

21 May 2019

Scrutiny Review into Preventing Youth Violence

Report from the Preventing Youth Violence
Scrutiny Panel

Members of the review group

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1. Chair's Foreword

I was thrilled to be able to do this Scrutiny review as I am not a FOGI (fear of getting involved) and to have Sachin Shah as my Vice-Chairman so that we can improve the policies and strategies to contribute to reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour. It is amazing that so much goes on in the borough but I did not know until the review the extent of activities. There are so many dedicated people who are working to make a big difference for the lives of young people. Also I would like to thank all who welcomed us on our visits and to the young people who talked to us freely. The Police are working so hard as well with young people and I hope schools will embrace them with their visits. I am especially pleased with the Junior Citizen being revived but like all things finance is needed. But prevention will cost us less in the future with these young peoples lives. I cannot stress enough how important it is with the Primary School children to equip them with strategies to deal with crime, violence and drugs which people may try to coerce them to do. The MASH and new computer system provide tremendous join up work and I would like to see a golden thread connecting all the partnerships/agencies together. When we met with the Scrutiny panel I did set out 10 recommendations which should be useful and I did notice the council is working on some already. Finally, a special mention to Maxine Henson, Sarah Butterworth, Camilla Bath, Chris Mote, Nathaniel Bygrave, and Shumailla Dar who accompanied me to the many visits and the meetings.

Cllr Janet Mote

Chairman, Scrutiny Review into Preventing Youth Violence

2. Executive Summary

This report sets out the final findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review into Preventing Youth Violence, which was established to scrutinise the Council's work into tackling youth violence. The purpose of the review was to investigate how we might use all of the Council's policies and strategies to contribute to reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour in a more 'Public Health approach' to Youth Crime.

The measure of success for this scrutiny review was to ensure policy changes are agreed; that there is a greater understanding amongst decisions makers to make a difference to young people's lives, through partnership working and information sharing; and to enable the better use of intelligence to target key people to stop youth violence and deter involvement.

The methodology for this review involved desk research, which was undertaken by policy officers to provide insight on the public health approach to youth violence. This approach originated in Glasgow and is now being adopted by the Mayor of London. Officers from Children's Services and Community Safety team also provided evidence around youth offending rates, and the services that are provided for young people in Harrow. Members of this review were also given the Young Needs Analysis which was a collaborative piece of evidence undertaken by the Young Harrow Foundation in collaboration with the council. This research enabled and assisted members to understand the needs of young people and services that are on offer for young people in Harrow through the lens of a public health approach.

To supplement this review, a series of meetings with relevant practitioners and field visits to local organisations that are working with young people in Harrow were also undertaken. The purpose of this was to give members of the panel first hand insight into this area. Councillors were also joined by a gang's worker from Ignite, who was part of the scrutiny panel in order to give the perspective of young people. In addition to this one challenge panel took place involving a series of questions to senior officers working on this agenda, minutes from this challenge panel are attached at A.

Key themes emerged, including; a new model of partnership working between the council and voluntary sector, which should be extended to statutory services; the gap of

intervention services for young people in the transition age group (year 6 of primary school); growing drug use amongst young people; and the need for a streamlined approach to ensuring all council strategies consider youth violence as driving out crime.

The recommendations from this Review are based on evidence from local data on youth violence, information from the latest Community Safety and Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy, partners working on the ground in Harrow, and from senior council officers and members at the Challenge Panel. It is hoped that this Review can assist in informing future interventions and the latest refresh of the Community Safety and Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy in order to ensure the best outcomes for all of Harrow's young people.

The final recommendations to Overview and Scrutiny Committee from the Panel are:

Recommendation 1: Each time a strategy or policy is reviewed a specific perspective on reducing youth violence should be included.

Recommendation 2: The Council to work in collaboration with the Police and Schools to address the priorities agreed within the CS, VVE Strategy.

Recommendation 3: The council to explore interventions that prevent young people from using and dealing drugs.

Recommendation 4: Harrow Council explores the use of early intervention programmes in year 6 of primary schools

3. Background

3.1 Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to investigate how we might use all of the Council's policies and strategies to contribute to reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour in a more 'Public Health approach' to Youth Crime. Specifically, the review aimed to:

- Understand how a 'Public Health approach' can contribute to reducing youth violence, to identify changes we could make to Council policies and strategies so they contribute to the reduction in youth crime and ASB
- Understand what the drivers are behind the rise in youth crime in Harrow and best practise in other boroughs
- Inform the Council's refresh of the VVE strategy, including the role of consultation with young people
- Investigate the better use of intelligence to target key people to stop youth violence and deter involvement

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3.2 Methodology

This Scrutiny Review has involved desk research conducted by the Policy Team, one Challenge Panel and a series of meetings and field visits as detailed below:

- Policy Officers undertook desk research into the public health approach to youth violence. The aim was to give members an understanding of the origins of the public health approach and its aims. The panel also had the opportunity to examine the Council's Community Safety and Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy, the most recent Youth Offending Team data, the 'This is Harrow' young people needs analysis, and the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime London Crime

Prevention Funded programmes, which include programmes, that seek to tackle some aspects of youth violence.

- Members also undertook a series of meetings with Children's Services and Community Safety Team & Observation of the Daily VVE meeting, a meeting with police in-charge of schools, a meeting with Dan Burke from the Young Harrow Foundation, and a meeting with PK Maselino at The Helix, a Pupil Referral Unit. Field visits took place to Ignite, The Wealdstone Centre, Rooks Heath School with participants of Synergy Theatre, the Cadets at Nower Hill School.
- One Challenge Panel was held, with questions being put to the Corporate Director for People's, the Divisional Director for Children's, the Divisional Director for Resources, and the Head of Service for Community Safety.

4. Context

4.1 Local context

In 2017, the Harrow Resident Survey asked: *'if the Council could fix one thing that's wrong with Harrow, what should it be?'* The top response was safety, tackling crime and ASB, which was raised by 20% of residents. In the same survey, from a pre-defined list of services, residents said that levels of crime and ASB was both the most important issue to them (34% of responses) and the issue that needs most improving (28% of responses) in the borough. This is also one of the top issues appearing in the local press, which additionally includes references to the closure of police stations.

Recently, the Metropolitan Police Service changed the way local policing is delivered in London through the introduction of new Borough Command Units (BCUs). Harrow police services merged with those in Barnet and Brent to form the North West BCU in November 2018. The move combined core policing functions of neighbourhoods, emergency response, CID and safeguarding. There have been local concerns about police resources being diverted from the borough.

The Strategic Assessment 2018 showed that overall crime levels in London have been increasing. Whilst this is also the case for Harrow, the borough continues to have the lowest crime rate in London. However, the proportion of knife crime that results in injury is increasing particularly for Under 25s. At least 46 children and young people within Harrow suffered knife crime injuries in the past 12 months. In addition to this, rates of gang flagged offences are low but resident concern is rising. Drug crime may be an emerging risk as Harrow's relatively lower levels are rising, while neighbouring boroughs are showing significant reductions. There have been significant increases in Faith Hate crime.

Despite Harrow being one of the safest boroughs in London, crime remains a top concern amongst residents. Harrow's Community Safety and Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy for 2017-2021 sets out the Community Safety Partnership's (Safer Harrow) commitment for crime reduction. The Delivery Plan has a strong focus on both high volume crime (burglary, non-domestic violence with injury, ASB) and high harm crime (youth violence and knife crime, domestic and sexual abuse, substance misuse, extremism and hate crime) which echoes the current Mayor's priorities, and includes a renewed focus on ASB and Youth Violence.

In addition to this the recent This is Harrow report¹, a young people's needs analysis, conducted in 2018 by the Young Harrow Foundation, in partnership with the council, found that young people in Harrow are struggling with issues such as mental health, including self-harm and suicidal thoughts; poor physical health; problems with drugs and alcohol; and other challenges of modern life. The report also found that there is a widespread of young people in Harrow with unmet needs and evidence suggests the importance of making support more generally available to young people, and the need for focus on preventative support. This analysis was a first of its kind and has been used by a wide range of professionals and young people alike working across a range of issues in order to bring voluntary organisations and other stakeholders together to develop collective and innovative solutions, and to help bring in external funding to support these approaches. The voice of young people must continue to be at the centre of this collective approach.

There has been a lot of debate about what can be learnt from the public health model that originated in the US and reduced youth violence over the past decade in Glasgow. The public health approach to youth violence works on the assumption that violence is preventable and therefore a collaborative, multi-agency approach to prevention working alongside policing and enforcement will have a greater impact than enforcement alone.

