

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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George Candler
Chief Executive

If you need any advice or information regarding this agenda please phone Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager, telephone 01604 837408 (direct dial), email ttiff@northampton.gov.uk who will be able to assist with your enquiry. For further information regarding **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** please visit the website www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny

Members of the Committee

Chair	Councillor Jamie Lane
Deputy-Chair	Councillor Graham Walker
Committee Members	Councillor Tony Ansell Councillor Rufia Ashraf Councillor Mohammed Azizur Rahman (Aziz) Councillor Janice Duffy Councillor Gareth Eales Councillor Penelope Flavell Councillor Andrew Kilbride Councillor Samuel Kilby-Shaw Councillor Dennis Meredith Councillor Nilesh Ramesh Parekh Councillor Emma Roberts Councillor Cathrine Russell Councillor Zoe Smith

Calendar of meetings

Date	Room
11 January 2021 6:00 pm	All meetings to be held in the Jeffery Room at the Guildhall unless otherwise stated

Northampton Borough Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

Item No and Time	Title	Pages	Action required
1	Apologies		Members to note any apologies and substitution
2	Minutes	1 - 4	Members to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020.
3	Deputations/Public Addresses		<p>The Chair to note public address requests.</p> <p>The public can speak on any agenda item for a maximum of three minutes per speaker per item. You are not required to register your intention to speak in advance but should complete a Public Address Protocol and notify the Democratic and Member Services Manager of your intention to speak.</p>
4	Declarations of Interest (Including Whipping)		Members to state any interests.
5	Monitoring of accepted recommendations contained within Overview and Scrutiny reports		
5 (a)	Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)		(Copy to follow)
6	Performance Monitoring Report	5 - 12	Members to review the Performance Monitoring Report for future Performance Management Scrutiny.
7	Scrutiny Panels		The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive the final reports from Scrutiny Panel 1 – Food Poverty and the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group – Gangs and Knife Crime.
7 (a)	Scrutiny Panel 1 - Food Poverty	13 - 97	
7 (b)	Overview and Scrutiny Working Group - Gangs and Knife Crime	99 - 186	
8	Potential future pre		The Overview and Scrutiny

Northampton Borough Overview & Scrutiny Committee

	decision scrutiny		Committee to consider any potential issues for future pre decision scrutiny.
9	Urgent Items		This issue is for business that by reasons of the special circumstances to be specified, the Chair is of the opinion is of sufficient urgency to consider. Members or Officers that wish to raise urgent items are to inform the Chair in advance.

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NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 7 September 2020

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillor Lane (Chair), Councillor Walker (Deputy Chair);
Councillors Ansell, Aziz, Duffy, G Eales, Flavell, Kilbride, Kilby-Shaw,
Roberts, Russell and Smith

Councillor James Hill	Assistant Cabinet Member for Planning
Marion Goodman	Interim Assistant Chief Executive
Peter Baguley	Interim Assistant Chief Executive
Tracy Tiff	Democratic and Member Services Manager

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashraf and Meredith.

2. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)

Councillor Smith declared an interest in agenda item 7(c) as a Board member of NPH.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2020 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

5. MONITORING OF ACCEPTED RECOMMENDATIONS

6. DEMENTIA FRIENDLY TOWN

Marion Goodman, Interim Assistant Chief Executive, presented the action plan – Dementia Friendly Town and highlighted the salient points.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- The consultation process in accordance with the study undertaken by the University of Northampton and Urban Splash is underway. It was confirmed that a copy of the consultation would be shared with the Committee. Following the consultation, the business case would be produced.

Marion Goodman was thanked for producing the update and it was requested that a further update be presented to the January 2021 meeting of the Committee.

AGREED: That the update is noted and a further update be presented to the January 2021 meeting of the Committee.

7. CULTURE AND TOURISM

Marion Goodman, Interim Assistant Chief Executive, presented the action plan – Culture and Tourism and highlighted the salient points.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- The majority of the actions progressing, however, the green badge has not progressed but this will be taken forward as part of the Unitary plans
- It will not be possible to hold Heritage Weekend this year but a virtual tour will be arranged

Marion Goodman was thanked for producing the update and it was requested that a further update be presented to the January 2021 meeting of the Committee.

AGREED: That the update is noted and a further update be presented to the January 2021 meeting of the Committee.

8. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY

Peter Baguley, Interim Assistant Chief Executive, presented the briefing note detailing information regarding:

- % of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks or agreed extension
- % of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed extension

The salient points were highlighted.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- Both large scale and small scale major applications have a determination period of 13 weeks, unless an Environmental Statement is submitted with the application, then the determination period will be 16 weeks. The government acknowledges that most major applications can be complex and there could be many related technical issues to be resolved to make development acceptable.
- 98.7% performance for minor applications in 2019/20 and 100% in 2018/19.
- Development Management have achieved 100% performance for major applications, with extensions of time, for major applications in both of the time periods.

Peter Baguley was thanked for his informative briefing note.

AGREED: That the information is noted.

9. SCRUTINY PANELS

10. SCRUTINY PANEL 1

In the absence of the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Russell advised that the work of the Panel is coming to a conclusion. There had been good attendance and a wealth of evidence received. It is possible that further evidence could be appended to the final report.

It is expected that the final report will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its November 2020 meeting for approval.

AGREED: That the update is noted.

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY GANGS AND KNIFE CRIME WORKING GROUP

Councillor Walker, Chair of the Scrutiny Working Group, advised that the work of the Working Group is coming to a conclusion. The Working Group had received a lot of evidence both from desktop research and from expert advisors.

It is expected that the final report will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its November 2020 meeting for approval.

AGREED: That the update is noted.

12. PRE DECISION SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP - TRIAL OF BUY BACK OF PROPERTIES

Councillor Roberts, Chair of the Scrutiny Working Group, advised that the Working Group had concluded its work and had received a very comprehensive report from the Director of Housing and Wellbeing. She emphasised the need for further Scrutiny of this issue.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

The need for social rent, rather than affordable rent, for the 30 additional properties was emphasised

It must be ensured that further, regular Scrutiny of this issue takes place. The Chair advised that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing would provide regular updates to the Committee.

The Committee queried the impact of evictions from both private tenancies and temporary accommodation and asked that an update is provided to the next meeting of the Committee and details of how many evictions there have been and details of the process is also provided.

AGREED: 1) That the update is noted.
2) That regular updates are presented to the Committee.
3) That the Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing attends the next meeting of this Committee and provides an update is provided to the next

meeting of the Committee including details of how many evictions there have been and details of the process.

13. POTENTIAL FUTURE PRE DECISION SCRUTINY.

There were none.

14. URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 6:35 pm

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

ACTION PLAN: SCRUTINY PANEL - Child Sexual Exploitation

Recommendations from Scrutiny Panel (Child Sexual Exploitation) completed in April 2017

Proposed dates for monitoring implementation of accepted recommendations

51

Report received by Cabinet	Response received by Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Monitoring activity	Monitoring complete
June 2017	October 2018	July 2020	November 2020

RECOMMENDATION 1: Northampton Borough Council establishes its own CSE Officer Group (to direct and co-ordinate all of the action the Council takes to detect, prevent and reduce child sexual exploitation).

Action	Implementation/ responsibility by:	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a CSE Officer Group 	Head of Housing and Wellbeing	To be achieved within existing resources.	October 2018	COMPLETED - CSE Officer Group (comprising representatives from Private Sector Housing, Homelessness, Community Safety, Taxi Licensing, Neighbourhood Wardens, Environmental Protection, CCTV and Northampton Partnership Homes) has been established.
9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a comprehensive action plan for tackling CSE in the borough 	Head of Housing and Wellbeing and CSE Officer Group	To be achieved within existing resources	August 2020 until March 2021	COMPLETED – At its meeting in August 2020, the CSE Officer Group agreed the action that will be taken before ‘vesting day’ on 31 March 2021. The various council services (housing, community safety, CCTV, taxi licensing, food safety, NPH, etc) have continued to tackle CSE in the course of their day-to-day work and their partnership working with other services and organisations.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Northampton Borough Council and Northampton Partnership Homes undertake a systematic review of all public spaces within their control to ensure that those spaces are made as safe as possible.

Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NBC and NPH to review and risk assess all public spaces within their control 	Head of Housing and Wellbeing	To be achieved within existing resources	December 2019	COMPLETED – Working closely with Northampton’s Community Safety Partnership, the RISE Team, the Council and NPH, Northamptonshire Police have developed an intelligence-led, risk-based approach to the monitoring of public spaces. This ensures that resources are used flexibly and effectively to detect and prevent CSE in the borough.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Officers of Northampton Borough Council meet with the Service Manager of the RISE Team on a quarterly basis to plan a programme of joint operations in Northampton in order to detect, prevent and raise awareness of CSE.

Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly meetings take place between NBC Officers and the Service Manager of the RISE Team 	Head of Housing and Wellbeing Community Safety & Engagement Manager Environmental Health & Licensing Manager	To be achieved within existing resources	Ongoing	COMPLETED – NBC Officers have continued to meet with members of the RISE Team (to plan joint operations and share information) as and when required. Regular quarterly meetings have not been deemed necessary.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Officers of Northampton Borough Council work with Northamptonshire County Council's E-Safety Officer and the RISE Team to explore ways in which the Borough Council's website can be used to promote safe internet use by children and young people, and to publicise the services and information portals where young people can receive information and support.

Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NBC Officers to meet with NCC's E-Safety Officer and the RISE Team • Explore ways in which NBC's website can promote safe internet use, etc 	<p>Head of Housing and Wellbeing NBC Web Developer</p> <p>Head of Housing and Wellbeing NBC Web Developer</p>	<p>To be achieved within existing resources</p> <p>To be achieved within existing resources</p>	<p>August 2020</p> <p>September 2020</p>	<p>COMPLETED – This workstream was originally deferred until NBC completed the development and implementation of its website. A meeting (originally scheduled for April 2020 but delayed due to COVID-19) took place in August 2020.</p> <p>COMPLETED – NBC's website has now been updated to include advice and signpost children, young people and parents to local services and organisations that offer help, advice, information and support. This additional content was agreed in a meeting with the E-Safety Officer.</p> <p>E-safety training will be included in the Members' 'Spotting the signs' training (on Safeguarding & CSE) that is being provided in November 2020.</p>

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RECOMMENDATION 5: Northampton Borough Council recommends to Northamptonshire County Council’s Director of Children’s Services that healthy relationships and sex education are included within the school curriculum.

Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation that healthy relationships and sex education are included within school curriculum 	Head of Housing and Wellbeing	To be achieved within existing resources	September 2018	COMPLETED.

6

RECOMMENDATION 6: All Members of Northampton Borough Council are issued with a copy of the LGA toolkit, “Tackling CSE – A resource pack for Councillors” and the NSPCC’s “Solution Focused Practice Toolkit – Helping Professionals use the approach when dealing with children and young people”.

Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of the LGA Toolkit and NSPCC Toolkit to be issues to all Members 	Head of Housing and Wellbeing CSE Officer Group	To be achieved within existing resources	August 2020	COMPLETED – Hyperlinks to these documents sent to all Members, along with details of the ‘ Spotting the signs ’ training (on Safeguarding and CSE) which is being provided for Members in November 2020.

RECOMMENDATION 7: All Members of Northampton Borough Council should take positive steps (as Ward Councillors and School Governors) to persuade the all the borough's secondary and academies to show the short video, "Kayleigh's Love Story" to their students.

Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Members should be provided with details of the video and encouraged secondary schools and academies to show it to their students 	Head of Housing and Wellbeing CSE Officer Group	To be achieved within existing resources	August 2020	COMPLETED – Details of the film sent to all Members, along with the LGA and NSPCC toolkits (see Recommendation 6) and details of the ' Spotting the signs ' training (on Safeguarding and CSE) which is being provided for Members in November 2020.

RECOMMENDATION 8: All Officers and Members of Northampton Borough Council receive training on how to recognise the signs of CSE and how they should report it.

Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and refresher training will be provided for all Officers and Members 	Head of Housing and Wellbeing	To be achieved within existing resources	Ongoing	PARTIALLY COMPLETED - Online and face-to-face training is to be promoted as part of a wider programme of safeguarding training that will support the implementation of the Council's Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults.

				<p>On 18 & 25 November 2020, a series of 'Spotting the signs' training sessions (on Safeguarding and CSE) will be provided for Members and Officers.</p> <p>Full details of the free online training that is available (on Safeguarding, CSE and E-Safety) will be available to Members and Officers.</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATION 9: The Chief Executive of Northampton Partnership Homes is asked to ensure that all of its Officers and relevant Board Members receive training on how to recognise the signs of CSE and how they should report it.</p>				
Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPH to confirm that all of its Officers and relevant Board Members receive training on how to recognise the signs of CSE and how they should report it 	Head of Housing and Wellbeing	To be achieved within existing resources	October 2018	COMPLETED – NPH has confirmed that all of its Officers receive training on safeguarding, which includes recognising the signs of CSE and how they should report it. Board Members have not received any CSE training.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Relevant Officers and Members of Northampton Borough Council undertake online training for practitioners on national best practice.				
Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the most appropriate way for Officers and Members to access, and learn from, national best practice • Identify the relevant Officers and Members • Organise the online training 	CSE Officer Group	To be achieved within existing resources	October 2020	<p>PARTIALLY COMPLETED – A programme of online training for Members and Officers is being developed as part of a wider programme of safeguarding training that will support the implementation of the Council’s Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults.</p> <p>Details of the online training will be shared with the relevant Members and Officers after the ‘Spotting the signs’ training (on Safeguarding and CSE) has taken place in November 2020.</p>
RECOMMENDATION 11: Northampton Borough Council actively encourages and hosts a series of briefings and training sessions for community groups in the borough (including community centres and youth groups), in order to raise awareness of how to recognise the signs of CSE and how to report it.				
Action	Implementation/ responsibility by	Resources required/available	Target date	Achievement/Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with the local community centres and youth groups • Arrange briefings and training if there is a demand 	<p>Head of Housing and Wellbeing</p> <p>Community Safety and Engagement Manager</p>	To be achieved within existing resources	March 2020	<p>COMPLETED – A significant amount of work has been undertaken by the Council’s Community Safety Engagement Team and its partners to raise awareness (in schools and youth groups) on how to recognise the signs of CSE and how to report it.</p>

Corporate Performance

All Measures Report

Q1 - 2020-2021 - June 2020

NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Introduction

The report details the full list of performance measures monitoring the Council's Corporate Plan by corporate priority and is published quarterly.

The measures contained within this report are monitored on a monthly, quarterly, half yearly or four monthly basis.

Performance is reported against the latest report period and then by overall performance year to date (YTD). Overall YTD performance is monitored against the current profiled target and helps us to keep track of the progress towards meeting the annual target.

Performance comparison against the same time last year is highlighted where comparative data is available.

Report Key:

-  Exceptional or over performance
-  On or exceeding target
-  Within agreed tolerances
-  Outside agreed target tolerance
-  Good to be low: Better
-  Good to be low: Worse
-  Good to be High: Better
-  Good to be High: Worse
-  No change
-  No data or target available
-  No data available
-  No target available

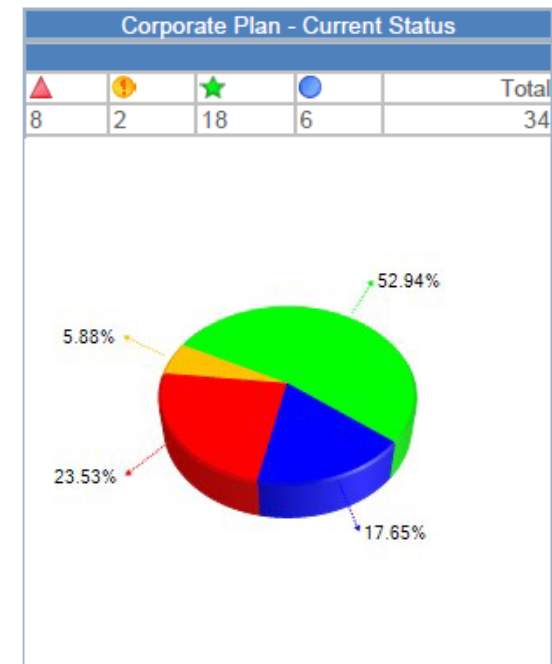
Northampton Borough Council Corporate Plan 2019 – 2021



15

Ambitious | Prosperous | Proud

- **A stronger economy**
 - Shaping place and driving growth
 - Creating a thriving vibrant town
 - A clean, green and tidy town
- **Resilient communities**
 - Keeping the town and people safe
 - Empowering local people
 - More homes, better homes
- **Exceptional services to be proud of**
 - Putting the customer first
 - Spending your money wisely
 - Improving your governance



Monthly Measures

Measure ID & Name	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Overall perf. to date	YTD	Current Profiled Target	Outturn Target	Polarity	Perf. vs. same time last year	YTD value same time last year
+ AST05a External rental income demanded against budgeted income (M)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	Bigger is Better		100.00%
We continue to demand external rental income against budgeted income as we have done throughout the year. The team have relocated to home working as far as possible during the lockdown period.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ AST05b % commercial rent demanded within the last 12 months (more than 2 months in arrears) (M)	?	?	?	?	?	?	100.00%	100.00%	Smaller is Better	?	?
Due to COVID19 the debt has increased but it is still being reviewed with the proportion of debt not yet certain.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ BV008 Local invoices paid within 10 days (M)	83.29	66.11	81.51	72.51	72.51	72.51	80.00	80.00	Bigger is Better		80.86
The number of invoices paid within 10 days has slipped significantly during the first quarter. As staff were asked to urgently step into other roles in the early weeks of lockdown, this affected business as usual. It showed a significant improvement in May. The slippage in June, is actually a very small number of invoices, but staff are reminded again the importance of ensuring that queries on invoices and authorisations must be carried out as soon as possible to help businesses in these difficult times.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ BV008 Percentage of invoices for commercial goods & serv. paid within 30 days (M)	99.00%	99.30%	99.60%	99.60%	99.60%	99.60%	99.00%	99.00%	Bigger is Better		98.10%
Payment of invoices paid within 30 days has remained within target during this quarter.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ BV012_12r Ave. no. of days/shifts lost to sickness for rolling 12 month period (M)	6.32	7.66	8.51	9.39	9.39	9.39	9.00	9.00	Smaller is Better		7.76
We have a small group of shielded staff (11 in total) that due to the type of work that they currently do, could not do their normal work or alternative work at home during the lockdown. These staff in the main were cleaning, car parking, market and bus station staffing. We could not replicate this work in the home environment, or support their development into using some of the ICT packages from a distance. We are however looking at options for them to do some work from home should they be shielded once more in the event of either a further lockdown, or second wave as HR recognises the negative effect that being shielded with nothing to do has on mental health and general well-being.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
CH11 Number of visitors to Abington Park Museum	1,894	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Bigger is Better		18,134
Due to the Corona Virus the decision to shut the museum was taken in mid March and has remained shut during this quarter.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ CS05 Percentage satisfied with the overall service provided by the Customer Service Officer (M)	88.89%	88.89%	100.00%	91.04%	93.04%	93.04%	90.00%	90.00%	Bigger is Better		98.04%
Overall the quarterly target was met. April satisfaction level was a little low which was owing to the accessibility of services due to service restrictions during lockdown.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ CS13a % of calls for NBC managed services into contact centre answered (M)	84.76%	98.59%	97.68%	96.24%	97.43%	97.43%	90.00%	90.00%	Bigger is Better		92.09%
The contact centre has maintained target throughout this quarter. The majority of the team were relocated to home working, which has proven very successful. Staff wellbeing continues to be a priority and we having fortnightly one to ones with all staff. We have introduced the face to face service again on an appointment basis, for vulnerable customers that are unable to self serve or have a priority need which is also working well. Telephone contact has been carefully monitored throughout this quarter and we have now reached expected levels. As well as maximizing service delivery on our normal services at this difficult time, we supported the Revenues and Benefits team by responding to tweets, the Community Cell by completing approximately 150 welfare checks each week and taking some overflow of calls on behalf of the Planning team.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ CS14a % OSS customers with an appointment seen on time (M)	88.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	90.0%	90.0%	Bigger is Better		88.5%
The decision to close the One Stop Shop due to Covid-19 was taken in April and May 2020. There was a gradual reopening for vulnerable customers on appointment basis only from June 2020. Waiting times will be minimal as customer are seen immediately on arrival and safety measures introduced for the protection of staff and customers.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ ESC01n Total bins/boxes missed in period (M)	405	519	425	597	1,541	1,541	1,020	4,080	Smaller is Better		891
With upwards of 100,000 properties being serviced each week, understandably there can be a few issues with access and container presentation at times. Veolia continue to monitor the numbers of missed collections and work with											

Monthly Measures

Measure ID & Name	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Overall perf. to date	YTD	Current Profiled Target	Outturn Target	Polarity	Perf. vs. same time last year	YTD value same time last year
crews and residents to reduce these.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
ESC02 % missed bins corrected within 24hrs of notification (M)	97.04%	98.00%	93.00%	96.00%	96.00%		90.00%	87.00%	Bigger is Better		85.00%
Improved data collection allows Veolia to monitor performance and ensure that performance continues to improve.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
ESC04 % household waste recycled and composted (NI192) (M)	80.04%	45.73%	46.77%	46.16%	46.16%		48.00%	48.00%	Bigger is Better		49.25%
NBC and Veolia continue to work towards improving recycling performance though recent issues with the Covid-19 pandemic have reduced the amount of campaigns undertaken.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
ESC05 % of Land and Highways assessed falling below an acceptable level - Litter (NI195a) (4M)	3.23%	0.00%	0.00%	1.61%	1.61%		4.00%	4.00%	Smaller is Better		0.00%
Each month on average 75 transects are inspected by the contractors. These vary each month to give a picture across the borough. We have increased some performance indicators and reduced others to ensure that we have realistic targets, and Veolia continue to achieve these.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
ESC06 % of Land and Highways assessed falling below acceptable level - Detritus (NI195b) (4M)	16.13%	10.00%	6.00%	9.00%	9.00%		25.00%	25.00%	Smaller is Better		1.00%
Each month on average 75 transects are inspected by the contractors. These areas vary each month to give a picture across the borough. The target for this PI has been increased this year to factor in the more complex nature of ensuring all detritus is removed. and Veolia are meeting these targets.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
ESC07 % of Land and Highways assessed falling below acceptable level - Graffiti (NI195c) (4M)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.00%	1.00%		2.00%	2.00%	Smaller is Better		5.00%
Of the transects inspected all areas were with targets.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
ESC08 % of Land and Highways assessed falling below acceptable level - FlyPosting (NI195d) (4M)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%		2.00%	2.67%	Smaller is Better		0.00%
Of the average of 75 areas inspected per month, no incidents of fly posting were recorded in this quarter											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
ESC09 % of Fly Tipping incidents removed within 2 working days of notification (SO2) (M)	66.29%	75.23%	90.67%	90.55%	90.55%		70.00%	70.00%	Bigger is Better		68.23%
The percentage of fly tips reported and removed within 48 hours was well over target. For fly tips that are hazardous or oversized there will be a new KPI which will detail the breakdown. For these where specialist equipment is required they will be cleared within 5 days of the initial report.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
HML01 Total no. of households living in temporary accommodation (M)	342	358	341	356	356		380		Smaller is Better		338
Overall acceptance numbers have dropped compared to last year in the same quarter which is good, but this could be again due to Covid-19 eviction restrictions (until August 2020) as less homeless case referrals have been received during this period.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
HML07 Number of households that are prevented from becoming homeless (M)	25	37	43	48	128		150	600	Bigger is Better		147
The prevention number has gone down compared to last year in the same quarter. This could be because of eviction restrictions (until August 2020) due to Covid-19 situation therefore less referrals received during this period. This also coincides with the number of approaches recorded lower during this period as compared to last year in the same quarter.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
HML09 Number of households for whom a full homelessness duty is accepted (M)	32	34	11	19	64		240	960	Smaller is Better		85
The overall acceptance number has dropped compared to last year in the same quarter which is good, but this could be due to Covid-19 eviction restrictions (until August 2020) as we had less homeless case referrals received											

Monthly Measures

Measure ID & Name	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Overall perf. to date	YTD	Current Profiled Target	Outturn Target	Polarity	Perf. vs. same time last year	YTD value same time last year
during this period. This also coincides with the number of approaches recorded which were lower when compared to last year (2019/20) in the same quarter.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ IG03 % FOI/EIR cases responded to within 20 working days (M)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.0%	98.0%	Bigger is Better		100.0%
In the first quarter the top three types of FOI requests received were as follows:- Businesses=26 requests; CCTV = 25 requests; Media requests =22. In June and following the implementation of schemes to assist small businesses by offering grants, we were made aware of national fraudulent behaviour which resulted in all Northamptonshire councils removing the business rates data from public view as well as refusing any specific FOI requests for business rates data, to eliminate the risk of information being used in a fraudulent way. While we are still in a period of national economic uncertainty and when further assistance may be offered in this area, we will continue to uphold this stance.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ IG04 % Subject Access requests responded to within one month (M)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	Bigger is Better		100.0%
All SARs requests received within this quarter were responded to within times scales. One SAR completed in April had received Executive approval to be extended by two months from January in line with GDPR Guidance Art 12 para 3 .."taking into account the complexity and number of the requests." This is the first time an extension has been applied by the Council under GDPR. All cases were dealt with within the regulatory time. The team continued to work throughout lockdown, relocating to home working without any detriment to performance.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ NI157a % Major Planning applications determined in 13 weeks or agreed extension (M)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	Bigger is Better		100.00%
100% of applications determined during April and May, no Major applications made during June.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ NI157b % of 'minor' planning apps determined within 8 weeks or agreed extension (M)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	98.44%	98.44%	100.00%	100.00%	Bigger is Better		100.00%	
98.21% applications determined within agreed time scales with one application out of time. This was when the case was reallocated after an officer left, and there was oversight in meeting the decision date. We have now rectified this with weekly monitoring reports of outstanding cases for all officers.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ NI157c % of 'other' planning apps determined within 8 weeks or agreed extension (M)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	99.41%	99.41%	100.00%	100.00%	Bigger is Better		100.00%	
Again, one case was out of time, due to the application being of a sensitive nature the case was referred to the Planning Committee. As there had been previous Extension of Time applications made previously during the course of the application it would have been unreasonable to request a further EOT from the applicant in this instance.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ PP22 % Hackney Carriage and private hire vehicles inspected which comply with regulations (M)	66.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-	Bigger is Better		0.00%
During this period the team were working remotely and not undertaking inspections due to the Coronavirus restrictions. The team were involved with monitoring compliance with Covid 19 business restrictions, and dealing with complaints and enquiries relating to the PVH and Hackney carriages.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											
+ PP53a % Service Requests responded to within 5 working days (M)	76.19	393.00	476.00	630.00	630.00	697.00	85.00	Bigger is Better		96.87	
In April, staff were being deployed on a wide range of new duties relating to Covid. These included welfare checks, supporting vulnerable residents and carrying out checks in relation to business closures. In addition routine fly tipping complaints were not subject to the normal investigation processes if staff were unable to carry out a visit that was not safe. There was a significant rise in complaints about bonfires and domestic noise during the lock down period of April and May. In June working patterns started to return to normal, but some staff were still involved in Covid related business regulation work and ongoing increase in domestic nuisance complaints, especially during periods of hot weather.											
Source Date 30/06/2020											

Quarterly Measures

Measure ID & Name	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Overall perf. to Date	YTD	Current Profiled Target	Annual Target	Polarity	Perf. vs. same time last year	YTD value same time last year
HMO01 No. HMOs with Mandatory licence (Q)	473			471			519			509	★	★	500		Bigger is Better		491
The number of licences has risen during the quarter, but the team have ensured that business as usual has continued during the lockdown period.																	
Source Date 30/06/2020																	
HMO08 No. of HMOs with an additional licence (Q)	393			382			388			324	★	★	324	324	Bigger is Better		398
The team have ensured business as usual carried on during difficulties presented during lockdown.																	
Source Date 30/06/2020																	
IG01 % LGO cases responded to within 28 days (excl. pre-determined cases) (Q)	100.0%			100.0%			87.8%			100.0%	★	★	100.0%	100.0%	Bigger is Better		100.0%
There were no full investigations during this period.																	
Source Date 30/06/2020																	
IG02 Av. days to respond to LGO enquiries (excl. pre-determined cases) (Q)	26.00			23.00			21.00			1.00	★	★	1.00	1.00	Smaller is Better		26.00
The first quarter includes the period of complete lockdown by the LGSCO. NBC only received three predetermined cases of which 2 were deemed "unlikely to find fault" and one was "No power to investigate". One pre-investigation also received resulted in the finding of "No sign of fault without requirement to go to full investigation".																	
Source Date 30/06/2020																	
MPE01 No. of new businesses locating on NWEZ (Q)	2			1			3			1	▲	▲	5		Bigger is Better		2
As this project is now reaching its conclusion this will be the last time this KPI is used in this report.																	
Source Date 30/06/2020																	
MPE02 No. of new jobs created on NWEZ (Q)	9			1			5			4	▲	▲	50		Bigger is Better		7
As this project is now reaching its conclusion this will be the last time this KPI is used in this report.																	
Source Date 30/06/2020																	
PP16 % Off licence checks that are compliant (Q)	0.00%			0.00%			0.00%			0.00%	★	★	0.00%		Bigger is Better		0.00%
During this period the team were working remotely and not undertaking inspections due to Corona virus restrictions. The team were involved in monitoring compliance with Covid-19 business restrictions and dealing with complaints and enquiries about the full range of licensing functions.																	
Source Date 30/06/2020																	
TCO05n Town Centre footfall (Q)	3,085,725			2,935,852			2,504,292			1,057,879	▲	▲	3,250,000		Bigger is Better		3,277,491
Town centre footfall is taken from 3 footfall cameras on Abington Street, The Drapery and Market Square. The Town centre footfall was significantly affected due to Covid-19 with all but key workers being urged to stay at home. Overall it is 68% down on the same quarter last year.																	
Source Date 30/06/2020																	

Major Project update

Delivery of the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone

Movement within the Enterprise Zone for quarter one showed one new business locating within the area, creating 4 new jobs.

Source Date 30/06/2020

Development of the Greyfriars site

Northamptonshire Partnership Homes will be utilising the site as their compound during the development of Belgrave House.

Source Date 30/06/2020

Restoration and regeneration of Delapre Abbey and Park

Essential repairs to the roof and alterations are now complete together with the external lighting installation. End of defects inspection for the car park was arranged, and some minor issues were resolved. A legal review of the schedule of defects for a potential claim has been undertaken

Source Date 30/06/2020

Delivery of the Business Incentive Scheme and account management to key businesses

The Five Year Business Incentive Scheme came to a close at the end of March 2020, and has been extremely successful with overall figures of 167 new and existing businesses being supported with committed grants of £1,406,991, creating 799 jobs and leveraging £8,493,868 of private sector investment.

Source Date 30/06/2020

Delivery of the Four Waterside Development

The Masterplan was approved at Cabinet in February 2020, and the development appraisal and delivery advice have now been completed. A draft business case to meet the viability gap has been developed and is in the process of being appraised by SEMLEP ahead of being brought to the Enterprise Zone Board by July 2020.

Source Date 30/06/2020

Development of the Cultural Quarter

Museum The 'Practical Completion' certificate was accepted by NBC in April. There is still a range of works outstanding that will be completed as part of the close out programme submitted by the contractor. Extra internal measures have been put in place to monitor the commissioning and to report on a weekly basis if there are any further delays. Installation work was mainly halted due to the Covid-19 situation, but a skeleton staff were able to continue to work safely. Museum staff are working towards opening the museum at the earliest opportunity when it is safe to do so.

Source Date 30/06/2020

Development of the Cultural Quarter - Vulcan Works

Development continues with masonry works on Guildhall Road, underpinning and drainage complete. The last bay and internal alterations underway in Fetter Street. Equipment has been removed from the cellar and will be infilled with concrete. Partitioning to the upper floors is almost complete on Angel Street with the units taking shape and skimming is in progress. Truss repairs are completed and ready for installation in the Victorian Workshops. The steel frame structure works are in progress and the lift shaft is now taking shape. The project team are in contact with the external project manager during the Covid-19 pandemic, to keep informed of any potential risk to the programme. The final drawdown has been completed for LGF funding.

Source Date 30/06/2020

Delivery of the Castle Station development

A workshop meeting to discuss various options and progress agreement was held in late April. Following the workshop it was agreed that a meeting would be arranged with the Department of Transport which will be held ahead of the Cabinet paper later in the year should the council wish to progress this development.

Source Date 30/06/2020

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

SCRUTINY PANEL 1

Food Poverty

September 2020



Index

Chair's Foreword	1
Executive Summary	3
Final Report including recommendations	13

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Scope of the Review
Appendix B	Core Questions

Foreword

The objective of this Scrutiny Panel was:

- To examine the extent to which individuals and families are experiencing food poverty, the range of contributing factors and the changes that have been made to the way the Council and partners support residents during hardship.
- To review the impact and concentration of food poverty across the Borough of Northampton

Key Lines of Enquiry

- What are the impacts of food poverty?
- How widespread is food poverty in the borough?
- What strategic approaches are in existence to tackle food poverty?
- What approaches are in existence to reduce people's dependency on food aid, such as Food Banks? To receive an understanding of how food poverty is addressed
- To evaluate how the Borough Council, together with its partners, can collectively respond to food poverty
- To identify the specific issues relating to food poverty
- To identify the existence and impact of "holiday hunger"
- To identify how food poverty differs across the borough of Northampton and the reasons for this

The Scrutiny Panel was made up from members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Dennis Meredith (Chair), Councillor Cathrine Russell (Deputy Chair) Councillors Alan Bottwood, Emma Roberts and Zoe Smith. The Scrutiny Panel benefitted from the expertise of two co optees, Paul Foster, Emmanuel Church and Clive Ireston, Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network.

The Scrutiny Panel received both written and spoken evidence from a wide variety of expert advisors. Desktop research was carried out by the Democratic and Member Services Manager. Representatives of the Panel undertook a wide range of site visits to various Food Banks and the Hope Centre all of which produced a wealth of information that informed the evidence base of this high profile Scrutiny review. The Scrutiny Panel was very impressed by the services provided at the various food banks.

Following the collation of the evidence, the Scrutiny Panel drew various conclusion and recommendations that are contained in the report. The Review took place between June 2019 and September 2020, due to the unprecedented situation of Covid19, evidence gathering was put on hold from March 2020 to July 2020.

I would like to thank all those people acknowledged below who gave up their time and contributed to this Review.



Councillor Dennis Meredith

Scrutiny Panel 1 – Food Poverty

Acknowledgements to all those who took part in the Review:

Cathrine Russell (Deputy Chair) Councillors Alan Bottwood, Emma Roberts and Zoe Smith. The Scrutiny Panel benefitted from the expertise of two co optees, Paul Foster, Emmanuel Church and Clive Ireston, Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network who sat with me on this Review

Geraldine Mahney, Customer Services Manager, Northampton Borough Council, Phil Harris, Director of Housing and Wellbeing, NBC, Rachel McGrath, Rachel McGrath, Deputy CEO, Northamptonshire Community Foundation and facilitator of Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network. Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing, NBC and Head of Housing and Wellbeing, NBC, Robin Bates, Head of Revenues and Benefits, LGSS, and Quality and Training Team Leader, LGSS, Anna King Cabinet Member for Community Safety, NBC, Chair of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the Community Safety Team, Northampton Borough Council, Rhosyn Harris and Deborah Mbofona, Public Health, Mike Kay, Chief Executive and Nicky McKenzie, Director, NPH, Sarah Holton and Julie Pritchard, Department of Work and Pensions, Robin Burgess, Chief Executive, Hope Centre, Anya Willis, Director, RESTORE, Julie Silver, CEO, Community Law, Sarah Hayle, Manager, Community Law and Mary Clarke, CEO, Northamptonshire CAB who provided evidence to inform this Scrutiny Review

Councillor Danielle Stone for addressing a meeting of the Scrutiny Panel and providing information to inform this review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was:

The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was to:

- To examine the extent to which individuals and families are experiencing food poverty, the range of contributing factors and the changes that have been made to the way the Council and partners support residents during hardship.
- To review the impact and concentration of food poverty across the Borough of Northampton

Key Lines of Enquiry

- What are the impacts of food poverty?
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1.2 The required outcome being:

- To make informed recommendations to all relevant parties on the most appropriate approaches to take to mitigate the impact of food poverty in Northampton.
- To make recommendations on how the specific issues in relation to food poverty are dealt with from now until the new Unitary Authority.

1.3 Following approval of its work programme for 2019/2020, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting in April 2019 commissioned Scrutiny Panel 3 to undertake the review – Food Poverty. An in-depth review commenced in June 2019 and concluded in September 2020. Due to unprecedented situation of the Covid19 pandemic, meetings were cancelled during March 2020 and July 2020.

1.4 A Scrutiny Panel was established comprising Councillor Dennis Meredith (Chair); Councillor Cathrine Russell (Deputy Chair); Councillors Mohammed

Aziz, Alan Bottwood, Emma Roberts and Zoe Smith. Paul Foster, Emmanuel Church and Clive Ireston, Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network were co-opted to the Review.

