



To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 6th November 2019

Subject: Keeping Young People Safe in Our City

1 Background

- 1.1 National concern about escalating harm to young people from violence is replicated in Coventry. Partners in Coventry held a summit to consider what could be done locally in January 2019.

This report provides Scrutiny Coordinating Committee with information regarding the city-wide approach we are now taking to keep young people safe in our city.

This report covers: -

- The Young Persons Violence Prevention Strategy
- The Public Health Approach
- Identifying vulnerable young people
- Projects, activities and partnerships and progress made
- The Police perspective
- Trend data

A follow-on city-wide summit is planned for January 2020

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee are recommended to:

- Note the draft strategy and progress made to date
- Identify any recommendations for relevant Cabinet Members

3 The Strategy

- 3.1 In order to keep young people safe in our City we knew we would have to change the way we work, use existing resources more effectively and work more closely as a group of agencies across the City. The Coventry Youth Violence Prevention Partnership Board (CYVPPB) was established in June 2019. The group includes senior representatives from Policing, Public Health, Children's Services, Adult Services, Education, Probation, City of Culture, Faith Groups and Youth Justice. At its meeting on 17 June 2019, the CYVPPB agreed to draft a **multi-agency strategy** using a public health approach to address the issue of youth violence in the City. The high-level strategy is shown at **Appendix A**. It is being presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Police and Crime Board and both the Adults and Childrens Safeguarding Boards for consideration and endorsement. This process will be completed by mid-December 2019.

The strategy is based on taking a "public health approach" and is modelled on the strategy produced by the West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit (WMVRU). The WMVRU has been set up by the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner as the successor to the West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance. Regional resources for tackling violence will sit with the WMVRU; as a City we need to align our local plans to work closely with WMVRU. The WMVRU officially launched on 2nd Oct 2019.

- 3.2 Supporting the CYVPPB are a Project Board and an Operational Group. Their roles are further explained in **Appendix B**. The Project Board oversees the delivery of two externally funded projects

and a project funded by the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner but delivered in Coventry. (St. Giles Trust, “teachable moments” based in University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire and Wolverhampton Hospital). For further information on the projects please see attached **One Minute Guide**. The Operational Group will be developing action plans on behalf of the board. The membership of the operational group are primarily managers who can implement the strategic aims on a practical level within their service areas.

3.3 The Strategy is a 10-year strategy. This emphasises the long-term commitment of the partnership and recognises that this issue cannot be resolved without a sustained long-term effort.

3.4 Approach and progress against the six key objectives in the strategy:

- Building Strong Foundations – this priority is about gathering intelligence and scoping the problem. We will take a whole systems approach which will include a cross disciplinary team focussed on youth violence. More broadly across the council we are changing the way we work using a “One Coventry” approach. We know that Poverty and Inequalities are key drivers of violence, but we have been tackling this issue already. We are well established as a Marmot City (a cross partnership approach to tackling health inequalities) which gives us a solid foundation on which to continue to build partnership approaches to problem solving. Our approach has meant that Coventry has become relatively less deprived between 2015 and 2019. This represents a relative improvement compared to other local authority areas in the region.
 - **Fewer** Coventry neighbourhoods are now amongst the 10% most deprived in England. In 2015, 18.5% of our neighbourhoods were amongst the most deprived (rank: 46th). In 2019, this has improved to 14.4% (rank: 64th).
- Primary prevention - Evidence shows that there are root causes to violence, including poverty, inequalities and adverse childhood experiences. As a Marmot City we are already taking a systematic approach to tackling inequalities and the Marmot Steering Group is exploring how we can work together around early intervention and prevention. We will continue to advocate for Early Years Support. Plans and work programmes are already in operation across the City and progress will be fed into the delivery of this strategy.
- Secondary prevention – There are already a number of programmes in operation across the City which are targeted towards those who are at higher risk of being drawn into violence. One example is the mentoring violence prevention programme in schools. Policing colleagues are closely linked with the Family Hubs to ensure a joined-up approach when issues which require a higher level of intervention are identified, as well as working with the troubled families work programme to prevent escalation of risk.
- Tertiary prevention – We are already working with those who are suffering the consequences of violence. There are three short-term funded projects in the City that work with individuals experiencing the impact of violence. Learning from these projects can be incorporated into everyday practice across agencies; developing a culture of professional curiosity and training for staff to spot warning signs, enabling earlier intervention.
- Enforcement and criminal justice- we will look to develop innovative ways of working with the young people in the criminal justice system to prevent reoffending. We will work with partners to look at alternatives to traditional criminal justice outcomes. The family drug and alcohol court (FDAC) is a good example of innovation which already exists in the City and we will consider how learning from this approach can be applied elsewhere. As a City we will explore, with partners, trauma informed responses and alternative approaches with young people. We will capture learning from the Horizon Team¹ and the two externally funded projects.
- Attitudinal change using effective communication – Underpinning all the strategic objectives is effective communication to challenge the culture of violence and promote a counter narrative. Effective internal and external communications are being developed to promote alternatives

