

**Classification: Public**

**Key Decision: No**

## **Gravesham Borough Council**

**Report to:** Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 27 October 2022

**Reporting officer:** Topic Review Group

**Subject:** Review of Knife Crime and Serious Youth Violence

### **Purpose and summary of report:**

This report provides Members with the final recommendations of the Knife Crime and Serious Youth Violence Topic Review previously reported to this Committee.

### **Recommendations:**

1. The Committee is asked to:
  - i) Note and comment upon the recommendations of the Topic Review Group and offer any further suggestions that could be submitted to the next Gravesham Community Safety Partnership meeting in January 2023.

<b>Key Implications:</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Implications</b>
<b>Legal</b>	The Council has a statutory obligation to work with partner agencies to address crime and ASB and Crime (Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Serious Organised Crime Act 2015).
<b>Finance and Value for Money</b>	There are no identified or specific financial implications.
<b>Corporate Plan</b>	Work undertaken by the Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (and which is subject to overview by the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee makes a direct contribution to People and Place in the Corporate Plan.
<b>Climate Change</b>	None.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 Terms of Reference for the Knife Crime and Serious Youth Violence Topic Review were originally agreed in January 2020 and a Multi-Agency Round Table Topic Review meeting was held in March 2020 however, due to Covid-19 the Review was then unavoidably halted. Following the recommencement of the Review process, a verbal report on progress was provided to the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee in October 2021 and a further meeting of the Topic Review was held on 6 December 2021.

- 1.2 A full report on and the actions and provisional recommendations resulting from both the Multi-Agency Round Table Topic Review meeting and December meeting was provided to the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee in January 2022. A further update was then provided to this Committee by the Topic Review Group's Chair, Councillor Tony Rana, at its last meeting in March 2022.
- 1.3 A final meeting has been held involving Members of the Topic Review Group that was also attended by Kent Police, KCC Youth Services colleagues, the Assistant Director (Communities, GBC) and the Strategic Manager (Community Safety, GBC). This provided an opportunity to consider any more recent information or intelligence regarding the level of knife crime and serious youth violence locally and whether the recommendations identified were felt to still be appropriate for referral to the Gravesham Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The Group's discussion confirmed that:
- The level of knife crime in Gravesham is low; proactive policing, joint partnership activity and the presence of the Town Centre Policing Team, are all having a positive impact in reducing knife crime.
  - Most recent information provided to the Council's Community Safety Unit by the Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit indicates that no priority repeat locations or hot spots for serious youth violence in Gravesham are currently identified.
  - There is an extensive programme of detached and outreach youth work being delivered across the Borough that is resulting in very positive engagement with young people. Workers from KCC Youth Services and The Gr@nd work collaboratively to ensure that outreach sessions are provided in different areas at a range of different times, diverting young people into constructive activities and simultaneously safeguarding them from being drawn into crime/violence.
  - A survey is in the process of being completed with young people by KCC Youth Services to develop a better understanding of young people's own perceptions and feelings of their personal safety and concerns that they may have in respect of crime.

## **2. Recommendations of the Topic Review Group**

- 2.1 The Topic Review concluded that there were several key tasks that should be taken on board and progressed via Gravesham's CSP namely:
- That partners needed to ensure that knife crime and serious youth violence statistics are not provided/shared in isolation but alongside supporting contextual information to give a more accurate picture of the level and nature of these crimes. This is particularly important when statistics/data are being made available in the public domain.
  - That the CSP review and agree the best means to communicate information on crime issues with local people, to keep them informed of the 'real' level of violent crime in the Borough i.e., that compared to many areas (including some other Kent Districts), crime in Gravesham is not high and the Borough is a safe place in which to live and work. This will help to build confidence, maintain perspective and challenge poor perceptions that may be held.
  - That efforts be made to raise awareness of the wide range of youth activities that are available to young people across the Borough, most of which are

free of charge, and how to access them so that more young people will be encouraged to take part.

- To understand and promote the beneficial role of Neighbourhood Watch in local communities, review the current number of active Schemes, identify areas in which Schemes could be introduced and to explore opportunities to support the expansion of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes more broadly within Gravesham.

<b>Secondary Implications</b>	
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Failure to work collaboratively with partner agencies in tackling crime and ASB would be a failure to meet our statutory responsibilities and would undermine the confidence of the public in our ability to respond effectively to their community safety concerns.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	<p><i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i></p> <p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of <a href="#">personal data</a> or <a href="#">special category data</a> or <a href="#">criminal offence data</a>? A definition of each type of data can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website via the above links. No.</p> <p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? N/A</p> <p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at <a href="mailto:gdpr@medway.gov.uk">gdpr@medway.gov.uk</a>. N/A</p>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. N/A</p> <p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. N/A</p> <p><i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i></p>
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	As stated above.
<b>Digital and website implications</b>	None at this stage although some of the recommendations of the Topic Review Group, may require the support of the Council's Digital Team to promote and to provide information on the outcomes of certain activities.
<b>Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults</b>	The safeguarding of vulnerable young people and adults is corporately a high priority for the Council and is also a strategic priority for the CSP. Partnership activity that aims to improve safety within Gravesend town centre, which is accessed by children and adults alike, will contribute to safeguarding them from harm.