

## Appendix 2 Gangs and Serious Youth Violence Scrutiny Review Action Plan

**Recommendation 1:** Our approach to dealing with those involved in or victims of gangs and youth violence should consider the needs of the whole family and adopt a safeguarding approach. This would be assisted by ensuring that current training being delivered to staff on gangs and serious youth violence is offered to all staff, including agency staff in relevant roles (**recommendation 15**) and that training is delivered to youth workers to develop an understanding of youth courts and the youth justice system (**recommendation 19**). Additionally, in order to best support staff who work in these areas, we need to ensure that there are effective, reflective supervisions in place to ensure that they can raise sensitive issues in a supportive setting (**recommendation 18**).

**Comments from Service:** The Multi-Agency Exploitation Team has been in place since May 2018. The team is comprised of a number of specialist police officers in the areas of exploitation, CSE, Missing Children, Gangs and Youth Offending. Police Officers sit alongside the Missing, Gangs & Child Sexual Exploitation Coordinators from Children's Social Care. The strong commitment from both the police and Children's Social Care has led to a focus on disruption of perpetrators and a focus on criminally exploited children, including those involved in gang and drug distribution activity as victims. While the Exploitation Team focuses on those children most at risk, the ethos and expertise has permeated into all other teams within social care. Ofsted noted in May 2018, *"A renewed focus on children as victims of exploitation rather than the criminalising of their behaviour is leading to an enhanced understanding of their circumstances and analysis of risk. Social workers now have a better understanding of children's lived experience. Together with partner agencies, they are increasingly diligent in their attempts to work with and support these young people and their brothers and sisters."*

Gangs Awareness Training with St Giles has been delivered to professionals, with more sessions booked on an ongoing basis. Adult Social Care is in the final stages of developing a Critical Thinking Skills training package for its social workers, which is being looked at as an additional tool for Social Workers in Children's Social Care to reinforce the application of learning and insights from the gangs awareness training and instill greater confidence in the application of the workforces' established social work skills in relation to this particularly challenging area of work.

The resources that the Youth Justice Team use with young people explain the various orders that youth courts can give them, rather than explaining the court process itself, they also require updating. The YJS can (update these and) make them available, but to deliver the original proposal that these be adapted to create an online self-taught module youth workers can use to inform themselves about youth courts and the youth justice system, someone will have to be identified with the necessary skills and resources to convert these into an online resource. The youth service has a commitment in the service plan 2018-19 to deliver this

training for staff. Recruitment to key posts was completed over the summer and the training plan is being reviewed by the new Head of Service. Further training is available from the youth justice board on-line learning platform.

Actions	Responsible Officer	Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that a safeguarding approach is embedded within work around gang members and victims, taking into account the needs of the whole family</li> </ul>	DD Children's Social Care	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase participation on training currently being delivered to staff</li> </ul>	DD Children's Social Care	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify whether there is capacity within the Youth Justice team to update resources and upload online</li> </ul>	DD Youth & Commissioning	April 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver training to youth workers</li> </ul>	DD Youth & Commissioning	April 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff supervisions to be reviewed to ensure they meet the needs of staff</li> </ul>	DD HR & DD Children's Social Care	July 2019

**Recommendation 2:** The council should develop a new Gangs Strategy which reflects the concerns of the community and young people and has a strong focus on the voices of victims and of empowering the community. This would complement **recommendation 8**, which asked that further work was undertaken to develop a more comprehensive understanding of impact on women as a result of gangs and gang activity in the borough, in particular Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). This should include the voices and experiences of those who have been victims of gangs and serious violence. Both approaches should involve wider engagement with the local community and other stakeholders, including schools, faith groups and TRAs to increase an understanding of community concerns and how they might help contribute to our response (**recommendation 12**).

**Comments from Service:** The refreshed strategy will be entitled "Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation" in recognition of the wider impact on gangs and the exploitation of young people related to gang activity. Work has already commenced with a number of meetings held with key stakeholders to look at the scope and direction of the strategy. The strategy will be governed by the Community Safety Partnership and jointly developed by both Children & Culture and Health, Adults and Community Directorates. Public Health is undertaking a Joint Strategic Needs Analysis which will provide much of the evidence base for the new strategy. The aim is for the final strategy to be presented to Cabinet in Autumn 2019. The development of the strategy will include engagement with young people who have been victims of, or previously involved with, gang activity in the borough as well as CSE survivors.

A refresh of the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy has been completed and the new VAWG Strategy was approved by Cabinet in March 2019. This process included consultations with both professionals and survivors. The Domestic Violence One Stop Shop is ongoing weekly with increased survivor drop in due to improved awareness. The VAWG Charter has been co-produced and was launched in November and a Communications Strategy is being developed. Public health is developing a Violence JSNA, which will in part inform the above strategy. The work will include qualitative insights (e.g. focus groups).

