



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
for Leicester,
Leicestershire & Rutland

Your Communities - Your Commissioner

Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

18 June 2024

Serious Violence Duty

Report Date	17 th 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, administering 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 addition 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.