Meeting: **Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel.**

Date/Time: **Tuesday, 18 June 2024 at 2.00 pm**

Location: **Sparkenhoe Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield**

Contact: **Euan Walters (Tel: 0116 305 6016)**

Email: **Euan.Walters@leics.gov.uk**

Membership

Cllr. Nags Agath   Salma Manzoor
Cllr. Liz Blackshaw   Cllr. Michael Mullaney
Parisha Chavda   Cllr. Les Phillimore
Cllr. Sarah Cox   Cllr. Sarah Russell
Cllr. Mohammed Dawood   Mrs D. Taylor CC
Cllr. Jim Knight   Cllr. Christine Wise
Cllr. Kevin Loydall   Cllr. Andrew Woodman
Cllr. Ravi Mahesh

<u>Please note</u>: this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's web site at <u>www.leicestershire.gov.uk</u>
– Notices will be on display at the meeting explaining the arrangements.

<u>AGENDA</u>

<u>Item</u>   <u>Report by</u>

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2024.   (Pages 3 - 8)

2. Public Question Time.

3. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.

4. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

5. Review of Panel Membership.   (Pages 9 - 14)

Democratic Services ◦ Chief Executive's Department ◦ Leicestershire County Council ◦ County Hall
Glenfield ◦ Leicestershire ◦ LE3 8RA ◦ Tel: 0116 232 3232 ◦ Email: democracy@leics.gov.uk

www.twitter.com/leicsdemocracy   www.leicestershire.gov.uk

11.   Section 106 of the Town and Country
      Planning Act 1990.

      The Chief Finance Officer at the OPCC will give a verbal update.

12.   Dates of future meetings.

      Future meetings of the Panel are scheduled to take place on the
      following dates all at 2.00pm.

      Monday 23 September 2024;
      Monday 28 October 2024;
      Monday 2 December 2024.

13.   Any other items which the Chairman has
      decided to take as urgent.

Agenda Item 1

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel. held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 12 March 2024.

PRESENT

Mrs D. Taylor CC (in the Chair)

Cllr. Nags Agath   Cllr. Les Phillimore
Cllr. Liz Blackshaw   Cllr. Sarah Russell
Cllr Adam Clarke   Cllr. Andrew Woodman
Cllr. Sarah Cox

In attendance

Rupert Matthews – Police and Crime Commissioner
Rani Mahal – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Rob Nixon – Chief Constable
Claire Trewartha – Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

21.   Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2024 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

22.   Public Question Time.

There were no questions submitted.

23.   Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

24.   Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

25.   Change to the Order of Business.

The Chairman sought and obtained the consent of the Panel to vary the order of business from that set out on the agenda for the meeting.

26.   East Midlands Special Operations Unit

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which gave an update on the East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU). A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

(i)   EMSOU tackled specialist areas of serious and organised crime such as fraud, economic crime, online crime, and carried out covert operations.

(ii)   In 2021 and 2022, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspected EMSOU with regards to serious and organised crime. In March 2023 HMICFRS published a report which found EMSOU's activity on tackling serious and organised crime to be inadequate. Many of the Police Forces involved in EMSOU now had different Chief Constables to when the inspection was carried out. A reconfiguration of the EMSOU operating model would be taking place from 2025/26 onwards and HMICFRS would be consulted on all the changes. Chief Constable Rob Nixon of Leicestershire Police was leading on the review of the operating model for the whole of EMSOU. It was not known when HMICFRS would next inspect EMSOU, however HMICFRS had recently inspected the individual forces that were part of EMSOU with regards to Serious and Organised Crime and Leicestershire Police had been graded 'Outstanding'.

(iii)   The financial plan for EMSOU was not considered to be stable and sustainable and therefore more funding was required to allow EMSOU to continue with the same level of activity.

(iv)   The PCC thanked Chief Constable Nixon and Assistant Chief Constable Michaela Kerr for their work on EMSOU.

RESOLVED:

(a)   That the contents of the report be noted;

(b)   That the PCC be requested to provide a further report to the Panel on EMSOU when progress has been made with the improvements.

27.   Police and Crime Commissioner's Update.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which provided an update on his commissioning activity and work engaging with the public. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 5', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

(i)   The Panel welcomed the additional detail in the report particularly around how the information received from the public was acted upon by the PCC and the Force.

(ii)   At the Panel meeting on 1 February 2024 the PCC had indicated that he was to have a meeting with the Home Secretary prior to the March 2024 budget to discuss Police funding. However, the PCC now reported that the meeting with the Home Secretary had not yet taken place and he was not sure when it would be rearranged for. It was now likely that the meeting would take place after the PCC elections with whoever was PCC at that time. The Panel was reminded that the Home Office had indicated an intention to revise the Police funding formula but this had been delayed.

(iii)   The Home Office had informed the PCC that the previously awarded Safer Streets funding would have a reduction of £180,000 in year two, across all bids. Therefore, the PCC had decided that the funding for Project 2 - ASB in Melton, and Project 3 - Neighbourhood Crime Oadby and Wigston would have to be cut. The Home Office had not given a specific reason for the funding reduction and the PCC had not been consulted prior to the cuts being made. It was assumed that the funding reduction was part of general savings being made across government departments. The cut was not specific to the Leicestershire Police force area; Safer Streets funding had been cut across the country, though the PCC did not know if the funding had been cut by the same percentage across the country. Panel members expressed disappointment at the lack of explanation from the Home Office and emphasised the need to understand why decisions were made.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

28.   Police and Crime Plan Delivery.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) which provided an update on progress with delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 6', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

(i)   The PCC explained that his original Police and Crime Plan covered a 4 year period, but as his term of office had been reduced to 3 years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, he had one year less to implement the Plan, and some aspects of the Plan required more than 3 years to come to fruition.

(ii)   The PCC emphasised the value of the role played by Special Constables and stated that public awareness of their value needed to be increased.

(iii)   Reported crime for January 2024 compared to January 2023 had seen the following reductions:
   • Harborough and Wigston down 3.7%;
   • City Centre down 7.1%;
   • East Leicester down 6%;
   • Hinckley and Blaby down 3%;
   • Charnwood down 5.4%;
   • Melton and Rutland down 10%;
   • West Leicester down 7%.

(iv)   The PCC paid tribute to all the work that was taking place in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to reduce crime, particularly violent crime, and he praised the impact of the Violence Reduction Network.

(v)   In response to a query about differences in crime levels across the different areas of LLR the PCC provided reassurance that trends were monitored and the data was used to hold the Chief Constable to account. CSPs were provided with detailed figures for crime in their areas.

(vi)   Rural crime had previously been an issue in the Force area and Leicestershire Police had received some criticism from rural businesses with regards to how it was handled. However, work had taken place to tackle the issue. There was now more confidence to report crime in rural areas, and actual incidents of rural crime had reduced.

(vii)   In response to a question from a Panel member, the PCC stated that he supported the work of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and he spent a lot of time engaging with them. The CSP funding formula had changed a year previously and the PCC was waiting to see the results of this before making any further changes. In the view of the PCC, further change and clarity was required with CSP funding but this would have to wait until after the PCC elections in May 2024. Panel members thanked the PCC for revising the funding formula for CSPs and for taking their concerns onboard.

(viii)   A member raised concerns about how onerous the process for reporting crimes online was, particularly all the personal information that was requested that was not specifically relevant to the crime/incident that was being reported. The member asked what the abandonment rate for online reporting was. In response the PCC explained that there were regulations that covered crime reporting and some of the information collected was mandatory whilst some of it was down to local discretion, however he agreed to look into the matter further and provide a report to a future meeting of the Panel on the topic including the abandonment rate.

(ix)   Leicestershire Police had uplifted its Taser training, and Tasers would be available for every officer who wanted to carry one and who had successfully completed the training. The PCC had also committed to equipping all Special Constables who were willing and able to do so to carry Tasers as long as they had passed the training.

(x)   A member expressed disappointment that Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) were trained to use speed guns but could not issue a Fixed Penalty Notice as a result of the speed measurement they had taken. In response the PCC explained that this was an operational decision that had been taken by the Chief Constable and the PCC held the Chief Constable to account for the results rather than the way the results were achieved. It was further explained that the role of the PCSO was different to that of a Police Officer in that PCSOs engaged with communities and listened to local concerns about speeding in an area and ascertained if there was an issue. Then further action could be taken by the Force. The College of Policing was reviewing the role of PCSOs.

(xi)   In summer 2023 the PCC had commissioned an independent large scale public survey to gain the views of residents across LLR and understand the expectations and views of policing across LLR. In response to a request, it was agreed that the findings of the survey would be circulated to members after the meeting.

(xii)   A member welcomed the strategic objectives set out in the appendix to the report though asked for more detail on why some of the objectives were RAG rated amber and some were green. The member raised concerns that the RAG rating by itself gave insufficient assurance that progress was being made. In response it was explained that the RAG rating reflected progress at that current point in time and for some of the objectives, plans were in place to deliver the objectives but the plans

had not been implemented yet. It was agreed that future reports would contain more detail on the reason for the RAG rating.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the contents of the report be noted;

(b) That the PCC be requested to provide a report for a future meeting of the Panel regarding the online method of reporting crimes.

29. <u>Ethics and Transparency Panel.</u>

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on the work of the Ethics and Transparency Panel. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

(i) The PCC thanked the Ethics and Transparency Panel members for their work.

(ii) A Police and Crime Panel member questioned whether the Ethics and Transparency Panel had raised any concerns about any aspects of policing in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and whether their work had any impact and led to changes. It was noted from the minutes of Ethics and Transparency Panel meetings that whilst the Panel asked a lot of questions there was no record of any actions being taken. In response it was explained that the Ethics and Transparency Panel was generally satisfied with the areas of policing that they had looked at and had not identified any major issues. However, it was agreed that a more detailed report would be brought to a future meeting of the Panel explaining the impact the Ethics and Transparency Panel was having.

(iii) In response to a query as to whether the Police and Crime Panel could suggest topics for the Ethics and Transparency Panel to look into, the PCC asked that any suggestions be submitted through his office and he reassured that he would consider them and pass onto the Panel if appropriate. It was therefore suggested by the Police and Crime Panel that the Ethics and Transparency Panel could look at the inappropriate use of social media by police officers and that some dip-sampling could take place. The Panel also raised concerns about reports in the national media about inappropriate and offensive comments made by Police Officers in WhatsApp groups, but acknowledged that this was difficult to monitor. In response it was explained that these issues were covered by the new Code of Ethics which had been created for Leicestershire Police and the PCC was holding the Chief Constable to account for how the Code was being imbedded. However, the PCC would give consideration to whether this was a topic that the Ethics and Transparency Panel could get involved in.

(iv) The PCC was in the process of recruiting people to be part of a Hate Crime Panel and the advert for the role had been published. The PCC felt that Hate Crime was such a serious issue that it required a Panel of its own. Police and Crime Panel members welcomed the PCC's focus on Hate Crime.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

30. Agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Police and Crime Panel considered a report of the Police and Crime Commissioner which provided an update on how the PCC and Leicestershire Police were implementing the recommendations that were given as part of the Police and Crime Panel Tasking Group review into monies spent under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

The Police and Crime Panel welcomed the progress that had been made with regards to Section 106. Panel members offered their support to the OPCC if there were any Section 106 issues in particular localities that needed to be resolved.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the contents of the report be noted.

(b) That the PCC be requested to continue to provide updates at each Panel meeting regarding Section 106.

31. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Panel take place on Tuesday 18 June 2024 at 2.00pm.

2.00 - 3.20 pm   CHAIRMAN
12 March 2024

LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 18 JUNE 2024

REVIEW OF PANEL MEMBERSHIP

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE, LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the Panel's membership and any changes required to meet the balanced appointment objective as required by legislation.

Background and Current Arrangements

2. The Panel needs to review its membership at its Annual General Meeting and/or following elections which may have affected the Panel's political balance.

Legal Position

3. The Police and Crime Panel is a joint committee of the relevant Local Authorities. The statutory requirement is for a Police and Crime Panel of 10 Councillors and 2 Independent Members. The ten Councillors must include one from each local authority in the area.[1] The Panel may not exceed 20 members in all. When the Panel was established in 2012 the decision was taken to establish a Panel of 15 Members made up as follows:

   - 8 Members representing the County Area (7 nominated by the districts and 1 by the County)
   - 4 City Members
   - 1 Rutland Member
   - 2 Independent Co-opted Members.

   This was to ensure that 'all parts of the relevant police area were appropriately represented hence the decision to allow 4 City representatives to reflect the fact it accounts for nearly 1/3rd of the population served by the Police. The Police and Crime Panel size was agreed with the Home Office and any change will require approval by the relevant Minister.

4. In making the appointments to the panel there is a requirement to '*secure that (as far as is reasonably practicable) the balanced objective is met*[2]'. This

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[1] Sched 6 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

[2] Sched 6 para 31.

means that local authority members of the Police and Crime Panel (when taken together) must -

(a)   represent all parts of the relevant police area.

(b)   represent the political make-up of -

   (i)   the relevant local authority, or

   (ii)   the relevant local authorities (when taken together);

(c)   have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the police and crime panel to discharge its functions effectively.

5.   The most recent Home Office guidance[3] issued in 2023 simply reflects the above stating: *'When appointing panel members, local authorities must consider, as far as is practicable, the balanced appointment objective laid out in the 2011 Act. This includes the make-up of the local areas, including the political make-up, and the required skills, knowledge and experience for the panel to function effectively. With the Home Secretary's consent, panels are able to co-opt further members, both elected and independent, up to a maximum panel size of 20.*

Applications to co-opt additional panel members can be made for either of two reasons.

1.   Co-opting additional independent members (more than two) – this may be to ensure the panel meets the balanced appointment objective, so that it has the necessary skills, knowledge and experience.

2.   Co-opting additional elected members – as well as the above, additional elected members may be requested to ensure the panel represents all parts of the relevant police area and the political make-up of the relevant local authorities'.

It should be noted that the co-option is subject to Home Office ministerial approval.

6.   There is no guidance on the qualification about practicability referred to above but generally this would be considered by assessing the balance between the difficulty/effort in achieving the outcome (the balanced objective) vs the difficulty (usually cost but that is not relevant in this case) of achieving the outcome. Broadly it will mean that the County Council as host should, working with the other local authority members, do all that it can to achieve the balanced objective but it is accepted that this may not _always_ be possible i.e. there may be a good reason which prevents this being achieved in some cases.

7.   The importance of the issue, and the balanced objective requirement reflecting the democratic process and electoral mandate, means that the effort required to achieve the outcome would be expected to be significant. Inconvenience

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[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-and-crime-panels/police-fire-and-crime-panels-guidance#panel-arrangements

caused because allocations have already been made by the relevant local authorities (by convention appointing Community Safety Partnership Chairs) would be unlikely to be regarded as sufficient to meet the test – especially when there are a number of options (including changing the composition of the Panel by co-option etc) which have not yet been explored.

Current Political Balance

8. Since the election in 2023, affecting Leicester City Council, Rutland Council and the Leicestershire district councils, and taking account of a by election at the County Council in 2024, the political balance and allocation for the municipal year 2024/25 is as follows:

	Conservative	Labour	Lib Dem	Green	Ind
	5.44	3.14	3.14	0.60	0.74
Allocation	5	3	3	1	1

9. There were a number of complexities in achieving political balance for the municipal year 2023/24, which resulted in the composition of the Panel not aligning precisely with the mathematical requirements for political balance. There were no Independent appointees despite the calculation allocating one seat to an Independent Councillor. There were also four Labour appointees despite the mathematical allocation of three seats to Labour.

10. In considering the membership of the Panel at the Annual General Meeting in 2023, Panel members noted the changes in political control and that historically the panel had always comprised one extra Labour Member (to reflect the political control of the City Council) and one extra Conservative Member (to reflect the then political control of the district councils i.e., prior to May 2023).

11. To seek to align membership with the mathematical formulae for 2024/25, the County Council's Director of Law and Governance wrote to all Monitoring Officers in April 2024 requesting that they consider appointing a representative for 2024/25 from the same political party as the current representative. The exception to this was Melton Borough Council, which was requested to consider appointing a representative from the Independent Group rather than the Labour Group. This would have resulted in a politically balanced panel.

12. Following the annual meetings of appointing Councils, the membership of the Police and Crime Panel for 2024/25 again does not reflect the requirements for precise political balance. The Panel currently proposed comprises 5 Conservative members 5 Labour members and 3 Liberal Democrat members, i.e., 2 additional Labour members and no Independent or Green appointees.

13. Appointing Councils have followed the convention of appointing the Community Safety Portfolio Holder/Community Safety Partnership Chair to the Panel, reflecting the requirement for members to have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience, but not the requirement for the Panel to be politically balanced.

Members (Local Authority)

<u>Conservative</u>	
Mrs Taylor CC	Leicestershire County Council
Cllr Phillimore	Blaby District Council
Cllr Woodman	North West Leicestershire District Council
Cllr Mahesh	Leicester City Council
Cllr Agath	Leicester City Council
<u>Labour</u>	
Cllr Blackshaw	Charnwood Borough Council
Cllr Knight	Harborough District Council
Cllr Cox	Melton Borough Council
Cllr Russell	Leicester City Council
Cllr Dawood	Leicester City Council
<u>Liberal Democrat</u>	
Cllr Mullaney	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Cllr Loydall	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Cllr Wise	Rutland Council

Members (Independent)

14. Following a recruitment process completed in February 2022, two Independent Co-opted Members were appointed. Their term of office will end on 1 February 2026. At this point, therefore, no further changes are required to the Independent Co-opted membership. A report will be presented to a future meeting of the Panel to begin the process for considering any reappointments/recruitment as necessary.

Parisha Chavda
Salma Manzoor

Next Steps

15. Officers are seeking the views of the Home Office and the regional Police and Crime Panel network on whether the balanced objective is met, as far as is reasonably practicable. Any responses received prior to the meeting will be reported to members.

16. Officers are exploring with relevant appointing councils whether they would consider changing their representative to enable political balance to be achieved.

17. An option which has not yet been explored is to increase the size of the Panel by co-opting further elected members. This would require the Panel to make a resolution under paragraph 4 (4) or 13(4) of the Schedule 6 to *notify the Secretary of State of its reasons for deciding that the resolution would enable the balanced appointment objective to be, or would contribute to that objective being, met or more effectively met.* All members of the Panel would need to agree to a particular co-option.

18. Once the membership is agreed, Schedule 1 of the Constitution will need amending to reflect the current membership.

Recommendations

19. The Panel is asked to:

(a) Consider whether they feel that the Panel meets the balanced objective, as far as reasonably practicable, or whether there are further steps that should be taken.

(b) Agree that Schedule 1 of the Constitution should be amended to reflect the current membership.

Background Papers and Published Documents

(i) The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (published)

(ii) Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel Arrangements (published)

(iii) Report of the City Barrister on Review of Panel Membership considered by the Police and Crime Panel on 26 July 2023 - https://cabinet.leicester.gov.uk/documents/s144266/PCPMembershipReport2023.pdf

Officers to Contact:

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Agenda Item 6

Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

18 June 2024

Serious Violence Duty

Report Date	17th May 2024
Report Author	Grace Strong, Director, Violence Reduction Network (VRN)
Security Classification	OFFICIAL

Purpose of Report

1. HM Government introduced the Serious Violence Duty through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022. Section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act was also amended to ensure Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) have the prevention and reduction of serious violence as an explicit priority in their strategies.

2. The role of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) is outlined in the legislation and the accompanying Statutory Guidance. Whilst not subject to the Duty themselves, PCCs have a key part to play in supporting delivery and may choose to assist specified authorities (duty holders) in the exercise of their functions. This includes convening and chairing meetings, administrating grant funding and monitoring specified authorities exercising of their Serious Violence Duty functions. (Section 14 PCSC Act).

3. The PCC brings this report to outline for the Police and Crime Panel how he is fulfilling his responsibilities through the work of the Violence Reduction Network (VRN) and the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Strategic Partnership Board (SPB) as the locally agreed LLR-wide partnership model.

Request of the Panel

4. In their role to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the PCC, the Commissioner requests that the panel examines the contents of this report. He would specifically like to ask the panel their opinion on the following questions;

    i. Is the Panel supportive of the work undertaken to date by the PCC?
    ii. Would the panel like to make any recommendations to the PCC in relation to any of the work outlined within the report?

Summary

5. It is the opinion of the PCC that good progress has been made against the new Serious Violence Duty with specified and relevant authorities meeting all the requirements prior to the deadline of 31 January 2024. The PCC receives regular updates on progress through weekly meetings with the Chief Executive Officer, bi-monthly briefings with the Senior Management Team and other briefings as appropriate. He also directly engages in activity and events led by the local Violence Reduction Network (VRN) including visiting a range of funded interventions aimed at preventing and reducing serious violence.

Background, Relevant Data and Trends

The Serious Violence Duty.

6. The Duty requires specified authorities, for one or more local government areas, to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence in the area, the causes of that violence and to prepare and implement a shared strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence in the area. (PCSC Act Ch1 Part 2). Section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act now requires CSPs to have serious violence as an explicit priority in their strategies and plans.

7. Specified authorities (duty holders) include the Integrated Care Board, Local Authorities, Probation and 'Youth Offending Services', Police and Fire and Rescue authorities. These duty holders must consult relevant authorities in preparing the strategy and they should co-operate. Relevant authorities include Education and HM Prisons and the Youth Secure Estate.

8. The requirements of the Duty mirror the core function of the Violence Reduction Network (VRN) and specified authorities are also encouraged to adopt a public health approach in discharging the duty. Specified authorities were expected to deliver on four mandatory requirements before 31 January 2024.

   i. Agree the local partnership model (and its geographical area) for discharging the duty.
   ii. Define serious violence locally.
   iii. Produce a Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA). (Reviewed annually).
   iv. Develop and publish a strategy which should outline the multi-agency response that will be taken to prevent and reduce serious violence in the local area. (Reviewed annually).

9. The Home Office also prescribed three success measures for local areas to monitor in additional to any locally agreed performance measures. These are:

   i. A reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with knife or sharp object;
   ii. A reduction in knife and sharp object enabled serious violence recorded by the Police;
   iii. A reduction in homicides recorded by the Police.

10. PCCs were also able to draw down temporary funding to support duty holders and the wider partnership to discharge their duties. Our local allocation was:

	Labour (staffing) costs	Non-labour (intervention) costs
22/23	38,795	13,692
23/24	182,091	41,343
24/25	173,343	20,968

Local Implementation

11. As LLR was already in receipt of Home Office funding for their Violence Reduction Network, the area started from a place of strength in relation to the Duty. This was reflected in a readiness assessment undertaken by Crest Advisory on behalf of the Home Office wherein we received the highest rating of readiness, 'Mature, Demonstrating Best Practice'.

12. Given the existence of the VRN and the expertise held within the central team, the PCC and local partnership agreed that the VRN would lead the work required to meet the four mandatory requirements. It was also agreed that the Strategic Partnership Board (SPB) would provide the local partnership model with additional support being offered to CSPs to develop locality-based responses and meet their statutory requirements.

13. To ensure all duty holders and the wider SPB partnership engaged and fulfilled their responsibilities, a Partnership Agreement was agreed by SPB members.

14. To support this, an Implementation Group comprising of representatives from specified and relevant authorities (including CSPs) was chaired by the VRN Director and met throughout 2023-24. This provided a forum for supporting and reviewing the production of the SNA and Strategy prior to formal sign-off by the Board.

15. It was agreed that the local definition of serious violence would be extended from the existing VRN definition, and the SNA would be prepared on this basis. The local definition is:

    "Violence resulting in significant physical injury and other serious harm, including sexual violence. Violence may be committed with or without weapons, and may take place in domestic or public places."

16. Throughout 2023-24, the VRN team provided written briefings and presentations to duty holders (and others) on the Duty and a self-assessment toolkit was produced for duty holder and CSPs to use in their mobilisation for the Duty.

17. Together with the Implementation Group, the VRN team co-ordinated a series of co-production workshops with schools and colleges, local prison establishments and community and voluntary sector organisations to ensure wider involvement in the production of these documents.

18. It was agreed by the PCC and partners that the labour cost funding would fund additional posts largely focussed on support for CSPs given there was already a central VRN team focusing on the system-wide response.

    - A Data Analyst to produce locality-based violence profiles and on-going analytical support until March 2025.
    - Two Partnership Officers to work between SPB, the VRN team and CSPs.
    - A Board Officer to ensure work focusing on serious violence is well-connected to other related priorities (for example exploitation and substance use) and to improve communication between the SPB Executive, CSPs and other relevant Boards.

19. Non-labour cost funding allocated to LLR was quite low which made it difficult to commission stand-alone interventions across the area and within the initially tight timescales. It was therefore agreed to allocate the funding to existing projects including a street outreach project in the city and the roll-out of the 'You're Right, That's Wrong Campaign' in the county. The non-labour costs funding for 2024-25 has been allocated to the co-design and roll-out of a community-based anti-violence campaign. This is currently in the design phase.

20. The SNA was produced, signed-off by SPB and submitted by December 2023 and an executive summary of this was published on the VRN websites (Appendix A). A locality-based profile was also produced for each CSP.

21. The SNA findings, together with the outputs from the Implementation Group and the wider co-production events were triangulated and our Preventing Serious Violence Strategy was produced, signed off and submitted prior to the deadline of 31 January 2024 (Appendix B). This five-year strategy outlines seven evidence-based priorities and has a stronger emphasis on community partnerships than previous strategies. The activity to be delivered in 2024-25 in pursuit of these priorities has been agreed by SPB and will be co-ordinated by the VRN.

22. As required, the Strategy has been published on a publicly accessible website (OPCC and VRN).

23. During 2023-24, all CSPs undertook the self-assessment with support from a SV Duty Partnership Officer and support was provided to all duty holders from the VRN Director and team.

