

# **TACKLING GUNS, GANGS AND ORGANISED CRIMINALITY IN BIRMINGHAM**

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# SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME - A NATIONAL THREAT

## CHARACTERISTICS

- A national security risk; pervasive threat with corrosive impact on communities.
- Includes: drugs trafficking (including County Lines); human trafficking; illegal immigration; firearms; cyber crime; fraud; counterfeiting; money laundering; organised acquisitive crime; child sexual exploitation.
- Undermines our economy, financial institutions and online confidence.

## SCALE

- Law enforcement estimates – more than 6000 organised crime groups, involving around 42,000 individuals
- Costs the UK at least £24bn a year.
- A complex and rapidly evolving threat. Organised criminals operate across regional, national and international borders

# LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

- Birmingham has a history of reducing violent and gang related crime. We did this successfully through the Birmingham Reducing Gang Violence Partnership. Unfortunately this was disbanded in 2015.
- The recent rise in gang and organised crime activity has demonstrated the need for constant vigilance to keep pace with gangs and organised criminality.
- At present there are approximately 35-40 Organised Crime Groups (OCG's) that operate in Birmingham and a rise in new gangs including in the South of the City.
- The vast majority of OCG members are adults. However young people are recruited into gangs and begin to affiliate with these more organised groups either willingly, for protection or as a result of criminal exploitation.
- As a consequence there has been an increase in the levels of violence including sexual violence, increases in teenagers carrying weapons, wearing stab vests and being afraid to travel outside of their local community.
- Increasing understanding of young people exploited to move drugs and money across the country.

# DEFINITION OF AN ORGANISED CRIME GROUP

## ORGANISED CRIME GROUP (OCGS)

- Crime is a business considered as a vocation/occupation, typically own and control means of production
- Membership may be based on family or ethnic lines but individuals may co-operate together in a particular criminal enterprise
- Those involved in drug distribution are likely to be armed and carry guns. Violence or a capacity for it can be mobilised as a way of accumulating a viable male identity.

**THERE ARE BETWEEN 35 TO 40 ACTIVE OCGS IN BIRMINGHAM**

# DEFINITION OF A GANG

## GANGS

- Typically a mutation of a peer group, falling mainly into one of two types: the territorial fighting unit and the entrepreneurial street gang. Rarely well organised and often volatile and short lived.
- Members may be affiliated with older criminals or OCGs who use them to 'run' drugs (i.e. County Lines). Likely to be armed and the weapon used is most likely to be a knife.
- Violence may occur as a consequences of group rivalries or 'jostling' for places when members higher up the chain or in the OCG world are removed i.e. imprisonment.

