



To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 26th June 2024

Subject: Serious Violence Duty (SVD)

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 This note is to update the Scrutiny Coordination Committee on progress made since the initial briefing note on the Serious Violence Duty presented in November 2023. This update outlines the key developments, achievements, challenges, and next steps in ongoing efforts to tackle serious violence in Coventry using a public health approach.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Coordination Committee is recommended to:
- 1) Review the progress note provided, including the letter of findings following the recent Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI)
 - 2) Provide feedback and any comments which can be integrated into the ongoing implementation of the Serious Violence Duty.
 - 3) Support advocacy for sustained funding and partnership working for existing initiatives to bolster violence reduction across the partnership.

3 Background

- 3.1 The initial note (Nov 2023), presented to the Committee, highlighted the new Serious Violence Duty imposed on local authorities and their partners to tackle serious violence collaboratively. The Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) was also introduced as an externally funded intervention targeting individuals aged fourteen or more, at risk of, or experiencing, violence. West Midlands Police has contributed a substantial resource in terms of personnel.
- 3.2 Key points from the previous briefing included:
- The legal framework established by the Police, Crime, Courts, and Sentencing Act 2022.
 - The role of specified authorities and key stakeholders in developing a partnership approach.
 - The assessment and strategic planning activities conducted in preparation for the Duty.
 - The launch and initial stages of the CIRV project.

- How the specified authorities in Coventry were working together to tackle this issue.

4 Progress Update

4.1 Since the initial report, progress has been made on implementing the Serious Violence Duty and CIRV, as well as undergoing a joint targeted area inspection. Key achievements are detailed below:

4.2 Serious Violence Duty Implementation

4.3 The Police & Crime Commissioner submitted the regional response strategy to the Home Office by the January 31, 2024, deadline. This strategy, informed by data from all seven local authority areas, is now in operation and will be reviewed and updated annually.

4.4 Coventry partners have continued to work closely with the regional violence reduction partnership (VRP) to align local plans with the regional strategy. Regular coordination meetings and data sharing have been established to ensure a cohesive approach. Coventry has an agreed set of priorities amongst the partnership with a focus on data analysis, engaging with young people and promoting Child Friendly Cov.

4.5 A new sub-group of Police and Crime Board, the Coventry Serious Violence Prevention Partnership (CSVPP) has been convened and is responsible for monitoring implementation of the delivery plan.

4.6 Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV)

4.7 Referral and Engagement: There have been a total of 493 referrals received since the project began, highlighting the high demand for this type of support.

4.8 Intervention Outcomes: While it is still too early to measure long-term outcomes, preliminary data indicates that participants are showing signs of reduced involvement in violence. There is a case study in Appendix B which demonstrates the value of a programme like CIRV.

4.9 Capacity Building: eleven volunteer mentors have been recruited to manage the high demand and ongoing training is being provided to ensure effective engagement and intervention techniques. Using volunteers from the local community is key to empowering local people to be involved in violence prevention in their communities.

4.10 Funding for CIRV by the Youth Endowment Fund is due to end in August 2025 and the CIRV management team are currently considering options regarding the project's sustainability. Coventry along with Wolverhampton were one of a handful of test sites where interventions for violence are being academically evaluated.

4.11 Significant milestones

4.12 A Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI)¹ on the theme "Serious Youth Violence". In March 2024 Coventry was selected to take part in a multi-agency inspection which lasted for a period of three weeks, with inspectors from Ofsted, Care Quality Commission (CQC), HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). The theme of the inspection was serious youth violence which had been announced the previous September. A great deal of preparation had already taken place across the partnership when the

¹ [Joint targeted area inspections to focus on serious youth violence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/joint-targeted-area-inspections-to-focus-on-serious-youth-violence)

local authority received the call. Please see Appendix A containing the letter of findings from the Inspectors.

- 4.13 The committee may wish to note that the letter states “Children at risk of criminal exploitation and serious youth violence are safer as a result of the effective partnership work undertaken by both statutory services and the third sector to reduce risks in places and spaces as well as for individual young people in Coventry. Mature partnership arrangements are in place. Since 2019, partners in Coventry have continued to focus on serious youth violence and exploitation. Their response to the new serious violence duty, through the Coventry Serious Violence Prevention Partnership led by the police, with strong links to the West Midlands Regional Violence Reduction Partnership and Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership, further builds on the learning from the city’s experience of serious youth violence”.
- 4.14 An agreed plan to tackle areas identified for development, following the JTAI, is due to be provided to inspectors in August. The draft plan has been prepared and circulated to partners for agreement.
- 4.15 As part of the JTAI preparations a comprehensive booklet has been produced [Serious Youth Violence Booklet – Coventry City Council](#) which details how the partnership are tackling violence, who is involved and the services on offer. It is a comprehensive overview of our offer to young people in the city when it comes to preventing and supporting those experiencing the consequences of violence

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Continued rigorous evaluation of CIRV and other violence reduction initiatives will be crucial. CIRV is being independently evaluated by academics. Once completed we will have a degree of certainty that this intervention is making a difference in the lives of those engaging in the programme.
- 5.2 **Community Engagement:** Efforts will be intensified to raise awareness and involve the community in violence reduction activities. A regional media campaign aimed at young people was launched on 30th May, this along with local initiatives like Safe Spaces and Child Friendly Cov. will be crucial to keeping young people at the heart of our dialogue. We will be using forums such as the Coventry Youth Council to engage young people and help them understand how the partnership is tackling violence and what they can do in their communities to support it.
- 5.3 **Policy and Advocacy:** Ongoing advocacy for policy changes at the regional and national levels will be pursued to support the sustained impact of the Serious Violence Duty and related initiatives. As a local authority public health team, we are working hard to co-ordinate a number of different work areas across teams with the local authority including children’s services, youth justice, education, health and community safety to ensure we are maximising our impact and reducing duplication of effort. The programme manager, violence prevention works closely with the other stakeholders (Policing, Health, Fire and Rescue, Probation) to coordinate efforts to tackle violence as a multi-agency partnership using an evidence-based and data led approach.

6 Health Inequalities Impact

- 6.1 Violence undermines people’s physical and mental health. Addressing the root causes of violence including poverty, parental neglect, childhood adversity, living in a high crime neighbourhood, substance misuse and low levels of educational attainment/school engagement, should improve health outcomes across the population. We continue to work together as partners to address those issues.

Coventry has now been a Marmot City for 10 years. Health Inequalities are routinely considered as part of council and partner decision making. Our Marmot monitoring tool [Marmot monitoring tool – Coventry City Council](#) sets out 8 key areas which, over the long term, should contribute to reducing levels of violence across Coventry.

- 6.2 The interactive Marmot monitoring tool sets out the work taking place across the eight key areas.

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