

Appendix 2 – Spotlight on Tackling Serious Violence

Definition of Serious Violence

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022 defines Serious violence as homicide, violence against the person (e.g., knife and gun crime) and broader offending which might lead to serious violence such as drug dealing (particularly gang related), domestic abuse and alcohol related offending.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022 also provides new duties in respect to Serious Violence. *The specific new Serious Violence Duty requires specified authorities (Duty Holders) to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence, and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence in the area. Local Authorities are defined as specified duty holders within the PCSC Act.*

Current Intelligence Picture

The latest figures available (12 Months to November 2022) show a 14.4% reduction (from 271 to 232 offences) in Serious Violence in Kirklees compared with the previous 12 months however there have been a small number of knife crime incidents in some wards, specifically South Kirklees that have received significant media interest linked Urban Street Gangs which has resulted in targeted direct work.

The latest (2022/23) Serious Violence Assessment produced by the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit highlights the following key points,

Possession of weapons offences have shown a more significant increase than crime generally; however, these offences are directly linked to targeted police activity and are as likely to reflect a change in policing practices as an actual increase in people carrying weapons.

Knife Crime

Knife Crime has slightly exceeded pre-COVID-19 levels in the last year. Offences increased by 5% on last year, and by 8% on year ending September 2019. There have been 2326 knife crime offences across West Yorkshire recorded in the year ending September 2022, of which almost half were violence with injury (48%), with robbery making up almost another third (31%). Most of the violence without injury offences (18%) were threats to kill and almost all were domestic related. Over a quarter of all recorded knife crime in the year was domestic related.

Knife Crime	2020/21	2021/22	Difference	
Bradford	565	502	-63	-11%
Calderdale	150	163	13	9%
Kirklees	366	364	-2	-1%
Leeds	908	999	91	10%
Wakefield	236	297	61	26%
Total	2225	2325	100	5%

Hospital statistics

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities reported that hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object in West Yorkshire in 2021/22 increased on the previous year by 28% ([Hospital Episode Statistics \(HES\) NHS Digital](#)). However, 2020/21 was significantly impacted by restrictions on movement and social contact as well as there being restricted access to hospitals during the height of the pandemic. Compared to the pre-pandemic year 2018/19, hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object have fallen by 13%. Provisional data for the first six months of 2022/23 suggest numbers of admissions could be considerably lower than 2021/22.

TABLE 18 - HOSPITAL EPISODE STATISTICS (HES) NHS DIGITAL

Local Authority of residence	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	April 22 – Sept 22 (provisional)
Bradford	55	35	40	45	60	35	50	20
Calderdale	10	15	15	20	10	10	*	*
Kirklees	35	55	55	60	40	30	45	20
Leeds	85	75	105	110	105	85	95	45
Wakefield	20	20	25	30	30	30	40	10

Current Interventions

Tackling serious violence in Kirklees is co-ordinated through the Communities Board although there are close links with the boards for Health and Well Being, Children and Adults services.

Governance arrangements are in place to monitor the work being undertaken to tackle violence/ knife crime through the Kirklees Gold, Silver, and Bronze Violence Partnership Groups.

Gold Violence Group is responsible for the partnerships approach and strategic direction in tackling violence/ knife crime, which includes adopting a public health approach. This group will also oversee the new Serious Violence Duty which places legislation on Public Bodies, including the Local Authority to work together to share data and target interventions to prevent serious violence.

Silver Violence Group is responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of activity to tackle violence / knife crime.

Bronze Violence Group is responsible for the partnership action to disrupt individuals and tackle organised crime groups (OCGs) across the district.

The approach to tackling Serious Violence is based on the following key principles:

1. **Preventing people from committing serious violence** by developing resilience, supporting positive alternatives and timely interventions
2. **To Intervening Early to prevent individuals become entrenched in Serious Violence** and Organised Criminal Activity

3. **To pursue, disrupt and prosecute those who commit serious violent crimes**, ensuring an effective policing and criminal justice system response, especially for victims

The Partnership acknowledge that violence can take place anywhere in the district and individuals and groups involved in violence can be fluid and move between wards, localities, and geographical borders. However, to make best use of the resources, using available Local Profiles and Needs Assessments (Serious and Organised Crime Local Profile and the Kirklees Violence Reduction Needs Assessment), the partnership have identified 6 x priority wards for engagement, activity and enhanced work. These wards include: -

- **Ashbrow**
- **Crosland Moor and Netherton**
- **Dalton**
- **Batley East and West**
- **Dewsbury West**

**The Partnership also acknowledge the data and intelligence for other wards of note/ to watch which include the Greenhead and Newsome ward.