The World Health Organisation (2017) defines a public health approach to reducing violence as one that: 'Seeks to improve the health and safety of all individuals by addressing underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or a perpetrator of violence. By definition, public health aims to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people. Programmes for primary prevention of violence based on the public health approach are designed to expose a broad segment of a population to prevention measures and to reduce and prevent violence at a population-level.'

A public health approach to youth violence focuses on the following:

¹ <https://youngharrowfoundation.org/images/downloads/This-is-Harrow-Report-Final-Low-Res.pdf>

- *A defined population, often with a health risk in common* - Connectors could be geography, common experience, diagnosis or demographic characteristics, for example young people involved in gangs.
- *Working with and for communities* - Focused on improving outcomes for communities by listening to them and designing interventions jointly with them.
- *Unconstrained by organisational or professional boundaries* - People often do not neatly sit within a service user grouping and looking across organisations means that we can look across the system for solutions and not be too narrow in our approach.
- *Generating long term as well as short term solutions* - Acting on the causes and determinants as well as controlling the immediate impact of the problem. Identifying actions to be taken now to put enduring solutions in place.
- *Based on data and intelligence to identify the burden on the population, including any inequalities* - Analysis of the differences between our population of interest and their peer's gets to their real story and the challenges they face. It shows us who is particularly affected and where particular communities experience more of the burden than others. It also tells us about the impact across the system, the underlying causes and protective and risk factors.
- *Rooted in evidence of effectiveness to tackle the problem* - Learning where we can from the experience of others and evaluating new approaches. This is important, so interventions can be replicated if they work or revised if they don't. The evidence may not be water tight, particularly for system level interventions, but we can use what is available to guide our decisions and help us test new ideas.
- *Working on system level solutions delivered through system leadership* - Typically, successful solutions to complex issues will involve different public service bodies working together in an integrated fashion. This means not only working to common goals within organisations but collaborating on a deeper level with shared objectives and work programmes.

In September 2018, the Mayor of London announced plans to establish a new Violence Reduction Unit of specialists in health, police and local government to lead and deliver a long-term public health approach to tackling the causes of violent crime. The new unit will improve co-ordination between the Metropolitan Police, local authorities, youth services, health services, criminal justice agencies and City Hall as part of the new enhanced partnership, backed up by the unit. It will also build on what works and share best practice.

The Mayor has directed an initial £500,000 towards establishing the Violence Reduction Unit. The ultimate aim is to divert young people away from criminal activity, by supporting the vulnerable at an early stage and giving young Londoners better life opportunities.

The new VRU unit will work across the city, expanding the work of the Mayor's Knife Crime Strategy to include wider types of violence and look to address the links between violence in the home and on the street. At its heart is the aim of better understanding the risk factors in a person's early life that can lead to serious violence by using data from health, criminal justice and other public services. It will also focus on improved and sped up interventions at a local level, with the aim of reducing violence and protecting those vulnerable to exploitation. This work will happen at all levels in the city by working with boroughs, local police Basic Command Units, the local community, families, the health service and criminal justice agencies. In addition to this, the Major has also produced a Knife Crime Strategy launched a new £45 million Young Londoners Fund and each borough also has a local knife crime action plan.

5. Findings

5.1 A public health approach to tackling youth violence in Harrow²

The council plays a key role in reducing violence, by bringing together partners through their strategic and operational role spanning enforcement, early intervention, prevention in relation to violent crime and provision of support to victims of violence. Central to an effective public health approach to reducing violence is the implementation of interventions that address risk and protective factors in individuals, families, communities and populations to reduce violence at a community and/or population level.

² **References:**

Harrow Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy 2018-2020

Harrow Community Safety Partnership Knife Crime Action Plan 2018-2019

Harrow Youth Justice Plan 2019

Khulisa (2019) Tackling Youth Violence in Harrow, Available at: <http://www.khulisa.co.uk/tackling-youth-violence-in-harrow/>

LGA, (2018) *Public health approaches to reducing violence*, Available at: <https://www.local.gov.uk/public-health-approaches-reducing-violence>

Over the past 10 years, the Scottish Government's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) successfully implemented a public health approach to reducing violence. The Glasgow approach utilised a classic public health approach with *primary prevention* meaning preventing violence before it happens, *secondary prevention* being an immediate response to instances of violence and *tertiary prevention* focusing on long term care and rehabilitation.

In taking this model forward, Harrow Council has introduced a multiagency, public health approach to tackling violence, with the aim to prevent violence before it happens, to respond immediately to incidents of violence and to support long term care and rehabilitation to victims and perpetrators of violence. Underpinning the approach to violence is the *Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation (VVE) Strategy*, which outlines a partnership approach to addressing low-volume but high harm crimes, including youth violence and domestic abuse, and the *Knife Crime Action Plan*.

Without minimising the impact of individual cases that have occurred, serious youth violence in Harrow remains lower than many other boroughs across London. The council recognises the importance of early intervention and considers knife crime and serious youth violence issue a public health matter. The council's social care, youth offending team and early support services are taking an integrated approach to working with schools to support them with a range of programmes and interventions to support them and these vulnerable young people.

A summary of Harrow's public health approach to tackling violence includes the following:

Primary Prevention

- Developing capacity of parents, schools and communities via the Early Intervention Youth Fund 18 month pilot to tackle youth violence
- Early Support School Engagement Strategy (improving schools understanding about EH, engaging with children, drop in parenting sessions, behaviour workshops, emotional resilience and intelligence)
- Schools using pupil premium grants creatively to work with parents to reduce vulnerabilities

Secondary Prevention

- *Daily VVE meetings* discussing overnight incidents of gang and youth violence in Harrow and tasking immediate actions to multiagency partners
- *Harrow Early Support* targets intervention with those children and young people most at risk, based on trend analysis from health, Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), and schools to develop bespoke programmes to address community needs – for example, Grange Farm estate and Roxbourne, programmes include mental toughness working with local community centre (Grange), relaunching an Early Support site at Roxbourne to work alongside key community groups to deliver interventions and utilising school nurses in community hubs.
- *Red Thread* targeted support to young people who have been stabbed “teachable moments” in A+E wards
- *Child protection plans/ Children’s services response* for young people who are victims and/or perpetrators of violence
- *Police disruption measures* such as Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs)
- *No knives better lives* – targeted programme held at Old Bailey court

Tertiary Prevention

- Youth Offending Team and Youth Justice Plan – trauma informed practice and restorative justice
- *Ignite* gangs prevention and gangs exit
- *Street Doctors* – teaching young people about the physical impact of knife crime

Harrow have an integrated structure addressing a local Youth Offer, this involves working with young people to prevent involvement in youth crime and to intervene at the earliest possible stage. The approach to working with cohorts of young offenders aims to see the child first, the offence second, and address welfare and vulnerability factors. The focus is to support young people who have come through the courts or police routes to desist in criminal behaviour and take up positive activities in education, training or employment, and tailored interventions specific to each child / circumstance. Programmes include; mental toughness and emotional resilience group programme, which are aimed at enabling young people to make better choices in difficult situations.

The Youth Offending Team work with a range of partner organisations to deliver programmes across Harrow, this includes:

- Ignite: 1:1 work with young people at risk of gangs, drug running, violent crime
- Street Doctors: provide emergency street based first aid to youngsters
- Redthread: work with victims of serious violence – use the “teachable moment” at the hospital bedside to try to help youngsters reflect on their path to this moment and rewind to a place where they can see an alternative
- Harrow School – Tall Ships project: brings YOT clients into a team with Harrow School boys – see an alternative view of life and develop team working skills and breaking down barriers of perception

Harrow’s own programmes include:

- Empire to Inspire: a leadership programme for young black men – recognising their specific needs/vulnerabilities and helping them see positive alternatives where they at risk of making choices likely to lead to unfavourable circumstances
- CAMHS practitioner within the YOT for Mental Health screening and signposting for all young people coming into YOT
- Education Specialist within the YOT helping young people find training or employment – alongside partnership with Prospects
- Specialist Drugs and Alcohol worker within the YOFT to help suitable young people address these issues where relevant
- Partnership work with Children’s Social Care where young people are suffering neglect/abuse and may be looked after

All programmes have a measure of success, and outcomes are measured against national indicators that include:

- Reducing numbers of First Time Entrants to YOT
- Reducing reoffending
- Reducing the use of Custody

Harrow is in the top quartile for all of these measures, succeeded across London. In addition to this, some of the more local priorities include reducing violence and drug

distribution (county lines), and outcomes for these are reflected in the national indicator set.