# THE PATHWAYS INTO SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME

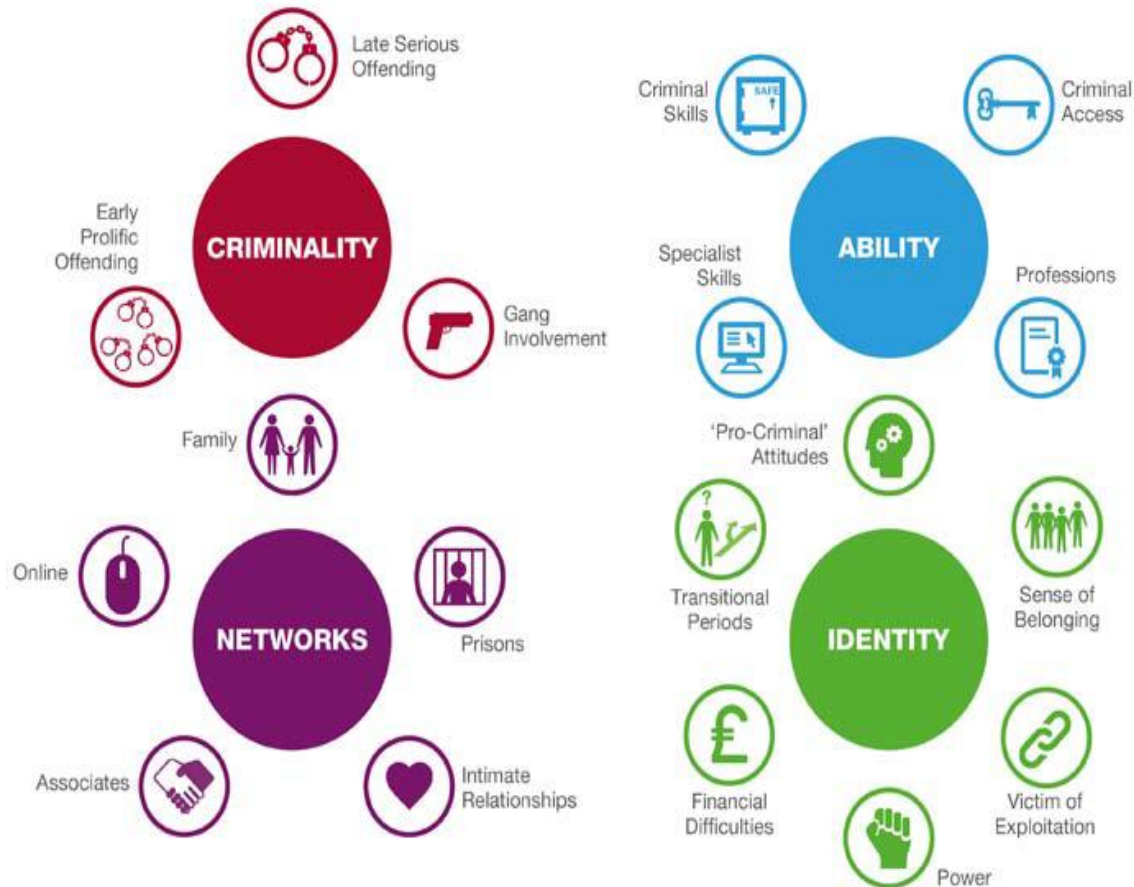
Complex pathways that lead individuals into organised crime are dependent on a number of factors:

**Identity:** the impact of adverse childhood experiences and wider environmental, economical and social factors can increase vulnerabilities to participate in gangs.

**Individuals:** **especially young and vulnerable people, can be manipulated into participating in organised crime.** They are often invited to undertake a small bit of 'work' for what seems a small and harmless reward. This can often **lead to entrapment within an organised crime group** – examples might also include reliance on a drug dealer for a fix or debt bondage to a loan shark. Others perhaps engage in organised crime because it seems to offer a lifestyle of glamour, risk and reward.

# RISK FACTORS

Factors to assess the risk of being drawn into Serious and Organised Crime



# COUNTY LINES

- County Lines is a Home Office term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines".
- It involves gangs criminally exploiting children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money. This can involve the use of drug debts which are often inflated or staged in order to coerce a child into further county lines activities.
- Child Sexual Exploitation is a significant risk factor associated to County Lines that is part of the national picture which includes "girlfriends" being offered to and abused by other gang members.
- Locally there is growing awareness and intelligence that young people are travelling to other parts of the country, engaging in drug dealing and putting themselves at risk of being victims of serious violence.

**'The true scale of the exploitation of children by gangs is unknown and there is likely to be many more children and young people who are not being safeguarded'**  
**(National Crime Agency report 2016)**



# KEY LEGISLATION

- **Crime and Disorder Act 1998** – listed authorities have a statutory responsibility to do all that they reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in their area and share information to protect communities from serious and organised crime.
- **Children's Act 2004** - each agency working with Children and Families must ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to safeguarding.
- **Serious Crime Act 2015** - councils should work alongside law enforcement agencies, sharing relevant intelligence, to make the best use of these new powers to disrupt and halt such crime.
- **Criminal Finances Act 2017** - new powers have been introduced to help law enforcement agencies tackle money laundering, corruption, terrorist finance and recover the proceeds of crime.
- **Children and Social Work Act 2017** – safeguarding partners are required to make arrangements to work together and with relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area.

