

<b>Item No.</b> 30.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 24 March 2020	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Community Harm & Exploitation Reduction Plan 2020/2021	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>		Councillor Evelyn Akoto, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health	

## **FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR EVELYN AKOTO, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

In Southwark we are seriously committed to doing everything possible to tackle knife crime and serious violence, working alongside the community and our young people all of whom are blighted continually by this intolerable behaviour. I convened a cross party panel on serious youth violence to ensure we were focused on tackling the root causes and also in recognition that knife crime is just one symptom which must be seen within a wider framework of community harm and exploitation. This against a background of poverty, widening inequality and a lack of alternative opportunities for young people.

The Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan is a comprehensive action plan that brings together the recommendations of the Cross Party Panel on Serious Youth Violence, the Southwark Extended Learning Review carried out by the Violence & Vulnerability Unit and the Southwark Youth Violence JSNA into a single plan of action and delivery. The plan has been created by all of the partners (council, police, health, voluntary sector and others) and by officers from department's right across the council including Childrens & Adults Services. This has been done to ensure that it adds value to and fills gaps in existing services and initiatives and does not duplicate any existing service.

A central part of the plan is the creation of a Community Harm and Exploitation Hub, a multi agency team that incorporates and builds upon the existing Southwark Anti Violence Unit (SAVU) team. It will hold casework and provide comprehensive and bespoke support to individuals and their families who are vulnerable to being exploited and getting involved in gangs, county lines, the drugs market, violence, human trafficking, modern slavery and other forms of exploitation.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. To approve a Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan that incorporates the recommendations from the Cross Political Party Panel on Serious Youth Violence and Southwark Extended Learning Review on Violence and Vulnerability.
2. To note that the Action Plan includes the mandatory areas as currently set out for all London Boroughs by the Mayor's London Violence Reduction Unit (LVRU), and the recommendations already agreed by Cabinet to adopt the public health approach to serious youth violence prevention.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. A new Council Plan for 2018-2022 was agreed by cabinet in June 2018. It includes a Safer Community as a key commitment. The plan highlights that everyone has the right to feel safe and be safe.
4. Serious youth violence is a key focus for Southwark Council and we all have a role to play in making young people and the community feel safer. Serious Violence and Knife Crime is a national problem and almost every area of London has been touched by its devastating effects.
5. Knife crime had been declining in London over the last few years, but 2016/2017 marked an increase. For the last five years Southwark has had higher level of knife crime than the London average. The number of offences of knife crime with injury and knife possession have also been above the capital's average. Despite this volume, over the last 12 months the borough has seen a continuing decrease in the number of knife crime offences.
6. 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.
7. Southwark Council along with its partners is currently implementing a knife crime and serious violence action plan. This multi-agency action plan, developed through consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, includes the following themes:
  - 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.
  - c. Targeting lawbreakers – enforcement and criminal justice response to knife crime.
  - d. Keeping deadly weapons off our streets – addressing the accessibility and availability of knives.
  - e. Protecting and educating young people – recognising the importance of prevention and working alongside schools. Standing with communities, neighbourhoods and families against knife crime.
  - f. Supporting victims of knife crime – ensuring that improving support to victims is at the heart of a holistic response.
  - g. Offering ways out of crime – recognising that young people should be offered interventions which help them move away from criminality.
8. Included within the delivery of the plan was a review of our local approach to knife crime and serious youth violence, to ensure that we were doing all that is

possible to address the causes. The report of the Cross Political Party Panel on Serious Youth Violence produced 18 recommendations, which were subsequently agreed at Cabinet in July 2019. These recommendations covered key thematic areas including:

- a. Early Years & Education
  - b. Mental Health & Public Health Approach
  - c. Role Models and Parents/Carers
  - d. Criminal Justice & Police
  - e. Youth and Community Services
9. The panel heard evidence from professionals, those with lived experience and those most affected by serious youth violence, particularly young people and communities. The report recommendations strengthen the work already being undertaken on Knife Crime and Serious Violence. Officers were instructed to report back to Cabinet with a more detailed delivery plan for these areas.
10. Further to the work of the Cross Party Panel, the Southwark Children's Safeguarding Board Executive commissioned the Southwark Extended Learning Review in January 2019 to look at our local response to violence and vulnerability. This review was undertaken to look more widely across the partnership landscape at community harm and exploitation, including criminal exploitation, gangs, and drugs markets as a driver of violence. The review was carried out by an Independent Peer Review Team from the Violence and Vulnerability Unit.
11. The review and its 15 recommendations outlined the rationale for Southwark to take a more joined-up approach to Community Harm & Exploitation, including the embedding of our response to knife crime within this. This work compliments the work of the cross party panel and includes three areas of particular focus: Governance and understanding the problem, Schools, Parents, Prevention, and Safeguarding and Enforcement.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

12. The Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan is a comprehensive action plan that brings together the recommendations of the Cross Party Panel on Serious Youth Violence, the Southwark Extended Learning Review carried out by the Violence & Vulnerability Unit and the Southwark Youth Violence JSNA into a single plan of action and delivery.
13. The plan has been created by all of the partners (council, police, health, voluntary sector and others) and by officers from department's right across the council including Childrens & Adults Services. This has been done to ensure that it adds value to and fills gaps in existing services and initiatives and does not duplicate any existing service.
14. There is currently no one place that has the expertise to offer impartial and confidential information, advice, guidance and support to those experiencing community harm and exploitation.
15. The key themes included in this plan are:
- a. Governance and approach
  - b. Understanding the root causes

- c. Transforming lives
- d. Targeting lawbreakers

Where relevant, the plan acknowledges the work already underway in some of these areas, and sets out the intention to strengthen the approach wherever necessary. It is widely accepted that this area is complex, multi-faceted, and involves a wide range of organisations, stakeholders and the community. A summary of the key areas of the plan are outlined in Diagram 1.

16. There is a national government programme to develop Regional Violence Reduction Units (VRUs), utilising the Public Health approach to violence. This promotes violence being recognised as a health issue underpinned by a multi agency approach. The London Violence Reduction Unit, (LVRU) hosted by the London Mayor undertakes this regional function working closely with London boroughs. Southwark works closely with the LVRU and for the first time funding has been made available to the borough to support its work on reducing and addressing violence, namely through strengthening the approach to contextual safeguarding (responding to peoples experiences of significant harm and exploitation beyond their families).
17. Every London borough is required by The London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) within the London Mayors Office to have a proactive plan for tackling knife crime and serious youth violence. Our Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan extended this remit to include wider contextual safeguarding issues. Our Southwark plan sets out what all partners, council departments, police, health, schools and others are doing to tackle the immediate threat and divert young people away from a life impacted by crime. The plan sets out how we will support and work with our communities in standing up against exploitation, knife crime, violence and community harm. The Community Harm and Exploitation Hub that is being created as part of this plan will be the Southwark VRU and the London VRU has supported the wider approach that we are taking including through funding.
18. All London Boroughs are required by the London Violence Reduction Unit (within the Mayor's Office) to have a Knife Crime and Serious Violence Plan which includes several mandatory outcomes. These plans are set to change over the coming months, with the requirement for all boroughs to have wider Violence Reduction Plans. Officers have been working closely with the LVRU to ensure that this Community Harm & Exploitation Reduction Plan will align appropriately with these future proposals. It will replace the current Knife Crime and Serious Violence Plan.
19. In October, Cabinet agreed to adopt the public-health approach to serious youth violence prevention and the recommendations set out in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on Serious Youth Violence. These have also been included within the Community Harm & Exploitation Reduction Plan.
20. Governance of the work that the council delivers in this area in partnership with other agencies is the responsibility of the Southwark Safeguarding Adults Board, which incorporates the role of the statutory crime and disorder partnership. The work of the partnership brings together the work on enforcement, the longer term public-health approach and a range of targeted and effective interventions that address the immediate issue.

