



# An Overview of the VRN and the Serious Violence Duty

**29 September 2023**

**Grace Strong**

**Director**

**Violence Reduction Network**

**Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland**

# About Us

We are one of the 20 Violence Reduction Units across England and Wales which receive Home Office funding to prevent and reduce serious violence.

The core function of VRUs is to offer leadership, establish a core membership and, working with all relevant agencies operating locally, provide **strategic co-ordination** of the local response to serious violence.

The VRN (our local VRU) is a wide alliance of groups, communities and organisations from across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland who share the common goal of reducing and preventing serious violence through understanding and tackling its **root** causes. The Network is supported by a central team .

The key success measures are reductions in:

- hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object
- knife-enabled serious violence
- non-domestic homicides



LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE  
& RUTLAND

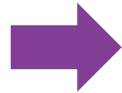
# Our Approach



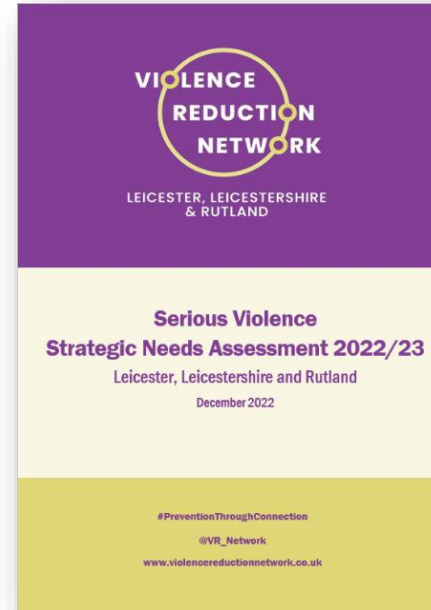
A 4 step process to preventing violence

# Our Work: Data Sharing and Use

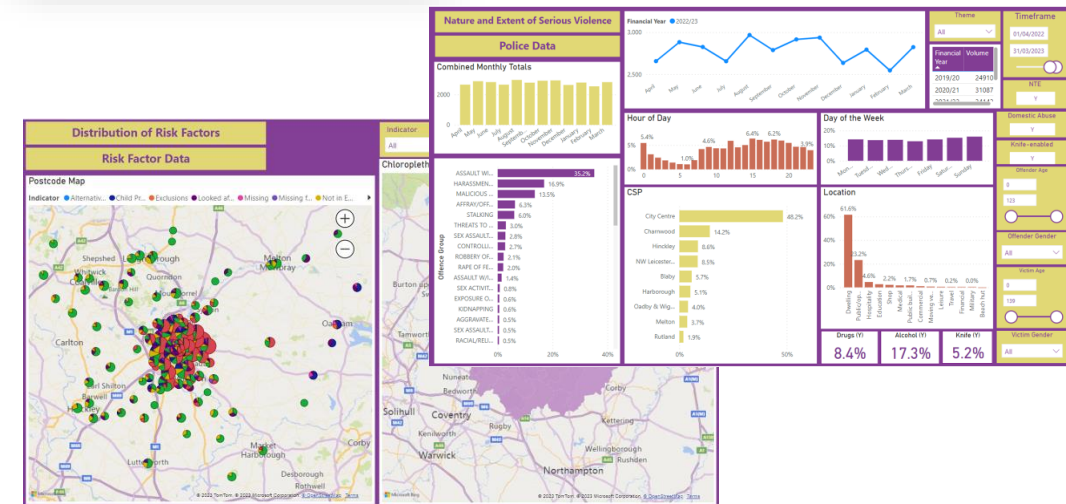
Information Sharing Agreement



- ✓ Leicestershire Police recorded crime
- ✓ Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit (A&E attendances and hospital admissions)
- ✓ East Midlands Ambulance Service
- ✓ Community and Young Person Surveys
- ✓ Commissioned Services / Voluntary and Community Organisations
- ✓ Social care data – Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council
- ✓ Education data – Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council
- ✓ Offending data – Leicestershire Police
- ✓ Anti-social behaviour data – Leicestershire County Council (LLR-wide)
- ✓ National data – Data from the Department for Education, Public Health Profiles and the Office for National Statistics