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY FINDINGS

5.1 After all of the evidence was collated the following conclusions were drawn:

Definitions of Food Poverty

5.1.1 The Scrutiny Panel noted that there a number of definitions for food poverty. The definition used by Restore is the inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet. It is about the quality of food as well as quantity. It is not just about hunger, but also about being appropriately nourished to attain and maintain health.” Additionally, there are clear links between levels of deprivation and food poverty. A key definition of deprivation used by local authorities is those areas (and their residents) which fall within the top 20% most deprived LSOAs nationally (i.e. Deciles 1 and 2 nationally). There are 422 LSOA’s in Northamptonshire. In the IMD 2015 release 69 of these were in the top 20% nationally, 29 in the 1st Decile and 40 in the Second. A further definition of food poverty according to the Department of Health is “the inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet”¹. It is closely related to household food insecurity which is the inability to be able to secure social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life². Hunger as a term to describe the physical feeling of insufficient food is used by a number of organisations working with people unable to afford food as a means of communicating messages to the wider public, including the Trussell Trust, FareShare, Magic Breakfast, and Church Action on Poverty. Hunger is one consequence of food insecurity but not an inevitability. The Department of Health defines food poverty as: ‘The inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet.

Risks relating to food poverty

5.1.2 The Scrutiny Panel noted that the poor health and wellbeing and risk of chronic ill-health relates to food poverty are not only due to the direct dietary risks but also due to associated social and psychological impacts e.g. chronic stress related to food poverty and poverty more generally, poor school performance due to acute hunger, It is also important to consider the differences between acute hunger and chronic food insecurity.

¹ Department of Health, Choosing a Better Diet: a food and health action plan, 2005

² <http://www.fao.org/3/y4671e/y4671e06.htm>

- 5.1.3 Households that cannot secure adequate food that its nutritious impacts on food poverty and this includes poor health, chronic illness, poor mental health, crime, obesity, diabetes, heart condition and poor education.
- 5.1.4 The Scrutiny Panel recognised that food poverty can have a negative impact on both physical and mental health.

Food poverty – children

- 5.1.5 The Under Secretary has contacted all Head Teachers of primary and secondary schools in the UK to identify the issue of child food insecurity. Evidence gathering indicated that the impact of food deprivation meant children were living in relative poverty with 60% of the median income; this information could be provided to the Panel as he felt it was important so that the statistics could be cross referenced. He explained that food banks can't always provide fresh provisions therefore an understanding of the types of food offered would be a useful question to ask as there has also been some work done regarding the nutritional value of the food. As of the January School Census 2019, 11.7% (3934) of pupils were eligible for free school meals from a total of 33,642. A report, compiled by the End Child Poverty coalition, shows that 13,633 children are living in poverty in Northampton.
- 5.1.6 The Scrutiny Panel realised that food poverty sits within wider poverty. Poverty within Northampton has increased from 16,000 to 18,000 children . There is a lot of concern and misery for the families throughout the area. Schools and health visitors are aware of this issue. The Scrutiny Panel highlights that there is a need to ensure that no children throughout Northampton are seen to be hungry. Holiday hunger is also an issue, and something needs to be done about this. It was noted that during the unprecedented situation of Covid19 that free school meals vouchers had been provided during school holidays and would include the summer break of 2020 also. It was further recognised that often children in poverty come from a working family. Regularly, people living in poverty have no electricity, saucepans or a cooker and obtain food from a food bank but do not have the facilities to cook it. There is a need for an Anti- Poverty Strategy.
- 5.1.7 The Scrutiny Panel notes that free meals are provided in nurseries in Scotland.

Food Poverty – reviews and statistical data

- 5.1.8 Central Government has confirmed it will begin to measure food insecurity from April 2019. Evidence gathering highlighted that in order to understand approaches to tackle food poverty it's important to understand the root causes of food poverty. An analysis by the House of Commons' Environmental Audit Committee "Sustainable Development Goals in the UK follow up: Hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity in the UK" identified three themes relating to the causes of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition:

1. Low incomes and rising living costs:
2. Universal Credit and the benefits system; and
3. Cuts to funding for local social care services.

5.1.9 . Zero hours contract often have an impact on poverty and food poverty.

5.1.10 Food poverty is clearly linked to poverty more generally and poverty can be measured in a number of ways. One useful metric is “income deprivation” which measures the number of people who are in receipt of various means tested benefits. In 2015 the total number of people affected by income deprivation in Northampton was 27,279³ of whom 7,806⁴ were children and 6,193⁵ older people.

5.1.11 A review by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), Church of England, Oxfam GB and The Trussell Trust “Emergency Use Only: Understanding and reducing the use of food banks in the UK”⁶ gives the following recommendations for preventing need for food banks:

- Improve access to short-term benefit advances: increase awareness, simplify the claim process and improve data collection to identify support needs.
- Reform sanctions policy and practice: increase access to hardship payments, clarify communications about sanctions, mitigate the impact whilst a sanction is being reconsidered and address issues for Housing Benefit.
- Improve the ESA regime: ensure claimants are not left without income whilst challenging a decision made because of missing medical certificates or missed appointments.
- Sustain and improve access to emergency financial support through Local Welfare Assistance Schemes.
- Ensure Jobcentres provide an efficient and supportive service for all clients.
- Improve Jobcentre Plus Advisers’ awareness of, and ability to respond to, mental health problems.
- Improve access to appropriate advice and support.

Emergency Food Aid

5.1.12 Use of emergency food aid (i.e. food banks) can give an indication of the levels of need around acute food poverty. Food Banks are primarily for adults and families and the Scrutiny Panel noted that it is important that children have direct access to food through schools and nurseries.

Initiatives are in place as schools for those children that come in hungry

³ Income Deprivation domain of [Indices of Deprivation 2019](#)

⁴ [IDACI 2019](#)

⁵ [IDOPI 2019](#)

⁶ https://cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/Foodbank%20Report_web.pdf

such as free breakfast clubs. They are therefore provided with both a free breakfast and a free lunch during school days. There is a good referral system into food banks. The Night Shelter is a good example of the positive impact good quality food can have on people's health and esteem. Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) runs a food bank and also makes referrals. It is a food bank for Council tenants. Volunteer tenants put the food parcels together however NPH delivers them which ensures dignity remains. Food parcels distributed by NPH was put in place due to the need for crisis intervention. The number of parcels and their locations is reported on a monthly basis

5.1.13 During the evidence gathering the Scrutiny Panel heard that Officers working in the Council's One Stop Shop, each month donate items of food that can be donated to those in need. This is funded totally by the staff who do this mainly because they come into contact with people on a daily basis that require food donations and other assistance.

5.1.14 Various statistics were provided to the Scrutiny Panel. The Emmanuel Church provides 40 parcels a week for around 100 people with referrals generally coming from schools. The Hope Centre has around 120 people come in for food daily whilst there is a separate food provision that helps 250 families per week. Re Store coordinate food parcels across 6 churches in Northampton Borough and in 2018 distributed 4500 parcels.

5.1.15 The Scrutiny Panel notes that it is expected that the food banking system would continue to grow.

5.1.16 Evidence gathered highlighted that teachers and social workers often note some children being uncomfortable in inviting friends home, due to the state of the home and poor quality food.

5.1.17 It is highlighted that there is a stigma around poverty and poor-quality food is also poor value for money

Assistance available and Partnership Working

5.1.18 The Scrutiny Panel recognises that there is a lot of assistance available regarding budgeting from organisations such as CAB, Housing and Money Advice and Community Law. The Scrutiny Panel recognised that approaches are often neighbourhood based; there is a need adequate funding and are reliant on skills and leadership and a strong voluntary and community sector. Approaches include:

- Voluntary action
- Food banks
- Community organising and social action
- Neighbourhood enterprise

- Community-based credit unions
- Developing physical assets
- Community-led housing

5.1.19 The Panel acknowledges that there are lots of Groups and organisations doing different things in relation to food distribution, which needed looking at collectively to ensure the sharing of information; which is very important across all of the Groups; as every Group needed to know about each other's work so that there was no duplication.

5.1.20 The Scrutiny Panel emphasised that, in the run up to West Northamptonshire Authority, there is a need to consider joint responsibility of Agencies regarding homelessness, poverty and food poverty. There is lots of partnership working and work completed already and there is need to be able to maintain drive. Evidence gathering highlighted that a main barrier is leadership. There is a need for strong leadership and a clear vision. Leaders should be drawn together to provide the necessary direction. The Scrutiny Panel further emphasised that there is a need to have individuals with the relevant passion to lead e.g. Food Poverty Champions who can identify the partners who have the motivation and drive to bring all together. Goals will be similar across all the boroughs and districts. With the move to the West Northamptonshire Authority, the Scrutiny Panel agreed that a way forward could be to use this issue to come together across the County and consider the following actions for local authorities recommended by Sustain:

- Developing a food action plan to tackle food poverty
- Improving the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers
- Promoting breastfeeding via the Baby Friendly Initiative
- Harnessing the value of children's centres
- Ensuring low-income families have adequate access to childcare
- Ensuring children's access to food 365 days a year
- Becoming a Living Wage employer and promoting the Living Wage
- Ensuring all residents have physical access to good food
- Supporting and enhancing meals on wheels provision
- Supporting financial advice services and providing crisis support

5.1.21 The Scrutiny Panel recognises that there is a need to do more to co-ordinate between food providers. Hope has worked with Northamptonshire Poverty Network but more needs to be done and co-ordinated. A summer festival, or similar, to "unlock" food would be useful. The Scrutiny Panel felt that the promotion of food poverty to allotment holders and shops would be useful regarding them providing any excess produce.

- 5.1.22 There will be full migration to Universal Credit from December 2019. As of 16 September 2019, there were 11,350 claims for housing benefit, in May 2019 it had been 14,000. There is a five-week waiting period for Universal Credit that has been causing issues and problems. Money management support is important for example pay bills such as rent first. A Council Tax Reduction Scheme is in place; everyone now has to pay at least 35% of the Council Tax bill for their property but some Groups are protected.
- 5.1.23 HM Revenues and Customs (HMRC) works collaboratively with partner organisations to help people. It has a claim commitment, but it needs individuals to tell officers about their circumstances. Individuals can contact HMRC for assistance. HRMC works with food banks in Corby and Towcester and speaks with customers regarding their income and the types of support available to them.
- 5.1.24 The Universal Credit app is easy to use. In addition, there is a programme of training in place that comprises 39 vulnerabilities. Mental health training includes suicide and ex-offenders. A lot of outreach takes place through schools and advice can be given. It was recognised that the Manager, □□RC regularly visits NBC and is part of the Welfare Reform meetings; that comprise a number of partners. Improvements come from these meetings.
- 5.1.25 It was realised that some individuals are fearful to go to the Job Centre. There are lots of posters in the Job Centre regarding partner agencies. A lot of outreach takes place through schools and advice can be given. The Scrutiny Panel felt this was not sufficiently aimed at Northampton.
- 5.1.26 The Scrutiny Panel supports the living wage employer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was to:
- To examine the extent to which individuals and families are experiencing food poverty, the range of contributing factors and the changes that have been made to the way the Council and partners support residents during hardship.
 - To review the impact and concentration of food poverty across the Borough of Northampton

Key Lines of Enquiry

- What are the impacts of food poverty?
- How widespread is food poverty in the borough?
- What strategic approaches are in existence to tackle food poverty?

- What approaches are in existence to reduce people's dependency on food aid, such as Food Banks? To receive an understanding of how food poverty is addressed
- To evaluate how the Borough Council, together with its partners, can collectively respond to food poverty
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6.1.2 Scrutiny Panel 1 therefore recommends to Cabinet that:

6.1.3 That a Working Group, owned by the Community and Engagement Team, is set up and tasked with analysing the gaps in foodbanks within Northampton and the Working Group works with Partners to seek solutions to increasing food provision within these areas.

6.1.4 That child poverty needs are included in any Strategy in relation to poverty. food poverty strategy and note that the process of developing an Anti-Food Poverty Strategy can of itself have wider impacts such as:

- Raising the profile of food poverty, especially with local decision-makers
- Developing a shared positive vision
- Creating a sense of empowerment for experts by experience
- Empowering diverse groups to raise their voices to call for food justice
- Ensuring the local council and other partners take ownership of agreed actions
- Sharing of good practice across local authority boundaries to support specific projects

6.1.5 That Food Poverty Champions, who can identify the partners, who have the motivation and drive to bring all together lead on the production of an Anti-Food Poverty Strategy, which must include all demographics, ensuring that it is an all inclusive Policy is investigated.

6.1.6 That with the move to the West Northamptonshire Authority, the way forward in relation to the production of an Anti-Food Poverty Strategy including the following adopted actions for local authorities as recommended by Sustain:

NB: The Scrutiny Panel updated some the actions recommended by Sustain so that they are more Northampton based

- Developing a food action plan to tackle food poverty
- Improving the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers
- Promoting breastfeeding via the Baby Friendly Initiative

- Promoting the need for children’s centres
 - Ensuring low-income families have adequate access to childcare
 - Investing and developing children’s access to food 365 days a year
 - Becoming an accredited Living Wage employer and promoting the Living Wage
 - Ensuring all residents have physical access to good food
 - Supporting and enhancing meals reasonably priced and the provision of meals to vulnerable people
 - Supporting financial advice services and providing crisis support
- 6.1.7 That a Working Group, led by the Community and Engagement Team, is set up and tasked with identifying areas where holiday hunger is a concern and to seek solutions to increasing food provision for children 365 days a year. In addition the outcomes that have come out following the Marcus Ashford Scheme within Northampton are continued and built upon to ensure food provision is developed for all children 365 days a year.
- 6.1.8 That the Manager, HM Revenues and Customs is formally invited to visit food banks in Northampton, to work with customers and aid regarding budgeting and where further help can be obtained.
- 6.1.9 That the Universal Credit app. Is widely promoted.
- 6.1.10 That Officers are instructed to work with partners in generating more events such as a summer festival where assistance in relation to food poverty can be highlighted.
- 6.1.11 That the Health Start Voucher Scheme is promoted.
- 6.1.12 That promotion of food poverty is highlighted to allotment holders and shops regarding giving away excess produce as emergency food aid.
- 6.1.13 That it is recommended to Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) that it considers reviewing Tenancy Agreements to ensure that support is provided to older people to ensure that they are in receipt of the correct pension credits.
- 6.1.14 That the Northampton Community Forums are asked that a presentation is given to each Forum, in particular the Older People’s Forum, that promotes the provision of pension credits and how this can be applied for.
- 6.1.15 That a Grants Officer is engaged with the main role of investigating funding for crisis support and the Grants Officer works closely with all organisations in this respect.
- 6.1.16 That it is recommended to the West Northamptonshire Authority that West Northamptonshire becomes a living wage Authority and a sustainable food Authority.
- 6.1.17 That the West Northamptonshire Authority is asked to lobby for national campaigns and challenge national Policy on food poverty.

6.1.18 That a copy of this report is provided to the MPs within West Northamptonshire and the MPs are asked to respond to the recommendations, in particular, recommendation 6.1.16.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6.1.19 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the impact of this report.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny

Report of Scrutiny Panel 1 – Food Poverty

1 Purposes

1.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was to:

- To examine the extent to which individuals and families are experiencing food poverty, the range of contributing factors and the changes that have been made to the way the Council and partners support residents during hardship.
- To review the impact and concentration of food poverty across the Borough of Northampton

Key Lines of Enquiry

- What are the impacts of food poverty?
- How widespread is food poverty in the borough?
- What strategic approaches are in existence to tackle food poverty?
- What approaches are in existence to reduce people's dependency on food aid, such as Food Banks? To receive an understanding of how food poverty is addressed
- To evaluate how the Borough Council, together with its partners, can collectively respond to food poverty
- To identify the specific issues relating to food poverty
- To identify the existence and impact of "holiday hunger"
- To identify how food poverty differs across the borough of Northampton and the reasons for this

1.2 A copy of the scope of the Review is attached at Appendix A.

2 Context and Background

2.1 Following approval of its work programme for 2019/2020, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting in April 2019 commissioned Scrutiny Panel 3 to undertake the review – Food Poverty. An in-depth review commenced in June 2019 and concluded in September 2020. Due to unprecedented situation of the Covid19 pandemic, meetings were cancelled during March 2020 and July 2020.

2.2 A Scrutiny Panel was established comprising Councillor Dennis Meredith (Chair); Councillor Cathrine Russell (Deputy Chair); Councillors Mohammed Aziz, Alan Bottwood, Emma Roberts and Zoe Smith. Paul Foster,

Emmanuel Church and Clive Ireston, Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network were co-opted to the Review.

2.3 This review links to the Council's corporate priorities, particularly corporate priority - improving the health and wellbeing of local people.

2.4 The Scrutiny Panel established that the following needed to be investigated and linked to the realisation of the Council's corporate priorities:

3 Evidence Collection

3.1 Background data, including:

- Presentation to set the scene: To identify the prevalence of the problem locally
- Relevant national and local background research papers
- Definitions – Food Poverty
- Causes of food poverty
- Best practice and successful initiatives in Northampton and comparable Local Authorities
- Relevant Council Policies and Strategies
- Relevant Statistics and relevant reports, including:

Poverty indicators

Demographics (national and Local)

UN report on food poverty

Institute of Fiscal Studies report on food poverty

- Relevant Legislation, including:
 - Child Poverty Act 2010
 - Changes to Universal Credit
 - Introduction to benefits and the impact
- Best practice external to Northampton

• Internal expert advisors:

- Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing, NBC

- Head of Housing and Wellbeing, NBC
 - Head of Revenues and Benefits, LGSS
 - Cabinet Member for Community Safety, NBC
 - Chair of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the Community Safety Team
 - Cabinet Member for Finance, NBC
 - Section 151 Officer, NBC
- External expert advisors:
 - Community Law, Northampton
 - Child Poverty Action Group
 - Education Services, Northamptonshire County Council
 - Director of Children’s Services, Northamptonshire County Council
 - Community and Voluntary Sector
 - Northamptonshire Citizens Advice Bureau
 - RESTORE
 - Public Health, Northamptonshire County Council
 - Rapid Relief
 - Representations of the Sikh Community
 - Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, NCC
 - Head Teachers of local primary and secondary schools (written evidence)
 - Local Youth Clubs, including Community Spaces
 - Partnership Manager, Department of Work and Pensions

Site visits

3.2 Background reports and information

[Presentation to set the scene](#)

Progress regarding PC terminals in community venues are being investing and Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) are looking to put PCs in all of their Hubs.

Officers working in the Council’s One Stop Shop, each month donate items of food that can be donated to those in need. This is funded totally by the staff who do this mainly because they come into contact with people on a daily basis that require food donations and other assistance.

Food Banks are licensed to donate food. Should a family or individual be in real need for food but cannot obtain a food voucher, they can receive a food parcel from the One Stop Shop. Concern was raised that staff feel the need to provide such food parcels; it should be a more structured provision

Should someone need a food bank voucher they are required to complete a standard form that amongst other questions asks for details of the number of individuals living in the property. Individuals can receive three vouchers from an Agency – the purpose being to prevent dependency upon food vouchers.

Food Banks operate on different days around the borough.

3.3 Various Definitions of Food Poverty

There are various definitions of food poverty for example:

The definition of food poverty used by Restore: - *“Food poverty is the inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet. It is about the quality of food as well as quantity. It is not just about hunger, but also about being appropriately nourished to attain and maintain health.”*

A key definition of deprivation used by local authorities is:

those areas (and their residents) which fall within the top 20% most deprived LSOAs nationally (i.e. Deciles 1 and 2 nationally). There are 422 LSOA's in Northamptonshire. In the IMD 2015 release 69 of these were in the top 20% nationally, 29 in the 1st Decile and 40 in the Second.

A further definition of food poverty according to the Department of Health is *“the inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet”¹. It is closely related to household food insecurity which is the inability to be able to secure social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life². Hunger as a term to describe the physical feeling of insufficient food is used by a number of organisations working with people unable to afford food as a means of communicating messages to the wider public, including the Trussell Trust, FareShare, Magic Breakfast, and Church Action on Poverty. Hunger is one consequence of food insecurity but not an inevitability. The Department of Health defines food*

¹ Department of Health, Choosing a Better Diet: a food and health action plan, 2005

² <http://www.fao.org/3/y4671e/y4671e06.htm>

poverty as: 'The inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet.

3.4 Statutory and Social Overcrowding

Definition of Statutory Overcrowding

Two standards – the 'room standard' and the 'space standard' – are used to assess whether a home is 'statutorily overcrowded' under Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985.

If either or both of these standards are breached, the home will be deemed to be statutorily overcrowded.

The Room Standard

Section 325 of the Housing Act 1985 specifies that there is overcrowding wherever there are so many people in a house that any two or more of those persons, being ten or more years old and of opposite sexes (and who are not living together as a couple) have to sleep in the same room. Report Title Statutory and Social Overcrowding

For these purposes, children under the age of ten may be disregarded and a room means any room normally used as either a bedroom or a living room. A kitchen can be considered to be a living room provided it is big enough to accommodate a bed.

When interpreting this definition, a local authority looks at how the sleeping arrangements within the premises could be organised, rather than how they are actually organised.

This means, for example, that a man and a woman living as a couple with two children of opposite sexes and aged ten years or more who have two living rooms (for example, bedrooms) may not be statutorily overcrowded because each member of the couple could occupy a separate room with one of the children (of the appropriate sex).

Under Section 325 of the Housing Act 1985, there is no limit on the number of people of the same sex who can live in the same room. However, there may be a contravention of the space standard.

The Space Standard

The space standard involves the calculation (undertaken in two ways) of the number of people permitted for the dwelling. The lower number (of the two calculations) is the permitted number for the dwelling.

The first test is based on the number of living rooms in the dwelling (disregarding rooms of less than 50 square feet) and the following levels of occupancy:

- One room = two persons
- Two rooms = three persons
- Three rooms = five persons
- Four rooms = seven and a half persons
- Five rooms or more = ten persons plus two persons for each room in excess of five rooms

For the purpose of this test, a child below the age of one does not count and a child between one and ten counts as a half person.

The second test is based on floor areas of each room:

- Less than 50 square feet = no-one
- 50 square feet to less than 70 square feet = half a person
- 70 square feet to less than 90 square feet = one person
- 90 square feet to less than 110 square feet = one and a half persons
- 110 square feet or larger = two persons.

Northampton Partnership Homes' website contains advice on how housing applicants can establish whether or not they are statutorily overcrowded).

Meaning of Social Overcrowding

Although the term 'social overcrowding' is often used in Northampton, it is not a term that has any legal basis or definition.

It is understood that the term was first used many years ago to distinguish between statutory overcrowding and situations in which a household has fewer bedrooms than specified in the Housing Allocations Scheme Lettings Criteria).

'Social overcrowding' is not a term that is used by other local authorities. Many use the term 'overcrowding' to describe a situation in which a household has one bedroom less than they need, and 'severe overcrowding' to describe a situation in which a household has at least two bedrooms less than they need.

Assessment of Overcrowded Households on Northampton's Housing Register

At present, households that are overcrowded but not statutorily overcrowded will only be able to join Northampton's Housing Register if they have other housing needs or their accommodation is having a serious impact on their health or wellbeing.

Housing applicants who are statutorily overcrowded and eligible to join the Housing Register and will be placed in the Emergency Band of the Housing Register.

Development of West Northamptonshire's Housing Allocations Scheme

Work is underway to develop a new Housing Allocations Scheme for West Northamptonshire. This needs to be in place by 1 April 2021.

Officers from Northampton Borough Council and Northampton Partnership Homes have agreed that the new Housing Allocations Scheme should enable all overcrowded households to join the Housing Register if they are eligible.

Although consideration will need to be given to the merits of these and other changes, Officers are recommending that:

- Tenants of West Northamptonshire Council or partner Registered Providers who are living in West Northamptonshire, are severely overcrowded and have at least two bedrooms less than the number of bedrooms to which they would be entitled to under the Housing Allocations Scheme will be placed in Band A of the Register. This will take into account all rooms that can reasonably be used as bedrooms;
- Tenants of non-partner Registered Providers who are living in West Northamptonshire, are severely overcrowded and have at least two bedrooms less than the number of bedrooms to which they would be entitled to under the Housing Allocations Scheme will be placed in Band B of the Register. This will take into account all rooms that can reasonably be used as bedrooms; and
- Tenants of West Northamptonshire Council or partner Registered Providers who are living in West Northamptonshire, are overcrowded and have one bedroom less than the number of bedrooms to which they would be entitled to under the Housing Allocations Scheme will be placed in Band B of the Register. This will take into account all rooms that can reasonably be used as bedrooms.

3.6 **Core Questions**

3.7.1 The Scrutiny Panel devised a series of core questions that it put to its key witnesses over a cycle of meetings (Copy at Appendix B).

3.7.2 Key witnesses provided a response to these core questions at the meetings of the Scrutiny Panel held on 25 September 2019, 20 November, 25 November, 14 January 2020 and 2 March 2020.

3.7.3 Salient points of evidence:

Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing

- Hunger in young people can be seen as malnutrition and also slower development. Hunger in schools has an impact on education and concentration.
- There is a stigma around poverty

- Poor quality food is also poor value for money
- Zero hours contract often have an impact on poverty and food poverty
- There is a good referral system into food banks
- Help is available regarding budgeting from organisations such as CAB, Housing and Money Advice and Community Law
- A key role is to raise awareness and understanding around the causes and impact of poverty and food poverty. The Night Shelter is a good example of the positive impact good quality food can have on people's health and esteem
- Initiatives are in place as schools for those children that come in hungry such as free breakfast clubs. They are therefore provided with both a free breakfast and a free lunch during school days.
- NPH runs a food bank and also makes referrals. It is a food bank for Council tenants.
- Many homeless people are not receiving any benefits and a lot are suffering from extreme malnutrition
- Bed and breakfast accommodation has not been used very much for homeless families over the last 18 months. 35 hours of outreach work is provided on the streets each week.
- Should a family present as homeless at the One Stop Shop, they would be provided with food free of charge and officers would then assess their needs.

Head of Revenues and Benefits, Local Government Shared Services (LGSS)

- Revenues and Benefits does not have a direct statutory responsibility for food poverty; it administers the benefit system and collects Council Tax. The benefits system changed in 2009.
 - There will be full migration to Universal Credit from December 2019. The migration to UC started in December 2019 and was (pre-Covid 19) expected to go on to 2024 and potentially beyond.
 - As of 16 September 2019, there were 11,350 claims for housing benefit, in May 2019 it had been 14,000 – April 20, 10,194 and currently 9,846
 - There is a six-week waiting period for Universal Credit that has been causing issues and problems. Money management support is important for example pay bills such as rent first.
 - Childcare costs are paid four weeks in arrears- what does this relate to as we don't pay child care costs?
 - Since 2009 there have been other Welfare Reforms such as a freeze on the indexation for rents. There is also the bedroom tax, and a cap

to Benefits –Hardship funding for all CTR customers, an increase in the LHA rate and business support grants were also changes recently made due to Covid-19

- There is £9 million outstanding in Housing Benefit - is this debt ?
- 1,445 discretionary housing payments were made last year – that is for 19/20 in full, if you need the previous year, please let me know
- A Council Tax Reduction Scheme is in place; everyone now has to pay at least 35% of the Council Tax bill for their property but some Groups are protected.
- A Vulnerable Persons Policy is in place and an Income Assessment is undertaken.
- There are around 14,500 court summons each year.
- Since 2015, The Authority collects itself or uses debt collectors.
- Revenues and Benefits do signpost individuals to the relevant Agencies and Groups for independent advice and support .
- Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) receives localised funds, in 2013 it was capped and it is now often used for white goods, furniture etc – Not relevant there hasn't been a fund for over 5 years I would delete.
- The Crisis Loan System is administered by NCC
- £437,000 has been given out in discretionary housing payments this year – this is the total awarded for 2019/20, £271,00 had been paid by 30.09.19.

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety

- Food poverty can have a negative impact on both physical and mental health.
- There are clear links between levels of deprivation and food poverty. A key definition of deprivation used by local authorities is those areas (and their residents) which fall within the top 20% most deprived LSOAs nationally (i.e. Deciles 1 and 2 nationally). There are 422 LSOA's in Northamptonshire. In the IMD 2015 release 69 of these were in the top 20% nationally, 29 in the 1st Decile and 40 in the Second.
- A good indicator would be the number of children that receive free school meals and the areas in which they live. Such data would be available through public health.

- More than £900,000 is awarded to the community and voluntary sector by NBC each year. A number of these grants support food aid and food provision projects and are available for groups to apply to.
- Northampton Borough Council provides various grants to organisations that are providing food provision in the Town. These grants have been allocated through Councillors utilising their community fund at ward level and through the small grants scheme, which have supported organisations such as Elsie's Café and Re:Store.
- £900,000 has been awarded in grant funding in respect of food aid.
- The Cabinet Member Community Safety and Engagement would be meeting with the Director of RESTORE imminently regarding joint working
- There are a number of good schemes in the Borough that are set up to have an impact on 'holiday hunger'. The below list provides a list of those that we were aware of over the summer 2019:

Re:Store - 12.00 - 1.00 lunch, 1.00 - 2.30 Play activities primary school age 0 - 10. For free hot meals, referrals from schools - (Spring Lane and Castle Academy, pupil premium)

St David's Community Cafe - Thursdays 12.30 lunch, followed by Time for Tots 1.30 - 3.00. Children up to 12 yrs. welcomed, activities provided for them. Community Cafe open Tuesday and Thursday 9.30 - 12.30 for breakfast and snacks. Saturday 9.00 - 10.30, donations welcome.

Kidz Link, St David's church rooms. Wednesday 5.30 - 7.00. Games and activities for up to 12 yrs. Snack provided.

Castle Hill, Spring Boroughs- Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays 12.00 - 1.00 serving freshly cooked food for families.

Elsie's Cafe - Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 10.00 - 2.00- free meal for children accompanied by paying adult. Bread to take away. (Would need funding to do this)

Martial Arts Academy - Summer Activity programme various town locations - Free activities 10.00 - 1.00. Water, fruit and snack provided.

FISH – Food in School Holidays every Thursday August 1, 8,15,22,29 12 – 2 at Blackthorn Community Centre. Free lunch for children and children's entertainer for families in Blackthorn Goldings and Rectory Farm. We are concerned about numbers at these

events so please only tell people in those areas about it. (led by Emmanuel Church, Growing Together and Blackthorn Primary school)

Director of Public Health, Northamptonshire County Council

[Comprehensive presentation](#)

Salient points:

It's important to define what we mean by "food poverty" so that we can properly understand what the impacts of this might be and to accurately measure how widespread this problem is.

Food poverty according to the Department of Health is "the inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet"³. It is closely related to **household food insecurity** which is the inability to be able to secure social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life⁴.

Hunger as a term to describe the physical feeling of insufficient food is used by a number of organisations working with people unable to afford food as a means of communicating messages to the wider public, including the Trussell Trust, FareShare, Magic Breakfast, and Church Action on Poverty. Hunger is one consequence of food insecurity but not an inevitability.

A clear direct impact of not having access to a healthy diet is malnutrition. As illustrated in **Figure 1** below, the malnutrition that arises as a result of food insecurity can manifest as undernutrition, **hunger and underweight** but may also come in the form of **nutrient deficiencies with healthy weights** or **overweight/obesity**.

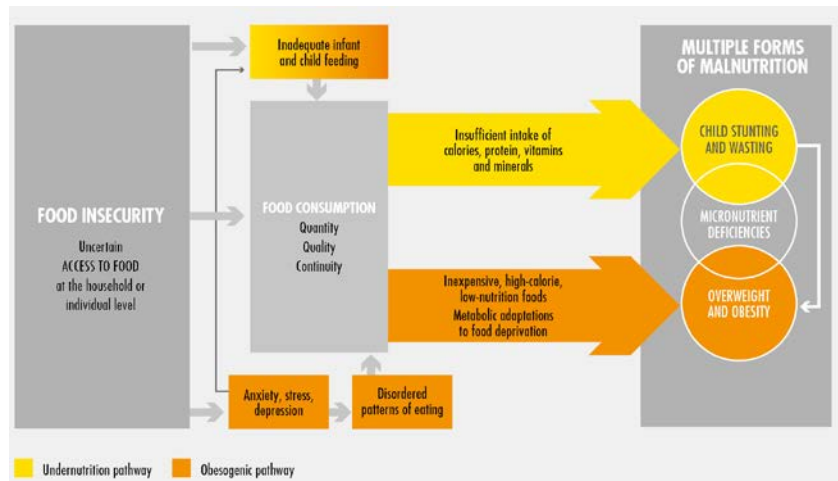
The poor health and wellbeing and risk of chronic ill-health related to food poverty are not only due to the direct dietary risks but also due to associated social and psychological impacts e.g. chronic stress related to food poverty and poverty more generally, poor school performance due to acute hunger, It is also important to consider the differences between acute hunger and chronic food insecurity.

³ Department of Health, Choosing a Better Diet: a food and health action plan, 2005

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/3/y4671e/y4671e06.htm>

Poverty has been further defined in terms of the way that it effectively excludes individuals from participation in what might be regarded as the customary life of society (Levitas, 2006).⁵

Figure 1. Pathways to multiple forms of malnutrition from food insecurity



Source: FAO The State of Food Insecurity⁶

Food poverty or food insecurity are challenging conditions to measure and there is a lack of robust or systematic measures in the UK. Other measures, however, can be useful in estimating the size of the problem.

Food poverty is clearly linked to poverty more generally and poverty can be measured in a number of ways. One useful metric is “income deprivation” which measures the number of people who are in receipt of various means tested benefits. In 2015 the total number of people affected by income deprivation in Northampton was 27,279⁷ of whom 7,806⁸ were children and 6,193⁹ older people.

Use of emergency food aid (i.e. food banks) can give an indication of the levels of need around acute food poverty. It should be noted that

⁵ Levitas, L. (2006) The concept of measurement and social exclusion, in C. Pantazis, D. Gordon and R. Levitas (eds.) *Poverty and social exclusion in Britain. The Millenium survey*. Bristol: Policy Press.

⁶The State of Food Security <http://www.fao.org/3/I9553EN/i9553en.pdf>

⁷ Income Deprivation domain of [Indices of Deprivation 2019](#)

⁸ [IDACI 2019](#)

⁹ [IDOPI 2019](#)

while the existence of emergency food aid provision reflects the growth of both episodic and chronic severe food poverty it measures just one aspect of this and so doesn't capture those who manage food insecurity in different ways ¹⁰.

Re;Store coordinate food parcels across 6 churches in Northampton Borough and in 2018 distributed 4500 parcels (website reference)¹¹. There are other emergency food aid providers (including those who provide meals to the homeless and rough sleepers) that are not included in this figure. Nationally, the Trussell Trust saw a 20% increase between 2017-2018 in the number of food parcels given out in the summer holidays¹².

The 2019 update to Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) identifies the top 20 most deprived small areas (lower super output areas – LSOAs) in the proposed West Northamptonshire . It shows that 19 of the 20 areas are in Northampton Borough and that one small area in the borough is within the 1% most deprived LSOAs in England (Bellinge Ward: Fieldmill Road area, Billing Aquadrome).

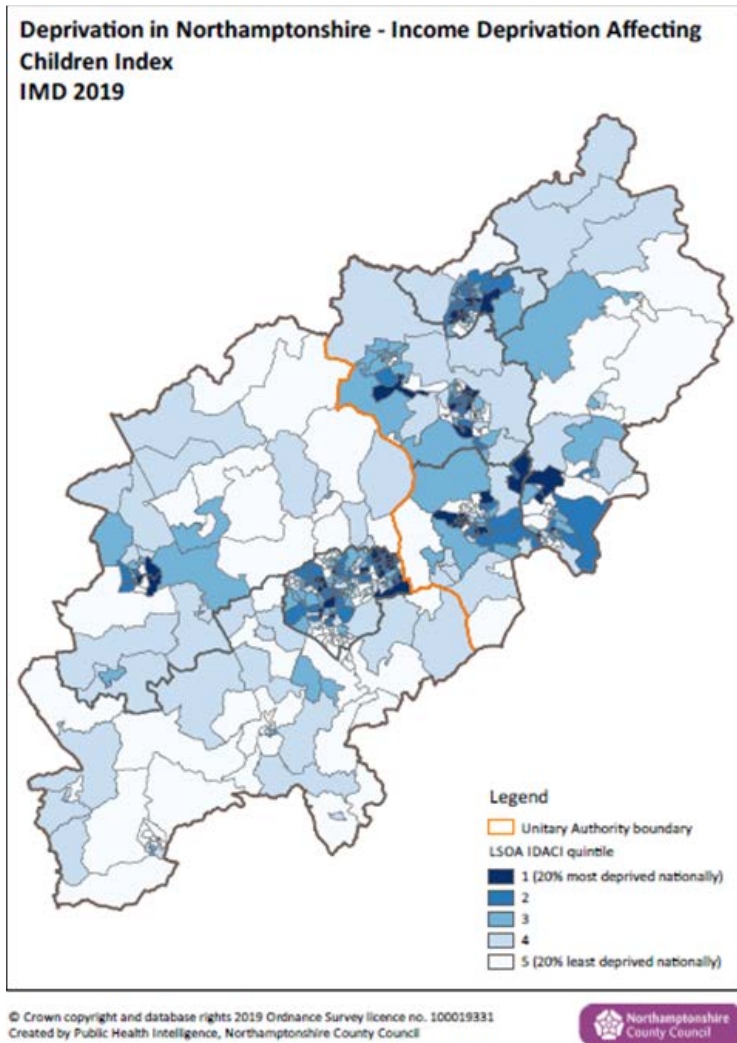
Another important factor to consider is accessibility of food, and in particular fresh fruit and vegetables. 'Food Deserts' describe areas where there are no shops selling affordable healthy food. This is particularly an issue for those with mobility issues or lack of access to transport.

