

Item No. N/a	Classification: Open	Date: 27 November 2018	Decision Taker: Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health
Report title:		Establishment of a Southwark Youth Violence Panel	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Communities	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the cabinet member for community safety and public health agree to establish a cross party member-led 'Youth Violence Panel' to lead and co-ordinate evidence gathering of the current status of youth violence and knife crime in Southwark and to use this evidence to inform the council's response to tackling youth violence and knife crime.
2. That the panel be formed and operate within the terms of references that are set out in appendix 1.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. Knife crime had been declining in London over the last years, but 2016/2017 marked an increase. For the last five years Southwark has had a higher level of knife crime than the London average. The number of offences of knife crime with injury and knife possession has also been above the capital's average. In the last rolling 12 month period Southwark has seen a decrease of over 15% in knife crime but the volumes still remain too high and the public remain rightly concerned about knife crime and carrying in the borough.
4. Serious youth violence is defined by the Metropolitan Police Service as any offence of most serious violence or weapon enabled crime, where the victim is aged 1-19' i.e. murder, manslaughter, rape, wounding with intent and causing grievous bodily harm. 'Youth violence' is defined in the same way, but also includes assault with injury offences.
5. Knife carrying by young people (10 to 24 years) is now more prevalent. While not all knife crime is gang related or committed by young people, young people remain disproportionately affected by knife crime.
6. Southwark Council recognises that youth violence and knife crime is a concern for many in our community and tackling it is the responsibility of everyone in society. Councillors have an important role as community leaders to bring the community together and communicate with residents about this important issue. Councillors are also often looked to by the community to provide reassurance and to ensure that the voices of those residents most affected by youth violence are front and centre in finding solutions.

7. Southwark Council are currently implementing a knife crime and serious violence action plan. This multi-agency action plan was developed using the following themes and included consultation with a broad range of stakeholders:
 - a. Governance – robust governance of the partnership and ensuring a system wide approach to the issues involving all key agencies.
 - b. Engagement, consultation and needs assessment – increasing understanding of violence and how to tackle these issues alongside communities. Targeting lawbreakers – enforcement and criminal justice response to knife crime.
 - c. Keeping deadly weapons off our streets – addressing the accessibility and availability of knives.
 - d. Protecting and educating young people – recognising the importance of prevention and working alongside schools. Standing with communities, neighbourhoods and families against knife crime. Supporting victims of knife crime - ensuring that improving support to victims is at the heart of a holistic response.
 - e. Offering ways out of crime - recognising that young people should be offered interventions which help them move away from criminality.
8. Councillors from throughout the borough and from both parties are rightly concerned by the impact on knife crime. While the council has a role in reducing knife crime, other partners and crucially communities across the borough also have an important role to play. All communities need to play their part and so all members as community leaders need to play their part. This is why this report recommends that a cross party panel is established to ensure that the broadest opinions are heard and shared solutions are found.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

9. This report proposes that cabinet member for community safety and public health establishes a youth violence panel to enable the council to investigate the local concerns and root causes of youth violence, particularly regarding knife crime, and to explore possible solutions. The panel will be informed of the local profiles of violence within the borough, particularly the hotspots of violent crime.
10. The panel will take evidence on current projects aimed at tackling youth violence, particularly community-led grassroots projects which have the potential to be scaled up in other areas of the borough. A key part of assessing youth violence in the borough would also include gathering information on the breadth of these projects.
11. The panel may hold evidence sessions to explore the scale, impact and underlying causes of youth violence in Southwark. It may take evidence from the police, community and voluntary sector groups, young people affected by and involved in youth violence, local businesses and employers, cultural, health and

education bodies as well as other interested parties to develop a detailed picture of the local drivers of youth violence in the borough.

12. As part of the council plan's commitments on knife crime and helping young people to stay away from knives, the panel will explore options developed by young people and the community for tackling youth violence.
13. To ensure a greater breadth of opinion, the panel will be made up of members from both party groups on the council, and the panel may co-opt young people to the panel, as well as seeking advice from others in the community directly impacted.
14. The panel is intended to make recommendations on improvements to the council's work in this area including as part of the implementation of the borough's knife crime and serious violence action plan. The panel's findings and any recommendations should be reported to the cabinet member and cabinet for consideration. It is anticipated that the panel will hold evidence sessions between December 2018 and May 2019.
15. The terms of reference for the panel are set out in appendix A.

