



## Cabinet

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| <b>Title</b>                   | <b>Serious Violence Strategy 2024-27</b>  |
| <b>Date of meeting</b>         | 16 January 2024   |
| <b>Report of</b>               | Councillor Sara Conway - Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Participation  |
| <b>Wards</b>                   | All   |
| <b>Status</b>                  | Public  |
| <b>Key</b>                     | Key   |
| <b>Urgent</b>                  | No  |
| <b>Appendices</b>              | Appendix A - Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment 2023<br>Appendix B – Serious Violence Strategy 2024 -2027<br>Appendix C - Outline Violence & Vulnerability Action Plan 2023  |
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## Summary

Under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (“the PCSC Act”), London Boroughs are specified authorities who must exercise their functions in relation to the Serious Violence Duty 2023 (“The Duty”). The Duty covers the requirements set out in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the PCSC Act. It requires specified authorities in a local government area to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence (so far as it is possible to do so), and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing, and reducing serious violence in the area. The Duty also requires the specified authorities to consult educational, prison and youth custody authorities for the area in the preparation of their strategy.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires Community Safety Partnerships to make Serious Violence an explicit priority. The amendments require Community Safety Partnerships to identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area and the causes of that violence, as far it is possible to do so. The findings are set out in the Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment attached at Appendix A.

Barnet’s Safer Communities Partnership which is comprised of specific authorities as defined in the PCSC Act, Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade, Barnet Council, Public Health, Youth Justice, and Probation Services, must work together to formulate and deliver a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence in the area. The Serious Violence Strategy is attached at Appendix B.

## Recommendations

That Cabinet note and agree the following;

- a. The Serious Violence Strategy 2023-27 at Appendix 1.
- b. The Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment 2023 at Appendix 2
- c. Outline Violence & Vulnerability Action Plan 2023 at Appendix 3

### 1. Reasons for the Recommendations

#### 1.1 Serious Violence Duty

- 1.1.1 The Serious Violence Duty 2023 (‘The Duty’) is a key part of the Government’s programme of work to prevent and reduce serious violence; taking a multi-agency approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focused on prevention and early intervention, and informed by evidence.
- 1.1.2 Under the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State within Chapter 1, Part 2 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (the ‘PCSC Act’), Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to help tackle crime and reduce reoffending, are required to formulate and implement a strategy to prevent people from becoming involved in serious violence, both as victims and perpetrators, and to reduce instances of serious violence in the area (following the amendments made to the Crime and Disorder Act by the PCSC Act).

1.1.3 Barnet's Safer Communities Partnership, as a 'duty holder' is required to work together to prevent and tackle violent offending by establishing a Strategic Needs Assessment and preparing and implementing a Strategy which should be reviewed annually. The Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment and Serious Violence Strategy fulfil the statutory requirements of both the Serious Violence Duty and Crime and Disorder Act.

1.1.4 Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 also requires every local authority to have a Crime and Disorder committee to oversee the work of the members of the Safer Communities Partnership. The Crime and Disorder Overview & Scrutiny Committee has powers to address local crime and disorder matters under section 19 which include:

- (a) crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour)
- (b) misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances
- (c) serious violence (within the means of Chapter 1, Part 1 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

1.1.5 The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) has a discretionary power to monitor the performance of the local partnership against its shared objectives. MOPAC has defined Serious Violence for London authorities for the purposes of the Duty as:

*'Any violence and exploitation affecting young people under the age of 25, domestic abuse, and sexual violence. Within the context of these types of violence, it encompasses homicide, grievous bodily harm, actual bodily harm, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault, personal robbery, threats to kill and violence against property caused during the commission of one of these offences. Domestic abuse is as defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021'*

## **1.2 Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment 2023**

1.2.1 The Duty requires the Safer Community Partnership to produce a Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) to support organisations and authorities exercising functions in relation to the Serious Violence Duty 2023, to formulate a Serious Violence Strategy.

1.2.2 The SNA provides a comprehensive evidence-based analysis of the local profile, causes and contributing factors of serious violence. It is informed by information and feedback collated from specified authorities, local communities and organisations providing support in Barnet and, provides the basis from which solutions to reduce serious violence can be built.

