



Slough Locality Review

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1 Introduction

Since the Gang and Youth Violence programme started in 2011, a number of challenges have emerged from the peer reviews, and our understanding of the way in which gangs or groups use violence and exploit vulnerable individuals to commit crime has evolved significantly.

Increasingly, crime is being committed in private spaces rather than the public sphere and this type of crime often involves the criminal exploitation of children and adults on a physical, sexual or financial basis. Groups of offenders variously labelled as street gangs, organised crime groups, dangerous drug networks and subversive groups carry out this abuse, often via illegal drug markets and the lucrative profits to be made from them, or for ideological ends. Most of this violence and exploitation is not reported and won't always show up in recorded crime statistics.

Increasingly it also appears that vulnerable people, especially children, are subject and exposed to a range of risk factors, making them vulnerable to a range of perpetrators. How they are then subsequently exploited often appears to depend on who gets to them first. It also seems to be the case that current partnership structures across the country aren't able to respond to this new threat, and often continue to work in silos or duplicate work and resources. There is plenty of evidence nationally to show local partnerships and various agencies are often trying to support the same people or families, duplicating effort and resources, or missing vulnerable cohorts altogether.

New communities, who will often hold the key to understanding the issues and tracking perpetrators, are also not engaged with properly or often at all; partnerships will want to engage with them to help effect cultural change and communicate messages. The challenges for partnerships therefore are:

- The need to understand the relationship between serious group offending and local drug markets (including illegal, prescription drugs and new psychoactive substances)
- The links between vulnerable cohorts, locations and gangs e.g. care homes, missing young people, school absence and exclusions
- Making links between violence and vulnerability and the Prevent Programme

- Vulnerabilities experienced by gang-associated women and girls
- The exploitation of children by gangs and organised crime groups (sexual exploitation or exploitation in order to commit crimes such as drug dealing)
- Gang members and associates moving into other areas, such as shire counties or seaside towns, to commit crime
- Links between street gangs and organised crime groups
- The use of social media to facilitate violence and intimidation
- The links between health, particularly mental health, and gang violence
- Youth offending services managing a more violent cohort than previously
- The ability to identify both dangerous gang nominals and young people at risk of involvement in gang crime when there is a lack of police intelligence
- Making sure that resources are effectively targeted and that partnership structures are set up to respond quickly to the new threat without duplication

Often practitioners have many insights into how gangs and groups are operating and exploiting young people and vulnerable adults. This qualitative information, when triangulated across a number of interviews and linked with relevant quantitative data sets can show a richer picture of how gangs and groups work, and help us to tackle them more effectively. It can also help us to identify and protect vulnerable people. This is the locality review (LR).

2 Purpose of the Locality Review

County lines is a national issue involving the use of mobile phone lines by groups to extend their drug dealing business to new locations outside their home areas. This issue affects the majority of forces.

A county lines enterprise almost always involves exploitation of vulnerable persons; this can involve both children and adults who require safeguarding. The gangs will put the

vulnerable individuals between themselves and the risk of detection, asking them to courier drugs, often “plugged” internally, and/or to sell drugs at the other end of the line in a “traphouse”, something known as “cuckooing”.

Cuckooing involves placing gang members into a property of a vulnerable person (often a drug user) either forcibly or by promise of free drugs. The property is then used as a base from which to sell drugs, and mobile phones are used to order more drugs via couriers, who travel by train or car.

The LR is a one-day process for local areas as part of the national strategy to tackle gangs and serious youth violence. It works as a broad-brush set of interviews and focus groups with front-line practitioners to gather information, building a qualitative picture of the key issues and drivers around county lines, gangs, youth violence and vulnerability. It is a rapid evidential assessment process that focuses on violence and vulnerability. It should –

- Enable rapid assessment of issues around gang activity, serious youth violence and victimisation through drawing upon the experiences of practitioners, communities, victims and offenders
- Test the prevalence of issues identified through cross-referencing opinions from interviewees/groups and relevant quantitative data
- Identify barriers to effectively understanding and tackling local priorities (in relation to threat, risk and harm)

It is crucial to understand that this is not a review of any single organisation’s role, but a process that seeks to identify what local practitioners know about vulnerability at an operational level, understand how the partner agencies are working together operationally to deliver the area’s gang/group and youth violence priorities and examine what blockages are perceived to effective delivery at a frontline level.

