervention Strategy which focuses heavily on Force culture, structures and partnership responsibilities and is consistent with the Government's Serious Violence Strategy. The Early Intervention Strategy highlights the importance of shifting policing and partnership activity upstream to reduce crisis management in crucial areas as child protection, combating organised crime and gangs, domestic violence and general demand management.

Early intervention forms a core part of our overall Policing Strategy: 2016-2021 and the PCC's Police and Crime Plan: 2016-2021.

### **Domestic violence**

The Force has a Domestic Violence Strategy which covers the Force's delivery of an effective service in order to safeguard victims of domestic abuse. It includes Leadership and Governance, Initial contact, First response, Investigation, Managing victims and offenders and Learning.

The progress in these areas are evidenced in our Domestic Abuse Action Plan which is public facing as part of HMIC requirements and has been shared with the OPCC. In addition to the policy we have the Whole Systems Approach to Domestic Abuse as part of a seven Force collaboration to share and implement best practice and also a VAWG project to deliver a DVPO team to improve our service to victims. We have also been a pilot Force for the "Deep Dive" in partnership with CPS and Courts to implement four component areas to improve our joint service.

The Governance of the first two projects is through the DA and Sexual Violence Board at the OPCC to ensure a corporate approach.

### **Organised crime and urban street gangs**

West Yorkshire Police has established a Force-wide OCG governance structure involving partners and localised OCG partnerships in order to deliver law enforcement and early intervention activity at all levels.

## **Night time economy**

Analysis of violent crime from the Problem Profile has shown that various night time economies across West Yorkshire have a significant impact on crime and disorder in terms of both demand and severity. There are clear links to serious sexual offences and organised crime activity.

Each major city or town has its' own night time economy plan which are directly linked to the principles of early intervention and delivering safer communities in partnership.

For example, through the local Community Safety Partnerships, both Halifax and Leeds have achieved 'Purple Flag' status reflecting the respective local partnership's commitment to providing a safe and fulfilling environment for the public.

In Leeds, as well as the over-arching Purple Flag partnership, a number of other partnerships exist, and are being developed, to combat violent crime associated with the night time economy. Work is ongoing with, for example, the Universities to raise awareness of personal safety for female students. Operation Capital is the policing plan to provide a visible and effective street reassurance for city centre service users over weekends and bank holidays. Focusing on specific areas of the city and flexible enough to respond to developments in demand analysis, this operation is delivered in partnership with a number of agencies, primarily the local authority. Street 'Evening Ambassadors' in Leeds assist in providing a tangible, visible presence and work with West Yorkshire officers, funded through Leeds BID, the city council and BACIL.

In Halifax, street 'Angels' fulfil a similar role, assisting and helping service users and working in conjunction with police officers.

In Bradford, Operation Gridiron is the policing plan to provide a visible and effective street reassurance for the city. Work is ongoing in refreshing the City Centre licensing partnership and the reinvigorating of the local 'Pubwatch'.

In Huddersfield, Operation Standedge is the initial policing and partnership response to night time economy challenges in the town centre and is also delivered in partnership through the CSP. It is anticipated that Operation Standedge will form the basis for a future 'Purple Flag' application and a new partnership has already been formed with that objective in mind involving West Yorkshire Police, Kirklees Council, local business groups and security management organisations.

## **Educational establishments**

Through the Force's Education Liaison Officer, training on violent crime issues, specifically knife crime has been delivered to over 100 officers and staff, including Safer Schools Officers, to enable inputs to be given to targeted secondary school students. This programme will be extended in the short term to include a further 50 officers and staff.

The input itself has been delivered to whole schools during their drop down days, and in others, to certain year groups. The response from schools has been extremely positive and has enabled this programme to be sustained into next year.

Following the investment into Neighbourhood Policing, work is underway to prepare a new package of inputs for PCSO's to deliver to primary schools across West Yorkshire. This new package will be far reaching and linked directly to our strategic objectives around early intervention, knife crime and county lines. These inputs will commence delivery in primary schools in the new academic year in September 2018.

The Mentoring to Prevent Violence (MPV) initiative is currently being explored as an additional strategy to combat educational establishment violent crime.

### **Knife crime**

In the light of national concerns around violent crime involving knives, the OPCC has already been briefed around West Yorkshire Police's Knife Crime Strategy and Knife Crime Problem Profile.

In November 2017, recognising the significant threat of knife crime, West Yorkshire Police established strategic ownership and governance of the issue in its' own right, through the Local Policing Governance Board. Commissioning a Problem Profile and establishing a performance and data tracker through eMis has enabled the Force to analyse offending patterns and trends in order to inform Force-wide and localised activity.

For example, Operation Sceptre was piloted in Leeds in February 2018 developing products to tackle knife crime. This lead to the development of a bespoke Toolkit for Districts to support local operations.

There will be a Force wide Operation Sceptre in September with all Districts now formulating operational plans according to their localised requirements.

Liaison has been made with Police Scotland and, specifically, the Violence Reduction Unit. They have several projects running that have helped them to tackle violence within communities. At this time, West Yorkshire Police is working to bring the MPV to West Yorkshire schools and the Redthread initiative to A & E departments. Redthread is an organisation referred to in the Government's Serious Violence Strategy.

## **Exploring Funding opportunities**

West Yorkshire Police is re-organising its' funding bid process to provide a much more standardised governance around such activity. This will be co-ordinated through a Silver group and will ensure that all funding opportunities are identified and fully explored. Environmental scanning will ensure that opportunities are not missed and the Force's income generation resource will be at the heart of all activity.

Consistent with the Serious Violence Strategy, a number of funding opportunities are currently being explored through the various funding streams available:

- Early Intervention Youth Fund
- Community Fund
- Ending Gang Violence Exploitation Fund

Street Doctors is a UK based charity which aims to change the lives of high risk young people by giving them the skills they need to deliver life-saving first aid. It also educates and empowers these young people to give them confidence and a sense of responsibility for their actions and help change their attitude towards violence. They provide inputs at locations such as Youth Offending Centres, PRUs, Secure Children's Homes and Youth Prisons and have expressed a strong interest to work with our force, providing 50% of the funding themselves. Principal Community Engagement Officer Bev Adams is exploring this opportunity and potential funding streams in this regard.

Sunnyvale Fishery and Outdoor Centre in Rastrick, Calderdale have been supported in the past by Safer Communities funding and provide activities and instruction to young people aged between 9 and 18 years – often those who are excluded from mainstream education and / or involved in anti-social behaviour. The facility represents an excellent location to provide violent crime awareness to young people across the Force area.

Several other funding bids have been successfully applied to tackle knife crime – Terriers Project, PEAK Project as examples and we continue to support and encourage partners to submit funding bids.