21. In line with the Extended Learning Review recommendations, a newly created Community Harm and Exploitation Board will oversee the delivery of this plan, reporting directly to both the Southwark Children's Safeguarding Board Executive and the Southwark Adults Safeguarding Board.
22. A central part of the plan is the creation of a Community Harm and Exploitation Hub. The Hub is a multiagency team that incorporates and builds upon the existing Southwark Anti Violence Unit (SAVU) team. It will hold casework and provide comprehensive and bespoke support to individuals and their families who are vulnerable to being exploited and getting involved in gangs, county lines, the drugs market, violence, human trafficking, modern slavery and other forms of exploitation.
23. The hub is being developed in a staged way to ensure due diligence and interconnectivity with all other existing services. Its development has already attracted national, regional and local interest. In the first stage (March to August) it will focus on individuals identified through the data analysis exercise outlined below. In many cases these are individuals who are not currently being supported by any statutory agency yet there is significant evidence of vulnerability and exploitation.
24. The Hub will also develop information, advice and guidance for parents/carers and communities in its first stage. In subsequent stages and subject to resources it will be aligned with and take referrals from the MASH and Parents and Carers of young people who do not meet current statutory thresholds. It will work in close partnership with Early Help, the Youth Offending Service, National Probation Service, Police and others to complement delivery.
25. The Hub is a programme comprising of professionals across various disciplines and partners coming together to form a single team. They include police, probation, community safety, housing, youth offending services, children services, victim support, Together, Department of Work and Pensions, (DWP), St Giles and Southwark Works. We are building upon the existing SAVU delivery model which uses a case management approach as detailed below. This is a bespoke multi-agency approach which is based on reducing vulnerability.

The Offer for young people (16-25):

- An allocated key worker
- Risk assessment and safety plan to exit the negative lifestyle they are involved with
- Advocacy to assist with identifying and or identified issues
- Mental health support, trauma, drugs and alcohol support including assessments
- Assistance with benefits and employment from DWP
- Additional access to advice for employment, education and training careers service
- Intensive mentoring, counselling
- A & E triage service at Kings Hospital by Red Thread
- Provision of emergency rehousing and relocation through housing utilising the SERVE programme for high risk cases delivered by SHIAN Housing
- GP registration (if required)

- Breaking the Cycle – the Hub will include existing resettlement work undertaken in prisons, through YOT and Probation case workers, (transitional phase)
- Diversionary activities where required for physical health and self esteem to build emotional resilience

The Offer for the family:

- Working in partnership with existing services around the family
- Diversionary interventions for younger siblings in a family setting
- Benefits and employment support for adult family members
- Access to support for those affected by adverse experiences, (e.g. domestic abuse, trauma support).

The Professional Offer:

- Multi-agency training to raise awareness of contextual safeguarding and linked subjects such as trauma informed practice and County Lines
- Annual conference with partners and stakeholders to share learning from the CHEH
- Mobilising the community – the team will include existing voluntary provision such as mentors and resettlement workers where there is evidence of promising practice. It will also include community workers who the team have identified and developed.

26. In Stage 1 of its development (March to August 2020) the Hub will focus on working with:
- SAVU and their families caseload aged 16-25 - SAVU provides support for individuals aged 16 to 25 at risk from gang related activity or serious violence. They offer a range of interventions and clients are offered support in areas including education and training, substance misuse, finance and health.
  - Rescue and Response and their families caseload (county lines) 18 plus - Rescue and Response is a programme funded by MOPAC to provide support to young people exploited by county lines. It's delivered by St Giles Trust, Abianda and Safer London. It's available to all London Boroughs although subject to resources.
  - Referrals (specialists advice and guidance for parents/carers/community)
  - One control group of care leavers 18-25 to support care services – the local offer for care leavers provides support for eligible care leavers with issues like employment, training education, managing finances, mental and physical health. The Hub will supplement this offer with expertise and support targeted at those who may be vulnerable to community harm and exploitation.
27. Due to the constantly changing nature of this area of work the future stages of this development will be informed by learning and data analytics along with insight gained from professionals, young people and parents directly affected by community harm and exploitation.
28. Work is underway across council departments and partner organisations looking at adults over the age of 25 who are vulnerable and impacted by community harm and exploitation. This includes the cohort considered at the Southwark Community MARAC, (Multi Agency Referral & Assessment Conference) and those cuckooed. Cuckooing is a practice where people take over a person's

home and use the property to facilitate exploitation. It takes the name from cuckoos who take over the nests of other birds.