3 The interviews

Focus group - Police neighbourhood team, response, CID

The group were not aware of London or other gangs running county lines into Slough, although it was stated that local gangs were dealing class A drugs in Slough and running what appears to be county lines out of Slough. Some local gangs were also said to have clear connections with London gangs, as a result of gang members moving from London into Slough. Local gang members (estimated to be around 18 years old) have been arrested for PWITS (possession with intent to supply) in Yeovil and Bournemouth, indicating that Slough

groups are exporting drugs out of the area, although it was noted that most PWITS arrests usually took place in Slough itself.

Cuckooing was said to be occurring in Slough, orchestrated by local gangs and criminal families. In Britwell, 13 addresses were said to have been cuckooed, following the usual mode (taking over the property of a class A user in order to establish a base for dealing heroin and crack cocaine).

There is a Serious Youth Violence meeting in Slough to manage this and provide early intervention for those at risk of becoming involved in gangs. A large number of gang members were thought to be attending the local Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) too. Concerns were voiced around looked after children (LACs), as children with connections to London and Birmingham gangs were said to have been placed in residential homes in Slough.

We were told that CID and intelligence usually lead on gang matters, although there is no gang unit or problem profile the group was aware of relating to gangs, violence and vulnerability. Other issues raised included -

- A perception from the group that the police drive the SYV (serious youth violence) meeting when other partners need to be more involved - for example it was stated that Children's Services can be difficult to engage with
- The neighbourhood team are briefed regarding gang activity but this could be improved - it was noted that whenever a serious gang occurs they are "bombarded" with information, names and photos, but this then drops off again
- Juveniles are being arrested with weapons and drugs but are released after an hour in custody
- The gang issue needs to be treated as seriously as CSE is
- The main perpetrators of CSE, sexual abuse and gang violence tend to overlap

Focus group - Schools and PRU, Children's Services

The issue of gangs was felt to be a growing issue for schools - one gave an example of year 8 pupils who left for the summer break and when they returned as year 9s had clearly changed, seeing themselves as a gang and acting inappropriately. It was thought that they had been groomed by older boys.

Examples were also given of pupils involved in violence or bringing drugs into school, who refused to talk about the incidents (even when clearly identified on CCTV) and who appeared "terrified of retribution". The PRU was aware of pupils who were thought to be involved in gangs going missing overnight and found in areas such as Hayes, Barnes and Brent. Young people from Hounslow were also known to be travelling into Slough.

Parents were said to be hard to engage and it was felt that a programme to make parents more aware of their children being involved in gang related activity would be useful. Although the PRU run programmes such as the Breakaway project (an afterschool initiative), a lack of provision was felt to be a problem, along with confusion regarding who the schools could report suspicions to. There was also said to be problems gathering or obtaining actual evidence of gang activity or involvement.

The SYV panel was felt to be good at data sharing information and intelligence, although some felt it might be difficult to evidence what actual action or activity arises as a result of the meeting.

Vulnerable locations were said to include -

- The Power league football provision
- Mercian Way Park
- Millstream Lane
- Shops on Britwell estate

Focus group - TVP Intelligence

The group had a good knowledge of gangs and organised crime (OCGs). The following gangs were named:

- The Diamond Boys
- Grey Bandana Gang (GBG)
- Lismore Park Killers (LPK)
- LPK youngers
- Marley Boys AKA MB or Muslim Boys

The group described OCGs in the area as well-established crime families who are embedded in the community with intergenerational criminal involvement. The intelligence team stated that importing/inward county lines were not present in Slough even though several of the named gang had links with London e.g. Hounslow, Croydon. The absence of county lines was attributed to the established OCGs who currently control of the drugs market. These OCGs would not allow external groups to enter the area to deal. There had been cases of exporting/outward county lines to Newbury and Oxford.