# MULTI AGENCY CHALLENGES

## IDENTIFIED RISKS EARLY 2017

- Reduced Home Office focus and funding on Ending Gang and Youth Violence
- Locally lack of partnership strategy and governance
- Pockets of partnership practice not co-ordinated or joined up
- Limited evidence of prioritisation
- No established escalation processes
- Lost opportunities (partnership, intervention and prevention)
- Evidence of child exploitation through County Line activity
- Nature and extent of gang, gun and organised criminality most typically understood from a policing perspective but does not reflect data available from the wider partnership

# LOCAL RESPONSE 2017

## A STRONG STRATEGIC AND POLICY RESPONSE

Publication of the West Midlands PCC'S Gangs Commission Report with commitment to fund and implement the recommendations.

A new Birmingham Guns, Gangs and Organised Criminality Strategy has been approved by the Community Safety Partnership and a new Strategic Group, joint chairing arrangements established. Both are aligned to the work of the Gangs Commission.

## AN IMPROVED OPERATIONAL RESPONSE

New multi-agency arrangements are in place. These arrangements seek to ensure effective information sharing and a collective response across agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, vulnerable adults and protect the public through criminal and civil enforcement.

# NEW WAYS OF WORKING

- Foster closer co-operation between all stakeholders in the further development and implementation of the Birmingham Gangs, Guns and Organised Criminality Strategy.
- Facilitate greater sharing of intelligence on a regular basis to develop a common understanding of concerns, emerging themes and issues affecting all critical areas of business.
- Development of a multi-agency process to screen and manage cases of County Lines and other forms of criminal exploitation.
- Act as an advocate in identifying, discussing and addressing issues of common concern and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.
- Establish and maintain closer links with existing multi-agency arrangements including MAPPA, the MARAC, the IOM Programme, the Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS), Think Family and Early Help Services

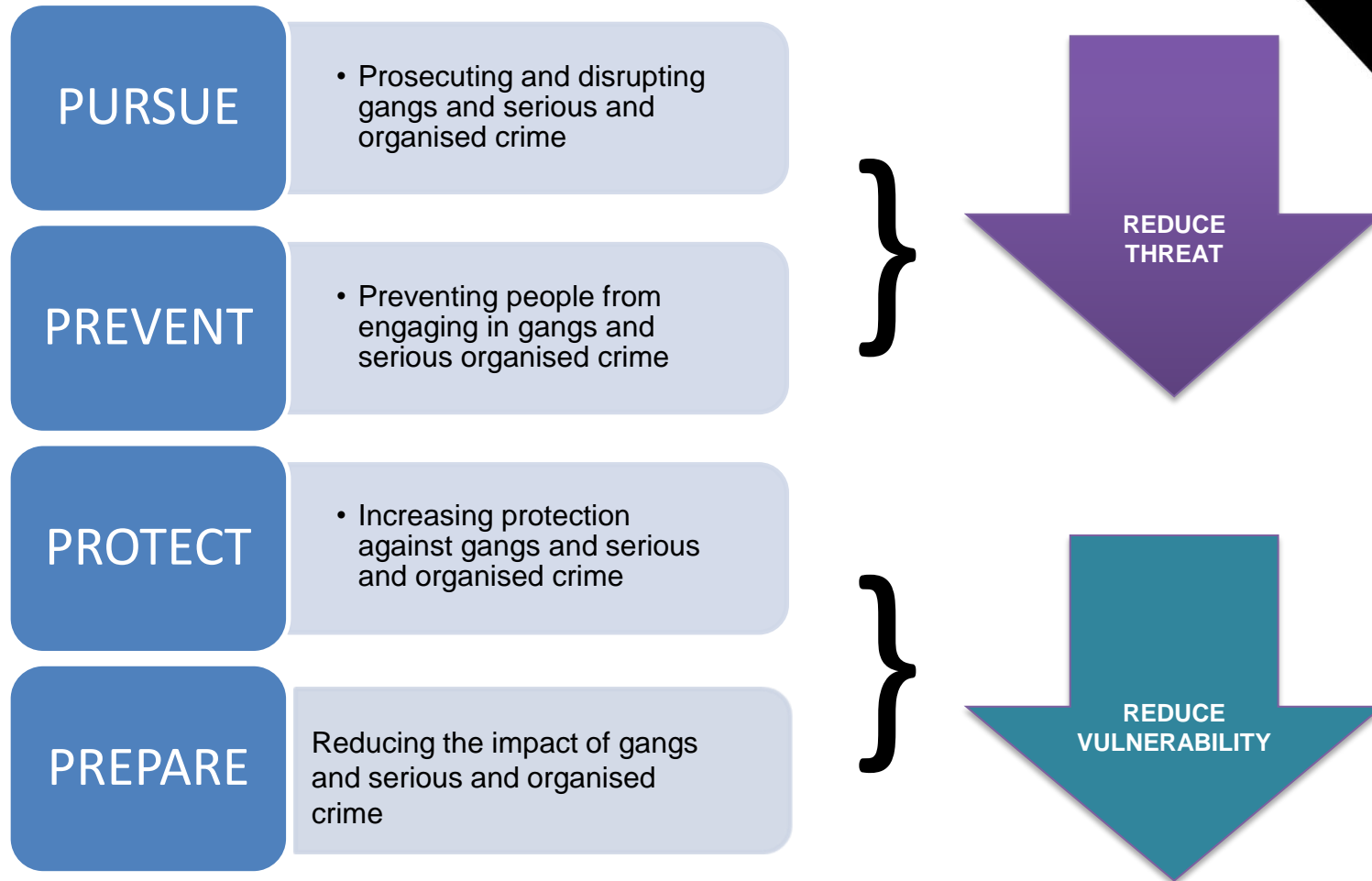
# PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

