



Strategic Policing and Crime Board 23 January 2018

Emerging Items: *Gangs and Violence Commission*

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Purpose of this report

1. The purpose of this report is to update Board members on the work of the Gangs and Violence Commission.

Background

2. The Commission was launched in March 2016 as a response of the guns discharges and increase in violence across Birmingham.
3. The focus of the Gangs and Violence work is to bring the local community, partners and decision-makers together in order to develop and implement a community-led response to the spike in gun discharges and increased violence. The report and recommendations and discuss how we work together in partnership in the West Midlands to tackle the issues. The process has engaged statutory partners, but was community-led. It has been an immense piece of work – and the report is representative of what the community have said are the main issues, with recommendations to address them. [The summary and full reports can be found here](#)
4. The report goes into detail about the issues as they affect people on a day to day basis. There was a wide ranging consultation and engagement process that looked at a number of key strands within the community. Specialist Provider leads led the consultation process and the areas that they led on are as follows:
 - Joan Campbell - Women and families
 - Bobby Dennis - The relationship between older and younger generations
 - Rev Robin Thompson - Prisoners, offenders and the role of faith
 - Craig Pinkney & Tanayah Sam - Young people
 - Lincoln Moses - Young people and diversionary activities
 - Mohammed Ashfaq - South Asian and Somalian communities

- Rev. Dr Carver Anderson - Final report and recommendations
- 5 The Launch of the report took place on the 7 December at Aston Villa Conference Centre. This is the [Highlights video](#) of the event which showcases the speakers and gives you a picture of the feel of the day. An opportunities fair took place on the afternoon of the launch, and this gives us an indication of how involved the business sector is on this agenda. Some of the business taking part includes: SCC, Suez, National Express, Specialist Recruitment Services, Bouygues, Balfour Beatty, Barclays Life Skills, KPMG, Aston Villa Foundation, HS2 College, Talent Match BVSC, West Midlands Police, Sport Birmingham, Princes Trust, Cadets, Black Country Metal Works, As Suffar Outreach, Big Light of Mine, Miss Macaroons, Anawim, Warwickshire County Cricket Club, Birmingham Youth Offending Service.
 - 6 The report is significant and is the most important piece of research carried out on this subject in Birmingham in over a decade. It is wide ranging and the first report that puts the community at the heart of identifying the problem and also identifying the response. The Commissioner has said repeatedly that 'we can't arrest our way of out this situation' and that is because we need a multi-agency, cross-cutting response to the issues that affect some of our communities.
 - 7 Gang activity costs the city in many ways; perceptions of crime and disorder in the city cause businesses to close or relocate outside the city, which in turn leads to lost revenues and jobs. Gang violence leads to neighbourhood disharmony, causing properties to lose value and breakdown community cohesion and spirit
 - 8 This is also a call out for businesses to work with us to offer young people who might not have any experience or qualifications, or the training to bring out their talent. We have a serious issue that many 16 to 24-year-olds in the West Midlands leave school with few or no qualifications. Even children with outstanding GCSE results can struggle finding their feet in an over-saturated jobs market, leaving those without any qualifications with nowhere to go.
 - 9 The successful rehabilitation of ex-offenders is good for the economy. The cost of reoffending to the taxpayer is around £15 billion, plus the cost in benefits for those ex-offenders who want to work but cannot get a job.
 - 10 It is also important to note that the violence that we are talking about is committed by a minority—a significant minority—of young people. We should not draw the conclusion that all youth are engaged in serious youth violence.
 - 11 It is important in this debate to recognise how much young people contribute to economy and we celebrate this. We do not want to see their talent and their futures wasted and are one of

The Recommendations

- 12 The report has identified 24 key recommendations and delivery of those will form the basis of the work of the Commission.
- 13 The recommendations are as follows:

- 1: The Gangs and Violence Commission is to provide ongoing leadership, direction and co-ordination to work that will reduce the impact of gangs and violence, working to fill the current leadership vacuum.
- 2: The Gangs and Violence Commission will work with a range of partners to collate and analyse data about gangs and violence.
- 3: The Gangs and Violence Commission will agree a broad preventative public health based action plan for addressing gangs and violence, recognising that enforcement does not offer enduring solutions.
- 4: The action plan will include targeted, place-based activity
- 5: The commission should consult with local community-led organisations to support their full involvement in the development of 'local community well-being partnerships' (community, voluntary, faith, statutory and business) in neighbourhoods identified as areas needing interventions relating to gangs and violence.
- 6: The commission partners should enable community organisations and groups involved in gangs and violence associated interventions to strategise, share and train together. The best practices produced locally can be shared with statutory providers to influence city policy and practice.
- 7: Our understanding of gangs and violence locally must be underpinned by a sustained academic research programme.
- 8: The development of a community-led partnership; to use social media and information technology mechanisms to strategically reach key communities and stakeholder audiences regarding gangs and violence awareness /initiatives.
- 9: The commission partners should ensure a remapping of all community groups/organisations, faith groups and key individuals providing or supporting gangs and violence services and interventions. These groups and individuals should be invited onto an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) to work with the commission to deliver workshops around: gangs and violence reduction; and ways to increase community participation and explore more effective ways to support communities directly affected by gangs and violence.
- 10: The commission partnership should learn from Birmingham Youth Offending Service and consider a roll out of its family-empowerment approach as a template for working with families, with needs linked to the criminal justice system, youth violence and criminality.
- 11: A flexible and culturally responsive community based preventative and reactive mediation and conflict intervention capability is required.
- 12: The commission partners should work to include an 'authentic youth and family voice' in their discussions and planning. This voice can represent the views of victims and perpetrators in service provision and provide relevant information about 'life on the ground'.
- 13: The commission partners should prioritise supporting community-led organisations that support children, young people and young adults identified

as 'at risk' of gang or violence related behaviours and activities. Such early Interventions have a greater chance of success and should be available to anyone in need.