In terms of partnership working, Children's services work closely with the Community Safety Team, which is the corporate team for dealing with matters of Anti-Social Behaviour arising in the Borough, except for ASB resulting from Council tenancy premises, which is within the remit of the Council Housing Department. The team were previously located at the Depot but moved to the Civic Centre last year, which has enhanced information sharing and enabled more effective working amongst teams.

The central focus of the Community Safety Team is the victim and also supporting the community, as outlined in key legislation governing the area. The Community Safety Team are responsible for investigating all complaints of ASB through to resolution using the appropriate tools and powers and through engagement with partners and ultimately reporting back to Safer Harrow. The main aim of the team is to:

- Provide a first line of support and are the primary co-ordinators and enforcers for all matters of Anti-Social Behaviour and crime and disorder crime on the Borough.
- Take the recommended action outlined to support the victim as well as the appropriate course of action to tackle the perpetrator.
- The Community Safety Team are responsible for investigating all complaints of ASB through to resolution using the appropriate tools and powers and through engagement with partners. This includes a series of meetings that they oversee governed by set protocols, and ultimately reporting to Safer Harrow Board and Home office where necessary.
- Work in partnership with other agencies to provide proactive reassurance and support in relation to ASB issues, to the residents of Harrow.
- Actively work cross border with the other 31 London Council for best practice in combatting crime and disorder to include Home counties
- Tackle and support and protect the vulnerable victims and manage risk in accordance to them.
- Collectively work with Police to identify the perpetrators of Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime.

5.2 Field Visits

Members of this visit undertook a number of field visits, which included visits to:

- Police in-charge of schools
- The Cadets at Nower Hill School
- Ignite
- The Wealdstone Centre³
- Rooks Heath School with participants of Synergy Theatre
- Young Harrow Foundation
- The Helix, a Pupil Referral Unit⁴

Police in charge of schools

Members were given an overview of the current service that is delivered by police in charge of schools; they are supposed to have 1 inspector, 6 sergeants, 57 PCs across 3 boroughs, but they have 1 inspector, 4 sergeants, and 37 PCs across 3 boroughs. There are also no engagement officers across the boroughs. Therefore the service is very low. The North West is a priority BCU which means that when police officers are trained NW BCU will be given priority. There is also a challenge in having the right police officers, especially for children. To date, there has been no special training for police to work with youth; this has only just become available for them 2 weeks ago. But all schools officers need special vetting to be with a child (child, youth and vulnerable child vetting).

Officers spoke about priority schools, which include Nower Hill, Hatch End, Canons, Bentley Wood, Park High, Harrow High, The Helix, Whitmore, and Salvatorian. Now they are going in to all schools now, including private schools. Until last year they talked to year 6 students about safety issues. At present there is no one going into primary schools. However, the part time officer will be going in on a Fridays.

On the 17th June – 5th July 2019 schools police will be running the Junior Citizens Scheme, Stanmore Community Centre, and Elliot Road. This has been happening for the last 2

³ This meeting was a walk around at the Wealdstone Centre for members of the panel and was not minuted

⁴ This meeting was only attended by members of the panel, not Policy support was present and therefore was not minuted

years, and is aimed at year 6 pupils (10-11 year olds), for which schools have to pay £15 per child to attend. Members asked what preventative methods were taking place for young people, and asked whether a box of drugs still exists. CG said that school nurses now do this sort of work, however the Met Police, the London Fire Brigade, Transport for London, and Mayfield Animal Welfare will be involved, and at the end they will have an assembly about knife crime.

A discussion took place about the transition period and the lack of a positive alternative for year 6s; officers said they have grown their cadet unit, which has 160 children this year, including 2 senior cadet units, 2 junior cadet units (which will be expanded by another 3 units). The team go into senior schools as soon as they arrive in year 7, and participants are given a Volunteer Police Cadet t-shirt which identifies them and doesn't make them stand out. Senior cadets (under the Duke of Edinburgh Award, DofE) come in and peer lead these sessions, with a syllabus around drugs, knives, etc. They are now expanding to junior children for the older children to be able to develop their skills so that they can add this to their DofE and add this towards their volunteer hours and CVs. The cadets get referrals from YOT, schools, etc. They also do lots of events in various places, as well as central London. In Harrow the cadets are based in Nower Hill.

Officers spoke at length about the barriers to expanding the cadets include a lack of volunteers, drill instructor is retiring, and they need better resilience. From a volunteer point of view it sounds good, but they are not police officers, so for example the schools safety officer will be at school and then will be at the cadets, but the process of volunteering is a long process for vetting etc., and therefore people often lose interest. New units are going to be in the back end of Rayners lane, Canons, Rooks Heath, Pinner High, and Nower Hill. Officers talked about the long process to join, but said that the value added from this sort of scheme is immense. For example, one particular child at Helix was very close to joining a gang, but instead of being with the gang he took part in this programme and got his DofE award and he is now back in mainstream school and is making progress. In addition to this, one officer said that this week there was a child who came forward with mental health issues. A discussion took place on the ability of officers are able to signpost and manage some of these issues too, saying that the cadets are almost like a cross between of a youth club and police cadet.

In relation to knife crime, officers said that they are working with Jessica Plummer who set up the Shaquan Sammy-Plummer Foundation; she volunteers her time to speak to all secondary schools. There is also the SOS project (St Giles Trust and Ben Kinsella are part of this), which was successful via the SNB to go into the Helix and Harrow High. As a result of these projects they know that no children from these schools have been found with a knife on them. The police have now applied for £5,000 again, and believe that the Helix, Harrow High, and Whitefriars would be a priority this time.

On funding, the police feel that if they didn't have the Safer Neighbourhood (MOPAC) Funding they wouldn't be able to survive. They also used to have funding, the central VPC team used to have money to give them a venue, but they no longer have this money, it's about £6,000 a year to house them at Nower Hill, through negotiations, the funding stopped as of the 1st of April 2019, and most schools have clubbed together to fund this until the end of July (end of the school year), but after this there is no other space to use. There was also an issue with trying to get funding on a county lines project but this was faced with problems from the council.

Officers said that diversion and protection of young people is the biggest priority for the police right now and that children are more exposed to real videos of people being stabbed whereas in the past they wouldn't have actually seen these images. Officers said that when you take knives off them, young people said they have them to protect themselves. At the Helix and Jubilee, they are more engaged in knowing about this sort of subject because they have a vested interest. Another issue in Wembley is that children have no concerns that the criminal justice system will respond appropriately, they just think they will get a slap on the wrists if they get caught. There is no fear. But officers said that although they don't try to give children criminal records they do tell them that it will affect them later on in life, even if they want to fly to another country and they are parents themselves.

On knife bins there has been a back clash from schools, the newer schools and colleges have been more responsive; Orley Farm, Stanmore College, Harrow College have allowed knife arches. They also have a Significant Incident Group once a month, where they discuss what's been happening in Harrow schools officers information is discussed here as well.

Officers said that they have lunch at the Helix whenever they can to get intelligence; this is to pick up information from them and to speak to them. However, the Helix closes at 2pm, and this causes issues. There is some ASB at the town centre; those children are from the Helix.

Councillors were invited to the cadets at Nower Hill to see the young people and find out about their experiences.

The Cadets at Nower Hill School

Member of the panel met a group of cadets; one who had been a cadet for 3 years, and another one who had been there for 2 years. Councillors asked the young people for their views on what they think is going on in Harrow right now and why they come to the cadets. One person said she was introduced to the cadets by the school and she liked what it had to offer, the same went for another girl, who said it looked very interesting and she has loved it since. Their parents are supportive of them coming, especially the activities and volunteering. Last year one of the children was part of the Graves End team and she really enjoyed it, including how to arrest people, and how the police work, car accidents, stop and search, and house searches. Cadets have a competition between them and this is part of that. They have also had training on drug awareness. The cadets said that during the lesson time they have different topics they focus on, such as drugs, knife crime, and current social issues.

The cadets said they feel safe coming here. A lot of people come by bus, but some get dropped off by their parents. They said they've learnt many skills including discipline. Another person said that he heard about it from his friend, he liked it because everyone was nice and friendly, and he said he learnt a lot. Another girl said she's been coming for 2 years after hearing an assembly about it, they came with all their friends and out of everyone they are the only two of them stayed. One boy said he came after hearing an assembly, he came with his friend and she's gone but he likes it. They said the best thing they like about being here, the people and the opportunities. The children said that half of the events wouldn't have happened without the cadets, and they feel like they're working with the community.

