

County Lines in Nottingham

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

7 November 2018

What are County Lines?

- HM Government Serious Violence Strategy 2018:
- *“County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move [and store] the drugs and money and they will often use coercion , intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.”*

What is Child Criminal Exploitation:

- HM Government Serious Violence Strategy 2018:
- *“Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.”*

Definition in Summary:

- County lines are drug dealing routes internal to the UK. They can exploit children and vulnerable adults to run these routes.
- County lines practices involve many offending types and can exploit multiple vulnerabilities in both children and adults.
- County lines can be an issue for both urban and rural areas.

National Picture

- County lines have been recognised as a threat to the whole of the United Kingdom as reflected in the Government's 2018 Serious Violence Strategy.
- The Home Office has established a National County Lines Action Plan to include guidance, new legislation and a National Coordination Centre (NCLCC) to be led by the National Crime Agency (NCA).
- The Home Office has also made funding available to tackle youth violence and exploitation for which Nottingham has made a bid.

Local Picture

- The local intelligence picture for county lines is limited although Nottingham is known to be an 'exporter' of county lines.
- Local cases have found local young people in Oxford, Grimsby and London. They have been found in addresses with large quantities of Class A drugs.
- There have been recent cases of young people from the city having been involved in lines to the north of the county.
- Opportunities to disrupt and dismantle county lines are taken by the force with string liaison with City Council Children's Services

Local Picture

- Nottinghamshire Police has established a lead for county lines DCI Nick Waldram.
- There are no criminal tactics or concerns specific to Nottingham although the link to serious youth violence is of concern.
- County lines intelligence is monitored through the Force Intelligence Bureau with opportunities for investigation and disruption being taken.
- DCI Waldram attends a regional county lines meeting to share intelligence and best practice.

Local Picture

- Local county lines are often associated with established organised crime groups (OCGs) and gangs.
- There are intelligence gaps with regards to how young people are targeted and exploited

Strategic Links

- Young people known to be involved in county lines have been found to be involved in gang activity and serious violence locally.
- The city has well developed mechanisms for responding to sexual exploitation which are now being employed in the management of other criminal forms of exploitation.
- The partnership's wider response to drug strategy, safeguarding and serious youth violence represent key strategic links to the agenda.

City Response

- Public Protection Notices are issued from Nottinghamshire Police to Children's Services for those identified as at risk.
- Building on an understanding of exploitation developed through CSE approaches Children's Services and partners have established a Child Criminal Exploitation Panel (CCEP).
- As part of the wider response to youth violence the City Council is establishing an interdisciplinary Knife Crime 'Hub' which will consider exploitation more broadly to include county lines
- The CCEP model will work to build local understanding, manage risk and ensure our joint practices are fit for purpose.

Further Scrutiny – December 2018

- Overview & Scrutiny has convened a further consideration of county lines in December 2018 where more detailed information on the CCEP model and the Hub will be presented.

Questions & Discussion



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