Using funding through the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit, a similar approach is taken within each of the wards however, it should be noted that some wards do receive more resources, for example, due to availability, and networks. The approach within each of the 6 x wards includes:-

1. **Funding of community projects** to divert and build resilience
2. **Educational interventions to work with young people in educational settings** to raise awareness and build resilience
3. **Early intervention for those identified at risk** through 1-1 and group mentoring
4. **Place based engagement, utilising partnership resources**, including knife sweeps, partnership officer presence and engagement and enforcement tactics.

The following key performances measures have been identified as indicative measures of success within each ward: -

- a reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object, especially among those victims aged under twenty-five
- a reduction in knife-enabled serious violence, especially amongst those victims aged under twenty-five
- a reduction in all non-domestic homicides, especially amongst those victims aged under twenty-five involving knives.
- a reduction in robbery offences overall
- a reduction in robbery using a sharp or bladed article

Summary of Interventions/ activities to tackle violence:-

Preventing people from committing serious violence

- **Funding of community projects** to divert and build resilience in local communities, improving local communication networks and sharing any learning and best practice
- **Educational inputs/ workshops within Primary and Secondary Schools.** This includes commissioning of Yorkshire Mentoring to deliver approved, bespoke interventions and resources and supporting West Yorkshire Police with the delivery of their Pol-Ed resource of which 54% of Primary Schools and 79% of Secondary Schools in Kirklees engaged in the workshop/ materials. Working with the Violence Reduction Unit and partners we are looking more deeply into what has worked locally and regionally elsewhere, the quality of input and impact of funded projects in Kirklees. This also includes how we continue to improve our support and coordination for our schools and colleges, but also more widely across the system.
- **Train the Trainer Secondary Education workshops sessions** for Designated Safety Leads/ Community Organisations across Kirklees on knife crime/ violence for delivery within their own groups/ schools to young people
- Roll out of the **Ask for Angela Campaign** across the district in bars, pubs, and nightclubs. This is being extended to restaurants, libraries and other public facing buildings. [Night safety | Kirklees Council](#)
- **Targeted work in Greenhead and Crow Nest Park** through funding via Safer Streets to make the parks look and feel safer, particularly for women and girls i.e., through additional lighting, gates, fencing etc, alongside funding of local community organisations to run positive activities within the parks.
- **Partnership Intelligence Portal submissions**– Through training of officers and partners via WYP and Safer Kirklees, Kirklees continue to submit the highest number of intelligence submissions across West Yorkshire. The latest awareness raising activity has resulted Kirklees providing 50% (339) of submissions to the PIP, up from 40% (265) last quarter.
- **Visual Audits** within areas to improve look and feel of area i.e., lighting, vegetation cutbacks, this also includes knife sweeps.

To Intervening Early to prevent individuals become entrenched in Serious Violence

- **1-1 Mentoring support** for young people identified as being at risk of violence/ exploitation. This work has been commissioned by Safer Kirklees to Yorkshire Mentoring.

- Dedicated **Street Marshalls for Huddersfield Town Centre** at key times/ days – Wednesday evening (Student Night), Friday and Saturday Evening. Street Marshalls work from approx. 10pm – 5am.
- **Mobile Night Safety Bus**, working in partnership with LOCALA and Chart to support individuals that may become vulnerable within the Night Time Economy in Huddersfield Town Centre on a Wednesday and Saturday evenings until 3:00am. [Night safety | Kirklees Council](#).
[Hop on the Night Safety Bus - Kirklees Together](#)
- **Developing pathways with Dewsbury and Huddersfield A&E departments** to support early referral processes for individuals, particularly those under the age of twenty-five with support should they present with knife injuries/ injuries related to violence. This work has also included new relationships and partnerships with LGI where several injured Kirklees individuals have been taken for treatment.
- **Focussed ‘Deterrent / Teachable moments Car’** – Services have been commissioned to work with the Police on a Friday and Saturday evening to visit identified areas of increased risk due to violent incidents and or the data and intelligence picture related to ASB. The deterrent car is a Police Officer and Mentor engaging with young people in locality, signposting to positive activities, gathering information and intelligence and having a physical presence within the area.

To pursue, disrupt and prosecute those who commit serious violent crimes,

- **Operation Jemlock** – Police operation with dedicated officers engaging in identified wards/ streets based upon real time intelligence and information to prevent violence but also target those known to be involved in serious and organised crime and violence.
- Neighbourhood Policing Teams continue to proactively target known nominals linked to violence using disruption techniques. Police colleagues have been visiting local voluntary and community groups building relationships in areas where serious violence is of concern to local people and elected members. Strong links have been forged between the Police and partners, in particular with the Council, with clear communication channels, co working and shared planning and response activity.
- Safer Kirklees continue to **deploy Community Environmental Support Officers (CESOS)** on a weekly basis to priority areas to patrol and engage with local businesses, community assets, residents, and councillors. They help reassure communities, as well as gather intelligence around criminal activity that is then shared with the police through the partnership intelligence portal.