Multi-Agency Dashboard

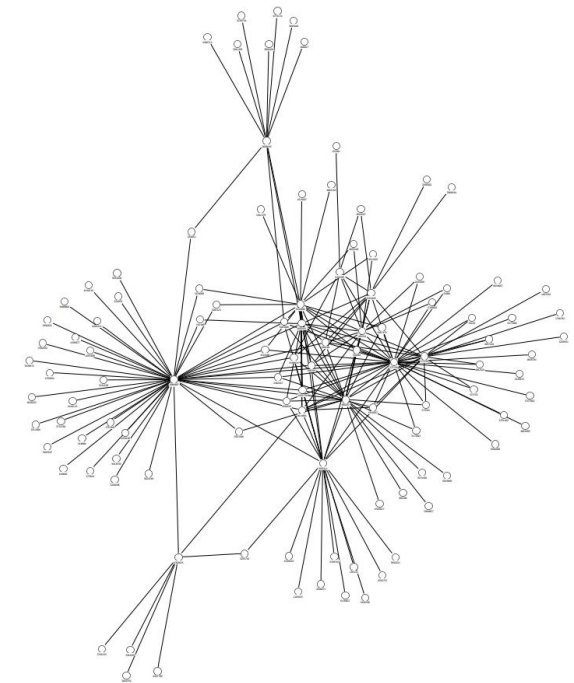
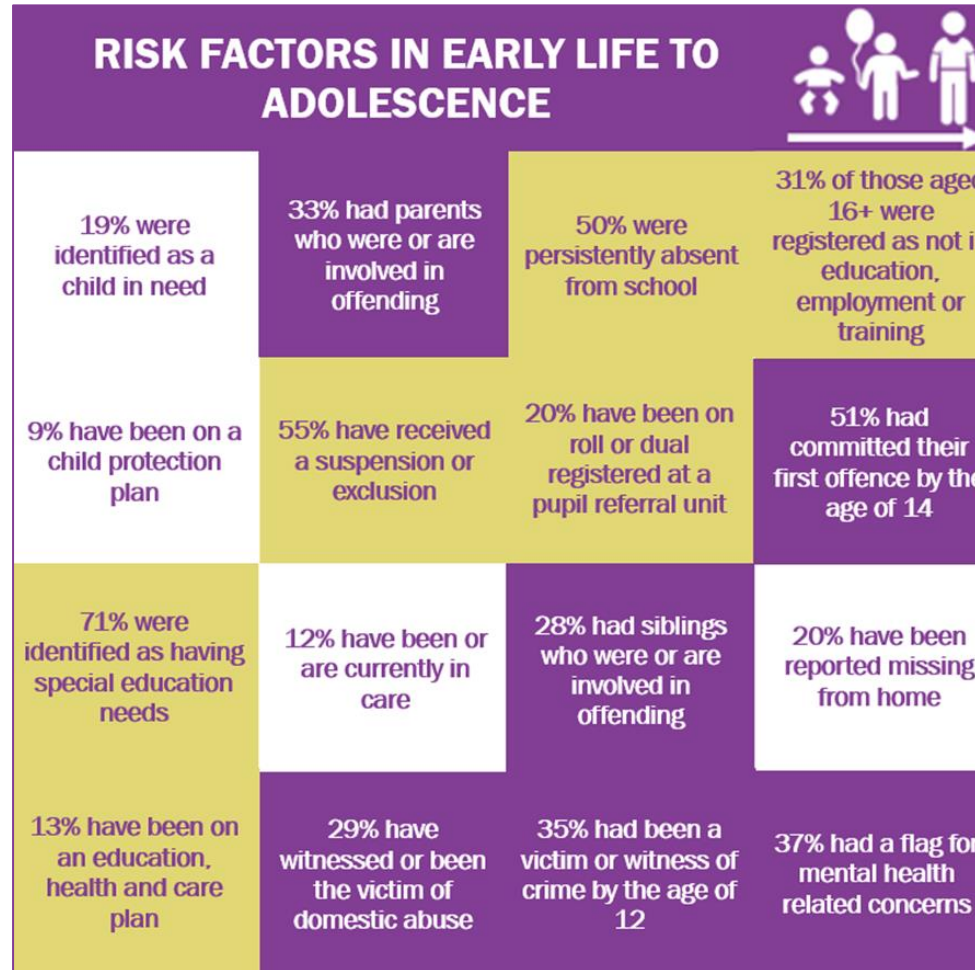