1.2.3 Key findings from Barnet's Serious Violence SNA are set out below and inform the Safer Communities Partnership Serious Violence Strategy:

- Strengthen partnership working for a coordinated whole system approach to preventing and tackling violent offending in the borough.
- Learn from and build on the successes of existing local projects and services that are targeted at preventing and reducing crime, violence, and exploitation.

- Learn from the early success of the “Clear Hold Build” approach to improve community safety and reduce crime and anti-social behaviours in areas with higher levels of violent offending.
- Support the development of universal and standardised support that is place-based in local schools and communities, with a focus on:
  - Empowering parents and carers
  - Preventative education approaches
  - Pro-active and evidenced-informed support for 10 to 25-year-olds at the greatest risk of exploitation, offending and violence.
- Development of targeted support aimed at reducing exploitation and offending in vulnerable groups including those aged 10-24 years with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and needs arising from neurodiverse conditions.
- Proactively monitor and tackle disproportionately of over-represented groups who are affected by violence and build data into key performance indicators and evaluation of all services.
- Effectively engage and coproduce solutions to local problems with local people
- Support the development of victim support services for males as an identified high-risk group.
- Work with schools to monitor and proactively intervene to reduce the need for ‘managed moves’ and risk of permanent exclusion from education, employment and training.
- Develop a public awareness campaign aimed at reducing knife-enabled offending.
- Align strategic priorities of the Combatting Drugs Partnership, Community Safety Strategy, Reducing Offending Partnership, Youth Justice Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board, Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls, Tackling Exploitation Strategy with the Serious Violence Strategy

1.2.4 The SNA has been informed by pooled data shared by the specified and relevant authorities of the PCSC Act, local community groups, residents, and Members who participated in the public consultation exercise completed in 2023, to create a stronger understanding of local drivers of serious violence and insights into the cohorts of people most affected or at risk.

### **1.3 Serious Violence Strategy**

1.3.1 The Serious Violence Strategy has been prepared for the Safer Communities Partnership to exercise its functions to prevent and reduce serious violence in Barnet. The scope of the strategy is concerned with specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, and gun crime, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in gangs and county lines drug dealing. For the purposes of the Duty, violence includes

domestic abuse, sexual offences, violence against property, and threats of violence but does not include terrorism.

- 1.3.2 The template for the Serious Violence Strategy has been developed by MOPAC, which is the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the London region as established by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011; the template aims to ensure a consistent format and approach across London.
- 1.3.3 The strategy identifies the need for strong community collaboration, with existing community groups, parents, schools, and children and young people and will build on the existing good work participation and engagement activities taking place across the borough and coproduce solutions.
- 1.3.4 Existing strategies and partnership delivery plans for tackling domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, combatting drugs, reducing offending, and meeting the needs of vulnerable cohorts of children will be aligned to the aims of the Serious Violence Strategy to reduce duplication of effort.
- 1.3.5 The Serious Violence Strategy 2024-27 sets out seven strategic objectives for the Partnership which will be underpinned by a Violence & Vulnerability Reduction Action Plan which will have clear and measurable desired outcomes; this is detailed in Appendix 3.

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| <b>Objective 1.</b> | Build upon and strengthen existing partnership initiatives through a coordinated and whole system approach, aligning local strategic ambitions for combatting drugs, tackling violence against women & girls, reducing offending, tackling exploitation and serious violence.   |
| <b>Objective 2.</b> | Build upon local community, child, and parent participation approaches to engage local communities in coproduced problem-solving activities.  |
| <b>Objective 3.</b> | Raise public awareness of the individual, community and social harm caused by violence through targeted campaigns   |
| <b>Objective 4.</b> | Engage perpetrators of all forms of violence in behaviour change programmes and ensure justice is served.   |
| <b>Objective 5.</b> | Support the development of a place-based approach in local schools and communities, with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Empowering parents and carers</li> <li>▪ Preventative education approaches</li> <li>▪ Meeting the emerging needs of children and young people with special educational needs</li> <li>▪ Pro-active and evidenced-informed support for 10 to 25-year-olds at the greatest risk of exploitation, offending and violence.</li> </ul> |
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| <b>Objective 6.</b> | Strengthen victim support, ensuring accessible and trauma-informed support is available to all victims of serious violence                                       |
| <b>Objective 7.</b> | Share and use data across the partnership to inform and monitor the development and effectiveness of services aimed at preventing and tackling serious violence. |