Ambitious vision ‘**to be the Safest City in the World**’

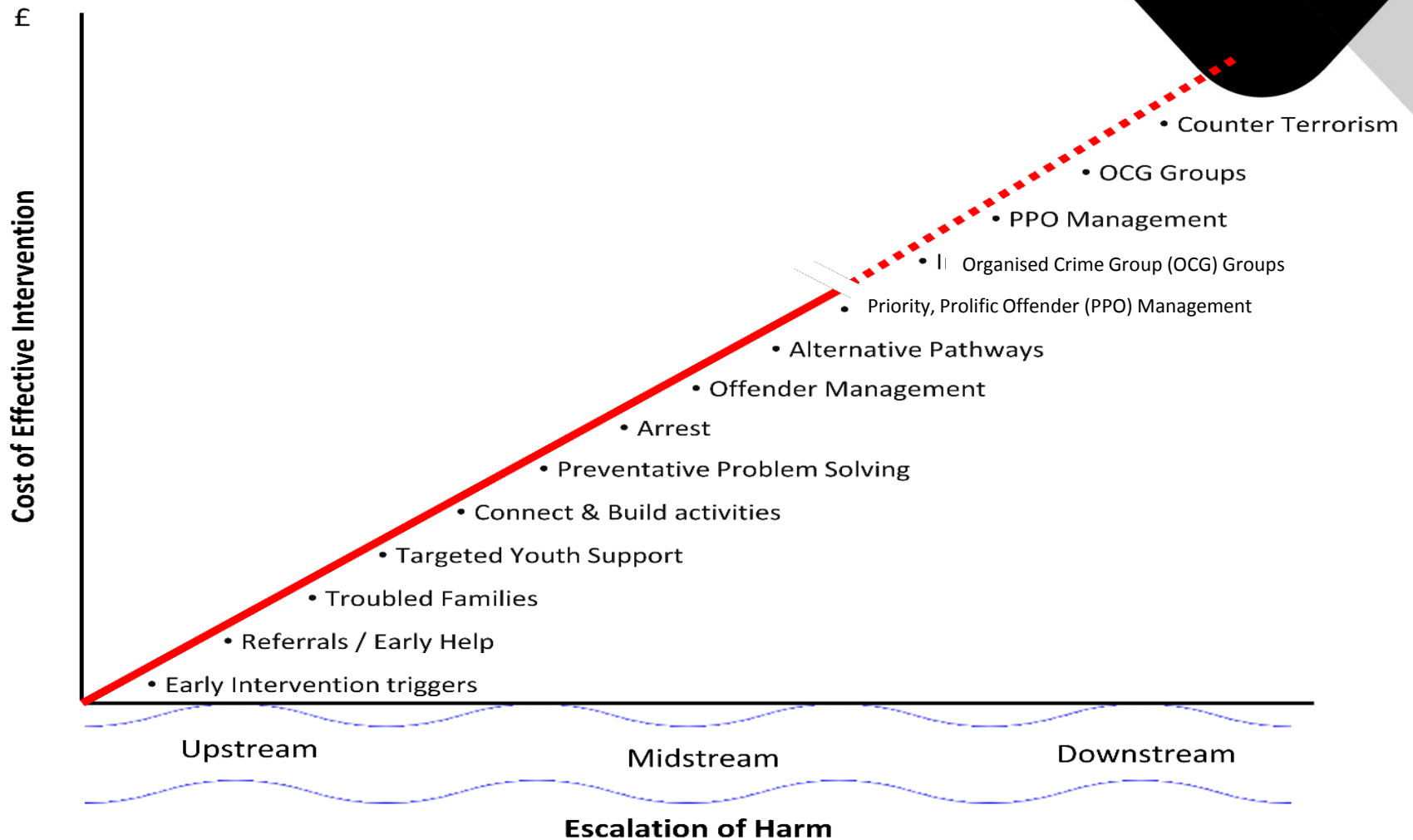
## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- To deliver a cohesive and challenging partnership approach across all sectors (including public sector, voluntary and community);
- To reduce the impact of gang, gun and organised criminality on the community;
- Promote early intervention and a whole family approach to identify and support vulnerable children and young people who are at risk of exploitation;
- Present young people with opportunities in education and employment as a positive alternative to guns, gangs and organised criminality;
- Enforce the law through multi-agency targeted action, to secure convictions and civil orders to deter people from guns, gangs and organised criminality;
- Reduce offending by effective rehabilitation and resettlement of those convicted of gang, gun and organised criminality;
- Continual review of progress and identification of best practice that informs future developments and approaches to be undertaken.

# INTELLIGENCE LED USING THE 4 'P' FRAMEWORK



# EMPHASIS ON EARLY INTERVENTION



# MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSES

- Major operations (i.e. Operations SORA and NEWRY) involving police and partners to disrupt and deter activity including offender management and positive support to parents and young people
- Funding for greater analytical support for the Operational Group to increase its intelligence and information sharing across all agencies and across vulnerabilities (CSE, Missing)
- Use of screening tools, strategy meetings and agency responses
- Workforce development
- CSP funding for immediate commissioning of targeted mentoring support in the South of the City
- PCC's Office leading more comprehensive commissioning for March 2018
- Sustaining Inclusion meetings and targeted work in schools including City wide knife wands campaign
- Communication Strategy



# GANGS COMMISSION

- Commissioned by the PCC to respond to the increase in gang associated activities, use of weapons and incidents of serious violence
- Community led, with the support of statutory agencies and academics. Members include specialist providers who also facilitated access to the voices of young people, men and women impacted by serious violence
- Recognises the disbanding of BRGV partnership led to the 'break up of a coherent approach to gangs and violence across the city'.
- Highlights examples of good practice (Multi Agency Gang Unit, Youth Offending Service and Community Sector Organisations) however no effective community involved partnerships, victims and those affected by gangs rarely included in planning or interventions and a lack of reviewing and replicating best practice.
- Full report includes key needs and 24 recommendations covering governance, community engagement and mediation, mentoring, specialist family and trauma services, appointment of a fundraising manager and involvement of the business sector.

# Q & A