# Our Work: Deep Dives

**VIOLENCE REDUCTION NETWORK**  
LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND

**Preventing Serious Violence After School**  
VRN Briefing No.8

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Social Network Analysis

# Our Work: Co-Production

## Participation



## Co-Design



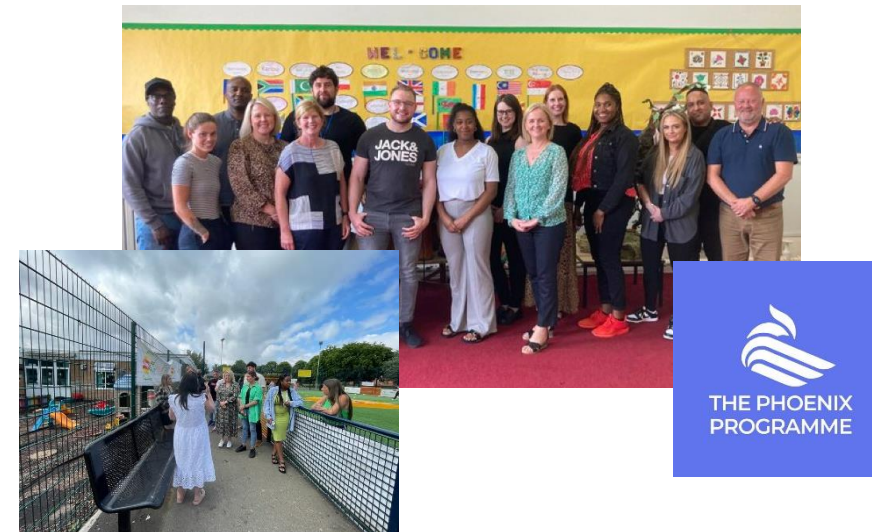
## Leadership



## Community Oversight and Scrutiny



## Co-Delivery



# Our Work: Designing Interventions

- Data-driven
- Focuses on gaps in local provision
- Use of available evidence
- Co-produced
- Based on a Theory of Change
- Outcome monitoring in place

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		

# Our Work: Interventions

	Primary Prevention	Secondary Prevention	Tertiary Prevention		
	<b>Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)</b>	<b>The Reach Programme</b>	<b>Early Intervention Service</b>	<b>Violence Intervention Project (VIP)</b>	<b>The Phoenix Programme</b>
<b>Data driven need and evidence-informed design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serious violence is most commonly committed by 10-19-year olds (SNA, 2022)</li> <li>Providing quality education in early life and a safe and nurturing educational environment is a protective factor (CDC, 2016)</li> <li>Mentoring programmes and social norm change are likely to have a moderate impact of serious violence (YEF 2021)</li> <li>Evaluations of MVP show that it is effective in improving attitudes and confidence in intervening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Widely recognised that school exclusions increases vulnerability and propensity to violence (UK Gov, 2018)</li> <li>Exclusions in LLR are unequally distributed – 60% reside in just 10 postcode sectors which are in 'hotspot' areas for serious violence</li> <li>Programmes which incorporate intensive mentoring, social skills training, mental health support and recreational activity show promise in prevention serious violence (YEF, 2021; CDC, 2016)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leicester has higher rates of first-time offenders and children in the justice system compared to national rates</li> <li>Pre-court diversion has the potential to protect a child against future involvement in violence (YEF, 2021) – it can support reintegration, prevent labelling and avoid the CJS</li> <li>Programmes which incorporate mentoring and work with families to provide broader contextual support have been shown to be effective (YEF, 2021; CDC, 2016)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LLR has higher rates than the national average for assault-related admission for a knife or sharp object, and recent trends show an increase in violence-related attendances to A&amp;E</li> <li>Leicester has higher rates of children in the justice system, and the peak ages for committing serious violence is 15-19 followed by 10-14 years.</li> <li>A&amp;E Navigator interventions are likely to have a high impact on preventing violence and pre-court diversion programmes a moderate impact (YEF, 2021)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The local rise in SV is directly linked to a group dynamic involving three interconnected parts: members of OCG, a USG and network of criminally active young people.</li> <li>Data shows cohort live in challenging circumstances with layers of vulnerability (e.g. ACEs and trauma, domestic violence, exclusions, substance misuse, live in urban areas with high social deprivation and crime)</li> <li>Research suggests focused deterrence (FD) could have a high impact on reducing serious violence (YEF, 2021)</li> </ul>
<b>Description of intervention</b>	The MVP project is a peer-led leadership and bystander programme. MVP trains students as Mentors and equips them with the confidence, knowledge and skills to identify and speak out against bullying, abusive behaviour and violence. It aims to tackle the beliefs, attitudes and culture which can give the message that violence is acceptable. Ultimately MVP promotes the healthy social norms and culture which is known to prevent violence.	The Reach Programme is an intensive six-month mentoring programme aimed at preventing exclusions. At-risk young people receive Social Skills Training, support with their confidence and wellbeing, and opportunities to participate in recreational activity (e.g. sports, arts and music). The Youth Worker will also provide support to the young person's family and work with their friends.	EIS is delivered by Prevention Officers who provide a 12-week tailored programme for young people who receive a community resolution or are at risk of offending. It seeks to prevent offending through improved anger management and well-being, and increasing engagement in positive activities such as ETE. Support is also offered to the families and carers of those engaged with the programme.	VIP provides timely and tailored support to young people attending A&E or Custody. Commonly referred to as a 'reachable moment', support workers engage with the young person at this critical point and offer support to assist recovery and address pressing issues such as safety and emotional well-being. The workers will continue to support the young person in the community, offering mentoring and practical assistance to empower them to achieve their goals.	The Phoenix Programme offers an age-appropriate, concrete and tailored package of support to participants focussed around hope, opportunity and connection. This is delivered through a multi-agency team which includes community navigators with lived experience. The team delivers in local communities and takes a pro-active approach to engagement. When participants refuse to engage and/or there are concerns in relation to continued harm, the enforcement and disruption element is deployed.
<b>Target group</b>	11-16 year olds in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland	10-17 year olds in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland	10-17 year olds in Leicester who receive a police or panel issued CR or are at risk of offending	11-25 year olds who attend A&E for violence related injuries or custody for serious violence offences	10-65 year olds in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

