

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 5 June 2019 from 2.02 pm - 3.40 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Anne Peach (Chair)
Councillor Georgia Power (Vice Chair)
Councillor Azad Choudhry
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis
Councillor Jane Lakey
Councillor Ethan Radford
Councillor Andrew Rule

Absent

Councillor Carole McCulloch (Vice Chair)
Councillor Maria Joannou
Councillor Sue Johnson
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Cate Woodward

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Councillor David Mellen	- Leader of the Council
Philip Broxholme	- Senior Performance and Insight Analyst, Community Protection
Alex Castle-Clarke	- Tasking & Intelligence Manager, Community Protection
Wilf Fearon	- Service Manager, Youth Offending
Superintendent Mat Healey	- City Area Commander, Nottinghamshire Police
James Lavender	- Governance Officer
Superintendent Matt McFarlane	- Knife Crime Lead, Nottinghamshire Police
Sophie Russell	- Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement
Zena West	- Senior Governance Officer

1 APOLOGIES

Councillor Cate Woodward
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED to note the contents of the updated Terms of Reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CALL-IN PANEL

RESOLVED to establish the Overview and Scrutiny Call-in panel, note its Terms of Reference, and note its membership.

6 KNIFE CRIME

Councillor David Mellen, Leader of the Council, delivered a presentation on the actions that Nottingham City Council (NCC) and Nottinghamshire Police have been taking in order to tackle knife crime within the city, highlighting the following:

- (a) Partnerships involving councils, the police and other stakeholders are key to tackling knife crime;
- (b) The city has previously had a reputation for violent crime. Through successful strategies and policies, the number of violent crimes in Nottingham halved around 4 or 5 years ago, but it has been increasing again recently;
- (c) Incidents of knife crime have increased in the past three and a half years, but the increase has slowed down recently;
- (d) Around half of victims and offenders involved in knife crimes in Nottingham City (not including those associated with domestic violence) are aged 25 and over, and a further quarter were aged 18 or over, which challenges the media assumptions that knife crime is a youth-related problem;
- (e) 45% of knife crimes reported were personal robberies;
- (f) There are a number of strategic links with the police, schools, disability services, safeguarding, families, education and training providers, voluntary and community groups, the Courts and the City Economy which feed into the Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation Programme;
- (g) Criminal exploitation interlinks with a number of multiple vulnerabilities and offences including the child being exposed to and/or victim of physical and emotional violence, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation, modern day slavery and human trafficking, domestic abuse and missing episodes;
- (h) 'County Lines' is a term used by government departments, law enforcement, local authorities and partner agencies to describe the use of mobile phone 'lines' by gangs looking to extend their drug dealing activities into locations outside of their metropolitan home areas;
- (i) Case studies from Chicago and Glasgow have helped inform the Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation Programme's work;
- (j) The proposed approach breaks down into two areas:
 - a. Phase One – Development of a responsive, deployable and flexible resource through a multi-agency hub;

- b. Phase Two – a systemic ‘public health’ approach to tackling the causative factors;
- (k) The Programme links together with Police Crime Commissioner’s Knife Crime Action Plan and aims to coordinate activities;
- (l) The Programme and its proposed governance was presented to, and agreed by the Nottingham Crime & Drug Partnership (CDP) Board in March 2019;
- (m) Over £490,000 in Troubled Families ‘Supporting Families affected by Youth Crime’ funding has been secured to work with schools and the voluntary sector;
- (n) A Play & Youth review and restructure is underway, which was presented to Executive Panel on 18 March 2019;
- (o) The Multi-agency Child Criminal Exploitation Panel was established in October 2018 and is currently tracking the ‘at risk’ cohort;
- (p) The Exploitation and Violence Reduction Hub (EVR Hub) was established in October 2018 to increase multi-agency support and capacity;
- (q) PCSOs in the EVR Hub are delivering the Street Aware programme in primary schools. 74% of all primary schools have either scheduled or completed the programme;
- (r) The YouCan programme is being funded and coordinated through Economic Development, with colleagues being trained to deliver to the target cohort;
- (s) Nottinghamshire Police use a Risk Matrix to identify areas where offences could or have taken place. They then work with community groups, children’s charities and housing associations to change the behaviours of potential offenders. This includes sending doctors into schools and youth centres to talk about the effects of knife crime, trips to the National Justice Museum, and a Violence Prevention Project which helps identify vulnerable individuals and provides them with the means to empower themselves to change their future;
- (t) Nottingham Trent University have undertaken some research into the victims of knife crime in Nottingham;
- (u) The tactical efforts of Nottinghamshire Police in tackling knife crime include the Knife Crime Team working out of St Ann’s. Stop and Search has been 60% accurate in seizing knives and other weapons. Police raids have found stores of drugs and weapons. Operation Guardian involved going into public areas and searching people for drugs.

