

BIRMINGHAM PARTNERSHIP GUNS, GANGS & ORGANISED CRIMINALITY STRATEGY 2017-2020

Working to make Birmingham the safest City in the world

A multi-agency
collaborative
approach

INTRODUCTION

Our principal partnership message is that the challenges from guns, gangs and organised criminality faced within Birmingham cannot be dealt with by individual agencies on their own; multi-agency co-operation is needed to reduce the incidence of death and injury. It is also needed to improve the life chances of those involved and affected through preventing and reducing ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences).

There is further recognition that the challenges faced form part of the wider public health agenda debate. Being a victim of crime, for example, can have obvious significant implications for an individual's health and wellbeing. This is particularly the case where crime is violent, abusive or traumatic. Similarly, negative perceptions of community safety can lead to behaviours such as staying inside which can be damaging to wellbeing, particularly among those at risk of being socially isolated. It is expected that this strategy will contribute to a more positively healthy Birmingham.

The role of community is key in any response to the complex challenges posed by guns, gangs and organised criminality. This has been recognised in the commission by the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office of a community lead report which will be used to inform and influence our partnership.

This strategy aims to tackle gangs, guns and organised criminality. This is set out in key strategic objectives:

Our key 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.

The delivery of these objectives will necessitate:

- Sharing intelligence more widely across the City to develop a common understanding among local partners of the threats, vulnerabilities and risks relating to guns, gangs and organised criminality;
- Implementation of the recommendations within the Birmingham Serious Organised Crime (SOC) problem profile, which identifies local threats;
- Review of existing data sharing protocols across organisations and multi-agency environments to ensure they are fit for purpose to support the work associated with this Strategy
- Ensuring all intelligence data and information is relevant and timely and can be utilised effectively to inform decision making in relation to risk and harm.

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Serious and Organised Crime

Serious and organised crime is a threat to national security. Police and law enforcement agencies have estimated during 2013 there were over 5,500 Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) operating in the United Kingdom involving around 37,000 individuals and costing the United Kingdom more than £24 billion each year. These figures are likely to be higher due to 2013 valuations and data limitations. The data limitations can be demonstrated by under-reporting by victims, and methodological difficulties in identifying links between recorded crimes and OCGs that are directly or indirectly responsible.

To understand the current threats to national security click on the following web link
<http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/>

The Government is currently reviewing its response to serious and organised crime. One of the aims of the review will be to generate an expanded, whole-of-government approach to tackling the threat. The new Strategy will be published by spring 2018.

Gangs and Youth Violence

A refreshed cross-government approach to Ending Gangs and Youth Violence (EGYV) and Exploitation was launched in January 2016. This work identified the need to respond and focus on gang-related exploitation of the vulnerable, with the following priorities communicated to the EGYV areas for local consideration:

- 1) Tackle county lines - address the exploitation of vulnerable people by a hard core of gang members to sell drugs
- 2) Protect vulnerable locations – places where vulnerable young people can be targeted, including pupil referral units and residential children's care homes
- 3) Reduce violence and knife crime - including improving the way national and local partners use tools and powers
- 4) Safeguard gang-associated women and girls - including strengthening local practices

- 5) Promote early intervention – using evidence from the Early Intervention Foundation to identify and support vulnerable children and young people (including identifying mental health problems)
- 6) Promote meaningful alternatives to gangs such as education, training and employment

LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

Firearms

Since the creation of the West Midlands Police Force Tasking and Delivery Board in November 2016, firearms have been and continue to be a tactical priority for the organisation.

The use of firearms in the attacks in Europe over the last two years emphasises the threat they also present to Birmingham, especially when many of the drivers and pathways into Serious Organised Crime are also pathways into and drivers of international and domestic terrorism. Whilst every large urban setting will experience gun crime, Birmingham's experiences have been well publicised in the national and local media. Gun crime has become a dominant issue, with the City experiencing a number of recent fatal shootings and an increase in the number of discharges.

Serious and Organised Crime

Serious and Organised Crime is impacting on large swathes of Birmingham and this is likely to increase as a consequence of a range of socio-economic factors that can act as drivers and facilitators of organised criminality.

Many children and young people across the City achieve good outcomes; however some face a range of challenges, particularly in terms of their well-being and staying safe. For example, the risk of children being sexually exploited is acknowledged in several boards with safeguarding responsibilities.

Gangs and Youth Violence

The City has a long history of reducing gang-related violence through its partnership and community approach however recent gang activity has demonstrated the need for constant vigilance and innovative ways to keep pace with gangs.

Following a recent rise and spread of gang-related crime within Birmingham, the Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner has established a Gangs and Related Violence Commission to formulate a response. The recommendations from this work will be incorporated within this strategy

While only a minority of children and young people are involved with gangs, gang members account for disproportionate levels of crime in affected communities and are at risk of involvement in violence as both perpetrators and victims.

Children and young people who experience Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are more likely to be associated with gangs, and are also more likely to be coerced, corrupted, debt-bound, groomed and exploited, or even offend unwittingly if they have multiple vulnerabilities.

