

<b>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</b>	<b>Cabinet</b> <b>10 July 2019</b>
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<b>Report title</b>	Wolverhampton's Tackling Violence and Exploitation Strategy	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Jasbir Jaspal Public Health and Wellbeing	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	Yes	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All Wards	
<b>Accountable Director</b>	John Denley, Director of Public Health	
<b>Originating service</b>	Community Safety	
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Lynsey Kelly	Head of Community Safety
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<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Children and Young People's Leadership Team	31 January 2019
	Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel	5 February 2019
	Public Health Leadership Team	12 March 2019
	Strategic Executive Board	26 March 2019
	Safer Wolverhampton Partnership	7 June 2019
	Wolverhampton Adult and Children Safeguarding Board	19 June 2019

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**Recommendation for decision:**

The Cabinet is recommended to:

Endorse and support the implementation of Wolverhampton's Tackling Violence and Exploitation Strategy, as approved by the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board, Safeguarding Children Board and Safeguarding Adults Board.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 To seek endorsement of Wolverhampton's Tackling Violence and Exploitation Strategy and support for its implementation.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Current Preventing Gang Involvement and Youth Violence Strategy 2016-2019 came to an end in March 2019.
- 2.2 The nature of offending behaviour is changing; there is more evident exploitation of adults/young people with the increase in the number of county lines; some of which is linked to drugs, but not all linked to gangs. It is recognised that there has been an increase in youth violence involving weapons; this is in line with the regional and national picture.
- 2.3 The launch of the Government's Serious Violence Strategy in April 2018 provides a helpful context for Wolverhampton's approach. The Government's strategy aims to striking a balance between enforcement action, early intervention to tackle root causes of violence and a strengthened partnership response.
- 2.4 Regionally, the evident growth in awareness around issues such as county lines, modern slavery and the associated grooming and exploitation by organised crime groups, has raised the profile of these issues. There is a clear willingness of key partners to work collaboratively both locally and regionally to tackle these issues and to share learning and best practice; most recently the West Midlands has committed to developing a Violence Reduction Unit, using learning from Scotland's successful model.

## **3.0 Overview of Wolverhampton's Tackling Violence and Exploitation Strategy**

- 3.1 Joint governance of this strategy will held jointly between the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board, Wolverhampton Safeguarding Adults Board and Wolverhampton safeguarding Children Board. The issues being address in the strategy cut across the three boards and this will allow for a strengthened city approach; taking a Public Health approach to preventing, identifying, and responding to issues of serious violence and exploitation.
- 3.2 Wolverhampton's Tackling Violence and Exploitation Strategy (Appendix 1) reflects the national shift towards a public health approach to violence and tackling all forms of serious violence and exploitation in a holistic manner. Where previously the city had developed individual strategies for each strand of exploitation; this strategy robustly addresses all related issues together rather than individually.
- 3.3 The strategy focuses on four key areas;
  - child sexual exploitation
  - child criminal exploitation
  - modern slavery
  - gangs and youth violence.

These areas all have common themes, including prevalence of grooming and exploitation of vulnerable people. By analysing data trends, the strategy gives an overview of each issue and identifies areas of early focus for the city.

3.4 The strategy document outlines the following strategic outcomes:

- Reduction in young people becoming involved in violence
- Strengthened Knowledge and understanding of professionals to better identify those at risk
- Improved integrated support pathways out of violence and exploitation
- Reduced harm to families and increased community resilience and awareness
- Improved information flow and use between agencies and communities
- Increased targeted intervention to protect people and violence and exploitation
- Reduce the level of risk and exploitation of young people
- Robust enforcement to tackle organised crime groups
- Strengthened and supportive offender management

#### 4.0 Model of Delivery

4.1 A multi-agency action plan will be developed to underpin the strategy and drive delivery. The model of delivery will be centred around the 4 P model:

**Prevent:** Identify individuals who are vulnerable to being exploited and/or involved in violence; ensure that they and their families receive the help and support required to prevent further harm.

**Prepare:** Strengthen resilience of victims and communities to mitigate the harm caused by violence and exploitation.  
Raise awareness of risks through active communication and training.

**Protect:** Extend the roles of communities in tackling V&E and reduce the fear of crime.

**Pursue:** Progress enforcement action against those involved in violence and exploitation; effective management of those involved in medium-high risk offending and deter those involved in lower level criminality.