Map 1. Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) Northamptonshire 2019

¹⁰ <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/2222/food-poverty.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.restorenorthampton.org.uk/>

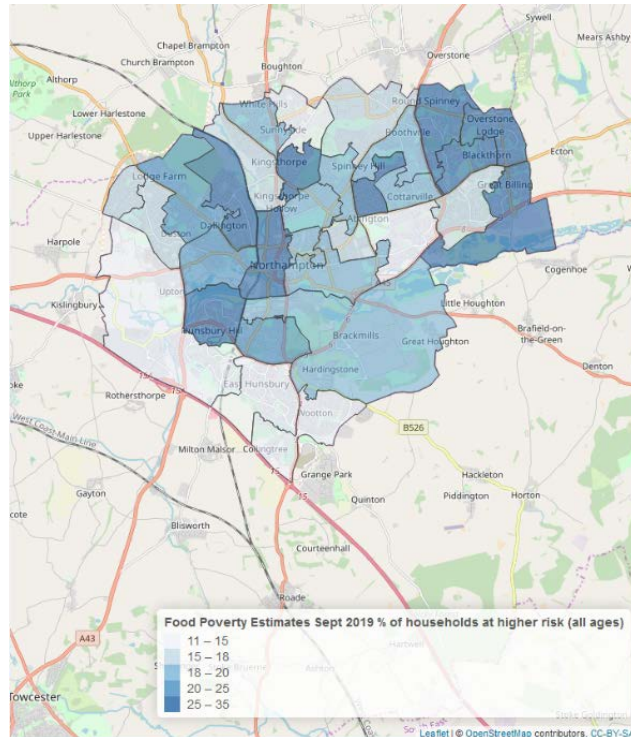
¹² <https://www.trusselltrust.org/2019/07/16/uk-food-banks-fear-busiest-summer-ever-ahead/>



The University of Southampton has developed a methodology¹³ to estimate risk of food poverty across local communities and it was last updated in September 2019. The map below shows the food poverty estimates at MSOA level across the borough of Northampton. Other presentations of the data are available [here](#).

Map 2. Proportion of households at high risk of food poverty in Northampton Borough 2019

¹³ [Identifying populations and areas at greatest risk of household food insecurity in England, D. Smith et al. University of Southampton, 2018](#). Further details on methodology available from Public Health Intelligence, NCC.



In order to understand approaches to tackle food poverty it's important to understand the root causes of food poverty. An analysis by the House of Commons' Environmental Audit Committee "Sustainable Development Goals in the UK follow up: Hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity in the UK" identified three themes relating to the causes of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition:

- Low incomes and rising living costs:
- Universal Credit and the benefits system; and
- Cuts to funding for local social care services.

Further to this, Sustain, in their guide to developing Food Poverty Action Plans suggest three broad approaches to tackle food poverty that complement the three key themes identified by the Environmental Audit Committee, namely;

Taking a preventative approach

- a. Improving access to financial and debt advice as well as maximising access to welfare and discretionary funds including fuel poverty funds.
- b. Improving access to healthy start vouchers, breastfeeding support and free school meal provision and access to affordable locally grown produce.
- c. Promoting fair incomes and the Living Wage

Shaping crisis provision (or more immediate provision)

- d. Improving access to food aid by developing signposting tools for frontline staff and ensure this is delivered in a non-stigmatising way.

- e. Improving nutritional value of food aid.
- f. Promoting greater coordination and networking of assistance providers.

Taking a wider approach

- g. Measuring and monitoring food poverty at a local level
- h. Using planning and business rate relief systems to shape local areas and support social supermarkets and community food growing
- i. Provide stable and affordable housing as well as access to energy efficiency measures
- j. Make reducing food inequalities a priority across a range of strategies and plans and/or integrate food poverty actions within a wider food plan

Innovative digital approaches can be employed as part of actions to address food poverty across these themes. In partnership with CAST (Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technology), Oxfam is exploring how digital technology can challenge and address the causes of food poverty in the UK.

A review by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), Church of England, Oxfam GB and The Trussell Trust “Emergency Use Only: Understanding and reducing the use of food banks in the UK”¹⁴ gives the following recommendations for preventing need for food banks:

- Improve access to short-term benefit advances: increase awareness, simplify the claim process and improve data collection to identify support needs.
- Reform sanctions policy and practice: increase access to hardship payments, clarify communications about sanctions, mitigate the impact whilst a sanction is being reconsidered and address issues for Housing Benefit.
- Improve the ESA regime: ensure claimants are not left without income whilst challenging a decision made because of missing medical certificates or missed appointments.
- Sustain and improve access to emergency financial support through Local Welfare Assistance Schemes.
- Ensure Jobcentres provide an efficient and supportive service for all clients.
- Improve Jobcentre Plus Advisers’ awareness of, and ability to respond to, mental health problems.
- Improve access to appropriate advice and support.

Crisp et al 2016¹⁵ explores the value of community led approaches to reducing poverty in neighbourhoods, including:

¹⁴ https://cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/Foodbank%20Report_web.pdf

¹⁵ CRESR, 2016 *Community-led approaches to reducing poverty in neighbourhoods: A review of evidence and practice*

- Approaches impacting on the 'material' forms of poverty, reducing housing or fuel costs or creating employment opportunities
- Approaches impacting on the 'non-material' aspects by enhancing health and wellbeing, improving quality of housing, the condition of the physical environment and increasing levels of social participation.

Approaches are neighbourhood based; need adequate funding and are reliant on skills and leadership and a strong voluntary and community sector.

Approaches include:

- Voluntary action
- Food banks
- Community organising and social action
- Neighbourhood enterprise
- Community-based credit unions
- Developing physical assets
- Community-led housing

This conceptual distinction between material and non-material forms of poverty provides a useful framework for understanding the broad range of poverty-related outcomes that community-led approaches may have. This is summarised in Table 1 below. The framework enables distinctions to be drawn between interventions that might not prevent 'material' poverty but could mitigate some of the 'non-material' impacts of poverty' that are part of the experience of poverty.

Table 1: Potential impacts on poverty of community-led activities

Activities may impact on 'material' poverty where they generate outcomes around:	Activities may impact on 'non-material' poverty where they generate outcomes around:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Jobs <input type="checkbox"/> Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Worklessness <input type="checkbox"/> Enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> Local economic growth <input type="checkbox"/> Living costs (e.g. food, fuel or housing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Housing (availability, quality or security) <input type="checkbox"/> Community safety <input type="checkbox"/> Physical environment <input type="checkbox"/> Social interaction <input type="checkbox"/> Community cohesion <input type="checkbox"/> Community empowerment

Nationally, the Government has recognised the need to understand better and measure the impact of food poverty. A national index of food insecurity is to be incorporated into an established UK-wide annual survey run by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that monitors household incomes and living standards.

More widely, parliament, via the Environmental Audit Committee published a report in 2019 recommending greater action to reduce food poverty across the UK.

There are also a number of voluntary sector organisations who campaign around Food Poverty. Schemes such as 'The Sustainable Food Cities Award' incorporates a strand on tackling food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food as part of the criteria for award.

Locally, alongside emergency food aid provision to address acute poverty there have been partnership efforts in recent years to address the root causes of food poverty.

Northamptonshire Community Foundation currently host the Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network who are active in promoting issues of food poverty across the

Some of the NCC Public Health Team's activities to address food poverty are listed below:

As part of the support for the Borough and Districts Health and Wellbeing Fora, a Public Health Healthy Town grant was made available in 2018-19 for them to apply for projects that support the health and wellbeing of local residents. Out of the 17 projects supported 5 projects are food related.

Breastfeeding – Health Visitors commissioned by the public health team provide infant feeding support including breastfeeding drop-ins as one of the key areas to reduce impacts of food poverty.

The Healthy Start Scheme is a statutory UK-wide government scheme that provides a 'nutritional safety net' for pregnant women and families on qualifying benefits and tax credits. Women who are at least 10 weeks pregnant and families with children under 4 qualify if the families received the relevant benefits. Pregnant women under 18 are also eligible, regardless of whether they receive benefits. The scheme includes food vouchers and vitamin supplements. The uptake of Healthy Start vouchers in Northampton borough in August 2019 was 56%. Nationally the uptake in this period was 52%.

A recent recruitment to a public health role has the function to develop a coordinated plan of existing work to tackle obesity across the County and identify key gaps that can be collectively worked on through a whole systems approach.

There are also projects around fuel poverty and healthy schools that seek to improve people's uptake of means tested support e.g. support to reduce fuel poverty and to provide free school meals.

Food poverty is an issue affecting the whole county and while there will be geographical and demographic variation the core issues, principles, actions and goals will be similar across all the boroughs and districts.

With the move to the two unitary authorities a way forward could be to use this issue to come together across the County and consider the following actions for local authorities recommended by Sustain:

- Developing a **food action plan** to tackle food poverty
- Improving the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers
- Promoting breastfeeding via the Baby Friendly Initiative
- Harnessing the value of children's centres
- Ensuring low-income families have adequate access to childcare
- Ensuring children's access to food 365 days a year
- Becoming a Living Wage employer and promoting the Living Wage
- Ensuring all residents have physical access to good food
- Supporting and enhancing meals on wheels provision
- Supporting financial advice services and providing crisis support

Food poverty is a complex issue and so has multiple and overlapping causal factors and impacts on health and wellbeing.

As noted by the Trussell Trust there are a widening group of people affected by food poverty, destitution and hunger¹⁶. Those vulnerable to food poverty are likely to be disadvantaged in other ways that have a negative impact on health and wellbeing.

Some specific associations with higher risk of food banks use include those who have a disability or health condition, lone parents and families with 3 or more children, those who have experienced adverse life events such as bereavement or loss of a job plays a role in food bank usage.

A national survey conducted by the NEU indicates teachers concerned over pupils missing meals during the school holidays¹⁷ and describe how the

¹⁶ Trussell Trust, 2019 The State of Hunger

¹⁷ <https://neu.org.uk/press-releases/neu-survey-increase-amount-teenagers-going-hungry-during-summer-holidays>

impacts of lack of school meals during the holidays and how these are compounded by:

- Increased pressure on family food budget
- Increased costs in Child care
- Increased Fuel bills (even cooking food has a cost)
- Social contact is diminished
- School readiness and learning decline
- Family Stress elevated

There is national evidence of adults skipping meals to save money so that their children can eat. For example, in London in 2018 33% skipped meals¹⁸

One project funded by the NCC Public Health Grant – Food with Dignity – was set up to address the issue of holiday hunger. As part of its application it recorded:

KCU (Kettering Community Unit) food bank statistics and local feedback:

Between October 2017 and September 2018, 1,495 adults and 1,032 children were fed through the food bank. Since the start of rollout of Universal Credit (October 2018), there has already been over a 30% increase on the figures in food parcel requirements. In areas where full rollout has been going for 1 year, the average increase in food bank usage is 52%.

Researchers at Thomas Coram speaking with children on the impacts on their lives.¹⁹

- Children in low income families are going hungry and missing out on healthy food and social activities that their peers take for granted. Lack of money and food cause children physical pain, feelings of guilt and shame and a sense of social exclusion; Children in lone parents' families are at greater risk of food poverty than others, reflecting broad poverty trends. Since most lone parents are mothers, the health implications of parental sacrifice are gendered;
- Free school meals are sometimes delivered in a discriminatory and stigmatising way and often don't buy enough to fill someone up.

¹⁸ GLA, 2018 Final London Food Strategy

¹⁹ CPAG 2019 Living Hand to Mouth

They recommended:

- Healthy free school meals should be available to all children at school. Solutions to food poverty must address the root causes of low and irregular wages, inadequate benefits and the high cost of essentials that leave parents struggling to make ends meet.

Northamptonshire County Council supports disadvantaged groups who are vulnerable to food insecurity through a number of its statutory services as well as non-statutory offers.

The Adult Learning Service provides a “healthy cooking on a budget” course to provide communities with skills to prepare healthy meals with fruits and vegetables while

As noted above the Public Health within NCC provides support around reducing the burden of food poverty in the following ways:

- Intelligence –
 - The public health team have a responsibility to produce Joint Strategic Needs Assessments that identify local health and wellbeing priorities.
- Commissioning –
 - Through our commissioned services (primarily the Public Health Nursing Service) we:
 - Work with health visitors to improve uptake of Healthy Start scheme
 - Maintain level 3 accreditation for the Baby Friendly Initiative as part of the public health nursing contract.
 - Work with health visitors to promote breastfeeding as part of infant feeding offer
- Partnership and project working-
 - Our work also includes areas that have an impact on the determinants of food poverty including:
 - Projects working with schools to improve uptake of free school meals.
 - Projects to reduce fuel poverty and address other wider determinants including access to training and employment will contribute to reducing food poverty.
 - Obesity prevention activities including promoting cooking on a budget skill and shaping food environments to reduce accessibility of fast food.

Bringing together local leaders

Identify a strategic group to come together and map the need, current provision and develop a way forward across:

Tackling the underlying causes of food poverty

This includes working on local economic development, access to training and good quality jobs as well as a living wage and improving access to benefits.

Improving access to existing support for those at risk of food poverty

This includes improving uptake of free school meals, healthy start vouchers and other related support for prevention of acute food poverty.

Working at local community level to address food poverty

This includes improving access to affordable healthy foods through working on local community growing schemes and working with local businesses.

Pupil premium for deprivation is provided to schools on the basis of the number of pupils on the school roll that have ever eligible for FSM, (including those not currently eligible for FSM). Pupil Premium is also awarded on the basis of other elements of need e.g. children who have previously been “looked after children” and children of those previously in service in the armed forces.

Nationally, data on pupil premium values is reported according to the upper tier authority or parliamentary constituency that the school is located in and not lower tier authorities.

Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility, conversely, is available at borough level and is presented below:

Table 2. - Free School Meals Eligibility - January School Census 2019

District	% Eligible	Eligible	Total on Roll
Northamptonshire	10.4%	12300	118504
Corby	12.5%	1598	12831
Daventry	9.3%	1009	10897

East Northants	8.6%	1022	11920
Kettering	10.2%	1688	16517
Northampton	11.7%	3934	33642
South Northants	4.5%	812	18097
Wellingborough	12.3%	1543	12513
PRU	47.5%	96	202
Special	31.7%	598	1885

Public Health promoted the development of a food poverty strategy and note that the process of developing a food poverty strategy can of itself have wider impacts such as:

- Raising the profile of food poverty, especially with local decision-makers
- Developing a shared positive vision
- Creating a sense of empowerment for experts by experience
- Empowering diverse groups to raise their voices to call for food justice
- Ensuring the local council and other partners take ownership of agreed actions
- Sharing of good practice across local authority boundaries to support specific projects²⁰

Partnership Manager, Department of Work and Pensions

- Unemployment rate is 3.7% and is the lowest since the 1970s. More people have moved into work.
- The Department of Work and Pensions works closely with many organisations to support deprived areas and has outreach workers.
- “Entitled to calculation” can be undertaken and Officers can then look at the individual’s circumstances. Individuals would never be asked to move from a

²⁰ Developing food poverty action plans 2019, Sustain

Legacy Benefit to Universal Credit unless this was financially better for them. Officers help individuals make best use of the income that they have.

- Universal Credit pays more the less an individual earns. It is based on earnings. If an individual is on a zero hours contract and does not work at all this then remains consistent; a taper for Universal Credit is detailed on the website of the Department of Work and Pensions.
- The employer must notify HMRC of the earnings of each employee.
- There is huge process that takes place before sanctions are implemented. Sanctions are the last thing that HMRC wants to introduce. The aim is to get the individual's money right and ready from the first assessment.
- The potential causes of individuals having to use food banks can be considered this to be mismanagement of money. HMRC can do entitlement assessments.
- HMRC works collaboratively with partner organisations to help people. It has a claim commitment but it needs individuals to tell officers about their circumstances. Individuals can contact HMRC for assistance.
- The Partnership Manager goes to Corby and Towcester food banks and works with them to see what their income is and assist them. Sarah Holton confirmed that she was very happy to attend a food bank in Northampton and work with users. Housing is always going to be an issue as rents can often be very high; HMRC cannot influence the rents. Costs of housing is often higher than housing benefit of the housing element of Universal Credit.
- HMRC has partner organisations that can assist people with claims.
 - DWP has a visiting team.
 - The Universal Credit app is easy to use.
- Under a Legacy contract, should individuals work more than 16 hours a week their benefit would be reduced and their claim closed. With Universal Credit, if an individual's earnings fluctuated – e.g. more earnings, less credit the account would only close if they earned more than Universal Credit. If the job comes to an end, they can notify change of circumstances and a re-assessment is done.
- There is a programme of training in place that comprises 39 vulnerabilities. Mental health training includes suicide and ex-offenders. She highlighted that her Office is not a trainer to give support regarding mental health but they can and do signpost.
- It was realised that some individuals are fearful to go to the Job Centre. There are lots of posters in the Job Centre regarding partner agencies.
- A lot of outreach takes place through schools and advice can be given.
- The Partnership Manager regularly visits NBC and is part of the Welfare Reform meetings; that comprise a number of partners. Improvements come from these meetings.

Chief Executive, Hope Centre

- Food poverty is just one way of looking at poverty as a whole. Food poverty is not some separate thing: it is labelled in this way simply because in a world of surplus food, people think they can ameliorate it with the surplus they have or is available. The term is superfluous: we are talking about poverty. But if it helps the public to become motivated about poverty as a whole, because they believe they can make a difference, as with homelessness, then it has awareness value. Therefore, poverty impacts on health, wellbeing, mental health, child development, obesity/malnutrition, dental poor health, crime, unemployment, future prospects and civil harmony. An unequal society is bad for itself, as studies such as the 'Spirit Level' have shown.
- National data suggests that as many as 14m or 21% of the population are in some form of poverty²¹. Given that Northampton is comparably poorer than the average for Britain by a ratio of 1:1.12 (based on salary average), this suggests that in Northampton, with a population of 225000, there are 53000 people (or 23.52%) in relative poverty. These are people who on a weekly basis experience issues of poverty which include issues with food. Within this total, 9.33% can be defined as destitute, or 4944 people²². Realistically, this can be seen as a likely shorthand figure for those who might access regular food aid provision but others will need help periodically from sources beyond their immediate families.
- Transferrable Canadian data²³ suggests that no more than 20% of people in the highest levels of need ever approach food aid provision, for reasons of stigma etc.
- The above figure includes a disproportionate number who are of ethnic minorities; and women are generally thought to most likely to offer food to their children before themselves, meaning even within poor families, women are more likely to experience food issues. Obviously, the figures are averaged, so this masks concentration in areas of greatest deprivation.
- The government gives some tax encouragement to food retailers to share surplus food. Beyond this, there is no strategic action beyond broader welfare provision. That which is done is solely at the inspiration of individual organisations, both statutory (e.g. Partnership Homes, NCC Public Health, as supplied) and mainly charitable, often church based. There is a county food poverty group but this is not strategic; it largely engages only in strategic campaigning. It does very little to co-

²¹ <https://fullfact.org/economy/poverty-uk-guide-facts-and-figures/> ;
<https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN07096>

²² https://naccom.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/destitution2018_0.pdf

²³ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11266-018-0039-2>

ordinate or support food aid providers nor engineer any organised supply or sharing of food.

- Within the voluntary sector nationally the Trussell Trust is in essence a franchise system for local foodbanks, from a Christian perspective: it has no local co-ordinary function, even amongst its own registered foodbanks. IFAN is a loose alliance of other providers, of which Hope is a member (and former board member) but does little co-ordination, mainly focusing on national campaigning.
- Within the retail industry there is no strategic co-ordination, either nationally or locally. Fareshare is a national charity with regional (not local) branches supported by various companies, but it is not strategic. If you want food from Fareshare, you contact them and they arrange this, but it is chaotic and unstrategic, and often of variable quality, focused on short life, sometimes unusable items near use by date, which is not supplied in a co-ordinated way, can become unusable between their supply to food aid providers and its distribution to customers. It contains little ambient food. This is a just a fragment of the food supplied by supermarkets, which is offered chaotically to charities every day of the week, wasting time and money with multiple wasted journeys for a smashed pallet of rotten veg or pop, as is often the case. Much of that which they give away has no nutritional value.
- The closest to strategic food aid is not in practice organised at all by any single entity, but each year, in two waves, supplies a vast amount of the food that is in turn supplied by food aid providers across the UK. These are the Christian festivals of Harvest and Christmas, where Churches and Schools (and the general public, at Christmas) voluntarily choose to collect and supply food to charities like Hope and others. It is co-ordinated, if at all, only by organisations like Hope, to try to co-ordinate donations to enable their management and not become overwhelmed. This is a vast operation and can involve in Hope's case perhaps 30 tonnes of donated ambient long life items being gathered, collected, sorted and stored in two quite short, concentrated periods. Because of Hope's size and efficiency, we are the closest to offering a structured way of managing what is in effect a spontaneous outpouring of kindness, but even we struggle at Christmas where we receive as much in clothes as food. If we have surplus, we then pass on to others (there is a degree of sharing amongst foodbanks generally, it isn't structured, it just comes from relationships and mutual respect).
- Because of this seasonality, most foodbanks and Hope are running low after Easter 2020, with real issues later in the summer 2020.
- There is a real need for structured leadership of local food aid, with co-ordination to get short life food to organisations who can use it best; to co-ordinate pickups and manage the supermarkets. In practice there is competition, for the supermarket food, where slots to access their offerings are fiercely fought over. Some providers are especially competitive.

- Hope is moving to seeing its large warehouse (the single biggest in the county, by some distance) as being a community food hub where we, through size and organisation and funding, can support smaller foodbanks to access food through us. We would welcome opportunity to do this on a more structured basis, becoming a local distributor to other local food aid projects, a role really needed.
- There are two broad ways of looking at why people are food poor: one, that they are feckless, lazy, can't manage the money, don't know how to cook, have too many children, are drug addicts, spend their money on fags etc etc. The second is that the low level of wages and benefits, in relation to other costs, like food, travel, and most of all, housing, mean that regardless of their personalities or individual characteristics, they are largely poor because they don't have enough money, including if they are working. Hope would generally recognise the latter view as being more broadly accurate. The best way to reduce such poverty would be a functioning welfare state or incomes policy with government commitment to ending poverty but sadly this not the case, as poverty increases daily and will likely get worse. The solutions to this at individual level may include education and teaching, but we are not aware of much structured work of this type and are in any case, secondary to improved income levels.
- At the local level a commitment by the council and pressure on its contractors do become Living wage employers would help, setting an example and applying leverage.
- In terms of activity within food aid settings, Hope supports the progressive approach in part of the food aid movement as members of IFAN. This model of practice includes such activity as:
 - Campaigning against low wages and benefits
 - Growing food locally
 - Support for people to learn new skills and get better paid work
 - Empowering service users to be voices for change, improving confidence etc
 - Sale based methods of food aid, such as social supermarkets, selling food at proper prices, rather than making it entirely charitable.
- Hope does all these (see 'Big Hunger' MIT 2017 by Andy Fisher for further examples of such initiatives). There are a number of other examples of progressive work but these are not means of reducing dependence on food aid but do have other value, such as refusing to supply large quantities of unhealthy food to users, not requiring referrals by health or social care professionals, not limiting to 3 parcels in crisis only, dignified offer of food, no evangelising as a condition for food etc).

- It is sometimes suggested that the addition of wrap around services can reduce continuing use of food aid. This includes benefits advice, access to drugs, alcohol and mental health support, plus education. All of these are potentially useful and Hope makes all of these available. However, they should be used in the context of the measures above and not conditional; i.e. there can be no assumption that people must take such services up to access food aid. There should be no presumption of need for such services as they are only in some cases the cause of need. Whether better take up of already inadequate benefits provides any real solution is arguable. Even where people have everything they are entitled to, they still experience food poverty.
- The benefits system and proper wages are the most effective methods.
- Aside from small scale efforts conducted by specific agencies and groups for their own customers, and the work carried out by Partnership Homes and the educational role of Public Health, previously submitted, the overwhelming response at any scale is from the voluntary sector and the churches.
- The churches offer foodbanks, Hope offers a social supermarket, where food and toiletries are supplied at charge, usually 1/3 or less of retail price, with lots of free items (sanitary products, toothbrushes and toothpaste etc). People pay a membership fee of £2 a month, but thereafter can attend every week, whereas in foodbanks people are often restricted to 3 visits in crisis, although often that is relaxed. You often have to be referred to foodbanks; you can self-present to Hope, our only condition being evidence of benefit status, including in work benefits.
- The other main distinction between foodbanks and Hope's offer is the volume of fresh food, especially veg and fruit. Many foodbanks mostly have access to ambient food only, and have much more limited amounts of fresh. This reflects the donation pattern. Hope avoids this by growing a lot of veg ourselves on our extensive allotments, and by sourcing fresh food. Some foodbanks grow a little veg themselves, but not in the serious manner Hope attempts (as an example, we have 14x as much growing land as Re: Store).
- There is some wrap around support at some local foodbanks, and at Hope. We have a student social worker attending most sessions to refer into Hope's wider provision. This is unconditional in offer.
- We feed about 250 people a week.
- There is also Elsie's café, or Shop Xero. Technically this is not a food poverty project, as anyone can go in and buy; its main ethos is food waste rather than poverty, though inevitably people on low incomes go to their shop, so it makes some contribution.

- It should also be recognised that Hope's day centre and street-based food distribution offers food support to some of the most destitute, including the homeless. Long before there were food banks, there were soup kitchens, feeding not just homeless people, as they still do. We see up to 130 people a day in the Hope day centre.
- Greater co-ordination of food aid would be welcome, but not necessarily by the Borough, but the Borough can be influential in encouraging this, as could NCC. Food aid is a voluntary sector/faith community thing, and given so little funding is made available, attempting to co-ordinate that which it does not fund would not be appropriate. If funding were available then it would be a different matter, but the key role and leadership of the independent sector should be recognised and retained.
- We have talked about setting an example by wages etc earlier.
- The Borough and NCC could also make larger amounts of land available for growing veg, but this would need revenue support for gardeners. A local sustainable food strategy would be a good idea, as Hope played a significant role within during 2018 but has been unable to continue due to other pressures in 2019.
- Making available free or discount warehouse space to enable Hope or others to organise and store food would be a help. Our current warehouse is a major financial challenge. Making shop space available would be really helpful.
- The shortage of food to provide to people in need is the single, overwhelming issue.
- The overwhelming canard of food poverty is that it can be 'solved' by greater use of food 'waste', or surplus food, mainly from supermarkets. Supermarkets are becoming very adept at managing their stock lines so the amount of fresh, short life food they have is reducing all the time. We have said before, what they make available is literally only the things they cannot sell, much of which is very unhealthy. Shops give away almost nothing fresh, and little of nutritional value, and they never supply ambient in volume, as profit rules here. You can access better stuff through upchain communication with the industry via Fareshare etc but locally only really Hope and Shop Zero are organised enough to do this, and again, volume is really quite limited and in practice Hope and others pay to receive this, it's not free.
- Most of what Hope offers has been donated by the general public. There is quite simply not enough food in *any* category available to feed all of the people who

could be in need or even might seek help. If all of the most acutely in need group came in for food aid, i.e. the c.5000 people identified above, the collective food aid providers of Northampton simply could not feed them. We could do so perhaps for a few weeks after Christmas, when our stores are full, but they would be emptied before Easter. There simply is not enough donated food, or food waste available to meet the potential level of need out there at the present time. To achieve this would require food retailers to donate a much higher volume of food, including fresh produce and ambient food at scale, and the general public to donate vastly more, and for a much larger amount of food to be grown by Hope or others. This is not a matter of small-scale tinkering, but really significant change in behaviour and attitude by everyone, including advertising to overcome stigma and encourage take up.

- Hope is exploring sourcing fresh or even ambient food on the wholesale market and will trial this in 2020. This will effectively just be a shop where we don't aim to make the excessive profit of the ordinary food retail sector, but do cover costs, where access is again restricted to those on low incomes. Lease of a building or shop at zero cost would be a great help here, enabling us to keep the food price low.
- Holiday hunger is simply another way of describing poverty, breaking down food poverty into yet another category.

Deputy CEO, Northamptonshire Community Foundation and facilitator of Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network

- Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network was convened in 2012 as part of the community leadership role of Northamptonshire Community Foundation when it recognised as a grant maker and funder an emerging trend of an increasing number of food banks and food aid providers applying for funds and the increase of local communities experiencing food insecurity
- During 2013 and 2014 the community foundation received £10,000 over the two-year period to convene the network and support the strategy of the council to tackle poverty in Northamptonshire. Other key members of the network were also funded including Phoenix Resource Centre receiving £10,000 per year over two years to provide storage and transport support to sharing resources between food banks. This funding ended by 2015.
- Since 2016 Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network has strategically aligned with a network of food poverty alliances through the national End Hunger UK campaign and commits to campaigning, training and events. Local campaigns and events have included launching a Fair Deal for Kids appeal with Northampton Chronicle

and Echo: <https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/how-can-8-400-northampton-children-be-living-hand-to-mouth-in-2018-we-relaunch-fair-deal-for-kids-campaign-1-8445606> , End Hunger UK campaign week, media and campaign training for network members, regular press releases of food insecurity, working in partnership with Oxfam to bring a food insecurity exhibition to Northampton: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQmEEjBUiSM> , promoting the findings of the Children's Future Food Inquiry, working on a campaign with BBC Radio Northampton focusing on child food insecurity and a programme of events bringing in national charity and aid agencies to talk about policy and best practice to tackle food insecurity. Northamptonshire Community Foundation continues to fund members of the network and key food aid providers to deliver their services. The End Hunger UK Campaign seeks to raise awareness of food poverty and is supported by a coalition of national charities and local food poverty alliances including Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network. It calls on the Government to do their part to address the root causes of food poverty and ensure public policy reduces rather than exacerbates food poverty. We also provide an online food aid directory. A recent campaign win is the commitment of the measurement of food insecurity by the Government. The first statistics are due for release in April 2020: <https://www.endhungeruk.org/2019/02/27/campaign-win-uk-government-agrees-to-measure-household-food-insecurity/>

- Government, councils, health bodies and other statutory agencies should play a central role in reducing food poverty in the UK. This should complement the role of the voluntary and community sector. Action by government, councils and others should address the root causes of food poverty and avoid unreasonable demands being placed on charities, faith organisations, volunteers and others responding to local need.
- The Department of Health defines food poverty as *'The inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet.'*
- Food poverty currently affects 8.4 million people in the UK who struggle to get enough to eat. This includes many households with people in work, families with children, as well as older and disabled people.
- It can affect children who lack free school meals during the holidays; parents on low incomes going without food so that their children can eat; working people whose low wages leave them struggling to buy healthy food; or older people unable to prepare meals without support.
- Hunger and unhealthy diets are symptoms of poverty. The root causes are the structural inequalities in household incomes and access to food. This includes low and insecure wages impacted by zero-hour contracts and/or pay that does not reflect the minimum living wage; an inadequate welfare safety net; lack of access to affordable and healthy food.

- The government must urgently address these inequalities. All households must have enough money to thrive, not just survive, through a living wage or an adequate welfare safety net, and healthy food should be more readily available and less expensive than unhealthy food.
- Key local contributory factors identified by members of Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network on rising food insecurity and child food insecurity:
 - Housing – particularly the number of families in temporary accommodation, no of families in overcrowded accommodation e.g. family of 2 adults 2 children are now not classed as overcrowded if they live in a one bed flat. Many of our families live in these cramped conditions – how can this help family life?
 - Universal credit – and the rise of food bank usage
 - Long term impact on children – being raised in poverty with parents who are not supported and who are unable to offer aspiration
 - Reduction in funding for essential services – CAMHS, Social care – thresholds getting higher so that more people are not getting any support
 - Demise of services for families – closure of children’s centres, cuts to support voluntary organisations
 - lack of services and that in our area it was really just us, Free2Talk and the schools
 - Schools could play a role to encourage both local and national Government to take matter seriously---real lack of awareness
 - Theresa May AS Prime Minster offer of policy to support those who are ‘just about managing’; instead the numbers have increased and many more people are struggling – people in work are in poverty. Nationally, there are not enough policies that are not accommodating people who are working but struggling.
 - Locally, the issues around Sure start are still manifesting itself – many of the above low-income families would use that agency for advice and consultation and also exacerbated by the whole cut to library services. Many projects have closed down or reduced their service offer which has a knock-on effect.
 - There’s an expectation that a voluntary organisation will be picking up a lot of this - they too are struggling to meet the needs.
 - There is a lack of staffing resources and so there is a lack of collaborative problem solving between public services and charities.
 - Brexit will add to the above pressure as policies stand and has overtaken the above issues relating to poverty.
 - Universal credit, especially for people who had never had to budget for a month at a time and for the long first period when you first go on it.
 - Housing - both NPH and private landlords and how many families we come across are living in conditions listeners would be shocked by for example people are now expected to use their living space as a bedroom so we have families with 2 young children in a one bed flat etc
 - Effects of long-term unemployment and also how difficult it is to start work when you know if you come off universal credit and the job then doesn’t work out you will have to wait another 5 weeks for any payment to come through.

- Key evidence and data submitted by the Deputy Chief Executive, Northamptonshire Community Foundation and facilitator of Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network:
- **United Nations Philip Alston Report on extreme poverty in the UK 2019:** <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/41/39/Add.1>
- **Summary:** The Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Philip Alston, undertook a mission to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from 5 to 16 November 2018. Although the United Kingdom is the world's fifth largest economy, one fifth of its population (14 million people) live in poverty, and 1.5 million of them experienced destitution in 2017. Policies of austerity introduced in 2010 continue largely unabated, despite the tragic social consequences. Close to 40 per cent of children are predicted to be living in poverty by 2021. Food banks have proliferated; homelessness and rough sleeping have increased greatly; tens of thousands of poor families must live in accommodation far from their schools, jobs and community networks; life expectancy is falling for certain groups; and the legal aid system has been decimated. The social safety net has been badly damaged by drastic cuts to local authorities' budgets, which have eliminated many social services, reduced policing services, closed libraries in record numbers, shrunk community and youth centres and sold off public spaces and buildings. The bottom line is that much of the glue that has held British society together since the Second World War has been deliberately removed and replaced with a harsh and uncaring ethos. A booming economy, high employment and a budget surplus have not reversed austerity, a policy pursued more as an ideological than an economic agenda.
- **Poverty Report:** <https://socialmetricscommission.org.uk/social-metrics-commission-2019-report/>
- **Summary:** More than 14 million people, including 4.5 million children, are living below the breadline, with more than half trapped in poverty for years, according to a new measure aimed at providing the most sophisticated analysis yet of material disadvantage in the UK. The measure seeks to forge a fresh political consensus between left and right over how to define and track poverty, with the aim of encouraging better-targeted poverty interventions, and making it easier to hold politicians to account. It finds poverty is especially prevalent in families with at least one disabled person, single-parent families, and households where no one works or that are dependent for income on irregular or zero-hours jobs.
- **Children's Future Food Inquiry:** <https://foodfoundation.org.uk/childrens-future-food-inquiry/>

- Summary:** In a society that believes in compassion and justice, it is unacceptable that children's development is being restricted by the effects of poverty. The number of children experiencing symptoms of food insecurity, or whose family income is evidently insufficient to afford a healthy diet amounts to between 2.5 and 4 million; between 20% and 30% of all children in the UK. We cannot allow this to continue. One in three children (4.1million) are living in poverty in the UK. For their families to be able to afford the Government's recommended diet, they would have to spend an estimated 35% of their income on food, once their housing costs have been taken care of. This is not a realistic option, given the restrictive effects of the rising cost of living, prevalence of low-paid, insecure jobs, and the freeze on benefits. On average, after housing costs, households with children spend around 18% of their income on food. A proportion of children living in poverty experience food insecurity. UNICEF estimates on the basis of a small but nationally representative survey that 2.5 million (19%) British children live in food insecure households. This means that there are times when their household does not have enough money to acquire enough food, or they cannot buy the full variety of foods needed for a healthy diet. The devastating consequences Hunger is an extremely debilitating experience. It damages physical health. It is a cause of great personal distress. It is a social harm. Food insecurity brings profound anxiety and stress into family life which can trigger depression, aggressive behaviour in children, a sense of hopelessness, and overwhelming stress for parents struggling to give their children the best start. It affects children's school attendance, achievement and attainment: children who are hungry in class cannot concentrate or may be disruptive. In addition, the long summer holidays are estimated to result in weeks of learning loss for some children through a combination of social isolation, low levels of stimulation and activity, and poor diets. Food insecurity also affects the quality of children's diets, which brings increased risks of obesity and poor child growth. The magnitude and importance of childhood food insecurity requires systemic change, rather than short term, ad hoc projects.

CEO, Community Law (CLS)

- Whilst Community Law (CLS) have directly referred 42 clients to a food bank in the last 12 months, it considers a lot of its work prevents the need to make such referrals. CLS also has a policy of only making such referrals when the individual is its client and actively engaging with advice; this is to prevent a foodbank referral simply be used as a 'sticky plaster' to solve a problem in the short term rather than addressing the long term or underlying reason for the need. For the last 6 months, CLS has held a fortnightly advice session within the Cafe at Emmanuel Church when they hold their foodbank session. Since it started there, it has advised 52 people, all of whom have presented as being in need of food, but who also have expressed that their issues with food are related to money issues. It

provides the people it sees with advice on benefits, debt and fuel poverty all to provide a holistic approach to addressing the difficulties they have with a view to reducing the risk of them returning to food poverty in a very short period of time

- Independent benefit, debt and fuel poverty advice is very effective and addressing food poverty. It places people in the best possible position to be able to afford food. It does this in a number of ways:
 - It ensures people are accessing all the money they are entitled to
 - Their debts are managed by making realistic and affordable arrangements/moratoriums agreed
 - All relevant grants are applied for to clear any energy debt
 - People know what is a priority and do not spend their limited funds on things which are not a priority at the expense of essential items
 - People's outgoings are reviewed and reduced wherever possible, such as checking energy supplier and switching where appropriate
- To receive an understanding of how food poverty is addressed CLS provide specialist benefit, debt and fuel poverty advice. One of the root causes of food poverty is usually related to lack of money to buy food. The advice set out above addresses this.
- It is also an agency who make active referrals to foodbanks as appropriate so that people are not left without food. CLS along with numerous other agencies, retain emergency food which is donated by staff and given to clients when there is not an available food bank session.
- CLS believes investment in independent advice to address the money issues people in the borough are facing is one very positive way to address food poverty. Demand outstrips supply presently with almost every drop-in advice session held at the Guildhall being oversubscribed coupled with a 2-3 wait for appointments. Staff are placed under a lot of pressure, trying to respond to more urgent cases and manage large caseloads due to a lack of available appointments.