The key differences between Gangs and Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) primarily relate to the level of criminality, group organisation, planning and control but there are other connections between gangs and organised crime. For example, urban gang members may engage in street drug dealing on behalf of organised crime groups and often aspire to become OCGs in their own right. Areas of high gang activity in the United Kingdom tend to be areas where OCGs are most active.

Appendix A provides a definition of gangs which will be used to support the actions to tackle guns, gangs and organised criminality within Birmingham.

KEY LEGISLATION

Crime and Disorder Act 1998 - listed Responsible and Co-operating 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. Publically commissioned private and voluntary sector providers must also contribute to prevention efforts through due diligence and information sharing to protect communities from serious and organised crime.

Children's Act 2004 - outlined the statutory requirements each agency working with Children and Families must adhere to, to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to safeguarding.

Serious Crime Act 2015 - improved the legislative powers available to local partners to tackle serious and organised crime. This Act gave effect to a number of proposals and commitments made in the Government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy (2013) and updated existing law dealing with the cyber-crime, serious crime prevention orders, gang injunctions, child cruelty, female genital mutilation (FGM) and the commission of certain terrorism offences abroad. When this Act was introduced it included a new offence of participating in the activities of an organised crime group and a strengthened preventative capability through Serious Crime Protection Orders. 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 - introduced new powers to help law enforcement agencies tackle money laundering, corruption, terrorist finance and recover the proceeds of crime.

Children and Social Work Act 2017 – identified 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.

CONTEXT

The Chair of the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership (BCSP) commissioned a review of the Birmingham response to gang, gun and organised criminality. That review highlighted the following concerns:

- A lack of partnership strategy
- A lack of partnership governance
- A lack of recognition of the problem being part of the wider public health agenda
- Pockets of partnership practice not coordinated or joined up
- Evidence of self-tasking around enforcement activity
- Limited evidence of prioritisation
- A lack of escalation pathways
- Evidence of lost opportunities (4Ps)
- Evidence of child exploitation through county line activity
- The nature and extent of of gang, gun and organised criminality is most typically understood from a policing perspective but does not reflect the data available from the wider partnership

NEW WAYS OF WORKING

This strategy will use the nationally recognised 4P framework with its four thematic pillars: prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in guns, gangs and organised criminality (**Pursue**); preventing people from engaging in these activities (**Prevent**); increasing protection against guns, gangs and organised criminality (**Protect**); and reducing the impact of this criminality where it takes place (**Prepare**) outlined in the diagram below. A description of each area that will inform the Strategic Board is available in **Appendix B**.

All intelligence and information sources should be exhausted to identify and gather information on those individuals involved in guns, gangs and organised criminality and the locations affected by them. The early flagging of threat, risk, harm and emerging issues alongside the opportunities for prevention and intervention that follow are essential for making the implementation of the strategy a success.



The most effective method to prevent people becoming involved in gangs is early identification (See **Appendix C** for 'Tell Tale Signs'). This will enable preventative services to be implemented at an early stage to support the young person and their family to make positive life choices and distance themselves from gang related activity.

Birmingham's Early Help and Safeguarding Partnership have agreed a Plan on a Page, which sets out our ambitions for children. This has now been adopted by the Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board and has 15 measures of success (see **Appendix D**) to improve outcomes for children. These include:

- Improved school attendance
- Reductions in exclusions
- Better mental health
- Reductions in substance misuse
- Reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour by young people
- Reductions in crime affecting children and young people, including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Gangs, Domestic Violence

The Strategic Board should look to identify other signifiers of risk, such as repeatedly going missing, repeated STD diagnoses, so that the opportunity to intervene early to prevent gang, gun and organised criminality association is maximised.

GOVERNANCE

Birmingham Community Safety Partnership (BCSP) partners will create the environment to deliver the ambitions of this Strategy across Birmingham through demonstrating leadership and coordination; bringing partners together to ensure support for what works, and encourage collaboration, innovation, and efficient working.

The proposed governance structure (see **Appendix E** - Proposed Governance Structure) seeks to address the concerns outlined in this Strategy through the creation of a Strategic Board reporting back to the BCSP. The Board will be responsible for:

- Implementation of the Birmingham Gangs, Guns and Organised Criminality Strategy
- Establishing a Gangs Operational Group/Forum
- Setting the prioritisation for this Group/Forum
- Acting as the point of escalation for the Forum
- Scrutinising the progress of the Forum
- Reporting back to the BCSP progress of delivery and on emerging issues.

The Gangs Operational Group/Forum will be a coordination, tasking and decision-making multi-partnership panel that will share information and agree action plans around individuals and their networks. It will act as the driving engine to bring partners together to deliver on the prioritised areas of focus, share information to reduce the harm posed by gun, gang and organised criminality.