The young people talked about youth violence and said Wealdstone has not been safe generally, but they think it's got better since before, especially in the last couple of months. The young people said they would like more youth clubs, like if they do drugs they can go somewhere, to turn their bad energy into good things. They would like table tennis and a chill area. In terms of homework, they said that if there are places that aren't rowdy then that would be good, such as libraries.

They would however like more awareness to be raised, they said there is only so much the police or council can do, but young people need a lot more education around the consequences of their actions.

Questions were asked about social media and phones, but the young people said that it is useful to talk to friends for example when they are abroad, so there are some positive things as well as negative things.

The young people talked about the young people they have seen who they know are going to go down the wrong path. They said you can't get into their heads and change their minds, and one day they'll realise that someone was trying to give them good advice. They said you can help young people as much as you can, but everyone is different.

Some of their friends initially thought that when they joined the police cadet they were better than them or they were part of the police, but it's about trying to help. They think that the police are just trying to do their job. They said their attitudes have changed since coming here. And now some of them are interested in joining the police now.

Ignite

Ignite has been in Harrow since 2001; they provide a space for young people, and found that people on the fringe of education are more susceptible to violence. They are now looking at ASB in young people who are involved in gang culture. Their work is predominantly based in Wealdstone, South Harrow, and Rayners Lane. The motto of Ignite is to Engage, empower, transform, but this relies on young people being open to wanting to engage. In relation to empowering, the sort of activities include chess, gym, music, etc. anything to help them see the positive in life. The Director of Ignite said that while she was very happy to hear about the positive stories, but she raised concerns about

the ongoing problems that are taking place in broad daylight, such as drug dealing. The majority of funding comes from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime.

Gang workers had an opportunity to talk to members about the work they were involved in, including work with the peel road gang, in Northolt and south harrow. Gang's workers said that there are some areas where young people tend to hang around more. Some questions were asked around the influence of religion and culture within gang culture, but this did not seem to be the case, with gang affiliation being more area-based and territorial, rather than culture based.

One gang worker said that there has been a good initiative around getting rid of street drinkers, which was based around understanding who these people are and distributing behaviour orders and said that it's about taking a step by step approach for the benefit of the residents.

The group also talked about the number of young people involved in gangs, which very much depended on the circle the young people are in. One gang worker said that this could grow within months. Though there are notably more men, the number of girls is growing; this includes girls hiding weapons or drugs as they are less likely to be searched. They also discussed the barriers for young people, such as not having the skill to complete a basic form, and the work that Ignite is doing gives them some insight into knowing what the problem is, such as writing forms, creating a CV, applying for their driving license. It takes about 5 years to get to the right stage in life. The group also talked about problems with the number of gangs coming from outside the borough, depending on their own affiliations in Harrow.

Questions were asked around how gang workers find young people to work with; to which they said that in some sense their own life experiences shaped their journey to get involved. Each gang worker shared their story on how they got into gangs work, some are from their own background, for others it was based around a career in youth work.

Members asked whether social media and phones have made things worse. One gang worker said that it always makes things harder because information travels so much faster, but you can still do positive things in the same way. So we need to flood the internet with good stories. They do have a Facebook page, but no capacity to do more social media

campaigns. The Director of Ignite said that they don't really advertise because they want only targeted people to come in, so it's mainly word of mouth, working on relationships. Young people are then given all gang workers telephone numbers.

One gang worker talked about the lack of parental involvement, saying that she felt it was a lack of love. Previously Ignite used to run for YOT children for parents, and it was interesting to see that parents had a lot of shame but didn't realise that so many other parents were also in the same boat as them. Gang workers felt that parents need to be more visible at the older ages not at younger ages, because that's when they need it the most. The group also said that there are also many issues that prevent young people from learning, such as learning disabilities and special educational needs.

An example of a new boxing and employment project was given, where, by the end of the project they got 13 young people into full time work last year who are still working. There is a real difference in the way that the young people see life, now they are trying to get those 13 young people to come and lead on projects in the areas they live in to give a bit more encouragement. Younger people delivering projects and telling their stories has much more impact as it is more relatable and people are less judgemental.

Rooks Heath School with participants of Synergy Theatre

Members of the panel met children from Rooks Heath School who had taken part in the Synergy drama project last year. Members asked the children what they felt they learnt through the Synergy programme. They said they had created short clips (vines). One child said that he created a vine about bullying because it happens a lot and there is a lot of violence. The video was aimed at helping children how to cope with it. Although none of the children had been bullied themselves they knew people who have been bullied. Another child had produced a video on the toilets and how it was very smelly and dirty, the vine was about new experiences when starting a new school, it was comedic, about going into a school and asking for help. Another girl created a video about being confident and doing your own thing.

One year 11 student talked about script writing when making a film. It took 3 lessons to do this, and he wrote a script on a barber, whose son had been killed; the play was about the barber finding the man who killed his son. Another year 11 pupil talked about her play and

how many skills she learnt, including strategies and skills for when she leaves school. The children said that it was good because they were able to develop more ideas. They felt that they gained a lot of good skills; feeling more comfortable talking to people, and that they feel more confident and are able to make good choices. In the past they had no experience in script writing and it really helped develop these skills.

Some of the children said they would like to experience being actors, but one of the girls said that she now wants to be a news reporter or a journalist, and the script writing will help in this. Councillors asked which subjects they would like to go into, and one of the children replied that she'd like to choose media, and go into being a foreign correspondence. The children also said they got a real buzz out of producing these short clips and plays. One of the children was very outspoken and was able to share that he felt that he can now write a novel.

Another child who was quite shy at first said that he was behind the screen and did some filming; he said that they were good actors. He said he used a large camera with a microphone on top, just like the one they use to make the news; he said that he would like to go into photography. The child who was being filmed said a little bit about how he was filmed but was too shy. However, he then spoke about the film 'Titanic', and the group started talking about the clever aspects of filming. He then went on to talk about the film, 'A Night to Remember'.

Members of the panel asked the children what they didn't like about synergy, and the children said that they left too early and that they would have liked them to stay for longer. There was someone who was filling in for someone else (staff turnover) and the children got on very well with the temporary staff.

Following the meeting with the children a discussion took place amongst councillors about the young people who had taken part in the group discussion and that it appeared that a lot of children had come from a disadvantaged background with some or significant special educational needs. Members felt that it was very 'them and us' and maybe we could have been on the floor with a more open dialogue. They found that the year 11s were much more open, relaxed and chatty. The other young people from year 10 seemed quite tense. It seemed that Synergy had an impact from what they were saying, however it was not clear what they were like before so not very comparable.

Councillors shared their views of the discussion with the young people with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and said that it appears there are many challenges with the young people. The DSL said that this work falls under 'personal development' and it is non curriculum based. The children are selected based on their needs if they have behavioural or special educational needs; last year's group was much more based around behaviour needs, so they would have been more vocal. When they did this year group, they felt it would be beneficial for this particular group of year 10s who have a number of special needs (LAC, language, SEN, speech and language), and that it would be based around film making which would be the most appropriate for the young children. The school felt that the film making would be most beneficial to these children. Members were told that next year's group with Synergy is going to be different again, with a bigger mix of behaviour and under SEN.

The group were met briefly by the Head Teacher who felt that more needs to be done in Harrow, but he felt that the school was very good at responding to a lot of the issues through work with respite care, working closely with Jubilee, reintegration back into the school. Members asked how it affects the 'A' students, but the headmaster said that they are not affected at all. The school is oversubscribed for the first time in 15 years, in year 7, 8, and 9, they beat 9 grammar schools, and there is a lot of good work going on.

On the issue of inclusivity, the DSL said that Rooks Heath prides themselves on how inclusive they are. The school has taken 94 children from abroad where English is not a first language since September 2018. The Head Teacher felt that Progress 8 data is sometimes not reflective of what progress actually happens at the school.

A discussion also took place on the school's new hub, which aims to deal with the large number of fixed term exclusions; this hub was introduced in September. It works as a support hub for SEN students and also deals with behavioural issues. Students who have misbehaved are isolated in this room for the school day, including lunch and break, with detention for half an hour as well. This is different from seclusion. This has cut their fixed term exclusion rates, from 84 fixed term exclusions last year to 3. It's not just them being isolated, they are actually with a member of the team to talk about the reasons why they are in isolation, and then some intervention work takes place. They also have a Safer Schools Officer who attends once a week and talks to the pupils based at the hub. If there

are any incidents he will sit down and talk to the children about it. He is also open to speaking to the children any time to have a drop in and a chat, openly and engages with them.

