

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Executive – 14 February 2024

Subject: Serious Violence Strategy

Report of: Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

This report details the Council’s updated Serious Violence Strategy that reflects the learning from the Joint Targeted Area Inspection that was reported to Executive in January and supports compliance with the Serious Violence Duty.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Executive approve the Serious Violence Strategy for the city.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	None
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	By developing our approach to Serious Violence in the city, this will ensure that communities are not disproportionately impacted, targeted or underserved by services that are responding to serious violence. The impact of the approach outlined in the Serious Violence Strategy on protected characteristics has been considered through an equality impact assessment.(EIA)

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city’s economic success	

A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The implementation of an effective response to serious violence will contribute to the safety of the city to make it a destination of choice to live, visit and work.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Community Safety Strategy 2022-25

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report details the development of the Serious Violence Strategy which is enclosed in Appendix 1.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In 2021 the Government released guidance in relation to a new Serious Violence Duty, which came into effect on 31 January 2023. The duty brings with it several commitments and responsibilities for both Central and Local Government, as well as named partners including police, justice (Youth Justice and Probation), health, education and fire and rescue services, including the collation of a Joint Services Needs Assessment on serious violence and publication of a serious violence strategy by 31 January 2024
- 2.2 In advance of the introduction of the Serious Violence Duty the Manchester Community Safety Partnership had already progressed a partnership approach to Serious Violence. Recognising the need for a coordinated approach both a needs assessment and an Interim Strategy were drafted in advance of the requirement for a strategy.
- 2.3 The Interim Strategy was discussed and supported at Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee on the 6 September 2022 with some further requests that were presented to Communities and Equalities Scrutiny on 7 November 2023.
- 2.4 On Monday 25th September 2023 a JTAI focusing on Serious Youth Violence commenced in Manchester and concluded on 13th October 2023. The results were published on 30 November and presented to Executive in January 2024. The Serious Violence Strategy has been updated to include the learning and improvements identified in the Inspection and an updated Joint Services Needs Assessment.

3.0 Development of the Strategy and Governance

- 3.1 Central to the development and delivery of the strategy is ensuring that the voices of children, young people and our communities are heard. To ensure that we have developed an effective strategy with and for our communities we have completed formal consultation through the Community Safety Strategy consultation as well as obtaining feedback from Community Led Approaches across the city, direct feedback from the children we support through our Youth Justice Services and those that work with our youth providers.
- 3.2 Further work will take place to embed this in the ongoing performance framework of the strategy, that will be implemented in response to the feedback from the Joint Targeted Area Inspection.
- 3.3 The delivery of the Serious Violence Strategy will be governed by the Serious Violence Board which reports to the Community Safety Partnership. This will include approving delivery plans, commissioning activity and analysis,

monitoring activity and outcomes in line with the key priorities and principles of delivery. Progress will also be reported to the Manchester Safeguarding Partnership for assurance and support.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Executive approve the Serious Violence Strategy.

Manchester Community Safety Partnership Serious Violence Strategy 2024-2027

Forward

Tackling serious violence is of huge importance to our communities in Manchester and they have told us that we need to focus our resources upstream to tackle the root causes. This is something we must do together, and it remains a key priority for our Community Safety Partnership.

We are committed to working with children, young people and our communities as well as statutory agencies and the voluntary sector, through a trauma informed and a whole- family approach, to bring about a positive change where violence is not inevitable but preventable.

Our key priority is to stop serious violence through prevention and early intervention. By approaching violence in our communities as a public health challenge we will achieve sustainable reductions in violence, improving the health, well-being and quality of life for everyone living, visiting and working in Manchester.

In order to achieve long-term solutions through our public health approach it is essential to understand violence at a local level, to identify risk factors and use this to inform our response for those at risk of becoming perpetrators or victims of serious violence.

To embed our public health approach, it will be vital for us to work in partnership with key agencies across the city including health, education, Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit, Police, local authorities, criminal justice agencies, voluntary and community groups and our local communities, whose voice is at the forefront of this strategy. It is only with the joint effort and dedication from the partnership and our communities that we can make a real difference for the citizens of Manchester.