Actions	Responsible Officer	Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a strategy focusing on gangs and victims</li> </ul>	DD Community Safety / DD Children’s Social Care	Autumn 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch a VAWG Charter</li> </ul>	DD Community Safety	Completed – November 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a refresh of the VAWG strategy</li> </ul>	DD Community Safety	Completed – March 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with victims of gangs and serious violence</li> </ul>	Public Health	Ongoing

**Recommendation 3:** Consider how we structure our activity in response to gangs and exploitation to ensure that it is a more holistic approach such as a wider ‘exploitation’ team, which will be supported by undertaking further analysis of the gangs profile in the borough including the age and ethnic profile of those involved (**recommendation 6**).

**Comments from Service:**

In May 2018, Ofsted noted *“there has been a substantial improvement in the quality of practice with this group of exploited children and their families. The recent co-location of key staff and the creation of a dedicated, authoritative, multi-agency exploitation team is very effective in responding quickly to high-risk situations...the exploitation team has an increased awareness of the multiple and overlapping risks to all children...these alternative methods of multi-agency interventions and engagement with young people are having a positive impact”*. In addition, the Police Integrated Gangs unit was located with the Exploitation Team in December 2018.

The mobilised Exploitation Hub has analytical capacity that the council simply hasn’t possessed up until now. An integral part of the teams work is mapping and better understanding of both the borough’s gangs’ profile and the networks/mechanisms that drive the criminal/sexual exploitation of young people. The London Crime Prevention Fund is funding two analysts, one of whom sits in the Hub. Ofsted noted *“effective multi-agency mapping meetings assist professionals to identify, track and understand common associations across gang memberships...Emerging information and intelligence is continually and quickly evaluated, leading to*

*effective action to disrupt perpetrators and defuse emerging incidents..”* The presence of the Integrated Gangs Unit alongside the Exploitation team has now further strengthened our capability in analysing intelligence of gang activity.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a multi-agency, co-located Exploitation team which includes the Police</li> </ul>	DD Children’s Social Care	Completed – May 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the Exploitation Hub to improve analytical capacity</li> </ul>	DD Children’s Social Care	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extract further data from the Violence JSNA in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding and renew the gangs profile</li> </ul>	DD Children’s Social Care	July 2019

**Recommendation 4:** Our assessments of children entering the care system should more thoroughly consider the mental health needs, including an understanding of the specific impact of violence on their lives. This understanding can be enhanced if our understanding of the impact of County Lines and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) on our looked after children who are placed outside of borough is improved and developed (**recommendation 7**)

**Comments from Service:**

A ‘Contextualised Assessment’ helps to better understand the impact and of a child or young person’s historical background impact and what is required to address it. There are already statutory reviews and Strength and Difficulty Questionnaires in place to address the areas of mental health needs and can trigger an assessment earlier if required to do so. Both Children Looked After (CLA) and Leaving Care Service (LCS) have access to Tower Hamlets in-house CAMHS whereby a child or young person can receive immediate support without having to be placed on a waiting list.

The borough is actively participating in the London Crime Protection Funded, pan-London, Response and Rescue County Lines project. Officers sit on the steering and operational boards and LBTH is seen as one of the four lead boroughs. Utilising the Response and Rescue East London analyst, we are reviewing and improving our analytical product relating to children subject to County Lines. This work is be helped by the mobilised Exploitation Hub whereby social workers and managers can seek advice and assistance in cases where children and young people are placed out of borough.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce an annual Contextualised Assessment</li> </ul>	DD Children’s Social Care	January 2019

• Provide training on working with young people at risk of sexual exploitation	DD Children's Social Care	Ongoing
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**Recommendation 5:** Ensure that there is funding and coordination that covers interventions for young people over the age of 18, including adopting the approach from **recommendation 9**, in which current engagement with Job Centre Plus should be expanded to include the Council's WorkPath, as employment is considered an effective opportunity for gangs exit

**Comments from Service:**

Young WorkPath (Careers Service) recently transferred from the Education and Partnerships Division in the Children's Services Directorate into the Growth and Economic Development Division, within the Place Directorate and focuses on the statutory groups of NEET, risk of NEET and more vulnerable young people. Using similar mechanisms and the shared knowledge and resource of WorkPath, young people are supported to explore aspiration, opportunities and apprenticeships to promote a self-reliant and sustainable lifestyle.