Young Harrow Foundation

Members of the panel were given an overview of the work that is undertaken by the Young Harrow Foundation (YHF) by the CEO, who explained that the charity is funded by the John Lyon Charity. John Lyon's Charity felt that services were starting to close because of a series of issues and therefore work with Harrow, Barnet and Brent in order to tackle some of the problems being faced by small charities; they realised that we as boroughs don't apply for funding and they saw the problem sliding from central boroughs to outer boroughs, therefore they wanted to invest in these boroughs. YHF has been funded by John Lyon and Mercers from April 2016, however the charity is not allowed to touch this money for scrutiny purposes.

The purpose of YHF is three-fold; to help address the needs of young people, helping with commissioning where some of the smaller charities were being crippled where they were unable to fundraise effectively, and also to help funders, councils, and charities to work in better partnership with one another, therefore helping with brokerage. In addition to this, the group were told that there are also issues for small charities in Harrow securing venues and they are now looking at how local organisations can have some social impact through the use of spaces that are not being used.

YHF operate a model that is based around a theory of change, this includes three elements:

1. Development – Helping lots of charities and the council with this in relation to very specific training which was evidenced in the YHF needs analysis.
2. Fundraising – Looking at organisations that don't have a fundraiser, supporting them and training them to write bids
3. Partnership – supported the council in securing £500k for the Early Intervention Youth Fund, and £450k for 5 charities to tackle mental health, as well as helping people develop expertise to be successful with funding.

In 2018 the YHF conducted a needs analysis called 'This is Harrow'. The first needs analysis was done with 51 charities in total, and they identified key gaps around services that are not being promoted, they also worked with the council's Business Intelligence Unit to look at various strands of data, and what would it look like if young people did a full analysis of young people. This analysis represented 15% of 10-18 year olds in Harrow, which covered 7 secondary schools, 1 college, and employment providers, covering 4,500 young people. Primary schools were not involved due to the severity of the questions (such as questions around suicide, crime, etc.), a lot of questions had to be verified for safeguarding of young people. 100 questions were asked, looking at all sorts of subjects, including travelling, caring, opportunities, etc.

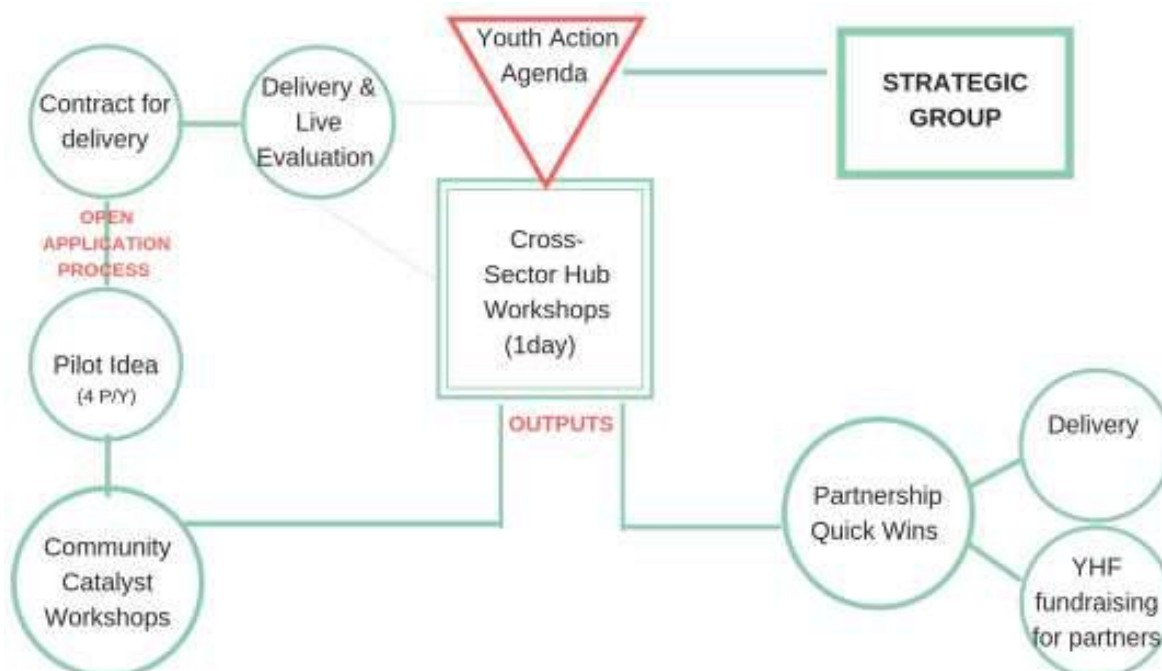
One of the things identified was the massive difference in inequalities in Harrow, especially for young carers in Harrow. Being active also came up as most young people over the age of 14 stopped being active. There was an increase of issues such as feeling isolated and unhappy. Some of the individual feedback seemed to be around lots of schools asking YHF not to get involved in activities outside of school, and educational pressures also seemed to be an issue.

Phase 2 of the Needs Analysis is to ensure all programmes that are available to young people in Harrow are available online which can be accessed by all practitioners. A big publicity push is going to happen in the near future; they are trying to get 400 organisations onto their web site. This was only launched in November, but the challenge is to try and get organisations to put their information up on the web site, someone has been recruited to help people put their information online which is jargon-free. They are working on this with the council to put lots of the children's centre activity information onto the web site.

A discussion took place on investment in the transition age and the CEO talked about a recent unsuccessful bid for this money as funders don't see this as a priority, but that they and the council do. YHF are also working with schools to start a new partnership model; and in the past three years YHF have helped £2.3m to come into the council but schools are very slow on take-up. The CEO said that there is a time and priority issue, especially when they themselves are under so much pressure. Therefore YHF have asked 5 schools to evaluate what's not working, and starts to develop a new relationship (Park High is already involved and the offer has also been opened up to Nower Hill). There was some

discussion around quality assurance of programmes, and this becomes a problem. The CEO said that's what they are trying to develop, if that's the stumbling block, but further work needs to be done on understanding the blockage. The Head Teachers Forum is engaged in this agenda, but what they would really like is for a head teacher to be a champion for this piece of work.

A discussion took place about YHF's Change Champion model, below:



This model looks at not just throwing more resources at a problem, but looking at what the problem is. They have recruited 12 young people with lived experiences of the 5 key areas highlighted in the Needs Analysis. They are then tasked with putting together a mandate on some of the key issues in Harrow. A deep-dive workshop was done on Grange Farm, then a SWOT analysis took place, through this some new work has now begun on the estate by existing partners. There was no cost attached to this. The only thing that YHF have invested in is the holiday programme.

A discussion also took place about the foodbank programme and members of the panel asked how we can replicate the foodbank at Grange Farm elsewhere. The CEO said that we can use this model to help solve some of these problems from a strategic level. He also said that a lot of people don't know about foodbanks, such as a church in Rayners Lane, which is open once a week.

YHF have now invested a bit of money and the CCG to make it mandatory that once a month all those people who are on the waiting list for CAHMS are given some information and help them to network with one another. Members said that this actually gets people out to talk to one another.

In relation to parenting skills, the YHF are launching a new partnership with the police, where parents can come to workshops where they can look at what sort of things they are dealing with, i.e., checking for phones, social media, looking at footage of children, etc. it's a complicated offer which is still being signed-off but helps to develop solutions for some of these problems.

A discussion was had around the extensive research that has been carried out recently and how this then feed into new bids completed by the VCS and council, and gives us power to need solutions. Right now all the power is with the funders.

5.2 Overview of Challenge Panels

One Challenge Panel was held on the 1st of May. Members heard from and asked questions of the Corporate Director for People's, the Divisional Director of Children's Services, the Divisional Director of Resources, and the Head of Community Safety. Detailed notes of all meetings (including all questions asked, and answers provided) are appended to this report.

The main discussion points were as follows:

An overview of the council's structure in relation to youth violence

An introduction was given by the Divisional Director for Resources, who oversees the development of the Community Safety and Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation strategy; facilitating partnerships across the organisation; and also managing the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF), as well as working with the VCS. The team are responsible for pulling together data and the strategic vision.