Director, RE: STORE

- Poverty as a whole is complex and multi-faceted, there is no single cause or single solution. Families and individuals facing food poverty have often faced many other types or aspects of poverty, including insecure housing, lack of finance fuel (so no heating/lighting/cooking facilities), adequate clothing and essentials. This has a negative impact on physical and mental health, especially if lived experience for several years (or in some cases for multiple generations). In the same way, food poverty increases this spiral of deprivation. Those accessing emergency food provision are most often desperate and ashamed, at their lowest point. Restore offers hope, dignity and solutions to a way forward. This can be practical - addressing housing needs, access to benefits, or building skills to work towards employment or become more self-sufficient. Many have reported that they are isolated and unsupported elsewhere, so Restore also offers emotional and spiritual support and care, through welcoming into a safe non-judgemental environment, listening, signposting to specialist services such as MIND, offering prayer where appropriate, and building peer support.
- Food poverty covers all areas of our borough, and some are more actively mobilised to address their need through food banks, whereas other areas (cultures, age groups, communities) may be more self-sufficient or support themselves within their own communities. However, it does know that Central Northampton has a significantly higher number of clients accessing Northampton Food Bank and our related services than any other area, with more than double the number in the next postcode area. This Data has been collected from the Distribution Points of Northampton Food Bank across the town (Duston, Eastfield, Spinney Hill, Kings Heath and Central Northampton).
- Below the table highlights client location. Further breakdown. The highest areas of need are as follows (based on 100-400 clients in this postcode area): NN1 - ALL Northampton Central NN2 6 & NN2 7 - Kingsthorpe, Kingsley Park, Semilong, Sunnyside, Whitehills NN3 2 - Abington (Birchfield Rd area) NN3 5 & 8 - Lings, Blackthorn, Goldings, Thorplands, Rectory Farm NN 3 9 - Little Billing NN4 8 - Briar Hill, Far Cotton & Delapre NN5 5 - St James NN5 7 - Kings Heath:

Re:store Northampton Referrals Nov 2019

	Number Clients		
NN1	1862	NORTHAMPTON	Northampton
NN2	799	NORTHAMPTON	Kingshorpe , Boughton
NN3	1035	NORTHAMPTON	Abington (East), Bellinge, Blackthorn, Boothville , Ecton Brook, Great Billing, Headlands, Kingsley Park, Lings, Little Billing, Moulton, Moulton Park, Rectory Farm, Round Spinney, Southfields, Spinney Hill, Standens Barn, Weston Favell
NN4	366	NORTHAMPTON	Brackmills , Delapré , East Hunsbury , Far Cotton , Grange Park , Great Houghton , Hardingstone , West Hunsbury , Wootton
NN5	784	NORTHAMPTON	Duston, New Duston Kings Heath, St James, Dallington, Spencer, St Crispins, Upton
NN6	51	NORTHAMPTON	Brixworth, Cold Ashby, Crick, Earls Barton, Ecton, Guilsborough, Long Buckby Spratton, Sywell, West Haddon, East Haddon, Chapel Brampton, Church Brampton
NN7	59	NORTHAMPTON	Blisworth , Bugbrooke , Castle Ashby , Cogenhoe , Dodford , Flora Gayton , Grafton Regis , Hackleton , Harpole , Harlestone , Hartwell , Horton , Milton Malsor , Nether Heyford , Piddington , Preston Deanery , Quinton , Roade , Rothersthorpe , Stoke Bruerne , Weedon Bec , Yardley Gobion , Yardley Hastings
NN8	39	WELLINGBOROUGH	Wellingborough , Wilby
NN9	4	WELLINGBOROUGH	Wellingborough , Chelveston , Finedon , Great Harrowden , Irthlingborough , Little Harrowden , Raunds
NN10	2	RUSHDEN	Higham Ferrers , Rushden , Wymington
NN11	19	DAVENTRY	Braunston , Daventry , Greens Norton , Hinton , Moreton Pinkney , Welton , Lower Shuckburgh
NN12	16	TOWCESTER	Abthorpe , Caswell , Greens Norton , Silverstone , Towcester , Weston
NN13	2	BRACKLEY	Brackley , Croughton , Farthinghoe , Hinton-in-the-Hedges , Westbury , Turweston , Mixbury
NN14	2	KETTERING	Broughton , Desborough , Geddington , Isham , Pytchley , Bothwell , Thorpe Malsor , Thrapston , Hardwick
NN15	3	KETTERING	Burton Latimer , Barton Seagrave
NN16	7	KETTERING	Kettering
NN17	1	CORBYP	Bulwick , Corby
NN18	2	CORBYP	Great Oakley , Little Oakley
NN29	2	WELLINGBOROUGH	Bozeat , Great Doddington , Irchester , Podington , Wollaston
No Fixed Abode	38		
TOTAL	5093		

- Together Re-Store seeks to work collaboratively to tackle food poverty, joining together services which offer food banks, food co-operatives, zero-waste schemes, and other forms of meal provision. Most of these services area crisis provision, with some services, like Re:store also addressing the reason for food poverty and helping people to make positive changes. The Network also advocates and campaigns for change at a local and national level.
- Re:store operates Northampton Food Bank with Distributions Points across the town and across the whole week (Duston, Eastfield, Spinney Hill, Kings Heath and Central Northampton). This is a referral based system, where households can receive 5 parcels a year, if they meet criteria (an interruption to usual income such as loss of job or benefit problems, so not just low income). Whilst around 5000 clients each year access this service, we are aware of thousands of households that are living in food poverty constantly that would not meet this criterion. Re:store offers a holistic response alongside providing crisis support through the Food Bank and Growbaby. The Distribution Point at Re:store HUB (Thursdays at Re:store) has professionals such as Citizen's Advice and Mind on site to offer advice, support and guidance to deal with the cause or symptoms of the poverty.

We have a range of trained volunteers and a lead Support Worker to also support, assist and signpost guests to address issues at hand. There are a range of other skills based opportunities, including supported volunteering, available to assist individuals to move forward from the point of crisis. Northampton Food Bank has always aimed to offer a hand up not just a hand out. Provision has changed and adapted over the years in response to the need and 3 other local service provision. For example, from 2017-19 we were offering a free hot meal twice a week, but as numbers increased and support needs were not being addressed as effectively it highlighted a dependency on the “hand out”. Instead now the community cafe (HUB) is coffee & cake and there is an emphasis on support element, whilst still being friendly and welcoming to all.

- Local charities and churches are attempting to address food poverty (in terms of emergency help) but actually there are systemic problems which are resulting in food poverty which are not being addressed, so the problem will never actually be resolved unless all parties work together to identify these problems and address them - and those experiencing food poverty need to be involved in this process. 7. How can the Borough Council, together with its partners, can collectively respond to food poverty? A good start would be to meet with Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network - gathering together all those working with the public, and also inviting those who have experienced food poverty. Hearing the reality first hand, and working out solutions together. It is a problem that the “Big Society” cannot solve alone. 8. In your opinion what are the specific issues relating to food poverty? Partly answered in the first questions, but our experience (evidenced by Citizen’s Advice on site) is that the main problems that are related would be housing insecurity (threats of eviction, short-term tenancies, lack of access to affordable housing etc) and financial barriers (benefits being interrupted/stopped, unfair sanctions which take time to appeal, zero-hour contracts, job insecurity). Many of those experiencing food poverty have previously worked or are working but lacking job security or the hours ‘promised’ on zero-hour contracts - often not being told that they are not needed until they turn up for work. Being on such contracts prevents access to benefits and lack of work means individuals cannot pay rent/bills/buy food etc. At a local government level, the lack of community and support services in Northampton has an impact on the most vulnerable in the town. Many adult and family services have been cut, including mental health and elderly care, meaning voluntary services are left to plug the gap. Likewise, the closure of community facilities such as libraries, and lack of investment in local parks, places and activities, means a reduction in community cohesion and peer support. Whilst this seems detached from the issue at hand, actually it has a dramatic impact as so many of those we support are isolated and do not know where to go for support, and certainly lack help from within their local community.

- Yes Restore is aware of holiday hunger, it has run special lunches though Summer 2019, and the year before, 2018 special food provision through the food bank. Both operated through referrals from local schools, identified by the Family Support Worker. However there was a low uptake to both projects. This does not reflect the lack of need, but the stigma and fear for families that still is attached to community projects addressing food poverty. However Re:Store is now engaging 60-80 adults and children each week through our family outreach activities, so feel this may help to overcome this.
- Northampton Food Bank Re:store operates Northampton Food Bank with Distributions Points across the town and across the whole week (Duston, Eastfield, Spinney Hill, Kings Heath and Central Northampton). This is a referral based system, where households can receive 5 parcels a year, if they meet criteria (an interruption to usual income such as loss of job or benefit problems, so not just low income). All food donated by individuals in Northampton, all volunteers from the local community. Growbaby Provision of food, clothes, toys and baby equipment (0-5yrs). Referrals from range of family support services, and donations from the local community. Drop-in session with a welcoming play area, free snacks and a more private area where the parent/ caregiver can select the clothing they need for their child as well as talk to our team for further practical or emotional support. Nest Award-winning play session with range of support services on site (including health professionals). Range of play activities led by qualified professionals working in voluntary capacity. Free snacks and high quality music time. Open to all, no referral needed. Attracts range of families from all backgrounds, including many with English as Second Language or who are otherwise isolated or vulnerable. Re:store Hub Free community cafe, with advice and support services, including Citzien's Advice. Access point for Northampton Food Bank. Various courses and opportunities running alongside this including wellbeing classes and money management support. Allotment Re:store Allotment is a volunteer led project, that seeks to grow skills and independence through growing fruit and vegetables. Participants are invited for a 4- 5 week course, to learn how to sow, grow and harvest edible plants, and welcomes complete beginners through to those with green fingers! Inspire Supported volunteering and mentoring scheme. Providing training opportunities and support to gain skills for life. It is ideal for those who are either struggling with confidence and self-esteem, are out of work, or wanting to develop skills in the workplace. The programme is tailored to each individual, with personal goals being set that are worked towards. Individuals are paired with a suitable mentor from Central Vineyard Church who meet up with them regularly to support them in reaching their goals.
- Despite Re:store running a town-wide Food Bank, it is not a long term solution to food poverty. 10 Years ago it began as a short-term support, but the extent it is now used highlights it has become part of the expected support network for the

town. The local government needs to look at policies that impact the most vulnerable and support services (or the closure of them).

CEO, Citizen's Advice Bureau

- CAB uses a case book system that tracks key issues and the statistics can be narrowed down by Borough, Ward etc.
- An example of case work was provided: a woman needed food for her 7 year old as well as nappies and milk for her 4 month old, she wouldn't go to a food bank but wasn't able to budget properly and had not receive the correct advice. She had presented at CAB for advice and support
- There is often a shortfall in the housing benefit and what landlords charge for rent
- CAB pays rent for its space in the One Stop at the Guildhall and that further grants would be of assistance
- CAB supported the Council Tax reduction scheme of 34% but would support 100% for the most vulnerable
- Council Tax is not proportionate to people's incomes. 50-70 Local Authorities in England and Wales provides 100% reduction in Council Tax to the most vulnerable
- CAB has found that 55% of people that claim Universal Credit have gone without essentials compared to 37% of those on legacy benefits
- People are now coming in to CAB for advice regarding day to day debt

3.6 Deputations to the meetings of the Scrutiny Panel

Public addresses and deputations were made to meetings of the Scrutiny Panel, key points:

- NBC is a Living Wage Foundation Living wage employer. It needs to take the next step and make it a contractual obligation for its contractors.
- Holiday hunger is about children not being able to access a hot meal during the school holidays. It is a real, material deprivation.
- Food poverty does not sit on its own. Many households, with children, cannot use food bank food because they cannot cook- because they have no cooker, or no fuel, or no pots- or none of these. Poverty goes very deeply over time, eroding all resources. Some poverty is more visible than others. Households with children are not particularly vulnerable and are particularly vulnerable.
- BAME communities are not well served by food banks. Often their dietary needs are not met at all.

- 16-18,000 children in Northampton are living in poverty.
- Often children in poverty come from a working family.
- There is a need for both the County Council and Northampton Borough Council to have an Ant-Poverty Strategy

3.7 Desktop research - Published reports and Data

Child Poverty Action Group (End Child Poverty) - Statistics

3.7.1 The Child Poverty Action Group reports a number of facts around poverty in general:

- There were 4.1 million children living in poverty in the UK in 2016-17.
- London is the area with the highest rates of child poverty in the country.
- Child poverty reduced dramatically between 1998/9-2011/12 when 800,000 children were lifted out of poverty. Since 2010, child poverty figures have flat-lined. The number of children in absolute poverty has increased by 0.5 million since 2010.
- As a direct result of tax and benefit decisions made since 2010, the Institute for Fiscal Studies project that the number of children in relative poverty will have risen from 3.6m to 4.3 million by 2020.
- Work does not provide a guaranteed route out of poverty in the UK. Two-thirds (67 per cent) of children growing up in poverty live in a family where at least one member works.
- Children in large families are at a far greater risk of living in poverty – 42% of children in poverty live in families with three or more children.
- Families experience poverty for many reasons, but its fundamental cause is not having enough money to cope with the circumstances in which they are living. A family might move into poverty because of a rise in living costs, a drop in earnings through job loss or benefit changes.
- Child poverty blights childhoods. Growing up in poverty means being cold, going hungry, not being able to join in activities with friends. For example, 50 per cent of families in the bottom income quintile would like, but cannot afford, to take their children on holiday for one week a year.
- Child poverty has long-lasting effects. By GCSE, there is a 28 per cent gap between children receiving free school meals and their wealthier peers in terms of the number achieving at least 5 A*-C GCSE grades.
- Poverty is also related to more complicated health histories over the course of a lifetime, again influencing earnings as well as the overall quality – and indeed length – of life. Men in the most deprived areas of England have a life expectancy 9.2 years shorter than men in the least deprived areas. They

also spend 14% less of their life in good health. Women share similar statistics.

- Child poverty imposes costs on broader society – estimated to be at least £29 billion a year. Governments forgo prospective revenues as well as commit themselves to providing services in the future if they fail to address child poverty in the here and now.
- Childcare and housing are two of the costs that take the biggest toll on families' budgets.

Source: <http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/key-facts/>

The full report can be accessed [here](#).

Statistics produced by the Child Action Group in relation to children living in poverty in Northampton during the period 2017/2018.

% of children living in poverty 2017/18

ONS code	Local Authority	Before Housing Costs			After Housing Costs			
		Number of children	% of children	Percentage point change since 2016/17	Number of children	% of children	Percentage point change since 2016/17	
E07000154	Northampton	10891	18.6%		0.8%	15725	26.8%	-0.2%
ONS code	Ward	% of children		% of children				
E05008836	Nene Valley		11.7%				19.6%	
E05008825	Billing		25.4%				33.2%	
E05008826	Boothville		7.9%				16.5%	
E05008848	Semilong		30.4%				40.8%	
E05008844	Riverside		16.4%				28.7%	
E05008837	New Duston		9.0%				16.5%	
E05008849	Spencer		27.7%				35.6%	
E05008828	Castle		27.9%				36.2%	
E05008852	Talavera		34.5%				37.7%	
E05008854	Upton		15.6%				25.3%	
E05008846	St David's		21.2%				31.8%	
E05008841	Parklands		7.5%				15.7%	
E05008824	Abington		14.6%				24.6%	
E05008840	Park		12.1%				17.5%	
E05008831	Eastfield		18.3%				26.0%	
E05008853	Trinity		16.5%				27.5%	
E05008851	Sunnyside		12.5%				22.2%	
E05008847	St James		16.8%				28.3%	
E05008835	Kingsthorpe		8.3%				18.7%	
E05008827	Brookside		32.2%				37.3%	
E05008855	West Hunsbury		19.1%				28.3%	
E05008834	Kingsley		13.8%				23.6%	
E05008845	Rushmills		15.8%				22.0%	
E05008838	Obelisk		13.5%				23.9%	
E05008830	East Hunsbury		9.3%				16.3%	
E05008832	Headlands		18.2%				24.8%	
E05008829	Delapre and Briar Hill		19.8%				28.6%	
E05008839	Old Duston		13.7%				23.7%	
E05008833	Kings Heath		26.4%				34.5%	
E05008850	Spring Park		9.1%				17.6%	
E05008843	Rectory Farm		32.0%				36.6%	
E05008856	Westone		10.0%				18.2%	
E05008842	Phippsville		17.8%				25.6%	

United Nations Report: Visit to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

3.8 A report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights was received by the Human Rights Council in June and July 2019.

3.8.1 The reported summary of the report is detailed below:

“Summary The Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Philip Alston, undertook a mission to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from 5 to 16 November 2018. Although the United Kingdom is the world’s fifth largest economy, one fifth of its population (14 million people) live in poverty, and 1.5 million of them experienced destitution in 2017. Policies of austerity introduced in 2010 continue largely unabated, despite the tragic social consequences. Close to 40 per cent of children are predicted to be living in poverty by 2021. Food banks have proliferated; homelessness and rough sleeping have increased greatly; tens of thousands of poor families must live in accommodation far from their schools, jobs and community networks; life expectancy is falling for certain groups; and the legal aid system has been decimated. The social safety net has been badly damaged by drastic cuts to local authorities’ budgets, which have eliminated many social services, reduced policing services, closed libraries in record numbers, shrunk community and youth centres and sold off public spaces and buildings. The bottom line is that much of the glue that has held British society together since the Second World War has been deliberately removed and replaced with a harsh and uncaring ethos. A booming economy, high employment and a budget surplus have not reversed austerity, a policy pursued more as an ideological than an economic agenda. “

The key sections of the report are around:

- a. Government’s reaction to preliminary findings
- b. Understanding poverty in the UK
- c. Dismantling the safety net
- d. Shortcomings of Universal Credit
- e. Poverty amongst specific groups
- f. Devolved administrations
- g. Brexit

The full report can be accessed [here](#)

3.9. The Trussell Trust – Published Statistics

A report of the Trussell Trust regarding the information that it publishes in relation to the number of emergency food supplies given to people in crisis by Trussell Trust food banks is published twice a year.

Trussell Trust reports that between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019 its food bank network distributed 1.6 million three-day emergency food supplies to people in crisis, which it states is an increase of 19% on the previous year. It goes on to comment that more than half a million of these went to children.

Regional breakdown of the figures for 2018/2019 are also reported by Trussell Trust.

East Midlands	Adults	Children	Total
	47,3331	28,328	75,659

Trussell Trust advises that its statistics are a measure of volume rather than unique users, and on average people needed around two food bank referrals in the last year. It collects its data by using an online system into which food banks enter data from each food bank voucher, and the number of three-day emergency food supplies is recorded.

An example is provided: “if a family of three was referred to a food bank twice in one year, this would count as six supplies on the system because it would reflect six instances on which a supply went to someone in the household. However, if a family of three were only referred to a food bank once, this would count as three supplies.”

It is highlighted by Trussell Trust that its figures cannot be used to fully explain the scale of food bank use across the UK, because our figures relate to food banks in our network and not to the hundreds of independent food aid providers. There are more than 1,200 food bank centres in its network across the UK.

Trussell Trust reports that the top three reasons for referral to a food bank in the Trussell Trust network in 2017-2018 were:

- Income not covering essential costs 33.11%
- Benefit delays 20.34%
- Benefit changes 17.36%

The full report can be accessed <here.C:\Users\ttiff\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\P13ME8YN\Summary>

House of Commons Library – Food Banks in the UK

The summary of the report detailed in the House of Commons Library – Food Banks in the UK (Published 1 October 2019):

“The primary source of data on food bank use is the Trussell Trust. This national charity provides food parcels to people referred to it by professionals such as doctors, health visitors, social workers and the Citizens Advice who meet certain requirements. Other charities also operate food banks or similar services, but there is no centrally collected data on them, except in Scotland. The data used here is mostly from the Trussell Trust, and so it should be considered incomplete – there are some areas where the Trussell Trust does not operate, but where other services may have delivered food parcels.”

This briefing has sections on:

- *The 2000 food banks in the UK, of which 1,200 are run by the Trussell Trust and 800 are independent*
- *Food parcel distribution statistics including the 19% rise from April 2018 to March 2019 in Trussell Trust figures*
- *Regional data; the North West being the part of the UK where the largest total number of Trussell Trust food parcels are distributed*

- *Food banks and parcels in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, with Scottish independent food banks being available in addition to Trussell Trust statistics, permitting a more complete picture*
- *Government introduction of food insecurity indicators, following an announcement made in February 2019*
- *Other food aid provision, such as meal providers, social supermarkets and initiatives aimed at school children”*

The Briefing Paper makes specific reference to the research undertaken by the Trussell Trust, a briefing note detailing its research is contained in an earlier agenda item of this meeting.

A copy of the full report can be accessed [here](#)

3.10 **Institute for Fiscal Studies Report: Living Standards, poverty and inequality in the UK: 2019**

The introduction of the report of the Institute for Fiscal Studies states:

“This report examines how living standards – most commonly measured by households’ incomes – have changed for different groups in the UK, and the consequences that these changes have for income inequality and for measures of deprivation and poverty. In this latest report, we focus in particular on those people who are poorest in society, with two of our three main chapters focusing on poverty.

The analysis in this report is chiefly based on data from two UK household surveys. The first is the Family Resources Survey (FRS), a survey of around 20,000 households a year, which contains detailed information on different sources of household incomes. We use household income variables derived from the FRS by the UK government’s Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). These measures of incomes underlie the DWP’s annual statistics on the distribution of income, known as ‘Households Below Average Income’ (HBAI). The FRS/HBAI data are available for the years from 1994–95 to 2017–18. They are supplemented by HBAI data derived from the Family Expenditure Survey (FES) for the years up to and including 1993–94. We also use data from the FES, and its later equivalents the Expenditure and Food Survey (EFS) and the Living Costs and Food Survey (LCF), to look at measures of households’ expenditure to help us to measure and understand the material living standards of poorer households.

The main outcomes of interest in this report are measures of household income. We use the measure of income that is used in the HBAI statistics. A few key points are worth summarising here:

- *Income is measured at the household level, i.e. as the total income of all individuals living in the same household. A household for these purposes is not the same as a family, which is defined simply as a single adult or couple and any dependent children they have. For instance, young adults living together (other than as a couple) would be classified as in the same household but not in the same family.*
- *Income is rescaled (‘equivalised’) to take into account the fact that households of different sizes and compositions have different needs.*
- *Income is measured after deducting income tax, employee and self-employed National Insurance contributions, and council tax, and it includes income from state benefits and tax credits.*
- *Income is measured both before housing costs have been deducted (BHC) and after they have been deducted (AHC).*

- All cash figures are presented in 2017–18 prices and all income growth rates are given after accounting for inflation. We adjust for inflation using measures of inflation based on the Consumer Prices Index, which are the same measures as are used by DWP in the government’s official HBAI statistics.

Because the data on household incomes are produced and released with some lag, we complement the results using another data set, the Labour Force Survey (LFS), for which Living standards, poverty and inequality in the UK: 2019 Institute for Fiscal Studies the latest available data cover 2018–19. Although these data do not measure household income, they provide high-quality information on the UK labour market, trends in which are key in determining living standards. This data set allows us to present results that are more up to date than those using household income data alone.

Since all the analysis is based on a sample from the population, all estimated statistics are subject to sampling error. It is therefore important to gauge whether changes are large enough that we can be confident they reflect real changes in the population as a whole, rather than random variation in the sample from one year to another. We frequently test whether estimated changes are ‘statistically significant’. In our analysis, being ‘statistically significant’ implies that an estimate is statistically significantly different from zero at the standard 5% significance level.

The rest of this report proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 contains our analysis of changes in average incomes in the UK, and how incomes have changed for richer and poorer people, and the knock-on consequences for income inequality. We also examine how household incomes have changed for people of different ages in recent years. Chapter 3 analyses changes in poverty, and the living standards of poorer households in general. We examine how ‘material deprivation’ (the inability to afford important material goods and services) has changed for families with children and for pensioners. Finally in this chapter, we examine the increase in relative pensioner poverty that has occurred in recent years. Chapter 4 analyses measures of – and trends in – severe poverty, which affects people with incomes significantly below the headline poverty lines. This is challenging because household surveys struggle to measure those with the very lowest (and the very highest) incomes in society, so we make use of a range of data sources to do so.

Finally, accompanying the release of this report, the same authors have written a standalone working paper (Bourquin et al., 2019), which examines the gradual, but important, rise in in-work poverty (the poverty rate for working-age families living in a working household) in the UK over the last 25 years. In it, we look at the role that changes in the labour market, tax and benefit system, and housing costs have played in this development. It forms part of the research undertaken as part of this report.”

The conclusion of the report details:

“Conclusion - Before summing up, it is worth reiterating a point we made in the introduction to this chapter. It is always likely to be difficult, even with the large-scale household survey data that are typically used to analyse the distribution of living standards, to pick up the most severe forms of poverty in the UK or, as some call it, destitution. Populations such as the homeless will, by definition, not appear in these surveys. Of those who can appear in a household survey, those in the most severe hardship may not reliably respond, or it may be difficult to distinguish them from people who are in fact much better off but whose resources have been under-recorded.

It is possible that there is increasing severe hardship among a very small proportion of the population which is simply undetectable with any confidence in these key data sources. There is some evidence in this respect, such as a rising number of people rough sleeping. But none of the analysis in this chapter has spoken to the frequency of destitution in the UK. We have, however, tried to assess what has happened to more severe forms of poverty than those measured by the headline statistics.

On none of our measures of severe poverty do we find any evidence of a significant rise in severe poverty 'hiding' behind the relatively small changes seen in headline measures of income poverty since 2010–11. Material deprivation rates (using both more and less severe thresholds) have clearly declined over the period, and the frequency with which people report being unable to afford those items most indicative of more severe poverty – such as keeping the home warm or keeping up with bills and debt repayments – has fallen by about as much as the frequencies for other items. Income and expenditure measures of severe poverty suggest little change, however. This discrepancy is not due to material deprivation falling only among those families not in poverty, because we see declines across the income distribution. It may be partly explained by the basic items, access to which is tracked by material deprivation measures, becoming cheaper (relative to other goods and services), though this evidence is only suggestive. Looking over a longer period, the modest declines in headline income poverty that have been seen since the mid 1990s do not appear to be reflected in more severe forms of poverty, with income- and expenditure-based measures suggesting a small increase over the period. However, some of this increase is driven by those with very low incomes who in fact on average have higher living standards; more generally, the unreliability of low incomes in survey data and the long-run fall in the coverage of spending in the LCF mean that we should be cautious in putting too much weight on these results.

In general, we find that those regions and nations of Great Britain that have higher rates of headline poverty also have higher rates of severe poverty, whichever measure of the latter we use; though severe poverty is slightly more concentrated in London and slightly less concentrated in the rest of the South than headline poverty.

We also find that the composition of those in severe poverty is more tilted towards social renters and workless households than for those in headline income poverty. But these trends are changing: just as private renters and working households are making up an increasing share of those in headline income poverty, they are also making up an increasing share of those in severe poverty.

As already stressed, drawing conclusions about those in severe poverty is made more challenging by the limitations of the data available. Some of these difficulties are at least partially surmountable. For example, the under-reporting of income could be made less acute if surveys were linked to administrative benefit and tax records. The increased use of internet shopping and credit and debit cards also may make higher-quality expenditure data possible. Surveys themselves could be improved by expanding the sample size and putting more resources into ensuring that as many households as possible respond.

Such improvements would by no means solve every difficulty with the analysis of severe poverty, which is by its very nature a challenging topic to study. But the ability of policymakers to tackle severe poverty, should they want to do so, is somewhat dependent upon the quality of the data available.”

The full report can be accessed [here.C:\Users\ttiff\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\P13ME8YN\Summary](C:\Users\ttiff\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\P13ME8YN\Summary)

3.11 Children’s Future Food Inquiry

Detailed below is the executive summary of the Children’s Future Food Inquiry.

“The scale of the challenge

In a society that believes in compassion and justice, it is unacceptable that children's development is being restricted by the effects of poverty. The number of children experiencing symptoms of food insecurity, or whose family income is evidently insufficient to afford a healthy diet amounts to between 2.5 and 4 million; between 20% and 30% of all children in the UK. We cannot allow this to continue.

One in three children (4.1million) are living in poverty in the UK. For their families to be able to afford the Government's recommended diet, they would have to spend an estimated 35% of their income on food, once their housing costs have been taken care of. This is not a realistic option, given the restrictive effects of the rising cost of living, prevalence of low-paid, insecure jobs, and the freeze on benefits. On average, after housing costs, households with children spend around 18% of their income on food. A proportion of children living in poverty experience food insecurity. UNICEF estimates on the basis of a small but nationally representative survey that 2.5 million (19%) British children live in food insecure households. This means that there are times when their household does not have enough money to acquire enough food, or they cannot buy the full variety of foods needed for a healthy diet.

The devastating consequences

Hunger is an extremely debilitating experience. It damages physical health. It is a cause of great personal distress. It is a social harm. Food insecurity brings profound anxiety and stress into family life which can trigger depression, aggressive behaviour in children, a sense of hopelessness, and overwhelming stress for parents struggling to give their children the best start. It affects children's school attendance, achievement and attainment: children who are hungry in class cannot concentrate or may be disruptive. In addition, the long summer holidays are estimated to result in weeks of learning loss for some children through a combination of social isolation, low levels of stimulation and activity, and poor diets. Food insecurity also affects the quality of children's diets, which brings increased risks of obesity and poor child growth. The magnitude and importance of childhood food insecurity requires systemic change, rather than short term, ad hoc projects.

Our findings

We focus on three food settings that characterise children's lives: pre-school settings, school and home, and examine the policies and programmes in place that are intended to support children to eat well. We look at these settings in all four UK nations. We document the evidence on whether these policies are reaching children living in poverty, and we present the views of children and those who work with them on how these policies work in practice."

A copy of the full report can be accessed [here](#)

3.11 Site Visits

3.11.1

On Thursday 22 August 2019, Councillor Dennis Meredith (Chair), together with Tracy Tiff Democratic and Member Services Manager, met with the lead Support Worker for the Food Bank.

Key information gathered from the site visit:

- Restore's hope for the town is to see people's lives restored and for the town to be renewed, the town thriving, businesses growing and people happy and enjoying themselves.
- Restore has over 100 referral Agencies and began over ten years ago.
- Restore costs £100,000 to run and currently it receives a partnership grant from NBC of £6,000 per year.
- The Foodbank and Café is open from 10am to 12 noon, it is open to anyone who can have a free tea/coffee/squash and a pastry. The pastries have been donated by a local supermarket. Originally the HUB was open twice weekly but it was not an appropriate setting for families so it changed to a café style. On average there are normally around 30 attendees with 10-20 food parcels given out. Most food is donated by the public and there are various food drop off points. Fresh vegetables such as onions, potatoes, green vegetables, and root vegetables are useful.
- A number of the main supermarkets have a contract with "Fareshare" where donations made to the supermarkets go to the distribution centre of Fareshare and foodbanks have to pay for the distribution costs to receive the donations.
- Restore offers a wide variety of services in addition to being a foodbank – including: Tuesdays – "Growbaby" - family services and attendees can pick up clothes, food, toys and baby equipment. It is for children 0-5 2 years. CAB are present during each session as are Health Visitors, Homestart. This is the only centre in the town that also provides for families and is not just a foodbank.
- Dental hygiene is a problem with children with a number having to have their milk teeth extracted due to decay. A dental hygienist attends the family sessions.
- Tuesdays and Wednesdays are dedicated to family days. Around 50-60 come in. Music is played, children play and can have a snack. In the school holiday period more is offered for older children too and on a Wednesday a free school dinner is offered; around 20 attend but the centre could accommodate 60.
- 25% of people are living in poverty in Northampton.
- The organisation – Inspire, supports people to reach their maximum potential, providing mentoring and supporting people into volunteering. An

example was provided whereby a woman had come in for a food parcel five years ago and now runs the Inspire Project.

- Individuals are referred to restore from specialist Agencies, schools, GPs, Children's services, Money Advice etc.
- Restore receives very little help for donations from the main food outlets
- The Support Worker reported that zero hours contracts can create poverty. For example a Warehouse operative, on zero hour's contract, works nights and also volunteers at the Foodbank. Should he have no work at any given period, he still has the regular bills to be paid and does not receive benefits whilst working. He often gets ready for work, arrives at the depot to be told there is no work available that night
- The Support Worker advised that often individuals and families do not have a network to turn to should they have financial difficulties and pressures. They often then turn to high interest loan companies and pay day loans which can re-enforce the spiral of poverty.
- General referrals come mainly from CAB, Jesus Centre, and One stop shop. Individuals must meet generic criteria to be referred. People can access food parcels five times a year. Each food parcel is aimed to last three days. Should a repeat referral be required, there needs to be a new referral. Once referred, individuals can access foodbanks at different locations and times, which best suits them – for example Duston or Eastfield. The food voucher is valid for one week and it then expires.
- When individuals come for a food parcel from this Foodbank, they fill out a tick list of the types of food and supplies they require. Whilst the pack is being made up, they are directed to the café for a drink and a pastry. An example was given of client B who was seven months pregnant but had not told anyone. Restore helped her and got equipment for her such as a pram, mosses basket, baby clothes etc.
- In May 2019, 936 items were given out and £70,000 of food is given out each year, all of which is provided via donations. Restore does not spend over £800-£1,000 per year on extra supplies.
- From April to the end of the summer is the period when supplies are at their lowest and it would be useful if schools could be contacted regarding 3 potential donations. Most needed food supplies are tinned meat, tinned vegetable and UHT milk. A local allotment will donate excess produce to the foodbank and this is delivered on a Wednesday ready for the foodbank opening on Thursday. There is a need to wider promote this to other allotments. Any leftover fresh produce is given to the homeless.



Supplies



Food being sorted



A typical family food parcel for three days



A typical single person's food parcel for three days

On Monday 2 September 2019, Councillor Catherine Russell, together with Geraldine Mahney, Customer Services Manager, visited the foodbank – Seventh Day Adventist Church and met with key volunteers and visitors. This was a hands on visit where we greeted and supported visitors which gave us a great insight into how the bank operated.

Key information gathered from the site visit:

- Seventh Day Adventist Church are one of the six food banks and are part of RESTORE. Restore are a charity that support vulnerable people in Northampton through practical means.
- All foodbanks have access to RESTORE data base. Visitors will already have a voucher number and the volunteers will access the system and record those who have used the voucher.
- On Monday 2 September 2019 there were 65 open vouchers awaiting for people to visit a bank within Northampton.
- The site visit saw 11 visitors on Monday, of which 5 families (3 with 2 Children and 2 with 1) and 6 individuals.
- Vouchers are valid for 7 days but discretion can be used allowing an expired voucher to be used.
- The site visit met a lovely community of volunteers who regularly support Seventh Day Adventist Church foodbank. It is a huge commitment as the food bank needs setting up the Sunday evening in readiness for Monday.
- This particular food bank has 5 regular volunteers who attend most Monday's, a further 3 who attend occasionally.
- Setting up on a Sunday is done by the same four regular volunteers. This is due to the physical nature of moving boxes etc.
 - Storage within premises is not ideal as storage is upstairs.
 - Each week approximately £100.00 a week is spent to replenish (this food bank only).
 - Good relationships are formed with some supermarkets but there are discrepancies between what some supermarkets will and will not donate.
 - There is an additional cost for the large plastic storage boxes.
 - Bread is collected from Tesco on Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon, from 2 local Tesco stores. This is strongly reliant on two volunteers.
 - Monday AM fresh goods are collected from four Aldi and one Lidl stores. This can include more bread, fruit, veg, flowers etc. This is strongly reliant on two volunteers driving around to collect this produce before the food bank opens.
 - The products in the greatest demand include: - Long life milk, cereals, beans, pasta, rice, pasta sauce, drinks and toiletries, especially wet-wipes, shampoo and deodorant. Actions/concerns to consider:
 - Form relationships with companies who would donate boxes.
 - Obtain premises within this area that would accommodate a permanent food bank,

- One thing that would help tremendously is if premises were provided to allow the Foodbank to be setup all through the week and thus enable to doors to open on other days or evenings. It would also help to have it in a location in another part of town where there might be a greater concentration of people who require help from a Foodbank.
- Complete research on local supermarkets to identify what they do with food that is close to the expiry date and what additional support is available.
- Increase communication to encourage donations and support. NBC are part of the Northants Chambers networking group who meet regularly. Could we arrange for a presentation on food poverty and support from these business and provide contact details for RESTORE to make arrangements



4 Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.1 Overview and Scrutiny ensures that it adheres to the Council's statutory duty to provide the public with access to Scrutiny reports, briefing notes, agendas, minutes and other such documentation. Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Scrutiny Panels are widely publicised, i.e. on the Council's website, copies issued to the local media and paper copies are made available in the Council's One Stop Shop and local libraries.
- 4.2 The Scrutiny Panel was mindful of the eight protected characteristics when undertaking this scrutiny activity so that any recommendations that it made could identify potential positive and negative impacts on any particular sector of the community. This was borne in mind as the Scrutiny Panel progressed with the review and evidence gathered.