The Committee considered the following points in discussions about the report:

- (a) The Street Aware and Life Skills sessions have worked well in schools and have helped provide opportunities for vulnerable children and young people to move away from violent crime;

- (b) Race and hate crime can't be ruled out as a factor in knife crime;
- (c) Cuts to youth services have meant that fewer staff are available, but NCC still provides this service, contracted to 12 wards within the city. Ideally, this service would still be provided across all wards of the city;
- (d) Cuts to the police have meant that there are fewer Police Officers and PCSOs. The Home Office has allocated money to tackle knife crime, but this money comes with tight conditions. The money needs to be spend on measures to tackle crime in the long-term, rather than recruit new Police Officers in the short-term;
- (e) Social media is a factor in knife crime in that comments made on social media websites and apps can escalate, however these apps are private or encrypted so it can be hard to track users. Social media can also hinder the work of the police and youth services because it can be used to track staff movements, particularly if they are visiting vulnerable people or offenders;
- (f) Referrals from schools, youth groups and social workers are the first step in identifying individuals. Various organisations can then work with them to change their behaviours;
- (g) There are three types of people who are usually involved with knife crime;
 - (1) People carrying knives which they believe can be used in self-defence;
 - (2) People carrying knives for show as a status symbol;
 - (3) Organised gang members who intend to use them as an offensive weapon;
- (h) Early intervention and rehabilitation is key. If a child or young adult is charged for carrying a knife, conditional bail is used to contact Children's Services and begin the process of rehabilitation;
- (i) Neighbourhood and Outreach projects also help in identifying vulnerable people;
- (j) The knife crime preventions programmes require all citizens to play their part. For example, some young people might not talk to the police or the council, but they might talk to other groups such as youth groups, charities or boxing clubs, who can then work with the police or the council to help the young person avoid becoming involved in knife crime;
- (k) It can take several weeks for the police to obtain a search warrant for a house if they believe drug dealing and abuse is taking place in that property, depending what evidence is available;
- (l) The use of body cameras by Police Officers has begun to show that most Stop and Search actions do take place fairly. Much of the negative publicity around Stop and Search has been due to the media's coverage of the London

Metropolitan Police service. Nottinghamshire Police conduct Stop and Search differently to the London Metropolitan Police, and hope to avoid many of the publicised issues associated with Stop and Search.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) Receive a written update on the victim research from Nottingham Trent University when available;**
- (2) Note the positive work of partner organisations so far, and the strong focus on the importance of working in partnership;**
- (3) Receive a written update from Nottinghamshire Police with statistics on the breakdown of knife crime incidents by ward, racially motivated attacks and Stop and Search use and effectiveness.**

7 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 19/20

Zena West, Senior Governance Officer, updated the Committee on the Work Programme, as circulated with the agenda. Councillors suggested a written update to the October 2019 Committee from Nottingham Credit Union, following their presentation to the Committee in January 2019, and that Flooding be added to the list of items to be scheduled.

RESOLVED to note the Work Programme.

8 FUTURE MEETING DATES

RESOLVED to meet on the following dates at 2.00pm (with a required pre-meeting for Committee members from 1.30pm):

- 3 July 2019**
- 4 September 2019**
- 9 October 2019**
- 6 November 2019**
- 4 December 2019**
- 8 January 2020**
- 5 February 2020**
- 4 March 2020**
- 8 April 2020**