There is a recognition that the challenges outlined in this Strategy form part of the wider public health agenda debate. It is important that appropriate linkages are made with relevant partnerships across the City, for example, there should be reporting arrangements to the Health and Well-Being Board and to the Birmingham Children Safeguarding Board to maximise efforts to reduce Adverse Childhood Experiences. It is expected that this Strategy will contribute to a more positively healthy Birmingham.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The threat of organised criminality is not confined to geographical boundaries. Pathways into criminality are diverse and differ between crime types. Individuals can be coerced, corrupted, debt-bound, groomed and exploited, or even offend unwittingly. Forged identity documents (particularly EEA identity documents) and Fraudulently Obtained Genuine documents remain a key enabler of criminal activities. Many OCGs are highly flexible and display great adaptability in the speed with which they adjust their *modi operandi* or whole business models to the changes in the environment.

It is vital that front line and back office staff are trained to keep abreast of any changes to support any intervention, prevention and enforcement work. There should be regular briefings to staff on emerging threats and what they need to look for in their everyday work to maximise opportunities to identify those involved or affected by gangs and organised criminality. This practice similarly needs to be extended into the third, voluntary and community sectors.

People involved in Gangs and OCGs exploit organisational and geographical vulnerabilities since they know there are weaknesses in the way different Responsible Authorities and Co-operating Authorities listed in the Crime & Disorder Act operate both internally and externally. It is important these risks and associated threats are reduced by working effectively to share intelligence in a timely manner.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The people of Birmingham need to hear, see and believe that action is being taken to tackle the problems in their area. A Communication and Reassurance Strategy should support the work to aid intervention, prevention and enforcement work and provide public reassurance that all Responsible Authorities and Co-operating Authorities are working effectively to tackle guns, gangs and organised criminality.

ACTION PLAN

This Strategy has been informed by the findings within the 2017 Birmingham Serious Organised Crime Problem Profile and will include additional actions following the publication of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner's Gangs and Violence Commission report. It will be the responsibility of the Strategic Board to develop and own the Action Plan.

APPENDIX A - GANG DEFINITIONS

A tiered approach to defining gangs was set out by Hallsworth and Young (2004 - *Getting Real About Gangs*). This outlined three basic categories:

Level 3: **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.

Level 2: **Gang**

- 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. Likely to be armed and the weapon used is most likely to be a knife.
- Violence may occur as a consequence of group rivalries or 'jostling' for places when members higher up the chain or in the OCG world are removed i.e. imprisonment

Level 1: **Peer or friendship group**

- Affiliation of people who share common history or biography. Will most likely congregate in public spaces but crime and violence is not intrinsic to identity or practice.
- Involvement in crime is usually low level and would most commonly include underage drinking, fighting, and drug use, upsetting the local community as a result of low level anti-social behaviour and perhaps behaving in a way that could be perceived as a threat.



These tiered definitions are in relation to organised crime groups. However the Centre for Social Justice's 2009 Report 'Dying to Belong' defined what we would classify as a street based gang, being:-

A relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:

- 1) See themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group;
- 2) Engage in criminal activity and violence;
- 3) Lay claim over territory (this is not necessary geographical territory but can include an illegal economy territory);
- 4) Have some form of identifying structural feature; and
- 5) Are in conflict with other similar gangs”

This definition was adopted in the Cross-Government Report ‘Ending Gang and Youth Violence’.

APPENDIX B – 4Ps

PREVENT

Early Help

The Early Help Assessment (EHA) is a key universal tool that can be used for early intervention.

The EHA and Our Family Plan can be used by all practitioners in universal and specialist services to holistically assess, share information and implement appropriate support at an early stage to prevent the escalation of any risk factors or concerns. In Birmingham, our Right Help Right Time guidance for professionals' sets out agreed partnership principles and outcomes and identifies children and family needs and how to access support. Further information is available on the Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board website - <http://www.lscbbirmingham.org.uk/>

Gang, gun and organised criminality all pose safeguarding problems and so must be addressed wherever children and young people are; at home, as well as at school, on transport or on the streets. In particular, where siblings of gang members can be identified as 'at risk' of gang involvement, opportunities for early intervention within the family should be taken.

A local community safety and early help partnership is being piloted currently in the North of the City in recognition that the outcomes above are cross-cutting and require more joined up approaches across welfare and enforcement agencies and partnerships.

Education

Schools, including alternative education units, have a critical role in early intervention and prevention, particularly in respect of the need to provide specific support at the transition point from primary to secondary school.

The one place most young people have in common is school. Schools and other educational and other youth settings provide the greatest opportunity to engage with and make a difference to the safety and well-being of young people. Better relationships between schools and community safety partners must be built. As a matter of principle, early help packages should be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs and age of the audience, and to cover a range of issues which affect young people in relation to crime, safety, and well-being, ensuring a holistic approach to early help.

Public Health

From a health perspective, for instance, the peak age for emergency admission to hospital due to violence is 18, and violence is estimated to cost the NHS £2.9 billion every year (Catch 22 report, 'Violence prevention, health promotion: A public health approach to tackling youth violence – October 2013). Indeed, the publication of Ending Gang and Youth Violence: A Cross-Government Report in 2011 heralded a change of policy direction, recognising gang and youth violence as a public health issue.

A public health approach holds a number of benefits. For example, taking a more holistic approach to the planning and delivery of services enables agencies to work together more effectively and improve the quality of support people receive. Success in reducing the number of incidences of violence can also help to reduce the costs to the NHS.