24. Alongside meeting the four mandatory requirements, feedback from duty holders and insights from the self-assessments indicate that LLR is in a strong position in relation to the Duty albeit discharging it will remain an on-going responsibility for duty holders.

Performance Monitoring, On-Going Support and Sustainability.

25. The VRN team continues to monitor and report performance relating to serious violence to SPB with reporting being available to CSPs through the additional Analyst. This is also reported to the PCC during VRN briefings.

26. With regards to the Home Office's prescribed success measures, an outline of performance is provided below. This has been tracked since the VRN commenced its work in 2019 (albeit the measures originally focused on under 25s) and will continue to be monitored locally. Reductions have been seen in this period in relation to all success measures with the exception of homicides (all ages). The VRN continues to prioritise under 25s as a group disproportionately affected by violence although the scope has now broadened under the new definition brought about by the SV Duty.

	Home Office Success Measure		2019/20	2023/24	Volume change compared to 2019/20	% change compared to 2019/20
Police	A reduction in knife-enabled serious violence and especially among those victims aged under 25	All ages	864	810	-54	-6.3%
		Victim U25	364	316	-48	-13.2%
	A reduction in homicides and especially among those victims aged under 25 involving knives	All ages	10	13	3	+30.0%
		Victim U25, involving knives	3	0	-3	-100.0%
Health	A reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object and especially among those victims aged under 25	All ages	51	38	-13	-25.5%
		Victim U25	19	13	-6	-31.6%

27. The VRN team continues to offer support and capacity to duty holders in discharging their duties as well as continuously building a wider network of partners, including communities, to play their part in preventing violence. The funded posts will continue to offer support to CSPs in relation to data and evidence, developing locality-based partnerships and local problem-solving as relevant to each CSP. As the latter resource is more time-limited, it is essential that partners, with support from the PCC, ensure this is used to make sustainable progress and delivery of the Duty becomes business as usual.

-- **End of Report** --
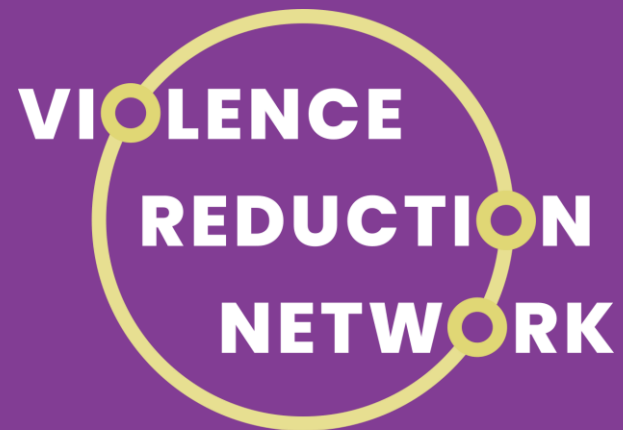
Serious Violence
Strategic Needs Assessment 2023/24

Executive Summary

#PreventionThroughConnection

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VRN

Introduction

The Violence Reduction Network (VRN) produces a Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) on an annual basis to provide a comprehensive assessment of serious violence across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). This document is a publicly accessible summary aimed at providing an overview of the main findings and recommendations.

The aim of the SNA is to increase understanding of the types, distribution and extent of serious violence in the local area and to help local partners to identify the people and groups who are most vulnerable to being or becoming victims or perpetrators of violence. The full SNA should be used to inform strategic planning including resource allocation.

The definition of serious violence used within the SNA is the one adopted by the VRN partnership which is: *"Violence resulting in significant physical injury and other serious harm, including sexual violence. Violence may be committed with or without weapons, and may take place in domestic or public places"*

The SNA aligns with the World Health Organization's four-step process for implementing a public health approach to violence which includes:

1. Defining the local problem of serious violence through systematic data collection
2. Identifying the risk and protective factors through evidence and research
3. Developing and evaluating interventions
4. Scaling up effective policy and programmes

SERIOUS VIOLENCE DEFINITION

ALL SERIOUS VIOLENCE OFFENCE TYPES

HOMICIDE:
- Murder
- Manslaughter
- Corporate Manslaughter
- Infanticide

ROBBERY:
- Robbery of Business Property
- Robbery of Personal Property

ARSON:
- Arson – Endangering Life

VIOLENCE WITH INJURY:
- Attempted Murder
- Cause or Allow Death or Serious Physical Harm to Child or Vulnerable Person
- Assault with Intent to Cause Serious Harm Endangering Life
- Assault with Injury
- Racially or Religiously Aggravated Assault with Injury

VIOLENCE WITHOUT INJURY:
- Threats to Kill
- Kidnapping and False Imprisonment
- Modern Slavery

STALKING AND HARRASSMENT:
- Harassment
- Racially or Religiously Aggravated Harassment
- Malicious Communications
- Stalking
- Controlling or Coercive Behaviour

SEXUAL OFFENCES:
- Rape
- Other Sexual Offences

MISCELLANEOUS CRIMES AGAINST SOCIETY:
- Exploitation of Prostitution

PUBLIC DISORDER:
- Affray/Offences Against State
- Violent Disorder

BURGLARY:
- Burglary – Residential (Home) (Aggravated Only)
- Burglary – Residential (Unconnected Building) (Aggravated Only)
- Burglary – Business and Community (Aggravated Only)

1 SURVEILLANCE — What is the problem? Define the violence problem through systematic data collection

2 IDENTIFY RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS — What are the causes? Conduct research to find out why violence occurs and who it affects

3 DEVELOP AND EVALUATE INTERVENTIONS — What works and for whom? Design, implement and evaluate interventions to see what works

4 IMPLEMENTATION — Scaling up effective policy and programmes. Scale-up effective and promising interventions and evaluate their impact and cost-effectiveness

Introduction

The following data sources are used in this document:

- **Police data** – Leicestershire Police recorded crime
- **Healthcare data** – Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit (A&E attendances and hospital admissions) and the East Midlands Ambulance Service
- **Social care data** – Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council
- **Education data** – Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council
- **Youth Justice Data** – Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council
- **Probation Data** – Probation Service for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
- **National data** – Data from the Department for Education, Public Health Profiles and the Office for National Statistics
- **Community and young person insights** – An LLR Community Safety Survey administered in 2022 and an LLR Young People's Safety Survey conducted in 2021, along with targeted surveys in 'hotspot' areas

Population Profile of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

- Leicestershire and Rutland are counties within the East Midlands with approximately 1.12 million residents
- The main urban area in Leicestershire is the city of Leicester
- There are significant cultural, economic and political disparities between the more rural areas of Leicestershire and Rutland and the urban and densely populated city of Leicester
- Almost 60% of Leicester's population are from a minority ethnic background compared to less than 13% of Leicestershire's and 5% of Rutland's population

- Leicester has a comparatively younger population than the national average largely as a result of have two universities situated in the City. This is similar to Charnwood in Leicestershire which is also home to a university
- Leicester is the 9th largest city in England and the most populous urban centre in the East Midlands
- Out of 152 local authorities, Leicester ranks 14th, Leicestershire 136th and Rutland 148th on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation
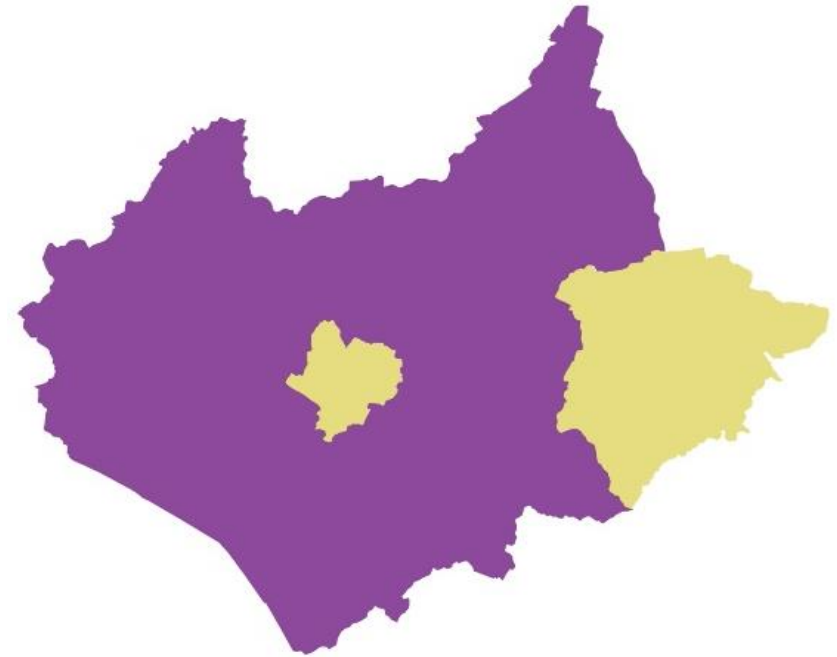
Map of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Profile of Serious Violence

The vast majority of residents in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) have not directly experienced serious violence over the past four years. However, serious violence is not distributed evenly across the population and significant inequalities exist. Certain groups and geographical areas within LLR are at much higher risk of exposure to and involvement in serious violence.

Understanding the local profile of serious violence is key to ensuring that responses are targeted and tailored in a way which tackles disparities and secures sustainable reductions.

1.7% of LLR residents were a victim and 1.2% were a perpetrator of serious violence in the last 12 months

Extent of Serious Violence

31,527 offences were recorded in 2022/23 which is a decrease of 4.4% compared to the previous financial year. The figure shows an increase from 2019/20 – 2021/22, followed by a slight decrease in 2022/23. It should be noted that the data from March 2020 onwards was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and implemented lockdown restrictions.
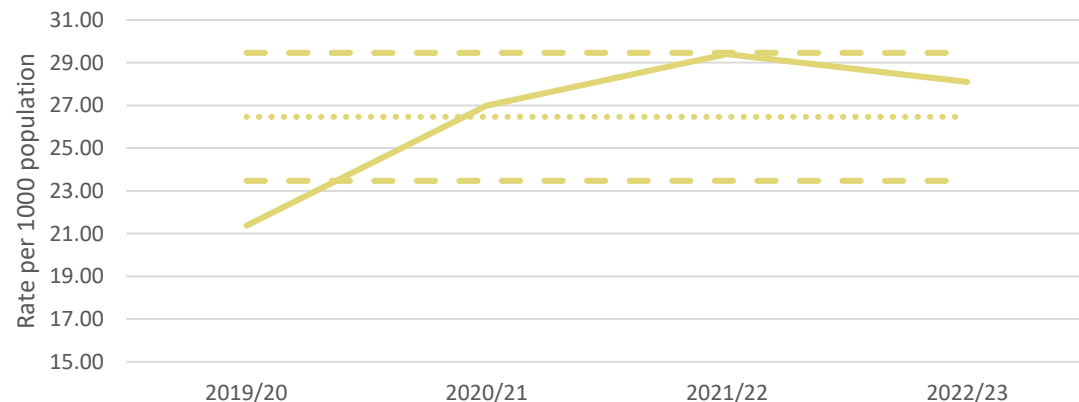
Rate (per 1000 population) of all reported serious violence offences across LLR (2019/20 - 2022/23) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

National data highlights that Leicestershire is ranked 6th out of all force areas for having the greatest rates of 'Violence with Injury' offences.

In 2022/23, there were 1,001 assault-related attendances to A&E recorded for residents from LLR (an increase of 19.9%) and 164 assault-related hospital admissions (an increase of 5.8%). Rates for patients under 25 and over 25 are very similar.

Both A&E attendances and hospital admissions are still significantly lower than pre-Covid levels (-27.5% and -30.2%).

Under 25s are 1.5 times more likely to commit high-harm serious violence compared to over 25s

Nature of Serious Violence

'Stalking and Harassment' shows the highest rate and is closely followed by 'Violence with Injury', making up 39.7% and 37.9% respectively.

Looking at specific offence types, 'Assault - S47 – AOABH assault occasioning actual bodily harm' (ABH) (31.8%), 'Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety' (13.0%) and 'S2 – harassment without violence' (12.4%) make up the greatest volume.

Comparing the offence breakdown for 2022/23 against 2021/22, 'Stalking and Harassment', 'Public Disorder' and 'Rape' saw the greatest increases (10.4%, 8.2% and 11.0%).

Decreases were seen with 'Violence without Injury', 'Burglary – Residential' and 'Burglary – Business/Community' (-18.0%, -23.5% and -57.1%).

30% of all serious violence was domestic-abuse related, and 9% constituted sexual violence

Profile of Violence

The rates of high-harm offences – such as homicide, grievous bodily harm and robbery for under 25s are 1.5 times greater than the rates for over 25s.

Less than 1 in 10 offences involved a knife or sharp object

The majority of violent offences did not involve a weapon. Police data indicates that just 5% of serious violence involved a knife or sharp object with 69% of offences occurring in Leicester City (April 22-March 23).

The Table below shows the rate (per 1000 population) of the five most frequent diagnosis descriptions for assault-related admissions for LLR residents.

Diagnosis Group	Rate per 1000 population
Assault by bodily force	0.080
Assault by sharp object	0.025
Assault by unspecified means	0.020
Assault by other specified means	0.006
Sexual assault by bodily force	0.004

The data also shows that from April 2022 to March 2023 the length of the stay in hospital ranged from 0 – 30 days, with the majority of patients staying for three or less days. The average cost per inpatient is approximately £2375.

Data from the ambulance service also provides insights into the nature of violence. 75.0% of call-outs were categorised as 'Assault/Sexual Assault' and 25.0% were 'Stab/Gunshot/Penetrating Trauma'. When looking at assault-related ambulance call-outs, 52.3% resulted in conveyance to hospital. The proportion increases to 70.3% when focusing on assaults categorised as 'Stab/Gunshot/Penetrating Trauma'.

Timings

The chart below shows the trend in serious violence over the four-year period of April 2019 to March 2023 for offences involving all ages.
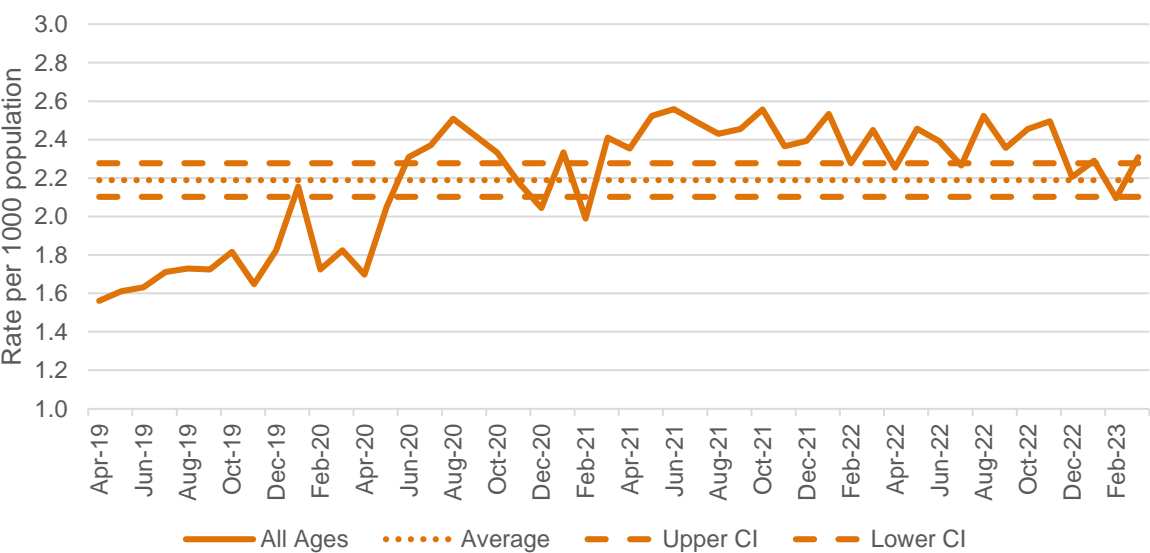
Rate (per 1000 population) of serious violence across LLR (April 2019 – March 2023) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

While there has been fluctuation, the last 18-24 months have shown a downward trend with February 2023 reporting the lowest volumes since February 2021 (which will have been impacted by lockdown restrictions). The chart highlights a higher average rate of offences over the summer months compared to the winter months.

Trends in monthly A&E attendances, admissions and ambulance call outs were similar with fluctuations across this period.

Profile of Serious Violence

Both police and health data show similar trends with increased levels of serious violence at the weekend although it is more evenly spread across the week for under 25s.

In terms of peak times:

- Police data shows serious violence is most frequently committed in the afternoon through to the late evening.

- The most prevalent time of the day for under 25s is 15:00-15:59. This is consistent with previous SNA findings and coincides with the end of the school day.

- A fifth of all serious violence was committed in the night-time economy (22:00-04:59)

- A&E attendances have a higher rate between the hours of 11:00-11:59, 18:00-18:59, and 21:00-21:59.

- Ambulance data reveals a peak between 22:00-23:59 with a general increase in rates between 19:00-00:59.

Preventing Serious Violence After-School

This section has been developed based upon a deep-dive of crime data on serious violence which took place between 3-4pm and focuses on offences where the victim or suspected perpetrator is aged under 18 (April 2022 – March 2023).

The most common offences experienced by under 18s between 3-4pm are:
- Assault with Injury (mostly ABH) (48%)
- Harassment (15%)
- Malicious Communications (9%)

In 2022/23, peak months of January 2023, November 2022 and May 2022 were identified, with a notable decrease seen over the summer months (June 2022 – August 2022).

The data shows a greater distribution of offences during the week (Monday – Friday) compared to the weekend (Saturday – Sunday) with the daily proportions seen on a weekday being roughly double the proportions seen at the weekend.

West Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby, and Charnwood make up the greatest proportion of offences at this time of day.

Peak ages of victims: 12 – 15 years

Peak ages of suspects/perpetrators: 12 - 15 years

Equal split of male and female victims

63% of perpetrators are male

The majority of perpetrators came from West and East Leicester (21%, 15%)

Victims were most likely to live in West Leicester (19%), Hinckley & Blaby (15%) and East Leicester (14%).

Serious Violence in the Night Time Economy

This section has been developed based upon a deep-dive of police data on public place serious violence in the night-time economy (NTE) using police data. This included offence committed between 22:00 and 04:59 between April 2022 to March 2023.

The most common offences in the NTE are:
- Assault with Injury (67%)
- Affray/Offences against State (17%)
- Robbery of Personal Property (8%)

Over 30% of offences take place on a Saturday followed by Sunday (28%) and Friday (15%)

22:00 – 00:59 is the peak time

73% of perpetrators were identified as White, 14% were Asian and 12% were Black

Over eight in ten perpetrators in the NTE are male

The majority of perpetrators came from West Leicester (17%), followed by Charnwood (15%) and East Leicester (14%). More specifically, perpetrators most commonly resided in Braunstone & Rowley Fields, New Parks, Riverside, Whitwick & Ibstock, Abbey, Loughborough Town and Westcotes.

Age of Perpetrator

Peak ages of victims are between 18 – 22

Almost 70% of victims are male

77% of victims in the NTE were identified as White, followed by Asian 15% and Black 7%

Victims were most likely to live in West Leicester, East Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby and Charnwood with all areas reporting around 15% of the cohort. More specifically, victims commonly reside in Braunstone & Rowley Fields, New Parks, Beaumont Leys, Loughborough Town, Riverside, Westcotes and Abbey.

Geography of Serious Violence

Leicester saw the highest rate and volume of serious violence which double the rate seen in Leicestershire. Charnwood saw the highest volume and North West Leicestershire saw the highest rate despite making up only 8.5% of the LLR total.

Area	Rate per 1000 population	% of LLR total
LLR	28.13	100.0%
Leicester	42.74	49.9%
Leicestershire	21.36	48.2%
Charnwood	24.37	14.2%
Hinckley and Bosworth	24.10	8.7%
North West Leicestershire	25.64	8.5%
Harborough	16.43	5.1%
Blaby	17.52	5.7%
Melton	22.44	3.7%
Oadby and Wigston	22.09	4.0%
Rutland	14.54	1.9%

Rate (per 1000 population) and proportion of serious violence offences across LLR and district/borough areas (April 2022 – March 2023) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

Looking at the Leicestershire Police Neighbourhood Policing Areas, 14.7% of all serious violence across LLR occurred in West Leicester, closely followed by East Leicester (14.6%), Hinckley & Blaby (14.4%) and Charnwood (14.2%). More specifically, the highest density of offences were seen in City Centre, Braunstone & Rowley Fields, New Parks, Beaumont Leys, Cultural Quarter and Whitwick & Ibstock.

62.6% of serious violence occurred in a dwelling, followed by public/open place (e.g. street, park etc), hospitality (4.6%) and education settings (2.7%).

Perpetrators

The vast majority of people in LLR are not involved in serious violence, with just 1.2% of the LLR population being perpetrators of serious violence.

Those aged under 40 are most likely to be perpetrators of serious violence, with the rates increasing between each group to a peak seen for those aged 35-39 years old, indicating that this group is most likely to be involved in serious violence.

Under 25s contributed to 30% of serious violence in 2022/23
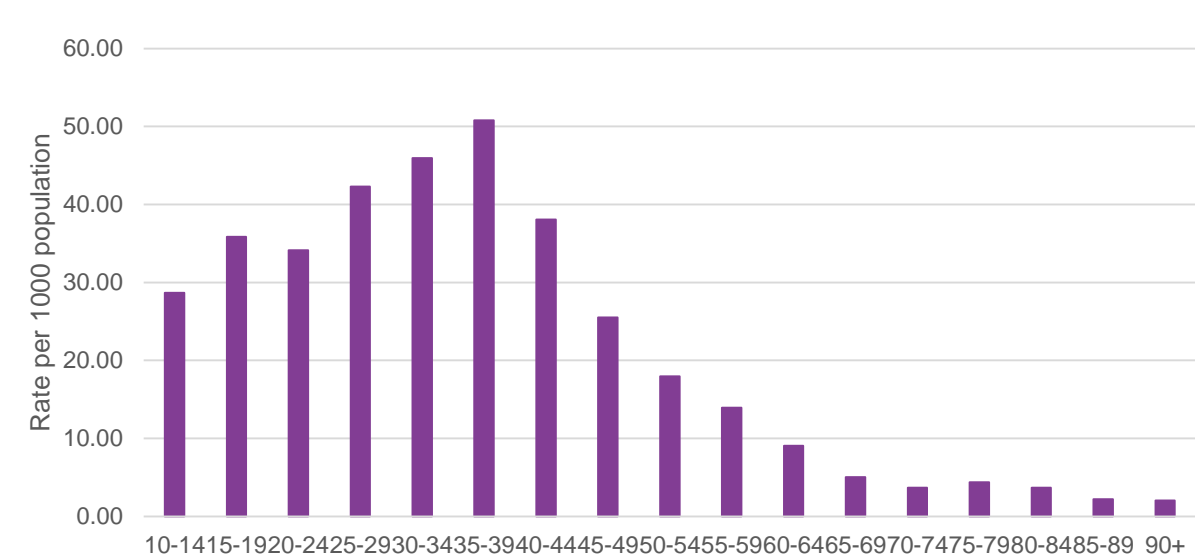
Rate (per 1000 population) of offences by suspected perpetrator age (at date of offence) of serious violence based on those residing in LLR (April 2022 – March 2023) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

Profile of Serious Violence

The majority of offenders are male (70.9%). Male perpetration is most likely to involve a male victim. Males are considerably more likely to be involved in higher harm offences.

Nearly three quarters of perpetrators were identified as White (74.6%), followed by smaller proportions categorised as Asian (15.1%), Black (8.9%), and Other (1.5%).

The highest volume of suspected perpetrators reside on West Leicester with the top beats being New Parks, Braunstone & Rowley Fields, Beaumont Leys and Abbey. Other areas across LLR with high numbers of suspected perpetrators are Freeman (South Leicester), Whitwick & Ibstock (North West Leicestershire), Syston (Charnwood), Earl Shilton (Hinckley & Blaby) and Humberstone (East Leicester).

Cohort Analysis: Repeat Perpetrators of Serious Violence (all ages)

- **Nearly four in ten repeat offenders live in West Leicester and two in ten live in East Leicester**

- **78% were male and 79% were under 25 years old**

- **Over half have a flag for having a mental disorder and for being involved in drugs**

- **47% were suspected of being habitual knife carriers**

- **95% have been a victim of crime with nearly a third experiencing victimisation before committing their first offence**

- **Average age at the first offence was 13 and it was most commonly ABH**

Victims

Police data shows that 30-34 year olds are most at risk of being a victim of serious violence across LLR. When analysing health data, those aged 20-24 have the highest rates of A&E attendances and for hospital admissions, smaller rates were observed but the peak was identified with those aged 20-24, closely followed by 35-39.
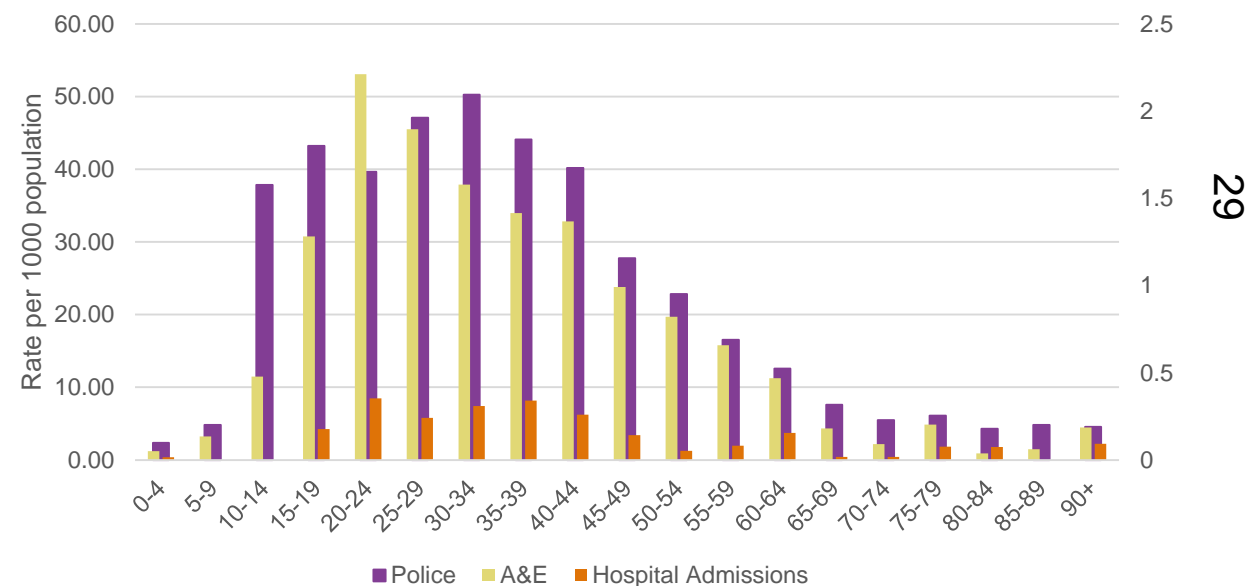
Rate (per 1000 population) of victims of serious violence offences or assault-related injuries based on LLR residents by age - police recorded crime, assault-related A&E attendances and hospital admissions (April 2022 – March 2023) (Source: Leicestershire Police and Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit)

Females are most likely to be the victim of serious violence based upon police data (55.5%) but health data suggests males are at greater risk (72.7%).