The head of community safety talked about the team's role in enforcement, and said that the community safety team deals with ASB, this includes all ASB except housing. All low level ASB is dealt with, and they also lead for intelligence sharing, feed into a daily VVE meeting to discuss what's happened overnight with actions for all partners and actions for perpetrators.

The Divisional Director introduced children's services, which includes early intervention and support, talked about the Wealdstone Hub, and said that they also have a VVE team to deal with some of the emerging issues, and managing the YOT services, who are aligned with the early support and crime prevention services. His area also tries to work with perpetrators and victims and looks at how they can keep people safe.

The Corporate Director for people's services said his area includes children's, schools, adult's services and public health, and commissioned services as well with delivering intervention services through the youth offer. He attends a number of operational meetings and chairs the YOT board, and also has contact with the VVE daily meetings and any high risk issues that occur with youth violence.

The head of The Helix School was also present and said that some current students and past students have been perpetrators of violence. The school is supported by the Met Police and SNT, and represents the heads on youth violence, and member of the YOT board. Also involved in other initiatives where young people are given a voice, and trying to address some of the issues.

The group were also joined by schools officers, who talked about prevention through education, engagement, and disposals that the police are responsible for. They also talked about diversion, and current staffing being enough to do firefighting, but schools and youth engagement teams are not fully staffed.

The drivers of youth violence

Officers commented that youth violence is a multiple problem, but one problem is where families neglect their children, they find their source of identity elsewhere, and it's about ensuring that younger siblings don't get involved. But the issue is multifaceted.

Members of the panel talked about YOT and not going down the court route, and that the cadets is a good route, but they are struggling to find £6,000 funding, which is aimed at around 160 students. They talked about their visit to Nower Hill and said that they were very impressed with the children. However, they commented that the young people did not have a good perception of the police, whereas in the cadets they can approach the police and talk to them, and about three or four of them said they wanted to go into the police. Some of the youngsters who were studying for their GCSEs found the space useful to do their revision.

Officers said that they work on a whole family approach and there is now a parenting practitioner who has been recruited.

Members also said that they have witnesses a lot of good initiatives that are taking place but not many people know about it, for example Cedars and Wealdstone Centre were doing a lot of good work, and the children they spoke to had an awareness of crime through the facts on knife crime that they are learning.

Officers said that in terms of looked after children, this group are affected by violence, but in terms of numbers these are still quite low, however the seriousness is still quite high. There was a recent incident which involved children in care, but lots of professionals are involved with them to prevent them from harming themselves. Members are questions about sign-spotting and whether carers are aware of this or have training. Officers said that this sort of training is given to foster carers, but the VVE team has specific training which is around this which is making a difference.

The head of the Helix also added that on youth centres there are two groups that use them, those children who are not involved in gangs and those who are involved in gangs who see youth centres as 'haters', because much of the things on offer don't appeal to the young people. Whereas Ignite seems to have an impact as they are doing work that meets their needs, around employment, etc.

Officers said that in terms of information sharing with schools, this is done via the Gold bulletin on a monthly basis, but there is an issue around how that gets disseminated to each school. But PH said that they are striving to get it right, which is coproduced with

young people, listening carefully to what the needs are of young people, and what they want.

Officers said that in terms of the public health approach to crime, they have adopted a public health approach on the basis that they recognise that the effort needs to go into early intervention as opposed to enforcement, and stopping young people getting involved in crime. The Mayor recognises that Glasgow and London are different, but appreciate that with county lines this is a bigger issue. In Harrow there is a need to try and recognise the signs and intervene early to help people move away from a life of crime. It is also important for safeguarding purposes, as these are children we are talking about and not criminals.

Recommendation: The council to explore interventions that prevent young people from using and dealing drugs.

Partnership working

A discussion took place about funding voluntary sector organisations that are being funded under the Mayor's London Crime Prevention Fund. This is in line with the council's strategy to mobilise the VCS to get match funding, which requires close working with Young Harrow Foundation to facilitate and enable working with young people in the borough. The relationship with young people could improve, but this was the point of the Needs Analysis, and to utilise this evidence to leverage more funding as there are more avenues for the VCS to attract funding as opposed to council. Following the Home Office Gangs Peer Review better partnership working is happening, but more work can be done with health partners, but this seems to be a general issue, and data out of health has been a challenge.

A discussion also took place about Red Thread, who work out of hospitals, and deal with victims of serious crimes and stabbings; Red Thread have been particularly good at helping on the ground at the time it is needed.

In relation to partnership working, Safer Harrow meets quarterly, and the Serious Incident Group meets once a month which is held at a school and this is because they are a key partner.

Information sharing between partners

The council have invested in new software called E-Cins; this allows the partnership to gain access to a wide range of information. To date all staff have been working on different databases and system, so they are relying on people talking to each other. What the new system does is bring everything into one area, instead of having lots of jigsaw pieces, and gives more information about where to make an impact rather than just firefighting. With funding it's not the most extortionate system to pay for, so our key thing right now is to make sure partners are using it properly, particularly in PH's area to get people on board so that we can start to sell it to others. Currently this software is funded via the Home Office's Early Intervention Youth Fund (EIYF) and there is possibly underspend available from other sources, such as the LCPF, but the first thing is to establish that it's working well.

Financing of early intervention programmes in the future

In relation to police programmes there is currently a shortfall of £5,000 to pay for books for the Junior Citizens Scheme and as the police are not a charity they cannot apply for funding, however other organisations can apply on their behalf.

Council officers said that the reality is that the direction of funding to local authorities has been declining for the last few years, and it's about how you protect statutory services through early intervention, but the problem is that the early intervention is not a statutory service. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) talks about finding more money for things that are important to residents. But they know that they can't enforce their way out of this issue, part of that is working with the Young Harrow Foundation to attract more money into Harrow, which is a competitive field. The reality is that Brexit is also paralysing government and a lot of energy is going into that. There is evidence on what the cost will be if you don't do anything, but it's about having an effective evidence base and how we use existing resources, which allows less children coming into care.

Officers talked about the new development of the Civic and a discussion took place about the infrastructure which looked at alleyways and street lighting and how residential opportunities could possibly design youth crime out.

In terms of specific policies, the Licensing Policy and Gambling Policy were renewed last year but they are limited by government guidance but this is done through consultation with partners. Officers agreed that it would be good to be able to change this through existing policies; however we need to be more innovative where looking for funding.

Members commented that there are probably cheaper ways through avoiding the late night levy, and multiple properties with alcohol licenses, or selling alcohol underage, and how we use the prioritisation there and how this makes an impact. Members also said that there is a debate around whether having a Civic in the Wealdstone area of regeneration, and questions were asked about how the council's role in regeneration had an impact on crime.

Officers said that following the shooting in May the Wealdstone Action Group was set up. Regeneration is a long term challenge and they need to think about some of the immediate actions, for example at this meeting no one in the area knew who Ignite were. They are also looking at Palmerston Road and private regeneration alongside council regeneration and how the community sector is driving that. Street drinking is also an issue, and they need to address this issue and not shift the problem elsewhere in order to lift the life chances of Harrow residents.

In addition to this, last year The Helix commenced 'The Ripple Effect' which no longer runs due to shortage of staff, but it was a phased intervention supported by the Met Police and Children's Services and got as far as targeting the Afro-Caribbean community, due to the statistics that support that largely this sort of crime is perpetrated by Afro-Caribbean community. It was about putting blame aside, and dealing with the problem, which included young people on streets after hours, employment issues, no one being home, and grandparents not there. They then looked at conflict resolution by young people themselves, and being clear about what resources are needed to help tackle this. Intelligence was also gathered on causes or drivers of crime. Young people said they do not feel safe in the community anymore which is why it is safer to join a gang. Some of the issues at home include not having any positive relationship with parents, even if there is no conflict, it's just a place to eat and sleep; the gangs are their family.

Recommendation: Each time a strategy or policy is reviewed a specific perspective on reducing youth violence should be included.

Work with the transition age group, primary school year 6

Some discussion took place about the Junior Citizens Scheme where all Harrow junior schools are invited to attend. The community centre in Stanmore is allowing them to use their space, but the issue is for schools to transport them to the venue, that's the only barrier. Officers said that currently there is limited work happening with the transition group, but funding options are being explored.

Recommendation: Harrow Council explores the use of early intervention programmes in year 6 of primary schools

The role of schools

The head of The Helix said that two of the Safer Schools Officers did a presentation to Heads for the free use of space of schools, but to date the cadets are still being charged. The Helix is too small to be used, and in some cases the cadets have used it, but there is no gym big enough. What was unclear was why the police cadets cannot use free space at schools.

