

Briefing Note

From: Colin Green, District Partnership Manager, KCC

To: Gravesham's Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee

Date: 2 April 2019

Subject: Supporting Families Against Youth Crime Fund

Summary: This briefing note provides an overview of our collaborative project to reduce serious youth violence and child criminal exploitation in North Kent and Medway.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) established the Supporting Families Against Youth Crime (SFAYC) Fund to support the delivery of the government's Serious Violence Strategy.
- 1.2 Kent County Council was successful in securing £1,362,645 in funding from the SFAYC Fund over two years, to deliver and lead a collaborative North Kent and Medway project.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Supporting Families Against Serious Youth Crime Fund supports the early intervention and prevention theme of the government's Serious Violence Strategy. The strategy was published on 9 April 2018 and sets out an in-depth analysis of the trends and drivers behind the recent increases in serious violence and a major programme of work.
- 2.2 The strategy sets out multiple strands of activity that are not solely focused on law enforcement, very important as that is, but also depends on partnerships across a number of sectors, such as education, health, social services, housing, youth services, victim services and others.
- 2.3 In particular, the strategy places an emphasis on early intervention and prevention and aims to tackle the root causes of violence and prevent young people from getting involved in crime in the first place.
- 2.4 The fund supports initiatives that align with the Troubled Families Programme's focus on early intervention and scaling up whole family working. Supporting a range of initiatives, from expanding existing good practice approaches that have an evidence base, through to new or innovative interventions that an area is developing in response to the issue.

3. Aims and Objectives of the Supporting Families Against Youth Crime Fund

- 3.1 The strategic aims of the Fund are to:
 - Provide additional capacity to local authorities where gang and youth crime is an issue, to help them respond to their local needs;

- Test and learn from interventions and place-based initiatives;
- Drive improved local, multi-agency partnership working with the VCS;
- Develop children's personal resilience to withstand peer pressure and make positive choices, particularly but not limited to the transition ages between primary and secondary school;
- Reduce gang and youth crime by intervening early to raise awareness of the dangers of gangs, youth violence and knife crime and changing the culture around the acceptability of carrying knives.
- Work with parents/carers and local workforce to understand the dangers and risks surrounding gang crime.

4. Our Collaborative Project in Kent and Medway

- 4.1 Kent County Council (KCC) as lead partner will coordinate and oversee the delivery of two year fully funded collaborative project to tackle serious youth violence and child criminal exploitation.
- 4.2 The collaboration brings together Medway Council, Kent Police, Met Police and Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner to deliver this important project for North Kent and Medway.
- 4.3 Our approach will coordinate and harness the 'totality' of partner resources to support to reduce the impact of gang activity and protect children at risk of criminal exploitation.
- 4.4 KCC will use an element of the funding to establish a Core Team, consisting of a Project Coordinator, Analyst, two dedicated Police roles (1 in each Police force area) and a Support Officer.
- 4.5 The Police roles will be co-located in combined Police units, with both spending one day per fortnight in each other's combined unit. They will coordinate and information gather on gangs and child criminal exploitation; to inform/influence joint police operations and inform casework planning with children and young people within the project cohort.
- 4.6 KCC will commission a service to provide a Peer Mentoring and a targeted Family Support Service. The service will consist of 4 Peer Mentors, 4 Family and Community Workers and two Alternative Curriculum Workers. Resource equally split across both councils.
- 4.7 The commissioned service will work flexibly across local authority boundaries to ensure children, young people and their families have tailored support in place as quickly as possible.
- 4.8 This project will help support those children and young people (CYP) most at risk through casework targeted to areas of greatest demand. Our matrix will assist in prioritising CYP and resources, and bridge intelligence and safeguarding gaps between local authorities and the Police, so that resources can be prioritised according to risk, threat and harm. Support for families will be coordinated by a whole Family Plan aligned to the Troubled Families Outcome Plan in each authority area.

5. Outcomes

- 5.1 Intensive support for a minimum of 80 CYP and families per full financial year, for those at risk of child criminal exploitation and their families or communities.
- 5.2 Training and workshop sessions will be delivered throughout the year across both authorities. The project will deliver a minimum of 50 over two years. Sessions will be developed for multi-agency staff, partners, young people, parents and the community.

- 5.3 This project will seek to bridge this gap in intelligence, and in doing so ensure support and risks are better coordinated, and that Police operations have a robust dataset to inform/disrupt county lines/CCE hotspots.
- 5.4 Support for schools: We recognise the need to work with schools to deliver schools-based interventions to victims of child criminal exploitation, so we can reduce the number of exclusions. This project will enable us to identify trends in particularly schools, earlier on, and mobilise the strength of the partnership to address emerging needs before issues escalate. The project will interface with Early Help and Education Teams to support a whole school approach.
- 5.5 The overarching aims of this project are:
- To reduce the risk of criminal exploitation for children and young people;
 - To increase the quantity and quality of trusted relationships between young people and adults who are there to support them;
 - To improve the wellbeing, self-esteem, self-efficacy, resilience and critical thinking for vulnerable young people;
 - To increase community resilience to county lines to ensure our areas become a hostile environment to those looking to exploit children.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Committee are asked to note the contents of this briefing note.