The council's WorkPath and Young WorkPath services support residents through a journey of assessment, advice, skills, experience, jobs and progression. Where referrals are received from Youth services, Schools, PRU or other organisations, the services will do an assessment of the barriers to work that the client discloses. WorkPath and Young WorkPath (Careers Service) work in close partnership with partner support organisations including Streets of Growth who specifically target those currently/previously involved with gangs, Street Elite and Wise Youth Trust who, although not targeting gangs, engage with youth through sport to promote inclusion, education and training and the Building Crafts College in Stratford delivering construction related training to mostly those clients that had previously been excluded from school have ended up in a PRU. The services also work alongside the Supporting Stronger Families team who are co-located in the WorkPath offices. The team utilises Jobcentre Plus secondees and receive referrals from the Youth service team.

WorkPath offers liaison with 'Integrated Offender Management' (IOM) referrals from Probation (clients with high risk of reoffending) and the 'Community Rehabilitation Company' (CRC) (clients with low to medium risk of reoffending). These clients are often accompanied by their supporting officers from these teams when meeting WorkPath advisers. WorkPath have also brokerage officers that are experienced in youth services and work closely with internal teams to maximise support and opportunity pathways.

Members of the Rapid Response Team have received comprehensive Community Safety Training to enable the teams reach to 18+. RRT continue to collaborate with relevant providers to increase client prosperity and ensure accessible and appropriate

training is available. This aims to address any skills gaps and provide support which is aligned to being job ready. Credible information is provided to maximise opportunities for meaningful employment, communicating detailed information about types of positions available, associated requirements and possible in work benefits. RRT meet with DWP, Catch 22 and Workpath regularly to identify employment and training opportunities.

RRT are working with the Young People's Housing Accommodation Forum. This forum works with both young people leaving care and young adults 18+ in supported accommodation non LAC residents with complex needs and risk associated with violence vulnerability and or exploitation.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To expand the remit of the Rapid Response Team to improve engagement with those aged 18 and over</li> </ul>	DD Community Safety	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch Young Workpath to support those between 16-24 into training and employment</li> </ul>	DD Growth and Economic Development	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Safety to develop a Mayoral Growth Bid to develop intensive one-to-one support</li> </ul>	DD Community Safety	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the Council's Workpath is fully utilised in offering employment opportunities to gang members</li> </ul>	DD Growth and Economic Development/ DD Youth and Commissioning	Ongoing

**Recommendation 10:** Consider ways in which the risk and vulnerability of young people attending the London East AP can be better understood, and develop an effective support package for young people re-entering secondary school when moving from the London East AP

**Comments from Service:**

Strategic leadership from Divisional Directors of Childrens' Services needed to agree a pathway and their services input into this. Behaviour and Attendance Partnership will consult with school leadership and recommendationis will be implemented by the Strategic Fair Access Panel.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further develop and improve on the already successful reintegration rate of</li> </ul>	DD Education and	July 2019

<p>young people reintegrating from London East Alternative Provision into secondary schools by developing a collaborative, partnership pathway which includes a co-ordinated response from Childrens' Social Care, the Youth Service, CAMHS and Education to ensure vulnerable children and families receive a holistic package of support which will secure a successful transition to a new school.</p>	Partnerships	
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**Schools are an important mechanism through which we can educate and support young people, as identified in recommendations 12 and 20. We need to engage with schools and the police to better understand their policies around exclusions in relation to carrying knives (12) and offer a quality assured preventative programme to schools, in order to spot early warning signs and develop the resilience of young people (20)**

**Comments from Service:**  
 Strategic leadership from Divisional Directors of Children's Services and Police to inform contextualised approach, whilst the Behaviour and Attendance Partnership consult with school leadership, informed by good practice examples identified The Strategic FAP Panel will implement the recommendations.

Working collaboratively with the exploitation team, St Giles and the youth justice team have developed an educational training programme for schools and youth centres, focusing on current issues such as serious youth violence, criminal/ sexual exploitation, gangs/ groups, county lines and drug awareness is under development.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a wide consultation with all partners to determine what effective risk management strategies can be implemented to reduce exclusions related to the carrying of weapons, whilst balancing the need for schools to safeguard all their pupils from physical harm.</li> </ul>	DD Education and Partnerships	July 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify/create a preventative programme to schools</li> </ul>	DD Education and Partnerships	Completed

**Recommendation 13:** Consideration should be given to whether there should be a social care/youth worker presence in A&E, including the paediatric A&E at Royal London in order to support early identification and intervention of those

**involved in gangs or subject to exploitation by gangs.**

**Comments from Service:** The Violent Crime Reduction Officer is based with the Major Trauma Unit, at the Royal London Hospital. The RRT Violent Crime Reduction Officer will engage adults and young people requiring medical treatment for injuries attributed to violent / knife crimes. The RRT Violent Crime Reduction Caseworker provides needs led wrap around support to high risk adults and young people, who have been victims of violent crimes including knife crime (not in-patients).