Moreover, the Public Health Outcomes Framework includes a number of indicators relevant to the issue of gang, gun and organised criminality associated violence covering:

- First-time entrants to the youth justice system
- Violent crime (including sexual offences)
- Re-offending levels
- Employment and Training

Research over the last two decades highlights the strong links that exist between employment and 'desistance' from offending. However, the relationship is complex. The individual, for example, should want to make a change, while the job opportunity works best if it is secure, stable and long-term. This complexity is further exaggerated with those associated with gang, gun and organised criminality.

Gang exit studies have suggested that desistance from crime and leaving that lifestyle are separate processes. Gangs are generally accepted as intensifying the crime and anti-social behaviour of gang members: when someone leaves a gang their offending is likely to reduce, but will not necessarily stop. This means we cannot simply assume that employment plays the same role in gang exit as it does in desistance from offending. Employment can contribute as an exit strategy, but will be most effective if the work opportunity coincides with a turning point in the person's life (Catch 22 report, 'Exit and enterprise: The role of enterprise in supporting young people's gang exit' – 2012).

Similarly, given the right conditions, social enterprises and the like, creating jobs and training opportunities for people to make the most of their entrepreneurial talents, may potentially provide an alternative pathway for those involved in gang, gun and organised criminality.

PREPARE

Exit Pathways

Exit pathways for those involved in gang, gun and organised criminality, are crucial as part of the Birmingham response to the challenges posed. Often young people engaging in this type of criminality have a history of poor educational attendance and behavioural problems that often predate their involvement in the youth justice system. Better engagement in

education, employment and training will increase resilience and support desistance. The success of a pan-Birmingham strategy will be judged on a range of outcomes including reductions in criminal behaviour, attitudinal changes and improvements in education, training and employment outcomes.

However, these cannot be considered the only indicators of success. Housing is also a critical exit pathway but projects can be hampered by limited provision of available housing stock and due to challenges of competing priorities and categories of need. Women and girls who are at risk through gang-association, for example, may rarely meet the threshold for accommodation. Simply moving a young person and his/her family may also be ineffective unless consistent support is also provided to the family.

Mentoring

Mentoring has been seen as a way to help prevent, divert, and provide ways out for individuals engaged in or at risk of involvement in gang, gun and organised criminality. Frequently, they lack a consistent positive role model or 'natural mentor' in their lives who they can turn to for emotional and practical support; formal mentoring programmes can provide access to this.

Mentoring can empower the individual to move away from their chaotic lifestyle by providing support to develop new skills and guidance towards opportunities for social reintegration into the community through receiving wise counsel, guidance and practical help.

A holistic mentoring approach may encompass:

- Offending behaviour
- Housing
- Health and wellbeing
- Relationships and family
- Signposting towards Employment, education and training

Mediation

Mediation, in the context of violence related to gang, gun and organised criminality, can best be described as an informal, voluntary, adaptable procedure in which an impartial and independent third party, not involved in the dispute, (a conflict engagement specialist or mediator) assists with dialogue between parties in conflict or dispute. The mediator proactively supports each individual/party in order to reach the best resolution to the conflict, which is not only acceptable to both parties, but is acceptable to society and is within the law.

The level and nature of violence related to gang, gun and organised criminality is frequently disproportionate, unpredictable and involves longstanding and endless feuds, which means that mediation is an appropriate intervention and has a good chance of positively impacting on the conflict. The perpetrators lack the skills to resolve the conflicts themselves without violence. Mediation can provide a workable solution, as it offers a means through which solutions can be reached that can be accepted by all concerned, rather than continue with the cyclical, pointless, symbolic conflicts that often stem from issues over, for example, perceived disrespect. Mediation can help diffuse instrumental violence, such as disputes

over drug territory, as the participants realise that they are known to the authorities and will be liable to sanctions if they continue their behaviour.

Specialist Support

Support services and evidence based interventions for those involved in gang, gun and organised criminality are crucial if they are to change their behaviour, choices and lives. Examples include CBT and family based work including Multi Systemic Therapy. However, research also shows that typically those involved in this lifestyle and activity have an increased risk of victimisation (according to the Metropolitan Police, Trident Matrix, 15 per cent of gang members have been a victim of a stabbing or shooting or a gang-flagged crime).

Gang, gun, or organised criminality associated girls and women also have multiple and complex needs which may require specialist, gender-appropriate provision. Girls and women who are sexually exploited and abused, or coerced into participating in criminal activity must also be provided with specialist victim support and safeguarding.

They may not report the crime or cooperate with an investigation they will need medical intervention, through ambulance emergency aid or attending hospital trauma centres. These are windows of opportunity that have successfully been harnessed to support people to change their lives.

Mental Health (Emotional trauma)

The cohort of gang, gun and organised criminality affected people are more likely to have emotional and mental health needs that are not necessarily provided with support to deal with trauma and loss. This is especially damaging because violent experiences can foster violence – ‘hurt people hurt people’.

Child and adult mental health services delivered by Forward Thinking Birmingham (FTB) are currently undergoing a Quality Surveillance Review and an Intervention Plan is now in place to ensure that the service meets current requirements including access and capacity. FTB and the CCGs have identified and deployed the required expertise to expedite the plan.