1.3.6 The Secretary of State has made regulations in connection with the publication and dissemination of the strategy which set out that the strategy must be published by 31 January 2024 and placed on the Council website. The strategy must be submitted to the Secretary of State for the Home Department within 7 days of publication. It should be sent to: [seriousviolenceduty@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:seriousviolenceduty@homeoffice.gov.uk)

1.3.7 PCSC Act requires that the Serious Violence Strategy is published and reviewed, on at least an annual basis. The review should consider how the interventions and solutions developed through the strategy, have impacted serious violence within the borough using crime statistics and local data. If new and emerging crime types are identified; the SNA and strategy may need to be refreshed.

## 2. Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended

2.1 Not applicable

## 3. Post Decision Implementation

3.1 The Cabinet may decide to make recommendations to the Safer Communities Partnership in the further development or implementation of the Serious Violence Strategy.

3.2 Progress the Partnership is making against the aims of strategy will be reported to the Overview & Scrutiny sub-Committee for Crime and Disorder.

## 4. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

### Corporate Plan

4.1.1 The Barnet corporate plan puts Caring for People, our Places and the Planet at the heart of everything we do, with a commitment to create places that are clean, safe and welcoming.

4.1.2 The Corporate Plan recognises that everyone should feel safe in their home and community and sets out an ambition for town centres, neighbourhoods and other public spaces to feel safe and that they are designed with residents in mind by working with communities. The Serious Violence Strategy aims to coproduce solutions with local people, ensuring that residents' perception of safety is improved.

4.1.3 Caring for People includes equipping our children and young people with the tools to take advantage of present and future opportunities, for example by ensuring they live in a safe

environment and have an excellent education, providing early help were needed to their families.

4.1.4 Family Friendly is a key driver of our corporate planning with the vision of “Creating a Family Friendly Barnet, enabling opportunities for our children and young people to achieve their best” through the delivery of evidence-informed services that are child-focused, strengths-based, trauma-informed and coproduced with children, young people and families. The Serious Violence Strategy aims to identify children and young people who are at the greatest risk of violence and provide support early to prevent violence.

4.1.5 We want children and young people to live their lives successfully, reach their potential and develop a sense of identity, ensuring the most vulnerable are protected, safe and supported to make the best choices and to build trusted relationships and prepare for adulthood.

### **Action Plan**

4.2.1 The Partnership will update the outline updated Violence & Vulnerability Reduction Action Plan, based on the Serious Violence Strategy which must be submitted to MOPAC Violence Reduction Unit by 28 February 2024

### **Sustainability**

4.3.1 The strategy outlines the need for sustainable approaches to preventing and tackling serious violence, given the short-term funding arrangements for locally delivered projects. This is achieved by building capacity in local providers, schools and communities to effectively prevent children becoming involved in incidents of serious violence.

### **Corporate Parenting**

4.4.1 Children and young people in care and care experienced young people have a higher prevalence of adverse childhood experiences that may make them susceptible to grooming and coercion as such may be at an increased risk of becoming involved with violence and the criminal justice system. The Serious Violence Strategy aims to ensure all children at risk of offending are provided with support early and ensures cohesive overlap with Corporate Parenting Services, transitional safeguarding and transitions and resettlement planning for young people involved with Youth Offending Services and transitioning to National Probation Services.

### **Risk Management**

4.5.1 The Safer Communities Partnership will monitor risk through the development of a Violence and Vulnerability Reduction Action Plan that will underpin the Serious Violence Strategy. This will be reported at quarterly Safer Communities Partnership Board Meetings and scrutinised at the Crime and Disorder Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

### **Insight**

4.6.1 The Safer Communities Partnership has a comprehensive suite of performance information to support decision making, including local and regional and national datasets. The Strategic

Needs Assessment has detailed the local profile for serious offending. The Violence Reduction Action Plan will report performance against agreed outcomes which will be reported to the Safer Communities Partnership Board and the Violence Reduction Unit of the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime.