Cllr Luthfur Rahman OBE Deputy Leader Manchester City Council

Introduction

In April 2018 the Government published its National Serious Violence Strategy in response to increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide in almost all police forces across England. The strategy represented a step change in how partners should think and respond to serious violence, establishing a new balance between prevention and law enforcement. It declares a call to action for partners from across different sectors to come together and adopt an end to end, whole system multi-agency approach to preventing and responding to serious violence at a local level. In 2019 as part of the National Serious Violence Strategy funding was identified to set up 18 Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) across the Country. The primary focus of VRUs is to ensure collaboration between Police, local authority community safety, education, and health professionals as well as community leaders and the voluntary and community sector to understand the root cause of serious violence at a local level taking a public health approach. Manchester's Serious Violence Strategy has

been developed in partnership with Greater Manchester's VRU and is designed to complement the Greater Manchester Serious Violence Action Plan.

On 31 January 2023 the Serious Violence Duty came into effect in England and Wales under Chapter 1, Part 2 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

The Serious Violence Duty requires Specified Authorities (Local Authorities, Police, Justice, Fire and Rescue and Health) to collaborate to prevent and reduce serious violence. This includes the identification of the types of violence, the cause of violence (as far as possible to do so) and to prepare and implement a response strategy at a local level. The new Duty requires the specified authorities to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. In doing so, local areas are encouraged to work within the framework of a public health approach: -

- Focused on a defined population
- With and for communities
- Not constrained by organisational or professional boundaries
- Focused on generating long term as well as short term solutions
- Based on data and intelligence to identify the burden on the population, including any inequalities
- Rooted in evidence of effectiveness to tackle the problem

Manchester's Serious Violence Strategy adheres to these fundamental principles. We acknowledge that greater law enforcement alone will not achieve the required long-term solutions to serious violence and that we must continue to focus on prevention and early intervention whilst offering support to, and protecting, those who we believe to be at risk of serious violence within our communities.

This strategy aims to outline how we understand and aim to deliver interventions with our communities to both prevent and respond to incidents of serious violence in Manchester.

Definition of serious violence

Manchester's Serious Violence Board has adopted the World Health Organisation's definition of serious violence, in line with the definition adopted by Greater Manchester's VRU. The World Health Organisation defines serious violence as "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" *Source: World Health Organisation.*

It is recognised that the Serious Violence Duty encourages us to include both domestic abuse and sexual assault within our serious violence strategy. In Manchester there is already in existence a recent (2021) Domestic Abuse Strategy delivered by the Community Safety Partnership and local voluntary and community groups which can be found here

[file:///mcc.local/users\\$/005/southernj/Downloads/102514_DomesticAbuseStrategy2021_FINAL%20\(1\).pdf](file:///mcc.local/users$/005/southernj/Downloads/102514_DomesticAbuseStrategy2021_FINAL%20(1).pdf)

This strategy dovetails with the ambition contained within the Domestic Abuse Strategy without losing the shared focus this needs. Manchester's Community Safety Partnership is also currently undertaking activity to increase our understanding in

relation to sexual violence and co-ordinate an action plan in response to the governments Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls strategy.

This strategy acknowledges the influence of further key elements on serious violence including, but not limited to, organised crime, criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation and complex safeguarding. Links to other cross-cutting strategies to which this one is aligned can be found below: -

Manchester Community Safety Strategy

https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/6107/community_safety_strategy

Making Manchester Fairer – Anti Poverty Strategy 2023-2027

Making Manchester Fairer: Anti-Poverty Strategy 2023-2027 | Manchester City Council

Manchester's Complex Safeguarding Strategy

<https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020-05-27-MSP-Complex-Safeguarding-Strategy-FINAL.pdf>

Greater Manchester Serious Organised Crime Strategy

<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/6125/serious-organised-crime-strategy.pdf>