Offender Management, Rehabilitation and Resettlement

The reformed probation landscape provides an opportunity to review the services offered to those within the prison system for gang, gun and organised criminality in order to desist from offending. The ease of transition is the key to supporting offenders. The Strategic Board could support this through examining the creation of building stronger bridges between release from custody and exit services into safe housing and secure employment within the community. Also see MAGU service under Support Mechanism section

PURSUE

Without investment in effective and targeted enforcement, violence rates associated with gang, gun and organised criminality are always at risk of significant increase.

While this Strategy has outlined available and potential measures Birmingham partners will take to support those who want to turn their lives around and desist from criminality, there will always be those who chose to remain involved in gang, gun and organised criminality. Birmingham citizens should be reassured that West Midlands Police (WMP) and its Criminal Justice and wider partners will respond robustly to such cases.

Post-sentence, the use of asset seizure and other civil restrictions and judicial disposals are all actively explored. The utilisation of civil tools and powers in targeted enforcement refers to a proactive tactic whereby, in collaboration with partner agencies like housing, the police make full use of all legislative measures to exert pressure on individuals to stop their involvement in gang, gun and organised criminality. An individual's associates can also be targeted thereby creating criminal pressure.

As well as providing methods for reducing involvement in associated criminality, the use of civil tools and powers can provide reassurance to communities that action is being taken. Indeed, the seizure of assets of those involved who are criminally entrenched, especially status items which can be used by older members to recruit and attract vulnerable young people, is highlighted as a useful potential deterrent and powerful community reassurance message.

Trust and confidence in policing must always be kept under review since it forms such an important element in encouraging and supporting victims and witnesses to cooperate with investigations into offences involving those associated with gang, gun and organised criminality. But most communities do not wish to foster crime and criminals. They do not want to support drug dealing or violence on their streets. So, they must be provided with sufficient support to give them the security to stand up against criminals.

Proactive Enforcement

The aim of proactive enforcement strategies is to provide a sustainable and coordinated response to disrupt and prevent future violence related to gang, gun and organised criminality from occurring. Proactive enforcement strategies can be implemented in addition to existing policing activity and reactive investigations. Employing proactive enforcement strategies requires dedicated resources and a clear tasking and coordination structure all of which currently exists within West Midlands Police.

The longevity of a proactive enforcement strategy must be considered because problems are likely to re-emerge if the strategy is not embedded as part of a long-term approach. Dedicated resources, joint working with local partners and community relationships are key ingredients for a long-term proactive enforcement strategy. The strategy should be tailored to the local problem profile focussing on individuals, groups, and locations as appropriate.

Prevent and Pursue

The Birmingham Prevent and Pursue has sat as a tactical arm to enforcement bringing together partner agencies including Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, West Midlands Fire Service and local council officials to take an innovative, Achilles-heel approach to those individuals and groups involved in organised criminality.

Threat to Life Warnings

West Midlands Police has a detailed Threat to Life process which places safeguarding, guidance to parties and disruption at the forefront of its approach. This may include the service of warning notices to the parties involved as one of a menu of options available.

PROTECT

Across the Birmingham partnership landscape there are existing platforms upon which the Strategy can build in order to effectively deliver positive outcomes. The identification of them and consideration of their structures and processes are necessary to avoid duplication of partnership discussion and effort around individuals, groups, places and issues. Examples include:

Intelligence and Information Sharing

Effective communication across partner agencies is required to emphasise the importance of the need to gather, share, and manage intelligence for prevention purposes. There is a requirement for appropriate processes to collate intelligence and ensure that there is a clear understanding of how it will be disseminated and used. Consideration should be given to who has access to shared intelligence in the wider context such as mainstream agencies e.g. Children Services, including the Youth Offending Service and Children's Social Care.

The WMP Birmingham Partnership Team has been charged with drafting a fit for purpose Information Sharing Agreement to enable the Birmingham Partnership Gang, Guns and Organised Criminality Co-ordination and Decision Making Forum to function.

Community and Voluntary Sector

There are a number of community and voluntary organisations who can offer support and guidance for young people, families and individuals affected by gang, gun and organised criminality.

The Strategy should aim to ensure that there is community representation is actively considered and responded to, and there is transparency in how it operates in order to reassure the community, that community energy is effectively harnessed and that work undertaken does address the needs of the community.

Multi Agency Public Protection Panels (MAPPP)

MAPPA meetings provide an opportunity for agencies to share information in order to assess and manage risk for qualifying dangerous offenders.

Multi-Agency Gangs Unit (MAGU)

MAGU is an offender management service comprising staff from probation, police, children's services, the youth offending service, and the anti-social behaviour unit.

MAGU works with providers to resettle offenders back into the community and support them not to reoffend. Part of this involves facilitating the sharing of information between services. MAGU works with a relatively small number of high-risk cases and for each offender it works with, MAGU creates a tailored sentence plan with objectives to help prevent them from reoffending. Some of these objectives are met in-house; others are met by partner agencies. Key areas covered include, accommodation away from previous community, debt advice and employment.