### **Social Value**

- 4.2.1 The cost of offending and reoffending is set out in the 2018 Home Office report on the Economic and Social Cost of Crime (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). The report followed a cohort of offenders identified in 2016 who subsequently went on to reoffend during the 12-month follow-up. The total estimated economic and social cost of reoffending was £18.1 billion. In addition, there is a further personal, familial and community cost which impacts the lives of individuals, children and families and the communities that they live in.
- 4.2.2 Reducing violence and offending seeks to minimise the harm caused and create opportunities for social integration, family cohesion and community engagement.

## **5 Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)**

- 5.2 None in the context of this report.

## **6 Legal Implications and Constitution References**

- 6.2 Under s4 of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009, A crime and disorder committee shall meet to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions as the committee considers appropriate but no less than once in every twelve-month period.
- 6.3 The Council's Constitution, Part 2B sets out the Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 10.1.8 To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions in accordance with s.19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.
- 6.4 Under the Council's Constitution Part 2D, the terms of reference of the Cabinet includes:
- 6.5 The Cabinet is responsible for the following functions:
- 6.6 Development of proposals for the budget (including the capital and revenue budgets, the fixing of the Council Tax Base, and the level of Council Tax) and the financial strategy for the Council;
- Monitoring the implementation of the budget and financial strategy;
  - Recommending major new policies (and amendments to existing policies) to the Council for approval as part of the Council's Policy Framework and implementing those approved by Council;



- Approving policies that are not part of the policy framework;
- Management of the Council's Capital Programme

## **7 Consultation**

- 7.1.1 My Say Matters: Child Participation and Family Involvement Strategy (2022) is Barnet Family Services consultation, engagement and participation programme for children and young people. Children are routinely engaged, consulted and supported to participate in the co-production of plans, strategies, information and services.
- 7.1.2 Together: The Barnet Community Participation Strategy 2022 underpins the Council's principles and approaches that the council will take in putting the community at the heart of decision-making and service delivery.
- 7.1.3 The Strategic Needs Assessment and Serious Violence Strategy has been informed by a period of public consultation which has included focus groups, online surveys and ward walkabouts and direct engagement with 50+ children and young people, 200 professionals, alongside input from residents, businesses, and members.

## **8 Equalities and Diversity**

- 8.1 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, the Council and all other organisations exercising public functions on its behalf must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without; promote good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without.
- 8.2 The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination. The work of overview and scrutiny will be transparent and accessible to all sectors of the community.
- 8.3 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.
- 8.4 Offending affects all communities and there is well-documented racial disproportionality in the criminal justice system for children and adults. Youth justice services for children and young must be sensitive and responsive to age, disability, race and ethnicity, faith or belief, sex, gender reassignment, language, maternity / parental status and sexual orientation. We closely monitor this in our performance data.
- 8.5 It is our aim for the borough to be a fair, inclusive and a safe place for all our communities. A borough where discrimination is tackled, crime is reported and dealt with promptly, and everyone feels safe to live their life.

## 9 Background Papers

- 9.1 [Serious Violence Duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- 9.2 [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales \(the Victims' Code\) \(PDF, 601KB\)](#)
- 9.3 [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines 2018, Home Office](#)
- 9.4 [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)
- 9.5 [From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives: a 10-year plan to cut crime and save lives by reducing the supply and demand for drugs and delivering a high-quality treatment and recovery system](#)
- 9.6 [Preventing serious violence: a multi-agency approach 2019, Public Health England](#)
- 9.7 [Preventing offending and re-offending by children 2019, Public Health England](#)
- 9.8 [The What Works Centre for Crime Reduction](#)
- 9.9 [The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - It was hard to escape - report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- 9.10 [The role of systems of support in serious youth violence: evidence and gaps \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)