- 4.3 So that the Scrutiny Panel obtains a wide range of views, a number of key witnesses provided evidence as detailed in section 3 of this report.
- 4.4 Details of the Equality Impact Assessment undertaken can be located on the Overview and Scrutiny [webpage](#).

5 Conclusions and Key Findings

- 5.1 After all of the evidence was collated the following conclusions were drawn:

Definitions of Food Poverty

- 5.1.1 The Scrutiny Panel noted that there a number of definitions for food poverty. The definition used by Restore is the inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet. It is about the quality of food as well as quantity. It is not just about hunger, but also about being appropriately nourished to attain and maintain health.” Additionally, there are clear links between levels of deprivation and food poverty. A key definition of deprivation used by local authorities is those areas (and their residents) which fall within the top 20% most deprived LSOAs nationally (i.e. Deciles 1 and 2 nationally). There are 422 LSOA’s in Northamptonshire. In the IMD 2015 release 69 of these were in the top 20% nationally, 29 in the 1st Decile and 40 in the Second. A further definition of food poverty according to the Department of Health is “the inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet”²⁴. It is closely related to household food insecurity which is the inability to be able to secure social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life²⁵. Hunger as a term to describe the physical feeling of insufficient food is used by a number of organisations working with people unable to afford food as a means of communicating messages to the wider public, including the Trussell Trust, FareShare, Magic Breakfast, and Church Action on Poverty. Hunger is one consequence of food insecurity but not an inevitability. The Department of Health defines food poverty as: ‘The inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet.

Risks relating to food poverty

²⁴ Department of Health, Choosing a Better Diet: a food and health action plan, 2005

²⁵ <http://www.fao.org/3/y4671e/y4671e06.htm>

- 5.1.2 The Scrutiny Panel noted that the poor health and wellbeing and risk of chronic ill-health relates to food poverty are not only due to the direct dietary risks but also due to associated social and psychological impacts e.g. chronic stress related to food poverty and poverty more generally, poor school performance due to acute hunger, It is also important to consider the differences between acute hunger and chronic food insecurity.
- 5.1.3 Households that cannot secure adequate food that its nutritious impacts on food poverty and this includes poor health, chronic illness, poor mental health, crime, obesity, diabetes, heart condition and poor education.
- 5.1.4 The Scrutiny Panel recognised that food poverty can have a negative impact on both physical and mental health.

Food poverty - children

- 5.1.5 The Under Secretary has contacted all Head Teachers of primary and secondary schools in the UK to identify the issue of child food insecurity. Evidence gathering indicated that the impact of food deprivation meant children were living in relative poverty with 60% of the median income; this information could be provided to the Panel as he felt it was important so that the statistics could be cross referenced. He explained that food banks can't always provide fresh provisions therefore an understanding of the types of food offered would be a useful question to ask as there has also been some work done regarding the nutritional value of the food. As of the January School Census 2019, 11.7% (3934) of pupils were eligible for free school meals from a total of 33,642. A report, compiled by the End Child Poverty coalition, shows that 13,633 children are living in poverty in Northampton
- 5.1.6 The Scrutiny Panel realised that food poverty sits within wider poverty. Poverty within Northampton has increased from 16,000 to 18,000 children . There is a lot of concern and misery for the families throughout the area. Schools and health visitors are aware of this issue. The Scrutiny Panel highlights that there is a need to ensure that no children throughout Northampton are seen to be hungry. Holiday hunger is also an issue, and something needs to be done about this. It was noted that during the unprecedented situation of Covid19 that free school meals vouchers had been provided during school holidays and would include the summer break of 2020 also. It was further recognised that often children in poverty come from a working family. Regularly, people living in poverty have no electricity, saucepans or a cooker and obtain food from a food bank but do not have the facilities to cook it. There is a need for an Anti- Poverty Strategy.
- 5.1.7 The Scrutiny Panel notes that free meals are provided in nurseries in Scotland.

Food Poverty – reviews and statistical data

5.1.8 Central Government has confirmed it will begin to measure food insecurity from April 2019. Evidence gathering highlighted that in order to understand approaches to tackle food poverty it's important to understand the root causes of food poverty. An analysis by the House of Commons' Environmental Audit Committee "Sustainable Development Goals in the UK follow up: Hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity in the UK" identified three themes relating to the causes of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition:

1. Low incomes and rising living costs:
2. Universal Credit and the benefits system; and
3. Cuts to funding for local social care services.

5.1.9 . Zero hours contract often have an impact on poverty and food poverty.

5.1.10 Food poverty is clearly linked to poverty more generally and poverty can be measured in a number of ways. One useful metric is "income deprivation" which measures the number of people who are in receipt of various means tested benefits. In 2015 the total number of people affected by income deprivation in Northampton was 27,279²⁶ of whom 7,806²⁷ were children and 6,193²⁸ older people.

5.1.11 A review by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), Church of England, Oxfam GB and The Trussell Trust "Emergency Use Only: Understanding and reducing the use of food banks in the UK"²⁹ gives the following recommendations for preventing need for food banks:

- Improve access to short-term benefit advances: increase awareness, simplify the claim process and improve data collection to identify support needs.
- Reform sanctions policy and practice: increase access to hardship payments, clarify communications about sanctions, mitigate the impact whilst a sanction is being reconsidered and address issues for Housing Benefit.
- Improve the ESA regime: ensure claimants are not left without income whilst challenging a decision made because of missing medical certificates or missed appointments.

²⁶ Income Deprivation domain of [Indices of Deprivation 2019](#)

²⁷ [IDACI 2019](#)

²⁸ [IDOP1 2019](#)

²⁹ https://cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/Foodbank%20Report_web.pdf

- Sustain and improve access to emergency financial support through Local Welfare Assistance Schemes.
- Ensure Jobcentres provide an efficient and supportive service for all clients.
- Improve Jobcentre Plus Advisers' awareness of, and ability to respond to, mental health problems.
- Improve access to appropriate advice and support.

Emergency Food Aid

5.1.12 Use of emergency food aid (i.e. food banks) can give an indication of the levels of need around acute food poverty. Food Banks are primarily for adults and families and the Scrutiny Panel noted that it is important that children have direct access to food through schools and nurseries. Initiatives are in place as schools for those children that come in hungry such as free breakfast clubs. They are therefore provided with both a free breakfast and a free lunch during school days. There is a good referral system into food banks. The Night Shelter is a good example of the positive impact good quality food can have on people's health and esteem. Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) runs a food bank and also makes referrals. It is a food bank for Council tenants. Volunteer tenants put the food parcels together however NPH delivers them which ensures dignity remains. Food parcels distributed by NPH was put in place due to the need for crisis intervention. The number of parcels and their locations is reported on a monthly basis

5.1.13 During the evidence gathering the Scrutiny Panel heard that Officers working in the Council's One Stop Shop, each month donate items of food that can be donated to those in need. This is funded totally by the staff who do this mainly because they come into contact with people on a daily basis that require food donations and other assistance.

5.1.14 Various statistics were provided to the Scrutiny Panel. The Emmanuel Church provides 40 parcels a week for around 100 people with referrals generally coming from schools. The Hope Centre has around 120 people come in for food daily whilst there is a separate food provision that helps 250 families per week. Re Store coordinate food parcels across 6 churches in Northampton Borough and in 2018 distributed 4500 parcels.

5.1.15 The Scrutiny Panel notes that it is expected that the food banking system would continue to grow.

5.1.16 Evidence gathered highlighted that teachers and social workers often note some children being uncomfortable in inviting friends home, due to the state of the home and poor quality food.

5.1.17 It is highlighted that there is a stigma around poverty and poor-quality food is also poor value for money

Assistance available and Partnership Working

- 5.1.18 The Scrutiny Panel recognises that there is a lot of assistance available regarding budgeting from organisations such as CAB, Housing and Money Advice and Community Law. The Scrutiny Panel recognised that approaches are often neighbourhood based; there is a need adequate funding and are reliant on skills and leadership and a strong voluntary and community sector. Approaches include:
- Voluntary action
 - Food banks
 - Community organising and social action
 - Neighbourhood enterprise
 - Community-based credit unions
 - Developing physical assets
 - Community-led housing
- 5.1.19 The Panel acknowledges that there are lots of Groups and organisations doing different things in relation to food distribution, which needed looking at collectively to ensure the sharing of information; which is very important across all of the Groups; as every Group needed to know about each other's work so that there was no duplication.
- 5.1.20 The Scrutiny Panel emphasised that, in the run up to West Northamptonshire Authority, there is a need to consider joint responsibility of Agencies regarding homelessness, poverty and food poverty. There is lots of partnership working and work completed already and there is need to be able to maintain drive. Evidence gathering highlighted that a main barrier is leadership. There is a need for strong leadership and a clear vision. Leaders should be drawn together to provide the necessary direction. The Scrutiny Panel further emphasised that there is a need to have individuals with the relevant passion to lead e.g. Food Poverty Champions who can identify the partners who have the motivation and drive to bring all together. Goals will be similar across all the boroughs and districts. With the move to the West Northamptonshire Authority, the Scrutiny Panel agreed that a way forward could be to use this issue to come together across the County and consider the following actions for local authorities recommended by Sustain:

- Developing a food action plan to tackle food poverty
- Improving the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers
- Promoting breastfeeding via the Baby Friendly Initiative
- Harnessing the value of children's centres
- Ensuring low-income families have adequate access to childcare
- Ensuring children's access to food 365 days a year
- Becoming a Living Wage employer and promoting the Living Wage
- Ensuring all residents have physical access to good food
- Supporting and enhancing meals on wheels provision
- Supporting financial advice services and providing crisis support

- 5.1.21 The Scrutiny Panel recognises that there is a need to do more to co-ordinate between food providers. Hope has worked with Northamptonshire Poverty Network but more needs to be done and co-ordinated. A summer festival, or similar, to "unlock" food would be useful. The Scrutiny Panel felt that the promotion of food poverty to allotment holders and shops would be useful regarding them providing any excess produce.
- 5.1.22 There will be full migration to Universal Credit from December 2019. As of 16 September 2019, there were 11,350 claims for housing benefit, in May 2019 it had been 14,000. There is a five-week waiting period for Universal Credit that has been causing issues and problems. Money management support is important for example pay bills such as rent first. A Council Tax Reduction Scheme is in place; everyone now has to pay at least 35% of the Council Tax bill for their property but some Groups are protected.
- 5.1.23 HM Revenues and Customs (HMRC) works collaboratively with partner organisations to help people. It has a claim commitment, but it needs individuals to tell officers about their circumstances. Individuals can contact HMRC for assistance. HMRC works with food banks in Corby and Towcester and speaks with customers regarding their income and the types of support available to them.
- 5.1.24 The Universal Credit app is easy to use. In addition, there is a programme of training in place that comprises 39 vulnerabilities. Mental health training includes suicide and ex-offenders. A lot of outreach takes place through schools and advice can be given. It was recognised that the Manager, RC regularly visits NBC and is part of the Welfare Reform meetings; that comprise a number of partners. Improvements come from these meetings.

5.1.25 It was realised that some individuals are fearful to go to the Job Centre. There are lots of posters in the Job Centre regarding partner agencies. A lot of outreach takes place through schools and advice can be given. The Scrutiny Panel felt this was not sufficiently aimed at Northampton.

5.1.26 The Scrutiny Panel supports the living wage employer.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was to:

- To examine the extent to which individuals and families are experiencing food poverty, the range of contributing factors and the changes that have been made to the way the Council and partners support residents during hardship.
- To review the impact and concentration of food poverty across the Borough of Northampton

Key Lines of Enquiry

- What are the impacts of food poverty?
- How widespread is food poverty in the borough?
- What strategic approaches are in existence to tackle food poverty?
- What approaches are in existence to reduce people's dependency on food aid, such as Food Banks? To receive an understanding of how food poverty is addressed
- To evaluate how the Borough Council, together with its partners, can collectively respond to food poverty
- To identify the specific issues relating to food poverty
- To identify the existence and impact of "holiday hunger"
- To identify how food poverty differs across the borough of Northampton and the reasons for this

6.1.2 Scrutiny Panel 1 therefore recommends to Cabinet that:

6.1.3 That a Working Group, owned by the Community and Engagement Team, is set up and tasked with analysing the gaps in foodbanks within Northampton and the Working Group works with Partners to seek solutions to increasing food provision within these areas.

6.1.4 That child poverty needs are included in any Strategy in relation to poverty. food poverty strategy and note that the process of developing an Anti-Food Poverty Strategy can of itself have wider impacts such as:

- Raising the profile of food poverty, especially with local decision-makers
- Developing a shared positive vision
- Creating a sense of empowerment for experts by experience
- Empowering diverse groups to raise their voices to call for food justice
- Ensuring the local council and other partners take ownership of agreed actions
- Sharing of good practice across local authority boundaries to support specific projects

6.1.5 That Food Poverty Champions, who can identify the partners, who have the motivation and drive to bring all together lead on the production of an Anti-Food Poverty Strategy, which must include all demographics, ensuring that it is an all inclusive Policy is investigated.

6.1.6 That with the move to the West Northamptonshire Authority, the way forward in relation to the production of an Anti-Food Poverty Strategy including the following adopted actions for local authorities as recommended by Sustain:

NB: The Scrutiny Panel updated some the actions recommended by Sustain so that they are more Northampton based

- Developing a food action plan to tackle food poverty
- Improving the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers
- Promoting breastfeeding via the Baby Friendly Initiative
- Promoting the need for children's centres
- Ensuring low-income families have adequate access to childcare
- Investing and developing children's access to food 365 days a year
- Becoming an accredited Living Wage employer and promoting the Living Wage
- Ensuring all residents have physical access to good food
- Supporting and enhancing meals reasonably priced and the provision of meals to vulnerable people
- Supporting financial advice services and providing crisis support

6.1.7 That a Working Group, led by the Community and Engagement Team, is set up and tasked with identifying areas where holiday hunger is a concern and to seek solutions to increasing food provision for children 365 days a year. In addition the outcomes that have come out following the Marcus Ashford Scheme within Northampton are continued and built upon to ensure food provision is developed for all children 365 days a year.

- 6.1.8 That the Manager, HM Revenues and Customs is formally invited to visit food banks in Northampton, to work with customers and aid regarding budgeting and where further help can be obtained.
- 6.1.9 That the Universal Credit app. Is widely promoted.
- 6.1.10 That Officers are instructed to work with partners in generating more events such as a summer festival where assistance in relation to food poverty can be highlighted.
- 6.1.11 That the Health Start Voucher Scheme is promoted.
- 6.1.12 That promotion of food poverty is highlighted to allotment holders and shops regarding giving away excess produce as emergency food aid.
- 6.1.13 That it is recommended to Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) that it considers reviewing Tenancy Agreements to ensure that support is provided to older people to ensure that they are in receipt of the correct pension credits.
- 6.1.14 That the Northampton Community Forums are asked that a presentation is given to each Forum, in particular the Older People's Forum, that promotes the provision of pension credits and how this can be applied for.
- 6.1.15 That a Grants Officer is engaged with the main role of investigating funding for crisis support and the Grants Officer works closely with all organisations in this respect.
- 6.1.16 That it is recommended to the West Northamptonshire Authority that West Northamptonshire becomes a living wage Authority and a sustainable food Authority.
- 6.1.17 That the West Northamptonshire Authority is asked to lobby for national campaigns and challenge national Policy on food poverty.
- 6.1.18 That a copy of this report is provided to the MPs within West Northamptonshire and the MPs are asked to respond to the recommendations, in particular, recommendation 6.1.16.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6.1.19 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the impact of this report.

Appendices



Appendix A

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

SCRUTINY PANEL 1 - FOOD POVERTY

1. Purpose/Objectives of the Review

- To examine the extent to which individuals and families are experiencing food poverty, the range of contributing factors and the changes that have been made to the way the Council and partners support residents during hardship.
- To review the impact and concentration of food poverty across the Borough of Northampton

Key Lines of Enquiry

- What are the impacts of food poverty?
- How widespread is food poverty in the borough?
- What strategic approaches are in existence to tackle food poverty?
- What approaches are in existence to reduce people's dependency on food aid, such as Food Banks?
- To receive an understanding of how food poverty is addressed
- To evaluate how the Borough Council, together with its partners, can collectively respond to food poverty
- To identify the specific issues relating to food poverty
- To identify the existence and impact of "holiday hunger"
- To identify how food poverty differs across the borough of Northampton and the reasons for this

2. Outcomes Required

- To make informed recommendations to all relevant parties on the most appropriate approaches to take to mitigate the impact of food poverty in Northampton.
- To make recommendations on how the specific issues in relation to food poverty are dealt with from now until the new Unitary Authority.

3. Information Required

- Background data
- Background reports
- Best practice data
- Desktop research
- Evidence from expert internal witnesses
- Evidence from expert external witnesses
- Site visits (if applicable)

4. Format of Information

- Background data, including:
 - Presentation to set the scene: To identify the prevalence of the problem locally
 - Relevant national and local background research papers
 - Definitions – Food Poverty
 - Causes of food poverty
 - Best practice and successful initiatives in Northampton and comparable Local Authorities
 - Relevant Council Policies and Strategies
 - Relevant Statistics and relevant reports, including:
 - Poverty indicators
 - Demographics (national and Local)
 - UN report on food poverty
 - Institute of Fiscal Studies report on food poverty
 - Relevant Legislation, including:
 - Child Poverty Act 2010
 - Changes to Universal Credit
 - Introduction to benefits and the impact
 - Best practice external to Northampton

- Internal expert advisors:
 - Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing, NBC
 - Head of Housing and Wellbeing, NBC
 - Head of Revenues and Benefits, LGSS
 - Cabinet Member for Community Safety, NBC
 - Chair of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and the Community Safety Team
 - Cabinet Member for Finance, NBC
 - Section 151 Officer, NBC

- External expert advisors:
 - Community Law, Northampton
 - Child Poverty Action Group
 - Education Services, Northamptonshire County Council
 - Director of Children’s Services, Northamptonshire County Council
 - Community and Voluntary Sector
 - Northamptonshire Citizens Advice Bureau
 - RESTORE
 - Public Health, Northamptonshire County Council
 - Rapid Relief
 - Representations of the Sikh Community
 - Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, NCC
 - Head Teachers of local primary and secondary schools (written evidence)
 - Local Youth Clubs, including Community Spaces
 - Partnership Manager, Department of Work and Pensions

- Site visit to be confirmed

5. Methods Used to Gather Information

- Minutes of meetings
- Desktop research
- Site visits
- Officer reports
- Presentations
- Examples of best practice
- Witness Evidence:-
 - Key witnesses as detailed in section 4 of this scope

6. Co-Options to the Review

- Paul Foster, Community Organiser, Emmanuel Church, and Rachel McGrath, Chair, Northamptonshire Food Poverty Network, to be approached to be co-optees on this Scrutiny Panel

7. Community Impact Screening Assessment

- A Community Impact Screening Assessment to be undertaken on the scope of the Review

8. Evidence gathering Timetable

June 2019 – January 2020

- 5 June 2019 - Scoping meeting
 - 17 July - Evidence gathering
 - 25 September - Evidence gathering
 - 20 November - Evidence gathering
 - 14 January 2020 - Approval of the final report
- Various site visits will be programmed during this period, if required.
- Further meetings to be programmed into the schedule

Meetings to commence at 6.00 pm

9. Responsible Officers

Geraldine Mahney, Customer Services Manager
Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager

10. Resources and Budgets

Geraldine Mahney, Customer Services Manager to provide internal advice.

11. Final report presented by:

Completed by January 2020. Presented by the Chair of the Panel to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then to Cabinet.

12. Monitoring procedure:

Review the impact of the report after six months (approximately October 2020)

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY



Appendix B

SCRUTINY PANEL 1 – FOOD POVERTY
CORE QUESTIONS – EXPERT ADVISORS

The Scrutiny Panel is currently undertaking a review:

- To examine the extent to which individuals and families are experiencing food poverty, the range of contributing factors and the changes that have been made to the way the Council and partners support residents during hardship.
- To review the impact and concentration of food poverty across the Borough of Northampton

The required outcomes are:

- To make informed recommendations to all relevant parties on the most appropriate approaches to take to mitigate the impact of food poverty in Northampton.
- To make recommendations on how the specific issues in relation to food poverty are dealt with from now until the new Unitary Authority.

CORE QUESTIONS:

A series of key questions have been put together to inform the evidence base of the Scrutiny Panel:

1. In your opinion, what are the main impacts of food poverty?
2. How widespread do you understand food poverty in the borough to be?
3. In your opinion does food poverty differ across the borough of Northampton and what are the reasons for this?
4. What strategic approaches are you aware of to tackle food poverty?
5. What approaches are in existence to reduce people's dependency on food aid, such as Food Banks?
6. How do you understand food poverty is being addressed?
7. How can the Borough Council, together with its partners, can collectively respond to food poverty?
8. In your opinion what are the specific issues relating to food poverty?
9. Are you aware of the existence of "holiday hunger" and what is its impact?
10. Please supply details of the support that your organisation or group offers?
11. Please supply details of your thoughts on suggested solutions regarding food poverty.
12. Are you aware of the number of people who are registered for pupil premium? Please supply details.
13. Do you have further information or comments regarding food poverty which you would like to inform the Scrutiny Panel?

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Overview & Scrutiny Committee

O & S Working Group

Gangs and Knife Crime

September 2020



Index

Chair's Foreword	1
Executive Summary	3
Final Report including recommendations	9

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Scope of the Review
Appendix B	Serious Organised Crime (SOC) - Northampton Borough Council Community Safety Partnership (November 2019)
Appendix C	Core Questions

Foreword

The objective of this Scrutiny Panel was to investigate how Northampton Borough Council (NBC) can play an active role in tackling knife crime and gangs in Northampton

Key lines of Inquiry:

- To gain an understanding of the work currently being undertaken by partnerships, statutory and voluntary organisations, and the Police to address these issues
- Whether there are links between knife crime, gangs other issues
- How Agencies can work with Community to reduce and respond to
- How young people can be engaged with in preventing knife crime and gangs
- To raise awareness of knife crime and gangs in Northampton
- Whether there are any common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs
- To explore best practice elsewhere in identifying and providing support to victims of knife crime and gangs
- To understand what NBC is doing outside the Scrutiny process in relation to knife crime and gangs

The Scrutiny Panel was made up from members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: myself, Councillors Jane Birch (Deputy Chair); Councillors Aziz, Lane and Russell.

The Review took place between June 2019 and September 2020.

It was a very interesting and informative Review; with clear evidence received. I thank all those who gave up their time to attend a meeting of the Working Group to provide this information and all those who provided comprehensive written evidence.

The Working Group held interviews with Cabinet Members, Senior Staff at Northampton Borough Council and external expert witnesses. Desktop research was carried out by the Democratic and Member Services Manager. Site visits informed the review also.

The result is a piece of work, which recommends to Cabinet a number of improvements to the dealing with gangs and knife crime.

I would like to thank everyone who took part in this piece of work.



Councillor Graham Walker

Chair, Gangs and Knife Crime Working Group

Acknowledgements to all those who took part in the Review: -

- Councillors Birch, Aziz, Lane and Russell who sat with me on this Review
- DS John Harte and DCI Lee McBride, Northants Police, Marion Goodman, Head of Customers and Communities, Ruth Austen, Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, Cllr Jonathan Nunn, Leader of the Council, Northampton Borough Council (NBC), Councillor Anna King Cabinet Member for Community Safety, NBC and Chair of the Community Safety Partnership CSP), Phil Harris, Director of Housing and Wellbeing, (NBC), Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety and Chair of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), Daryl Lyons, CIRV Manager, Wynn Hughes, Anti Social Behaviour Manager, Sharon Womersley, Chief Executive, Lowdown, Claudia Slabon Chief Officer, ServiceSix, Fiona Campbell, Chief Officer, VOICE Northants, Manager, Free2Talk, and Bianca Todd, Chief Executive, Community Courtyard and the young person, Betsy for providing evidence to inform the Review
- Mr Daly, Far Cotton Boxing Club, Manager, Free2Talk for being so welcoming to the Working Group when it undertook its informative site visits

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was:

To investigate how Northampton Borough Council (NBC) can play an active role in tackling knife crime and gangs in Northampton

Key lines of Inquiry:

- To gain an understanding of the work currently being undertaken by partnerships, statutory and voluntary organisations, and the Police to address these issues
- Whether there are links between knife crime, gangs other issues
- How Agencies can work with Community to reduce and respond to
- How young people can be engaged with in preventing knife crime and gangs
- To raise awareness of knife crime and gangs in Northampton
- Whether there are any common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs
- To explore best practice elsewhere in identifying and providing support to victims of knife crime and gangs
- To understand what NBC is doing outside the Scrutiny process in relation to knife crime and gangs

1.2 The required outcome being:

- To make evidence based recommendations to improve the role that NBC has in tackling gangs and knife crime
- To make recommendations, as appropriate, regarding partnership working in tackling gangs and knife crime

1.3 Following approval of its work programme for 2019/2020, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting in April 2019 commissioned Scrutiny Working Group – Gangs and Knife crime to undertake the review. An in-depth review commenced in June 2019 and concluded in September 2020. Due to unprecedented situation of the Covid19 pandemic, meetings were cancelled during March 2020 and July 2020.

1.4 A Scrutiny Working Group was established comprising Councillor Graham Walker (Chair); Councillor Jane Birch (Deputy Chair); Councillors Aziz, Lane and Russell.

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY FINDINGS

- 5.1 After all of the evidence was collated the following conclusions were drawn:
- 5.2 Evidence gathered highlighted that Northamptonshire is not unique, however, it is the most effected county in the region regarding county lines; due to the transport links making it easy for them to get around and the many academies in the town. Exclusions from school are high and the number of home-schooled children has tripled. The Working Group realised that looked after children and children excluded from school are often involved in gangs.
- 5.3 The Working Group acknowledges there is a need for a complex solution to the problem. The Working Group further acknowledged that there is a need for community empowerment and the Police can assist regarding bidding for funding.
- 5.4 There is the perception that some young people carry knives as they feel safer doing so. but the majority do not carry knives and are perfectly safe. People are more likely to be injured if they carried knives. Harm caused by drugs is a cross-cutting theme, for example drug and drink driving.
- 5.5 Some middle-class cocaine users use cocaine over the weekend but hold down a full-time job. There is a need to ascertain the demand for the supply of drugs in Northampton. There is a need to reduce the demand. Drugs appear to be a main concerning issue.
- 5.6 The site visit highlighted that the Boxing Club keeps young people fit, instils discipline and gives them somewhere to go. The value of Boxing Clubs and the benefit that it provides to young people was emphasised by the Working Group. Boxing Clubs are a tried and tested method for anger management. Boxing gives self-discipline. Boxing is credible for both genders. The John Daly Boxing Club has been a fantastic facility for young people and assisted a number of youngsters. Mr Daly is prepared to take his Boxing Club around the county. Far Cotton Boxing Club instils discipline into the young people. It is understood that others would like different activities and opportunities
If parents cannot pay bills such as gas and electricity; this can then be an incentive for young people to join a gang and obtain money that way.
- 5.7 The Community Safety Initiatives were welcomed
- 5.8 The Working Group emphasised that there is not a lot for young people to take part in that doesn't cost money; there is a need to build up youth clubs and boxing clubs. A bid is being submitted regarding facilities for 8-13-year olds. The Working Group hopes that there could be funding stream achieved to bring youth clubs back into the town which requires a push with government to outline objectives.

- 5.9 Evidence gathered showed that Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) employs two Officers who check on those who fall in the amber category of home schooling; however, they have no right of access and have to have proof that they aren't receiving education. Parents/ guardians are responsible for paying for exams.
- 5.10 During the evidence gathering process, the Working Group heard that often, the parents have no idea what is going on e.g. one child had a cannabis addiction, the parent made sure he had no money however, he was then arrested with a balaclava and a knife.
- 5.11 The work undertaken by the Community Safety Team and the Police over the summer holiday period was welcomed as was the work that is carried out with both Primary and Secondary schools.
- 5.12 There is a need to coordinate the youth provision/offer in the Borough.
- 5.13 The Working Group welcomed the training regarding the risk of exclusion that is being rolled out to schools as well, there is a need for Multi Agency Training to bring all multi Agency work together. It was reiterated that Multi Agency training is required.
- 5.14 Over lockdown in 2020, safeguarding oversight continued. Schools remained open during the holidays too and vulnerable children could attend. Safeguarding leads in schools will be given further training. In addition, some parents will be anxious about sending their children back to school in September. Free school meals have continued over the summer holiday period.
- 5.15 There is a need to co-ordinate all activities going on in the town and this would avoid duplication. It needs to be ensured collaboration takes place. There is also a need to build community support. The Working Group highlights that there are pockets of voluntary organisations all delivering a service, but they are not joined up. Should partnership working develop, there would be the ability to signpost.
- 5.16 The Working Group hoped that there could be funding stream achieved to bring youth clubs back into the town which requires a push with government to outline objectives.
- 5.17 The most difficult area appears to be liaising with families the Working Group agreed that a way to rectify this could be to have a stand at a family fun day which may be useful.
- 5.19 The Working Group notes that there are a number of reasons why young people join gangs, there is a need for long term solutions. People often accept certain behaviours, for example there is no positive role models at home. There is a need to do a lot more at an early age.
- 5.20 Previous Troubled Families work did a lot of in-depth prevention work which included life skills development classes. Such classes are valuable and

there is a need to provide somewhere for classes such as homework or sports and recreation.

- 5.21 The Working Group felt that attitude to violence and gangs is often “skewed”. NPH is working in Blackthorn, one question that is asked is whether people feel safe. Some comments received were that “stabbing is normal around here”. People don’t seem to report as they have a fear to report. A blind eye is turned.
- 5.22 There needs more Police and Youth work on the streets. It is acknowledged that a number of PCSO’s have built good standing, trusted relationships with young people.
- 5.23 There is a real problem with organised crime targeting young people. Often groomed into the gangs.
- 5.24 The Working Group felt that there needs to be a meeting with NBC and Community Courtyard regarding involving its work.
- 5.25 Evidence gathered highlighted that Merseyside has undertaken some best practice in combatting gangs and knife crime.
- 5.26 The Working Group commended the film produced by young people, via Free2 Talk - Knives end Lives: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCnUZyfekL4>

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was to:

To investigate how Northampton Borough Council (NBC) can play an active role in tackling knife crime and gangs in Northampton

Key lines of Inquiry:

- To gain an understanding of the work currently being undertaken by partnerships, statutory and voluntary organisations, and the Police to address these issues
- Whether there are links between knife crime, gangs and other issues
- How Agencies can work with Community to reduce and respond to
- How young people can be engaged with in preventing knife crime and gangs
- To raise awareness of knife crime and gangs in Northampton
- Whether there are any common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs

- To explore best practice elsewhere in identifying and providing support to victims of knife crime and gangs
- To understand what NBC is doing outside the Scrutiny process in relation to knife crime and gangs

6.1.2 Scrutiny Working Group (Gangs and Knife Crime) therefore recommends to Cabinet that:

Collaborative working

- 6.1.3 That the current work and programmes undertaken by the Community Safety Team regarding knife crime is continuous and becomes more strategic.
- 6.1.4 That the Community Safety Manager is in charge with working with all relevant organisations and Agencies so that they collaborate and enhance joint bids for funding in respect of dealing with gangs and knife crime.
- 6.1.5 That Northampton Borough Council, works with other Agencies and Groups in the town to coordinate the youth provision/offer in the Borough.
- 6.1.6 That Northampton Borough Council leads on Multi Agency Training, regarding issues relating to gangs and knife crime, to bring all multi Agency work together.
- 6.1.7 That a meeting with Community Safety Team, NBC, and Community Courtyard is convened regarding involving its work.

Facilities for Young People

- 6.1.8 That all potential funding streams are investigated so that youth clubs, and other facilities for young people are brought back into the town.
- 6.1.9 Funding is the core as all activities cost money and it is ensured that the costs should not be passed onto the young people.
- 6.1.10 That in recognising that the most difficult area appears to be liaising with families, when safe to do so, the Community Safety Team has a stand a family fun day; or a similar event is organised remotely.

Best Practice

- 6.1.11 That the Community Safety Team liaises with Officers at Merseyside regarding their best practice initiatives in dealing gangs and knife crime and aim to mirror such initiatives in Northampton.
- 6.1.12 That all Councillors are provided with the link to the short film produced by young people, via Free2 Talk - Knives end Lives: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCnUZyfekL4> and encouraged to watch it.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6.1.13 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the impact of this

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny

Report of Scrutiny Working Group – Gangs and Knife Crime

1 Purposes

- 1.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was to:
- 1.2 To investigate how Northampton Borough Council (NBC) can play an active role in tackling knife crime and gangs in Northampton

Key lines of Inquiry:

- To gain an understanding of the work currently being undertaken by partnerships, statutory and voluntary organisations, and the Police to address these issues
 - Whether there are links between knife crime, gangs other issues
 - How Agencies can work with Community to reduce and respond to
 - How young people can be engaged with in preventing knife crime and gangs
 - To raise awareness of knife crime and gangs in Northampton
 - Whether there are any common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs
 - To explore best practice elsewhere in identifying and providing support to victims of knife crime and gangs
 - To understand what NBC is doing outside the Scrutiny process in relation to knife crime and gangs
- 1.3 A copy of the scope of the Review is attached at Appendix A.

2 Context and Background

- 2.1 Following approval of its work programme for 2019/2020, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting in April 2019 commissioned the Scrutiny Working Group to undertake the review – Gangs and Knife Crime. An in-depth review commenced in June 2019 and concluded in September 2020. Due to unprecedented situation of the Covid19 pandemic, meetings were cancelled during March 2020 and July 2020.
- 2.2 A Scrutiny Panel was established comprising Councillor Graham Walker (Chair); Councillor Jane Birch (Deputy Chair); Councillors Jamie Lane and Cathrine Russell.

2.3 This review links to the Council's corporate priorities, particularly corporate priority - improving the health and wellbeing of local people.

2.4 The Scrutiny Panel established that the following needed to be investigated and linked to the realisation of the Council's corporate priorities:

3 Evidence Collection

3.1 Background data, including:

- Presentation to set the scene: To identify the prevalence of the problem locally
 - Relevant national and local background research papers
 - Definitions – Knife crime and Gangs
 - Case Studies
- Best practice external to Northampton
 - Internal expert advisors:
 - Leader of the Council, Northampton Borough Council (NBC)
 - Cabinet Member for Community Safety, NBC
 - Head of Customers and Communities, NBC and the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, NBC
 - Head of Housing and Wellbeing, NBC
 - Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety
 - Chair of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP)
 - Service Manager, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit
 - External expert advisors:
 - Head of Protecting Vulnerable Persons, Northamptonshire Police
 - Chief Superintendent, Northamptonshire Police
 - PCSO – St David's, Northamptonshire Police
 - Service Manager, RISE Team
 - Senior Manager, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Board

- Director, Education Services, NCC
 - Representative, Children’s Rights’ Group, Corporate Parenting Board
 - Chief Officer, Northamptonshire Victim Support
 - Cabinet Member for Adult Services, NCC
 - Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, NCC
 - Chair, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board
 - Chief Officer, Service Six
 - Chief Officer, Lowdowne Centre
 - Manager, Free to Talk Group
 - Chief Executive, Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH)
 - Chief Officer, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
 - Chief Executive, Victim Support, Northampton
 - Security Manager and Police Team, University of Northampton
- Site visits to Free2 Talk, Blackthorn, and Far Cotton Boxing Club

3.2 Background reports and information

Presentation to set the scene

3.2.1 A Detective Chief Inspector and a Detective Sergeant Northants Police, the two Leads for Serious and Organised Crime in Northampton gave the Working Group a comprehensive presentation that set the scene.

Key points:

- 28% of crime in Northamptonshire comes from deprived areas.
- Policing priorities in respect of Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) include gangs, knife crime, cybercrime, modern slavery, child abuse and fraud. The priorities are set by the Police and Crime Commissioner
- SOC costs £37 billion
- There are pillars of vulnerability which pose a regional threat
- A gang is a vulnerability
- Harm caused by drugs is a cross-cutting theme, for example drug and drink driving
- Some middle-class cocaine users use cocaine over the weekend but hold down a full-time job. There is a need to ascertain the demand for the supply of drugs in Northampton. There is a need to reduce the demand.
- A Drugs Strategy is currently being devised.
- Should the Police have reasonable grounds to stop a vehicle, such as a light out, they can stop and search. A good Police Officer will spot any signs.

Recently, Northamptonshire has acquired a Road Crime Team who will focus on criminality of the roads.

- It is not unusual for taxi drivers to report drug use.
- Rehabilitation is often a better option and people are helped and treated as individuals
- The Counter-Corruption Team will both prosecute and make redundant Police Officers should they not uphold the law.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire has committed to there being more Police Officers on the streets
- There is a correlation between gangs and culture.
- If individuals are stopped from carrying knives, they often then carry noxious substances in clear bottles. A knife crime initiative took place where individuals could surrender knives etc.
- The Police is aware of cuckooing and it is being dealt with. Individuals are modelled on, for example from deprived areas; they may be given new trainers for examples and in return asked to deliver a package.
- Some young people will engage with CIRV, others with Free2Talk.
- The Police is currently horizon scanning and by May 2020 will have a Strategy in place stating what it wants to deliver
- NBC funds two Police Officers to work over the school summer holiday period
- The Working Group acknowledged that there is a need for community empowerment and the Police can assist regarding bidding for funding
- Vicki Rockall advised that the service had hosted 60 knife crime awareness sessions in 12 secondary schools and there will be 12 separate events to primary schools regarding knife crime and how not to get involved in gangs
- The Community Safety and Engagement Manager, Northampton Borough Council, co-chairs, with the Police, the SOC Partnership Group; the purpose of which is to develop a Partnership Strategy.
- The Hacker Project is underway which is looking at the supply and demand of cocaine

Serious Organised Crime (SOC) - Northampton Borough Council Community Safety Partnership (November 2019)

Attached at Appendix B are details of SOC – November 2019

The Community Safety and Engagement Team, Northampton Borough Council - Programmes

Primary School events will be held in priority areas with 11 schools at the Deco Theatre. Knife crime and gangs are a part of this event; children are asked how they cannot be involved in gangs. The Youth Offending service delivers a presentation

and teaches them how to say no e.g. just don't take the package, ask questions, say no.