Probation

If any professional or agency has concerns regarding the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult due to an adult's gang related behaviour the Probation Worker can undertake gang specific intervention with the adult to support them moving on from the lifestyle and will contact CASS for additional discussions around the vulnerability of the child/ren.

Youth Offending Service (YOS)

There is a YOS support officer within the MAGU who can provide support to YOS workers in all gang related case work. The aim of this role is to provide advice and guidance on gang related issues to YOS practitioners and to undertake interventions with young people on statutory orders to the YOS who are involved or at risk of being involved in gang activity. Below are some of the methods in which the MAGU YOS support officer will be able to assist:

- Assisting in undertaking assessments by contributing information from IGMU risk assessments and intelligence updates
- Attending Meetings (e.g. Case Planning Forums)
- Undertaking Joint Visits
- Sharing intelligence updates and information with appropriate agencies
- Undertaking gang specific intervention work with the young people identified as needing the support.
- The YOS support officer will support Statutory YOS worker by attending YOS meetings, sharing information and developing practitioners' knowledge of gangs.

The Youth Offending Service has recently applied the Gangs Matrix developed by Barnet Local Authority to all young people engaged with the Service (Inc. on pre-court disposals) to identify those likely to be involved in or on the periphery of gangs. 76 cases were identified as at risk, the majority of which had not come to the attention of the Service for gang related concerns. Information has been shared with Police Partners as part of joint mapping and responses.

All young people charged or subject to caution plus are assessed using the Youth Justice Boards standardised assessment tool (ASSETplus), which identifies risk and vulnerability factors to address in plans. ASSETplus also highlights resilience factors and strengths of the young person and their family that can be built upon. All young people receive an

education programme on the dangers of knife carrying with more intensive programmes for those known to carry knives or to be at risk of gang affiliation.

Knife crime has become the more dominant issue, with the City experiencing a number of fatal stabbings. Whilst generally it is believed knives typically are carried for protection, the carrying of a knife clearly heightens the likelihood of it being used, leading to serious injury or even death. However, some of these young people are also involved in drug dealing and professionals have not been aware of this until the occurrence of a serious event.

A review of the backgrounds of young people charged in relation to murder/attempt murder allegations involving a knife identified a significant number were not open to the Service and some were not known previously in the youth justice system. The majority had identified issues in relation to education including exclusions and truancy. Those on Orders or previously on Orders had a lack of a role model and had previously been cautioned or charged for possession of a knife.

Children and young people continue to be exposed to the risk of involvement in gang activity and serious violence as victims and perpetrators and YOS partners and community organisations regularly highlight and flag concerns in relation to young people who come in contact with their services. In discussion with third sector and community organisations, the YOS has been made aware of concerns relating to the coercion and grooming of children and young people into the gang lifestyle, where they are then exploited. The majority of these young people have not yet come to the attention of the criminal justice system, however there are significant concerns relating to their behaviour and circumstances.

There is a gap in provision since the Ending Gang and Youth Violence Programme ceased, for those young people who sit below the threshold of the criminal justice system, who are being referred into Children's Social Care (CASS/MASH) for support around additional /complex and significant needs, where there are concerns in relation to youth violence and gang issues, however there are no criminal convictions / cautions or community resolutions.

Children's Advice and Support Service

The Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) is the way the public and professionals in Birmingham access support, advice, information, report a concern about a child and make contact with their allocated Social Worker. If anyone suspects or believes a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm of any form of mistreatment or abuse, they should report their concerns immediately to the CASS. Where a child or young person is assessed by social workers within CASS as at risk of harm or significant harm relevant information sharing and strategy meetings to coordinate the appropriate response will take place within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

CASS also offers early advice and support from a range of co-located partners including social workers, police, health, education, family support and early help staff, to better identify risks and improve decision making, interventions and outcomes.

Integrated Offender Management (IOM)

Integrated Offender Management is an existing process by which agencies such as Police, Probation, Youth Offending Service (YOS) and the Prison service work together to identify and manage offenders assessed as causing or likely to cause the greatest harm including violent crime and serious acquisitive crime (SAC).

This approach also identifies and manages individuals who are involved in gang related behaviour. The 3 Key Academic Nationally recognised principles of IOM are as follows;

Prevent and Deter - Directed towards young offenders, this strand of the strategy aims to: Stop young offenders from escalating into future prolific offenders. Prevent young people from becoming involved in criminality.

Catch and Convict - Directed at the most prolific offenders this strand of the strategy aims to: Actively 'tackle' those who have been identified as being the most prolific offenders; By ensuring that resources are prioritised on these offenders to put an end to the harm they are causing; Through their apprehension, conviction and if applicable licence enforcement.

Resettle and Rehabilitate - Directed at successfully rehabilitating Prolific Offenders this strand of the strategy aims to: Present Offenders with a choice of either reforming, or face a swift return to the courts Ensure that all offenders are successfully rehabilitated through effective multi-agency work. Manage offenders on release from custodial sentences with a view to them reforming.