Almost three quarters of victims were identified as White (76.6%), followed by smaller proportions who were categorised as Asian (16.0%), Black (5.9%) and Other (1.5%).

	All Serious Violence	Public Place Serious Violence	Domestic Abuse	Sexual Violence	Violence Involving Young People
Extent	Serious violence has **decreased** by 4% compared to the previous financial year. **Increases** in attendances to A&E and hospital admissions but figures still **lower than pre-pandemic rates.**	Serious violence has **increased** by 2% compared to the previous financial year	Domestic abuse has **decreased** by 8% compared to the previous financial year	Sexual violence has **decreased** by 5% compared to the previous financial year	Serious violence involving young people has **remained stable** compared to the previous financial year
Nature	Most commonly **Actual Bodily Harm (ABH)** offences. 'Stalking and Harassment', 'Public Disorder' and 'Rape' have **increased.** Majority of hospital admissions were caused by **assault by bodily force**, followed by assault by sharp object.	**Assault with Injury** makes up the greatest proportion of offences in 2022/23 with 88% categorised as **Actual Bodily Harm** offences. **8%** of public place serious violence offences **involved a knife or sharp object.**	'Stalking and Harassment' shows the highest rate closely followed by 'Violence with Injury'. **Over a quarter** of offences were flagged as involving **alcohol.**	'Sexual Assault – Female Over 13' made up the greatest proportion of offences in 2022/23, followed by 'Rape of Female Over 16', Sexual Activity Child Under 16' and 'Exposure or Voyeurism'.	Assault occasioning **actual bodily harm (ABH)** makes up the greatest proportion of offences in 2022/23 and is followed by '**Sending letters etc with intent to cause distress or anxiety**' and '**S2 – harassment without violence**' 8% of offences involving under 25s involved a knife or sharp object.
Timings	Higher average rate of offences over the **summer months.** Volume of offences throughout the week relatively stable, with slightly higher rates at the **weekend.** Increases seen from **afternoon** onwards (particularly Mon – Fri) and increase over the **weekend evenings** (NTE).	Higher average rate of offences over **Spring and Summer months**, peaking in **March and May.** Rates of public place violence are highest at the **weekends** (Fri – Sun), with a peak on **Saturday** Greater rate of offences between Friday evening to Saturday morning and Saturday evening to Sunday morning (NTE)	Rate of offences typically peaks in **January.** Rates are relatively stable with slight increase over the **weekend**, peaking **Sunday.** Higher rate of offences between **8am – 9pm** with the greatest density between **Saturday evening into Sunday morning**	Fluctuation over the last few years with no clear trends identified, with the exception of a **peak in October 2021.** Across the week, rate of sexual violence is relatively stable with a slight increase observed over the **weekend**, peaking on **Saturday.**	Distribution of offences throughout the week is relatively stable, with slightly higher rates observed on **Sunday** and **Monday.** Health data identifies a clear peak on **Sunday.** Greater rates between **Monday and Friday at 3pm**
Distribution	Rate of offences in the **City** is double the County. Priority areas: **West Leicester, East Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby** and **Charnwood.** Almost 2/3 of offences occurred in a **dwelling**, followed by public/open place and hospitality.	Rate of offences in **City** is 2.7 times that of County Priority areas: **Central Leicester, East Leicester, West Leicester, Charnwood** and **Hinckley & Blaby.** Almost 2/3 of offences occurred in a **public/open place**, followed by hospitality and shop settings.	Rate in the **City** is 1.7 times that of the County. Priority areas: **West Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby, East Leicester** and **Charnwood.** Almost **90%** occurred in a **dwelling**, followed by public/open place and hospitality settings.	Rate in the **City** is 1.75 times that of the County. **Charnwood** observes the greatest proportion of offences, followed by **Central Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby, West Leicester and East Leicester.** 60% of offences occurred in a **dwelling.**	Rate in the **City** is 1.3 times that of the County. **West Leicester** reported the greatest proportion, closely followed by **Charnwood, Hinckley & Blaby, East Leicester** and **Central Leicester.** Almost 60% of offences occurred in a **dwelling.**
Perpetrators	Peak age: **40 and under**, peaking at **35 – 39** Gender: **Males** perpetrate the majority of serious violence and are more likely to commit high-harm offences. Majority of perpetrators **White** and come from **West Leicester**, followed by **East Leicester, Charnwood** and **Hinckley & Blaby**	Peak age:**10 – 19 years old.** Gender: Over three-quarters are **male.** Majority of perpetrators are **White** Residency: **West Leicester**, followed by **East Leicester, Charnwood** and **Hinckley & Blaby**	Peak ages: increase between **25-44**, peaking at **30-34.** Gender: almost three-quarters are **male.** Ethnicity: majority of perpetrators of are **White.** Residency: **West Leicester**, followed by **East Leicester, Charnwood** and **Hinckley & Blaby.**	Peak ages: **10-19 years old** Gender: 85% are **male** Ethnicity: majority of perpetrators are **White** Residency: **Charnwood**, followed by **West and East Leicester** and **Hinckley & Blaby.**	Peak ages: **14 and 15 years old** Gender: almost two-thirds **male** Ethnicity: majority of perpetrators are **White** Residency: **West Leicester, Charnwood, East Leicester** and **Hinckley & Blaby**
Victims	Peak ages: **30 to 34-years old** (Police data) and **20-24** (health data). 56% of victims are **female.** Ethnicity: Minority ethnic communities more prominent in health data compared to police data Residency: **Hinckley & Blaby**, followed by **East Leicester, West Leicester** and **Charnwood**	Peak ages: **10-14**, followed by **15-19** Gender: almost two-thirds **male** Ethnicity: majority of victims are **White** Residency: **East Leicester**, followed by **West Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby** and **Charnwood**	Peak ages: **30-34 years old.** Gender: almost three-quarters **female.** Ethnicity: majority of victims are **White.** Residency: **West Leicester**, followed by **Hinckley & Blaby, East Leicester** and **Charnwood.**	Peak ages: **10-14 years old**, then **15-19** Gender: over 80% **female** Ethnicity: majority of victims are **White** Residency: **Hinckley & Blaby**, followed by **East Leicester, West Leicester** and **Charnwood**	Peak ages: **13 – 15-year olds.** Gender: 56% **female.** Ethnicity: majority of victims are **White.** Residency: **West Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby, East Leicester** and **Charnwood.**

Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Serious Violence

The SNA examined the known risk and protective factors of serious violence and their prevalence across LLR. The causes of violence are multiple and complex. It is important to understand that there is no single cause of serious violence – it arises from a complex interplay between a wide range of risk factors operating within and across individual, relationship, community and societal domains. The following diagram provides an overview of some of the risk and protective factors across the different domains.

Individual and contextual risk factors occur across an individual's life course and are subject to change. They can be cumulative, additive and sometimes multiplicative in impact. The more risk factors that accumulate in an individual or in a particular setting, the higher the likelihood that the individual will become involved in violence as a victim and/or perpetrator. Importantly, risk factors are not deterministic and should not be used diagnostically at an individual level.

A risk factor is a characteristic that increases the likelihood of a young person becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.

A protective factor is a characteristic that decreases the likelihood of a person becoming a victim or perpetrator of youth violence or buffers against the effects of risk factors.

Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Serious Violence

VRN

We have conducted research to examine the prevalence of some of the known risk factors amongst a cohort of children and young adults (*n*=113) from LLR who recently committed high-harm serious violence including Grievous Bodily Harm, Attempt Murder or Murder.

This project involved linking data from Leicestershire Police to education and social care data from Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council – a recommendation included in last year's SNA.

In summary, the research highlighted that this group of children and young adults experienced a wide-range of individual- and relationship-related risk factors. Based on the data available, each individual had an average of 4.8 risk factors recorded and when looking at those who had committed the highest harm offences (Murder & Attempt Murder) the average number of risk factors increased to 5.1.

The visual to the right provides highlights of crime, education- and social care-related risk factors within this group of children and young adults.

RISK FACTORS IN EARLY LIFE TO ADOLESCENCE

19% were identified as a child in need

33% had parents who were or are involved in offending

50% were persistently absent from school

31% of those aged 16+ were registered as not in education, employment or training

9% have been on a child protection plan

55% have received a suspension or exclusion

20% have been on roll or dual registered at a pupil referral unit

51% had committed their first offence by the age of 14

71% were identified as having special education needs

12% have been or are currently in care

28% had siblings who were or are involved in offending

20% have been reported missing from home

13% have been on an education, health and care plan

29% have witnessed or been the victim of domestic abuse

35% had been a victim or witness of crime by the age of 12

37% had a flag for mental health related concerns

Risk & Protective Factors Associated with Serious Violence

The following provides a summary of the prevalence of key risk factors in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland where we have data available. Rates are compared against the national average.

LEICESTER

- Amongst the most deprived geographic areas in England and the top 10% for income deprivation affecting children
- Children have poorer SEM health and below the expected level of development and attainment
- Higher rates of young people who are NEET
- Higher rates of children who are looked after
- Higher rates of first-time offenders, entrants and children in the YJS
- Higher rates of admissions for alcohol-related conditions and dependent drinkers
- Higher rates of children on a child protection plan
- Higher number of children who are habitual knife carriers
- Higher proportion of adults in treatment at specialist drug misuse services
- Higher rates of economic inactivity and unemployment

LEICESTER-SHIRE

- Lower rates of children who have reached a good level of development at age 2
- Higher rates of children on an education, health and care plan
- Fewer people who use services feel safe
- Higher rates of anti-social behaviour involving young people
- Higher number of County Lines

RUTLAND

- Higher rate of 10 to 24-year olds being admitted to hospital as a result of self-harm compared to Leicester and Leicestershire
- Fewer people who use services feel safe

Based upon the data which has been shared with the VRN to date, West Leicester, East Leicester, Charnwood and Hinckley & Blaby are the areas in LLR which have the higher concentration of risk factors. These are also the areas which have the highest rates of serious violence.

More specifically, the following areas are highlighted from the analysis of individual, relationship and community risk factors:

- Braunstone
- New Parks
- Beaumont Leys
- Hinckley
- Humberstone
- Spinney Hill
- Loughborough and the surrounding areas
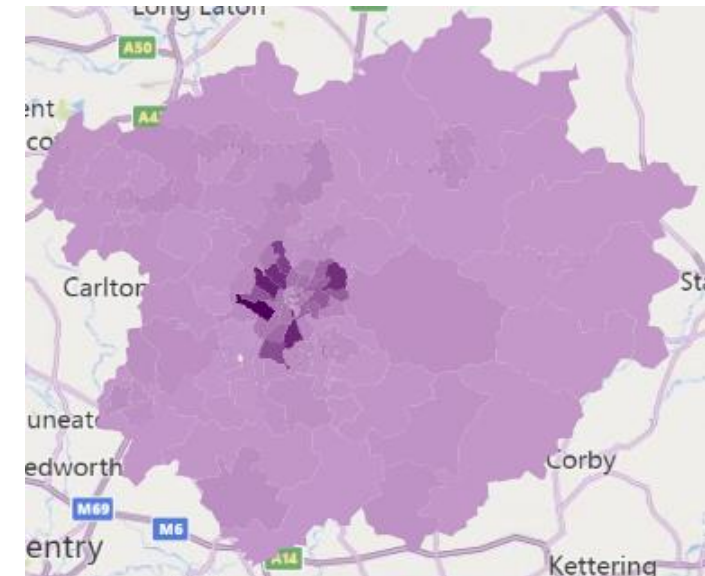
Choropleth map by postcode sector of social care and education risk factors experienced by young people in LLR (Source: Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council)

Preventing Serious Violence

Central to a public health approach is the core belief that violence is preventable; that it is possible to prevent and reduce modifiable risk factors and to strengthen protective factors. The SNA synthesised the growing body of evidence, drawn from research, on the approaches and interventions which have demonstrated effectiveness in preventing and reducing serious violence.

Drawing on resources provided from Public Health England (2019), the VRN has developed a framework to support the design and delivery of comprehensive, evidence-based prevention programmes which tackle the complex and multi-layered nature of risk and protective factors. The 5 C's framework represents the critical building blocks of a violence prevention system and includes:

|	
Community consensus	At the core of an effective approach to preventing violence, local responses should be 'with and for communities' to build trust and confidence and ensure that they are relevant and responsive.
Collaboration	Tackling serious violence requires system thinking and collaboration between a wide-range of groups, organisations and sectors often beyond organisational boundaries.
Co-production	Strategies and interventions should be co-produced with young people, their families and communities.
Co-operation in data	A key enabler to preventing violence is the commitment of organisations to identify, share and analyse all relevant data.
Counter-narrative	Concrete and credible alternatives to involvement in violence are critical as is promoting hope rather than deficit-based approaches which can often perpetuate the problems we're seeking to address.

For prevention activity to be effective in the long-term, it should adopt a life-course approach which considers the critical stages, transitions and settings in which there are opportunities to reduce and manage risk factors and strengthen protective factors.

The following framework embodies the life-course approach and is used by the VRN to understand, plan and take action to prevent and reduce serious violence:

A PLACE-BASED, WHOLE SYSTEM FRAMEWORK FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION
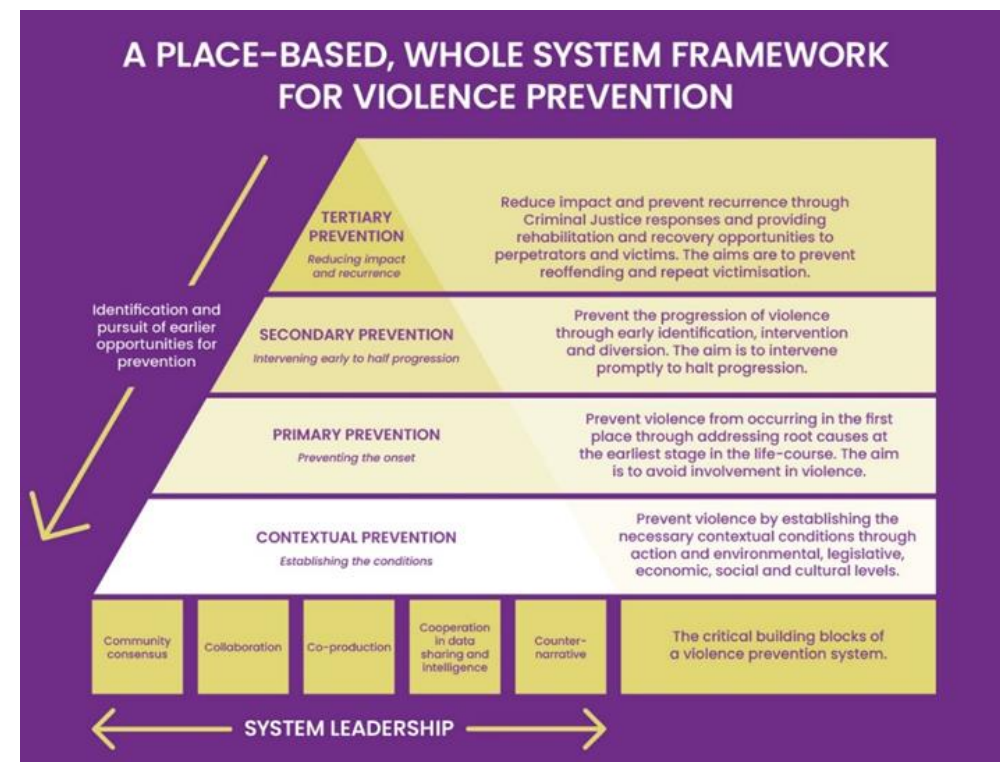
Preventing Serious Violence

Interventions and Approaches

Implementing high quality, evidenced-based interventions is key to preventing and reducing serious violence. The SNA, whilst acknowledging the gaps in the evidence-base, highlighted the strategies and interventions which are most likely to be effective.

The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2016) has identified six strategies for preventing violence involving young people which are underpinned by the best available evidence. They are presented alongside the key interventions and approaches which fall within these strategies.

1. Promote family environments that support health development – this includes parenting programmes, family nurse partnerships and therapeutic approaches to trauma

2. Provide quality education in early life – this includes bullying prevention, school-based programmes and classroom management

3. Strengthen young people's skills – this includes universal school programmes (e.g. social skills training) and behavioural / skills-building interventions

4. Connect young people to trusted adults and activities – this includes mentoring programmes, after-school programmes and recreational activities

5. Create protective community environments – this includes limiting alcohol and weapon access, data sharing, hotspot and problem-solving policing, environmental design and community norm change

6. Intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk – this includes therapeutic and cognitive-behavioural approaches for perpetrators, hospital-based interventions and substance misuse programmes

The Youth Endowment Fund's (YEF) Toolkit summarises the best available research evidence about different approaches to preventing young people from becoming involved in serious violence.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENCE	APPROACHES	EVIDENCE QUALITY (Low – High)
High	Focused deterrence	
	Social skills training	
	Cognitive behaviour therapy	
	Sport programmes	
	A&E navigators	
	Trauma-specific therapies	
Moderate	Pre-court diversion	
	Relationship violence prevention lessons and activities	
	Mentoring	
	Restorative justice	
	Hot spots policing	
	Bystander interventions to prevent sexual assault	
	Multi-systemic therapy	
Low	After-school programmes	
	Interventions to prevent school exclusions	
	Anti-bullying programmes	
	Adventure and wilderness therapy	
	Parenting programmes	
Unclear	Police in schools	
	Knife surrender schemes	
	Media campaigns	
	Trauma-informed training and service redesign	
Harmful	Boot camps	
	Prison awareness programmes	

Recommendations

The SNA made 14 recommendations for the core membership to consider when refreshing the VRN's Response Strategy. These build on previous SNA recommendations and do not represent a change in focus or direction but rather a strengthening of work underway. However, as our understanding of the data improves and the evidence-base evolves, it is important to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the populations most at risk and that all interventions are developed and delivered in a way which is consistent with the evidence base.

Strategic-level recommendations

The strategic recommendations are those which will require cross-sector collaboration and chief officer/senior manager support.

1. Continue to discharge the VRN's core function in ensuring it operates across the system and connects and collaborates with other relevant strategic and operational developments.
2. Continue to improve both access to and quality of multi-agency data particularly in relation to known risk and protective factors.
3. Work with the Strategic Partnership Board to increase future capability in data sharing through improving connectivity between systems.
4. Increase the use of VRN data and evidence products in strategic planning and operations within partner organisations and Community Safety Partnerships.
5. Continue to prioritise the City (with a particular focus on the Central, East and West areas), Charnwood and Hinckley & Blaby, and the under 25 age group, and assault-related, sexual and stalking and harassment offences.
6. Develop and implement a multi-agency, community-focused problem-solving approach to tackle persistence issues with violence after-school and in the night-time economy.

7. Strengthen strategic and operational work to tackle the higher prevalence of risk factors identified in the cohort analysis (e.g. mental health, substance misuse and early involvement in offending).
8. Ensure that the importance of gender and the associated cultural norms are understood and factored into prevention activity across the partnership.
9. Continue to embed evaluation and learning across the system.

Intervention-level recommendations

The intervention-level recommendations build on the evidence-informed approach that the VRN is already taking in relation to intervention design and delivery.

10. Continue to design and test primary and early intervention approaches.
11. Continue to invest in 'teachable moment' interventions and progress to the evaluation phase.
12. Build on evaluation findings to strengthen local out of court/diversionary interventions across the partnership.
13. Provide specialist education, training and employment support and sport/recreation opportunities.
14. Implement and evaluate a focused deterrence intervention.
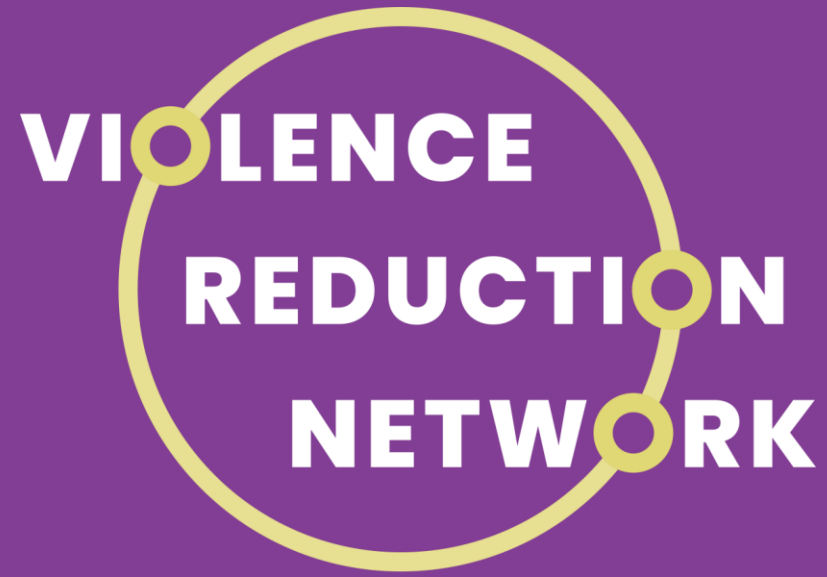
VIOLENCE REDUCTION NETWORK

LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND

If you would like to find out more about the Violence Reduction Network, you can contact us at:

vrn@leics.pcc.gov.uk

You can also find details of our work at:

www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk

You can keep up-to-date with VRN developments at:

@VR_Network

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VIOLENCE REDUCTION NETWORK

Serious Violence Prevention Strategy
Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland

2023–2028

#PreventionThroughConnection
@VR_Network
www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk

Contents

Introduction

Background

In September 2019, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and local Strategic Partnership Board (SPB) established the Violence Reduction Network (VRN) with the aim of strengthening our local response to preventing and reducing serious violence across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The VRN's core function is to offer leadership and provide strategic co-ordination of the local response to serious violence **(↗)**.

Violence has devastating and long-lasting impacts on individuals, families and wider communities. Importantly though, the VRN partnership believes that violence is preventable. With the causes of violence being multiple and complex and the solutions lying across the system, the VRN is a wide alliance of communities, organisations and partnerships who all share a common vision and mission.

Vision	**We believe violence is preventable.** Our vision is for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to be a place where people can lead their lives free from violence and the fear of violence.
Mission	Our mission is to achieve '**prevention through connection**' by building an inclusive, collaborative and courageous network which will drive the short and long-term change required to successfully tackle the causes and consequences of violence.

In January 2023, the Serious Violence Duty was introduced, placing a statutory responsibility on several of the core members of the VRN to work together and take effective coordinated action to prevent serious violence. As part of the Serious Violence Duty, these Specified Authorities* must:

- Agree a local partnership model (and its geographical area) for discharging the duty

- Agree a local definition of serious violence

- Work together to produce a local Strategic Needs Assessment

- Work together to develop, publish and implement a strategy outlining the multi-agency response to serious violence

Our partnership is in a strong position to deliver on the Serious Violence Duty due to our collective involvement in and commitment to the VRN and the progress made to date. This was highlighted by the recent Joint Readiness Assessment (2023) conducted by Crest Advisory on behalf of the Home Office which found that we are 'Mature, Demonstrating Best Practice' in relation to the core requirements of the Duty.

Our Definition

For the first four years of its work, the VRN has focused on preventing public place serious violence. However, the local definition has now been extended to:

"Violence resulting in significant physical injury and other serious harm, including sexual violence. Violence may be committed with or without weapons, and may take place in domestic or public places"

Whilst this strategy focuses principally on the definition outlined above, we remain committed to preventing and reducing all forms of violence recognising that they are inter-connected including sharing common causes and consequences for individuals, families and communities. To reflect this broad view of violence, our partnership also embraces the WHO broader definition of violence:

*As defined in section 11 of Schedule 1 to the PCSC Act, the Specified Authorities are the Police, Justice (including Probation Service and Youth Offending Teams), Fire and Rescue, Health (including Integrated Care Boards), and Local Authorities.

"The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation."

(World Health Organization, 2002)

Behaviours such as bullying, intimidation, coercion, exploitation, physical, sexual and emotional violence and abuse fall within our definition. Our partnership will continue to connect the dots between different types of violence when pursuing preventative strategies and activities.