On 26 November 2019 the first event is scheduled with a Secondary School (Weston Favell Academy) with years 8s and 9s. It will be a wide programme including gangs and knife crime, a drama on grooming and county lines. If the event goes well it will be continued with other Secondary Schools.

Events will also be arranged on the Market Place and teachers will be provided with information packs.

Judge Mayo, or his representative, will bring real life cases that they have dealt with in the Courts and the consequences for these. A doctor and paramedic will also talk to the young people. In addition, there will be talks on hate crime. LGBTQ will be discussed under "this is still me". EMAS and school nurses will present and talk around sexual health. The event costs £2000.

3.3 Core Questions

3.3.1 The Scrutiny Panel devised a series of core questions that it put to its key witnesses over a cycle of meetings (Copy at Appendix B).

3.3.2 Key witnesses provided a response to these core questions at the meetings of the Scrutiny Panel held on 16 September 2019, 14 November, 5 December, 13 January 2020 and 25 February.

3.3.3 Salient points of evidence:

Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, Northampton Borough Council

- There are links to serious organised crime, influence in gang culture in the area. Grooming of vulnerable young people, the gang being seen as a "family". Influence of drugs crime, county lines gangs. Trend towards thinking it is normal and acceptable to carry a knife and perception by some people that it is necessary to carry a knife to be safe.
- Agencies can work to deal with root causes, social inequalities, feelings of exclusion, address low level Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) before it escalates to more serious crime. Ensure that concerns which are reported are passed to the relevant people. Promote reporting channels. High visibility presence in areas – wardens / enforcement

officers. Staff being eyes and ears and using professional curiosity – if something doesn't look right and feel right report it.

- Young people can be engaged in preventing knife crime and getting involved in gangs by projects targeting specific areas, youth work projects. Diversion projects. Work with schools from primary upwards, Junior wardens, schools days.
- Awareness of knife crime and gangs in Northampton can be raised by a range of publicity, poster campaigns, social media
- Feelings of limited opportunity, education exclusion, vulnerability, low level ASB, locality factors (rivalry between different areas / schools being exploited by criminal gangs) can lead to involvement in Gangs.
- Community Safety and Neighbourhood Warden teams working with schools
- Programme of briefings for frontline staff on gang and knife crime, serious organised crime and modern slavery raised awareness to enable staff to keep alert for signs when carrying out visits.
- Staff in food and safety and licensing teams distributed SOC / modern slavery packs to businesses when carrying out inspections during August
- Licensing objective “prevention of crime and disorder” potential for licence review by police in cases where knife crime has happened / inadequate measures are being taken to control risk.
- Suggested solutions regarding knife crime and gang: continue to support programmes of engagement taking action to address low level ASB. Use of licensing powers where appropriate. Awareness of recent changes in legislation Offensive Weapons Act 2019 powers in relation to sale of bladed weapons, corrosive products and offensive weapons Trading standards role in enforcement, there is a current consultation on statutory guidance to be issued under this legislation
- There is the perception that some young people carry knives as they feel safer doing so
- There is a need for reporting mechanisms to be communicated. Information packs have been distributed to businesses regarding modern slavery
- Both the Community Safety Team and the Neighbourhood Wardens do a lot of work with schools and they are aware of the signs to look for regarding gangs.
- Actions must be evidenced based

**Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Engagement,
Northampton Borough Council**

- Drugs are at the centre of these issues – knife crime and gangs. There are clear links between knife crime and gangs. Cuckooing is another issue, which is very much linked.
- Fifty individuals have been safeguarded in Northampton after they were identified as being victims of cuckooing, the nationally accepted term used to describe the illegal practice of taking over the property of a vulnerable person to use it for drug dealing.
- Over the past 18 months, partners have worked alongside one another, including; Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire Partnership Homes, probation and adult and child social services and have secured closure orders for 16 of the town's properties which were being used to deal drugs from.
- This follows a series of training events to increase awareness amongst professionals and a public awareness campaign, calling for communities help to tackle the increasing problem of cuckooing. Tactics used have included targeted work in specific areas of town with officers door knocking and speaking to residents to make sure they are aware of the signs which may indicate cuckooing at a particular address.
- In Northampton, Northampton Borough Council has coordinated the work of the community safety partnership and delivered the following actions, to tackle knife crime and gangs:
- 3 primary school events have been delivered - covering 11 of our priority schools, nearly 500 year six pupils. The events are a full day, with input from County Court Judge Rupert Mayo, warning of the consequences of carrying a knife and detailing his involvement with a number of murder cases. Knife crime awareness training is delivered by the youth offending team as one of the inputs of the day, alongside how to avoid getting involved in violent gangs by Anton (an ex-gang member who is working with Northants Police).
- 60 knife crime presentations have been carried out by the youth offending service, initially commissioned by the CSP, as well as 13 teacher sessions. The material used includes a short video that we commissioned by East Midlands Ambulance Service. A Doctor and Paramedic give their account of what its like to attend a knife incident.
- £354,706, secured from the Home Office's Trusted Relationships Fund for the next two years, with a potential of additional funding for a further two years, a total of £470,936 (subject to the Governments Spending Review) to help increase the support available to the town's most vulnerable young people. The funding will enable Northampton Borough Council and Free2Talk, to deliver interventions and

mentoring, lasting up to a year, to young people most at risk of getting involved in knife crime and anti-social behaviour. Rolling out of the programme taken place in the past 6 months, youth centres set up in Blackthorn, Bouverie and Semilong/Spring Boroughs.

- Working with local stakeholders to consider initiatives such as a gated alleyway projects where there is evidence of drug dealing and violence and to deny these alleyways to the persons offending. i.e. Jeyes Jetty.

Through Northampton Youth Forum and through the peer mentoring programmes that are being led and developed by Free2Talk, as part of the Trusted Relationships programme. It is also really important that both the primary and secondary school engagement events are continued, to raise general awareness and educate our young people.

- In August 2018 a knife crime campaign was launched and produced materials, including awareness raising posters and a bi-fold card detailing the support services that are available.
- Continue to support local and national campaigns, e.g. Supported the Police's national knife crime awareness week in March - focus on cutting shrubbery in priority locations, included Blackthorn and Bouverie.
- More than 450 safeguarding professionals from across the county have received training and advice about how to spot the signs of modern slavery, during a week-long series of events in Corby and Northampton. Continue and build upon this.

Vulnerability, absence of 'family' support mechanism and adverse childhood experiences are common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs. There is also a desire to earn large amounts of money.

- The Community Safety and Engagement Manager coordinates the work of the community safety partnership, responsible for the development of the community safety strategy and the associated delivery plan, which includes gangs, knife crime and cuckooing, all priorities for the partnership and Northampton Borough Council.
- Suggested solutions regarding knife crime and gangs are supporting the further roll out of the trusted relationships work, explore funding pots to enable the roll out. Trusted Relationships is already embedded in Malcom Arnold, NIA and Progress School. Free2Talk are mentoring regularly in Northampton Academy and Weston Favell Academy also. From the work taking place within the schools, the following has been developed as a potential project: Weekly after school youth groups and

a summer programme for those moving to secondary school. A youth worker to help settle in the first term at secondary school. 10 sessions of community youth groups for 42 weeks a year; in cycles which follow the school terms. A contextual safeguarding approach will be utilised to intervene in peer, neighbourhood and community risks underpinning youth violence. The project will reach 600 young people a year. Groups will meet in community and youth centres and through the detached youth bus. This will be in areas with high levels of youth violence and offending. Groups will be led by a team of Youth Workers. In the summer term, young people in year 7 will be identified to be invited to take part in an intensive summer programme. This will be coupled with mentoring through year 7 to support young people to take advantage of the transition to engage in a positive out of school lifestyle and settle into secondary with a strong, healthy peer network.

- Continue to deliver the primary schools community safety awareness events
- Where appropriate take an enforcement approach and utilise the ASB legislation to tackle youth violence. The first gang injunctions are being obtained by Northants Police- this is work in progress and built upon close support by the Borough Council Community Safety Teams with both Police and Borough Council legal teams supporting each other.
- A secondary schools event is being developed to include gangs, knife crime and county lines - NIA and Weston Favell secondary schools are already signed up.
- Fund catastrophic haemorrhage packs to be strategically placed within venues in the Town Centre.
- It is likely that the funding for the Home Office Trusted Relationships Fund will be extended for a further 12 months.
- The Community Safety Team works with East Midlands ambulance and a local GP to produce a short film as part of a knife crime awareness training package for schools and professionals. The key message is "Don't carry a knife."
- Young people become very vulnerable when excluded from school.
- Catastrophic Haemorrhaging packs are now in all Police vehicles and ambulances. The Community Safety Team are also looking at rolling this out further to venues within the town centre, to pubs/clubs, businesses etc.
- There is a perception that young people carry knives in order to feel safe, but, the majority do not carry knives and are perfectly safe. People are more likely to be injured if they carried knives.

- Youth workers visit schools and spend time talking to students over the lunchtime period, operating drop in sessions to engage with young people who may be involved in gangs.

Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing and Head of Housing and Wellbeing, Northampton Borough Council

- There are challenges regarding gang culture and links with knives. From a housing perspective, to help people out of the gang culture, it is endeavoured to move them. NPH is working with the Police regarding managed moves.
- The majority of young people do not carry knives or take drugs.
- No weapons are bought into the night shelter.
- Community Safety and Housing and Wellbeing work together to help move people.
- Cuckooing has been noted; single, vulnerable people are often “preyed upon”; Officers help them and keep a watchful eye on their tenancies for the first year. It is difficult to give people assurances that it won’t happen again. Success is about outreach and being persistent.
- Young people can become attracted to homeless communities.
- Boxing Clubs are a tried and tested method for anger management. Boxing gives self-discipline. Boxing is credible for both genders.

Anti-Social Behaviour Manager, NBC

Key points of evidence:

- Often comes down to how a child is treated and/ or spoken to.
- There is a lack of good community
- Cuckooing means targeting the offenders and picking them off with injunctions, however, HMRC Constabulary were concerned as there were no gang injunctions in place due to these being very difficult to get and time consuming therefore, they were now using the ASB route:
 - ASB Officers would be attending court soon regarding preventing a particular group operate as a gang
 - Evidence was required to prove drug use, which could be obtained by speaking with the community and drug related evidence
 - Key people in the community are required e.g. teachers, social workers etc. who can present hearsay evidence regarding the effect of drugs and drug related evidence
 - Safeguarding plays a huge part of this process
 - One of the biggest problems is older people having the fear of giving evidence

- Merseyside conduct research. They have a large list of who they impact on, There is a need to disrupt the network and stop the gang functioning
- Crime and violence statistics show as very high in Rushden which will be a targeted area
- Judges appear to be wary of gang injunctions although Merseyside has been putting them in place since 2010/2011
- There will always be a displacement. If 3-4 big drug dealers are taken out, there needs to be a good community response

Head of CIVR, CIRV

- Knife crime however is often a symptom of the issue. Young people arm themselves with weapons do to either a real or perceived issue. For example, if you canvass young people, they usually say that they feel that over 50% of young people weapon carry, they therefore weapon carry.
- If they have gotten into a dispute, have started moving drugs on behalf of someone else and threats of violence are present it is obvious to see the link and reason why someone would carry a knife.
- You already have the most effective gang intervention in the UK in Northamptonshire – CIRV. No one in the UK comes anywhere near the effectiveness of this program and anything that is proposed needs to link to and with this program.
- CIRV intends to grow their reach this year into the community to get key people in those areas supporting those on the margins who are already in gangs or at risk of becoming involved via 1-2-1 mentoring facilitated by CIRV. There are many studies which identify a link between community involvement in the solution and an effective solution. CIRV have also been successful in getting funding to run mentors in violence prevention training in all county schools as part of a public health approach to violence.
- Young people can be engaged in preventing knife crime and getting involved in gangs by referring them to CIRV. CIRV employs two ex-gang members as part of the core team to help overcome trust issues. You also need to speak to the youth commission within OPFCC who have done some research on this area. CIRV in 2020 will produce a teacher resource with public health for PHSE lessons with CIRV as the vehicle that helps.
- You need a real focus as a council on preventing school exclusions and electively home educated children. In my view this is
- CIRV can do some of this awareness raising of knife crime and gangs in Northampton, but it you need to be clear on what the awareness raising is.

Raising awareness of gangs and violence will not help, it will in fact cause more to carry knives and fear to increase. You need to increase awareness of supports and resources including what to do.

- CIRV in 2020 will launch a parents' support group so we can all help one another with this issue. Raising awareness of the issue is pointless.
- There are plenty of factors identified from various studies. These include but aren't limited to:
 - Early exclusion from school
 - Special educational needs
 - Living in poverty
 - Low aspiration/ attainment
 - High number of ACES or childhood trauma
 - Parental imprisonment
 - Lack of attachment at home
 - In care
 - Electively home educated
 - Peer group
 - Looking up to gang members
 - Fear of retaliation
 - Instant gratification
 - Easily groomed/ vulnerable
- Aware of some excellent work by the Community Safety Team at NBC around knife crime and there has been some commissioning of youth services. The Police Sergeant was not entirely convinced the youth service is delivering the right outcomes or is engaging in the right way.
- A need to engage hand in glove with CIRV. CIRV is the central pillar of the gangs strategy of the county. You should look at how you engage communities to combat this issue together and ask how you can engage CIRV in what you are doing as an authority.
- Specific issues relating to knife crime and gangs, Including but not limited to:
 - Exclusion from school and electively home educated children
 - Knee jerk school responses to issues with children already gang linked
 - Grossly ineffective county council with regards to social care and children's services that are poor
 - A lack of relationships with young people
 - Too much process
 - Too little action

- CIRV has now had 700 referrals since the 1st of February 2019. CIRV has the most diverse, fast responding and effective set of resources and is available 24/7.
- CIRV - has been running since its official launch in February this year. Northamptonshire has, and continues to experience significant issues directly related to gang violence and associated crimes such as drug dealing. Steadily over time despite hundreds of years of custodial sentences being handed down, the issue of gangs has become worse and this issue now seriously threatens the safety and wellbeing of our communities and in particular young vulnerable people.
- CIRV offers a unique tailored response to each of our cohort. Where possible, we visit within 24 hours of a referral to visit and assess what the person we are working with might need. It is not a one size fits all approach. It has a list of interventions to choose from but CIRV will also source an intervention that we may not already have in place if it what is required to help that person turn their life around. CIRV is forward thinking and flexible in its ideas and approaches.
- An important part of the process is the Triage Meeting. CIRVs new referrals come in through its website aimonline.org.uk. Once a week CIRV hosts a multi-agency triage meeting. Representatives attend and CIRV run through each individual it has in pending and it discusses any new referrals. Each week CIRV is seeing an increase in the number of referrals that are coming in.

“Message from Head of CIRV - Inspector Daryl Lyon - September 2019

“CIRV has now made a national impact, and it is clear to see why. We continue to receive interest from many UK forces, Violence Reduction Units, and members of the public who all have commented positively on the progress that CIRV has made the real difference is making to communities and individuals alike. We as a team remain totally focussed to our mission of getting people out of gang related criminality. We have now had over 500 referrals in just over 6 months. Whilst this is a phenomenal amount where we can now start making a difference it also indicates just how much gangs affect local communities. On the 4th of October we will have our second call-in event which I know will be a tremendous success. If you know of anyone who will benefit from CIRV you can refer via this website under the CIRV Referral section. In a gang and want to get out phone/ text 07539183975 24/7.”

Testimonials

“CIRV Northamptonshire is the best violence and gangs intervention we have seen anywhere in the UK”

“The simple and straightforward referral process..... combined with the genuine offer of a range of credible services and channels aimed at helping young people move away from gang or group violence and related offending was impressive. Within such a short space of time it speaks to successful awareness raising and partnership across Northamptonshire.....We are very optimistic for the prospects of CIRV in Northamptonshire as it continues to develop, with key features including an emphasis on education/training/employment, aspiration building, and family engagement and support”

Centre for Social Justice – July 2019

I want to take this time to say a big thank you for all that you have done for my son, helping him find an apprenticeship and helping him with the interview side and research. You have worked so so hard to help and I’m forever thankful.. It’s so nice to see a company and team work so hard for teenagers that in some what respect may help them from going down the wrong path and making the wrong choices in their lives... please carry on with what you are doing as you are giving hope and opportunity’s to young people to make a better life for themselves and change.

Parent – July 2019

“I have worked in the care industry for over 13 years and I have seen a lot of professionals across different fields who would give their all in their service delivery. I have been profoundly challenged with the level of commitment X has shown while he worked with XX. I have seen high level of dedication and consistently X has taken an extra mile in helping XX in many issues which he faced.....This sort of involvement is ground breaking and beyond an reasonable doubt, there is significant and positive impact this would bring to the young person and his well-being”

Social Worker – Sept 2019

I just wanted to let you know that X spent his first full day in mainstream education today. We think the last time he managed this was over 5 years ago I believe this is because X recognises the support that both he and XX have received over the summer and the hopes they both have for the future. Thank you for your support so far - I know we still have a long way to go and may still incur setbacks, but today for X was a major achievement and I just wanted to share it with you.

Headteacher – Sept 2019

“I just wanted to say thank you to yourself, X & X, supporting my son and myself through a very difficult time, your knowledge and kindness has helped me and XX get back on track. I know XX has appreciated it, he was very low at times and his anxiety and mine had hit rock bottom, you and your fantastic team, there to support us both, I would recommend you, X & X, if any one was in the same situation as we were. We are both looking forward to the

future now, in a better place. I would not change anything about your service, it was a life saver for me. Thank you so much and please pass on my thanks to your fabulous team”.

Parent – Sept 2019

“I am absolutely over the moon with today!!!!!! He’s actually come back really positive about stuff which is amazing to see. This is what frustrates me because my boy is not a bad kid, he still shows so many of the qualities I love about him and I am so grateful you guys have stepped in now because you are the first person in so long that X has given the time of day to – so you are definitely doing something right as he doesn’t normally trust anyone!!

To have this tiny bit of hope actually means the world to me!”

Parent – Sept 2019

Background to CIRV:

Support Services

In CIRV we are committed to providing various programmes and services to our clients that are of the highest quality. The programmes are designed to provide opportunities to people to give them the chance to make a change to their chaotic lifestyles either through education, employment or other diversionary schemes.

GPS Tagging

A mandatory condition of receiving support is that all adults wear A GPS (Buddi) tracker.

Benefits of the tracker are:

- Quickly ruled out of crime thereby reducing the need to bring into custody unnecessarily.
- Reduce disruption caused to wearers and their families by negating the need for curfew checks and disruption visits.
- Support and empower wearers to make positive lifestyle decisions, avoid peer pressure and move away from offending thereby reducing the risk of reoffending
- Protect the vulnerable.
- Other support
- Strong links have been forged with a number of non-statutory partners who are able to provide support to our cohort. Including just some of the following:

Accommodation

- Support in relation to substance abuse

- Careers advice through dedicated Prospects staff who now work within our team.
- Family support through Action for Children
- Vocational training is available via Goodwill Solutions and Goodwill Learning Academy.

Tactical support

Recognising that this programme was likely to be the largest undertaking of many of our careers it was vital we got it right first time. CIRV enlisted the help of Dr Will Graham of Abertay University in Scotland who lectures in criminology. Dr Graham is a former police officer and was the deputy lead of CIRV Glasgow and ran all 10 “Call in “ events. He advises CIRV on operational aspects of CIRV. In addition to that we also enlist the support of Prof Steve Peters (Author of the Chimp Paradox) to deliver work on offender profiling to our team. This enables us to use basic psychology to deliver better services and maximise our effectiveness.

CIRV Highlights from the last six months:

- CIRV has a gang phone number that can be called 24 hours a day 7 days a week which is monitored by our team.
- Launch of the Northants Support Directory www.aimonline.org.uk.
- CIRV Advertising Campaign running from April to September 2020 to raise awareness of CIRV and increase referrals into CIRV. This is on bus shelters, billboards and digital billboards across the county. All visuals produced for this campaign did not feature any real images of knives or any images that could be seen as traumatic. As we know that the fear factor can encourage young people to carry knives. We believe our campaign strengthens prevention work in relation to the carrying of knives.
- Participation in OP Serpent which is an operation to disrupt drug supply and organised crime through custody visits to offer CIRV support and encourage sign up to CIRV.
- Launch of the Peer to Peer support group on What’s App for the cohort.
- National Citizens Scheme team working with us for two weeks in July to promote CIRV and to engage with the public about gangs and knife crime.
- Increase in the number in the cohort who are wearing the Buddi GPS tracker.

- We have had colleagues from Nottinghamshire Police, Cambridgeshire Police and Wiltshire Police visit us to understand more about our CIRV programme.
- Visited numerous schools to carry out assemblies in relation to CIRV and gangs and knife crime.
- Being referenced as national best practice in violence prevention from the Centre for Social Justice.
- Being featured on Look East twice once in relation to the Call in and once in relation to the disruption side of CIRV
- The team received the High Sheriff of Northamptonshire award for recognition of great and valuable services to the community. Which we were humbled and honoured to accept.
- My BK YD event at Rockingham Castle where a number of local businesses signed up to the scheme.
- CIRV Call in Event in March – In March this year we ran our first Call In Event. Which is designed to promote CIRV and deliver our message to a select group of gang members, partners and key members of the community. We invited 15 gang members or those at risk of becoming involved in gangs. There were numerous other invited guests from the community including parents of gang members, guest speakers and members of the local and national press. The session is designed to show gang members the negative consequences of gang life and then encourage them to live a life that is free of violence and drugs. The next Call in will be in October
- Continued increase in the number of referrals that are coming into the team.
- We have assisted on a case by case basis on a number of individual school exclusion cases to try and find an acceptable outcome for the young person and the school that doesn't involve them being excluded.
- In July 2019 CIRV welcomed Chief Superintendent Ian Wyle Vice President of the Superintendents Association and Chief Inspector Scott Ware who is seconded to the London Mayors Office from the Metropolitan Police. Both officers came to see how the CIRV Northants Programme has developed into the successful and leading programme that it is today. Conversations are continuing to assess the viability of CIRV being expanded into other areas of the UK.

Team Members

The team is made up of 11 police officers, 1 Sergeant and 1 police staff equivalent manager and 2 administrative staff. We are based across two sites one in Northampton and one in Kettering. We also have working with us mentors, family support workers, careers advisors, PADS and an ex gang member amongst other various services and interventions. We work closely with Children's services (inc Social Care, Early Help and Education & Inclusion), Schools and Colleges, YOS, Housing and health provides further opportunities for support. Partnership working is key to the project.

- Suggested solutions regarding knife crime and gangs: a better response to school exclusion and school inclusion, we need to get communities onside to help us help them to keep their young people safe. All services need to coordinate with and support CIRV. We need to get real and take some action about these issues which plague our estates and families. CIRV are doing this largely on their own. We welcome other supports too.
- There needs to be a real commitment to deliver actions now that aren't tick box, and that deliver real outcomes for young people in this town.

Chief Executive, VOICE for Victims and Witnesses

- Knife crime, gangs and drugs go hand in hand and fuel crime and criminal exploitation within our communities.
- Poverty is an important factor in knife crime among children and young people. There is a need to build communities where our young people are healthy, safe and happy, one way to get children off the street and away from gangs is to offer access to youth centres and facilities at no cost. The most at risk will not be able to afford to attend groups if they have to pay.
- To engage young people in preventing knife crime and getting involved in gangs: provision of year-round youth centres, sports clubs, after school clubs and other youth activities in their local areas. Provision of the CIRV team to stop those on the periphery of gangs becoming involved. Provision of experienced youth workers who have the skills to challenge behaviour and support diversion from offending and becoming a victim, also targeting those in the early twenties age categories. The OPFCC new youth workers will be targeting areas of concern across the county. Continued educational
- To raise awareness of knife crime and gangs in Northampton: Provide a comprehensive schools programme including peer education to help young people to spread messages re knife crime themselves and amongst their peer group. Provide teacher training on Knife crime and

gangs and identifying those at risk and who they can make referrals to if not already done. Provide a parent programme to raise awareness of knife and gang issues and how to access support.

- Common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs: Poverty and peer pressure. Northamptonshire also has had more children permanently excluded from school than the average area in the East Midlands, these children are at a higher risk of criminal exploitation and are more likely to become a victim of knife crime or an offender. Schools should be encouraged to not exclude children and to manage those difficult cases bringing in appropriate agencies at an early stage. Children in care again a higher % of those will be targeted by gangs as they are vulnerable. Again, working with appropriate agencies at an early stage to divert them away from gangs. Children educated at home, not only are they at higher risk of becoming involved in gangs but they are also more vulnerable to other forms of abuse. Early multi agency response to be in place to reduce the exclusion levels and reduce the numbers educated at home.
- Northampton Borough Council can work together with its partners to collectively respond to knife crime and gangs by better information sharing across all agencies so individuals can be identified, and appropriate action taken.
- It is unfortunately becoming the norm for some young people to carry knives and consider this the way of keeping themselves safe when in fact the opposite is true. Some young people do not consider that the criminal justice system is in place to protect their communities and indeed them, especially if they have suffered crime. They then decide to protect themselves by carrying a knife as they consider the CJS is not for them. Early intervention involving multiple agencies to develop a range of interventions is required to change this mind set of individuals, prevention work for at risk groups, as well as law enforcement activity to disrupt gangs is required to address this significant issue.
- Voice for Victims and Witnesses is funded to support victims and witnesses of crime who reside in Northamptonshire. At the moment we do not provide support to gang members or those on the periphery of gangs as they are directly referred to and managed by the CIRV team.
- Voice for Victims and Witnesses would support victims of knife crime or witnesses if they are not involved in gangs either through our children and young people service or through our adult service. Those cases that are going to court will be provided with a Witness Care Officer for the life of the case and Victims and Witnesses are updated at key stages of the court case.

- At the time of presenting evidence, the CEO was aware of only one referral from CIRV to Voice for support for an individual who had left a gang and became a victim of gang crime. There may be a limited number of cases that could be referred to Voice following CIRV interventions where the emotional impact of the crime is still an issue for the ex-gang member

Director, Free to Talk

- Youth violence brings together the issues of knife crime, gangs and exploitation. FreetoTalk is seeing an increasing level of youth violence and we see a numbers of links:
 - an increase in the exposure of children and young people to violence in their families, streets, online and through media.
 - A widening range of young people involved in violence due to lack of youth services and prevention services for people.
 - A growing level of poverty increases levels of apathy, self-worth, direction and reason to avoid violence. We view poverty and inequality due to income as the root of the complex issues young people face.
 - Mental health issues are increasing at a rapid pace alongside young people continually feeling unsafe.
- Agencies work with the Community to reduce and respond to knife crime and gangs by: Agencies need to be in communities on a long-term basis, work needs to be relationship based, communities need realistic short- and long-term strategies and development.
- Young people can be engaged in preventing knife crime and getting involved in gangs by contextual safeguarding is a key route forward to understanding issues and responding in partnership with the community and young people. School exclusions need to be addressed at a local level and schools need to be accountable for these. Part time timetables need to be transparent and accountable. Transitions to secondary school with vulnerable children need to be allocated for intensive monitoring and intervention planning through year 7. Young people need trusted relationships – services and workers that are present in their lives longer term which requires stable organisations and funding to keep staff.
- There is a need to consider the level of awareness which is appropriate and required. It needs to be supported by an offer post awareness raising. Young

people and families need to be equipped with signs and symptoms, recognising issues, protective behaviours in a balanced way.

Common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs:

- Familial offending / criminal lifestyles in families and communities
 - Proximity and exposure to drug dealing on the street
 - Marginalisation, bullying and social exclusion
 - School exclusion
 - Vulnerability at transition points within childhood and adolescence
 - Trauma and bereavement
 - The myth and glamorisation created about gang life and criminal careers within our culture
 - Low self-awareness; self-esteem and a permeable identity.
- The Borough Council, together with its partners, collectively respond to knife crime and gangs by: generous leadership of CSP at NBC is already modelling the best practice for this. Their strategic guidance and resourcing of direction has created the current opportunities for a strong response in the town. Youth providers need to come together to plan a coordinated response to youth violence. A structure such as <https://londonyouth.org/> could create many more opportunities.
 - The specific issues relating knife crime and gangs are young people have increasing complex worlds and stressors and decreasing support and guidance. Inequality is growing, particularly around income and social mobility is declining. Reality is being skewed by the manipulation behind media and information streams. Critical thinking and understanding of society needs to be developed as a lifeskills to manage the information flow to young people and communities.
 - Support that the organisation offers: True Knowledge – Youth Groups to create safe spaces and consistent trusted relationships giving access to engaging mentoring. Youth Work and Community Development. Support with contextual safeguarding in areas of risk to young people. Harnessing workforce development opportunities such as E-safety and Understanding Youth Violence. Research into youth violence.

Chief Executive, Lowdown

- The Lowdown is a Youth Counselling Agency and supports young people across the county. The Lowdown has some indicators regarding drug taking and crime but not in relation to knife crime. Training for counsellors could be sought when a young person presents to the Lowdown as being groomed. The Lowdown provides counselling for young people aged 11 to 25. Wellbeing support is also provided as is support to LGBTQ. Sexual health testing and support and conception advice is provided.
- If a young person needed more specialist mental health support they would be referred to CAHMs.
- Young people could be helped and preventing them joining gangs, by providing them with a role model and a purpose. For example, the Springs Centre and Free2 Talk. Young people need to feel valued.
- An example: the leader of the LGBTQ Group who was in their early 20s but was concerned regarding their safety in the town centre. There is also a need to keep young people safe when they finish school for the day and go into town to catch the bus home. There is a need for presence in the town centre – either Police or Community Warden presence.
- Schools are currently undertaking RAG rating and it was suggested that the counsellors at the Lowdown might benefit from this. There is a huge waiting list for mental health support but also emphasised that the individual must want to get help also. They are often running on adrenaline thinking about the next deal. The Chief Executive did not think that a great number of those involved in drug dealing access the services of the Lowdown. When a young person accesses the services of the Lowdown they are initially assessed as to why they need support. The Lowdown does not specifically ask if they are part of a gang or are taking drugs.

Chief Executive, ServiceSix

- Regarding all the organisations “joining forces”, this did take place previously but this is no longer the case. The type of services that ServiceSix offers are includes youth counselling. ServiceSix has young people coming to it for support that have been groomed, including online grooming. There is a need to find a way to intervene into grooming. “stranger danger” is everywhere.
- ServiceSix works closely with CIRV and the RISE Team. ASB Projects have previously taken place involving young people. Service Six also works with young people, aged 16 plus who are not in education or on a training programme.
- The school exclusion programme can impact upon young people joining gangs. Teachers are also expected to do more than teach a subject; resources should be focussed on preventing exclusions.
- ServiceSix is working on an exclusion prevention project in Wellingborough and the impact of the project will be investigated.
- Young people need activities to go to.
- Often gang members see gang activity as “their graft”. If they are seen as asking for support, it is often seen as weak or telling tales.
- ServiceSix confirmed they would very much want to be part of a solution.

- Certain areas of the town need more support than other areas. Service Six is unable to walk the streets anymore due to funding cuts but they do operate in schools and other organisations. Some areas are “targeted hotspots”. All such organisations are underfunded.
- Individuals either self-refer to ServiceSix or are professionally referred. Saturdays and evenings are very busy. ServiceSix has a long list of community facilities and GP facilities and try to make the service as accessible as possible. ServiceSix does not have a centre in Northampton but it can use its partners’ facilities
- ServiceSix doesn’t do home visits for counselling but will do a home visit for an initial assessment and take stock of the home surroundings and home life.
- Most of the advice offered by ServiceSix to schools is free of charge.
- ServiceSix has seven contracted youth specialists and a bank of staff.
- ServiceSix covers Northamptonshire, Leicestershire and Milton Keynes.

3.6 Free to Talk - Case Studies

Detailed below are various cases studies received by the Working Group:

True Knowledge Case Study

October 2019

I met this young person (17 years old) through attendance at youth clubs and built up a relationship through the music course. He approached me as he had heard of the mentoring service available and wanted some support and guidance regarding his personal life. He had lot's of issues with family relationships and wanted advice on decision making. Mentoring started and we had an action plan involving building bridges with family and friends as well as looking for employment.

Unfortunately, after two meetings ***** went away with his girlfriend of the time and I was unable to contact him for a number of weeks. I then found out that he had split from his girlfriend whilst away which had caused him to fall out with all of his friends. He'd been seen at the local shops by some young people who reported he looked run down and was wearing the same clothes for days.

I went to the MASH team with my concerns and was informed that he had been assigned a social worker as there had been a serious incident. ***** had got involved with a group of people who had exploited and then attacked him so he had to flee the premises in minimal clothing, no shoes and was taken in by the police. I got in touch with the social worker and he gave me details of the incident and invited me to a TAF meeting. He also said that ***** had mentioned me and was keen to get back in touch. I met with ***** , his Dad and the social worker for the TAF and discussed the situation. ***** was back at home with Mum and Dad who were keeping him at home as they were seriously concerned about his wellbeing. His dad was happy for my support so I started meeting ***** at home with a view to trying to find him work. He applied for the army but due to a previous mental health diagnosis was unable to join at that time. Things were OK for a while, I helped him sort his CV and register with agencies which led to an interview for an apprenticeship

but unfortunately he was not successful at that time. He then went on a family holiday where relationships became a bit strained with his dad but nothing too serious. The relationship worsened over the next few weeks, culminating in an argument at home when ***** ran away and stayed at a friend's over night. He was reported as a missing person so when the police saw him at the local precinct they picked him up and took him home. At this point dad refused to let him back in so he was taken to his uncle's in Corby.

Since then I have met with him weekly and I have been in regular contact with uncle and dad too. I've arranged a phone for ***** as it was essential for his job search and uncle was getting frustrated fielding calls for him. ***** now has a job at his local pub and will start a warehousing job as soon as he turns 18. This has improved relations with his dad and I have brokered a meeting between the 2 to rebuild relations. ***** is now going on a family trip for his birthday at the start of November. His uncle has a family of his own so the current arrangement is only short term. I am helping with the housing situation, I've taken responsibility of this from his uncle as he simply hasn't the time and he is getting concerned as no-one from social services is getting back to him and the house feels overcrowded. I've managed to reconnect with *****'s social worker who apologised for the confusion and will help me in trying to get *****'s accommodation sorted. I still meet with ***** weekly and he is in a much better place personally and in terms of relationships with family and friends.

The case study gives the example of self referral through a youth group. It shows the pattern in young people's behaviour which can often only be understood through the rich intelligence of his peers. This information alongside a strong understanding of the young person and family situation led to the MASH referral. Indicators were his declining self-esteem with peers, dependency on peers, breakdown with family and then a period of being missing.

The strength of the trusted relationship was apparent in that the young person had talked to workers and parents about the support through the youth group and mentoring.

What works in Free2Talk's mentoring is the self referral for high engagement. Being able to support long term and be led by the young person's needs, regardless of geography. It works for young people to choose their safe meeting space and home visits work well for some young people. In this case it aids the family relationship development. Having the flexibility to purchase emergency items which includes communication which is often the biggest barrier for support.

Chief Executive, Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH)

- Northampton Partnership Homes is an arms-length management organisation that manages the housing stock on behalf of Northampton Borough Council.

It manages approximately 11,500 council tenancies. It has a Tenancy Compliance Team that deals specifically with reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB). During the calendar year 2019 there were 465 new reports of ASB. It also has a Support Team that work with any tenant that has support needs. The support it provides includes help with managing money, managing accommodation, self-care and living skills, physical and mental wellbeing, drugs and alcohol and domestic abuse.

- NPH believe that these are intrinsically linked. Being a member of a gang often means there is a risk of violence from rival gangs which leads to members of the gang feeling that they need to carry a knife in order to feel safe from any possible attack. Also, gang members are more likely to become involved in other criminal activities, e.g. drug dealing. This is a dangerous endeavour due to risks from customers as well as the more serious risk from rival drug dealers. Other issues linked to gangs include anti-social behaviour when gangs can appear intimidating to members of the public when associating in large numbers. There can be issues of misuse of communal areas if gangs force communal doors in order to shelter within flat blocks.
- NPH believes that it is essential that there is a true multi-agency approach, working alongside the community, in order to effectively tackle knife crime and gangs. Where we know that there are current issues with gangs in Northampton there is a lack of reporting of information from members of the public. NPH believes that this is due to a mixture of distrust in agencies, a lack of confidence that anything will change and a generally higher tolerance to crime and anti-social behaviour than other areas. All relevant agencies need to work together to gain the trust and confidence of the community and change the social norm of accepting violence and gang as a normal way of life. In order to do this it will be necessary to change the aspirations of the community and show them an alternative way of life. NPH believes that this will be a slow process and will require consistent and long-term engagement and will not be achievable with quick wins.
- NPH believes that the key to prevention is a combination of educating young people at the earliest opportunity (primary schools) specifically about the potential dangers of knife crime and getting involved in gangs as well as more general work in improving the life chances of young people and their families. Risk factors linked to gang membership include poverty, alcohol, violence in the media, witnessing or experiencing violence in the home, socially disorganised communities, poor academic performance, sub-standard housing, lack of opportunities for social activities, lack of access to legitimate employment, presence of gang members in the family, peer group or neighbourhood (Dahlberg, L "Youth Violence in the United States Major

Trends, Risk Factors, and Prevention Approaches”, American Journal of Preventative Medicine, vol 14, issue 4). In order to get to the real source of the issue it would therefore be necessary to try and address some of those risk factors. For example, by increasing local opportunities for social engagement, by ensuring that there are adequate programmes to assist young people to access education and employment and by generally trying to improve opportunities in the neighbourhood. Using the risk factors that we are aware of it would also be possible to identify those young people that are at particular risk and work them and their families specifically with more in depth targeted prevention work. We believe that there is also a need for more resources to undertake long term outreach youth work in order to tackle those currently on the streets either already in gangs or at high risk of joining gangs to try to divert attention and provide alternative lifestyle choices.