Local serious youth violence, CSE and drugs problem profiles existed. These are created from reported crime data and information from A&E. However, it was unclear how the local intelligence picture linked together with the wider force violence and vulnerability landscape. The intelligence team said they struggled with information from the community and cited a case of a stabbing recently which was witnessed by a group of people who were

unwilling to speak to the Police or give witness statements. The victim also did not want to talk to the Police. They said this is an on-going challenge.

The team explained that the drugs market was location based as follows:

- Chalvey - heroin and crack cocaine
- Manor Park - cannabis

The group were aware of Roma gangs from Algeria and Albania based in Chalvey. There was a slight disagreement in the group about the areas of crime this gang was involved in. Fraud, car crime, drugs and sex trade were the crimes perpetrated by this gang. There had been one reported case of a gang member having extremist views and linked to PREVENT.

There was knowledge of cuckooing and details of cases were discussed. The cases were mainly in the Britwell estate and Manor Park areas. The victims had mental or physical disabilities.

Multi-agency training has been widely delivered by the intelligence team on CSE which had been well received. It has been delivered to NHS and several local authority departments. The group spoke about several specific cases of CSE of young women aged 14 + that were linked to gang initiation e.g. multiple rapes.

In 2016 a report had been produced by Sgt. Chris Shaw showing about a 70% increase in knife crime in the local area. The group believed this had been the basis of the business case for the additional 15 officers that were being transferred into the area over the next few months.

There was no knowledge of the national referral mechanism (NRM) which is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. The officers saw the value of the NRM once it was explained.

Focus group - Early Help/ Multi Agency Group

The early help group was aware of named gangs in the area. They had a good knowledge of CSE and were aware of cases which were mainly peer on peer. The types of CSE they work with range from CSE on social media, sexting, cyber grooming to young people going missing, especially looked after children.

The group explained the referral system with the safeguarding front door and how it is integrated with the MASH. The MASH has been running for approximately 6 months and is receiving 6 referrals per day.

There is a locally produced Pan Berkshire CSE indicator tool which prompts a detailed assessment for referral and seen as a success. A copy of the tool was requested.

Hotel watch was discussed. This is an initiative which delivers CSE training and information to hotel staff and taxi drivers. This was put in place after cases of older men visiting hotels with young girls were being reported. This has been a great success. There are still concerns regarding the numerous private bed and breakfast premises in Slough where CSE may still be happening.

The Young People's Service who carry out the return home interviews for young people residing in Slough, have concerns about the number of young people going missing especially looked after children (LACs). They discussed a case where a group of 4 or 5 LACs aged 13 -14 year olds went missing from the same children's home overnight. The YOT prevention team work with missing young people. This is leading to improved return home interviews. A permanent missing officer will be in post shortly. The team also has a young person's drugs worker.

The group spoke about the numerous meetings they are required to attend. These include

- SYV
- OCG
- Vmap
- SEMRAC

The group suggested some efficiency could be made with the number of meetings that currently exist. They also highlighted that most meetings were chaired by the Police. This meant that unintentionally the Polices' agenda dominated: despite this the group thought that the partnership was strong and information sharing was good.

There was no knowledge of the national referral mechanism (NRM) which is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. The group said they would welcome multi-agency training on the subject.

Focus group - Youth Offending Team (YOT), Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) and Probation

This group were aware of a recent increase in violence and links to gangs, but found it difficult to evidence this, although they could name a number of local groups/gangs. They felt local crime families' drove most of the local drug/crime activity and these families would not be known locally as gangs. They are aware of conflict between local groups and quoted the Purple Hayes from London as one of the groups local young people had conflict with.