This Strategy

This is a five year Strategy which sets out the LLR-wide strategic approach to preventing serious violence. It builds on the VRN's previous Response Strategy (2020-23) and sets out the collective action that partners will take to enhance and compliment core business.

Based on the findings of the VRN's previous and latest Strategic Needs Assessment **(↗)** it explains how as a partnership we are adopting a public health approach, using data and evidence to understand serious violence and its root causes, designing and implementing evidence-informed responses, and evaluating impact.

As a partnership we will adhere to the common approach and principles when developing internal and multi-agency policy and practice to ensure that it is consistent with the evidence-base and makes a positive and effective contribution to our local violence prevention system.

The Strategy then sets out seven inter-connected priorities. These priorities have been informed by well-established and evidence-based violence prevention strategies, and co-developed with the VRN partnership since its establishment.

The seven priorities are:

1. Providing collaborative and courageous leadership

2. Using data and evidence to improve and understand the effectiveness of our collective work

3. Supporting families to provide nurturing and safe environments

4. Building protective and cohesive communities

5. Providing safe and inclusive education

6. Connecting children and young people to purposeful activities and trusted adults

7. Providing opportunities for rehabilitation and recovery to lessen future harm

Finally, our approach to monitoring, scrutiny and evaluation are outlined, along with the mechanisms which we use to share learning within and beyond our local area.

Co-Production

We know that when strategies and services are co-produced they are more relevant and responsive to local needs. The VRN partnership has a track-record of adopting an approach which is collaborative, open and inclusive when designing and delivering its work. This Strategy has been developed by the Duty's Specified Authorities, with support from the VRN central team, and after consultation with the wider partnership, including:

•   Co-production workshops with primary and secondary schools, alternative provision and further education establishments.

•   Co-production workshops with prisons located within our area.

•   A co-production event with voluntary and community organisations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

•   Consultation events with children, young people and community members including the VRN's Community Oversight Group which comprises of people who come from local areas with high rates of serious violence and/or have been directly involved with the criminal justice system.

As highlighted in the section on our partnership, we will continue to consult with and involve children and young people, communities and Relevant Authorities in the implementation, reviews and evaluation of the Strategy.

Our Local Serious Violence Problem

In order to identify our local serious violence issues and the drivers, we have worked together to produce a Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) which draws upon multi-agency data to improve our local understanding of the types, distribution and extent of serious violence across LLR and identify those who are most vulnerable to being involved and/or affected.

The following infographic provides a high-level summary of the key findings from the SNA:

STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT KEY FINDINGS 2023/24

EXTENT

A decrease in serious violence compared to the previous year

Decreases observed with **violence without injury** and **burglary (residential and business/ community)** offences

Increases observed with **Stalking and Harassment**, **Public Disorder** and **Rape** offences

MOST COMMON OFFENCES / INJURY TYPES

Police: Stalking & Harassment

Hospital Admissions: Assault by bodily force

Ambulance: Assault / Sexual Assault

NATURE

30% of all serious violence was flagged as domestic-related

Sexual offences make up **9%** of all serious violence

Under 25s contributed to **30%** of serious violence in 2022/23

5% offences involved a knife or sharp object

PERSON PROFILES

71% of offenders are male
56% of victims are female

1.7% of LLR residents were a victim and 1.2% were a perpetrator of serious violence in the last 12 months

10-19 year olds experience the highest rates as perpetrators and victims of **sexual violence** and **public place serious violence**

30-39 year olds experience the highest rates as perpetrators and victims of serious violence

Most common areas of residency for perpetrators and victims were:
West Leicester, East Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby and Charnwood

TIMINGS

Peak times

Police:
15:00—15:59

A&E:
11:00—11:59

Ambulance:
00:00—00:59,
22:00 – 22:59

Increases seen at the weekend

28% of public place serious violence was committed in the NTE

LOCATION

Priority areas:

West Leicester

East Leicester

Hinckley & Blaby

Charnwood

Central Leicester

Of the local authorities, **Leicester** saw the highest rate and volume of serious violence – double the rate seen in Leicestershire

COHORT ANALYSIS

Serious Violence in the Night Time Economy
- More than 80% of perpetrators were male.
- Almost a fifth of perpetrators reside in West Leicester, followed by Charnwood and East Leicester.
- The greatest proportion of victims and perpetrators were aged between 18 – 24.
- 70% of victims were male.
- The greatest proportion of victims live in West Leicester, East Leicester, Hinckley & Blaby and Charnwood.

Perpetrators of High-Harm Offences (under 21s)
- The majority of the cohort reside in East Leicester, West Leicester, Charnwood and South Leicester.
- The peak ages of committing GBH, Murder or Attempt Murder were 18, 16 and 19.
- 89% were male.
- Average age of first offence was 14.6 years old.
- 28% of first offences were for Grievous Bodily Harm.
- Average age of first victimisation was 12.9 years old.
- 29% of the cohort were victim of or witness to domestic abuse.
- 71% were identified as having special educational needs.
- 55% received a suspension or permanent exclusion.
- 50% were persistently absent from school.
- 37% had a flag for mental health concerns.
- A third had parents who are involved in offending.

Our Local Serious Violence Problem

As a partnership, we should be prioritising activities which enable us to tackle our local serious violence issues. Based upon the findings identified in the Strategic Needs Assessment, this should include:

Reducing the number of children and young people who are affected by higher harm serious violence, including in relation to the carrying and use of weapons.

Reducing rates of sexual violence amongst children and young people.

Reducing the prevalence of domestic-abuse related serious violence, particularly stalking and harassment.

Reducing the scale of serious violence taking place after-school and in the night-time economy.

Reducing serious violence in communities within East, West and Central Leicester and Hinckley & Blaby and Charnwood in the County.

Reducing the presence of criminal networks and drug-related activity within communities with high rates of serious violence.

Reducing the number of repeat offences committed by perpetrators of serious violence and related offences.

Reducing the prevalence of known risk factors (e.g. neurodiversity, absenteeism, unsafe family and community environments, and alcohol use) amongst children, young people and adults at-risk of or involved in serious violence.

Our Approach

A Public Health Approach

A public health approach provides a framework to help us understand and respond effectively to serious violence across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The VRN partnership has embedded the public health approach within our principles and processes, and we routinely follow the World Health Organization four step process when designing services and interventions aimed at preventing violence (see diagram below).

We know that the causes of violence are wide-ranging, complex and inter-related, and, therefore, effective prevention requires a comprehensive and coordinated whole system approach. In recognition that violence can manifest differently and have distinct causes and consequences at different life stages, our multi-agency response should span the life course and address individual, relationship, community and societal risk factors, providing prevention opportunities in the spaces in which people live, work and socialise.

Importantly, we should continuously seek to increase our focus on prevention and early intervention to stop violence from happening in the first place, thereby reducing the multiple and far-reaching human, economic and societal impacts of violence. Evidence shows that there is considerable overlap between the risk and protective factors for different forms of violence including violence involving young people, domestic abuse and sexual violence (CDC, 2014). Therefore, our work to prevent or mitigate the onset of risk factors and strengthen protective factors has the potential to reduce multiple types of violence and abuse.

What is our serious violence problem and what is causing it?

The first step involves analysing all available data and community insights so that we have a good understanding of what violence looks like within our local area and what the drivers are. Because violence and its drivers evolve, we review data and insights regularly.

What is the best way for us to tackle our local issues?

Next, we need to consult the evidence-base to see what interventions the research says is likely to tackle our local serious violence problem, reduce risk factors and strengthen protective factors.

How will we share and embed our learning?

If we find out that an approach is preventing violence, as a partnership we'll make the decision to scale-up these interventions so that we can reach more people. We'll also share our learning locally and nationally through publishing reports and knowledge exchange events.

Have our responses been effective?

Now that we understand our local issues and which approaches work best at tackling them, we should test them to see if they're effective. This involves spending time working out what will be delivered, to whom, and how we'll know if its worked.

The four steps of a public health approach to violence prevention (World Health Organization, 2002)

Risk and Protective Factors

Risk Factors

Community & Wider Society

- Low social integration and poor social mobility
- Poor access to services
- Access to and misuse of alcohol and/or drugs
- Cultural and social norms supportive of violence
- Harmful gender norms
- Discrimination
- Deprivation

Close Relationships

- Exposure to violence
- Family conflict
- Economic stress
- Associating with delinquent peers
- Gang involvement
- Lack of nurturing relationships and environment

Individual

- Unemployment
- Low income
- Low educational achievement
- Brain injury
- Social isolation
- Neurodevelopmental needs
- Substance use
- Low self-esteem
- Witnessing violence
- Mental health concerns
- Adverse childhood experiences
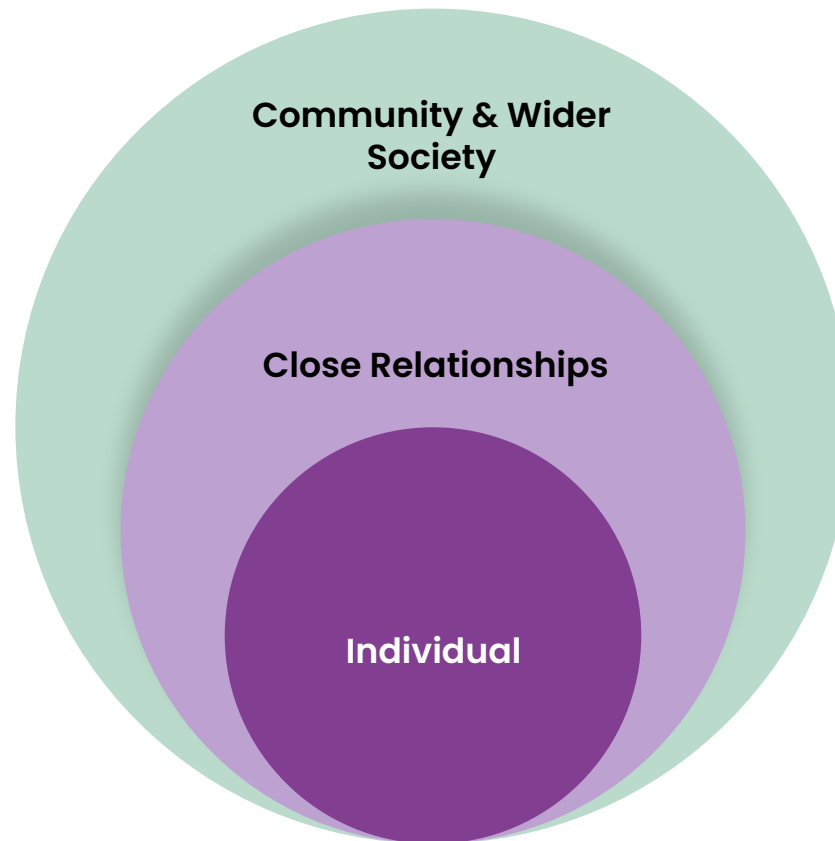
Protective Factors

Community & Wider Society

- Economic opportunities
- Community spaces designed to increase visibility, control, access, promote positive reactions and appropriate use
- Residents' willingness to assist each other, and collective views that violence is not acceptable
- Safe recreational areas and community environments
- Access to services and positive activities
- Safe and stable housing
- Community cohesion
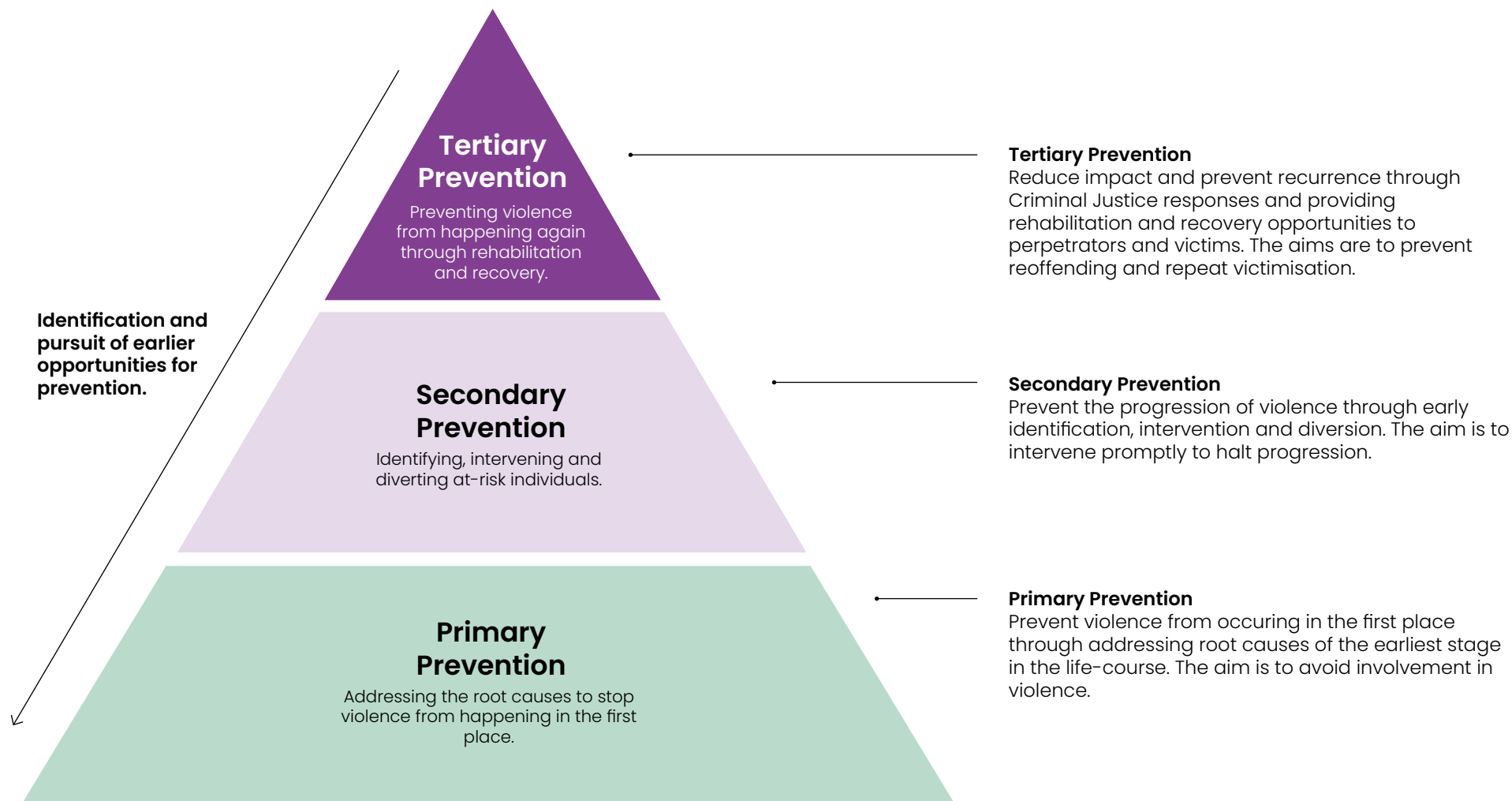- Meaningful employment and training opportunities

Close Relationships

- Relationships with prosocial and non-violent peers
- Stable home environment
- Healthy relationships
- Family support

Individual

- Healthy problem-solving
- Emotional regulation skills
- Good communication skills

Adapted from Wales Violence Prevention Unit, 2023

Community & Wider Society

Close Relationships

Individual

Much like all public health issues, violence can be predicted and prevented, and there are opportunities for us to intervene at different stages across the life course to prevent the (re-)occurrence of violence. There are three key levels of prevention and as a partnership we will continuously operate across these levels to ensure that we address not only individual level risk factors but also those that occur within relationships and the wider community and societal context.

Identification and pursuit of earlier opportunities for prevention.

Tertiary Prevention
Preventing violence from happening again through rehabilitation and recovery.

Secondary Prevention
Identifying, intervening and diverting at-risk individuals.

Primary Prevention
Addressing the root causes to stop violence from happening in the first place.

Tertiary Prevention
Reduce impact and prevent recurrence through Criminal Justice responses and providing rehabilitation and recovery opportunities to perpetrators and victims. The aims are to prevent reoffending and repeat victimisation.

Secondary Prevention
Prevent the progression of violence through early identification, intervention and diversion. The aim is to intervene promptly to halt progression.

Primary Prevention
Prevent violence from occuring in the first place through addressing root causes of the earliest stage in the life-course. The aim is to avoid involvement in violence.

Our Core Principles

Aligning to the public health approach, we have developed and agreed seven core principles which will guide our collective efforts to prevent serious violence:

1. **Empower everyone, including young people and communities, to play a role in preventing violence.** We will seek to widen involvement, particularly amongst those most affected by violence, so that solutions are more relevant, responsive and effective. We will also promote leadership amongst young people, communities and at all levels in organisations to build capacity and the reach of our work.

2. **Secure maximum impact through maintaining a population focus and tackling inequalities.** When allocating resources and targeting prevention activity we will ensure this reaches the populations most at risk and impacts positively on reducing inequalities.

3. **Ensure our work is evidence-based.** We will use data and insights and gather knowledge from a range of sources to improve our understanding of the nature and causes of violence locally and in shaping our responses. We will seek to share this knowledge across and beyond the Network to promote a shared understanding and improve our collective effectiveness.

4. **Adopt a life-course and trauma-informed approach.** We recognise that prevention holds the greatest potential if we invest in healthy child and adolescence development, actively support transitions and promote resilience in individuals, families and communities. We will seek to prevent violence at the earliest opportunity and within each developmental stage in life with a particular emphasis on early years development.

5. **Promote whole-system thinking and action.** We will continuously seek to lead and collaborate across the whole system, promoting joint working, strengthening connections and problem-solving between agencies and within communities where challenges or barriers arise.

6. **Add value and create sustainable solutions.** We will seek to strengthen existing structures and services wherever possible including investing in capacity and asset-building. We will invest additional resource only where there are identified gaps and with a view to making the case for mainstream investment.

7. **Commit to continuous learning and improvement.** We will assess the effectiveness and impact of our work including seeking stakeholder feedback, evaluating interventions and sharing learning across the local and national violence reduction and prevention networks.

Our Partnership

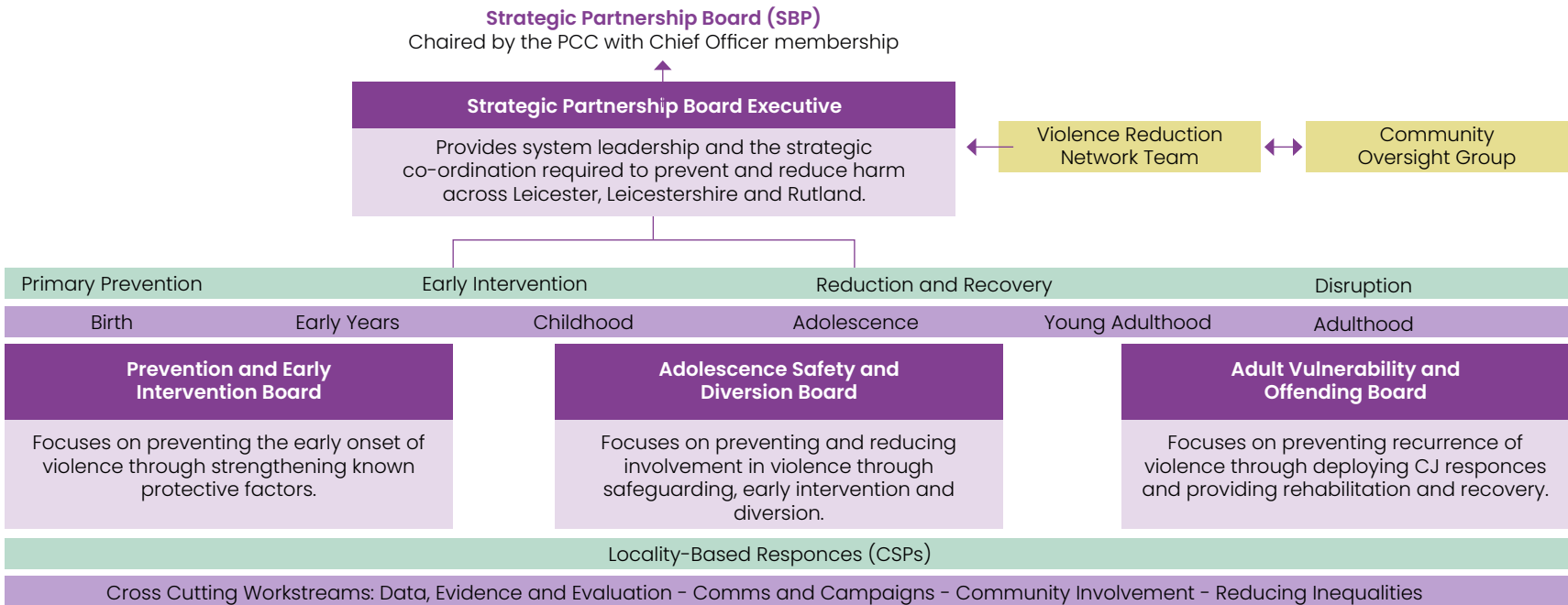## The Strategic Partnership Board

The Strategic Partnership Board (SPB) provides the local partnership model for discharging our responsibilities set out within the Serious Violence Duty at a system-level and for holding one another to account. The Violence Reduction Network (VRN) and its central team, which is governed by SPB, will continue to provide the vehicle through which the local partnership will collaborate in its work to prevent and reduce serious violence across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

This model includes strong links with place-based and locality-based organisations and partnerships, not least Community Safety Partnerships, to ensure that strategies and activity are tailored to the diverse needs of our populations.

The membership and Terms of Reference for SPB can be found here (↗)

The SPB Executive provides the ideal forum and governance for discharging the Duty as:

- Its purpose is to provide the system leadership and strategic coordination necessary to prevent and reduce harm across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR).
- Preventing and reducing serious violence is an existing Board priority and it has provided governance for the local Violence Reduction Network (VRN) since September 2019.
- Membership of the Board includes representation from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, all Specified and Relevant Authorities as well as the voluntary and community sector and community groups.
- It has the capability and combined authority to be able to monitor and respond to changes in the rates and volumes of serious violence locally as well as the known risk and protective factors.
- It has embedded the public health approach into its core principles and its sub-board structure.
- It has strong links with other relevant Boards including Safeguarding Boards, Health and Well-being Board, Locality-Based Domestic Abuse Boards the Leicestershire Strategic Community Safety Board and the Leicester City Community Safety Partnership.

Strategic Partnership Board (SBP)
Chaired by the PCC with Chief Officer membership

Strategic Partnership Board Executive

Provides system leadership and the strategic co-ordination required to prevent and reduce harm across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Violence Reduction Network Team

Community Oversight Group

| Primary Prevention | Early Intervention | Reduction and Recovery | Disruption |

| Birth | Early Years | Childhood | Adolescence | Young Adulthood | Adulthood |

Prevention and Early Intervention Board

Focuses on preventing the early onset of violence through strengthening known protective factors.

Adolescence Safety and Diversion Board

Focuses on preventing and reducing involvement in violence through safeguarding, early intervention and diversion.

Adult Vulnerability and Offending Board

Focuses on preventing recurrence of violence through deploying CJ responses and providing rehabilitation and recovery.

Locality-Based Responces (CSPs)

Cross Cutting Workstreams: Data, Evidence and Evaluation - Comms and Campaigns - Community Involvement - Reducing Inequalities

Everyone has a role: our partnership has individual and shared responsibilities in preventing and reducing serious violence. Together these lay the foundations for a whole-system approach which is vital to the successful delivery of this Strategy.

Shared Responsibilities:

- Leading the delivery, review and evaluation of this Strategy
- Championing and pursuing our shared principles and approach
- Sharing and using data and evidence to improve responses
- Involving communities as partners
- Collaborating on multi-agency and cross-sector activity
- Jointly problem-solving to overcome barriers
- Understanding our impact through monitoring and evaluation

Youth Justice Services
Promoting a child-first approach and diverting children from the criminal justice system through early intervention and rehabilitation.

Probation Service
Protecting communities from future violence though managing adults on statutory orders and offering desistance-focused and rehabilitative services.

Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
Convening the partnership, supporting the delivery of this strategy, securing and distributing relevant funding, (co-)commissioning violence prevention activity and monitoring progress.

Local authorities
Contributing to safe and nurturing families and protective, resilient communities through commissioning and delivering a range of prevention, early intervention and protective services including early help, children's and adult's social care, housing, alcohol licensing, substance use, leisure, community safety and support services for victims.

Health
Commissioning and delivering a wide-range of physical and mental health services and interventions that address the causes and consequences of violence and the wider social determinants of health.

Police
Contributing to protective communities though neighbourhood policing, identifying and pursuing early intervention opportunities, protecting the vulnerable, and disrupting and reducing violence through the use of proactive and reactive tactics.

Children, Young People, Families and Communities
Strengthening responses through sharing insights and co-producing solutions, promoting healthy social norms, providing nurturing and safe environments.

VRN Central Team
Co-ordinating the delivery of the Strategy, leading on data, evidence and evaluation, providing capacity for new projects and workstreams, strengthening and extending the partnership, and delivering the communications plan.

Voluntary and Community Sector
Providing a wide-range of generic and specialist community-based provision which supports healthy childhoods, safe and nurturing families and resilient communities.

Fire & Rescue Service
Engaging with local communities to promote safety, citizenship and cohesion, and delivering preventative interventions with young people.

Prisons
Developing safe regimes, protecting the public through restrictive measures and rehabilitative activities and preparing prisoners for release.

Community Safety Partnerships
Convening duty-holders at a local level and delivering evidence-based strategies and activities in response to local issues and needs.