Officers also commented about issues in schools and how information is passed on and there is some work going on around that around pathways for referrals to prevention of escalation and officers asked members what teachers views were around the expanding role of welfare and expectations from teachers.

One member of the panel said here are questions around knowing how well trained they are, a lot of it is playground chatter and hearsay from other young people. Some teachers don't feel well equipped enough to deal with some of these issues and it would be useful to have some more training around this. In addition to this it's important for teachers to know what's happening outside of school.

Police officers commented that schools are quite closed and police won't know about an issue until further down the line. Ofsted grading depends on this around safeguarding, so

it's important for schools to be open. All schools need to have buy-in and to acknowledge there is a problem, which costs nothing.

Members asked the police attend the monthly SIG meetings and if this could be promoted; officers said that there are regular meetings that happen with Heads and these are well attended, and a lot of these issues are discussed and training is talked about. Officers agreed that there is an issue around knife arches but more are coming on board. Members echoed this point and said there needs to be a better relationship between the police and schools. The head of The Helix also asked how many staff can recognise whether a child can be identified as being under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

Recommendation: The Council to work in collaboration with the Police and Schools to address the priorities agreed within the CS, VVE Strategy.

6. Conclusions

At the end of the challenge panel the Chair listed a number of additional recommendations:

1. Encourage a multi-agency approach and make sure any strategy addresses the root causes; childhood trauma, social inequality, poverty, mental health problems, and education and training;
2. Help young offenders into employment and training to 'break the cycle';
3. Engage the community. Good options include recruiting community mentors and supporting youth clubs;
4. Work with school. They can provide valuable intelligence about who is at risk and help deliver universal interventions to children;
5. Start young. Many of the most proactive councils are working with pupils at the end of the primary school;
6. Language is important. Young people caught up in crime are victims as well;
7. Collect the data. Analysing A&E attendances and arrests can identify trends and hotspots;
8. Streamline referral systems. Some councils are setting up hubs to review and assess cases;
9. Make sure parents and carer know the signs so they can spot early if children are being exploited;
10. Consider working with other groups – such as taxi drivers, train staff and security guards – as they may be able to spot the changes in behaviour and the arrival of criminal gangs.

It was felt that all of these recommendations had been fulfilled as part of this review and that recommendations arising from this review, that have been outlined below, will be fed into the Community Safety and Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy. These will also feed into the annual YOT Plan.

Recommendations

Our recommendations, as contained within the body of this report, are as follows:

Recommendation 1: Each time a strategy or policy is reviewed a specific perspective on reducing youth violence should be included (All departments, Corporate Strategic Board)

Recommendation 2: The Council to work in collaboration with the Police and Schools to address the priorities agreed within the CS, VVE Strategy (Children's Services)

Recommendation 3: The council to explore interventions that prevent young people from using and dealing drugs (Children's Services)

Recommendation 4: Harrow Council explores the use of early intervention programmes in year 6 of primary schools (Children's Services and Community Safety Team)

MINUTES FROM THE CHALLENGE PANEL

To	Preventing Youth Violence Scrutiny Review Panel
Scrutiny Support	Shumaila Dar
Date and Time of Meeting	Wednesday 1st May – Committee Rooms 1&2, Civic 1, Civic Centre 18:30-20:30
Scrutiny Members Present	Councillors Janet Mote (Chair) (JM), Sachin Shah (Vice Chair) (SS), Sarah Butterworth (SB), Chris Mote (CM), Christopher Baxter (CB)
Officers present	Paul Hewitt (PH), Paul Walker (PW), Alex Dewsnap (AD), Richard Lebrun (RLB), Peter Tolley (PT), Graig Bradley (GB) - Police, PK Maselino (PK) – The Helix Pupil Referral Unit, Shumaila Dar – Policy Officer
Apologies	Councillors Maxine Henson, Camilla Bath, Dan Anderson, Honey Jaimie, Peymana Assad, Susan Hall, Dan Burke (Young Harrow Foundation), Sara Leech (Police), Nathaniel Bygrave

Preventing Youth Violence Scrutiny Review Panel

1. Welcome and Introductions

JM started with a brief introduction, and all members introduced themselves.

2. Questions

JM: What connections does your team have with youth crime and violence?

AD started off with an introduction about his service area; which oversees the development of the Community Safety and Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation strategy; facilitating partnerships across the organisation; and also managing the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF), as well as working with the VCS. The team are responsible for pulling together data and the strategic vision.

RLB said that he oversees enforcement and the community safety team deals with ASB, this includes all ASB except housing. All low level ASB is dealt with, and they also lead for intelligence sharing, feed into a daily VVE meeting to discuss what's happened overnight with actions for all partners and actions for perpetrators.

PT introduced children's services, which includes early intervention and support, talked about the Wealdstone Hub, and said that they also have a VVE team to deal with some of the emerging issues, and managing the YOT services, who are aligned with the early support and crime prevention services. His area also tries to work with perpetrators and victims and looks at how they can keep people safe.

PH, Corporate Director for people's services, said his area includes children's, schools, adult's services and public health, and commissioned services as well with delivering intervention services through the youth offer. He attends a number of operational meetings and chairs the YOT board, and also has contact with the VVE daily meetings and any high risk issues that occur with youth violence.

PK talked about The Helix, and said that some current students and past students have been perpetrators of violence. The school is supported by the Met Police and SNT, and represents the heads on youth violence, and member of the YOT board. Also involved in other initiatives where young people are given a voice, and trying to address some of the issues.

CG talked about prevention through education, engagement, and disposals that the police are responsible for.

CB talked about the other side of things, around diversion, and talked about current staffing being enough to do firefighting, but schools and youth engagement teams are not fully staffed.

JM: How do you work with outside agencies in particular, with the VCS?

AD talked about funding Ignite (VCS organisation) under the LCPF, which is in line with the council's strategy to mobilise the VCS to get match funding, also working with Young Harrow Foundation to facilitate and enable working with young people in the borough. AD also said that the relationship with young people could improve, but this was the point of the Needs Analysis, and utilising this to leverage more funding as there are more avenues for the VCS to attract funding as opposed to council. Many facets drive this, and it's not just an enforcement approach. AD said following the Home Office Gangs Peer Review better partnership working is happening. More work can be done with health partners, but this seems to be a general issue, and data out of health has been a challenge.

PT talked about Red Thread, who work out of hospitals, and deal with victims of serious crimes and stabbings; PT said they have been really good at helping on the ground at the time it is needed.

JM: Do you all meet together regularly?

CG said that the SIG meets once a month which is held at a school and this is because they are a key partner.

JM: How will new intelligence gathering software (E-Cins) be used to inform the strategic vision and ongoing information sharing between partners given that it's only being funded for a year?

RLB said that they are all working on different databases and system, so they are relying on people talking to each other. What this does is brings everything into one area, instead of having lots of jigsaw pieces, gives us more information about where to make an impact rather than just firefighting. With funding it's not the most extortionate system to pay for, so

our key thing right now is to make sure partners are using it properly, particularly in PH's area to get people on board so that we can start to sell it to others.

CM asked if the software will be funded further. AD said no, because right now it's being funded via the Home Office's Early Intervention Youth Fund (EIYF) but there is possibly underspend available from other sources, such as the LCPF, but as RLB said the first thing is to establish that it's working well.

JM: What work is taking place in primary schools with transition age pupils and even younger pupils aged 7/8 in relation to PSICHE?

CG talked about the Junior Citizens Scheme where all Harrow junior schools are invited to attend. The community centre in Stanmore is allowing them to use their space, but the issue is for schools to transport them to the venue, that's the only barrier.

Possible recommendation: Given that transition group was one of the areas of focus for this scrutiny review, would you like to include a recommendation around exploring the use of early intervention programmes in year 6 of primary schools?

JM: Can you see barriers to the financing of early intervention programmes in the future?

CG said that there is currently a shortfall of £5,000 to pay for books for the scheme. JM asked if there is any other way to get funding, such as John Lyon Trust. CG said that the met police can't but someone can do it on their behalf. JM then showed the group a book called 'Watch Out' for Junior Citizens which covers knife crime and youth violence, which is also endorsed by the Council and public health. There are also some phone numbers and access points for children who want to get hold of somebody. CG will send JM an email to see if someone can apply for this on their behalf.

JM: How are looked after children affected by youth violence, is there a rise and does this have an impact on their life?