Education Inclusion Strategy

https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/7154/manchester_inclusion_strategy_november_2019_%E2%80%93_july_2022

Greater Manchester Serious Violence Reduction Unit – new page –

The Greater Manchester VRU is crucial to assisting us in embedding our public health approach, understanding violence at a local level and supporting us in establishing evidence-based interventions and trialing community led projects. In April 2023 Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit published their refreshed Strategic Needs Assessment which takes a public health approach to looking at serious violence at a regional level. The needs assessment identifies risk and protective factors through the life course as well as identifying recommendations and next steps.

Further to the refreshed needs assessment the Greater Manchester VRU launched their ten-year violence reduction strategy “Greater than Violence”. The strategy commits to working with individuals and communities to understand their strengths, challenges and ideas in tackling violence. The strategy was founded on two main pillars, preventing violence and providing a swift and appropriate response when an incident does occur. The strategy has 5 main principles:

- Community Led Approach
- Early and timely intervention
- Partnerships for change
- Equality, equity and justice
- Trauma responsive city region

The Greater Manchester VRU needs assessment and Greater than Violence Strategy have been utilised to inform the refreshed needs assessment and strategy for Manchester.

A copy of the Strategic Needs Assessment can be found here [GM-VRU-SNA-Design-22nd-May_compressed.pdf](#) (gmvrु.co.uk).

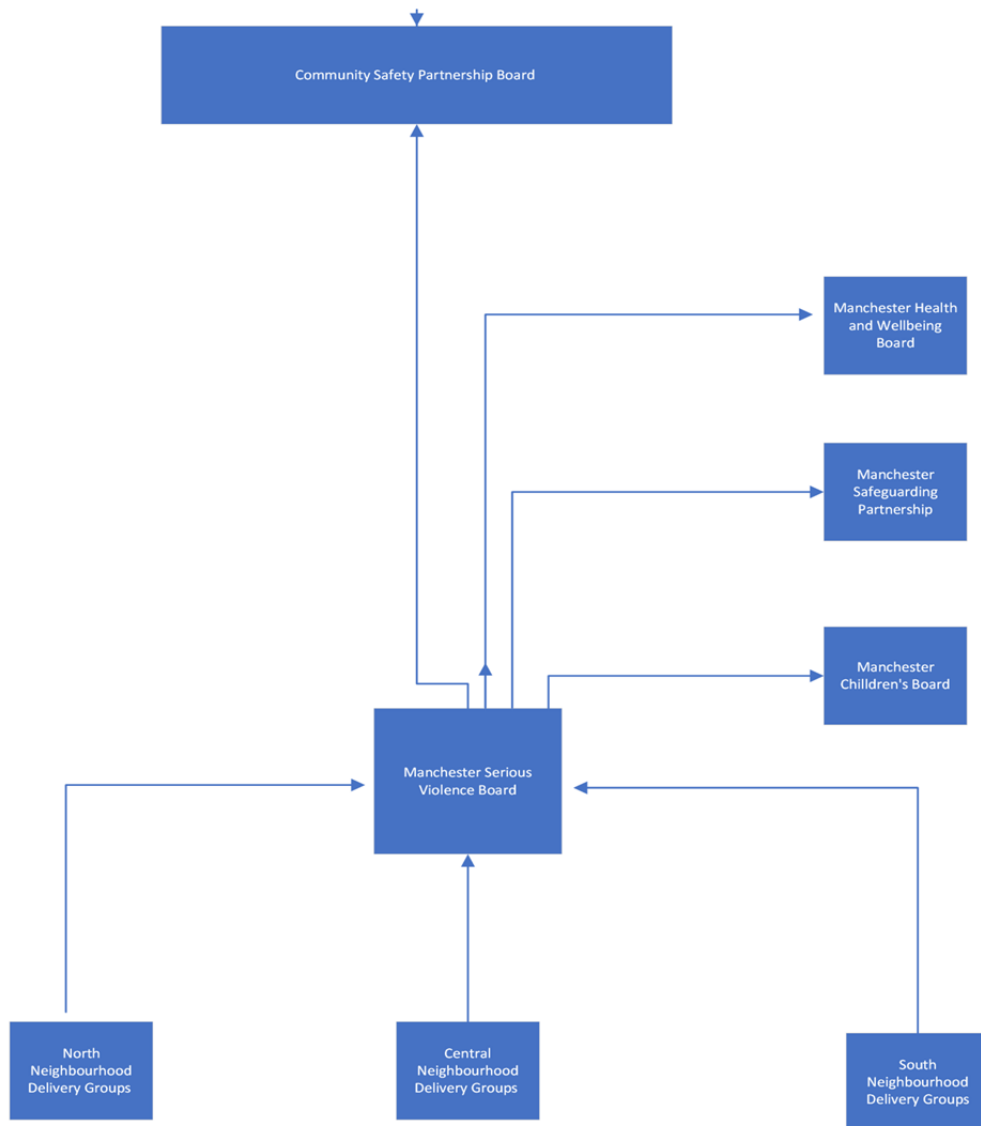
A copy of the Greater Than Violence Strategy can be found here - [Greater Than Violence Strategy - Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit](#) (gmvrु.co.uk)

