


Non-Executive Report of the: Health and Wellbeing Board 20 th March 2023	
Report of: Naveed Mohammed	Classification: Unrestricted
Report Title: Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy	

Originating Officer(s)	Leo Hutchinson
Wards affected	All wards

Reasons for urgency

This report was not published within the statutory timescale as there was a need to incorporate changes from partners and stakeholders which delayed this being finalised. Development of a Serious Violence Strategy is a statutory requirement with councils and local services expected to work together to share information and target interventions to prevent and reduce serious violence. The LBTH Serious Violence Strategy falls under the governance of the Tower Hamlets Community Safety Partnership, however given its scope it also needs to be taken to other partnership boards including Health and Wellbeing and the Adult's Safeguarding Board and the Children's Safeguarding Board. To ensure we can work through other partnership boards and this is published/finalised within the necessary timeframes - consideration at HWB first is important.

Executive Summary

The Serious Violence Duty came into effect in Jan 2023, requiring police, councils and local services (known as duty holders) to work together to share information and target interventions to prevent and reduce serious violence. Duty holders are responsible for forming a relevant partnership, agreeing a local definition of serious violence, producing a serious violence needs assessment for the borough and using this to inform a strategic delivery plan for the partnership to tackle serious violence. The serious violence and exploitation strategy group will be formed as a sub-group of the Community Safety Partnership.

This item presents the first Draft Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategic Plan: formulated using the findings from the Serious Violence needs assessment, recommendations, engagement with professionals and wider consultation with our local residents (including children, young people and young adults).

The Serious Violence Plan on a Page, produced in Jan 2024, has been used to consult the public and professionals on the proposed approach to tackling violence and exploitation: contributing to the development of the full strategic delivery plan

Recommendations:

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

1. Note and provide comments/feedback on the contents of the draft Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy Plan
2. Note the work associated with the Serious Violence Duty will be managed and monitored by the Community Safety Partnership but should be addressed widely across multiple statutory boards (i.e. Health and Wellbeing Board, Safeguarding Adults Board, Safeguarding Children's Partnership).

Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is grounded upon 6 principles that matter most to residents of Tower Hamlets. Detail how this report relates to these principles:

1. Resources to support health and wellbeing should go to those who most need it
This strategy details the consolidated efforts of core partners (Council, NHS, Probation, Police and Fire Services) to tackle violence and exploitation: including the health and wellbeing implications (both physical and mental) that being a victim or perpetrator of violence can bring. The strategy looks to provide a high level overview of resource, initiatives and collaborative efforts delivered across the partnership to support the needs of those at risk of violence and exploitation: with the intention of improving health and wellbeing outcomes for those affected
2. Feeling connected and included is a foundation of wellbeing and the importance of this should be built into services and programme
3. Being treated equally, respectfully and without discrimination should be the norm when using services
There are sections of the community that can be disproportionately affected by violence, exploitation, incarceration and harsher sentencing within the criminal justice system. The strategy highlights the understanding of this, the services that are non-discriminatory that support those at risk of violence and exploitation,

as well as the efforts from enforcement services to mitigate bias when coming into contact with the diverse community that resides in Tower Hamlets
4. Health and wellbeing information and advice should be clear, simple, and produced with those who will benefit from them
5. People should feel that they have equal power in shaping and designing services and programme that impact on their health and wellbeing
This strategy has undergone a consultation process, involving professionals, the public (including children and young people) and the voluntary community sector.
6. We should all be working together to make the best use of the assets we already have that support people's health and wellbeing.
The strategy is developed as a result of a statutory duty placed on responsible authorities to work together to address violence and exploitation, making the best use of existing assets, funding and community services to support the health and wellbeing of people at risk of violence exploitation

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1. Tower Hamlets aim to fully comply with the relevant legislative framework (Police, Crime, Sentencing & Courts Act 2022) that sets out the duty for "specified authorities to work together to prevent & reduce serious violence".
- 1.2. Duty holders: local authorities, the police, youth offending teams, Integrated Care System (NHS), probation, and the fire service. Certain organisations have a "duty to cooperate" e.g. education establishments
- 1.3. The new Serious Violence Duty sets out the requirement for localities to Develop and implement a partnership strategy to prevent & reduce serious violence with annual review.

2. ALTERNATOVE OPTIONS

- 2.1.** To date, Tower Hamlets have complied with all requirements set out within the Serious Violence Duty to:
- agree a partnership structure e.g. CSP, SAB, HWBB – Locally agreed to be the CSP
 - develop a strategic needs assessment to provide an evidence base
 - agree definition of SV, with evidence based analysis of the causes of serious violence in the area and effective data sharing
 - develop and implement a partnership strategy to prevent & reduce serious violence
- 2.2.** There are no alternate routes to compliance and failure to fulfil the tasks set out within the statutory duty would mean the council would be non-compliant and face reputational risk

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1.** Tower Hamlets employs a range of initiatives, commissioned services and efforts to tackle serious violence in partnership currently. This strategy would act as a public facing document that illustrates the local approach to addressing violence and vulnerability.
- 3.2.** To ensure compliance, Tower Hamlets have developed a time-limited working group that has driven the work of the serious violence duty, reporting all progress to the relevant boards, such as the Community Safety Partnership Board, Safeguarding Adults Board, Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board. This board will form the new Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy Group which will drive the associated work and report into the Community Safety Partnership.
- 3.3.** This work has been overseen by Community Safety Partnership Board as well as the Lead Member for Safer Communities
- 3.4.** We agreed a local definition of serious violence which was agreed at the CSP Board on 20th February 2024. The definition is as follows:
- “Any violence and exploitation affecting young people under the age of 25, domestic abuse, sexual violence and hate crime. Within the context of these types of violence, it encompasses homicide, grievous bodily harm, actual bodily harm, rap, assault by penetration, sexual assault, personal robbery, threats to kill and violence against property caused during the commission of one of these offences.”
- 3.5.** A Serious Violence Needs Assessment was developed by Public Health to ensure any future strategy was evidence based and incorporated the understanding of serious violence and exploitation locally.
- 3.6.** A Serious Violence Plan on a Page was developed to provide a high level summary of the partnership approach that would be undertaken to address serious violence. Both the Plan on a Page and the Needs Assessment were submitted to the Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) In January 2024.
- 3.7.** A more detailed strategy has been developed to provide insight into what we will do to address identified local violence and exploitation related issues and how we will implement this.

- 3.8. The public (including children and young people), professionals and the voluntary community have been consulted on the approach to tackling serious violence their views on violence locally the proposed approach professionals outline in the Plan on a Page (Appendix 1) personal experiences (or the experiences of those they know) within the context of violence and exploitation
- 3.9. The draft strategy is being presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board and recommendations are set out at the start of this report. Board members are asked to comment and provide feedback on this strategy considering the nature of the work is cross thematic and fits into the remit of this board. Members are encouraged to provide feedback on the content: whether that which is reflected captures the health and wellbeing aspect of addressing violence exploitation, as well as highlighting any activities, initiatives that may be relevant and not included.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. Whilst the work of this strategy could have potential equalities implications with regards to those who come into contact with enforcement services and the criminal justice system, this is a partnership document and only focuses on ensuring compliance with the statutory requirements set out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing & Courts Act 2022.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. N/A

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1. N/A

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1. N/A

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Serious Violence and Exploitation Plan on a Page
- Appendix 2 – Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- Serious Violence Needs Assessment

Officer contact details for documents:

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