Actions	Responsible Officer	Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify whether there is officer capacity already within the service to provide such a presence. If not, begin recruitment (contingent on budgets)</li></ul>	DD Community Safety	Completed VCRO in post as of 02/01/2019

**Recommendation 14: The council should work in partnership with the police in order to develop effective disruption activity in relation to gangs, drugs and CSE, ensuring that it utilises all of the tools and powers at its disposal.**

**Comments from Service:** Environmental Health and Trading Standards carry out a range of Licensing enforcement activities and under age sales test purchases. Although they do not specifically target gangs/drugs/CSE, they have an impact.

**Operation Continuum** - This is a partnership operation involving police and Local Authority. Over the past year this partnership activity has resulted in;

- 190 total arrests for drug offences and drug supply
- 91 people charged
- 31 men sentenced to a combined total of more than 100 years' imprisonment
- Large quantities of Class A drugs and Cannabis seized
- £171k in cash seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act
- 4 firearms recovered during raids
- 164 drugs stop and searches conducted
- 399 ASB Warnings issued
- 25 weapon sweeps conducted
- 33 weapons recovered from weapon sweeps including knives and other offensive weapons
- 93 people arrested, assessed and referred in to drug treatment
- The Partnership Task Force (PTF) was increased (from 1-5) to 1 Sergeant and 10 Constables on 5<sup>th</sup> September. These officers are funded by the Mayor. The section 92 agreement with MOPAC and Police is for a resource of 4 Sergeants and 20 constables. These additional officers will be released when the Borough Commander is able.
- Weekly tasking process chaired by council officer focuses on drugs, violence and agrees deployments across the borough.



These deployments are based on call analysis to the police, information received from residents, ME's, and intelligence from other council departments and Registered Providers.

- Apart from key locations, the PTF are also focussing on the top 10 vehicles identified as being associated with drug dealing and exploring ways to disrupt the activity of dealers often referred to as an 'Achilles Heel' approach.
- Where users are identified, the PTF offer appointments to engage with treatment service
- The multi-agency Exploitation Team undertakes work with the most vulnerable teenagers in the borough, joining up work around Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation, missing children and County Lines. Information sharing and intelligence has enabled surveillance and disruption activity to be undertaken.

Actions	Responsible Officer	Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the Partnership Task Force owing to additional funding from Mayor</li> </ul>	Metropolitan Police Service – Tower Hamlets	Completed – September 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for release of additional officers as per the section 92 agreement</li> </ul>	Metropolitan Police Service – Tower Hamlets	Ongoing

**Including the community in plans to tackle gangs and serious youth violence was recommended in 16 and 17, both by instigating a programme of training for local residents, where appropriate, to act as community advocates, and by developing a peer led programme. This should raise awareness of risks and vulnerabilities and support peers through mentoring.**

**Comments from Service:** Recommending using local residents was based on the Chicago/Ceasefire model of Violence Interrupters, one of the methodologies being explored, (alongside the Glasgow model) by the GLA's new Violence Reduction Unit for the application of a London wide Public Health response to violence and knife crime. There may be an opportunity for an LBTH officer to join a fieldtrip to Chicago in April next year to see first-hand how they apply the model and discuss how it might best be adapted to meet the specific needs/dynamics of Tower Hamlets.

In regards to the peer-led programme, it was proposed that the newly established Youth Independent Advisory Group would be invited to lead on this piece of work. When consulted on this, they felt it was a bigger project than they wanted or felt able to take on this early in their formation. They also indicated that although they might at a future date be in a position to co-design such a programme, they wouldn't be able to deliver the project, it would be beyond the scope and resourcing of the YIAG to deliver this, particularly the mentoring component. A separate group would need to be established (and resourced) to deliver an initiative of this size and ambition. After LBTH discussions with Glasgow violence reduction their recommendation to train young people to deliver training to their peers regarding gangs/ groups, CSE, staying safe, county lines, criminal exploitation is under consideration to be

employed with in LBTH education settings. The Youth Service's A Team Arts project currently runs a 3 hour CSE workshop called 'Her Link' in schools, Youth Centres and Community Centre. The March 2019 Parent and Family Conference included parental workshops on gangs and county lines.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake an assessment, as part of the Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy development, to establish which, if any training programme should be implemented</li> </ul>	DD Community Safety / DD Children's Social Care / DD Youth and Commissioning	Sept 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify whether it is feasible to establish and resource a group</li> </ul>	DD Youth & Commissioning	Sept 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make a decision on whether training young people to deliver training is viable</li> </ul>	DD Youth & Commissioning	Sept 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decide whether the CSE workshop should continue into 2019/20</li> </ul>	DD Youth & Commissioning	Sept 2019