Schools, Colleges and other Education Establishments
Providing high-quality education and creating safe and inclusive social and physical environments which enable children and young people to thrive.
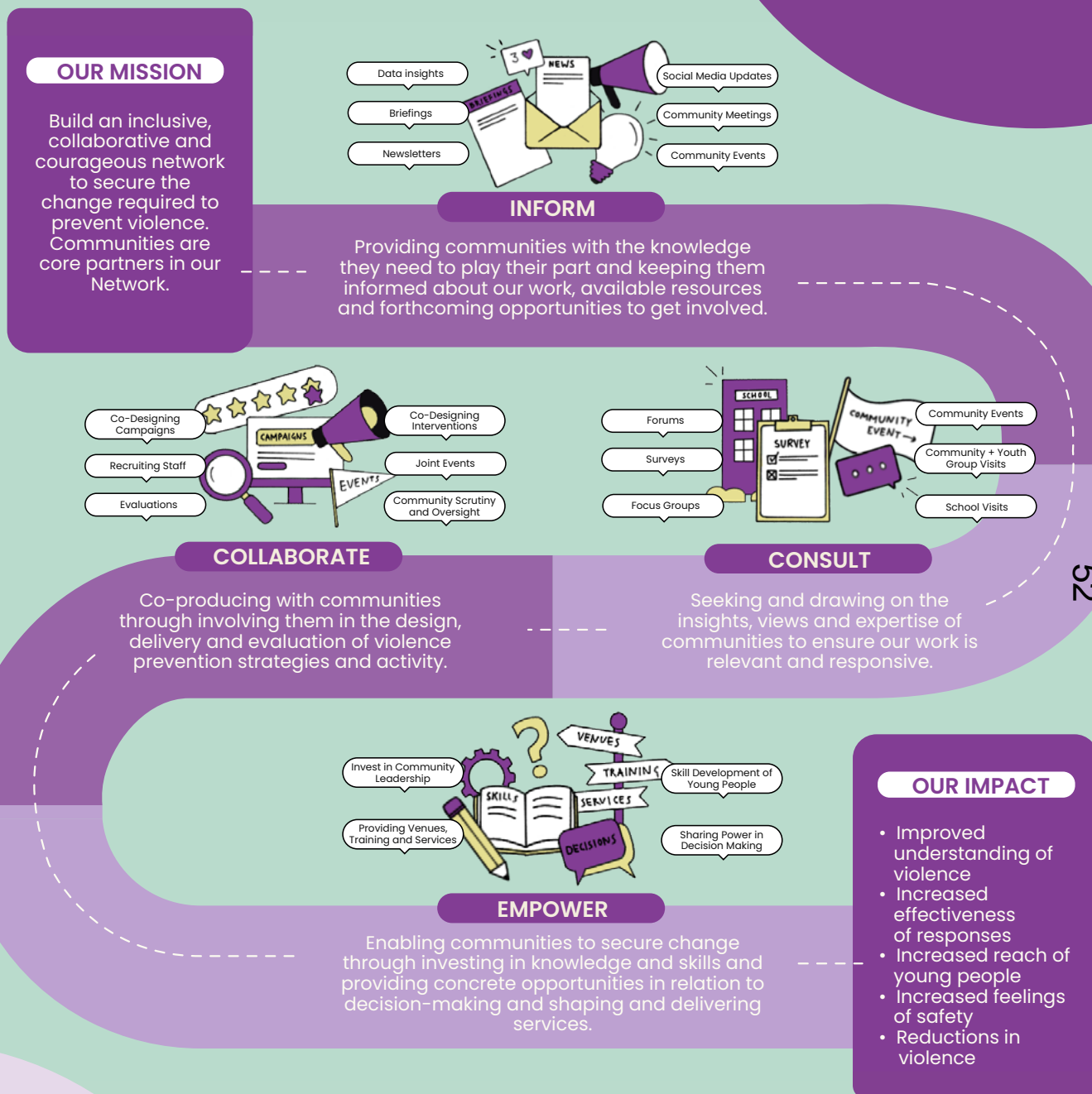
Effective prevention requires all partners to work together and this includes communities. They play a particularly important role in preventing violence because:

- Violence usually occurs within community and home environments and therefore its impact is most significantly felt within these contexts.
- Communities often have invaluable insights into the nature and extent of violence, the root causes and the most suitable solutions.
- Strategies and interventions designed in partnership with relevant communities are more likely to be effective.
- Communities often hold the key to reaching those most affected and can deliver effective responses when empowered to do so.

The following principles will guide how we will work in partnership with communities on the delivery of this Strategy.

We will:

- **We will invest in relationships and work with communities as partners:** We will invest in creating meaningful, trusting, and reciprocal relationships with communities.
- **Involve communities most affected by violence:** We will actively seek the voices and involvement of those most affected by violence to involve in co-design and delivery where possible.
- **Adopt a creative, flexible, and adaptable approach:** We will do everything we can to empower communities to work in partnership with us through meeting diverse needs.
- **Be ambitious, courageous and promote change:** We will play our role in securing system-change by continuously developing and strengthening our approach.

OUR MISSION

Build an inclusive, collaborative and courageous network to secure the change required to prevent violence. Communities are core partners in our Network.

Data insights
Briefings
Newsletters
Social Media Updates
Community Meetings
Community Events

INFORM
Providing communities with the knowledge they need to play their part and keeping them informed about our work, available resources and forthcoming opportunities to get involved.

Co-Designing Campaigns
Recruiting Staff
Evaluations
Co-Designing Interventions
Joint Events
Community Scrutiny and Oversight

Forums
Surveys
Focus Groups
Community Events
Community + Youth Group Visits
School Visits

COLLABORATE
Co-producing with communities through involving them in the design, delivery and evaluation of violence prevention strategies and activity.

CONSULT
Seeking and drawing on the insights, views and expertise of communities to ensure our work is relevant and responsive.

Invest in Community Leadership
Providing Venues, Training and Services
Skill Development of Young People
Sharing Power in Decision Making

EMPOWER
Enabling communities to secure change through investing in knowledge and skills and providing concrete opportunities in relation to decision-making and shaping and delivering services.

OUR IMPACT

- Improved understanding of violence
- Increased effectiveness of responses
- Increased reach of young people
- Increased feelings of safety
- Reductions in violence

Our Prevention Priorities

Our multi-agency response comprises of seven evidence-informed priorities which build on and extend the work undertaken by the VRN partnership to date.

These inter-connected priorities have been informed by the evidence-base, the findings of our Strategic Needs Assessment and the learning from previous VRN Response Strategies. The priorities have been developed in collaboration with the Specified and Relevant Authorities, and voluntary and community organisations, as well as insights from children, families and community members.

There is a wide-range of existing work being led by other partnerships and strategic boards which has relevance to these priorities including the work of the Health and Wellbeing Boards, Safeguarding Partnerships and the local Criminal Justice Board as well as other related SPB strategies and plans including the Combatting Drugs Strategy, the Serious and Organised Crime plan and the impending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. For this reason, the key areas of focus within each priority are those which strengthen and add value to wider work underway.

As mentioned earlier, we recognise the multiple forms of violence affecting communities and young people, and the links between these. Research highlights these connections, together with the common risk and protective factors and the importance of deploying strategies which simultaneously address the different ways in which violence manifests. It is therefore anticipated that by delivering the planned activity under each priority, there will be a positive impact on other forms of violence and vulnerability.

Over the coming pages, we provide a description of each priority along with the partnership's key areas of focus. Further detail on the activities that the partnership will pursue, including owners and timescales, are set out in an annual Delivery Plan.

1. **Priority 1:** Providing collaborative and courageous leadership.

2. **Priority 2:** Using data, evidence and evaluation to improve our response.

3. **Priority 3:** Supporting families to provide nurturing and safe environments.

4. **Priority 4:** Building protective and cohesive communities.

5. **Priority 5:** Creating safe and inclusive education settings.

6. **Priority 6:** Connecting young people to purposeful activities and trusted adults.

7. **Priority 7:** Providing opportunities for rehabilitation and recovery.

Priority One

Providing collaborative and courageous leadership

Leadership which reduces silo working and facilitates collaborative working across organisational and sector boundaries is key to tackling the root causes of serious violence and securing long-term impact.

As a partnership, we have a strong foundation of collaboration and have refreshed our Strategic Partnership Board structure so that we are better equipped to respond collectively to violence and vulnerability across the life course. By continuously strengthening our collaborative and courageous partnership we will be able to make a significant and sustained difference to lives of children, families and communities across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Adopting a public health approach provides a framework for preventing violence but it is through system leadership and effective partnership that we will realise its benefits. A shared understanding and commitment to the key elements of this approach and a willingness to truly collaborate, including with communities as partners, will enhance our collective efforts to prevent violence.

Key areas of focus:

- Pursue the public health approach and tackle the root causes of violence through an increased focus on primary prevention strategies.

- Align and integrate partnership governance, commissioning, funding and prevention activity across inter-connected areas of policy and practice.

- Use our collective knowledge and voice to influence national policy relating to the drivers and societal causes of violence and vulnerability.

- Extend and strengthen our partnership through engaging new partners and empowering everyone to play a role.

- Challenge social and gender-based norms within organisations, families, and communities.

- Develop responsive, relevant and accessible communication and campaign strategies which span physical and digital environments.

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Priority Two

Using data, evidence and evaluation to improve our response

Data, evidence and evaluation are central tenets of a public health approach to preventing violence. Effective prevention relies on understanding what our local serious violence problem is and what the key causes and drivers are. We have developed a more comprehensive picture of our local issues through the Strategic Needs Assessments because of improved data sharing and collaboration across the partnership. However, there are still datasets that we have not secured, issues with data quality and opportunities to make greater use of data when designing, commissioning and delivering services and interventions.

To give our collective work the best chance of success, we need to ensure that it is rooted in the growing body of evidence on 'what works' in preventing violence. As a partnership, we are committed to contributing to this evidence-base and to finding out if what we're doing is making a difference to the children, families and communities who are most in need. We will embed monitoring and evaluation within our collective work to ensure that we are generating learning which can be shared across and beyond our partnership to support continual improvement.

Key areas of focus:

- Develop and deliver a cross-cutting Data and Information Sharing Strategy through the Strategic Partnership Board.

- Ensure that data, insights and evidence informs strategic planning and commissioning activity.

- Use data, insights and evidence to improve the multi-agency management of people and places.

- Enhance understanding of the lived experience of violence for children, families and communities and use this to strengthen responses.

- Increase the use and quality of monitoring and evaluation activity across the system.

- Develop more efficient and accessible ways of sharing knowledge within and across the partnership.

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Priority Three

Supporting families to provide nurturing and safe environments

It is widely recognised that the family environment plays a critical role in influencing a child's emotional, physical and cognitive development, shaping the way in which they think and behave throughout their lives.

Evidence shows that children who grow up in homes which are characterised by instability, neglect or abuse, or who have experienced low levels of supervision or inconsistent and harsh disciplinary practices, are at greater risk of future involvement in violence. It is for this reason that one of our key prevention priorities is to support families to create and maintain a nurturing, stable and structured environment to support healthy development in children and young people.

Evidence-informed approaches related to this priority include providing support for parents in the early years through antenatal care, health visits, and local family hubs, affordable and accessible childcare, and parenting programmes which equip parents and carers with information and strategies to build an environment in which children can thrive.

Key areas of focus:

- Strengthen the prevention, early identification and mitigation strategies for childhood trauma.

- Continue to develop a trauma-informed system across the partnership.

- Equip parents and carers with knowledge and tools for them to play their part in preventing violence and vulnerability.

- Support professionals working with families in health, education and social care settings to understand the causes of violence and strengthen prevention focused practice.

- Strengthen the links between criminal justice responses and the opportunity to support families through early intervention.

- Support early years and early help provision to better target support for families at-risk of or experiencing violence and vulnerability.

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Priority Four

Building protective and cohesive communities

Building protective and cohesive communities is an essential foundation for effective violence prevention. By communities, we are referring to defined populations with shared characteristics, or places where regular interaction takes place such as neighbourhoods, schools, youth or recreational clubs, online platforms, and local spaces (e.g. parks).

It is through community-level activity that we have an opportunity to address the features of community environments that are conducive to violence prevention. For instance, adapting physical and social environments through improved lighting, street cleaning and facilitating community events can make people feel safer and more connected.

We will also pursue opportunities to reduce children and young people's exposure to community-level risks. This includes limiting access to alcohol, drugs or weapons, and proactive policing operations such as hotspots policing or enforcement on criminal networks and their activities (e.g. County Lines). Finally, we will partner with communities on prevention activities because we know that when we do, our responses are more relevant, responsive and effective.

Key areas of focus:

- Invest in activities which support the development of collaborative leadership within and across communities.

- Equip communities with the knowledge and tools to play an active part in preventing violence.

- Develop and apply a shared model for community-based problem-solving to be deployed at a local level.

- Make evidence-informed adaptations to the physical environment.

- Create safe and inclusive spaces for groups most at risk.

- Pursue civil and criminal enforcement to tackle the drivers of violence and vulnerability.

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Priority Five

Providing safe, inclusive and high quality education settings

Safe, inclusive and high quality education settings benefit children and young people in a number of ways; they support healthy social and emotional development, increase the chances that children will experience trusting and nurturing relationships, and improve life outcomes through academic and employment success.

The education sector provides a crucial contribution to our efforts to prevent violence locally. Schools (including alternative provision), colleges and universities have direct and regular contact with children and young people, providing teachers and other staff with invaluable opportunities to strengthen protective factors and reduce and/ or mitigate the impact of risk factors associated with violence. Risk factors which are particularly relevant to education settings include absenteeism, exclusions, low education attainment, low self-esteem and bullying.

Education settings play a significant role in preventing violence locally through the provision of high quality education, the delivery of violence prevention activities within and beyond the curriculum, and through the creation of positive prosocial education environments.

Key areas of focus:

- Equip education establishments, including teaching staff and students, with the knowledge and tools to play their part in preventing violence.

- Improve multi-agency information sharing and joint working with children and young people at-risk of or affected by violence.

- Develop a shared school – community partnership approach to preventing violence and vulnerability.

- Pursue evidence-informed strategies and interventions which reduce education-related risk factors and strengthen protective factors.

- Support the implementation of curriculum and other school-based activities focusing on developing healthy relationships and positive social norms.

Priority Six

Connecting young people to purposeful activities and trusted adults

The risk of children and young people becoming involved in violence can be mitigated through the development of strong and stable connections with trusted adults including family members, teachers, youth workers, community members or coaches.

There are a myriad of ways in which trusted adults, and the opportunities and experiences that they can provide for children and young people, can support our violence prevention efforts. This includes acting as a positive role model by demonstrating acceptable and appropriate behaviours, providing emotional and practical support, and helping children and young people to navigate our complex support systems.

Importantly, trusted adults can support children and young people with the development of life, community and social skills by facilitating access to credible and purposeful activities. It is these positive interpersonal relationships and opportunities, and the benefits that they can bring in terms of improved education and employment outcomes, that can help to protect and divert children and young people from violence.

Key areas of focus:

- Equip 'trusted adults' with the knowledge and tools to play their role and empower, support and safeguard children and young people.

- Support the development of shared quality standards and a community of practice for cross-sector youth work.

- Identify and pursue opportunities to support at-risk young people in reachable spaces.

- Improve the availability and quality of evidence-informed interventions as part of pre-court diversion.

- Increase opportunities for young people in volunteering, sports and physical activity and arts and culture within local communities.

- Provide concrete opportunities for children and young people to develop social and life skills.

- Empower and involve young people in all elements of the VRN's work including decision-making, and the design and delivery of violence prevention strategies and activities.

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Priority Seven

Providing opportunities for rehabilitation and recovery

While we will prioritise and proactively seek out opportunities for primary prevention and early intervention, a comprehensive whole system approach to prevention also includes responding effectively in the aftermath of violence.

Tertiary prevention is key to minimising the harm caused by violence because it can help victims to recover through the delivery of trauma-informed support services, which in turn, reduce the likelihood of involvement in future victimisation and perpetration. Furthermore, the visible and fair upholding of the law can provide reassurance and build confidence amongst victims, witnesses and communities.

Tertiary prevention also includes activity to rehabilitate those who have committed violence thereby supporting desistance. Our local criminal justice agencies – such as the police, prisons, youth justice and probation – and other relevant organisations have a pivotal role to play in delivering evidence-informed responses and interventions which address the drivers of criminality and prevent re-offending.

Key areas of focus:

- Strengthen timely and tailored support for victims, their families and wider communities.

- Design and deliver bespoke desistance-based programmes for people involved in violence

- Improve the continuity of support and intervention between the youth and adult justice system.

- Strengthen the provision and timeliness of specialist interventions for perpetrators across the pathways out of offending.

- Ensure responses are evidence-informed, tailored and culturally attuned to secure equity in rehabilitation and recovery outcomes.

- Increase whole-family and community-focused rehabilitation and recovery responses.

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Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

As illustrated by our Core Principles, we are committed to continuous learning and improvement, and to understanding the impact of our work.

Our Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Framework outlines how we monitor our activities, outcomes and impacts, and how the evidence generated through monitoring and evaluation is used to implement, adapt and inform wider practice across and beyond the Network. This includes ensuring we monitor how violence and this strategy affects different parts of our population and impacts on inequalities. Our approach incorporates the following:

The Evidence Base

The VRN team will continue to support the partnership by seeking out and sharing emerging evidence on promising practice such as Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) Toolkit, the College of Policing's Toolkit and Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) Guidebook. We will undertake rapid evidence reviews to better understand 'what works' before commissioning or designing interventions. We will also pursue opportunities to collaborate with academics and What Works Centres, and commission research to address knowledge gaps amongst the partnership about our local serious violence issues and the drivers.

Local Datasets

As a partnership, we have made significant progress with data sharing. We have an information sharing agreement in place which provides a framework for the safe sharing of data and information to improve our collective understanding of serious violence. Accompanying this, we will develop a partnership Data and Information Sharing Strategy which sets out the action that the Strategic Partnership Board will take to improve data quality, sharing and use in relation to all areas of harm.

Alongside improving access to data, we are also committed to improving the quality of our data outputs which will inform the work of the partnership. We have incorporated new datasets within our interactive dashboard so that it reflects the revised definition of serious violence. This will enable the Strategic Partnership Board to monitor local trends in serious violence and the drivers, and adapt their responses to tackle these issues.

The VRN team will use local data (such as ASB and crime, health, social care, education, substance use data) to monitor the impact that commissioned interventions are having on the local problem and causes of serious violence (see performance monitoring). We will also evaluate the impact that data sharing, such as the Injury Surveillance System, is having on rates and volumes of violence locally.

Performance Monitoring

As a partnership we will self-monitor and collectively evaluate the impact and effectiveness of this Strategy and our commissioned services through our Strategic Partnership Board structure (see page 12). Our performance monitoring approach enables us to monitor the progress of this Strategy and our collective actions against the success measures outlined on the next page and in our Theory of Change (Appendix A). The VRN team will report progress against the Delivery Plan for this Strategy on a quarterly basis at the Strategic Partnership Board.

Local trends in serious violence and the prevalence of risk and protective factors will be monitored by the VRN team with quarterly reports provided to the SPB on a quarterly basis. CSPs have access to the Serious Violence Dashboard and analytical support to be able to monitor trends at a locality level.

We have implemented monitoring frameworks across VRN interventions and we analyse this data to learn more about the young people and families accessing these services. We use this monitoring data to further develop and improve these interventions to ensure that they are reaching the individuals who need them most and that they are achieving the intended outcomes.

Serious Violence Duty Success Measures

- A reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with knife or sharp object
- A reduction in knife and sharp object enabled serious violence recorded by the Police
- A reduction in homicides recorded by the Police

Partnership Success Measures

- Reductions in serious violence* overall and specific offence types such as robbery and actual bodily harm
- Reductions in serious violence involving young people
- Reductions in public place serious violence
- Reduction in re-offending and re-victimisation, with a particular focus on domestic-abuse and sexual violence
- Reductions in the risk factors associated with serious violence including absenteeism, unemployment and conflict within the home

Scrutiny

Members of the SPB will hold each other to account for delivery against the strategy and seek to resolve any issues at a senior officer level when necessary. Scrutiny outside of this Board structure will be provided through the VRN's Community Partnership activity, including the Community Oversight Board, as well as annual reporting to the Police and Crime Panel. Updates will also be provided to local CSP Strategic Boards.

Insights and Feedback

We will continue to embed opportunities for different beneficiary groups – including young people, families, community members, victims, perpetrators and professionals – to share their insights and to shape services and interventions. As a partnership we will strengthen our community involvement work through the adoption of the Community Partnership Framework to ensure that diverse voices are listened to.

*Based upon the definition agreed by the partnership.

Evaluation

The VRN team will continue to improve the robustness of evaluations conducted across the system. This will include:

- Process Evaluations - When implementing new interventions we conduct process evaluations to assess how they're being delivered and what's working well or needs improving.
- Impact Evaluations - Where possible we will undertake impact evaluations to provide an objective assessment of what difference VRN-supported interventions are making.

The team will also support partners to evaluate new and existing interventions including developing a Theory of Change, intervention blueprints, monitoring frameworks and evaluation plans.

List of VRN Core Members

Leicestershire County Council
Leicester City Council
Rutland County Council
Oadby and Wigston Council (on behalf of districts)
Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service
Leicestershire Police
Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland)
Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Integrated Care Board
National Probation Service (Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland)
HMP Leicester
East Midlands Ambulance Service
Voluntary Action Leicester(shire)
Active Together
Turning Point
Community Representation x 2
Office of Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID)

Community Safety Partnerships

Blaby, Hinckley and Bosworth CSP
Charnwood CSP
Harborough District CSP
Leicester CSP
Safer Melton Partnership
Safer North West Leicestershire Partnership
Oadby & Wigston CSP
Safer Rutland Partnership

Appendix A: VRN Theory of Change

Rationale

The 23/24 SNA highlighted that our local serious violence issues are:

- Persistent high rates after-school and in the night-time economy.
- high rates of young people affected by sexual violence and high-harm offences.
- High concentrations of SV in East, West and Central Leicester and Hinckley & Blaby and Charnwood in the County

Local data shows high rates of risk factors amongst children young people and adults involved in violence (including absenteeism, unsafe and community family environments), and key drivers include alcohol and drug markets.

A long-term public health approach involving the 'whole system' is key to enabling the partnership to tackle our local serious violence issues.

Evidence shows considerable overlap between the risk and protective factors for different forms of violence (CDC, 2014), and that early intervention strategies which create safe, inclusive and nurturing family, community and education environments, and which connect young people to trusting adults and activities can prevent young people and adults from involvement in all forms of violence by strengthening risk factors and reducing protective factors.

Activity

Priority 1: Providing collaborative and courageous leadership
Key areas of focus include continuously pursuing the public health approach and primary prevention strategies, influencing national policy relating to the drivers of violence, challenging social and gender-based norms, and developing responsible communication strategies.

Priority 2: Using data, evidence and evaluation to improve our response
Key areas of focus include developing a Data and Information Strategy and delivery structure, developing data products which improve the multi-agency management of people and places, and increasing the use and quality of monitoring and evaluation activity.

Priority 3: Supporting families to provide nurturing and safe environments
Key areas of focus include strengthening responses to childhood trauma, developing a trauma-informed system, equipping parents/carers with skills, and supporting early help to better target resources.

Priority 4: Building protective and cohesive communities
Key areas of focus include supporting development of effective community leadership, equipping communities with knowledge and skills, improving safety of physical environments, and creating safe and inclusive social environments and community-based problem-solving.

Priority 5: Providing safe, inclusive and high quality education settings
Key areas of focus include equipping teachers and other relevant staff with knowledge and tools, improving information sharing and joint working, developing a school-community partnership, and pursuing evidence-informed interventions and curriculum activities.

Priority 6: Connecting young people to purposeful activities and trusted adults
Key areas of focus include equipping 'trusted adults' with knowledge and tools, supporting development of a community of practice for youth work, and improving opportunities and support for young people.

Priority 7: Providing opportunities for rehabilitation and recovery
Key areas of focus include delivering evidence-informed desistance programmes, improving transitions between youth and adult justice systems, increasing responsiveness of victim services, and developing whole-family and community-focused responses.

Outputs

- Strategy and SNA owned by partnership
- Partners understand and use PHA
- Primary prevention opportunities identified and pursued
- Communication and Campaigns Strategy
- Alignment between strategies, funding and activity

- SNA evidences local SV problem and drivers
- Data and Information Strategy and data outputs such as dashboards
- At risk/high harm cohorts identified
- Partners use data to inform responses
- Monitoring and evaluation embedded in activity across the system

- Partners, professionals, community members, parents/carers and young people have the knowledge and tools to respond effectively to violence and delivery evidence-informed approaches (where appropriate)
- New partnerships, activity and services across the system
- Data-led, evidence-informed interventions operating across primary, second and tertiary prevention levels to tackle the drivers of serious violence, reduce risk factors and strengthen protective factors
- Adaptations to physical and social community environments
- Children and young people provided with opportunities to develop social and life skills
- At-risk/high harm young people and adults identified and receiving effective support to prevent, divert and rehabilitate
- Young people, families and communities influence the design and delivery of partnership activity across the system

Outcomes

STRATEGIC
- Focused, data-driven, evidence-informed whole systems prevention strategy to serious violence
- Partners/CSPs embed the PHA, deliver on the SVLD and sustain work of the VRN
- Shared and consistent communication and campaigns
- Resources targeted at areas with greatest needs

OPERATIONAL
- Increased multi-agency and community collaboration and delivery, particularly primary and secondary prevention.
- Partners/professionals understand and are better able to respond to individual/community needs
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness of prevention activities across the system.
- Improved understanding of effective practice, and appetite to learn and adapt

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS
- Successful identification and engagement of those at risk
- Underlying risk factors addressed
- Improved access to local services for support
- Diverted away from crime

COMMUNITIES
- Improved understanding, interaction and trust in VRN and partners
- Improved knowledge of SV and development of skills
- Community Leaders, parents and carers are better able to respond to individual/community needs
- Increase in community-led solutions to preventing SV
- Improved feelings of safety and cohesion

Impacts

Whole systems approach adopted and sustained through: organisational cultural change and effective multi-agency working

Reductions in all serious violence including SV Duty measures:
- Reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object
- Reduction in knife-enabled serious violence
- Reduction in homicides

Improved life outcomes for young people, families and communities across LLR from strengthening protective factors/reducing risk factors at an individual, relationship, community and societal level

VIOLENCE REDUCTION NETWORK

Serious Violence Prevention Strategy
Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland

If you would like to find out more about the Violence Reduction
Network, you can contact us at:
vrn@leics.pcc.gov.uk

You can also find details of our work at:
www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk

You can keep up-to-date with VRN developments at:
@VR_Network

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Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

18ᵗʰ June 2024

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Update Report

Report Date	18 June 2024
Report Author	Lizzie Starr, Director of Governance and Performance
Security Classification	Official

Meeting and Date: Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, XX Month 20XX
Report Title: OPCC Update Report
Author and Date: Lizzie Starr, Director of Governance and Performance, May 2024
Page 1 of 9

Purpose of Report

1. In his role as the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) the Commissioner is required to establish a Police and Crime Plan and deliver such a plan and bring together community safety and criminal justice partners to make sure local priorities are joined up.