There are different types of cuckooing:

- Using the property to deal, store or take drugs
- Using the property for sex work
- Taking over the property as a place for them to live
- Taking over the property to financially abuse the tenant

The most common form of cuckooing is where drug dealers take over a person's home and use it to store or distribute drugs.

### **Policy implications**

29. 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". This work is already underway through the Positive Futures Fund in place to support groups which provide inspiring opportunities for young people and the community.
30. The Community Harm & Exploitation Reduction Plan is the council and wider partnerships' work towards meeting this commitment, and its delivery will impact on future policy.

### **Community impact statement**

31. Community Harm and Exploitation 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 works with community organisations and local communities to develop and deliver potential solutions. This is a key thread of the plan and its related work programmes.

### **Resource implications**

32. Resources to deliver the plan will be met through existing budgets and resources. Southwark has been awarded as a Tier 1 borough by the LVRU an additional financial uplift of £400,000 for wider violence reduction programmes until March 2021. The use of this is already underway supporting the delivery of the Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan.

### **Legal implications**

33. 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 and do all that it reasonably can to prevent: crime and disorder, misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, and reoffending. In July 2019, a further amendment to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 included within it a new legal duty to support a multi-agency approach preventing and tackling serious violence.

### **Consultation**

34. A range of consultation has been undertaken with communities and stakeholders in this area. Through the cross party panel, the wide range of evidence delivered by

professionals, young people and stakeholders have been used to inform recommendations. Consultation and engagement is key focus of the plan, along with young people being central to future development, delivery and commissioning of services.

## SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

### Director of Law and Democracy

35. The recommendations of this report are consistent with the Council's relevant statutory obligations in relation to this aspect of community safety, which are confirmed as set out in paragraph 33. There are no other legal implications arising at this time.

### Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (FC19/041)

36. The Strategic Director of Finance and Governance notes the recommendations of the report to approve a Community Harm and Exploitation Reduction Plan. A key element of the plan is the creation of a Community Harm and Reduction Hub which incorporates and builds upon the existing Southwark Anti Violence Unit.
37. The report notes that the plan will be delivered within existing budgets and resources although supported by a £400,000 grant from the London Violence Reduction Unit over a two year period ending in March 2021.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark Cross Political Party Panel on Serious	Housing & Modernisation 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Stephen Douglass 020 7525 0886
<a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s83894/Report%20Southwark%20Serious%20Youth%20Violence%20Panel.pdf">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s83894/Report%20Southwark%20Serious%20Youth%20Violence%20Panel.pdf</a>		
Southwark Extended Learning Review on Violence & Vulnerability.	Housing & Modernisation 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Stephen Douglass 020 7525 0886
<a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s82118/Southwark%20Extended%20Learning%20Review.pdf">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s82118/Southwark%20Extended%20Learning%20Review.pdf</a>		
The Southwark Public Health Approach to Serious Youth Violence Prevention	Public Health 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Kirsten Watters 020 7525 7758
<a href="http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s85367/Appendix%20Southwark%20Public%20Health%20Approach%20to%20Serious%20Youth%20Violence.pdf">http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s85367/Appendix%20Southwark%20Public%20Health%20Approach%20to%20Serious%20Youth%20Violence.pdf</a>		
Council Plan 2018-2022	Housing & Modernisation 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Stephen Douglass 020 7525 0886
<a href="http://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/fairer-future/council-plan">http://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/fairer-future/council-plan</a>		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
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Appendix 1	Community Harm & Exploitation Reduction Plan
Appendix 2	Diagram 1: Plan Summary

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Evelyn Akoto, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Michael Scorer, Strategic Director of Housing & Modernisation	
<b>Report Author</b>	Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities Caroline Thwaites, Assistant Director of Community Safety & Partnerships	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	11/03/2020	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
List other officers here		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	23 March 2020	