Governance

Governing a partnership approach to serious violence is essential to the delivery of this strategy as no one organisation can resolve the problem alone.

Manchester's Serious Violence Board will ensure effective oversight of responses to serious violent crime and the implementation (ensuring prevention, early intervention and safeguarding are integrated to our responses) in the City of Manchester. The Board will oversee the implementation of the serious violence duty through a public health approach and drive to support partnership working to ensure visibility for overlapping areas such as safeguarding.

The Serious Violence Board will be overseen by the Community Safety Partnership Board and will also feed into the Manchester's Health and Wellbeing Board, Children's Board and Safeguarding Partnership.



Serious Violence in Manchester -

Manchester's Community Safety Partnership recognises that in order to effectively embed a public health approach to serious violence we need to ensure we have a robust understanding of the presenting issues and driving factors at a local level. It is essential that we understand the picture of serious violence in Manchester in order to ensure that we can respond to trends and drivers efficiently and effectively.

Outlined below is what we know about serious violence in Manchester so far. This comprises a variety of anonymised data sources including from Greater Manchester Police, Youth Justice, Education and Accident and Emergency departments.

- Between October 2020 and September 2023, 33% of homicides and attempt murders in Greater Manchester happened within the City of Manchester.

- Manchester's disproportionate share of serious violence in Greater Manchester is driven by several different factors, but of significance is: -
 - Manchester City Centre's status as an entertainment, retail, business, and transport hub.
 - High levels of deprivation in some neighbourhoods outside the City Centre.
- The number of serious violent offences in Manchester saw a 9% reduction between October 2022 and September 2023 compared with the previous 12 months.
- The significance of cross border issues also continues to be seen, in recent homicides involving young people, and which are also more specifically linked to group associations and rivalry including potential criminal exploitation.

Victims

- The vast majority of victims of serious violence are male
 - Over the past three years (October 2020 to September 2023), 78% of victims of homicide and serious violence in the City of Manchester have been male, as have 79% of personal robbery victims.
- The age profile of victims of serious violence in Manchester is relatively young
 - Victims of serious violence in Manchester (homicides and wounding) are most likely to be in their twenties and early thirties.
- Repeat victimisation is a significant issue across the city.
 - 25% of victims of serious violence in Manchester between October 2022 and September 2023 had already been the victim of a violent crime during the previous 12 months

Suspects

- Two thirds of suspects linked to serious violent offences between October 2022 and September 2023 had already been linked to another violent offence in the previous 12 months (including public order and weapon possession offences).
- The vast majority of Serious Violence perpetrators are male
 - 82% of perpetrators linked to serious violence in Manchester in the past three years have been male, although the proportion of female perpetrators has increased over this period, from 15% during 2020/21 to 21% during 2022/23.
- Perpetrators of serious violence were more likely to live locally, with 71% of suspects living in the City of Manchester, and a further 22% living in other parts of Greater Manchester.