¹ Horizon is a statutory social care team that consists of Social Workers, Youth Workers, a Children and Families Worker, a Health Worker and a Police Officers. Young people who are in need of support from the Horizon team are usually supported via the Child In Need or Child Protection processes. The Youth Workers also support those who are in Local Authority care.

for young people, empowering them to make the right decisions and supporting them into adulthood.

3.5 Mobilising the strategy – Even though the strategy is still in draft, a great deal of work has already been undertaken to progress the short-term priorities identified. Over the past six months we have:

- Mobilised three projects within the City including one funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner which is working with young people admitted to hospital with traumatic injuries as a result of violence. Detailed information regarding the Children's Services core offer, including the funded projects is give in **Appendix C**.
- Established joint, co-located police and children's services team focussed on youth violence within the existing Horizon Team.
- Secured substantial funding for the City (approx. £1million) from various sources including the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner and Central Government. Included in this has been the appointment of a Programme Manager to oversee delivery of the strategy within the City.
- Focussed operational policing towards violence and gang suppression activity
- Established schools' interventions – for example the Mentoring Violence Prevention Work
- Delivered Summer diversionary activities

The West Mids PCC recently sent out a call for providers to bid into a fund which will provide activities for young people across the West Midlands during October half-term. Providers were able to bid for up to £5,000 to deliver activities in key crime hotspots across the West Midlands.

The successful projects for Coventry are listed below:

Positive Youth Foundation & Short Football- Hillfields, Wood End & Bell Green
Empow-U- Joe Graham, Wood End, Hillfields
Coventry Boys and Girls Club- City Centre

3.6 Activities already taking place with schools:

- Secondary schools have well established panels, led by Head teachers. These panels meet 6 weekly and include professionals from the police and other relevant agencies to discuss families and incidents where there has been an incident of, or threat of, violent crime. The panels seek to support the schools and the police through the careful and appropriate sharing of information and the discussion around strategies to support vulnerable young people and their families. As a consequence, schools are also supported by initiatives such as police visits to school assemblies to reinforce key messages. They may also be supported by enhanced police presence at times of potential vulnerability.
- Positive Youth Foundation have established a key educational program for Secondary school pupils called Staying Safe. They are also working on funding an increasing number of mentors who can work directly in schools with students who are at risk.
- Violent crime is a key agenda item on Secondary and Primary Heads meetings. On a regular basis information updates shared and there are discussions around what more can and should be done. An example of this was the recent discussion around the imminent arrival of the Knife Angel and how schools could access this and integrate it into their existing strategies in meaningful way. Schools are very keen to utilise opportunities that will have a lasting, positive impact and sharing their ideas and good practice is key.
- Workshops have begun to be offered to all schools, led by secondary colleagues, to educate them around violent crime directly from ex-gang members. These workshops are specifically focused around informing professionals around children of the background, context and themes that influence the actions of some young people. The emphasis is on violent crime as an epidemic, as opposed seeking to lay blame.

