



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

O & S Working Group

Gangs and Knife Crime

September 2020



**NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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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
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- How young people can be engaged with in preventing knife crime and gangs
- To raise awareness of knife crime and gangs in Northampton
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- 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=mCnUZyfeK4>

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
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 - 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/Distraction – 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**

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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.

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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

Plans that are underway

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

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?