**Specialist Sport Provision:** YEF (2022) rates sport programmes as being likely to have a high impact on crime and violence. This provision will provide young people with swift and long-term access to a broad range of sports and physical activities to run alongside the support that they receive from the intervention which connected with them in a 'reachable space'.

**Specialist ETE Provision:** Leicester and Leicestershire have higher rates of young people who are NEET when compared to the national average, and ETE are considered protective factors which reduce the risks of (re)offending. This provision will provide specialist employability support and quick access to credible education, training and employment opportunities.



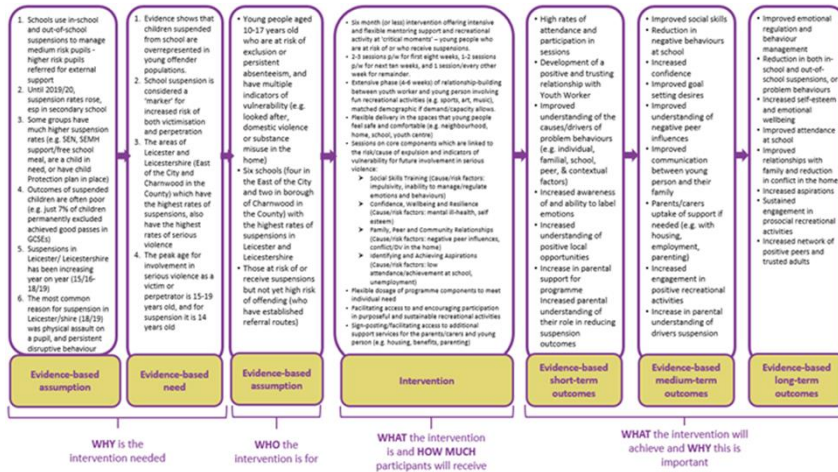