- There are newly establish Primary Panels, Chaired by Heads and including the involvement of the Police and Early Help, to emulate the existing Secondary panels. The same three geographical areas are the focus and Primary Heads have all signed up to attend. A Chair and Vice Chair has been identified for each panel, who will attend the next Secondary panel meetings to establish the protocol and join up the thinking. The first meetings ran in the summer term as a trial and were very successful. The main aim of the panel meetings is to share information between schools and the police in order to enable our schools to intervene swiftly and meaningfully where they can. They may be sharing information about families and about incidents in the area. There will be recommendations from the police around educating our younger pupils and Heads will be able to use their professional discernment to better equip children to stay safe. This will be mainly aimed at years 5 and 6.
 - The details of these new panels have been shared with Special schools who are also attending.
 - A working party of Primary Heads has been created to work to design resources that emulate the existing Secondary Staying Safe program. They have also discussed mentors in schools which could be explored with PYF moving forwards. Resources will be designed to be integrated within the new PSHE curriculum, to ensure that it represents a sustainable strategy at an appropriate level.
 - Catch 22 works with specific targeted Primary schools on reducing the vulnerability of our younger children to violent crime and offers assemblies to Secondary schools and workshops for Special schools.
- The Magistrates in Schools project is supporting almost all Primary schools with a half day programme around justice and democracy, which also tackles elements such as knife crime directly. This is an established initiative aimed at year 6 pupils which has been built with school practitioners to ensure its relevance and suitability. Violent crime is discussed at the termly safeguarding reference Headteacher group, attended by Angie Bishop (safeguarding and LADO, CCC). This consequently relates to the multi-agency panel that she Chairs, where high level information about all known affected or potentially threatened children and young adults is shared in order to build a joint, effective response. These meetings are also attended by an Education representative, Jeannette Essex (SEND and safeguarding).

4 The Public Health Approach to Knife Crime

4.1 The Partnership Board believes violence in the City should be approached as a public health issue, in that it has root causes, it can be treated but most importantly it can be prevented. Left untreated violence may spread. In effect we are treating violence like a disease. A disease will have clustering in certain areas, it will have common symptoms, and certain groups will be more susceptible. The most effective way of tackling disease is universal prevention. Whilst we cannot immunise our population against violence, we can build up community resilience over the long term by taking a multifaceted prevention approach. These steps are:

- Using data and intelligence to understand and identify the scale and scope of the problem
- Quantifies the burden at population-level and identify inequalities and risks
- Identifies and focusses on defined populations, who may share certain risks
- Seeks evidence of effectiveness to tackle the problem
- Generates both long-term and short-term solutions
- Works with and for communities
- Is not constrained by organisational or professional boundaries but seeks out system-wide solutions delivered through system leadership.
- Scales up small interventions when evidence demonstrates success.

Public Health models often talk about the different levels of prevention, in order to better explain the difference between the levels of prevention some examples of what would be classed as long, medium and short-term actions from a range of partners are given in the table.

Primary Prevention (Long term)	Secondary Prevention (medium term)	Treatment (short term)
Tackling health inequalities throughout Coventry	Working with at risk individuals	Supporting victims of violent crime (particularly involving Young People)
Early years programmes provided through midwifery, nursery and family hubs	Finding alternatives to school exclusion	Supporting offenders involved in Urban Street Gangs, Violence and other criminal activity to make positive change
Parenting support programmes	Dealing with ASB in local communities by engaging & empowering the community	Zero tolerance to weapons