- There is already some good work going on, led by the Community Safety Team at NBC with various partnership support, around Primary and Secondary School workshops that cover a vast range of community issues including knife crime and gangs. We believe that this programme needs to continue and reach more schools. NPH believes that there should also be some multi-agency work done around raising awareness of knife crime and gangs to parents so that they are aware of the signs to look out for and what they can do if they suspect that their child is, or may become, involved in gangs. The knife angel is coming to Northampton in June and is a perfect opportunity for agencies to come together to plan a series of events during that week surrounding raising awareness. NPH will be attending the planning meeting organised by NBC around this on 27th February.
- Risk factors linked to gang membership include poverty, alcohol, violence in the media, witnessing or experiencing violence in the home, socially disorganised communities, poor academic performance, sub-standard housing, lack of opportunities for social activities, lack of access to legitimate employment, presence of gang members in the family, peer group or neighbourhood (Dahlberg, L “Youth Violence in the United States Major Trends, Risk Factors, and Prevention Approaches”, American Journal of Preventative Medicine, vol 14, issue 4).
- Preventative work – education starting at primary school, improving life aspirations and opportunities for young people and adults in poverty stricken communities including employments, sports, art etc..., targeting those with high risk factors for specific preventative work. There was a successful project in Ottawa between 1999 and 2003 providing support to high risk 6-12 yr olds. They offered life skills development classes, a homework support centre, sports and recreation opportunities and ongoing counselling. The

local housing association was also involved in providing venues for classroom and meeting space.

- Interference/Distracton – targeting those already involved with gangs or very close to becoming involved. This work is currently being carried out by the CIRV team who use ex-gang members as mentors. We believe that there could be better multi-agency work in this area so that information is shared with all relevant agencies and regular meetings taking place to discuss specific individuals and families and agree action plans that involve multiple agencies.
- Build a community of support – break down the social norms and attitudes towards violence and community safety. This needs to be a long-term programme of gaining community trust and generate a real desire for things to change from within the community as opposed to agencies coming along and telling the community that things need to change. It feels like there is currently an “us and them” mentality within some of our communities particularly concerning the police where residents don’t want to report things for fear of being a “grass”.
- Embed a zero-tolerance approach to knife crime – We believe that there should be a strong message surrounding knife crime and gang related violence that it will not be tolerated and that anyone continuing to use violence in this way will be punished to the full extent of the law. This should obviously go alongside the support that CIRV offer to help people get out of gangs so that they are fully aware of the help available but also know the consequences of choosing to continue committing violent acts. Utilise the tool of gang related injunctions to deal with specific individuals persistently causing gang related crime and ASB.
- Once within a gang it can be difficult for a gang member to withdraw themselves from it because they may be financially dependent upon the illegal income they are making from crime associated with the gang. With some gangs it is likely that there are links to more serious organised crime groups e.g. county lines, and gang members may be fearful of serious repercussions if they attempt to leave the gang. This fear makes it even more likely that a gang member will carry a knife which therefore makes an incident of knife related violence more likely. The consequences of gang activity (which on the surface may predominantly be general ASB) should not be viewed in isolation or underestimated since if linked to more serious crime then they could be contributing to additional issues in the wider community such as drug addiction, prostitution, cuckooing etc....

- NPH participates in the preventative workshop events that are run for the Secondary and Primary Schools.
- As a result of some recent gang related violence on Blackthorn we are currently doing some weekly community engagement work using our NPH bus. NPH has Tenancy Compliance Officers engaging with members of the public between the hours of 14:30-17:00 outside the shops in Blackthorn talking to residents about any issues they have in the area, if they feel safe, what we can do to help etc... Our general aim is to improve awareness of our service and improve confidence in members of the public to report any concerns to us.
- When approached, NPH works with CIRV regarding specific individuals that they are engaging with to assist in any housing related issues. NPH would welcome the opportunity to be more involved on a wider scale as currently as NPH does not receive a lot of information and appear to be approached on an ad-hoc basis.
- NPH's Tenancy Compliance Team investigate Anti-social behaviour when it is reported to us. NPH would welcome further information sharing with the police in particular. NPH is aware that some residents when witnessing gang related ASB will report it to us and not the police and vice versa. NPH believe that it is vital that we are sharing this information with each other as we recognise that it has different powers and it may be able to take action using housing law that the police can't and vice versa.
- NPH is currently considering implementing a pilot trial of having a full time Positive Engagement Officer within the Tenancy Compliance Team. The remit of this officer would be to work with perpetrators of Anti-social Behaviour (that could include gang related ASB) to provide targeted intervention work with the specific aim of reducing further instances of ASB by tackling any root causes of the behaviour.
- NPH attends a variety of multi-agency meetings surrounding Community Safety including CSP Board and Officers group, Northamptonshire ASB and Hate Crime Delivery Group and HASBAG.
- NPH recently offered the support of our TCO team to NBC's Anti-social Behaviour Unit to assist in applying for injunctions on a number of individuals causing ASB within a gang. This was due to the fact that the ASBU were struggling to progress with injunctions due to issues with their legal services. Since NPH have proven experience of successfully obtaining injunctions we offered to work in partnership and use our legal team to resolve the issue.
- More specifically NPH believes that injunctions should be used more often by the ASBU and the police to deal with gang related ASB issues. They are a quick and easy power to obtain, can include positive requirements as well as prohibitions and can carry the power of arrest. The success of an injunction

will obviously depend on the ability and/or willingness of the police to deal effectively with any breaches of injunction by making the necessary arrests and pressing charges so the police's support on the use of injunctions by any agency is vital.

Strategic Manager Children Services, and Strategic Manager and Head of Youth offending Team, Northamptonshire County Council

- It is their view, reinforced through referrals for statutory assessment and young people subsequently entering formal systems (YOS, Targeted Support, Child in Need, Child Protection, Children in Care) that there are links between knife crime, gangs and safeguarding issues that arise outside of the family unit i.e. Contextual Safeguarding.
- Standard responses to children's safeguarding is focussed on assessing and addressing risks arising within a family context; the risks to young people through knife crime, gangs and anti-social behaviours is most often external to the family unit and, as such, traditional child safeguarding responses and services are not set up to address these concerns.
- Adolescent neglect and risks to young people through reduced safe adult contact amplifies vulnerabilities of disaffected young people and makes them more susceptible to grooming by older gang members, organised crime groups etc. This includes local gangs but is also an issue imported from more gang-affected areas.
- It is important to note knife crime is not isolated to gang related behaviours, the possession and use of weapons is a concern linked to various circumstances including disputes amongst peers, domestic incidents and aggressive incidents in schools. Also knife crime is often visible in cases of exploitation and County Lines offences
- Carrying a weapon has become more prevalent amongst young people, for various reasons, for example protection against bullying, peer expectation, increase in violent crime within their neighbourhood and links with music and social media,
- Standard child protection safeguarding services do not readily fit with assessing and providing services for young people affected by gangs, knife crime and contextual safeguarding. Statutory assessments are aimed at individual risks and vulnerabilities as well as individual or family strengths, with reduced reference to whole-community / whole-school assessments and interventions.
- Within YOS a Gang Related screening tool has been introduced as part of the assessment process. Any young person referred for a programme within YOS preventative or post court will be assessed for safeguarding, risk and Child

sexual exploitation. Gang screening is now compulsory to ensure that all young people have the appropriate referrals made to CIRV, social care or other agencies.

- The issue of Gangs and Knife Crime is a countywide one but has individual district and borough 'flavour' to it. There are also different levels of services in the differing districts and boroughs, leading to patchwork engagement and delivery of responses, based on where a young person lives.
- There needs to be coordinated, joined-up services, across all agencies and consideration of pooled resources to address risks through gangs, knife crime and adolescent neglect. Whilst there are positive individual agency approaches (CIRV / RISE / PADS / Free2Talk etc.) there is not a coordinated, one-service approach to identify, assess and address risks to young people through contextual safeguarding across the whole county.
- There is evidence within YOS that young people that associate with gangs are often lacking educational opportunities, many after the age of 16 are unemployed and struggle to find appropriate employment, access to traineeships for young people aged 16-18, more supportive education (reductions in exclusions) would be beneficial for these young people with support from professionals to encourage the young person to maintain and sustain employment /education. Targeting from agencies of at-risk young people would be beneficial.
- Young people can be involved in preventing knife crime and getting involved in gangs by:
 - Evidence-based toolkits for schools / community-based organisations to use to identify, assess and address contextual safeguarding issues. Increased and consistent community services and resources.
 - Targeted youth outreach where 'hotspots' are identified.
 - Agreement and funding for increased levels of services and interventions when young people are at risk of, or actively engaged in, contextual safeguarding – possibly based on Police '4-P' approach (Prevent, Protect, Prepare, Pursue).
 - Participation and engagement forums. 'Experts-by-experience' role models (ex-gang members) engaged to work with marginalised young people most at risk of contextual safeguarding.
- Involve young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of services meaningfully by considering the following:

- Co Production - genuine co-production takes time and resource to set up and run. Start by making sure all staff and partners understand both the benefits and the subtle, but important, differences in 'consultation' (young people asked what they think but have limited influence) and 'participation' (young people can make suggestions and influence outcomes) vs. 'co-production' (young people working as equal partners, sharing decision-making).
- Involve young people at a level that they feel is appropriate to them at the time and build in 'progression' opportunities for involvement (e.g. they may want to start by contributing with ideas, or volunteering at events and slowly build their confidence and skills to take part in decision-making roles).
- Make young people feel welcome, encourage them to challenge existing ways of working; respect their contributions. Ensure participation is voluntary and they need to be able to change their mind.
- If young people take part in board or partnership meetings, ensure the meetings are run and written information is provided in jargon-free, Plain English and in an age-friendly format that is easily understandable
- Make sure the young people understand how they can benefit from getting involved. For example, highlight the opportunities to influence the services they and their friends could make use of, new skills and experiences, and opportunity to meet new people and get involved in fun group activities
- Make sure you celebrate their work and ensure staff; partner organisations and young people know what has changed as a result of their contributions.
- Think how to gather the views of people from different backgrounds and with different experiences. If they are expected to represent a wider 'constituency' of young people, then this needs to be factored in.
- Awareness be raised of knife crime and gangs in Northampton by:
- The problem is here and we're seeing the damage being caused. Local media highlights the risks through contextual safeguarding and this needs to be kept as a high profile for all agencies.
- Schools have highlighted gangs, county lines and knife crime as the issue they are most concerned about and want the most support (training etc.) to recognise and work with.
- The lead for addressing contextual safeguarding needs to come through a coordinated approach across all agencies through Community Safety Partnerships and the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership

(NSCP) – with each forum sighted on activities being driven by the other / complementary planning, engagement and interventions.

- There needs to be an effective social media output and presence in relation to gangs and knife crime - to reach the widest audience through media that is current and responsive.
- To make a long term, sustainable difference we have to protect, educate and support young people.
- We must engage with young people and identify and intervene with those at risk of offending or victimisation.
- Early intervention is crucial with children at risk of offending, however evidence as to what works in supporting at-risk children, are challenges which have consistently been raised nationally. Learning from what is already in place and what other areas have done is critical when identifying a Northamptonshire approach and response to this issue. Evidence from any strategy and program agreed needs to be collated and shared widely and used to drive change and support partners both locally and regionally.
- Any approach needs to run through the education system including effective schools programmes, youth provision, after school programmes and summer activities. These resources are absolutely critical to dealing with some of the factors such as poverty, unemployment and educational failure that give rise to young people who are vulnerable to becoming exposed and lured into various forms of criminality.
- Schools and alternative education providers have a crucial role to play in the delivery of positive messages and safeguarding measures to our young people and their parents. They also need to be places of safety.
- Schools should be able to provide support, advice and effective conflict resolution skills for both teachers and parents.
- Skills based programmes that aim to develop young people's abilities to control their behaviour (problem solving, self-control, anger management) as well as family focused programmes which incorporate the young person's wider network have also been shown to work in preventing gang involvement and youth violence. Young people need to be equipped with the skills to be able to resolve conflict without the need to resort to violence and weapons use.

- From local experience and research (<https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/>) there are numerous common factors leading to increased risk from gangs and knife crime; most of these are external to the young person's family and some of them are locality-based, but others relate to other factors e.g. exclusion / non-attendance at school, adverse childhood experiences, adolescent neglect etc.
- It is also important to note that almost all children who become involved in knife related crime are vulnerable in some sense, but the children most at risk have multiple interlinked vulnerabilities: Gang associated children are more likely to experience, parental substance misuse, neglect, violence at home, offending in the family, housing instability, school instability, mental health issues and self-harming behavior.
- Engagement with the NSCP, including trialling a 'Tactical Response to Incidences of Serious Violence, Gang Activity and Exploitation' process.
- The Borough Council works closely with various voluntary and statutory agencies to provide education and awareness. Last year the Borough Council provided funding to support in the design and delivery of our Knife Crime presentation 'KnivesEndLives'. They were key in coordinating the delivery of this presentation in secondary schools across Northampton and setting up the crime awareness days for Yr. 6 Primary Schools. In addition, the Borough Council support the Police and Ambulance Service by way of providing funding for specific equipment and also arranging events in which the awareness can be raised. The Borough Council also use social media to continually spread information to the local community. I am aware that they had planned for the Knife Angel to visit Northampton this summer, this has now been postponed. It is my understanding is that the Knife Angel will be presented and a variety of educational and awareness events will be ran around this.
- No issue relating to serious youth violence has a single aspect or cause and no single agency, service or organisation can address this issue alone. As such, Northamptonshire is highly supportive of a whole-system approach as the most effective at delivering a long-term solution to reducing serious youth violence. Northamptonshire needs to tackle serious violence using a multi-agency approach involving a range of partners and agencies, such as education, health, social services, housing, youth and victim services, offender management and others. It is essential that all statutory agencies work in close partnership with the voluntary and charitable sector to develop targeted interventions in local communities with action guided by evidence of

the problems and what works in tackling root causes. There also needs to be a cross-portfolio responsibility for violence and knife crime with cross-departmental leadership for any programme.

- Consideration is needed for commissioned training – either as an online learning resource or through face-to-face learning opportunities; this would require agreement about what is included in a local joined-up curriculum and be targeted at differing age-ranges, as well referring to approved resources, with associated training for professionals (and parents / carers).
- Consider co-location or collective pooling of resources across agencies / partners to have greater coordinated activities in relation to contextual safeguarding. Current interventions are locality or largely single agency based and this is a countywide issue, requiring a consistently led response.
- There is an imperative requirement to work together to gather and share intelligence to get an accurate picture of the contextual safeguarding 'landscape' from all agencies' perspectives; this would allow the wider children's partnership to prioritise and target resources. To have an effective contextual framework to tackle this issue we must include environmental factors, including planning, education, housing, Police etc.
- Pilot a multi-agency child exploitation (MACE) panel, resourced by decision-makers.
- The specific issue that needs to be addressed is how to align the raft of different services, assessments and interventions in differing agencies / areas of the county to safeguarding risks that arise from outside of the family home. Whilst there are families where gang involvement and knife crime is endemic, there are more young people being groomed into risky behaviours as a result of their vulnerabilities to extra-familial factors.
- Having a menu of services / responses available to address each of the 4-P 'levels (Prevent, Protect, Prepare, Pursue) so that all agencies can immediately recognise signs of concern and intervene early to divert young people.
- Approach as a Public Health concern – as the bulk of young people at risk will not require a statutory approach but do require education and early diversion from identified risk factors – right through to active Police disruption of gang members who we have been unable to divert from risky behaviours.
- In relation to NYOS experience with Young people, young people have reported that that knives were viewed as an easily available form of Protection. They also have reported that carrying a knife had become a 'norm'

in their community and was something they did because all of their peers did. Lines are often blurred, and young people frequently reported having been both a victim and a perpetrator of knife crime in their community. Many young people reported they did not feel that the police were able to provide protection and that they needed to rely on something else to ensure they were safe. Since knives are comparatively simple to obtain, they provided an “easy solution”. It is currently far too easy for young people to get hold of knives, even with restrictions on their sale.

- The YOS have analysed the data of young people and knife crime and have identified the below as contributory factors in relation to knife crime and gangs.

Risk factors linked to crime and anti-social behaviour			
Environmental level risk factors and impact on young people	Family-level risk factors	Individual Risk factors	Demographic factors
Peer pressure	Lack of attachment to parents or carers	Experience of abuse and maltreatment	Gender - boys are three times as likely to do so.
Fear of crime	Harsh parenting and neglect	Alcohol and drug abuse	Age - The “peak age” for carrying knives or guns seems to be around age 14 to 15
Poverty and social exclusion	Domestic abuse	Problematic behaviour from an early age	Ethnicity Young people from African-Caribbean backgrounds are disproportionately affected by knife and gun crime
Local presence of organised crime	Familial offending and attitudes to crime	School exclusion	
Lack of diversionary activities		Personal resilience	
Glamorisation of gang culture and violence			

- NSCP has a Child Exploitation sub-group, chaired by Mark Behan (Police) and interventions to children are managed through this forum.
- Risks to children and young people that are assessed to meet threshold are referred into MASH for statutory assessment and intervention. Statutory assessment and intervention is focussed on the individual and rarely considers the impact of contextual safeguarding to the degree necessary / related to the actual risk arising from outside of the young person’s family.
- The Northampton shire Youth Offending Service [NYOS] is responsible for co-ordinating the provision of the local youth justice services, as set out in section 38 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act.
- NYOS has worked with partners to develop a knife crime intervention programme KnivesEndLives. We deliver the programme to all young people open to the Youth Offending Service regardless of offence. We offer this at a tiered approach depending on the individual young person and their involvement in knife crime and gangs. We have shared this resource with all partner agencies and offer support in delivery where possible.
- NYOS are also a partner within County School Challenge and have been proactive in engaging schools wherever possible. NYOS have delivered the

knife crime programme in various schools to all different year groups; this is both mainstream and alternative education provisions.

- The Prevention offer with NYOS has been expanded and they work closely with CIRV (Community Initiative for Reducing Violence) in identifying those young people on the periphery of gang related or violent behaviours. By doing this it is able to offer support and intervention to these individuals at the earliest opportunity. Through this process our Police colleagues also complete a weekly report reviewing any young people who may have been involved in a knife enable incident in which is no formal Police outcome; again, it will aim to contact these young people and offer interventions and support where appropriate. The prevention service continues to grow and explore new ways of reaching those young people in need of support at the earliest possible opportunity to divert them away from gang related or violent behaviours
- Suggested solutions: this requires a 'whole-system' approach, to be delivered across traditional agency and locality boundaries. The issue is growing, and more young people's lives are being blighted as a result of being a victim or a perpetrator of knife crime / involvement in gang activities.
- From Children Services perspective it is felt the following would be beneficial:
- Service leaders need to review and consider pooling of resources and coordinated responses to contextual safeguarding, rather than continue to conduct individual agency or locality responses.
- A multi-agency, contextual safeguarding approach to be adopted taken by the council to address knife crime, and to overcome barriers in information sharing and collaboration between agencies.
- Introduce and agree a Northamptonshire Knife Crime Action Plan to join up actions and strategies across early health, family solutions and other children and young people's services with community protection to derive one action plan going forward.
- The council to support and encourage community projects that aim to prevent 'at risk' young people from being drawn into knife crime and are set up with measurable evaluation outcomes.
- Media project be funded, which involves ex-offenders, role models and victims and focuses on knife crime's impact on individuals, families and communities.
- Improve relations with local communities. This may be achieved by providing a more visible presence in neighbourhoods and adopting a more empathetic method of stop and search.

- Northamptonshire CCG to work with statutory partners (including the council) to enable the provision of more services at hospital A&E departments at the 'teachable moment'. Stakeholders in primary and tertiary care should be educated in how to approach knife crime issues.
- The council to support and encourage schools and other community organisations to make their facilities available for youth-focused activities after school hours and during holidays, to keep young people engaged in positive activities and deterred from crime.
- The council to work with Northamptonshire primary and secondary schools to develop and implement a Schools Safety Charter.
- Enhance ways of working with youth offending services and the National Probation Service in order to support offenders who can be rehabilitated and continue to manage and assess risk.
- The council to facilitate more collaborative working between the voluntary and community sector and religious organisations, to raise funds for projects and training to prevent knife crime.
- The Contextual Safeguarding Network has a lot of evidence-based research relating to best practice in response to gangs / knife crime. These issues have been prevalent in other areas for longer and are more entrenched than they are in Northamptonshire *at the moment*. There needs to be consideration of coordinating a whole-system response to address contextual safeguarding before Northamptonshire 'catches up with' other more gang-impacted areas of the UK.

Chief Executive, Community Courtyard

- There are clear links which are complex, it often begins with poverty and includes issues with social media. Young people are governing themselves. Young people are very much influenced by social media and their peers. Young people can make poor choices which is contagious, they are often looking for people they have something in common with.
- Community Courtyard is open till 9pm. It is well established in the town. There is a need to find time to liaise with young people and perhaps utilise the internet.
- There needs to be open and accessible youth work. Getting young people involved – long term involvement, a long-term process, five-year process at a minimum. Young people do not have the money to go to the cinema therefore there needs to be something/somewhere for them to go that does not cost.

- There is a need to re-connect. Also sharing information is important.
- Do authentic collaboration – Agencies and groups to work together.
- The need to share real stories was emphasised, not just the horror stories but positive stories also.
- Music, creativity and social media are all a part of engaging young people. Some of the music that young people listen to portrays gangs.
- There had been a successful event that was held in Grosvenor Centre. Families that attended asked “how did you escape from the gangs?”
- There needs to be a combined approach – lived experience of the young people and professionals.
- Joint working and joint sharing of information empowering young people needs to be a big part of awareness raising. Community Courtyard deals with young people at 1, 2am in the morning who are involved with knives. Joint working would help to create trust. More organisations should be open more in the evenings. There needs to be a celebration of all achievements.
- It is concerning the number of increasing women expecting to be raped as a part of gang initiation. Often their person life is as chaotic as their involvement in the gangs. Young people need to realise that they are a part of Northampton and they matter.
- Community Courtyard had received £220,000 in funding and now has premises in Gold Street.
- Community will be assisting for example painting parties. It will be a youth-led hub and will be open in March 2020. It needs to be used collaboratively. Community Courtyard wants young people to use its to space.
- Community Courtyard puts on street-based youth services. It also undertakes restorative justice work, get young people to take responsibility and think about how they can make amends.
- There should be a skill sharing process, by asking organisations what their skills are and how it can be shared.
- There is a need to make sure young people have a future.
- In respect of safeguarding and sexualised behaviours this is forwarded onto Police, School, Social Services etc. if Community Courtyard hears that a young person is unsafe, their safeguarding policy is triggered. If

a young person has been raped, Community Courtyard will work with them. Young people may share historic information. Community Courtyard acts within the law.

- Community Courtyard has often approached other organisations to share resources
- Community Courtyard keeps some data in terms of best practice – e.g. safeguarding and it goes to shops etc to find out about the area and where young people are “hanging out”. It will put on picnics pop up BBQ etc.
- Community Courtyard has 6 FFE staff and 42 active volunteers.

Police Sargeant, Police Team, University of Northampton

- There are clear links between gangs, knife crime, drugs and fraud. These links are often more commonly seen in lower income areas where there is not as much support and opportunities and the younger element in the community group together to support each other.
- Any affinity to gangs and them potentially carrying weapons starts at a much younger age. Dealing with anyone at this age is dealing with the consequences, not preventing the issue. While any work to support members out of gangs is worth pursuing, by this age the affinity is already well established. Families need support when children are very young. Parenting support and reducing the number of families in poverty would be tackling the cause of the issue and reduce the need for the children to gain support elsewhere.
- The penalties for knife crime, gangs and drugs goes no way to deter this behaviour, the cost is paid in lives lost. It is merely applying a sticking plaster to this problem, which is not a long-term solution.
- Identify the ‘at risk’ families and invest in those with parenting support, children’s services and ongoing domestic support. Looking at the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and looking to reduce these in early childhood would go a long way to us seeing a reduction in the harm gangs and knife crime causes. Engaging with those at risk needs to occur at a much younger age, these services have seen massive cuts over the past 5 to 7 years or so and as a result we have seen a rise in youths involved in gangs and knives.
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-49661740>
- Someone who has experienced four or more ACEs is 15 times more likely to have committed violence against another person in the past year, 14 times more likely to have been a victim of violence, and 20 times more likely to spend time in prison.

- Awareness can be raised of knife crime and gangs in Northampton by: Create conversation opportunities, before COVID there was plans to bring the knife angel to the town, things like this are good conversation starters and will help raise the issue. Also publishing figures around what crimes have occurred in this town compared to others, raises awareness. The balance needs to be found though between raising awareness and scaring people, this town is no worse than many others, the chance of being a random victim of knife crime is slim, but if you are a young male, especially with other ACE factors, in this town, as in many others the chances are much higher
- It has been proven that ACE factors lead to significantly increased chance of a child becoming involved in violence or creating these factors on their children.
- The investment needs to go back into children's services, especially targeting those at-risk families, we have CIRV dealing with those who are likely to be in gangs, this will help identify those at risk. Partnership working and information sharing is key to putting the resources into those who are most vulnerable.
- Knife crime is just one part of the gang culture, people do not get into gangs due to the knife crime, they are drawn in for other reasons and then are susceptible to pressures to get involved in knife crime to 'defend' their gangs and other crimes to generate money and notoriety. Gangs and violence are not a new thing and we are not going to make it go away. However, what is present now is an increase in the sheer numbers who are involved in this lifestyle and see this as a solution to their issues at home.
- The Police Sergeant works for the police within the University of Northampton. Her role is impacted by gangs and knife crime in that they are looking to identify vulnerable individuals and refer them onwards for additional support. Whilst they work closely with the university staff in this and in preventing offences occurring here, we do not directly offer support for these people from within the University, but instead link in with external agencies already offering this in this area.
- The team will look for opportunities to raise awareness of the issues around gangs and knives around the University and with the students and through our regular interactions she tries to get others looking out for the signs in order that we can then step in to offer support, however again this is a balancing act between informing and raising awareness and scaring people unnecessarily.

- As the enforcement agency the Team also deal robustly with any offences that occur within this setting.
- The Police Sargeant's experience has shown me by the time we are arresting offenders for gang and knife related crimes there have been so many missed opportunities to have avoided this path in this individual. I believe this is where the investment is needed, but this is not my area of specialism.
- The bigger cities seem to suffer first and then the issues spread out to smaller towns like us. I think looking at the solutions tried and tested in larger areas is a good starting place.
- The Team has some really good work going on in this area already in the town and CIRV is central to this. It is important to reflect on what they already achieve and look to plug the gaps they are missing.

3.4 Desktop research - Published reports and Data

3.4.1 True Knowledge Project Outputs & Outcomes

Year 2: April – June 2019

Output	Annual Target	Quarter Actual	Cumulative Actual
Number of referrals in total	-	19	19
Conversion through open access youth club (40% of all mentoring offered)	72	16	16
Peers accessing through open session (50% of those being mentored have peers accessing open sessions)	36	16	16
Professional referrals (40% of referrals converted)	72	3 (75%)	3
Referral response in five working days	100%	100%	100%
Number YP not engaging	-	0	0
Number of YP disengaged	-	1	1
Average length of support	-	-	-
Number of mentoring programmes opened this year		19	19
Number of mentoring programmes open	144	54	54

Number of open access centres	3	3	3
Number of YP engaging in open access centres (period between 3 - 12 months and a year)	180	Blackthorn 33 Semilong 21 Racecourse 10	64
Specialist workers attending sessions	-	1	1
Number of Young Leaders	-	2 on advisory 0 in mentoring 1 In groups	

Outputs & Outcomes

Mentoring (April – June 2019 detailed below; update on these to be completed end of June for next quarter to ensure consistent consideration given).

Non Engagement - 1

1 young person not contactable, homeless referred to MASH.

Yet to engage – 9

All in relationship building stages; those in this stage for more than 3 months worker allocation and approach is being reviewed.

Engaging – 42

Disengaged / Closed– 3

3 to close without intervention.

Progress on outcomes within mentoring

Distance travelled evaluations are currently being changed due to external evaluation. However a summary of outcomes that young people are achieving are below:

Of the current 54 open cases of mentoring:	
Report increased understanding of self and others in their community	26
Identify and report increased resilience, wellbeing, self-esteem and self-efficacy	18
Identify protective factors and personal strategies to enhance these	23
Discuss their complex worlds; how society impacts on them and how they are agents in relation to this	14
Identify requirements for a young person to engage, build and access trusted professional relationships	38

3 of the cases without a trusted relationship are due to close

13 cases are currently in the relationship building stage.

Learning

Peer group work is important for young people not feeling safe to engage in mentoring alone but want support.

Parents often the protective factor, not the issue as often assumed.

Within supervision, it should be discussed whether the worker is the most appropriate to build the relationship and consider alternatives.

Free 2 Talk are accelerating engagement with social care in 8 cases at present. Youth Workers are taking on an advocacy role to support young people's engagement with their social worker. This is reducing the wasted resource of Social Workers; although this has increased the amount of time allocated to each young person, consequently workloads are higher than expected which exaggerates the staffing / recruitment issues.

Youth Groups

The objective of the Trusted Relationships Fund is to reduce young people's involvement in exploitation and abuse, as victims and/or perpetrators, through:

1. increasing the consistency and quality of support for children and young people at risk of becoming involved in exploitation and abuse;
2. improving trust between young people and adults who are there to support them;
3. developing protective factors that build resilience in children and young people (including support networks; positive role models; sense of purpose; self-esteem; critical thinking skills).

1.increasing the consistency and quality of support for children and young people at risk of becoming involved in exploitation and abuse;

Youth groups are consistently providing safe spaces and group work for 48 weeks of the year. Young people are more informed on what Youth Workers can offer. The quality of the youth work is recognised as of an excellent standard in Northampton; this is evidenced from the growing feedback from colleagues in schools, social care and partners in the voluntary and community sector. Resource is acknowledged as an issue, particularly in areas where the project is not being delivered. Free 2 Talk are now involved in local sector events such as the Youth Summit and will be supporting the knife crime / youth violence training events for the county.

51 young people are currently receiving mentoring support. This has increased consistency of support for the young people. It is improving consistency and quality in other services by leading a youth led approach to support, putting the voice of young people into social care; multiagency enforcement meetings; in education planning.

3. improving trust between young people and adults who are there to support them;

Semilong - Increased level of trust with youth workers. Young people are now sharing issues of self-image and bullying. Young people are reporting feeling listened to. 4 young people have disclosed additional needs which have been supported through safeguarding and mentoring work.

Racecourse – there is a growing level of trust with youth workers as young people are sharing the family and peer challenges. 1 young person has requested mentoring from this group.

Blackthorn – young people are requesting support of mentoring as previous youth group members in particular issues with gangs, crime and violence. Peer network interventions are being delivered in response to this. Trust in the organisation and Youth Workers is embedded in the community. Young people frequently introduce friends and family also feel able to contact the youth team.

Mentoring illustrates a significant level of trust. Young people enter an environment which shifts the power dynamics of the relationship towards the Youth Worker and therefore the young person needs to feel very safe to enter this. The respect for this process is evident in the model of youth led parameters in venue, who is in the meeting and when it happens. Young people have often chosen school to be their safe space for regular mentoring.

developing protective factors that build resilience in children and young people (including support networks; positive role models; sense of purpose; self-esteem; critical thinking skills).

Semilong – young people are identifying similarities with their peers from different cultures, gender and race. They are developing an understanding of healthy relationships.

Racecourse – Young people have discussed their community and have volunteered to help plan community days to bring people together.

Blackthorn – young people have completed peer mapping and developed an understanding of healthy relationships. They have debated the sexual approaches of adults to young people in their area and started to report this to the police with Youth Workers support. Young people are actively engaged in their programme of informal education in the youth group, issue based work and wellbeing activities are having an impact on problem solving and resilience. The complexity of their worlds is being unpicked with youth workers which is insightful and social action projects are underway to campaign positive images of young people and exploring exploitation through film.

Progress against deliverables / milestones / critical success factors:

On target:

3 youth groups / programmes have been set up and are being delivered weekly. 1 of these programmes is detached due to the nature of the area and a lack of youth spaces.

21 members – Semilong

10 members – Racecourse (detached)

33 members – Blackthorn

Number of young people engaged in support due to a prior relationship: over-achieving target

92% (48/52) young people on current caseloads

Young people at point of arrest are stating willingness to engage with Free 2 Talk rather than other services. Free 2 Talk are actively facilitating social care relationships with 8 young people.

Monitoring and evaluation: on track

- Fortnightly project monitoring at Free 2 Talk Operational Team meetings
- Monthly supervision - includes case reviews
- Updates for HASBAG – monthly
- Risks and issues logs - 6 weekly at Community Safety Partnership (steering group)
- Safeguarding and incidents internal review - bi-weekly
- Attendance at Home Office Learning Events – quarterly
- Meetings with evaluation team – as scheduled with them.

Not on target:

Social action projects

Semilong – youth group have this planned from September 2019.

Racecourse – young people to be involved in planning community events summer 2019.

Blackthorn - #notthatbad is a social media campaign which is being developed to portray positive images of young people. The young people are completing this in the youth group, additional resource needs to go into this to get it moving at the young people’s pace. The young people have also contributed to a film on CSE although there have been some challenges with conflicting and accuracy of information about CSE and the professional understanding of CSE.

Young Leaders – the team need to put more time into this however due to staffing challenges, this is not being led in the proactive way that this needs to be. Nonetheless, Free 2 Talk are involved in leading a residential for young leaders across the local youth provider network in the autumn. This is a stepping stone in young people being central to the new unitary authorities.

Learning

The youth groups have an active programme of informal education. There are now 36 regular attenders in the directly funded groups and another 90+ in groups which have increased attendance due to the reputation development indirectly from this funding. The HACT calculator states that there is an annual social return on investment of £2300 per young person regularly attending a youth group; this equates to in excess of £207,000 per annum at this stage of the project.

Workforce Development

- Youth Providers event 29th June 2019 – workshop on ‘Keeping young people safe’ based on contextual safeguarding.

Evaluation by Home Office

Awaiting the dates for the interviews

Distance travelled tools have been introduced to staff and they are starting to use these.

Finance

Additional funding is being sought for the contextual safeguarding work around the peer mapping with young people. The networks of young people connected to all three priority areas have some overlap. Intervention for peer groups are currently being planned.

Young people are self-referring from Bellinge and Lodge Farm centres. Due to the common associations across geographical hotspots as well as their residential address they also qualify for this support. In addition, young people are commonly travelling / touring youth groups either to gain more access to groups or to access groups that they feel safer in. This is impacting on funding required in the Bellinge and Lodge Farm centres.

Risk and Issues assessment: Medium Risk

- Recruitment and retention of staff – the programme can only offer a fixed term contract for staff. We have had 2 offers of employment rejected due to this in favour of permanent local authority contracts. In addition, the local pool of expertise continues to be an issue with workers who have not experienced long term, strengths based, voluntary youth work. Lack of qualified workers in the field locally.
- Complexity of young people engaged in the project are higher than anticipated. Referrals / self referrals come in without young person's back story so unable to pre-empt level of need accurately. This impacts on the workload for Youth Workers reducing the number of young people they can effectively support. Social care are allocated to a number of cases but unable to engage the young people.

Mitigating Action Plan:

- Social media campaign in progress to communicate ‘why work in Youth Work for Free 2 Talk’ and current developments in central government views and value for Youth Work as a profession.
- Revision of recruitment process to test values and ability to commit to the roles.
- Early Help Coordinator to attend Operational Meeting on a monthly basis to guide decision making and case mapping.
- Supervision of cases emphasising the role of advocacy with mentors and social work cases; any additional family support or parenting to be delivered under specialist funding.
- Risks being reviewed bi-weekly.

3.4.3 True Knowledge Project Outputs & Outcomes

January – March 2019

Output	Target	Quarter Actual	Cumulative Actual
Number of referrals in total	-	53	53

Conversion through open access youth club (40% of all mentoring offered)	72	24	24
Peers accessing through open session (50% of those being mentored have peers accessing open sessions)	36	24	24
Professional referrals (40% of referrals converted)	72	8 (44%)	8
Referral response in five working days	100%	100%	100%
Number YP not engaging	-	13	13
Number of YP disengaged	-	2	2
Average length of support	-	-	-
Number of mentoring programmes delivered	144	24	24
Number of open access centres	3	2	2
Number of YP engaging in open access centres (period between 3 - 12 months and a year)	180	Blackthorn 61 Semilong 12 Bouverie 4	77
Specialist workers attending sessions	-	0	0
Number of Young Leaders	-	2 on advisory 1 in mentoring 8 In groups	11

Outputs & Outcomes

Mentoring

Non Engagement - 13

6/7 cold referrals; 5 inappropriate referrals; 1/7 historic relationship over 5 years ago. 1 no longer needed support; 4 moved out of area.

