



CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE, 14 FEBRUARY 2019

Subject Heading:	Knife Crime and Adolescent Safeguarding
SLT Lead:	Tim Aldridge
Report Author and contact details:	Anita Stewart ,01708-431255, anita.stewart@haverling.gov.uk Diane Egan,01708-432927, diane.egan@haverling.gov.uk
Policy context:	<i>Information briefing only</i> The Council has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce an annually refreshed community safety plan. Addressing serious group violence and knife crime are key priorities within the Havering Community Safety Partnership, Partnership Plan 2017/18 to 2019/20
Financial summary:	Implementing our ambition as laid out in this report will require realignment of local authority (and partner) resources, such as the development of a multi-disciplinary hub to better identify and respond to adolescent safeguarding, meeting needs of young people, sooner. The local authority has already submitted a number of bids to contribute, such as to the Home Office Early Intervention fund (successful) and the government's Troubled Families programme (awaiting an outcome). We unsuccessfully bid to the Mayor's fund in 2018 and intend to submit a bid to the Young Londoners fund when applications open later in 2019.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering
Places making Havering

[X]
[]

SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT DETAIL

- **Tackling knife crime and gangs** – The Mayor of London makes it clear that it is currently far too easy for young people to get hold of knives, even with restrictions on their sale. One of the first steps to preventing violence is to take knives off our streets and have tougher penalties to act as a deterrent for those who break the rules. He also makes it clear that tackling gangs requires a partnership approach between local authorities, schools, youth services and the police. For some communities, gang activity and the related threat of violence is a daily occurrence. Going forward, it is key to provide positive alternatives and exposing the damage that gangs do to gang members and society.
- **Early intervention for those on the periphery of crime** – This is not about creating soft justice for young people, but rather is about delivering smart justice, reducing crime by recognising and dealing with the complex and range

of needs and circumstances of particular young people and families that can lead to them offending and becoming victims of criminal exploitation. Refreshing Havering's strategic and operational partnership approach to addressing adolescent safeguarding and exploitation will be a particular area of focus going forward. In addition to this, working with the private and voluntary sector to improve pathways into apprenticeships, training and employment, and finding effective alternatives to custody will be key over the next four years.

- **Protecting and safeguarding our children (from exploitation and county lines)** - too many children are born into violent and abusive households, into communities damaged by crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB) and into chaotic families affected by drugs and alcohol abuse. Vulnerable young people are at risk of being exploited by organised criminal networks to sell drugs through county lines and this is an issue that needs addressing. It is imperative that councils and partners get the basics of child protection and adolescent safeguarding right so that we can improve our performance on keeping London's children safe.

Key Actions

The key actions of this strategy are included in the action plan which focuses on:

- Prevention - The purpose of prevention is to reduce the flow of young people who become susceptible to serious youth violence and knife crime and to better safeguard young people from this. Although it is a challenge to assess the impact of prevention, it is important that we attempt to deglamourize the culture associated with serious youth violence as early as possible to either deter future involvement, or to identify those likely to engage in future criminal activity and violence and to provide targeted support and opportunities for diversion.
- Intervention- The purpose of both universal and targeted intervention is to deter and divert young people from carrying knives or thinking of carrying knives, or on the periphery of serious youth and group violence.
- Enforcement- Enforcement should be the last resort, when all attempts at intervention have proved ineffective. Suppression and enforcement should be used to deal criminally active young people who pose a risk of harm to others or themselves. Selecting an individual for enforcement, intensive monitoring and targeting by police and prosecutors should not be permanent or indefinite. The most successful enforcement would be that which influences the offender to stop carrying a weapon, stop offending, and take up offers of intervention.
- Intelligence and Information sharing- Multi-agency information sharing to ensure work around gangs, serious group violence and knife crime is appropriately targeted and as accurate as possible. It will also make sure the most suitable and appropriate responses are identified for individuals who are being risk managed.

2. Havering Data

The recent Havering Community Safety Partnership (HCSP) annual strategic assessment looked at crime from October 2017 to September 2018.

Serious youth violence accounted for 1.4% of all recorded crime in Havering during this period. Havering borough has the 10th highest rate of serious youth violence compared to the whole of London.

There has been a rise in people's perception of gun and knife crime in Havering. Data from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, shows that 20% of residents think that Gun and Knife Crime is a problem, this is an increase of 7% from the previous year.

In relation to Youth Offending Service data, over the three year period, (2015 to 2018) data shows 72 unique offenders linked with weapons reports. Including duplicate offenders there were 82 reports in total.

There has been an upward trend in weapons offences by young people of 78% over the three year period. The highest distribution of weapon offences was in the year 2016-17 when there were 39 offences with 32 offences in 2017-18, up from 11 in 2015-16 and then 2015-16.