Local gangs known -

- The Diamond Boys
- Grey Bandana Gang (GBG)
- Lismore Park Killers (LPK)
- Marley Boys

All felt county lines were likely to be present in Slough but again did not provide obvious evidence of this. They were able to describe examples of local young people stripped and subject to what appears to be initiation violence (stabbings/beatings), but could not link this to named gangs. The group discussed young people found and or arrested in Swindon, Dorset, Norfolk, London and Kent and it was believed this may be linked to county lines and drug dealing. All felt that the local Serious and Organised Crime multi agency partnership needed to address this emerging issue of local groups involved in this activity.

All felt training and awareness for professionals, parents and the young people would help identify the signs and signals of county lines. The group felt that although there was a focus locally on CSE and domestic abuse the subject of county lines and linked exploitation had not been tackled, was not well understood and was a growing concern. All felt involving Magistrates and the Crown Prosecution Service in this training would help highlight the need for impact statements and the significant community risk gang's/group violence brings.

The definition of a gang has caused confusion with many of the key stakeholders thought to be unsure of what a gang is, having a perception of "*out of town gun toting black men*" as gang members, whilst local youths hanging around together to sell drugs, taunt police, steal cars and fight were not seen as gangs.

There was no knowledge of the national referral mechanism (NRM) which is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support.

Focus group - Accommodating Young People

The group had a good awareness of the gangs and drugs landscape in the area, naming gangs and hotspot drug dealing areas of concern (reported to the police) which are as follows:

- Manor Park
- Britwell Estate
- Lansdowne Avenue

They mentioned a historic presence of super spice, the legal high, in the area which was described as an “explosion” approximately 18 months ago. The drug had originated from Reading. This is no longer a threat in the area, on the scale it was, due to the dealer being arrested and imprisoned. They also referenced alcohol, heroin and cocaine as drugs of choice for the homeless. They attend the SYV partnership meeting and spoke positively about local information sharing.

The local authority has also delivered a pilot relating to landlords of houses of multiple occupancy in the Chalvey area. The results of this were requested. The information from the pilot will contribute to the development of new housing strategy currently being created.

We spoke about the cross-rail development and the impact this will have on the town. There is considerable investment being made in Slough with new housing and development of the town center. We discussed how the community will be affected and opportunities the development made for young people in the town.

There was no knowledge of the national referral mechanism (NRM) which is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. The group said they would welcome multi-agency training on the subject.

Focus group - Health Group / GP / Health Visitor

The group stated that they have concerns about the level of violence that they were seeing in A&E related to youth stabbings for over 6 months. There has been a year on year increase in stabbings of 400%. (This translates from 2 stabbings to 16 stabbings). The named safeguarding nurse had undertaken an audit of 10 cases. These were examined in detail and reveal a set of common themes for the young people stabbed in these cases. Some common themes include – unknown perpetrator, bereavement within immediate family, lack of parental engagement. The audit has been presented to the LSCB quality and assurance sub-group.

Members of the group attend the multi-agency on SYV and CSE. The members of the group are delivering training on all gangs and youth violence to health professionals based at Wexham Park Hospital. All GPs in the area are keen to receive training in all areas of vulnerability. This should be arranged in 2 hour slots in a lunch time to reach the maximum number of staff.

The A & E Dept. is making daily referrals to the MASH. Currently there is little or no feedback from the MASH to A&E staff. If this was to occur, it would show A&E staff the benefit for referring to MASH and motivate them to continue this process.

The risk management of A&E was discussed if gang members from opposing gangs were admitted at the same time. There is an A&E lock down procedure in place. However, if the gang members are seriously hurt and referred to a ward this may be a challenge as there is only one surgical ward. The risk assessment may need to be refreshed specifically in relation to gangs.

There was no knowledge of the national referral mechanism (NRM) which is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. The group said they would welcome multi-agency training on the subject.