Yet to engage – 8

4 – complex situations and challenging to contact

4 – new referrals and in process if set up

Engaging – 22

1 – engaged in youth group key work only

21 – engaged in mentoring

Disengaged – 2

2 Moved out of area due to violent incident

Progress on outcomes within mentoring

1 – moving between phase 1-3 of theory of change; court case from incident 2 years ago has impacted on progress

8 – engaged through small groupwork and in relationship building.

14 self-referrals

Learning

Young men are reluctant to discuss feelings. Generally happier to critically discuss their world and society.

Very apparent that self-referrals are generated through the long standing relationships in youth groups. Relationships in 8-11 group are as significant even if not attended 12+ groups.

Youth Groups

2 set up of which 1 ongoing.

Semilong has been running a detached programme. This has now got 12 members and 1 young leader.

Agreed worker from current providers in Spring Boroughs / Semilong area to build on trusted relationships.

Progress on outcomes within Youth Work

- Trusted relationships have begun to develop with current core group.
- Core group from summer 2018 have re-established support from team and have requested small group mentoring and closed Youth Work.
- Keeping safe as young people and how young people can keep safe by developing behaviours that will combat the risks presented to young people in society.
- Young people were empowered and given the opportunity to give opinions about the police, crime and what makes them feel unsafe. These discussions were recorded and reported to the independent advisory group that speaks into the police's practice.
- The young people have planned activities they want and in what location of the building they want these activities to take place.
- Small group have attended CIRV Call In and requested support to attend. Although they did not stay in the event they have requested further support to access the opportunities CIRV offer.

Learning

Bouverie, no group has been established. Detached work has concluded the area is too small and that young people are not congregating there. All public spaces for young people are just outside of area. Identified park that young people are congregating in and have agreed in principle a community building and youth space for delivery.

Workforce Development

3 training sessions in Child Criminal Exploitation led by Craig Pinkney (International Adviser on CCE).

In planning

- Management training for Youth Work Line Managers.
- Youth Work Practice (Diploma and CPD)
- Volunteer Passport.

Funded spaces being offered to Youth Works CIC, Growing Together Northampton, Adventure Ways. Other organisations to be offered dependent on space NAYC, Service Six, Springs Family Centre, Community Courtyard, Youth Inspired.

CSE terms and definitions training in May 2019.

Single Intervention Safeguarding in a Youth Work Setting to be delivered in June / July.

Contextual safeguarding to be researched and training needs to be identified.

Evaluation by Home Office

Likely to be an interviewing process with young people, Free 2 Talk staff and Partner agencies. Timing for this will be July, August and then March 2020.

Logic model currently being finalised.

Risks

Staffing for the project – one dismissal on the project due to values mismatch; current recruitment drive for 2 / 3 new staff.

Change of area proposed for Bouverie Estate to incorporate area up to the Racecourse. Based on profiling young people's social movements. – propose new community venue Umbrella Fair.

Issues

Cash flow due to delayed payments to NBC from Home Office and subsequently F2T – remedied last quarter through overdraft facility. Amendment to the payment schedule in contract between F2T and NBC to be considered.

3.4.5 True Knowledge Project Outputs & Outcomes**January – March 2019**

Output	Target	Quarter Actual	Cumulative Actual
Number of referrals in total	-	53	53
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3.4.6 House of Commons Library paper: Knife Crime Statistics

The House of Commons Library published on 3 October 2019 a briefing detailing knife crime statistics.

Summary of the briefing is reported:

“Knife crime is a persistent and worrying concern, especially as it impacts particularly upon young people and the disadvantaged, and various remedies have been tried over the years.

Knife crime is a persistent and worrying concern, especially as it impacts particularly upon young people and the disadvantaged, and various remedies have been tried over the years.

Recorded crime

In the year ending March 2019, there were around 47,100 (selected) offences involving a knife or sharp instrument recorded by police in England and Wales. This

is the highest number in the nine-year series (from year ending March 2011) the earliest point for which comparable data are available. This is directly related with improvements in recording practices.

However, a review of recording practices has identified that Greater Manchester Police (GMP) had been undercounting knife crime in the area. Excluding GMP data, there were around 43,500 offences recorded in the year to March 2019 - still the highest number in the nine-year series.

Homicide

In 2017/18 there were 285 homicides currently recorded using a sharp instrument, including knives and broken bottles, accounting for 39% of all homicides – an increase from the 212 recorded in 2016/17.

Knife crime by police force area

London recorded the highest rate of 169 offences involving a knife per 100,000 population in 2018/19, an increase of 1 offence per 100,000 population from 2017/18. Gwent had the lowest rate of 24 offences per 100,000 individuals (up by 5 from 2017/18).

Proven offences and offenders

In the year ending March 2019, there were 22,041 disposals given for possession of a knife or offensive weapon. Juveniles (aged 10-17) were the offenders in 21% of cases.

Hospital admissions

There were 5,149 finished consultant episodes (FCE) recorded in English hospitals in 2018/19 due to assault by a sharp object. This was an increase of 2% compared to 2017/18 and 41% higher than in 2014/15.”

A copy of the full report can be accessed [here](#).

3.5 National Conference – National Combatting Gangs, Violence and Weapon Conference 2019

- 3.5.1 On 3 December 2019, Councillors Birch (Deputy Chair) and Councillor Aziz attended the Conference.

Key Findings:

Chair's Welcome

Key points raised:

- The Government had launched the new Youth Charter 11/04/19
- 25 teenagers were murdered in London in 2019
- 277 teenagers have been murdered in London since 2005
- During 2012 Olympic Games, the lowest figure of teenage murders - effect of sport engagement or extra policing?
- There is a £3 million cost of one young life lost.
- Contact sport - karate, boxing etc - provides discipline to help setting targets and goals as well as confidence to help channel anger
- Girls 99% influence what happens on the streets, mules, messengers, honeypots
- Poverty can lead to young people joining gangs
- Pioneered sport in the social and human development in children
- Engage with sport and all cultural and digital activity
- Equip with mental, physical and emotional life skills
- Empowerment, motivation, inspiration and aspiration
- Social coaches – aspire strong emotional intelligence, common sense and life skills
- Communities are the most sustainable offer
- 750 youth centres closed since 2012
- Child poverty rising
- Youth justice in crisis
- This is the first duty of government
- Olympic Charter, 2019 legacy manifesto, Call to Action
- Youth Charter Legacy Cultural Framework
- Facebook – Youth Charter – www.youthcharter.co.uk

The Police and Crime Commissioner's Role in Tackling Gangs and Serious Violence at a Local Level

Susannah Hancock, Chief Executive of Policing and Crime Commissioners (PCC), explained what to expect from the PCC, salient points:

- Strategy for tackling crime, work with partners
- Giving gang violence priority
- £22 million early intervention youth fund

- Government Spring statement – funding?
- Now only annual funding cycles
- PCC/ Deputy Mayors work to deliver co-ordinated and joined up strategies across local partnerships
- PCC funds community-based youth services which are the most effective
- Inform next spending review submission
- Investment across services – multi-agency
- London Violence Reduction Unit (London Model)
- Not just looking at public space violence; home, domestic abuse, violence with families
- Avon and Somerset Violence Reduction Unit is informed by Glasgow and Bristol
- Local level - partnerships, communities and young people
- Wales Violence Prevention Unit - early intervention, ACES, wellbeing of communities and young people, legislation
- Durham, Northants examples of good practice
- New investment in planning
- Public Health – early intervention for prevention
- New duty to prevent serious violence, a legal duty to report to government
- Leadership local and national needed

Case Study: Understanding the Rise in Gangs, Knives, Exploitation and Violence

Professor Simon Harding, Professor of Criminology at the University of West London and the Director for the National Centre for Gang Research provided the following information:

- 35 years of research and observation on the front line and had published a book on county lines
- Gang evolution – drug markets – IT/ social media (continuing circle)
- Gangs now 10 – 25/30 years old
- Belong to gang outside area
- More embedded
- More social completion – maintain street capital
- Driving towards ultra-violence
- Gangs in prison = business as usual

- Young people build levels of respect
- Dangerous arena of social conflict
- Belonging to gangs is extremely pressured and stressful, add in drugs, weapons, knives - its all social media 24/7
- Ultra-violence – acid attacks, face, body, stabbing, group stabbing, videoed
- Post code wars – territoriality, not good for business
- Drugs delivered to the door 24/7
- Widens out gang and drug dealing
- Mostly heroin and cocaine
- Gangs in town and villages
- Cuckooing to avoid costs of accommodation, payment in drugs
- Competitive advantage sought for county lines
- Violence/ threats
- Inventive
- Remote money, money laundering
- Revenge, debt, intimidation
- Group rape filmed/ published – blackmail
- Gift girls – care homes targeted
- This becomes normalised/ unrecognised
- **The effect on towns** - Increased acquisitive crime
- Violence against runners
- Debt bondage
- Inherited violence (phones worth £50k for contacts)
- Money laundering
- Pop up brothels
- Product quality increases to increase custom
- Users equilibrium upset
- Local retaliation, revenge
- Policies needed for Looked After placements
- Unregulated children's' homes
- Strategies to exit gangs
- Relocate if families from urban environments
- School exclusions
- PRUs (Pupil Referral Units)
- Gang ripple effect in small towns
- Social media live streaming
- Wider involvement, multiple opportunities
- Increased frequency/ volume
- Grooming/ recruitment
- 'Gang fans' – middle class girls

- Information = survival it builds brands/ business
- Dynamic changes
- Information overload for young people leads to inability to plan, foresee or risk assess
- Causing huge stress, confusion, fake/ real
- Keep it real – crisis of authenticity (**fake** = insult)
- Landscape of risk and fear, ungoverned, un-policed, unsafe, reachable 24/7
- On their own resulting in paranoia, trauma use of skunk
- Drill music - carry weapons, masks
- Fear, so arm themselves
- **'Get him, threat him, wet him'** - slogan
- Survival– strike first
- Reach is king – trained to strike, how to use knives to wound
- Carrying knives, sense of empowerment
- Not sufficient police/ partnership structures to deal with this
- C21st problem, C20th resources, radical new way of working
- Need a National Youth Conversation to find solutions **with** young people
- National Centre for Gang Research University of West London
- Youth Manifesto – National Task Force

Secure Management and Sharing of digital Media . Mike Ashby-Clarke, AXON Public Safety Ltd.

- People – apps – devices (continuing circle)
- Taser – technology to police
- Bodyworn video cameras to secure evidence
- Live streaming, dash cam, body cam, drones
- Significant number of incidents are mental health crisis
- Public evidence app
- Decriminalisation of drugs has been successful in Portugal, look at drug using community – delivery of services
- Information on movement of young people from London to care homes improves data sharing (barrier – GDPR)
- Gangs become 'family'
- Families are working 2-3 jobs – need supporting

Mark Simmons Assistant Commissioner Met Police Service, provided a multi-agency response:

- London – number one priority
- 2018 Violent Crime Taskforce, focussed on enforcement element of police role
- Targeted at highest harm, 11% reduction over 12 months
- 128 murders this year, 3.5% of that was through knife crime
- Tackling drives of violence, ancillary crime – robbery – threatened with knife
- 60% of all knife crime is involved in robbery
- Robbery – school age victims, 2/3 hours after school
- Schemes to work in summer holiday, diversionary work with young people
- Stop and search – relate stop and searches to violence and knife crime – 80% increase in stop and searches
- Body worn video used in stop and searches
- Section 60 – blanket area for stop and searches
- School Officers and Community Engagement Officers to compensate for reducing officer numbers but still increased number of Officers in schools
- Every school has a named Officer , 479 in London schools
- 47 Officers in PRUs
- Schools Watch – patrols around schools to reduce robbery and knife crime at the end of the day
- Include parents, community, teachers
- PRUs - concern about exclusions, link between exclusions and violent crimes
- Support for children excluded
- Police working in partnership with PRUs
- Enforcement activity comes next - robbery/knife crime
- Stop and searches tactic, mandate from community
- Investment in school engagement
- After school provisions, transition from primary to secondary
- Domestic violence
- Supporting parents
- Young people's voice
- Work in prisons and youth offending units
- CSE – safeguarding transfer work with criminal exploitation
- Move from safeguarding within family to wider context
- Multi-agency work critical in challenging violent crime, support and develop sustainable partnerships

Case Study - Learning from Scotland's Violence Reduction Unit – Niven Rennie.

- 2003 Glasgow – murder capital of Europe, Scotland most violent country in the world
- Territorial gangs
- Revolving door of prison – you can't arrest your way out of violent problems
- Violence is preventable, not inevitable
- Public health problem – interpersonal violence between families
- Intervention – attitude
- **Phase 1** – suppression of violence, **Phase 2** tackling gang problem, carrying knives fuels fear – ways out
- Prevention – former gang members given employment, serving customers, working with colleagues
- Second chances – 'Navigator', hospital work, support work by people affected by violence
- Education – mentors in violence prevention
- ACES – abuse, neglect, household dysfunction
- Break that cycle – look at reasons for behaviour
- Inequality – gap between the rich and poor, trauma, despair, mental health, vulnerability
- New approaches – innovation
- Drink, drugs and poverty are the drivers of violence
- Invest in communities, positive relationships, long term investments
- Timpson's employ ex-offenders, 'no one has ever stolen from them'
- Large number of offenders cannot read and write

Tim Champion, NPCC Silver Lead, Prevent and Prepare Project and National County Lines Coordination Centre - A Coordinated Response To The Threat of County Lines Violence, Exploitation and Drug Supply

- What is the demand? What drives the demand?
- Gangs and County Lines are not the same
- Supply and demand to be considered, if demand is understood the violence can be too
- Vulnerable, exploited young runners easily found, adults are also exploited

- 2,700 county lines
- 50,000 gangs
- Extremely successful business operating model
- Turnover £1 billion per year with crack cocaine and heroin
- County lines are not just a drug problem – violence, CSE, economics crime £500m+, slavery and trafficking, firearms, criminal exploitation, organised crime groups and gangs, drug networking
- Use of Modern Slavery Act in county lines context
- Dismantle the current 'business model'
- Under 18s don't have to prove coercion
- Exploitation of vulnerable children
- 'Middle managers' of drug organisations – taken out
- Each region has police coordinator
- NCLCC – exploited children, movement, transportation, priority, location, supply, demand, operation, response
- **Any** young person can be drawn into county lines

Steve Warner, Deputy Head of St Marys High School in Herts ('good' school) gave key points around schools and education to the Conference:

- Challenge is the communities, gang activity and county lines
- Need to safeguarding students, **all** considered now at risk
- Society problem not school problem
- Safeguarding issues - 'Beyond the Gate'
- Schools have clear responsibility
- Early intervention and identification
- Need to understand causes and symptoms
- Develop staff skills and understanding
- Positive relationships – schools/ families, schools/ students, schools/ partnerships
- Change school culture – trust and respect
- “Culture eats strategy for breakfast”
- Short term discussion strategies
- Fundamental **cultural** changes needed
- Open up conversations, music, pressures, drill music
- Not acceptable – knives in school, bullying
- Awareness and identification

- Early warnings – mobile phone thefts, anxiety – uplift in reported crime
- Understanding and acceptance, strategies for staff assessments, RAG ratings
- Community response – examples of good practice
- **Universal approach** - look at curriculum – engaging, interesting, relevant - trusted relationships
- **Targeted approach** - Sports, afterschool, hobbies, skills, positive choices – work with other agencies to develop skills and confidence to make positive choices
- **Specialist approach 'Aspire Beyond'** - Long term monitoring and support is required – building resilience, counter narrative, positive career exposure
- **Evidencing Impact** - Internal – engagement, headlines, questionnaires, case studies, exclusion data, Ofsted.
- email : steve.warner@stmaryshigh.herts.sch.uk

Cecile Palmer, New Directions Pupil Referral Unit, explained the following::

- Newham PRU, Tunmarsh School – 60 x 14-16 year olds, 25 hour bespoke programme, screening, CAMHS, speech and language, maths and English, Ed. psych, reading, support staff, safeguarding key workers to work with young people to keep them on track and look at absences, contact with youth offending team
- NEST – Summer, and ½ term activities which offers breakfast and lunch
- STIC Programme – self management, resilience, relationships, social communication, choices and consequences, coping with change
- A 6-week programme and then return to school - some stay longer
- APPLE – young people with particular emotional needs, place to talk, small, nurturing environment
- TRILOGY PLUS – culture and digital, sports and arts engagement
- Youth Charter – we are the only nation who do not have a Youth Ministry
- **Youth Manifesto** – until we put our young people first the climate and culture will not change
- 2020 a good time to launch Youth Centre

3.6 Site Visits

- 3.6.1 The site visits took place on Monday 7 October 2019. The Chair, together with the Deputy Chair and the Democratic and Member Services Manager and the Community Engagement and Safety Manager, visited Free2Talk and Far Cotton Boxing Club on Monday 7 October 2019.

Free to Talk

The site visit met with the Director of Free to Talk, and three youth workers.

Key comments and findings from the site visit:

Free to Talk operates in disadvantaged areas and works on the principles of qualified youth work and development

Funding has been acquired for the True knowledge: Parenting project – A parenting worker is employed 10 hours a week as there has been an influx in requests for this. The parenting worker is currently supporting six families

Another funded project is True Knowledge: Workforce development. E safety training will be delivered by 25 November 2019. Contextual safeguarding training to be negotiated to include trauma informed approaches and generic contextual safeguarding for addressing exploitation.

The Beyond Theory: Leadership and Management training is ongoing monthly training.

True Knowledge: Weekly School drop in – At Malcolm Arnold around 8-20 attend the sessions. At NIA around 6-7 young people attend. The young people are progressing through to mentoring; some young people's needs are being fulfilled through the drop-ins.

Youth Clubs operate in Kings Heath, Lumbertubs Primary (average 12 attendees per session); Bellingage age 8-11 (average 12 attendees). Age 12+ (average 20 per session) and Lodge Farm, age 12+ (average 30-35 attendees)

There is a need for more youth clubs

Young people need freedom and ownership of the space. Inspiration FM has offered its shop front space. It is envisaged that this will be a flag ship for young people as a safe place to go

Get Real Youth Music Project is at the second stage application of funding. Funders increased the application amount asking that more funds are applied

for to support the wider impact of the work for other organisations. The decision will be made by a Panel in December 2019.

The 3rd Programme of Free 2 Work is set to be launched on 20 October 2019. It includes one day a week “job and training shop in Kings Heath.

Social Action Project - young people build relationships with Youth Workers and when they become more confident and have strategies for their own lives then become involved in projects such as film making about a story of young violence and what young people experience.

The Director, Free 2 Talk, commenting that there is no one Strategy and everyone is doing similar projects and activities for young people.

The Youth Summit will be youth led and it will hear from young people. Free2Talk are leading on a residential for young leaders across the local youth provider network 6-8th September.

A contextual safeguarding programme is being worked on in Blackthorn and negotiations are taking place for a Youth House, with drop ins during the afternoon

True Knowledge host Youth Groups include: Semilong 12+, Blackthorn 12+

Various Social Action Projects include Knives End Lives Film – young people have been involved in creating a film communicating their views on youth violence. This captures a range of views from young people.

True Knowledge: Mentoring – 57 young people are now accessing mentoring. Varied relationship building programme for small groups with regular studio sessions. Outdoor/sports sessions are held bi-weekly

True Knowledge: Mentoring – 57 young people are now accessing mentoring. Varied relationship building programme for small groups with regular studio sessions. Outdoor/sports sessions are held bi-weekly

Far Cotton Boxing Club

The site visit met with the Director of Far Cotton Boxing Club and arrived at the club a few minutes prior to the start of an evening session that started at 6pm to 7pm so that Councillors could observe young people arriving.

Discipline is obvious and there is a rule of no talking during the sessions.

Around 30 young people were present, mainly boys – the age group was 7 – 9 year olds. Each session closes with sprinting outside.

Key findings from the site visit:

- The Boxing Club has been open for 16 years.
- One young boy attends the club three times a week now and had previously been a member of a gang
- The parents of one young person had insisted he attended the Club; he came with them the first time and now gladly attends on his own
- The Director of the Boxing Club is willing to visit local schools to promote the work and success of the Boxing Club. An example was provided to the site of a young person who had joined a gang for money to help his mum who was a drug user and wanted money to buy drugs.
- Kingsthorpe Upper School is bringing ten young people to the Club in November for a taster session.
- The site visit spoke with a member of the Club. She had been attending since 2012 and had recently got through to the ABA finals.
- Parents are involved in the Club, for example taking subs as young people arrive, making tea and coffee etc. One parent is a volunteer coach.
- The site visit spoke to a coach and he confirmed that he thoroughly enjoying coaching at the Club. He had been there around a year and would be attending a coaching course in January 2020.
- The Club also has a Level 3 Personal Trainer that will speak to attendees about nutrition too.
- The Club is open 5 evenings a week and sessions are held for women only on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The Club is also open on Saturday mornings. 5-10year olds attend on Saturdays from 11am to 12 noon and this is reported to be a busy session.

Free2Talk and young people have put together a short documentary - “knives end lives.”

4 Equality Impact Assessment

- 4.1 Overview and Scrutiny ensures that it adheres to the Council’s statutory duty to provide the public with access to Scrutiny reports, briefing notes, agendas, minutes and other such documentation. Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Scrutiny Panels are widely publicised, i.e. on the Council’s website, copies issued to the local media and paper copies are made available in the Council’s One Stop Shop and local libraries.

- 4.2 The Scrutiny Working Group was mindful of the eight protected characteristics when undertaking this scrutiny activity so that any recommendations that it made could identify potential positive and negative impacts on any particular sector of the community. This was borne in mind as the Scrutiny Working Group progressed with the review and evidence gathered.
- 4.3 So that the Scrutiny Working Group obtains a wide range of views, a number of key witnesses provided evidence as detailed in section 3 of this report.
- 4.4 Details of the Equality Impact Assessment undertaken can be located on the Overview and Scrutiny [webpage](#).

5 Conclusions and Key Findings

- 5.1 After all of the evidence was collated the following conclusions were drawn:
- 5.2 Evidence gathered highlighted that Northamptonshire is not unique, however, it is the most effected county in the region regarding county lines; due to the transport links making it easy for them to get around and the many academies in the town. Exclusions from school are high and the number of home-schooled children has tripled. The Working Group realised that looked after children and children excluded from school are often involved in gangs.
- 5.3 The Working Group acknowledges there is a need for a complex solution to the problem. The Working Group further acknowledged that there is a need for community empowerment and the Police can assist regarding bidding for funding.
- 5.4 There is the perception that some young people carry knives as they feel safer doing so. but the majority do not carry knives and are perfectly safe. People are more likely to be injured if they carried knives. Harm caused by drugs is a cross-cutting theme, for example drug and drink driving.
- 5.5 Some middle-class cocaine users use cocaine over the weekend but hold down a full-time job. There is a need to ascertain the demand for the supply of drugs in Northampton. There is a need to reduce the demand. Drugs appear to be a main concerning issue.
- 5.6 The site visit highlighted that the Boxing Club keeps young people fit, instils discipline and gives them somewhere to go. The value of Boxing Clubs and

the benefit that it provides to young people was emphasised by the Working Group. Boxing Clubs are a tried and tested method for anger management. Boxing gives self-discipline. Boxing is credible for both genders. The John Daly Boxing Club has been a fantastic facility for young people and assisted a number of youngsters. Mr Daly is prepared to take his Boxing Club around the county. Far Cotton Boxing Club instils discipline into the young people. It is understood that others would like different activities and opportunities. If parents cannot pay bills such as gas and electricity; this can then be an incentive for young people to join a gang and obtain money that way.

- 5.7 The Community Safety Initiatives were welcomed
- 5.8 The Working Group emphasised that there is not a lot for young people to take part in that doesn't cost money; there is a need to build up youth clubs and boxing clubs. A bid is being submitted regarding facilities for 8-13-year olds. The Working Group hopes that there could be funding stream achieved to bring youth clubs back into the town which requires a push with government to outline objectives.
- 5.9 Evidence gathered showed that Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) employs two Officers who check on those who fall in the amber category of home schooling; however, they have no right of access and have to have proof that they aren't receiving education. Parents/ guardians are responsible for paying for exams.
- 5.10 During the evidence gathering process, the Working Group heard that often, the parents have no idea what is going on e.g. one child had a cannabis addiction, the parent made sure he had no money however, he was then arrested with a balaclava and a knife.
- 5.11 The work undertaken by the Community Safety Team and the Police over the summer holiday period was welcomed as was the work that is carried out with both Primary and Secondary schools.
- 5.12 There is a need to coordinate the youth provision/offer in the Borough.
- 5.13 The Working Group welcomed the training regarding the risk of exclusion that is being rolled out to schools as well, there is a need for Multi Agency Training to bring all multi Agency work together. It was reiterated that Multi Agency training is required.
- 5.14 Over lockdown in 2020, safeguarding oversight continued. Schools remained open during the holidays too and vulnerable children could attend. Safeguarding leads in schools will be given further training. In addition, some parents will be anxious about sending their children back to school in September. Free school meals have continued over the summer holiday period.

- 5.15 There is a need to co-ordinate all activities going on in the town and this would avoid duplication. It needs to be ensured collaboration takes place. There is also a need to build community support. The Working Group highlights that there are pockets of voluntary organisations all delivering a service, but they are not joined up. Should partnership working develop, there would be the ability to signpost.
- 5.16 The Working Group hoped that there could be funding stream achieved to bring youth clubs back into the town which requires a push with government to outline objectives.
- 5.17 The most difficult area appears to be liaising with families the Working Group agreed that a way to rectify this could be to have a stand at a family fun day which may be useful.
- 5.19 The Working Group notes that there are a number of reasons why young people join gangs, there is a need for long term solutions. People often accept certain behaviours, for example there is no positive role models at home. There is a need to do a lot more at an early age.
- 5.20 Previous Troubled Families work did a lot of in-depth prevention work which included life skills development classes. Such classes are valuable and there is a need to provide somewhere for classes such as homework or sports and recreation.
- 5.21 The Working Group felt that attitude to violence and gangs is often “skewed”. NPH is working in Blackthorn, one question that is asked is whether people feel safe. Some comments received were that “stabbing is normal around here”. People don’t seem to report as they have a fear to report. A blind eye is turned.
- 5.22 There needs more Police and Youth work on the streets. It is acknowledged that a number of PCSO’s have built good standing, trusted relationships with young people.
- 5.23 There is a real problem with organised crime targeting young people. Often groomed into the gangs.
- 5.24 The Working Group felt that there needs to be a meeting with NBC and Community Courtyard regarding involving its work.
- 5.25 Evidence gathered highlighted that Merseyside has undertaken some best practice in combatting gangs and knife crime.
- 5.26 The Working Group commended the film produced by young people, via Free2 Talk - Knives end Lives: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCnUZyfeL4>

6.1.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Panel was:

To investigate how Northampton Borough Council (NBC) can play an active role in tackling knife crime and gangs in Northampton

Key lines of Inquiry:

- To gain an understanding of the work currently being undertaken by partnerships, statutory and voluntary organisations, and the Police to address these issues
- Whether there are links between knife crime, gangs and other issues
- How Agencies can work with Community to reduce and respond to
- How young people can be engaged with in preventing knife crime and gangs
- To raise awareness of knife crime and gangs in Northampton
- Whether there are any common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs
- To explore best practice elsewhere in identifying and providing support to victims of knife crime and gangs
- To understand what NBC is doing outside the Scrutiny process in relation to knife crime and gangs

6.1.2 Scrutiny Working Group (Gangs and Knife Crime) therefore recommends to Cabinet that:

Collaborative working

- 6.1.3 That the current work and programmes undertaken by the Community Safety Team regarding knife crime is continuous and becomes more strategic.
- 6.1.4 That the Community Safety Manager is in charge with working with all relevant organisations and Agencies so that they collaborate and enhance joint bids for funding in respect of dealing with gangs and knife crime.
- 6.1.5 That Northampton Borough Council, works with other Agencies and Groups in the town to coordinate the youth provision/offer in the Borough.
- 6.1.6 That Northampton Borough Council leads on Multi Agency Training, regarding issues relating to gangs and knife crime, to bring all multi Agency work together.

6.1.7 That a meeting with Community Safety Team, NBC, and Community Courtyard is convened regarding involving its work.

Facilities for Young People

6.1.8 That all potential funding streams are investigated so that youth clubs, and other facilities for young people are brought back into the town.

6.1.9 Funding is the core as all activities cost money and it is ensured that the costs should not be passed onto the young people.

6.1.10 That in recognising that the most difficult area appears to be liaising with families, when safe to do so, the Community Safety Team has a stand a family fun day; or a similar event is organised remotely.

Best Practice

6.1.11 That the Community Safety Team liaises with Officers at Merseyside regarding their best practice initiatives in dealing gangs and knife crime and aim to mirror such initiatives in Northampton.

6.1.12 That all Councillors are provided with the link to the short film produced by young people, via Free2 Talk - Knives end Lives: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCnUZyfeL4> and encouraged to watch it.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6.1.13 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as part of its monitoring regime, reviews the impact of this report.

Appendices



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Appendix A

Gangs and Knife Crime Working Group

1. Purpose/Objectives of the Review

- To investigate how Northampton Borough Council (NBC) can play an active role in tackling knife crime and gangs in Northampton

Key lines of Inquiry:

- To gain an understanding of the work currently being undertaken by partnerships, statutory and voluntary organisations, and the Police to address these issues
- Whether there are links between knife crime, gangs other issues
- How Agencies can work with Community to reduce and respond to
- How young people can be engaged with in preventing knife crime and gangs
- To raise awareness of knife crime and gangs in Northampton
- Whether there are any common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs
- To explore best practice elsewhere in identifying and providing support to victims of knife crime and gangs
- To understand what NBC is doing outside the Scrutiny process in relation to knife crime and gangs

2. Outcomes Required

- To make evidence based recommendations to improve the role that NBC has in tackling gangs and knife crime
- To make recommendations, as appropriate, regarding partnership working in tackling gangs and knife crime

3. Information Required

- Background data
- Background reports
- Best practice data
- Desktop research
- Evidence from expert internal witnesses
- Evidence from expert external witnesses
- Site visits (if applicable)

4. Format of Information

- Background data, including:
 - Presentation to set the scene: To identify the prevalence of the problem locally
 - Relevant national and local background research papers
 - Definitions – Knife crime and Gangs
 - Case Studies
- Best practice external to Northampton
- Internal expert advisors:
 - Leader of the Council, Northampton Borough Council (NBC)
 - Cabinet Member for Community Safety, NBC
 - Head of Customers and Communities, NBC and the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, NBC
 - Head of Housing and Wellbeing, NBC
 - Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety
 - Chair of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP)
 - Service Manager, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit
- External expert advisors:
 - Head of Protecting Vulnerable Persons, Northamptonshire Police
 - Chief Superintendent, Northamptonshire Police
 - PCSO – St David's, Northamptonshire Police
 - Service Manager, RISE Team

- Senior Manager, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Board
 - Director, Education Services, NCC
 - Representative, Children's Rights' Group, Corporate Parenting Board
 - Chief Officer, Northamptonshire Victim Support
 - Cabinet Member for Adult Services, NCC
 - Cabinet Member for Children's Services, NCC
 - Chair, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board
 - Chief Officer, Service Six
 - Chief Officer, Lowdowne Centre
 - Manager, Free to Talk Group
 - Chief Executive, Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH)
 - Chief Officer, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
 - Chief Executive, Victim Support, Northampton
 - Security Manager and Police Team, University of Northampton
- Site visits to Free2 Talk, Blackthorn, and Far Cotton Boxing Club

5. Methods Used to Gather Information

- Minutes of meetings
- Desktop research
- Site visits
- Officer reports
- Presentations
- Examples of best practice
- Witness Evidence:-
 - Key witnesses as detailed in section 4 of this scope

6. Co-Options to the Review

- None.

7 Community Impact Screening Assessment

- A Community Impact Screening Assessment to be undertaken on the scope of the Review

8 Evidence gathering Timetable

June 2019 – January 2020

- 18 June 2019 - Scoping meeting
- 23 July - Evidence gathering
- 12 September - Evidence gathering
- 14 November - Evidence gathering
- 13 January 2020 - Approval of the final report

Various site visits will be programmed during this period, if required.

Meetings to commence at 6.00 pm

9. Responsible Officers

Lead Officers - Vicki Rockall, Community Safety and Engagement Manager and Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager

10. Resources and Budgets

Vicki Rockall, Community Safety and Engagement Manager to provide internal advice.

11. Final report presented by:

Completed by January 2020. Presented by the Chair of the Working Group to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then to Cabinet.

12. Monitoring procedure:

Review the impact of the report after six months (approximately November/December 2020)

A snapshot of knife crime occurrences in relation to possession, and violence with injury from 01/08/18 to 28/02/18 for the central ward.

Key findings

- Out of 81 occurrences, 57 (70%) are related to knife possession and 24 (29%) are related to injury with a knife
- Wednesday is the highest risk between the hours of 16:00-18:00 for possession and injury with a knife
- The Drapery and Abington Street are hotspots for possession and injury with a knife
- Knife possession in Northampton Town Centre equates to 16% of occurrences that are located in the Central area of Northampton
- Injury with by a knife in Northampton Town Centre equates to 50% of occurrences that are located in the Central area of Northampton.

From August 2018 to February 2019 there have been a total of 57 knife crimes in the Central area of Northampton in relation to possession. Of the 57:

- 38 (66%) are in relation to stop and search
- 15 (26%) occurrences are in relation to threats being made with a bladed article
- 9 (16%) occurrences are located in Northampton Town Centre
- 6 (11%) nominals are under the ages of 18
- 4 (7%) nominals are currently outstanding
- 1 (2%) occurrence is in relation to drugs
- 1 (2%) nominal is from out of force
- 1 (2%) occurrence in relation to gang related activity.

The Drapery and the surrounding area is highlighted as a hotspot for knife possession (Map 1). Out of the 48 occurrences within the Central area of Northampton, 9 (19%) occurred on or around the Drapery. Specifically 3 took place at Market Square. It is likely, that larger numbers of people are attracted to Market Square as a shortcut, and where there is limited visibility and security

Subtopic

Current Issues

Serious Organised Crime - Northampton Borough Council/Community Safety Partnership

What has been achieved?

3 primary school events have been delivered - covering 11 of our priority schools, nearly 500 year six pupils. The events are a full day, with inout from the County Court Judge Rupert Mayo, warning of the consequences of carrying a knife and detailing his involvement with a number of murder cases. Knife crime awareness training is delivered by the youth offending team as one of the inputs of the day, alongside how to avoid getting involved in violent gangs by Anton (an ex gang member who is working for Northants Police).

60 knife crime presentations have been carried out by the youth offending service, initially commissioned by the CSP as well as 13 teacher sessions. The material used includes a short video that we commissioned by East Midlands Ambulance Service. A Doctor and Paramedic give their account of what its like to attend a knife incident.

In August 2018 we launched a knife crime campaign and produced materials, including awareness raising posters and a bi-fold card detailing the support services that are available.

SOC Training, including county lines, Exploitation and Gangs being delivered across the County - nearly 500 frontline officers trained

Supported the polices national knife crime awareness week in March - focus on cutting shrubbery in priority locations, included Blackthorn and Boverie

Knife crime awareness posters on the sides of 12 ambulances.

Chairing the cuckooing case management meetings

Over the past 18 months, officers have worked alongside partners from Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire Partnership Homes, probation and adult and child social services and have secured closure orders for 16 of the town's properties which were being used to deal drugs from.

Trusted Relationships

Developing a secondary schools event to include gangs, knife crime and county lines - NIA and Weston Favell secondary schools are already signed up.

Looking at a youth space in the Town Centre

Knife Angel being brought to the Town next year

Knife crime week of action

Fund catastrophic haemorrhage packs to be strategically placed within venues in the Town Centre.

NBC ASB Case Managers exploring the use of Gang Injunctions to tackle offenders and gang members

Youth provision bid

Plans that are underway

Governance

SOC - priority

Community Safety Partnership

Partnership SOC Strategy being developed

SOC Partnership Group - Vicki R co-chair with the police

County Community Safety Board

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY



Appendix C

WORKING GROUP – GANGS AND KNIFE CRIME
CORE QUESTIONS – EXPERT ADVISORS

The Working Group is currently undertaking Scrutiny Activity around:

- To investigate how Northampton Borough Council (NBC) can play an active role in tackling knife crime and gangs in Northampton

Outcomes Required

- To make evidence based recommendations to improve the role that NBC has in tackling gangs and knife crime
- To make recommendations, as appropriate, regarding partnership working in tackling gangs and knife crime

CORE QUESTIONS:

A series of key questions have been put together to inform the evidence base of the Working Group

1. In your opinion, are there links between knife crime, gangs and other issues?
2. How can Agencies work with the Community to reduce and respond to knife crime and gangs?

3. How can we engage young people in preventing knife crime and getting involved in gangs?
4. In your opinion, how can awareness be raised of knife crime and gangs in Northampton?
5. In your opinion, are any common factors that lead to involvement in Gangs? Please supply further details.
6. (Internal expert advisors) What is the Borough Council doing outside the Scrutiny process in relation to knife crime and gangs?
7. How can the Borough Council, together with its partners, collectively respond to knife crime and gangs?
8. In your opinion what are the specific issues relating knife crime and gangs?
9. Please supply details of the support that your organisation or group offers?
10. Please supply details of your thoughts on suggested solutions regarding knife crime and gangs.
11. Do you have further information or comments regarding knife crime and gangs which you would like to inform the Working Group?