5 **Prevention**

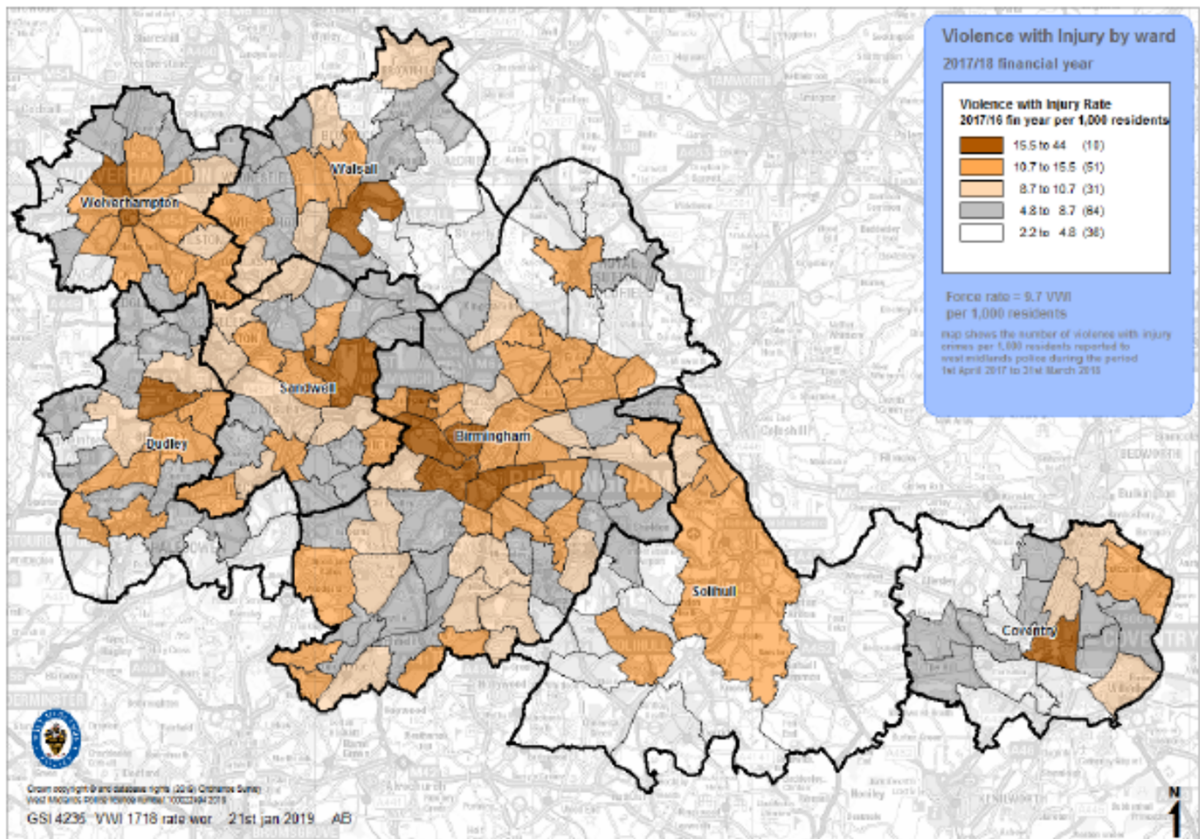
- 5.1 The Public Health Approach recognises that prevention begins at the earliest possible stage, with future parents. Drug and Alcohol Recovery, Mental Health and Domestic Abuse services all play an important part in this. Coventry City Council operates parenting strategy (2018-2023) steered by a multi-agency group which aims: to strengthen availability and accessibility of general information and advice to parents, harness technology and the develop digital systems across agencies to strengthen the parenting offer and ensure there is a systematic approach to ensuring the quality and effectiveness of the parenting offer across the whole system.
- 5.2 Coventry City Council, statutory partners and commissioned service providers already provide a range of preventative activities. A large proportion of prevention is delivered through our family hubs. The family hub model is an approach to the delivery of early help services centralised around a building, where a number of different services providing information and support to families, children and young people are based. They will provide early help and support for families, children and young people aged 0 – 19 years up to age 24 where a young person has additional needs.
- 5.3 Children’s Services deliver a range of projects which are working with families and young people to prevent and address violence.

6 **Identifying vulnerable young people, demographics and race data, projects, activities and partnerships.**

- 6.1 Each service can talk about how they identify vulnerable young people. There is a lot of training taking place in schools and with other professionals to raise awareness of spotting vulnerable children, this is a key part of the strategy. Each service has protocols in place once a vulnerable child is identified.
- 6.2 Demographics and data are given in the separate background paper.
- 6.3 Details of projects, activities and partnerships are also given in the separate background paper.

7 **The Police Perspective and Trend Data**

- 7.1 Violent crime in Coventry, particularly knife crime, has become a West Midlands Police force priority. This means extra police resources can be called upon to help tackle the issue and run additional operations aimed at catching offenders and safeguarding young people.
- 7.2 The map below (using police data) shows where violence is concentrated in the West Midlands. The darker the colour, the more incidents have been recorded.