PT said that they are affected by violence; in terms of numbers these are still quite low, but the seriousness is still quite high. There was a recent incident which involved children in

care, but lots of professionals are involved with them to prevent them from harming themselves. JM talked about ensuring sign-spotting and whether carers are aware of this or have training. PT said that this sort of training is given to foster carers, but the VVE team has specific training which is around this which is making a difference.

JM: What do you think the main problems are?

PT said that it's a multiple problem, but one problem is where families neglect their children, they find their source of identity elsewhere, and it's about ensuring that younger siblings don't get involved. But the issue is multifaceted.

JM talked about YOT and not going down the court route, and that the cadets is a good route, but they are struggling to find £6,000 funding, which is aimed at around 160 students. JM talked about her visit to Nower Hill and that she was very impressed with the children. JM said the children did not have a good perception of the police, whereas in the cadets they can approach the police and talk to them, and about three or four of them said they wanted to go into the police. Some of the youngsters who were studying for their GCSEs found the space useful to do their revision.

CM also said that the young people need a place to chill out and be on their own, CM also said that work needs to be done to educate parents.

PT said that they work on a whole family approach and there is now a parenting practitioner who has been recruited.

JM said that there are so many good things going on but not many people know about it. JM said that Cedars and Wealdstone Centre were doing a lot of good work, she said that all the children had an awareness of crime through the facts on knife crime that they are learning.

PK also added that on youth centres there are two groups that use them, those children who are not involved in gangs and those who are involved in gangs who see youth centres as 'haters', because much of the things on offer don't appeal to the young people. Whereas Ignite seems to have an impact as they are doing work that meets their needs, around employment, etc.

PH also said that information is shared with schools via the Gold bulletin on a monthly basis, but there is an issue around how that gets disseminated to each school. But PH said that they are striving to get it right, which is coproduced with young people, listening carefully to what the needs are of young people, and what they want.

JM: Financing youth violence programmes seems to be a problem, how are the council resolving this issue and assisting external partners with this?

PT said that there is evidence on what the cost will be if you don't do anything, but it's about having an effective evidence base and how we use existing resources, which allows less children coming into care.

AD said that there is a reality that the direction of funding to local authorities has been declining for the last few years, and it's about how you protect statutory services through early intervention, but the problem is that the early intervention is not a statutory service. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) talks about finding more money for things that are important to residents. But they know that they can't enforce their way out of this issue, part of that is working with the Young Harrow Foundation to attract more money into Harrow, which is a competitive field. The reality is that Brexit is also paralysing government and a lot of energy is going into that.

JM: How will recommendations from this review be fed into the VVE strategy refresh?

AD said that they will be. The reason why we are here is because this is a really important topic and we want to get it right so that we get recommendations that can make a difference with those.

PH said that it will also be the YOT plan which goes to Council every year, we have tried very hard that the VVE strategy and the YOT plan work together.

JM: How do the Council's other strategies make reference to the public health approach to crime?

AD said that in terms of the public health approach to crime, they have adopted a public health approach on the basis that they recognise that the effort needs to go into early intervention as opposed to enforcement, and stopping young people getting involved in crime. The Mayor recognises that Glasgow and London are different, but appreciate that with county lines this is a bigger issue. We need to try and achieve recognising the signs and early intervention to help people move away from a life of crime.

PT said that it's also in line with safeguarding and YOT, as these are children we are talking about and not criminals.

SS: How can the council make an impact which doesn't cost much? Harrow Council will be reviewing its planning and licensing policies, and how will those impact on reducing youth crime where it would cost very little or no money.

CG talked about a super zone under public health and wanted to know more about this as she felt it would be an easy win.

PK said that when the new development of the Civic was discussed we talked about the infrastructure which looked at alleyways and street lighting and how residential opportunities could possibly design youth crime out.

RLB said that the Licensing Policy and Gambling Policy were renewed last year but they are limited by government guidance but this is done through consultation with partners. RLB agreed that it would be good to be able to change this through existing policies; however we need to be more innovative where looking for funding.

SS said that there are probably cheaper ways through avoiding the late night levy, and multiple properties with alcohol licenses, or selling alcohol underage, and how we use the prioritisation there and how this makes an impact. Agreed that they work with other partners, but said that when they are looking at this they need to think about how every policy affects youth violence from another point of view. SS said that he had some discussions around how we think about licensing and fly tipping in a different way.

SS said that there is a debate around whether having a Civic in the Wealdstone area of regeneration. SS asked how the council's role in regeneration had an impact on crime.

AD said that following the shooting in May the Wealdstone Action Group was set up. Regeneration is a long term challenge and they need to think about some of the immediate actions, for example at this meeting no one in the area knew who Ignite were. They are also looking at Palmerston Road and private regeneration alongside council regeneration and how the community sector is driving that. Street drinking is also an issue, and they need to address this issue and not shift the problem elsewhere in order to lift the life chances of Harrow residents.

PK also added that last year they commenced 'The Ripple Effect' which no longer runs due to shortage of staff, but it was a phased intervention supported by the Met Police and Children's Services and got as far as targeting the Afro-Caribbean community, due to the statistics that support that largely this sort of crime is perpetrated by Afro-Caribbean community. It was about putting blame aside, and dealing with the problem, which included young people on streets after hours, employment issues, no one being home, grandparents not there; looking at the problem. They then looked at conflict resolution by young people themselves, and being clear about what resources are needed to help tackle this. Intelligence was also gathered on causes or drivers of crime. Young people said they do not feel safe in the community anymore which is why it is safer to join a gang. Some of the issues at home include not having any positive relationship with parents, even if there is no conflict, it's just a place to eat and sleep; the gangs are their family.

Recommendation: Each time a strategy or policy is reviewed a specific perspective on reducing youth violence should be included.

SB: Is anything they felt schools could be doing that doesn't really cost any more that could be helpful?

PK said that two of the Safer Schools Officers did a presentation to Heads for the free use of space of schools. But to date the cadets are still being charged. The Helix is too small to be used, and in some cases the cadets have used it, but there is no gym big enough. PK said he cannot understand why the police cadets cannot use free space at schools.

PT said there was a conversation last Friday with Paul Gamble about issues in schools and how information is passed on and there is some work going on around that around pathways for referrals to prevention of escalation.

AD asked SB how she gets a sense of what teachers views are around the expanding role of welfare and expectations from teachers.

SB said it's interesting because they have a higher number of young people come and speak to them. All teachers realise this is a big issue and SB said that her understanding is that teachers would welcome some more training around this. SB also added that it's important for them to know what's happening outside of school.

CG said that schools are quite closed and police won't know about an issue until further down the line. Ofsted grading depends on this around safeguarding, so it's important for schools to be open. All schools need to have buy-in and to acknowledge there is a problem, which costs nothing.

JM asked whether CG could go to the monthly SIG and plug this, PH said that there are regular meetings that happen with Heads and these are well attended, and a lot of these issues are discussed and training is talked about. Agreed that there is an issue around knife arches but more are coming on board. JM echoed this point and said there needs to be a better relationship between the police and schools. PK also asked how many staff can recognise whether a child can be identified as being under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

Recommendation: The Council to work in collaboration with the Police and Schools to address the priorities agreed within the CS, VVE Strategy.

CM said that there are more reports around drug crime more than knife crime.

SB: Is stability in staff in terms of continuity.

PT said that in Children's Services this is as stable as it has ever been and staff retention is good and looking at professional development for staff to stay on.

GB clarified that there issues with staffing is not due to funding issue it's a people issue.

JM listed a number of recommendations:

11. Encourage a multi-agency approach and make sure any strategy addresses the root causes; childhood trauma, social inequality, poverty, mental health problems, and education and training;
12. Help young offenders into employment and training to 'break the cycle';
13. Engage the community. Good options include recruiting community mentors and supporting youth clubs;
14. Work with school. They can provide valuable intelligence about who is at risk and help deliver universal interventions to children;
15. Start young. Many of the most proactive councils are working with pupils at the end of the primary school;
16. Language is important. Young people caught up in crime are victims as well;
17. Collect the data. Analysing A&E attendances and arrests can identify trends and hotspots;
18. Streamline referral systems. Some councils are setting up hubs to review and assess cases;
19. Make sure parents and carer know the signs so they can spot early if children are being exploited;
20. Consider working with other groups – such as taxi drivers, train staff and security guards – as they may be able to spot the changes in behaviour and the arrival of criminal gangs.

Recommendation: The council to explore interventions that prevent young people from using and dealing drugs.