Accident and Emergency

Health Authorities must fulfil their obligation to share and disclose information under Section 115 Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The General Medical Council (GMC) has outlined guidance for doctors in Accident and Emergency departments to report gunshot wounds.

Think Family

Birmingham's Think Family is a Birmingham partnership that is delivering the National Troubled Families programme.

It provides a service to meet the needs of the whole family, rather than supporting one person separately. Think Family is offered for families with multiple problems where there are at least two of more problem areas listed below and where the family would benefit from intensive and whole family working:

- An adult is out of work;
- There are concerns about a child's school attendance;
- A young person is not in education, training or work;
- A child may be suffering from i.e. neglect, at risk of sexual exploitation;
- A family member has been in trouble within the neighbourhood or with the Police;
- A family member has physical or emotional health problems;
- The family is affected by domestic abuse.

The Think Family offer is available on the BSCB website and is provided by a range of partners including the voluntary sector and the Department of Work and Pensions. An integrated Request for Support Form has been developed to complete and send to CASS to request support where there is a concern about a child or to request Think Family services.

The type of support on offer by Birmingham Think Family is aimed at stopping problems getting worse and to help give children the best start in life, to make positive, long-lasting improvements working with families to build resilience.

Gang Injunctions

Gang injunctions are civil orders designed to prevent an individual from being involved in gang-related violence; the statutory framework is to be found in Part 4 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009 ("the 2009 Act"). Under the 2009 Act applications for a gang injunction may be made to the County Court, or the High Court, by the police or a local authority. Gang injunctions allow courts to place a range of prohibitions and requirements (including supportive, positive requirements) on the behaviour and activities of a person (aged 14 or over) involved in gang-related violence. These conditions could include prohibiting someone from being in a particular place or requiring them to participate in rehabilitative activities.

Gang injunctions for adults have been available since January 2011, and gang injunctions for 14 to 17 year olds have been available since January 2012. In deciding whether to grant a gang injunction, two conditions must currently be satisfied. The first condition is that the respondent has engaged in, assisted or encouraged "gang-related violence". Once this condition is satisfied, the court may grant an injunction if a second condition is satisfied, namely that it thinks it is necessary to do so in order "to prevent the respondent from engaging in, encouraging or assisting gang-related violence" or "to protect the respondent from gang-related violence". The 2009 Act defines gang-related violence as: "Violence or a threat of violence which occurs in the course of, or is otherwise related to, the activities of a group that:

- a) Consists of at least 3 people;
- b) Uses a name, emblem or colour or has any other characteristic that enables its members to be identified by others as a group; and
- c) Is associated with a particular area."

The way gangs operate is changing. Gangs do not always have a name, emblem or colour or other characteristic which enables its members to be identified as a group. Instead, a group of individuals may operate as a group and engage in criminality with some degree of organisation without these features.

In addition, gangs are increasingly involved in criminality beyond their own areas and can be less associated with a particular area. Moreover, gang structures change over time such that it is possible for gangs to disappear from certain locations and re-appear in other locations relatively quickly.

Gangs also tend to be engaged in a wider range of criminality than simply violence. In addition to violence, street level gangs are involved in drug dealing. In recognition of these

changes to the way gangs operate, section 51 of the 2015 Act revises the test for the grant of a gang injunction. In particular, expanding the range of activities to include any involvement in support of the illegal drugs market will allow gang injunctions to be used to prevent individuals from engaging in such activity and to protect people from being further drawn into this illegal activity. This change will also enable local agencies to address the cross-over between urban street gangs and street drug dealing controlled by organised criminal groups.

Revised test for the grant of gang injunctions Section 51 of the 2015 Act recasts the key features of a gang, for the purposes of the 2009 Act, to be a group which:

- Consists of at least three people;
- Has one or more characteristics that enable its members to be identified by others as a group; and
- Engages in gang-related violence or is involved in the illegal drug market.

The identifying characteristics of a gang may, but need not, relate to any of the following:

- The use by the group of a common name, emblem or colour;
- The group's leadership or command structure;
- The group's association with a particular area;
- The group's involvement with a particular unlawful activity.

As now, the court will be able to attach prohibitions or requirements to an injunction. Such prohibitions or requirements may, for example, bar the respondent from going to a particular place or area or from associating with and/or contacting a specified person or persons, or requiring him or her to participate in set activities on specified days.

Alongside the amendments made to the 2009 Act by the 2015 Act, the provisions in section 18 of and Schedule 12 to the Crime and Courts Act 2013 also come into force on 1 June. These provisions will transfer proceedings, in respect of gang injunctions, in relation to respondents under 18 years, from the County Court to the Youth Court.