- 14: The Commission will review approaches to school exclusions, aiming to develop services and support for excluded pupils and their families.
- 15: The new Police Cadet scheme must engage young people in areas most affected by gangs and violence.
- 16: The Commission will develop, support and review schemes that support young adults at risk and ex-offenders to find work and start businesses.
- 17: Mentoring schemes should be targeted at young people at most risk.
- 18: The Commission will support development of specialist family and trauma therapy services for those affected by gang associated violence.
- 19: Birmingham City Council should engage partners in a review of services for young people.
- 20: Prisoners associated with gangs and violence should have a comprehensive 'intervention and support package' in place for when they leave prison.
- 21: The Commission's action plan should include exploration and review of faith-based approaches to gangs and violence.
- 22: There should be investment in capability to seek greater external funding from charitable and non-statutory funders.
- 23: The commission should establish a community-led 'interdisciplinary business hub' for supporting individuals and families associated with gangs and violence. This hub will show people routes into employment, training, self-employment and business start-up possibilities.
- 24: The Commission should work with businesses to provide spaces for activity, training, mentoring and advice for individuals and families associated with or impacted by gangs and violence.

14 Progress has been made on many of the recommendations and below are some of the activities that have been progressed to date.

- A Partnership Engagement Manager appointed September 2017 in partnership with Broadway School; to develop and connect young people to mentoring opportunities and support Duke of Edinburgh work
- A Community Fundraising Manager will be in post by Spring 2018, will be hosted by Birmingham Voluntary Sector Council to support capacity building and income generation for the community sector
- The Cadets scheme was launched during November 2017. The scheme will recruit 13-17 year olds, and will eventually operate across the Force with cohorts of up to thirty cadets per unit. The Cadets will aims to build active citizens,

provide early intervention and there will be a focus on young people in the target area.

- We are now relaunching the PCC's Building Blocks Charity to ensure it meets the needs of local young people and also, importantly, attracts further funding that can be used to support local activities. Trustees are now in place who have skills in the following areas: fund raising and bid writing, media and communications, youth services and youth provision
- The OPCC has met with HS2 College colleagues to explore longer terms opportunities and partnerships with local schools /colleges
- There was Youth Summit held during August 2017 to explore young people's key issues and motivations
- A Faith Summit took place that explored how faith communities can work together to tackle the issues
- We are reviewing our approach to Weapons Surrender Bins with the aim of placing more bins across all local authority areas and developing a community led approach to identifying locations
- Supporting the Precious Lives initiative in conjunction with our schools officer Rob Pedley and Alison Cope and the Precious Trust with Marcia Shakespeare
- Best Practice Summit that explored best practice from across the country in terms intervention, prevention and engagement and how other areas are responding to gangs and youth violence
- The OPCC supported the Big Clean-Up campaign which took place along Soho Road, Handsworth to engage local communities to take pride in their local area.
- We are exploring options of how buildings and access to 'space' can be used to benefit young people across our region.
- The PCC has contributed £1 million pounds towards Youth Promise Plus that supports young people into education, employment or training through tailored mentoring and specialist coaching and pathway training.
- The OPCC already commissions a family intervention project that supports the families of victims of crime, we will look at expanding the support offered.

Next Steps

- 15 To continue to respond to gang violence effectively, Birmingham needs strong leadership from the key statutory agencies and a commitment to collaborative working. The OPCC will continue to harness the commitment to this work and to deliver on the recommendations in the report.
- 16 We are now developing the structures and governance that will sit around the project to ensure it is delivered. The OPCC is working with partners to establish lead agencies for each recommendation that can be held to account for delivery, by the public. There will be a Senior Leaders Roundtable session with the Commissioner, a Corporate Social Responsibility breakfast with the Business Sector and a community meeting start to develop the 'local community well-being partnerships', IAGs and Youth Voice. This will establish the fundamental structures to deliver the recommendations. We are also

developing a commissioning structure that we are aiming to have in place for April 2018.

17 There are some key projects of note from the recommendations that should be highlighted and they are:

- A team of expert negotiators will be set up to defuse violence between gangs and to help individuals escape a life of crime.
- A mentoring scheme will be formed to help young people, at risk of offending, make the right life choices.
- A package of support will be put in place to rehabilitate ex-offenders as they leave prison and re-enter their communities. The aim is to break the cycle of crime.
- A set of programmes will be established designed to provide alternative activities for young people at risk of school exclusion and offending.

Legal Implications

18 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 states that the PCC

- a) Must make arrangements for obtaining the views of victims of crime in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area, and the views of victims of crime in that area and
- b) Provides Commissioners with the powers to award crime and disorder grants to any organisations and projects they consider will help them to achieve their crime prevention aims and wider priorities.

Financial Implications

19 There are a range of activities that support the recommendations in the report and the Commissioner has allocated a budget of £2million over 2 years to the work. It is anticipated that there will be funding streams/budgets allocated from partners working with us and responding to the recommendations.

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