A greater understanding of the reason for the spike is needed; efforts need to be made to clarify whether the increase relates to a greater number of youth carrying weapons or if there has been improvements in policing and intervention work which has resulted in a greater number of offences coming to light. The table below shows a breakdown of young people charged with carrying a weapon (not exclusive to knife carrying) in the period 2015-2018.

Breakdown of Weapon Offenders by Age 2015-2018							
Year	Age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17
2015-2016	0	1	0	0	2	5	3
2016-2017	0	3	7	6	6	8	9
2017-2018	1	2	2	1	10	9	7
Total	1	6	9	7	18	22	19

Table 1: Source- 2018 Annual Strategic Assessment Problem Profile

Youth Offending Service age data for weapons offenders over the last three years is consistent with the above, in that the age range of 15 – 17 contains the most number of offenders. The single most age of weapons offenders was 16. The level of offending rises as age rises which is in line with common trends as offenders reach adulthood. Since 2015-16 the offending at each age round has risen. 2016-17 saw a spike in the offending of ages 13 and 14, with 2017-18 seeing a rise in the latter ages 15, 16 and 17. The year 2017-18 was the first year that had an offender aged 11.

3. Havering Offer

The Local Authority, Metropolitan Police, Mayor's Office for Police and Crime, London Ambulance Service and voluntary organisations work together to commission and deliver preventative and enforcement opportunities across the borough. Some of the commissioned programmes already in place include the following.

Street Doctors – Doctors go into educational provisions, Youth Offending Teams, youth clubs and other settings to teach small groups emergency lifesaving first aid skills. Sessions specifically focus on teaching young people how to deal with bleeding out from knife wounds and gun shots. Aimed at young people up to the age of 25.

No Knives In Schools- Hard hitting and impactful half day workshop run in schools focusing on the dangers of carrying knives. The programme is run in collaboration between Police, London Ambulance Service and a local Knife Charity. The sessions are delivered to children in year 9 (aged 13 &14). It looks at the Law (Police), emergency services response and reality of the incidents (LAS) and they get a murdered victims family member to talk to the young people about the wider impact of knife crime.

Gangs Awareness Training –Training for frontline professionals across the partnership coming into contact with individuals who may be involved or at risk of being involved in gangs.

Mentoring Scheme – Havering Council have commissioned a targeted mentoring service to work with young people who are involved in or at risk of being involved in gang activity.

School Access To Search Wands – The Mayor of London has offered all schools across the capital a free option of knife wands to help discourage young people from carrying knives. All Havering secondary schools and colleges possess search wands.

Safer Schools Officers – Provide an opportunity for all schools to promote and develop a safe climate of learning for pupils and staff. All Secondary schools and colleges have a named Safer Schools Officer. The local authority is working with the Police to assign Safer Schools Officers in 'alternative provision' (see below).

Junior Citizens Programme - A personal safety awareness raising programme designed to help young children transitioning from primary to secondary school.

Youth Offending Service Intensive Weapons Programme – Targeted programme run for young people focussed on knife crime and the dangers, risks and consequences of carrying a knife.

Operation Sceptre - Weapon sweeps around the Borough. Targeting shopping areas, schools, parks and known crime hot spot areas. Large operations take place monthly and last for a whole week, however smaller checks are carried out daily by Police Officers.

Knife Amnesty Bin – Secure bin placed outside of Romford Police Station for residents to anonymously hand in knives.

Knife Arches Being Tested At Bars And Clubs - Identify and deter weapons from bars and clubs

Safe Haven Schemes - A number of key sites around the borough where young people at risk of harm can go to for immediate refuge and assisted to get home safely.

Sales Of Knives And Noxious Substances – London Borough of Havering and the Metropolitan Police are working closely with retailers to prevent the underage sale of knives and noxious substances.

Home Office Early Intervention fund – running for two years over 2018-2020, to deliver a blend of universal crime awareness to Year 6 (primary) and 7 (secondary) school children, to raise awareness of potential risks to their safety via crime, drugs and weapons. A 'crime prevention pathway' is in place to divert children in 'alternative provision' (outside mainstream school) away from potential crime.

Local authority Social Care response.

For those who come to the attention of Children's Social Care, we have established safeguarding referral pathways via a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This includes the processing of Merlin notifications from the police when children and young people are missing. We acknowledge that the risks to children and young people in danger of going missing, child sexual exploitation or involvement in gang-related activities are not consistently well recognised or responded to. As in many other places, safeguarding services have typically been designed around younger children and their families and so do not necessarily respond to the complex needs of adolescents who experience risks outside of the family and home contexts.

Havering is focussed on how we evaluate risk factors to children outside the familial home, such as from a wider safeguarding perspective including sexual exploitation, county lines, modern slavery and criminal exploitation. Good arrangements are in place to respond to children who are missing from home, school or care; children who are at risk of or who are being sexually exploited (CSE); and children who come to the attention of the criminal justice system, via the Youth Offending Service (YOS). The CSE, Serious Group Violence and Missing panels are well understood by the partnership and functioning well to respond to these issues.

The Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) panel holds a strategic overview of CSE and strategy meetings for individual children (as victims and perpetrators of knife crime) are routinely held to determine which projects or programmes are suitable to address the risks identified. However youth justice and policing systems tend to apply adult-based principles to adolescents who commit crime and can over-emphasise enforcement methods. Where this occurs, we do not perhaps take full account of the constrained circumstances and choices that our young people

face.

4. Next steps

From April 2019 we propose to implement an enhanced partnership strategy in Havering focussed on Adolescent Safeguarding. An integrated approach is required to tackle issues concerning adolescent risk which includes criminal exploitation, county lines and modern slavery. We will develop a bespoke, data-led and systemic approach to prediction, prevention, intervention and disruption to reduce risk to adolescents in the borough. Part of this approach will consider the training needs of the partnership as part of the work plan.

Partners need to better understand the contexts of adolescents' lives such as peer groups and social networks (including technology and social media). Our prediction, prevention, intervention and disruption requires further enhancements and in doing so we need to move away from harmful assumptions that adolescent young people make a 'lifestyle' choice to enter into criminality when in reality the choice is constrained.

In developing our revised offer for adolescent safeguarding we will focus on three main themes:

1. Prevention: a committed focus on an integrated approach to early intervention to prevent vulnerability from escalating to more serious forms of harm. This means identifying and working with younger children than perhaps at present. Early help is key to identifying and supporting families (not just children) who are identified as potentially at risk of future criminal exploitation and the borough's schools are key to successful identification.
2. Intervention: recognising the positive work relating to risk and intervention to date, especially around CSE, Missing and serious violence whilst we will build on current professional practice and use systemic therapy and restorative practice to better respond to this agenda. Interventions should be 'co-produced' with young people to ensure adolescents recognise and will positively engage with the intervention.
3. Disruption: a move away from attempting to manage an individual or a group of individuals, towards developing place-based interventions through schools, parks, shopping centres or other spaces where adolescents congregate. Together with robust offender management strategies we will continue to adopt the full range of disruption tactics available through both criminal and civil routes to protect children and adolescents (i.e. in relation to licensing).

The purpose is for a multi-disciplinary 'hub' arrangement to better identify and respond to adolescent safeguarding and meet needs of young people, sooner. Working together, between schools, the local authority and partners the above approach will take time and dedicated resource to fully implement.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

Implementing our ambition as laid out in this report will require realignment of local authority (and partner) resources, such as the development of a multi-disciplinary hub to better identify and respond to adolescent safeguarding, meeting needs of young people, sooner. The local authority has already submitted a number of bids to contribute, such as to the Home Office Early Intervention fund (successful) and the government's Troubled Families programme (awaiting an outcome). We unsuccessfully bid to the Mayor's fund in 2018 and intend to submit a bid to the Young Londoners fund when applications open later in 2019.

Funding for serious youth violence in Havering also comes from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) through the London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF). A new system has been introduced where boroughs receive a committed allocated amount of funding on a 2 yearly basis. £114,000 per year was allocated for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. A further funding announcement for the period 2019/2020 to 2021/2022 is expected to be agreed in February 2019.

Any costs associated with delivering the strategy will be funded from a mix of external grants and existing resources. The external grants are likely to be time restricted and there will be an expectation that activity funded by those grants can be scaled back or have delivered the specific objectives, ensuring no additional pressure or risk to the service budget on an ongoing basis.

Legal implications and risks:

The strategy forms part of the suite of strategies which comprise the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Strategy, which is part of the Policy Framework which must be approved by full Council and is required by section 6 Crime & Disorder Act 1998. There are no apparent legal implications arising directly from this report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are some HR implications in relation to the review and/or re-alignment of the teams to enable better collaborative working arrangements across Children services and external partners which may result in restructuring proposals and if applicable be managed under the council's Organisational Change process. Training for all partner staff should be arranged to raise awareness of the Council's revised offer. If specialist skills are required, the service should consider offering this training to existing staff, including this in the restructuring proposals, recruit externally or resource via the partnership arrangement. The service will also need to consider how the hub will be managed in terms of staffing and working hours in the proposals.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

Knife crime and other forms of criminality directly impact on community cohesion and the general sense of wellbeing. Therefore, our work on knife crime will be an integral component of our community cohesion agenda.

An EIA has also been completed in relation to knife crime (appendix 2).

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

- **Appendix- 1** Havering Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime Strategy 2018-2021- draft
- **Appendix- 2** Havering Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime EIA 2017-2021
- **Appendix- 3.** Havering Adolescent Safeguarding Strategy for Havering 2019- draft