2. The PCC brings this report to outline for the Police and Crime Panel how he fulfilled his duty through his work or the work of his deputy and office throughout the period from January 2024 to the April pre-election period.

Request of the Panel

3. In their role to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the PCC, the Commissioner requests that the panel examines the contents of this report. He would specifically like to ask the panel their opinion on the following questions;

   a. Is the Panel supportive of the work update provided by the PCC?
   b. Would the panel like to make any recommendations to the PCC in relation to any of the work outlined within the report?

Summary

4. It is the continued opinion of the PCC that there is good progress being made against a key number of workstreams within the office. The PCC receives regular oversight of the workload through weekly meetings with the Chief Executive Officer, Bi-monthly briefings with the Senior Management Team and other briefings as appropriate. There has been an enhanced focus on community engagement and consultation with the public over the past 6 months as evidenced by the additional detail provided below regarding public meetings, parish council engagement scheme and community Thursdays.

Background, Relevant Data and Trends

Community consultation and engagement (PCC)

5. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (PRSRA) places a statutory duty on the Police and Crime Commissioner to regularly engage and consult with the public. This has been a key priority for the Commissioner, and to that end he has created dedicated 'Community Days', enabling him to listen to the views of local people.

6. Due to the election on 2 May 2024 the OPCC/Commissioner entered the Pre-election period on 24 March. Please note therefore, this report concerns the period from 24 January (the last panel report) until 24 March. Eight Community Days took place during this time period.

7. In line with best practice convention, communications and engagement undertaken by the OPCC were then restricted until the election results had been announced.

8. The map below shows the coverage of the community days in the relevant period.

9. As per the OPCC standard internal practices, engagement activity and follow up actions are tracked and all feedback, both positive and negative, is relayed to the appropriate personnel in the force or partner organisations. The PCC debriefs the team on his visits from which a number of actions are logged from each visit, these are actioned and tracked by the team for completion as per the diagram below.

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┌─────────────────────┐
│      Community      │
│ Engagement Activity │
│     by PCC/DPCC     │
└─────────────────────┘
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┌─────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────┐
│   Feedback meeting   │        │ All items logged and │
│      with BSO        │────────│  groups for future   │
│                      │        │ policy development   │
│                      │        │         (6)          │
└─────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────┘
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┌────────────────┐ ┌────────────────┐ ┌────────────────┐ ┌────────────────┐
│ Item added to  │ │ Item sent to   │ │ Item sent to   │ │ Item added to  │
│ CC/PCC 121     │ │ NPA Commander  │ │ other partner  │ │ forward plan   │
│ meeting (2)    │ │ for additional │ │ organisation   │ │ for CGB/       │
│                │ │ information (4)│ │ for feedback(2)│ │ Scrutiny Panels│
│                │ │                │ │                │ │      (0)       │
└────────────────┘ └────────────────┘ └────────────────┘ └────────────────┘
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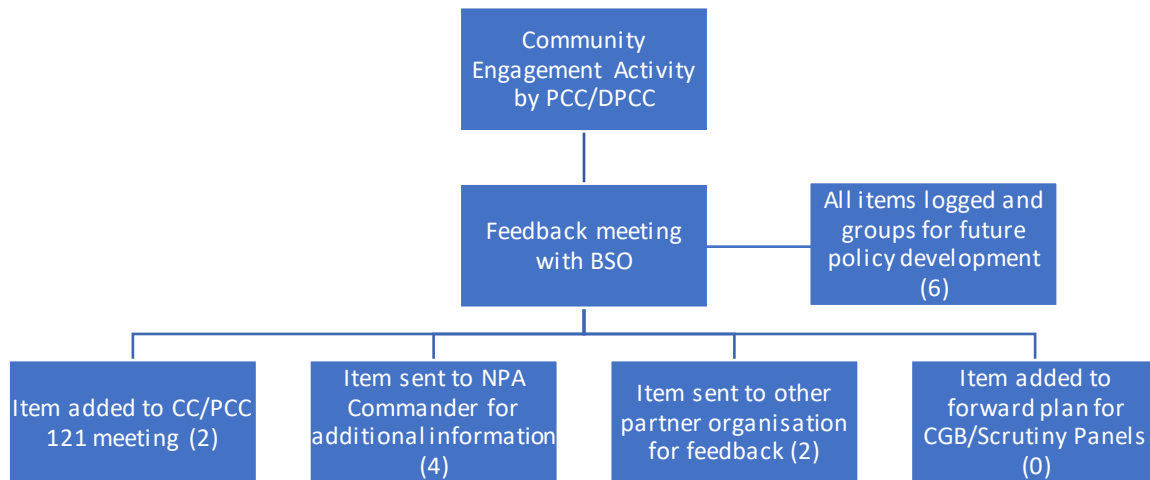
10. Following community engagement some examples of the items raised through the PCC's meeting with the Chief Constable and follow up enquiries with the NPA Commanders include, activity planned for tackling Anti-social Behaviour (ASB), especially the intention for the new funding and areas of focus, activity required on sheep worrying, car cruising and road safety.

11. Following on from this the PCC has requested and received a number of briefings on the new Hotspot Funding for ASB. Partners, via the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) have been engaged if the data shows their area to be a hotspot (selection of which must be data and evidence based).

12. A business case came forward for support to rural communities to raise awareness of the impact of sheep worrying, this was approved by the PCC and activity put in place.

13. The PCC continues to talk to the Chief Constable regularly about the impact car cruising has on communities and is fully supportive of the actions that the Neighbourhood Policing Teams are planning to put in place for those areas. He has also already reached out to the Road Safety Partnership as he would like the OPCC to work closer with this organisation to the benefit of road safety during his new term.

Community Consultation and Engagement (DPCC)

14. The Parish Council Engagement Programme led by the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner concluded in March.

15. The surgeries in Northwest Leicestershire were attended by a total of seven parish councils out of a total of 23 Parish Councils across the district. Key

topics raised included issues relating to road safety, suspicions of substance abuse and motorbike speeding on By Ways Open to All Traffic.

16. A total of six out of 25 Parish Councils from Charnwood attended their surgery and key topics raised included issues relating to road safety such as: speeding, suspicions of substance abuse, and inconsiderate parking. E scooters on pavements have also been a common concern in Charnwood parishes.

17. From the 26 Parish Councils across Melton Borough, five attended the surgeries. Key topics included issues relating to road safety due to the increased traffic brought by festivals as well as resulting anti–social behaviour and substance abuse.

18. The surgeries in Hinckley and Bosworth resulted in the attendance of six Parish Councils. There were a number of complaints received regarding speeding, and road safety appears to be the largest concern in this district.

19. Out of the 19 Parish Councils in Blaby District, six attended the surgeries. The key concerns raised were road safety, due to speeding on the Bypass and HGVs passing through villages; inconsiderate parking and the use of e scooters.

20. From the 46 Parish Councils across Harborough District, there were a total of 46 Parish Councils attending the surgeries. Dangerous speeding and traffic were the common concerns raised by the Councillors in addition to anti-social behaviour.

21. Road safety was clearly the strongest concern of the councillors who took part in the programme.

22. All of the information collated will now feed into the creation of the new Police and Crime Plan alongside other engagement activity.

Due Diligence Activity (PCC and DPCC)

23. The PCC/DPCC continued to carry out visits to projects funded via OPCC to talk about progress of project delivery. Throughout the Spring, visits have taken place to a number of funded initiatives, including, but not limited to, those summarised in Table One.

Table One

Organisation	Area and Work	Funding	Output
Turning Point	Reducing Substance Misuse	Circa £462k	The PCC was impressed to hear about the hard work being done in custody with vulnerable people.

Charnwood CSP	Community Safety	Approx £90k	The PCC welcomed hearing about the projects funded through the CSP annual funding.
Oadby and Wigston CSP	Community Safety	Approx £33k	
Blaby CSP	Community Safety	Approx £53k	
City CSP	Community Safety	Approx £272k	The PCC had a very impressive meeting on the projects the funding has enabled.
CSP Project Warwick Way Football	Community Safety	In above	The PCC was pleased to hear the project was going well and looked forward to an update in due course.

Commissioning and Partnership Activity

24. The OPCC is supporting the mobilisation of the Victim First contract, this is underway through a staged approach over the first six months. We are working in partnership with the Force on the joint Victim Service Pathway.

25. The new Community Leadership Programme cohort have commenced the training, members of the VRN and OPCC with varied experience are supporting relevant sessions. There are 19 new Community Leaders on the programme, 5 of which are from within the People Zones areas.

26. Safer Streets Activity continues to be delivered as detailed below:
    a. Project 1 – Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) – LLR Wide - The OPCC has delivered a grant round to secure community-based groups to develop co-produced resources to take the Under 25 VAWG Prevention strands of delivery forward. Six organisations have been commissioned to support co-production.
    b. Project 2 – ASB – Melton - delivery of both young people interventions completed within the necessary timescale for year 1. Delivery for both these projects began in December 2023. The physical CCTV and lighting improvements are all on track to be delivered well in advance of the March 2025 deadline as all equipment has been purchased and it is simply a case of installation. Majority have been installed. Target hardening items purchased and due to be rolled out imminently with support from the Melton Police NPA across up to 250 homes.
    c. Project 3 – Neighbourhood Crime – Oadby and Wigston - progress for this workstream included a live Crimestoppers campaign targeting winter months and burglary offences and other neighbourhood crime types. This campaign has now concluded, and a report has been provided by Crimestoppers outlining its results. As with the target hardening element of project 2, the promotion of the target hardening offer has commenced with residents and mobilisation is underway with deliveries to qualifying addresses starting to reach homes. The re-deployable and fixed CCTV

elements are being led by the Community Safety Partnership and are all on track to be delivered before March 2025.

27. Below are two updates relating to the progress of two key projects across the People Zone (PZ) areas;

    a. We are holding a 'People Zone Network Meeting' in May with stakeholders, residents and partners from all three PZs. This event aims to bring partners together from all areas to network and discuss best practice. The main focus of the event will see us hold a 'grants process workshop' where we will co-design the PZ grants funding process with partners at the event, taking into account their feedback and opinions on how we can streamline the process and include them in decisions making when it comes to grant awarding. The workshop will focus on the application process, project commencement support, monitoring of project and end of project support. This event aims to ensure we are listening to the communities in PZs and co-designing processes across all zones.

    b. Crimestoppers Zones were launched across the three People Zones from Monday 15th January. During the Forcewide Week of Action, on Tuesday 23rd January, the team, along with residents & Officers from North West Leicestershire Police carried out a leaflet drop around the hotspot zones. There was another event in New Parks on Friday 26th January and in Bell Foundry on 8th February. The Crimestoppers Zones were launched by way of a three phased campaign across all three zones. The first stage of the three-stage campaign has just finished in each area, evaluation data can be seen below.

28. The key objectives of the campaign activity were to raise awareness to the community of Crimestoppers' alternative and anonymous reporting line, highlight the Fearless online service for young people to access information about crime types and to empower the local community to report information in relation to those who are involved in criminal activity. The campaign ran for a two-week period and had great success in achieving the directive and desired impact, particularly in reaching young people.

29. Crimestoppers social media posts were sent out across Instagram and Facebook targeting people aged over 18 in the Bell Foundry, New Parks and Thringstone and Whitwick. These posts focussed on:
    a. Crimestoppers anonymity;
    b. How to report information anonymously online and by phone;
    c. Reporting in different languages.

30. Social media posts reached over 44,000 people with over 340,000 impressions.

31. The Fearless social media campaign reached over 137,000 young people with over 620,000 impressions. Over 13,000 young people 'swiped up' to find out more about the campaign.

32. The increase in activity was primarily seen across New Parks and Thringstone and Whitwick areas as well as Leicestershire as a whole, with over 17 new pieces of information received and 12 reports. Drugs and drink driving were the most reported crime types, with additional information received regarding Knives, Environmental and Wildlife Crime, Firearms, Vulnerability and Safeguarding issues and Trading Standards.

33. The People Zones team work very closely with the Community Payback team within Leicestershire Probation. The team have been actively approaching community groups, local authorities and charities to identify potential projects to undertake next. Some examples of the positive work completed by the community payback team include; Bell Foundry mural, Autumn antisocial clean up, Thringstone and Whitwick (community orchard), Fearon Hall (planter project) and New Parks community hub.

34. The hours accredited to Community Payback projects in partnership with the OPCC totals to a rising 1,717 hours, five completed/ongoing projects and nine potential ones within the People Zones.

35. Following on from a report of the Designing Out Crime Officer (DOCO), where recommendations were made to improve the safety of the Bell Foundry estate, Charnwood Borough Council have recently agreed to collaborate with People Zones & Leicestershire Probation's Community Payback team to carry out a pilot project to reduce the height of some bin stores in key hotspots for crime & ASB.

36. The People Zones team are also currently piloting the rolling out the First Phone 360 VR Headset project around online safety for young people as a prevention tool. An educational toolkit has been developed to compliment the film, where teachers in schools are trained on utilising the provided resources to educate children in online safety, using the Virtual Reality (VR) film as reference. The toolkit spans six sessions which teachers can rollout in their school however they see appropriate.

37. A tender process has concluded and awarded to Mapping for Change (MfC) who are currently undertaking the evaluation of the PZ project which will be completed in June this year. MfC are undertaking the evaluation using a mixed methods engagement approach including surveys, workshops, interviews, focus groups, forums, attending events and data analysis. A full report with results will be released in July, as well as a short summary report

for lighter reading. Evaluation results will be used as a baseline for the future of the project including the budget.

38. MfC will be delivering Evaluation training to OPCC members of staff to enable us to undertake internal evaluations of the project in future. The training will also be offered to residents and stakeholders within the People Zone steering groups to support them with future bid writing and project evaluation approaches.

Scrutiny and Governance Activity

39. The OPCC continue to achieve 100% of scheduled ICV Visits, via their volunteers, equating to twenty-five visits undertaken over January and the end of March. No serious issues have been observed within these visits.

40. The team are working on a training package for the newly recruited 15 custody volunteers with a view to having them fully operational by September.

41. The volunteers continue to also achieve 100% of animal welfare visits, with one visit taking place each month, similarly no serious issues have been observed within these visits.

42. A previous paper came to Police and Crime Panel outlining an enhanced structure for the independent scrutiny panels. Following the introduction this structure, work has been ongoing to recruit to all panels and train members in the new functions.

43. Since the last update to the panel, there has been one meeting of the Out Of Court Resolution Panel, one complaint review session and one custody detention scrutiny panel. The recruitment for the Hate Crime Scrutiny panel members has concluded and the first meeting has been set for 10th July 2024.

44. The team hosted the Police and Crime Panel members to Force Headquarters (FHQ) to outline the methods and performance in which the OPCC scrutinise force performance to support the PCC in holding the force to account.

45. Thirty-six Force complaint reviews were received by the OPCC in the period January-March. The team have been working to improve the turnaround time for these complaint reviews and have seen steady improvements in the last few months, with 100% turnaround within 28 days within March.

-- **End of Report** --

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Agenda Item 8

Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

18th June 2024

Corporate Governance Board

Report Date	18 June 2024
Report Author	Clare Hornbuckle/Lizzie Starr
Security Classification	Official

Meeting and Date: Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, 18 June 2024
Report Title: Corporate Governance Board
Author and Date: Lizzie Starr and Clare Hornbuckle, OPCC
Page 1 of 4

Purpose of Report

1. In his role as the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) the Commissioner is required to secure efficient and effective policing for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, appoint a Chief Constable and hold them to account.

2. The PCC brings this report to outline for the Police and Crime Panel how he is fulfilling his duty by holding the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the force.

Request of the Panel

3. In their role to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the PCC, the Commissioner requests that the panel examines the contents of this report. He would specifically like to ask the panel their opinion on the following questions;
    a. Is the Panel content in the way that the PCC has held the Chief Constable to account through the Corporate Governance Board?
    b. Would the panel like to make any recommendations to the PCC in relation to this matter?

Summary

4. It is the opinion of the PCC that there is a robust system in place to challenge the Chief Constable on performance and the standardised performance metrics that have been introduced provide greater accountability of the Police to the Public.

5. It is the opinion of the PCC that the issues escalated to the Corporate Governance Board, a board attended by the Chief Constable and his Chief Officer Team, have been fully considered by the force and the PCC is content in the actions put in place by the force to improve performance in these areas.

Background

6. In advance of the Corporate Governance Board meeting and in support of setting the agenda, the PCC was presented a report that outlines the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Force performance and a summary of the other scrutiny and assurance work undertaken by the team on his behalf to support him in his statutory duties to hold the Chief Constable to account.

7. The report presented on the 7th February 2024, highlighted two areas in which further scrutiny of the force was appropriate and therefore warranted escalation to the board meeting, there was also one item in which further monitoring was agreed. These items were;
    a. 999 Performance – for escalation at the board meeting;
    b. Rape Performance – for escalation at the board meeting;

    c. Response times – recommended to continue to closely monitor performance.

8. The Force were requested to provide a paper for the topics detailed in paragraphs 7a and 7b above to outline the reasons for the declines in performance and covering what the Force are doing in response to these issues.

9. In preparing the report the team consider the data available to them and review force dashboards and performance reports, performance across other boards for example the Local Criminal Justice Boards. The team look at national performance and forces similar in size/make up to determine outliers and also take into consideration feedback from the PCC and the communications team to include community perceptions of crime and the impact they are having.

10. The full report of the board meeting in which these performance exceptions are discussed is attached as Appendix One.

Impact of Scrutiny for the March Agenda

11. Operational Summary: The PCC noted his thanks to the Force for all the hard work of Chief Officer Team (CoT), Officers and Police Staff. An intranet article went out across the Force on the 22nd March 2024.

12. Call Performance: The Force shares the PCC concerns for performance in this area and, with PCC support through the budget, invested in this area. 101 call performance has significantly improved and, as of April 2024, is currently at 86.7% with only a 5% abandonment rate.

13. Rape Performance: This is a clear priority in the Force and the Chief Constable (CC) demonstrated a determination to drive up performance in this area. Through the activity presented the Force are making positive progress towards their target of 8% positive outcome rate, from a baseline of 3.4% in 21/22. Both the PCC and CC recognise the need to drive this as high as possible on behalf of victims. To ensure this issue remains a priority the PCC has requested a further paper to the Board in four months time to show the impact of the actions taken, however the impact could take a while to show in the performance metrics due to the time required to achieve a court outcome.

14. Finance: The programme to identify savings to close the budget gap for this year are ongoing. The PCC has requested a full business case, including detail around the impact this programme could have on service delivery, to come to the next Corporate Governance Board in May.

15. Reserves: The Reserves Strategy was debated and adopted.

16. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS): The Force outlined that they were well prepared for the coming inspection and had welcomed HMI into various forums. They will continue to feedback progress to the PCC, who will be involved in the debrief. Final inspection reports are not expected from HMICFRS until the Autumn.

17. Police and Crime Plan: In March the OPCC presented the Police and Crime Plan progress report to the Police and Crime Panel.

18. The actions captured and discussed within the Corporate Governance board are tracked by the OPCC for completion and the performance reviewed.

-- **End of Report** --

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE BOARD

18th March 2024

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1. **Overview, attendance and purpose**
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   a. **Calls performance**
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4. **Finance**
   a. **Savings process**
   b. **Reserves strategy**
5. **HMICFRS**
   a. **Inspections initial feedback report**
6. **Police and Crime Plan**
   a. **Police and Crime Plan Delivery Report**
7. **AOB**
   a. **Memorandum of Understanding and Corporate Governance Framework**
   b. **Proactive Communications**
   c. **Op Bridger Update**

Clare Hornbuckle – Evaluation and Scrutiny Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

1. Overview, attendance & purpose

Overview

Chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Corporate Governance Board is attended by both the OPCC and the Chief Officer Team who meet roughly every 8 weeks to discuss and highlight the performance of Leicestershire Police force, allowing the PCC to challenge, scrutinise and discuss potential support from the OPCC. Below is a report detailing the discussions of the meeting held on the 18th March 2024.

Attendance

Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
Mr Rupert Matthews (Police and Crime Commissioner)
Mrs Rani Mahal (Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner)
Claire Trewartha (CEO)
Miss Kira Hughes (Chief Finance Officer)
Miss Abbey Dearden (Business Staff Officer)

Office of Chief Constable
Mr Rob Nixon (Chief Constable)
Mr David Sandall (Deputy Chief Constable)
Mr Chris Kealey (Head of Communications and Engagement)
Mr Paul Dawkins (ACO FR)

Apologies – Mrs Lizzie Starr (Director of Governance and Performance)
Mr Adam Streets (ACC)
Mrs Michaela Kerr (ACC)

Purpose

The purpose of the Corporate Governance Board is to allow the PCC to carry out their statutory duty of holding the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public. The board consists of both reports, presentations and verbal discussions guided by the Chair on key areas such as performance, corporate risk, recruitment, HMICFRS, among other measures. This report is to highlight the main points covered in the latest CBG, in the following format:

i.   Overview of issue (with the exception of repeat financial items)
ii.   Force update/overview
iii.   Police and Crime Commissioner response (where appropriate)

Clare Hornbuckle – Evaluation and Scrutiny Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

2. Operational Summary

<u>Overview:</u> Summaries of operational performance for the previous 8 weeks is routinely brought to the CGB for the benefit of the Chair, and for interest of the public and police and crime panel.

<u>Force update:</u> The board received a report from the Chief Officer Team (COT) authored by the Executive Support Team. The paper contains a detailed summary of operational activity for the period from the last CGB to the current. The report included updates on the tragic incident involving two-year-old Xielo Maruziva in the River Soar. Thoughts were with the family and friends with the extensive efforts and resources that this operation has drawn on both in Force and from specialist partner agencies. The report also touched on the County Lines Intensification Week, an update on the total arrests as a result of a double shooting in on Evington Road, and the successful conviction of two rapists as a result of robust policing and the testimony from the victim who bravely spoke out against the perpetrator.

The report also provides a corporate overview of the previous 8 weeks, including the rollout of the Leicestershire Police Pledge, engagement activities regarding the budget challenges, preparation for the upcoming HMICFRS PEEL inspection in July, refurbishment of the Occupational Health Offices at FHQ and data transfer to the cloud.

An update on regional operation activity was included in the summary but has been redacted from this report to support ongoing work.

<u>PCC response:</u> CC Nixon emphasised the level of work that this report details and the significance of each update included. Upon thanks from the Chair, CC Nixon queried whether a message could go out to all officers and staff. CEO Trewartha explained that due to the pre-election period beginning two days following the CGB, this would need to be approached sensitively. An action was captured for Sallie Blair (OPCC Comms Lead) to link in with Chris Kealey to discuss what can be shared.

The PCC and CC agreed that findings of the Angiolini Inquiry[1] and implementation of the 16 recommendations be discussed at the next CGB.

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[1] An independent inquiry into how an off-duty Met police officer abducted, raped and murdered Sarah Everard. The report makes 16 recommendations to Police Forces nati onal.y

Clare Hornbuckle – Evaluation and Scrutiny Officer, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

3. Operational Performance

a. Calls Performance

Overview: Calls performance is currently a priority focus area for Leicestershire Police after it was noted in the summer of 2023 that the standard of performance had declined compared to previous years when looking at average answer times and drop off times.

Force update: The board received a report authored by Supt Bunn (Head of Contact). The report explains that the demand on the contact management department increases year on year, and June of 2023 saw peak demand at 22,378 calls within the month, this is 6,538 more calls than the same month of the previous year. This resulted in a critical incident being declared as demand outstripped capability, which remained in place until January 2024. The report goes on to detail that call levels have stabilised from November 2023 onwards, however remained significantly high compared to previous years. The response to the critical incident included focusing on prevention by extending the approach of 'right person right care' to contact demand, ensuring that callers receive specialised and specific care earlier depending on the nature of the call. The force also altered shift patterns and resources to manage demand. Challenges in recruitment are also detailed, explaining that the private sector call centres offer higher pay, and that the CMD is often a stepping stone for staff into other roles in force, resulting in a high turnover of staff. To manage this, the CMD recruited 79 new starters in 2023, with continued recruitment planned for 2024.

The result of these changes for 2024 mean that Leicestershire Police are in the top quartile nationally for their calls performance. 90%+ all 999 calls between November 2023 and Feb 2024 were answered within 10 seconds. The force currently is not achieving the target 75% of all 101 calls being answered within two minutes, with the highest performing month at 73.7%. The ongoing recruitment and training is scheduled for April 2024 and this should improve the performance for 101 calls.