APPENDIX C - THE TELL TALE SIGNS

Below are some of the signs that would indicate that a young person or vulnerable adult may be involved or at risk of becoming involved in gang activity:

- Child withdrawn from family
- Sudden loss of interest in school
- Decline in attendance or academic achievement
- Started to use new or unknown slang words
- Holds unexplained money or possessions or cannot explain where large sums of money have gone (financial exploitation)
- Stays out unusually late without reason
- Sudden change in appearance – dressing in a particular style or ‘uniform’ similar to that of other young people they hang around with, including a particular colour
- Dropped out of positive activities
- New nickname
- Unexplained physical injuries
- Graffiti style ‘tags’ on possessions, school books, walls
- Constantly talking about another young person or adult who seems to have a lot of influence over them
- Broken off with old friends and hangs around with one group of people
- Increased use of social networking sites
- Started adopting certain codes of group behaviour e.g. ways of talking and hand signs
- Expressing aggressive or intimidating views towards other groups of young people, some of whom may have been friends in the past
- Signs of sexual exploitation e.g. pregnancy, abortion (perhaps forced), sexually transmitted infections and injuries
- Signs of psychological effects of exploitation – depression and suicide attempts for example
- Scared when entering certain areas; and
- Concerned by the presence of unknown youths in their neighbourhoods

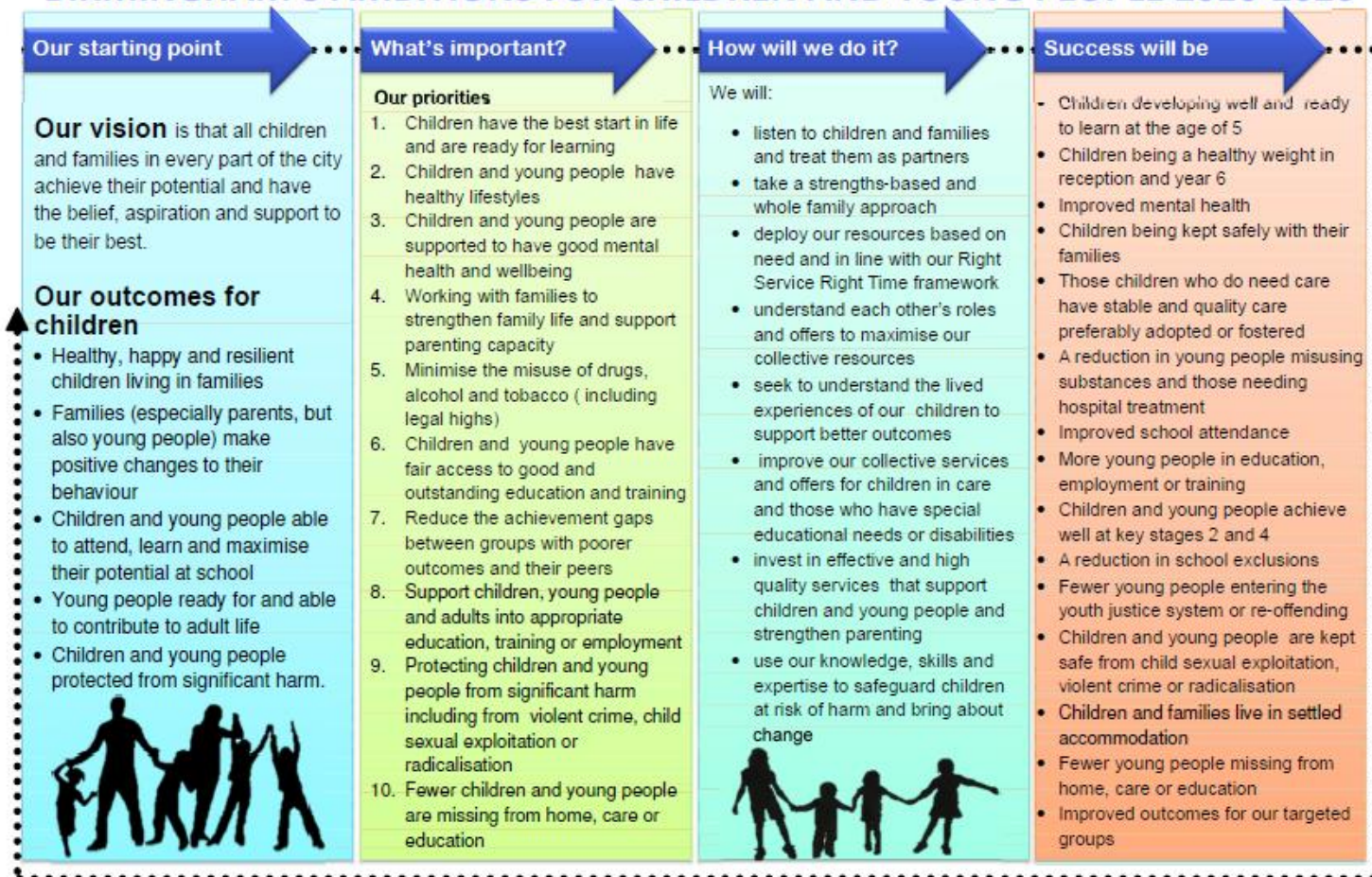
(DCSF, Safeguarding Children & Young People who may be affected by Gang Activity, 2010)

Victims of gang related activity could come under the remit of domestic violence services if their situation meets the following Government definition:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional.”

APPENDIX D – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PLAN ON A PAGE

BIRMINGHAM'S AMBITIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE 2016-2020



APPENDIX E – PROPOSED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