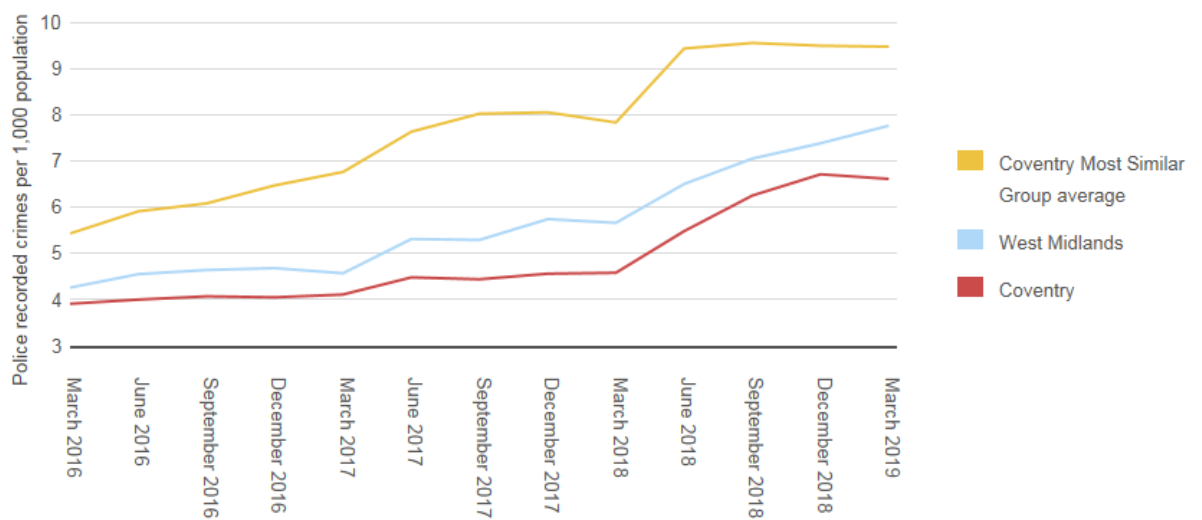


7.3 Data taken from Police.UK tells us:

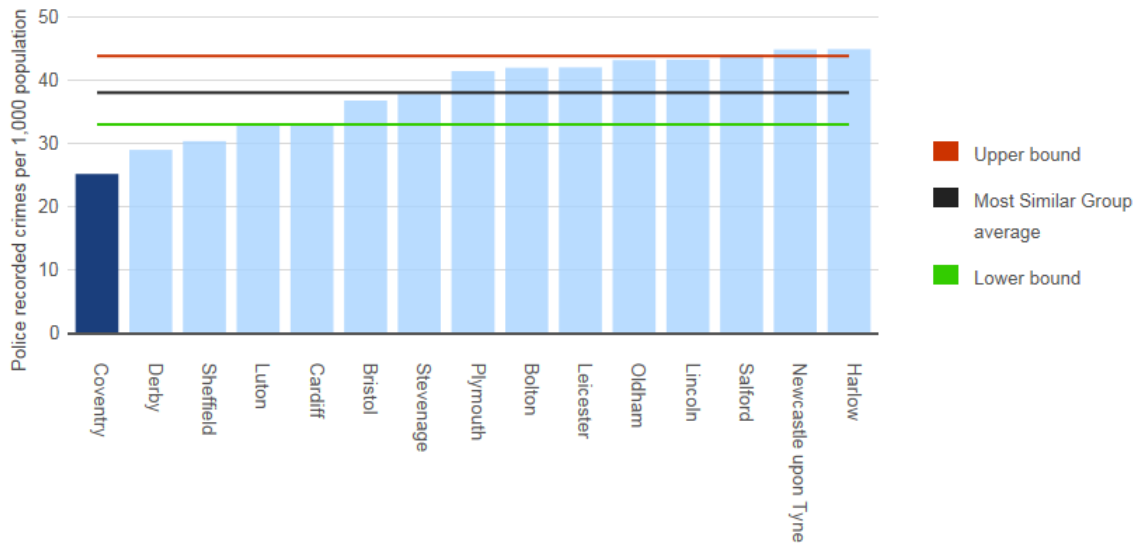
In the quarter ending March 2019, violence and sexual offences crime rates were:

- up in Coventry
- up in the West Midlands force area

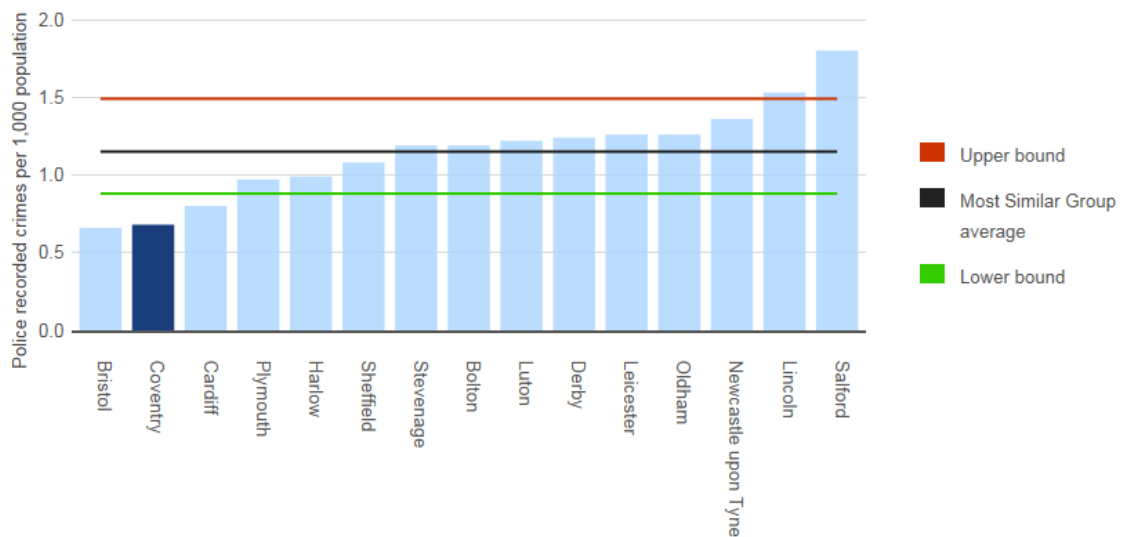
compared with the corresponding quarter in 2018.



In the year ending March 2019, the violence and sexual offences crime rate in Coventry was lower than the average violence and sexual offences crime rate across similar areas.



In the year ending March 2019, the possession of weapons offence rate in Coventry was lower than the average possession of weapons offence rate across similar areas.



The police are committed to doing everything possible to play their part in tackling violence. The chairmanship of the CYVPPB is shared between the Police Commander and the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing. The Police have worked with the statutory and 3rd sector organisations to form a Youth Violence Reduction team (which sits within the Horizon team). This team which consists of a sergeant and a PC scan all reported crimes daily to ensure that incidents involving young people are identified and followed up. They are currently considering how the “drug market” is linked to offending in young people and looking at ways in which our commissioned drug and alcohol service may assist in providing valuable data to inform the picture in Coventry.

The Police are carrying out numerous activities which are currently being mapped against the draft strategy, some of these actions include:

- Two university interns will shortly be joining the police and will assist in researching strategies used elsewhere for tackling violence and how they might be deployed in Coventry.

- The Youth Violence Reduction Team have 2 members of staff embedded within 4 family hubs (strategically covered the East and Central Coventry areas).
- Police have been in discussion with Trading Standards Colleagues about test purchasing knives in local businesses (to assess the risk of underage sales being made) and this will be supported by the police cadets. Discussions have also taken place with Coventry BID.
- The Active Citizen Fund is being used to support initiatives to engage communities around this agenda with projects such as “Fridays.”
- The Early Intervention Youth Fund and the Strengthening Families project has seen approximately 170 young people progress through the referral process. This has seen police intelligence systems interrogated and cross reference for knife possession and violence and fed back into Social Care teams.
- St. Giles Trust are delivering a project in Coventry Police Custody block for those who are under 25 years, arrested for violence/weapons offences.

8 Co-production with Young People

Key to the successful delivery of the action plans supporting the strategy will be the involvement of young people. In the context of this strategy a young person is considered to be a person up to the age of 25.

The board are currently considering the most appropriate way to involve young people across a whole range of ages, experiences and backgrounds so that they have their voices heard and co-produce our response to this issue across the City going forward.

Mike O' Hara, Police Commander
m.ohara@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

Liz Gaulton, Director of Public Health and Wellbeing
liz.gaulton@coventry.gov.uk

John Gregg, Director of Children's Services
john.gregg@coventry.gov.uk

Kirston Nelson, Director of Education
kirston.nelson@coventry.gov.uk

Caroline Ryder, Programme Manager (WM Police & Coventry CC)
caroline.ryder@coventry.gov.uk