# Our Work: Evaluation

## 10 STEPS FOR EVALUATION SUCCESS



Source: EIF

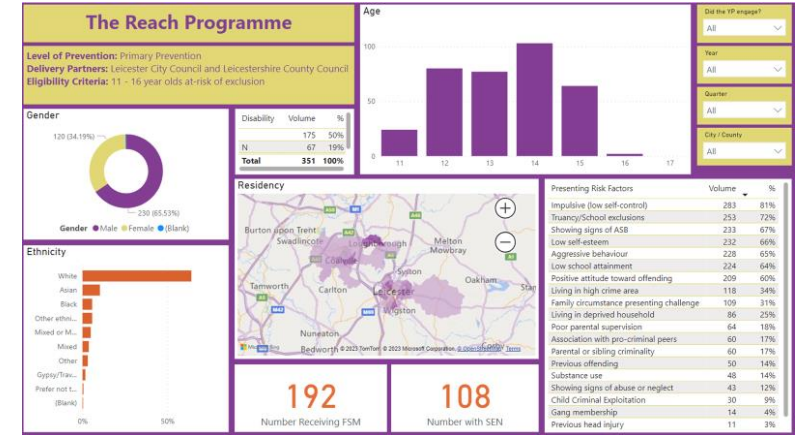
## Theory of Change



## Blueprints

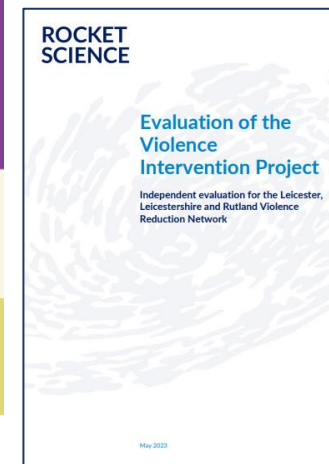
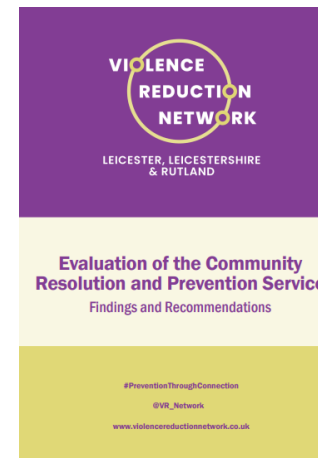


## Outcomes Monitoring Framework and Dashboard



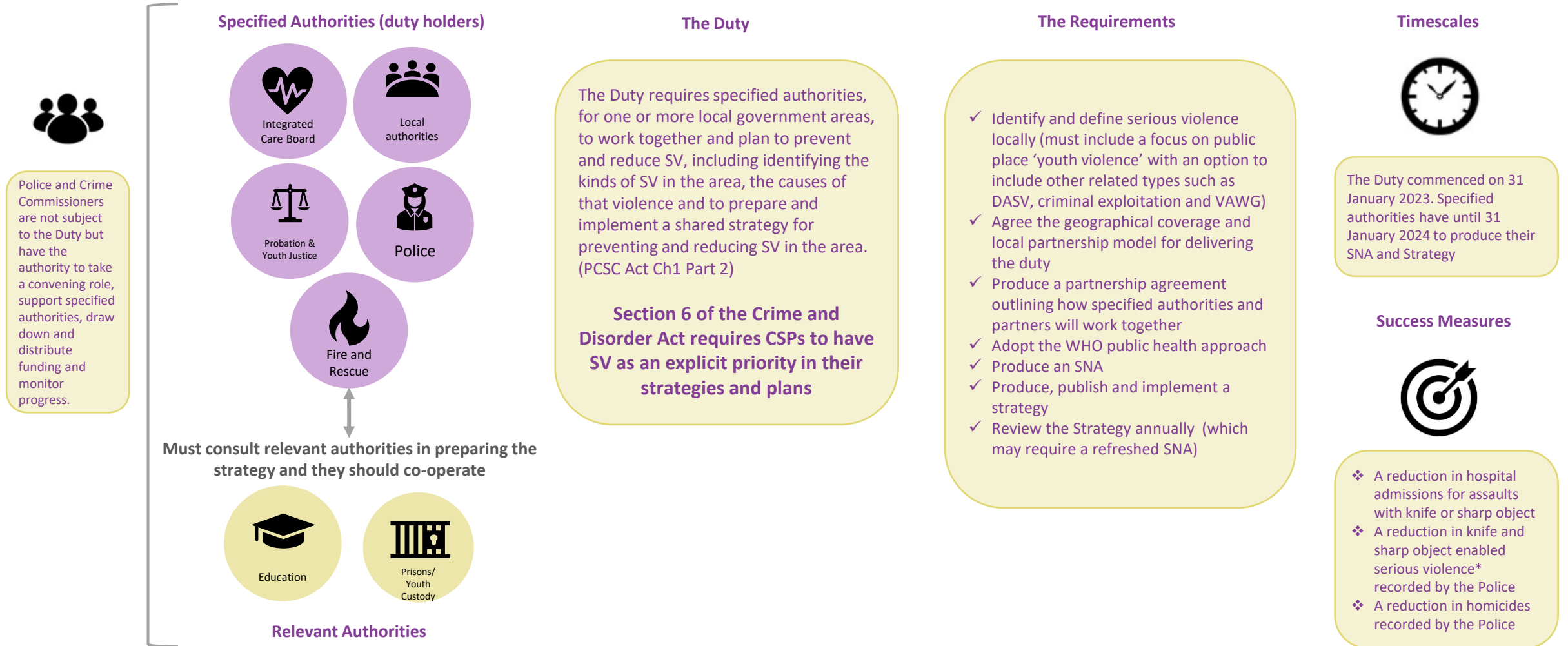
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## Feasibility Studies & Evaluations



# Serious Violence Duty: A Summary

The requirements of the duty are very similar to the work of our VRN partnership except it places a legal duty on specified authorities



\* Details have been requested

# Requirements

## 1 Defining Serious Violence

Specified authorities (SAs) are expected to define serious violence.