Policy implications

16. The draft council plan was agreed by Cabinet in October 2018, and is due to go for final decision to Council Assembly in November 2018. The Council Plan sets out the council's ambition for Southwark to be a great place to live, with clean, green and safe communities. The council plan commits to "empower people, particularly young people, with the opportunities that they need to make positive choices and to stay away from crime and violence." It commits to "work with communities to find local solutions that help young people stay away from knives."
17. This panel is part of the council's work towards meeting this commitment and its findings will impact on future policy and will be identified when the findings are reported to cabinet for consideration.

Community impact statement

18. Youth violence and knife crime is an issue of national importance and particularly impactful locally. As a result, it is important that Southwark Council effectively understands the community impact and scopes potential solutions.

Equalities assessment

19. Knife carrying by young people (10 to 24 years) is now more prevalent. While not all knife crime is gang related or committed by young people, young people remain disproportionately affected by knife crime. To ensure that young people's voices are heard, the panel may co-opt young people to the panel as well as seeking advice from others in the community.
20. BME people are disproportionately affected by knife crime, and are therefore a valuable voice on the issue. It is crucial that BME people, and particularly young BME people, feel that the panel actively represents their views and voices.

21. Knife crime disproportionately affects men, and particularly young men. The panel will have a greater understanding of the impact of knife crime on the community if they are aware of this imbalance.
22. There is significant research regarding the impact of knife crime on those in socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The panel will ensure that the wider community, particularly socio-economically disadvantaged members, are fully engaged in the process.

Legal implications

23. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities when carrying out its functions to give due regard to the likely effect of its work on its functions and a need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent: crime and disorder, misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, and reoffending. This duty extends to the work of the panel.

Financial implications

24. There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report as the staff resources required will be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Proposed Membership and Terms of Reference of the Southwark Youth Violence Panel

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities		
Report Author	Emma Moseley, Policy and Public Affairs Officer		
Version	Final		
Dated	23 November 2018		
Key Decision?	Yes		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES /			
CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included	
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No	
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No	
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	26 November 2018		

SOUTHWARK YOUTH VIOLENCE PANEL

Membership and Terms of Reference

Summary

The panel shall be known as the "Southwark Youth Violence Panel". It is a time limited, task focussed group, established to lead and co-ordinate evidence gathering from local stakeholders and responsible public sector organisations, to build a picture of the current status of youth violence and knife crime in Southwark and use this evidence to inform the council's response to tackling youth violence and knife crime. The panel is not a formal committee or a decision making body. The panel will report its findings and make recommendations to the relevant cabinet member / cabinet to inform the council's policy and work around knife crime.

Membership

1. The group shall be a cross party panel. The cabinet member for community safety and public health will chair the panel. In addition there will be four nominations from the majority group and two nominations from the opposition group. The panel may co-opt up to two young people in addition to the permanent members.
2. The panel may, as it sees fit, invite other members, representatives from partner organisations, public and private and third sector bodies to part take in the work of the group where necessary and relevant.

Terms of Reference

3. To lead and co-ordinate evidence gathering from local stakeholders and responsible public sector organisations.
4. To build a picture of the current status of youth violence and knife crime in Southwark.
5. To use this evidence to inform the council's response to tackling youth violence and knife crime.
6. The panel will identify and agree specific issues to consider in their first meeting.
7. The panel will agree a final report back to the cabinet / cabinet member for community safety and public health including any recommendations by the end of the 2018/19 municipal year.
8. Following the final report back , the panel shall come to an end.

Meetings of the Panel

9. Meetings shall take place on such dates as agreed by the chair.
10. The ordinary place of meetings of the panel shall be Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH unless otherwise specified.
11. In the absence of the chair, the meeting will elect a person to chair the meeting.
12. Any member of the council who is not a member of the youth crime panel may attend the meetings of the panel, but he/she shall not take part in the consideration or discussion of any business, save by leave of the chair.
13. Meetings of the panel will be held in public.
14. Relevant officers will provide all the necessary support to enable the work of the panel.