4.2 To support the delivery of the strategy a review of the current operational structures and delivery is currently underway and will be concluded within the first year of the strategy. The review will also give consideration to how contextual safeguarding is imbedded across the partnership.

4.3 Early areas of focus have been identified, they include; recognising work to be done in education settings, building community resilience, developing structured training packages for use of professionals and the facilitation of improved cross boundary coordination.

## **5.0 Summary of Consultation Responses and Strategy Revisions**

5.1 A consultation was launched on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and ran for 12 weeks to ensure compact compliance, finishing on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The consultation sort input from a range of stakeholders. A survey monkey questionnaire was established and was advertised using social media, email to Councillors, stakeholders and community members, at PACT meetings, and by holding focus groups with key groups. Focus groups included;

- Youth Council
- Youth take over day
- Gangs Steering Group
- Whitmore Reans community action day
- Resilience Group
- Young People engaged in outreach services

5.2 The presentation was delivered to Adults and Safer City Scrutiny panel on 5 February 2019. As the strategy will have joint governance with the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards, members of the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny panel were also invited to attend the panel on 5 February 2019. Members of Scrutiny were in full support of the widened focus of the new strategy and actively input into the consultation process. In total, 238 of responses were received.

5.3 Revisions have been made to the strategy in line with common themes arising from the consultation.

## **6.0 Evaluation of alternative options**

6.1 A refreshed Preventing Gangs and Youth Violence Strategy could have been developed, however, in light to the changing landscape around this agenda; focusing more on a public health approach and the evident links between exploitation of adults/young people with county lines, some of which is linked to drugs, but not all linked to gangs. A decision was made to develop a more encompassing strategy which recognised the links between violence and exploitation to enable a more robust and holistic response. Section 3.2 of this report details the benefits of taking a joint governance approach.

## **7.0 Reasons for decision**

7.1 There is a statutory requirement for Council's and other responsible authorities to formulate and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder in the area; Section 17 places a duty on the Council to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in the area. Implementation of the strategy contributes to fulfilling the Council's duties in this regard.

## **8.0 Financial implications**

Any costs arising from this report will be funded the 2019-2020 Police and Crime Commissioner grant allocation of £114,000 and the 2019-2020 Home Office Early Intervention Youth Fund grant of £110,000.

## **9.0 Legal implications**

- 9.1 Sections 5 and 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 require the Council and other responsible authorities to formulate and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder in the area; Section 17 places a duty on the Council to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in the area. Implementation of the strategy contributes towards the Council's duties in this regard.
- 9.2 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 can be used to protect and convict against crimes of trafficking. The Act defines Human Trafficking, slavery, domestic servitude and forced or compulsory labour as an offence. These crimes include; holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude forced or compulsory labour, or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them soon after and using the individual as a commodity. The Act states that First Responders, which includes Local Authorities have a duty to refer any individual identified as a victim of modern slavery in any of the above guises to be referred into the National referral Mechanism.
- 9.3 Serious crimes, including CSE would be convicted under the Sexual Offences Act, and would fall under the Childrens Act 1989 Section 47 where you have 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm'. Therefore, Local Authorities must work in a partnership approach to tackle such issues and protect victims.

[TS/20032019/B]

## **10.0 Equalities implications**

- 10.1 A full equalities analysis has been completed. The analysis highlights that the strategy will impact positively on all adults and children at risk of violence and exploitation and cater for the disproportionate number of male perpetrators of violence spanning the life course. Females will be positively impacted on due to their additional vulnerability linked to CSE and county lines. The strategy provides a positive opportunity to strengthen prevention measures for young people, particularly Black and Minority Ethnic young people, where disproportionate representation within the youth criminal justice system is evident.

## **11.0 Environmental implications**

- 11.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

## **12.0 Human resources implications**

- 12.1 There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

## **13.0 Corporate landlord implications**

- 13.1 There are no Corporate Landlord implications arising from this report.

## **14.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

14.1 The strategy takes a Public Health approach to violence and exploitation; with an ambition to provide interventions earlier in the life course to prevent young people becoming vulnerable to violence and exploitation. The strategy also aims to assist people who are already affected, to exit from violence/exploitative situations. Identification and support at all stages will assist in providing better outcomes and improving health, wellbeing and future life chances.

## **15.0 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Wolverhampton’s Tackling Violence and Exploitation Strategy.