Focus group CSE and community safety

Although intelligence was supplied by this group to the police regarding gang related violence and drug dealing, no reciprocal information or briefing is provided, leaving the feeling of information going into a “black hole”, thus discouraging the recording of further information.

The group agreed that suitable terms of reference for a range of groups/meetings was needed in order to adapt to the increasing issue of violence, vulnerability and exploitation driven by local and (increasingly) gangs/groups from out of the area. All felt training and awareness for professionals would help identify the signs and signals of county lines.

The group felt that the NRM process was unclear and the link to modern slavery legalisation had not been made by most services.

We heard about links with Croydon, Southall and further afield like Luton and Birmingham, no structured SPOC process was in place and information exchange relied on personal relationships.

The SEMRAC (sexual exploitation missing risk assessment conference) was seen as an effective process for sharing information and tasking resources, and it had highlighted girls linked to gangs and rehoused into Slough without sufficient risk assessment. The recent change in one of the areas in Thames Valley to take the S (sexual) out of SEMRAC was seen as a positive step to more effectively identify vulnerability linked to county lines and drug dealing.

Vulnerable locations -

- Mallards Children’s home
- YMCA +16
- Millennium House

- All the PRU establishments

There was less detailed knowledge of independently run local care homes and supported living provisions regarding their governance and resident's current risks. The mapping of these vulnerable locations would help identify and manage this risk.

Focus group - Adult safeguarding (only one attendee, safeguarding adult co-ordinator)

It was noted that there are lots of adults in Slough with chaotic lifestyles involving drugs and alcohol, and that there was a culture of entrenched criminality in some families that played out in gang activity, usually around the supply of drugs. Cuckooing did take place but unless the adult concerned has vulnerability (such as a learning disability), they probably don't meet the safeguarding criteria for support from adult social care.

It was thought that awareness training for adult safeguarding staff (including the mental health team) around gangs, violence and vulnerability would be useful in order to help staff recognise signs and links between gangs, modern slavery and exploitation.

Focus group - Alternative provision, Pupil Referral Unit, Voluntary Community Sector group

The group were aware of pupils who openly admitted to gang membership, and knowledge of young people running drug lines out of Slough - one young man was said to have returned from such activity with an obvious wound to his leg and was heard talking about "the traphouse".

One of the group provided youth provision and stated that his organisation was considering rebranding and relaunching Monday evening provision due to "challenging sessions and poor behaviour". The group were aware of local gangs and cited a Somali group (Cash Affiliated) who were known as the "Kings of the Great Western", running drug lines to the south of the country. Open houses that dealt heroin and crack were also thought to be well known in Britwell.

The group commented on the general behaviour and nihilistic attitude of young people they worked with, believing that the behaviour of this cohort had grown much more challenging this year in particular. There was a great deal of discussion around the low aspirations of people in the area and a significant cohort whose ambition was to become a gangster - there was nothing else that seemingly appealed to this group.

The council was felt to be concentrating resources into certain areas, ignoring others with a developing problem - Colnbrook and Cippenham were mentioned.

There was generally felt to be an over emphasis on CSE at the expense of work to tackle gang violence - an example was given by the PRU safeguarding lead who had contacted Children's Services three times with no response over concerns around a young man believed to be involved with gangs and at risk of harm.

Concern was raised at the conversion of office space into residential flats and studios in the centre of Slough, and London boroughs buying properties in order to place people from London (Ealing for example) into accommodation in the area - it was thought that this would accelerate an increase in vulnerable people moving to the town from London.

Focus group - Young people VCS, Youth Voice focus group

The group discussed the educational preference group, seen as good practice as it brought educational specialists from across the district together to discuss emerging issues and themes. Educational establishments are seeing an increase in drug activity and hearing more anecdotal stories of young people involved.