*The Local Definition has been agreed as:*

*“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”*

## 2 Defining the Local Area

Specified authorities should agree the local partnership model (and its geographical area) for discharging the duty.

*It has been agreed that the area will be LLR-wide and the Strategic Partnership Board and VRN will be the local partnership model.*

*A mandatory Partnership Agreement has been signed-off and submitted to the Home Office by the deadline of **31 March 2023**.*

## 3 Understanding Local Issues

The partnership should work together to establish the local Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) by 31 January 2024.

*The VRN team have produced the Strategic Needs Assessment based on the new definition. Locality-based violence profiles are now being produced for each CSP.*

## 4 Preparation, Publication and Implementation of a Strategy

The partnership must collectively develop a strategy which should outline the multi-agency response that will be taken to prevent and reduce serious violence in the local area (by 31 January 2024).

*A series of co-production events have been held or are planned including a final workshop in September for Implementation Leads. The VRN will produce the LLR-wide Strategy and it will be signed-off by SPB. CSPs will need to ensure their local violence issues are addressed within their Strategies.*

# Additional Resource

- **1 FTE Data Analyst** – Ethan commenced his role on 4 September and will provide additional analytical capacity to CSPs.
- **2 FTE Partnership Officers** (Violence and Vulnerability). Shameera has commenced her role as Senior Partnership Officer and will offer hands-on support to CSPs including in relation to strategy development and delivery. She will mainly focus on County CSPs with the remaining post focusing on the City (in process of recruitment).
- **1 FTE SPB Board Officer** Morgan has commenced in role and is offering administrative support and strengthening connections between the business of all SPB Boards and CSP locality-based delivery.

## Roles and Responsibilities:

### VRN Team

Leads production of partnership agreement and LLR-wide SNA  
Leads production and continues to co-ordinate delivery of LLR-wide Strategy for SV  
Supports specified and relevant authorities to mobilise for duty including self-assessments and on-going support  
Provides data reports to SPB Exec  
Works closely with and supports new staff in OPCC team

### OPCC Team

Produces locality-based profiles for CSPs  
Supports CSPs in strategy and plan development and delivery  
Acts as link between system-level work and localities  
Provides data insights to CSP strategic boards  
Offers Board support to SPB Exec  
Increases sustainable data sharing and products across broader SPB Exec priorities

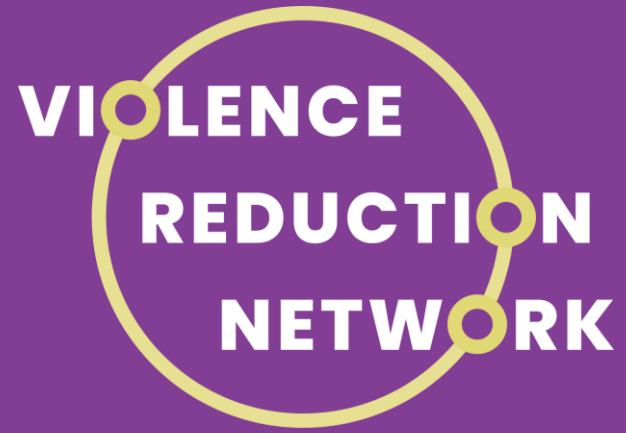
### SV Duty Delivery

### Specified and Relevant Authorities

Continue to work with the wider VRN partnership including communities  
Identify a Lead to join the Implementation Group to support SNA and strategy development  
Disseminate internal briefings and develop organisational/sector plans for delivery of the duty  
Ensure CSP representation at locality-level

### Community Safety Partnerships

Brief CSP members on the new duty  
Continue to engage with VRN briefings and products and attend the SV Delivery Group  
Work with the OPCC team to inform the structure and content of locality-based profiles and an approach to including SV in CSP strategies and plans



**Thank you!**

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