A Gold group was created last summer and is led by ACC Streets to manage the different workstreams and oversee the improvements.

PCC response: The Chair noted the report. CEO Trewartha asked if there is anything more the Force can do to reduce the turnover. DCC Sandall explained that the challenges are embedded within the nature of the job, for example staff who go elsewhere are attracted by higher salaries and the potential to work remotely which cannot be accommodated in the contact management department for Leicestershire Police. CC Nixon emphasised the competitiveness of salaries for call centre jobs in the private sector. CEO Trewartha noted that it would be interesting to know what the up lift of salary would need to be in order to retain staff, as continuing to recruit and retrain is not cost neutral. CC Nixon raised the concern that increasing this pay may result in CMD staff being paid more than a frontline Police Officer, and that longer term workforce planning is required as uplift is not sustainable nor affordable.

b. Rape Performance

(An appendix report has been produced by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the benefit of the Police and Crime Panel, detailing the key challenges and how the PCC is supporting the force).

Overview: Rape is a priority area of focus in for Leicestershire Police following an increase in the number of reported rape offences in the most recent year, and a low level of positive outcomes for rape offences[2].

Force update: The board received a report authored by D/Supt Chris Baker. The report provides an update on the Leicestershire Police arrangements for responding to and investigating rape offences, the changes made to the investigation teams and detailed planned action for responding to this priority area in the upcoming months. A comprehensive overview of the content can be found in appendix item A.

A verbal update was provided also by ACC Kerr to give the Chair an update on the points made within the report. ACC Kerr noted that positive outcomes continued to move in an upward trajectory, and that the force is starting to see a reduction in the number of rapes recorded in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. ACC Kerr highlighted again the two vulnerability boards of which ACC Kerr is the lead, under which the delivery plan is being tracked, challenged, and governed.

PCC response: The Chair queried the average days of investigation length (84 days) and asked whether this was 'good' performance. ACC Kerr explained that this was positive, to which CC Nixon further explained from a national standpoint that this was a positive figure, emphasising the national shortage of lawyers who take on cases relating to rape. CC Nixon explained that certain aspects of rape investigation cannot be controlled by the COT, such as the turnaround time for forensic examination. CC Nixon assured the Chair however that the Force is heading in the right direction.

The Chair queried how our figures compare to the rest of the country. ACC Kerr informed the Chair that the Force is in line with the rest of the country, but local targets aim to improve the Force's outcomes significantly, which is already beginning to happen.

CEO Trewartha explained that she had received some data from the regional SARC Children and Young Peoples referral centre in Nottingham, which showed that the combined total for the last three quarters for referrals was 92 cases, and of which 50 came from Leicestershire. Leicestershire is above the rest of the regions and acknowledged that this may be due to under reporting in other counties. CEO Trewartha queried whether there was any evidence to support the theory that there is under-reporting elsewhere, or whether this was a specific concern for Leicestershire. CC Nixon explained that the same discussion is currently ongoing around kidnapping – reassurance was provided to the board that regional data is being examined. ACC Kerr added that they would be

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[2] Positive outcomes relate to **charges** only. Rape offences should never be dealt with using an out of court resolution.

concerned if the numbers were low, as Leicestershire will be offering victims forensic examination and linking victims with correct supporting agencies including the children's SARC.

ACC Kerr added that the Force is currently in the process of finalising the strategic assessment for Child Sexual Exploitation. The Force are placing it a high priority area for next year.

CEO Trewartha continued to ask about whether any further prevention work regarding rape offences could be done by the Force, and whether a closer look at the themes of these offences could be carried out such as recurring location types, known/unknown offenders etc. CEO Trewartha also raised the concern of courts struggling to move through sexual violence cases. CC Nixon explained through dialogue with the courts, it is his understanding that the courts are prioritising sexual offences and mentioned that the force also have a task and finish group to push for outcomes with sexual offences.

The Chair asked when further updates on the Rape report will be provided to the board, to which the board agreed in 4 months-time to allow two further vulnerability boards to have taken place, and updates from those boards can come to the CGB for the Chair's information.

4. Finance

a. Savings process

Overview: Leicestershire Police are facing a budget deficit of £5.4m due to budget cuts and increasing costs. As part of the ongoing management of the budget deficit, an update paper has been provided to the PCC on the approach to be undertaken to meet the £5.4 million budget gap and other challenges faced by the force in relation to the budget gap.

Force update: The board received a report from DCC Sandall. The report provides a briefing to the CGB on the approach being taken to address the budget gap, reinstate commitments of the Chief Constable to deliver good public service and increase trust, provide an outline of the strategic context, and make recommendations to the Police and Crime Commissioner on how he may support the force's budget process. The report is broken down into strategic context, principles of the planning, non-cashable savings, regional partnerships, non-salary budgets, pay budgets, contingency plans for 2024-2025, governance, communication and resourcing. The report outlines that a 6% vacancy rate (excluding contact management) will be maintained but further vacancy management and reduction of posts will be required to close the budget deficit. It is noted within the report that all carefully made decisions will be aligned to the force's core functions that policing is required to deliver.

The report outlines that the focus is making budget decisions ensure that Leicestershire Police can remain operationally viable and continue to deliver statutory functions. The report states a 'need to use reserves', however ensuring that 'careful consideration is being applied to ensure the sustainability of those reserves in future'. The report goes on to state that the force will seek to continue to achieve the Police Officer uplift requirements of 2298 (Head Count) until September 2024 to prevent a financial penalty to be incurred if the target is not delivered.

The report concludes with a summary, including a five-point request for support from the Police and Crime Commissioner:

1. 'We would request that the Commissioner consider active engagement with Government to address the pay award funding shortfall for 2022/2023 and 2023/24 by re-engaging with the Home Office to have this unfunded award addressed, as it is at the root of the current financial issues.

2. We would request that the Commissioner take a high profile and leading role in highlighting the current inadequate funding arrangements that detrimentally impact on the residents of Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland.

3. We would request the use of reserves to support the transition of the workforce to support the glide path required and to cover any potential severance and redundancy costs.

4. We would request the Police and Crime Commissioner continues to lobby the Home Office to continue covering pension shortfalls and request a multiyear budget settlement that enables a better approach to financial management.

5. PCC to note and endorse the direction of travel.'

PCC response: The PCC acknowledged the recommendations however acknowledged that he could not 'ensure' that future government funding for Leicestershire is increased, nor could he 'ensure' that the Home Office continue to cover pension shortfalls as worded in the force's report. The Chair did however agree to continue to lobby and engage with the government to push for these outcomes and will progress these commitments post-election.

Referring to point 3 above, the Force asked for an agreement in principle to draw down on reserves to allow the Force to cover redundancy costs and explore transition costs.

Point 7.7 of the reserve's strategy outlines that any unbudgeted/unplanned use of reserves will require a business case submitted to the PCC for approval. The PCC stated that any formal decision would need to wait until after election period, and that he would prefer to see a formal presentation of figures and proposals after the election before agreeing to the use of reserves.

In response, the CC explained that if the Force cannot use reserves, the impact would be significant. CC Nixon acknowledged that a formal paper and request can be accommodated at the next CGB but that an agreement in principle now would allow work to begin. The Chair agreed that he was open to the use of reserves for the stated purpose. However, the Chair stated that a final decision would be made on production of a full business case in May that detailed options for the use of the reserves including using them to fund the full costs of this programme, part costs of the programme and implications should the PCC deem it not appropriate to use reserves.

It was agreed as an action for the Force to bring a full paper to the May CGB for discussion and sign off.

b. Reserves strategy

Overview: The reserves strategy is regularly discussed at the Corporate Governance Board to discuss any potential spending and implications. The FMCP states reserves should be held by the PCC and managed to balance funding and spending priorities and to manage risks. This should be established as part of the medium-term financial planning process. The strategy is set out in a way that is clear and understandable for members of the public, and includes:

- how the level of the general reserve has been set;
- justification for holding a general reserve larger than five percent of budget;
- details of the activities or items to be funded from each earmarked reserve, and how these support the PCC and Chief Constable's strategy to deliver a good quality service to the public. Where an earmarked reserve is intended to fund a number of projects or programmes (for example, a change or transformation reserve), details of each programme or project to be funded should be set out.

Force update: The Chair brought the latest reserve strategy paper to the CGB for discussion. A verbal discussion was held around the reserves strategy report. CC Nixon raised a point that when people view a published strategy, that this is what is viewed as a final budget for 2025/2026 and that this could be different to what the actual budget will be.

The Chair stated that the reserve strategy paper outlined intention, rather than commitment to a long-term plan due to being so close to election period. ACO Dawkins explained that there are two parts to the reserve strategy, and that increasing the general reserves makes sense in the long term.

CFO Hughes stated that this will be aligned to come with the budget setting meeting in January 2025 rather than March 2025.

5. HMICFRS

Please note that from this point of the meeting, the PCC handed over to Rani Mahal to Chair.

a. Inspections initial feedback report

Overview: Carried out by HMICFRS, the PEEL inspection is a regular assessment of police forces in England and Wales. Using inspection findings, HMICFRS use professional judgement to assess how good forces are in several areas of policing. Most of these areas are then graded as outstanding, good, adequate, requires improvement, or inadequate. In readiness for the 2024 PEEL inspection scheduled for July, the PCC has been routinely requesting updates from the Force on how they are preparing, and maintaining an overview of forecast grades, and early inspection results.

Force update: The board held a brief verbal discussion regarding the initial feedback from HMICFRS inspections. The Force updated the board that they are officially in pre-inspection stage. CC Nixon informed the board that by July, the Force will be able to present the Transformation Programme to HMICFRS inspectors.

ACC Kerr discussed the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP) which she had attended the week prior to the board. During that meeting a peer review of governance arrangements in the Force was carried out. ACC Kerr informed the board that the de-brief from this review was extremely positive, highlighting the forces systems and processes as good practice. ACC Kerr informed the board that the de-brief report from this review will be available to HMIC also.

DPCC response: CEO Trewartha thanked the board for the update, and queried which areas of the inspection the force is concerned about. CC Nixon responded that the areas of concern were 'call handling (please see previous report outlining issues and planned action), attendance crime and victim's oversight'.

6. Police and Crime Plan

a. Police and Crime Plan – Delivery Report (OPCC Update)

Overview: Director of Governance and Performance for the OPCC Lizzie Starr has authored an in-depth report for the Police and Crime Panel on the Police and Crime Plan Delivery, outlining the 11 main themes of the Police and Crime Plan and how the OPCC have delivered against these, providing a balanced account of delivery to the period ending December 2023. The OPCC have brought the report to the CGB for observation.

PCC update: CEO Trewartha provided a summary of the report for the benefit of the panel.

CC Nixon acknowledged that the report was well put together. CC Nixon further acknowledged that linkages between the PCC and CC could be improved moving forward by increasing conversations. The OPCC share this ambition and wish to publicise more of the PCC/CC discussions for public interest.

CC Nixon raised that there is a sense across that even more could be done to ensure that thanks are given to the Force by the OPCC for the work being done. CC Nixon raised that post-elections it would be beneficial if some of the optics could be shifted this would be better received by those working in policing.

CEO Trewartha responded if it could be seen from a broader perspective how the OPCC supports and enables the Force to carry out duties. CEO Trewartha explained that this support is done through the CGB and supporting the Transformation Programme for example and went on to highlight that through budget setting, the PCC also offers support which therefore enables the Force to accomplish goals, however acknowledged the CC's request and stated that working together to communicate achievements and successes can be looked at going forward. CEO Trewartha concluded by encouraging the Force to bring more areas of success to the CGB meetings as well as areas of challenge to allow the PCC to note formal thanks and hear more of the good work going on.

7. AOB

a. Memorandum of Understanding and Corporate Governance Framework

CEO Trewartha brought a revised version of the MOU (in line with suggested changes informed by best practice nationally, and OPCC's consultation with legal). CEO Trewartha pointed out that all changes had been highlighted in a 'changes' section at the beginning of the document, reducing the need for members to review the document in full.

CFO Dawkins queried whether this would be the final version, and provided assurance that from a Finance and Procurement perspective that this was compliant in current state. CEO Trewartha confirmed and explained that all changes have been logged, however noted that when entering a new political term with or without a new PCC, they will want to refresh all policies for the new term which was understood by the board.

b. Proactive communications

The board received a presentation on Proactive Communications from Chris Kealey. The presentation discussed the below:

1) Fully aligned with the Force vision
2) Approach and capability
3) Integrated into layers
4) Evaluation and Learning
5) Planning for the future
6) Trust and Confidence

PCC response: CEO Trewartha asked how the Force is tracking the progress of the Force Pledge. Mr Kealey responded that Corporate Services SSD have set up KPIs to monitor each point of the pledge.

CEO Trewartha explained the Panel's previous query of how the Force keep a watchful eye on social media, to with Mr Kealey responded that though funding, the Force have a system in place to maintain a central overview of all social media accounts (ORLO). It was explained that the quality and quantity of posts are tracked and shared at a monthly governance meeting.

CEO Trewartha further queried whether any checks on officer's personal social media are carried out. CC Nixon responded that personal social media checks are carried out as part of the vetting process. Mr Kealey explained that there is an up-to-date social media policy and the Force have also prepared an up-to-date Digital Comms plan.

    c. **Op Bridger Update**

Overview: Operation Bridger is a nationwide police protection security programme in the United Kingdom designed to offer MPs access to extra security in their homes and constituency offices.

Force update: CC Nixon provided a verbal update on Op Bridger in the run up to election period, reinstating that all MPs receive support from Leicestershire police, and they are ensuring that the Force is picking up measures for the PCC also.

PCC response: CEO Trewartha queried whether the Force's local position statement is consistent with others. CC Nixon explained that if other areas positions were different that this would have been agreed locally. CC Nixon went on to explain that Leicestershire Police as a Force follow the national guidance provided by the Home Office. CC Nixon agreed to explore other Force's position statements further, mentioning Devon and Cornwall specifically.

End of meeting

Date of next meeting: 30th May 2024

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Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

18th June 2024

Op Soteria and Rape Performance

Report Date	18 June 2024
Report Author	Clare Hornbuckle – Evaluation and Scrutiny Officer
Security Classification	Official

Meeting and Date: Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, 18 June 2024
Report Title: Op Soteria and Rape Performance Update
Author and Date: Clare Hornbuckle 18th June 2024
Page 1 of 9

Purpose of Report

1. In his role as the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) the Commissioner is required to secure efficient and effective policing for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, hold the Chief Constable to account and contribute to national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary.

2. The PCC brings this report to outline for the Police and Crime Panel how he is fulfilling his duty by holding the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the Force in relation to Rape Offences and demonstrate how he is supporting the force and local partners to tackle local priorities.

Request of the Panel

3. In their role to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the PCC, the Commissioner requests that the panel examines the contents of this report. He would specifically like to ask the panel their opinion on the following questions;

    a. Is the Panel content that the PCC is ensuring this important topic is kept as a priority across the Force and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)?
    b. Would the panel like to make any recommendations to the PCC in relation to this matter?

Summary

4. It is the opinion of the PCC that the Chief Constable is on track to achieve the 12-month target to increase the positive outcomes relating to rape offences to 8%. It is of the opinion of the PCC that the Force are taking the right steps to support the work and objectives of Op Soteria.

5. The PCCs evidence for this is the recently refreshed Force Vulnerability Plan and the OPCC Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy. The PCC's ongoing funding for commissioned services will continue to support victims and encourage victim engagement to maximise the chance of prosecution, and therefore increase the positive outcome rate.

Background

6. Rape is a Force Priority as identified in both the Strategic Assessment and in the Force Management Statement.

7. In LLR, the number of reported rape offences per 100,000 population has increased from 91 in 2019 to 122 in 2024, an increase of 34%. This does however include reporting campaigns to improve victim confidence in reporting. Nationally the force sits 29th out of 43 forces for volume of rape offences for the year ending March 2024, this is also 6th out of the 8 most similar forces group.

8. The Force have managed to drive down the median length of rape investigation times by 10 days to an average length of 84 days as of February 2024.

9. The positive outcome rate (offence resulting in a charge) for rape offences in Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland (LLR) is currently 6%, which is 1% below the national average and 32nd for the volume of positive outcomes recorded.

10. A refreshed Force Vulnerability Strategy was developed in November 2023 which provides clarity around the force commitment to protecting those who are vulnerable and prosecuting those who cause harm, with Rape being specifically identified as a key performance and delivery focus within that strategy.

11. The Force have presented their strategy to the PCC including a delivery plan to reflect best practice. Guidance for Leicestershire Police has been developed and is being overseen by a dedicated Detective Superintendent, reporting to the Force Vulnerability Board chaired by ACC Kerr. The delivery plan reflects the '4P' approach of **Protecting** the Public, **Preventing** Harm, **Preparing** the Force and **Prosecuting** Offenders.

12. Leicestershire Police have set a short term 12-month target to achieve an 8% positive outcome rate for rape offences in LLR. One of the main actions to ensure this target is achieved is ensuring victim referrals to support services and the service providers having enough resources to manage demand.

13. Following on from a previous report for the Panel brought in December 2023, the Force is also continuing to implement and deliver against the Op Soteria objectives. This includes the completion of a thorough self-assessment in December 2023 of the Force's response to rape, from which the insights have informed the Force's refreshed delivery plan and reports into the Force Vulnerability Board.

14. The Force is delivering the new national RASSO Investigative Skills Development Programme (RUISDP) to 180 officers and staff across specialist teams throughout the summer of 2024. Increased resources have been allocated to the Signal Team and in March the new operating model was launched with an additional two Detective Sergeants and Detective Inspector alongside twelve Police Constable's (PCs).

15. The new structure ensures that the Domestic Abuse Investigation Unit takes primacy in rape investigations where rape forms a part of a pattern of intimate partner Domestic Abuse (DA). All DA detectives will undergo relevant programmes to become accredited RASSO investigators.

<u>Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner</u>

16. The Police and Crime Commissioner provides funding to numerous services who provide both diversionary intervention for potential offenders, and victim support where a rape offence has occurred.

17. Diversionary courses typically relate to domestic abuse perpetrators in which the content of the course is designed to prevent behaviour from escalating. While not all cases escalate to sexual violence, these courses can help prevent escalating behaviour and protect potential victims of sexual assault.

18. The PCC funds a wide range of victim support services in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland who provide specialist support services for victims of domestic abuse and rape offences in LLR, including trials for new initiatives to further support victims in the city and county, such as support for CARA (Conditional Cautioning and Relational Abuse).

19. A brief summary of each commissioned service has been listed below:

Service provider	Summary of services	Total funding from OPCC to 31st March 2024
Juniper Lodge (Sexual Assault Referral Centre)	Juniper Lodge provides a free and discreet service to anyone aged 18 years and over, male or female that has been subject to a sexual assault. Staff support victims by accessing medical support, make referrals to specialist agencies, and enable the individual to make choices about their case by providing clear information to victims.	£67,906.00
New Dawn New Day	New Dawn New Day offers practical, emotional and therapeutic support to women who are considered vulnerable and have multiple and complex needs. Our support helps women to change their lives and look forward to a brighter future. NDND use assessment planning tailored around the induvial, provide one to one advice plus group programmes among other activities to provide support and build confidence.	£32,050.00
Freeva	HES – Helpline & Engagement Service. FreeVA is a free helpline for people who have experienced or are experiencing violence and abuse. Callers speak to trained advisors who will listen and provide support. Freeva also provide organisational training for a range of support services.	HES: £434,708.00 DASV: £176,539.00

Leicester Rape Crisis	Provides support for victims of rape via telephone helpline support, face to face support, support groups and tailored services.	£43,500.00
Quetzel	Quetzal provides support for female survivors aged 16 and above who are recovering from the trauma of childhood sexual abuse in Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland. Quetzal offers long-term counselling, crisis counselling, and a telephone helpline to assist these survivors in their recovery journey.	£7,625.00
Victim First	Victim First are a team of experienced and professional caseworkers, supported by a team of dedicated and highly trained volunteers to help support victims in their journey of recovery. Victim First provide confidential and independent advice to both adults and young people, tailored to victim's needs.	£508,845.00
Women's Aid Leicestershire	Women's Aid Leicestershire offer temporary refuge accommodation and support services for all victims of domestic abuse and violence. WAL provide support to both adults and children through family practitioners. WAL offer an Empowerment Programme to support female survivors of domestic abuse.	£64,294
Living Without Abuse	LWA provides information and advice, as well as practical and emotional support, to anyone experiencing domestic abuse and/or sexual violence in Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland. Within LWA, The Amber Service is an independent service providing support to children, young people, and adults who have experienced rape and/or sexually assault. The Amber Service includes Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) support for children and adults going through the court process and a team of Sexual Violence Support Workers who support those who choose not to, or are unable, to engage in the criminal justice process. LWA also offer a dedicated Pregnancy and Maternity Specialist Support IDVA.	£132,981.00
Hampton Trust - Cara	Through engagement in two workshops and feedback from victims, CARA is designed to enable offenders to understand what domestic abuse is, the impact and its consequences.	£44,000.00

<u>Partnership working</u>

20. Representatives from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner have wide-reaching attendance on strategic boards across the Force and with external partners, which enables a strong multi-agency approach to tackling VAWG offences across both Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, and the wider region.

21. A representative from the OPCC attends the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) board chaired by Leicestershire Police. This is a quarterly board in which the force discusses the figures of the most recent quarter, initiatives and activities undertaken in the quarter prior, horizon scanning and forward planning. The latest meeting included discussion on the relentless pursuit of perpetrators and embedding the voice of the victim/lived experience in all workstreams. The objectives of this VAWG partnership board are to maintain ownership and progression of the Force VAWG Delivery Plan mapped to the National VAWG Delivery Framework and give direction to, and maintain oversight of, relevant Delivery Groups and their delivery plans to ensure alignment with national VAWG priorities. next meeting is scheduled for 13/08/2024.

22. The OPCC also attend the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence partnership group, between representatives of the City, County and Rutland. The group is held quarterly, and the objectives of this board are to ensure a coordinated response across LLR through commissioned providers. The latest meeting included discussion on interrogating data across the OPCC and Local Authorities to map the victim's journey and identify gaps where reporting could better align. The next meeting is scheduled for August 2024.

23. The OPCC has recently been invited to also attend the Family Court Justice Board, which will enable the OPCC to provide insight to the board on the positive impact of commissioned services, and gain insight on the impact that such crimes have on policing and the challenges faced in the judicial system with relation to what are typically domestic offences involving abuse and sexual violence. The first meeting in which the OPCC will attend is scheduled for 26 June 2026.

24. Whilst not all victims of rape are female, 75% of rapes reported in LLR are committed against female victims, with nearly 90% being over the age of 16.

25. The PCC has funded a new VAWG Officer post for 12 months to lead on the delivery of the OPCC's recently approved LLR Partnership VAWG Strategy

2024-2026 which details planned partnership objectives and deliverables for the next two years. The VAWG Strategy is aligned to the force's RASSO (Rape and Serious Sexual Offences) Delivery Strategy. Looking at the most recent year's data, one in every 5 suspects was under the age of 19 according to local data. With the above in mind, the Violence Reduction Network and OPCC secured Home Office funding under the Safer Streets Bid to develop educational interventions with boys and young men to promote healthy relationships and positive attitudes towards women and girls, including challenging negative behaviours and misogyny.

26. As part of each report request in the Corporate Governance Board, the PCC asks the Force how the OPCC can support on the subject area, allowing any changes to be agreed together in partnership with shared outcomes. Opportunities for consideration highlighted by the Force included working with the OPCC to deliver the LLR VAWG Strategy, increasing focus on offenders and prevention methods, and increasing support for victims.

Next steps

27. Force
- Implementation of the new force model for response to adult rape;
- Training delivery for all rape investigators – RISDP programme;
- Increase of early investigative advice from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS);
- Embed the RASSO National Operating Model (Op Soteria[1]) principles and NOM products to support "The Investigator's Journey";
- Secure the future funding stream for the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, Juniper Lodge, and work towards UKAS accreditation;
- Reduce the number of victims declining or withdrawing support for police action and prosecution;
- Increase use of Sexual Harm Orders to disrupt offenders.

28. OPCC
- The PCC will look to continue funding for all victim support services, particularly those that deal directly with female victims of rape.
- The OPCC are working on delivering a 12-month pilot to offer direct 24-hour access to Crisis Workers from the Sexual Assault Referral Unit, regardless of whether or not the victim attends SARC.
- The OPCC will continue to link in with the Force on the delivery of the VAWG Strategy 2024-2026 and provide updates to the panel on how the OPCC and partners are delivering against the plan as and when requested.
- The PCC will continue to attend partnership working boards and ensure all actions and outcomes are tracked and delivered.

- The OPCC's VAWG Officer will work with the identified target age group of offenders to deliver diversionary and educational work to prevent rape and serious sexual offences.

-- **<u>End of Report</u>** ---

Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

18th June 2024

Annual Report for the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

Report Date	18 June 2024
Report Author	Lizzie Starr, Director of Governance and Performance Dharmista Dave, Volunteers Manager
Security Classification	Official

Meeting and Date: Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, 18 June 2024
Report Title: Independent Custody Visitors Annual Report
Author and Date: Lizzie Starr, Director of Governance and Performance
Page 1 of 14

Purpose of Report

1. In his role as the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) the Commissioner is required as per Section 51 of the Police Reform Act 2002 to manage a custody visiting scheme ensuring the rights of those detained in police custody are met.

2. The PCC brings this report to outline for the Police and Crime Panel how he is fulfilling his duty by discharging this function through a cohort of volunteers. This report summarises the work of the volunteers in this respect for the period April 2023 – March 2024.