Practitioners had heard from their respective clients that there had been a rise in the availability of crack cocaine, perhaps driven by the reduction in the quality of heroin. All felt that the cohort they worked with are vulnerable to county lines and gangs/groups. All felt training and awareness for professionals, parents and the young people would help identify the signs and signals of county lines. Interestingly all felt that the young people would not see themselves as members of a gang.

There was no knowledge of the national referral mechanism (NRM) amongst this group who work with vulnerable young people.

All felt that targeted primary school education on this subject would help build the resilience of young people in Slough. Local mentors and role models were also thought to be an effective way to disrupt and prevent this growing issue.

We heard about people from London relocating to Slough, with some having existing connections. A key issue at this stage is that Slough does not have a particularly large night time economy but as the infrastructure grows this may change. The group felt local Slough groups feel that there is no consequence to what they do, and prison does not act as a deterrent to them.

Focus group - Local councillors

Most were aware of a problem with gangs and county lines in the areas (mainly gangs travelling out), and believed that the police were not taking the problem seriously enough. Examples were given of how councillors and local residents had reported open drug dealing to the police with no response.

There was a perceived lack of aspiration in young people and a lack of resources and activities to divert them from gang activity, and anecdotal examples were given of how young people were being intimidated by gangs - one councillor told of how a group were openly dealing drugs from the boot of a car outside a local school.

Councillors were also aware of local children involved in carrying and running drugs locally, and stated that the issue of drug dealing from certain addresses needed tackling.

It was thought that a targeted programme in schools was needed, aimed at primary school children as well as older pupils, and also a programme aimed at parents to make them more aware of the potential consequences of gang involvement and how to spot the signs.

4 Summary

Slough's problem with gangs, violence and vulnerability appears to be different from other areas. Whereas most places outside of large metropolitan areas suffer from London, Manchester, Liverpool or Birmingham gangs travelling into them, Slough's local gangs and criminal families seem to control the internal drug market for heroin and crack and also appear to be running drug lines out of the area to a number of places across the country. This will present the same type of safeguarding issues currently faced by large cities, namely young children and teenagers travelling out of their local area to deal drugs.

It was noticeable that most interviews readily acknowledged the presence of class A drugs in the town, and the activity of local gangs. A significant number of those interviewed believe that the issue with gangs and drugs is getting more serious, resulting in more violence and the increasing involvement of young people.

Like most areas, the internal drug market, the driver for most gang violence, is not well understood. This provides the business model for gangs and can be extremely lucrative. There is clearly a role here for public health agencies and the Thames Valley Police drugs profile (mentioned in one of the interviews) should be reviewed to take into account the "customer" base for drugs, and examine implications for agencies other than the police. Such a profile will help Slough better understand the nature of the problem and decide how to tackle it and deploy resources.

Although most of those interviewed mentioned that the entrenched criminality of certain local families and gangs has kept external gangs out, this does not mean that this will necessarily remain the case. In other parts of the country we are seeing gangs vie with each other to sell and distribute drugs, and in some cases gangs are pushing crack cocaine, hoping to win some of the heroin market held by rivals. There is also a need to consider the implications of new arrivals into the town, via planning changes (such as the conversion of

office space into residential housing) as well as migration changes. Things are changing quickly in Slough across a range of indicators, and gang violence and activity could also be subject to change too.

There is a sense that the police and community safety from the local authority are leading on this issue in the absence of others; the attendance of certain agencies at the review was disappointing, and lent credence to the view from some that the police are driving this agenda but need support from other quarters. Experience shows that the police cannot arrest their way out of this type of problem as it is cross cutting and requires the involvement of a range of agencies around safeguarding, drugs, early intervention and the development of strategies. For example, there was evidence of extensive experience of gangs and gang violence from health professionals interviewed and ways should be found to involve them in partnership work to a greater degree.

