

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES MEETING

15 June 2021

SUBJECT: Serious Violent Crime

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. This report provides an update on how West Yorkshire Police are responding to Serious Violent Crime.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Mayor uses this report to scrutinise West Yorkshire Police's response to serious violent crime.

POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

3. Serious Violent Crime is now featured within the refreshed Police and Crime Plan under Major Threats and serious violence. Organised crime, serious violence and the use of weapons, are often linked and we must all work to protect, educate and divert people away from these crime types. The Mayor will continue to oversee and support the response to major threats and serious violence provided by our regional teams, local partners and neighbourhood police teams in identifying and preventing major threats and serious violence within our communities.

KEY INFORMATION

4. 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 office has:
 - Reviewed the West Yorkshire Police response to Knife Crime with the Chief Constable
 - Being assigned to the Home Office Government Task Force on Serious Violent Crime
 - Supported weapons amnesties and WYP lead campaigns across the serious and violent crime arena.
 - Supported Programme Precision a Partnership response to Serious Violent Crime.
 - 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.

- Received £1,121,395 from the national Early Intervention Youth Fund. Specific projects were 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
- Worked with the Home Office to host a West Yorkshire Partnership Event involving partners who are working together to tackle Serious and Violent Crime
- Funded a 3rd Sector Coordinator to support voluntary sector Partners in all areas, including vulnerable young people, substance misuse and community support work.
- Supported the launch of Knife Crime Awareness and other national and local campaigns
- Attended the Serious Violence Youth Summit
- Held a serious violence event in conjunction with the Home Office which brought key partners together to help understand what the public health approach looks like in tackling serious violence. The event also publicised the #knifefree campaign which will be re-run over the summer.
- Received for 2021/22 a further £3.37m from the Home Office to deliver a Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) which covers the whole of West Yorkshire and aims to strengthen the response to serious violence across the county. The Unit now in its 3rd year is one of 18 VRU's which have been set up in a bid to tackle violent crime across the country – a detailed update is attached to the cover report.

PARTNERSHIP CONTRIBUTION

Early Intervention Youth Fund - The office 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.

Violence Reduction Unit - The Violence Reduction Unit take a multi-agency approach, bringing together police, local government, public health, voluntary and third sector, community leaders and other key partners to tackle violent crime and crucially to understand its underlying causes, the unit works closely with colleagues from the Policing and Crime Dept. particularly around interventions, engagement and commissioning.

The office supports the work of the South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium, which seeks to improve the transition between Wetherby Young Offenders Institute and Youth Justice Services and promotes initiatives around identity shift of those who have become involved in criminality at a young age. In addition, colleagues are working with WYP and the VRU to support staff within

Wetherby to improve searching of residents, with a view to fewer weapons being concealed and used.

Through the Local Criminal Justice Board WYP have been encouraged to revise its approach to tackling prison crime which regularly involves serious violence, and as a result, improvements are being made to the structure moving forward.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

With a diverse population distributed across urban and rural areas, understanding the needs of our communities can be complex. It is crucial that we are engaged with all our communities to understand their needs so we can serve them well. The health needs of people in the criminal justice system are increased by additional social needs and inequalities, unemployment, rough sleeping, lack of education, training and social isolation.

ATTACHMENT

- [Report of the Chief Constable - Serious Violent Crime](#)
- [West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit update report](#)