Request of the Panel

3. In their role to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the PCC, the Commissioner requests that the panel examines the contents of this report. He would specifically like to ask the panel their opinion on the following questions;
   a. Is the Panel content in the way in which the PCC has discharged his duties?
   b. Is the Panel satisfied with the work of the volunteers for this period?
   c. Would the panel like to make any recommendations to the PCC in relation to this matter?

Summary

4. It is the opinion of the PCC that the volunteers provide an excellent independent service and work well with the Force to ensure those in Custody have their rights met. The PCC is extremely satisfied with the management of the scheme locally, which is enabled by an experienced, dedicated cohort of volunteers which without their commitment, the assurance to the public, PCC and Force that the rights of those detained in custody are met would not be possible.

Background, Relevant Data and Trends

5. Custody visiting in Leicestershire commenced in 1983 as a voluntary scheme following a recommendation from the Scarman report into the Brixton disorders in 1981. One of Lord Scarman's recommendations was that a system be introduced whereby local community members could make independent, unannounced visits to police stations for the purpose of ensuring the welfare of persons detained in police custody.

6. The purpose of this recommendation was to counter growing mistrust of the police at that time and to increase their accountability. Subsequently Section 51(1) to the Police Reform Act 2002 placed independent custody visiting on a statutory basis with responsibility for schemes lying with each local policing

body. As such, the Home Office produced a Code of Practice on the delivery of schemes and National Standards were introduced by the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA).

Organisation of the Scheme in Leicestershire

7. The Police and Crime Commissioner is responsible for the Scheme and receives regular reports on the performance and outcomes from custody visits. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner have undertaken a number of custody visits during the term of office. The Scheme is overseen by the Director of Performance & Governance at the OPCC with daily management undertaken by the Volunteer Manager.

8. At the start of April 2023, there were 18 Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) registered with the Scheme. At the end of the year 2 ICV's had left the scheme. Exit interviews are undertaken with each volunteer leaving the scheme and the reasons for leavers this year were:
   - Decided to leave the scheme after one year of service, when she went on maternity leave. She was given the option to return to the scheme following maternity leave but stated would reconsider in the future.
   - The second volunteer left the scheme after 8 years of service due to a conflict of interest professionally and the OPCC policy around independence of the scheme.

9. There are currently 16 Independent Custody Visitors in the Scheme.

10. All ICVs are recruited from the local community through a recruitment process which includes an application form and an interview. All volunteers are vetted and complete a six-month probationary period during which time all induction training is provided.

11. Approximately 25 ICVs for the Force area is considered appropriate to provide the required level of resilience to ensure visits take place and to maintain the interest of the visitors. A review of ICV numbers has recently taken place considering our 2023 numbers and therefore a recruitment campaign for new ICVs was undertaken in 2023/2024.

12. A total of 15 further ICV's were successful and are currently going through pre-employment checks. This will bring our total cohort of ICV volunteers to 31. Training for all new volunteers is due to be completed before they become operation in September 2024.

13. The map below shows the current home geographical reach of the 16 volunteers. Currently 38% of the ICV volunteers are from Leicester and 62% are from Leicestershire. There are no volunteers currently from Rutland. Due to the

custody suites all being located centrally within the City, it is difficult to attract volunteers from Rutland.

14. The ICV Scheme in Leicestershire has fantastic retention rates with over 69% of ICV volunteers having over 5 years' service in the role. There is also a number of volunteers with over 20 years' service, Volunteers will receive long service certificates after a block of 3 years of service with the scheme, such as 3, 6, 9 years and continued. These awards are presented by the PCC at an annual volunteer recognition event.

Volunteers Service Time

15. The experience of the volunteers is invaluable when training and recruiting new members to the scheme as we operate a buddy system in which each new volunteer is paired with an experienced visitor to gain experience and insights.

16. The OPCC strives to have a pool of volunteers that are representative of the local communities, and the following information details how the volunteers in Leicestershire compare to the communities.

17. The gender profiles of the ICV volunteer cohort compared to the population of LLR can be seen below. This demonstrates the cohort of ICVs is roughly in line with the gender profile of LLR.

Gender Profiles
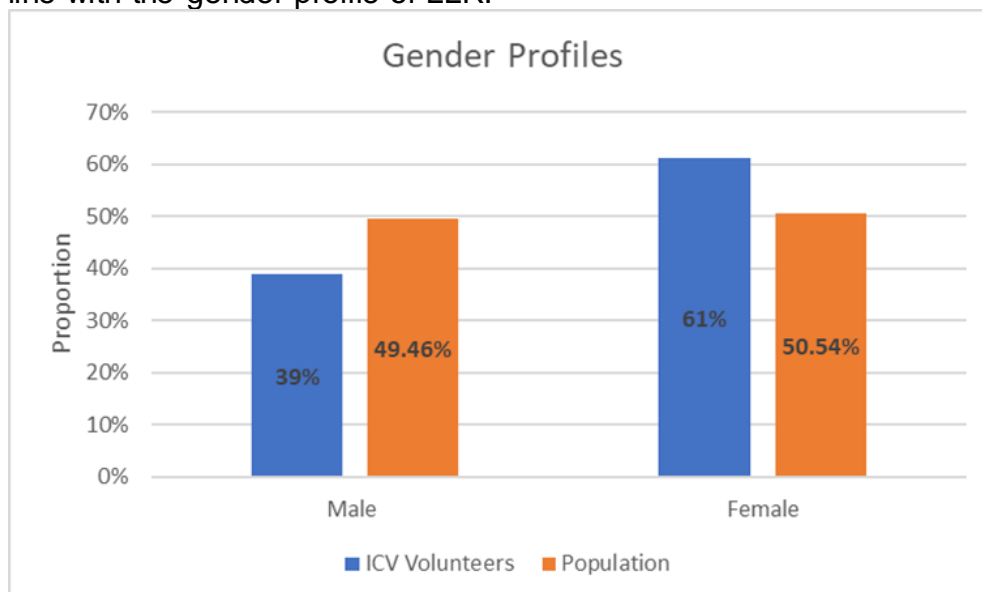
18. The age profiles of the ICV volunteers cohort can be seen below compared to that of the population of LLR. The chart shows that whilst the scheme is lacking representation from young people (18-19 year olds) as there are currently no volunteers in this age group, the volunteers age profile is roughly in line with the remainder of LLR.
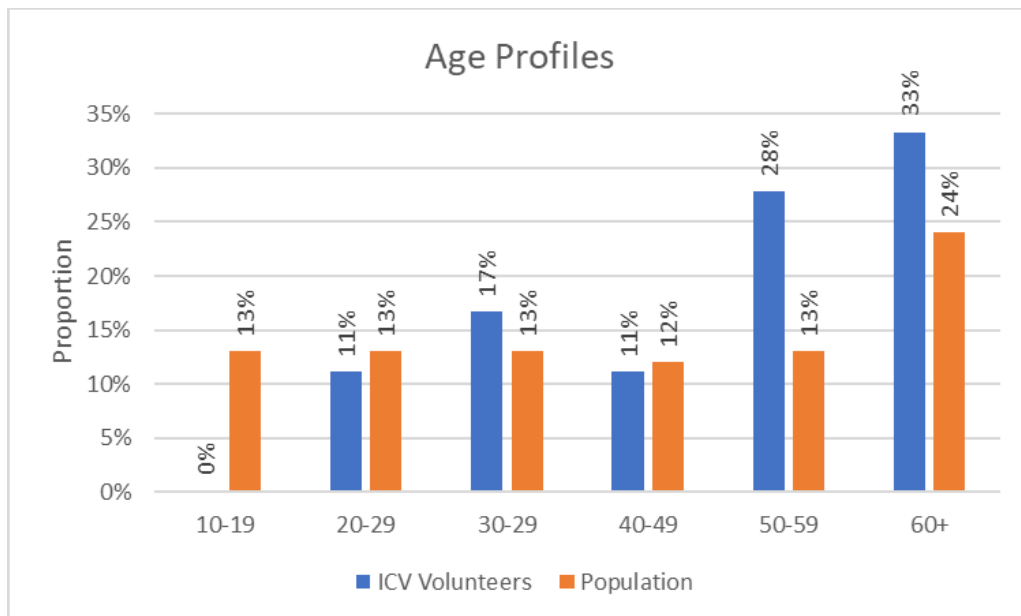
19. Leicestershire Police has 3 custody suites located as follows:
    a. Euston Street - 36 cells;
    b. Keyham Lane - 18 cells;
    c. Beaumont Leys - 14 cells (Currently not being used).

20. Euston Street and Keyham Lane are the primary custody suites and Beaumont Leys is a secondary custody suite. Beaumont Leys was closed most of the year and only open when there was high demand or when there were refurbishment works taking place at Keyham Lane Custody Suite.

21. Quarterly team meetings take place, which are chaired by the Volunteers Manager and are attended by the Force Custody Inspector and team of Independent Custody Visitors. These meetings took place on;
    a. 7 June 2023,
    b. 12 September 2023,
    c. 13 December 2023 and;
    d. 16 April 2024.

22. Items discussed in the last 12 months included outcomes from custody visits and Force response, developments within the scheme and custody, legislative

changes and system and staff updates within custody. Since April 2023, the team meetings have been conducted in a hybrid format both face to face and also on MS Teams.

Visits undertaken 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

23. ICVs have the locally agreed target to visit each custody suite a minimum of once per week.

24. During 2023/24 a total of 101 visits were made as follows;
    a. Euston Street - 51 Visits;
    b. Keyham Lane - 50 Visits.

25. This equates to 97.1% of visits completed when compared to the locally agreed target.

26. The Independent Custody Visitors contributed an impressive 442.43 hours of their time volunteering for the OPCC throughout the year.

27. The volunteers carry out, on behalf of the PCC, independent scrutiny of those detained in custody, which is a statutory function. This scheme being carried out by volunteers saves the PCC employing staff/workers to carry out the scheme. The total economic value of the ICV Volunteered hours for the past 12 months stands at a saving of £8,119.32 to the taxpayer's purse (compared to staff equivalent + shift allowance).

Access to the custody suite

28. For each visit undertaken, a record is kept of the time that ICVs arrived at the police station to the time they received admittance to the custody suite, times over 5 minutes are classed as non-immediate access and recorded as such.

29. Of the 101 visits carried out during the year, immediate access to the custody suite was permitted on 91 occasions (90%).

30. ICVs experienced a delay of 6-15 minutes on 1 occasion, and a delay of more than 15 minutes on 9 occasions. Delays in access were mainly due to suites being very busy and staff shortages, and one while a staff handover was taking place.

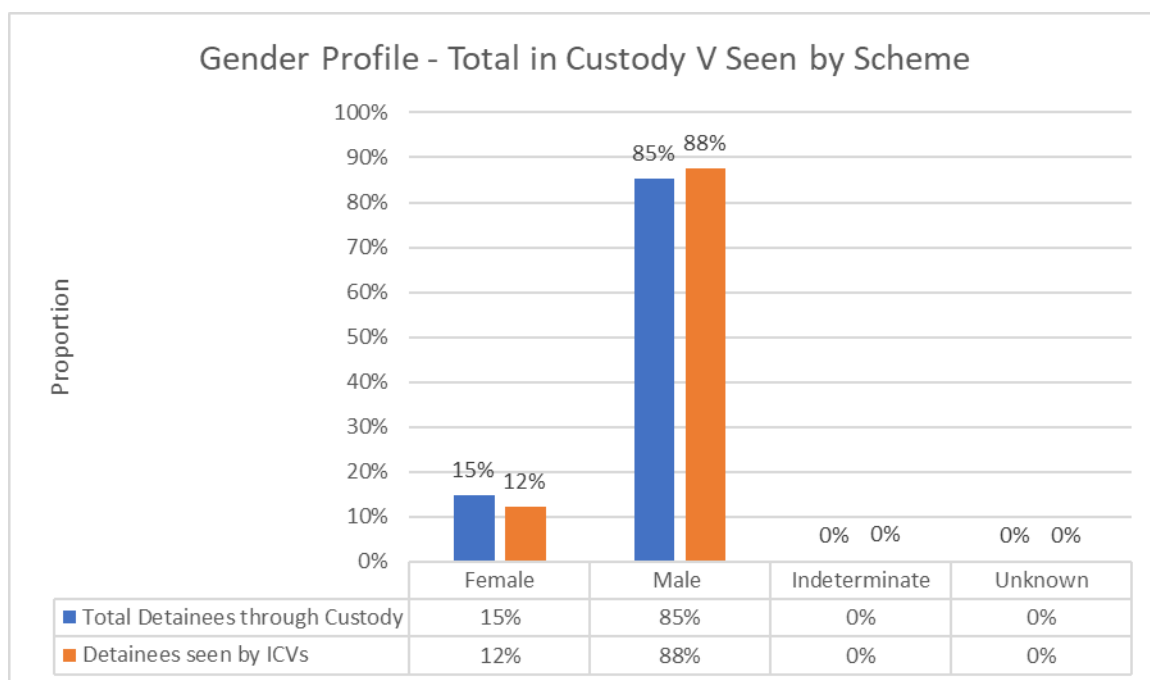Detainees seen, not seen or who refused a visit by Custody Visitors

31. During 2023/24, the total number of detainees in police custody was 15,475 of which 1,096 were in police cells at the time of custody visits.
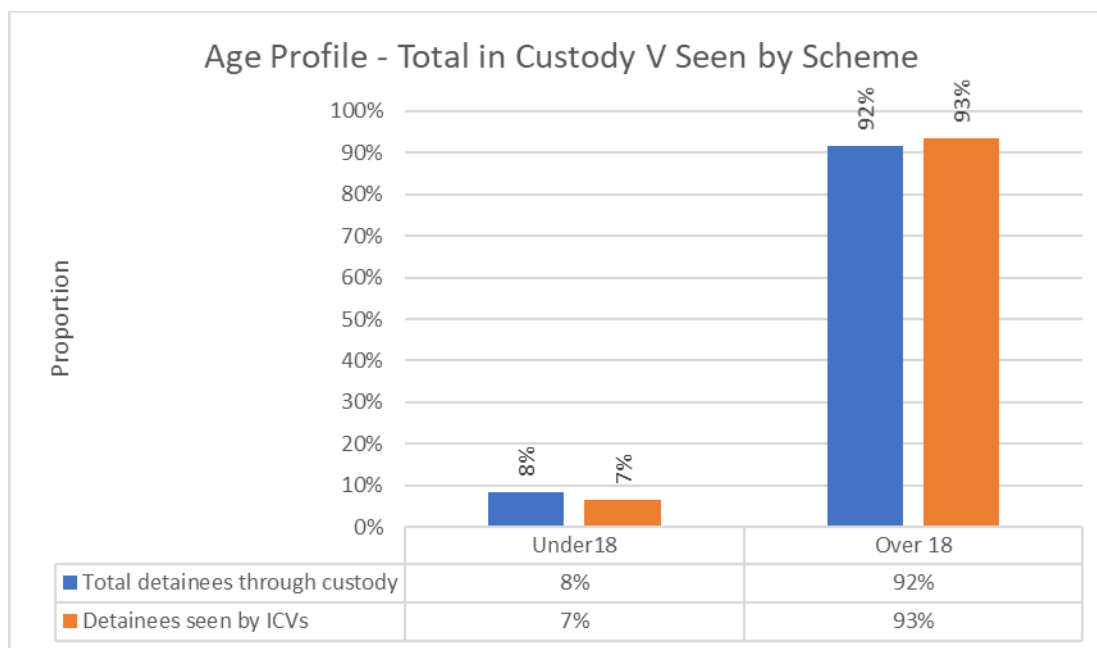
32. Of these:
    a. 407 detainees (37%) were offered a visit;
    b. 72 detainees (7%) were not offered a visit on advice from the Custody Sergeant due to them being aggressive, intoxicated or health and safety concerns.
    c. 222 detainees (20%) were not available to be visited due to being in an interview, at hospital, or out of cell for other reasons.
    d. 395 detainees (36%) that were asleep, were observed through the spyhole or cell hatch.

33. Of those 407 detainees that were offered a visit, 365 (90%) agreed to be seen. 42 (10%) of those offered a visit refused to be seen.

34. The demographic breakdown of those detainees that were seen by visitors is shown below.

Gender Profile - Total in Custody V Seen by Scheme

	Female	Male	Indeterminate	Unknown
Total Detainees through Custody	15%	85%	0%	0%
Detainees seen by ICVs	12%	88%	0%	0%

Age Profile - Total in Custody V Seen by Scheme

	Under18	Over 18
Total detainees through custody	8%	92%
Detainees seen by ICVs	7%	93%

Day and Time of Visits

35. To ensure a varied coverage of visits, each week is divided into 35 timeslots per custody suite. A varied spread of visits is crucial to ensure that visits do not become predictable. The below tables show the performance for 2023/24.

36. The performance is monitored at the ICV team meetings with a view to target those areas of 'green' in which we have not had any visits within custody during that time slot. The numbers on the chart indicate how many visits have taken place during that time slot and therefore no more visits are required if they are coloured 'red'. This ensures the visits remain unpredictable.

Euston Street

	00:00 - 07:59	08:00 - 11:59	12:00 - 15:59	16:00 - 19:59	20:00 - 23:59	Totals
Monday	1	2	2	2	3	10
Tuesday		1	1	2	1	5
Wednesday	1		1	2	2	6
Thursday	1	1	1	1	3	7
Friday	1	1	2	2	2	8
Saturday	1	2	1	1	1	6
Sunday	1	3	2	2	1	9
Totals	6	10	10	12	13	51

Keyham Lane

	00:00 - 07:59	08:00 - 11:59	12:00 - 15:59	16:00 - 19:59	20:00 - 23:59	Totals
Monday		3	2	3	2	10
Tuesday		1		4	1	6
Wednesday	1	2		1	2	6
Thursday	1	1	1	2	2	7
Friday	1	3	1	1	1	7
Saturday	1	3	1	2	1	8
Sunday	1	1	2	1	1	6
Totals	5	14	7	14	9	50

Issues Reported

37. All issues raised by detainees to the ICV visitors are recorded on the app and the custody inspectors and sergeants are notified. These are reviewed by the Volunteer manager to pick out themes and trends to escalate at the team meetings.

38. The chart below shows the groupings of the types of issues recorded by the volunteers. The OPCC and volunteer manager follow up on all these issues directly with the custody team and ensure any outstanding issues are completed.
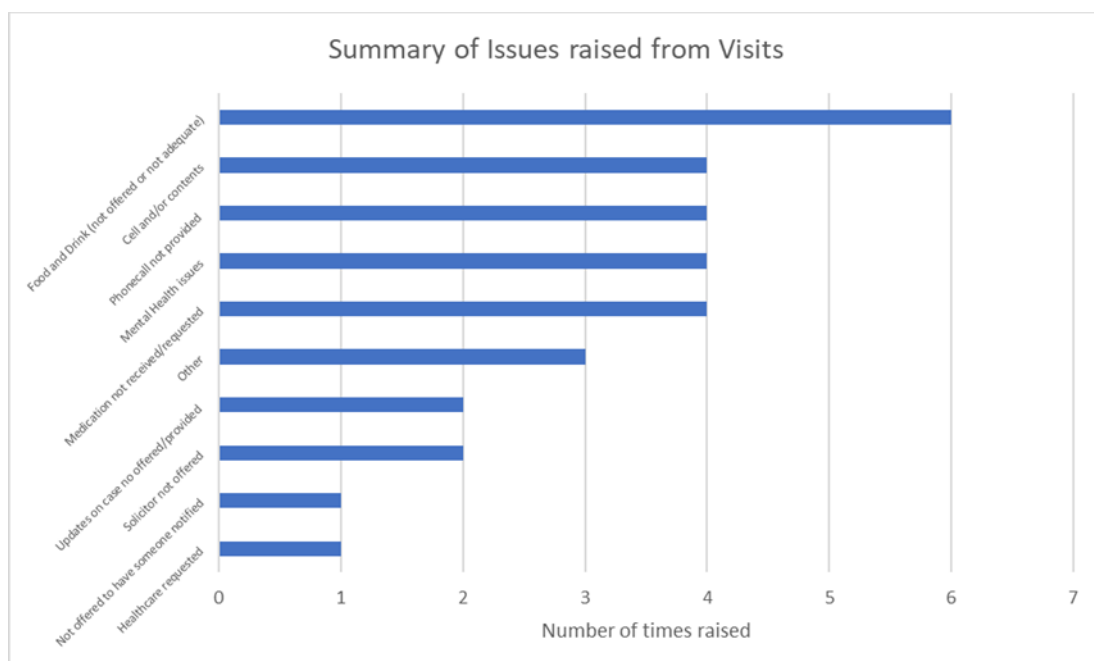
39. The above chart indicates that the most reported issue raised by the volunteers across the year was the category of Food and Drink, this either being not offered or not being adequate. The force response is documented below:

'We provide every detainee with suitable optional dietary foods when in custody and in line with PACE. We have contingency in place to provide more specific dietary requirements where in rare cases, we cannot provide this within the custody range. Our range of food is adequate for the vast majority of detainees.

Custody staff are required to record on a custody record food offered and given, however, on rare occasion, a custody log entry covering this may be missed. To mitigate, we routinely audit custody records and identify instances where a detainee appears to not have been offered food/drinks, these are investigated and reasons identified, which are then recorded for organisational memory and learning'.

40. The next most reported category is relating to the cell and/or its contents, this ranges from issues such as toilet paper not being available, blankets not available to toilets being broken all of which were resolved during the visits.

Developments during 2023/24

Investing in Volunteers Award

41. Investing in Volunteers (IiV) is the UK quality standard for good practice in volunteer management.

42. The Scheme in Leicestershire is accredited and has achieved the Investing in Volunteers Award for the fourth consecutive time and has held this award since 2012. This provides assurance to the panel, PCC and Volunteers that the scheme provides an outstanding volunteer experience and enhances the effectiveness of the work.

Independent Custody Visitors Association (ICVA)

43. The ICVA is a Home Office, PCC funded membership organisation set up to lead, support and represent the ICV schemes, promoting the effective provision of the ICV schemes in Police forces.

44. ICVA has developed a Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for schemes to be recognised for the work they are undertaking enabling OPCCs to benchmark against each other and enhance the legitimacy of the schemes.

45. The Scheme in Leicestershire has been accredited to the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) and has achieved Platinum Status which is the highest achievable award. The Scheme is one of only 6 nationally to have been accredited platinum status.

Regional Collaboration

46. Volunteer Managers from Schemes within the East Midlands meet on a quarterly basis. The group discuss:
    a. Matters arising;
    b. Key Performance Indicators – monitored around frequency and coverage of visits, access to custody suites and the number of detainees visited.
    c. Recruitment updates;
    d. Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) updates;
    e. Risk Assessment Documents;
    f. ICV Advanced Regional Training;
    g. Electronic reporting;
    h. National Experts Forum (NEF) updates.

47. The meetings provide an opportunity to share good practice with each other and discuss any new developments in the Scheme. Opportunities are also identified for future collaboration.

Conclusion

48. In conclusion the key findings from the scheme over the year can be summarised below:
    a. Cells, kitchen and yard generally kept well during all visits.
    b. Kitchen well stocked with a good range of food and drinks. Dates of food and drink checked. Any out-of-date food was removed immediately.
    c. Female detainees provided female officer and hygiene products offered on most occasions.
    d. Staff and duty and escorting officers are generally friendly and welcoming, even during busy periods. Good communication.
    e. Prompt access provided on most occasions.
    f. There had been rare occasions where access to custody suites were delayed due to staff handovers taking place. Volunteers have been informed that they should avoid making their way to a custody visit during the handover times 6.30am - 7.15am and 18.30 to 19:15. OPCC are working out a process to carry out some visits during the handover period to ensure that all days and times are covered throughout the year.

g. A future plan for the Leicestershire ICV Scheme is to develop an in-house electronic visit report form to record custody visits.

Animal Welfare Scheme

49. The PCC launched the Animal Welfare Scheme (AWS) on 1 April 2022. The operation of the AWS is the responsibility of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and is exercised in consultation with the Chief Constable.

50. Once a month AWS visitors make an unannounced visit in pairs to the Leicestershire Police Dog Unit. They check on the conditions in which the dogs are housed, trained and transported. They will also observe dog training in progression and will provide feedback on all visits via an electronic visit report form. Feedback from their visits will be shared with the OPCC Volunteers Manager and the Sergeant of the Dog Unit.

51. The AWS visitors, all members of the public who have volunteered to dedicate their time to the scheme, have received training and upon visiting the kennels have been impressed with the variety of enrichment activities on offer for Leicestershire's canine cops which include a sandpit, pool and open space to explore.

52. The AWS volunteers are existing ICV volunteers. The newly recruited ICV's will have the opportunity of joining the scheme once they have completed their probationary period. Existing ICV's can join the scheme.

53. To ensure a varied coverage of visits, each month is divided into 12 timeslots. A varied spread of visits is crucial to ensure that visits do not become predictable. The below tables show the performance for 2023/24.

March 2024	7am – 1pm	3pm – 8pm	Totals
Monday	1	1	2
Tuesday	1	1	2
Wednesday	1	1	2
Thursday	1	1	2
Friday	1	2	3
Saturday/Sunday		1	1
Totals	5	7	12

54. Examples of good practice observed by the volunteers over the year;
   a. Helpful staff, everything is good and clean. Volunteers are always made to feel welcome.

b. Food is in date.
c. All external fencing is being replaced.
d. Records for each dog seen is checked.
e. Dogs are observed in kennels and vehicles.
f. Training for dogs has been observed.

55. Future development, Animal Welfare Visitors to observe off-site dogs training and provide reassurance and feedback on training methods.

-- **<u>End of Report</u>** --