From those we spoke to, there is a willingness and experience in Slough that can provide a solid base to tackle the problem with gangs, violence and vulnerability. There are structures in place that appear well considered and sensible, but what is lacking is a strategic approach to the problem and clear evidence of leadership from a senior level to drive and prioritise the work. There are numerous meetings identified that were often attended by the same people with the same vulnerable individuals discussed. It may be the case that Slough considers how it could combine the agendas around gangs, CSE, modern slavery and missing people in order to reduce duplication.

5 Recommendations

- Consideration should be given to a visioning event involving partners from across the town and county. This will help to spread awareness of the issue amongst partners (especially hard to reach ones) and help to identify potential areas of information and intelligence that can help to inform the analytical picture. It could also start discussions around the effectiveness (or otherwise) of current structures and look at identifying potential blockages or improvements to partnership working. It could also help to start work around some of the recommendations outlined below.
- A problem profile that understands and explains the current position around gangs, violence and vulnerability should be commissioned. This should look at the current situation around the internal drug market and local gangs, the business model involved (including the financial size of the market and therefore motivations of the main gangs involved) and the implications of a potential increase in those using class A drugs, which was mentioned by some of those interviewed. Partner data (hospital data around wounding's for example) should be part of this work, including data

supplied by Violent Crime Reduction Nurses via the Information Sharing to Tackle Violence Programme (<https://officelondonccgs.org.uk/blog/ccg-bulletin-issue-91/>). A local mapping of potentially vulnerable locations would also help inform the overall strategy on vulnerability and exploitation. A local collection plan with appropriate data sets will help provide a clear picture of the demand, evidence the need for resources and help to establish objectives and outcomes. The findings from the A&E violence audit prepared for the LSCB quality and assurance sub-group should be shared with professionals working with young people.

- Consider a local definition of gangs and serious group offending that highlights violence, vulnerability and exploitation linked to local and out of town groups and gangs.
- Review of information sharing protocols between Police, partners and third sector organisations in the town, to enhance the intelligence picture in relation to drug usage and vulnerability. A review of outreach youth provision might be advisable given how gangs appear to be targeting local youths. Youth outreach work can be used to engage with hard to reach children, and is also useful in terms of getting messages out to these groups that may not be in contact with any other agency.
- Awareness training around the issue of gangs, vulnerability and violence, and also in relation to NRM and modern slavery - specifically young persons trafficked for the purpose of drug supply - would seem to be of use to local partners and practitioners. Also review of awareness training in schools to highlight the dangers of county lines and local youths being lured/exploited to supply drugs. Training should be considered for health professional and GPs on gangs in the area, CSE and other forms of vulnerability e.g. FGM, modern slavery, human trafficking. Health professionals suggested that the optimum time to deliver training would be at lunch time for a maximum 2 hours.
- Consideration should be given to working more closely with the multi-faith groups and include their youth workers in training. This would provide a consistency of understanding and knowledge around violence, vulnerability and safeguarding.
- The input from key community representatives should be included at all levels of the work around gang violence and exploitation and they should be involved in the co-design of future strategies.
- Health professionals should be made aware of health based interventions such as Red Thread that can assist staff in A&E when a young person is admitted with a suspected stab wound. Their Youth Violence Intervention Programme runs in

hospital emergency departments in partnership with the major trauma network. Their innovative service aims to reduce serious youth violence by engaging the young person at a teachable moment in their life, and has revolutionised the support available to young victims of violence.

- The A&E Dept. have an existing “lock down” procedure in place which can be invoked when necessary if there are opposing gang members admitted together. Consideration should be given to refresh the risk assessment plan for the single surgical hospital ward staff should be given an understanding of gang conflicts that may arise to manage risk if more than one gang member is admitted at any one time.

6 Ongoing support

Learning from the gang and youth violence programme is shared via the Gang and Youth Violence Special Interest Group and can be access by the Home Office tackling crime unit and Basecamp online site. <https://basecamp.com/2308334/projects/12421689>

Contacts to discuss the recommendations and support any future work are -

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