Deprivation

- In Manchester there are strong correlations between deprivation and levels of serious violence

Serious Youth Violence (Youth Justice data)

- 38 young people charged with 67 Serious Youth Violence category offences between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2023.

- 55% of young people charged with a Serious Violence offence are from Black Asian or Minority Ethnic Communities
- 87 % of young people charged with an offence were male.
- 13% of young people charged with an offence were female.
- The average age of the cohort is 16.3 years old.

Education data

Using data sources including Greater Manchester Police, Youth Justice, Childrens social care and Education, SAFE Taskforce research identified 344 young people in Manchester who would be within their definition of being involved in serious youth violence. Other factors that were present for this group are: -

- 95% boys
- 74% received a suspension from school
- 21% received a permanent exclusion
- 46% spent time in an alternative education provision
- 33% have 6-10 indicators of ACE's

The most recent data from the Local Authority Education team shows that permanent exclusions and suspensions are increasing in Manchester schools. Permanent exclusions were up 2022/ 2023 from the previous year by 0.4% and suspensions went up by 0.94%. Both have continued to rise this academic year, but the trajectory is that the increase will be a lot higher. There is also an indication that there is an increase in children with Educational Health and Care Plans being permanently excluded from Manchester Schools.

Complex Safeguarding

Manchester Complex Safeguarding Insights and Impact Framework (2022-23) identified the following:-

- 242 referrals were made into the Complex Safeguarding Team between April 2022 – March 2023.
- 60% were regarding criminal exploitation and 22% were regarding sexual exploitation.
- Gender breakdown highlights 69% were male and 31% were female.
- 39% had additional needs including special educational needs or learning disabilities.

What have our local communities told us about serious violence? - new page

By listening to our communities, we can understand their concerns, local priorities and how we can work together to improve our responses, on a local level, to the challenges and complexities that serious violence presents.

We have carried out a wide variety of consultations within our local communities, including young people, and they have told us:

The community Safety Strategy Consultation

90% of people consulted in the Community Safety Strategy consultation in 2021 identified serious violence as a priority for action in their local area.

In focus groups partners and residents told us that they wanted to see

- Earlier intervention for young people
- Work in schools to support young people and prevent them being drawn into crime
- Better communication between partner agencies
- Action to address inequalities and disproportionality
- Action to address domestic abuse and the cycle of violence

Listening to the experts – what young people have told us

The Community Safety Partnership commissioned Reclaim to undertake analysis with young people to understand what young people want and need to stay safe from violent crime. The results are detailed in this report.

Young people revealed their hopes for the future to be:

- To feel safe
- To be respected and understood
- To have hope for a positive future
- To feel supported and listened to

The report details that young people wanted our responses to move away from the presenting issues of serious violence and tackle some of the underlying causes that impact young people.

Negative influences such as fear, isolation, sensationalist media, and lack of understanding by professionals, opportunities, investment, and support, frustrated these hopes.

The report contains several recommendations:

- A youth-centred approach to be taken by services, commissioners, and policy makers, listening to young people non-judgmentally, focusing first on understanding, and work alongside young people to create solutions, being more inclusive of adults from similar backgrounds.
- Shift from interventions that undermine support, respect, and hope and to approaches that build upon young people's strengths, create relationships of trust and make them feel safe.
- Adopt new approaches and continue the dialogue in order to close the gaps between young people and professionals.

Community Led Approaches

Two community-led projects to address serious youth violence have commenced in the city, in Moss Side, Hulme and Rusholme and in Cheetham. These projects have developed responses to serious violence with their local communities. Initially listening to communities identify their local priorities and then working with communities to deliver community-based services in response to those needs.

Communities told us that they were concerned about:

- Negative perception of the local area driven by detrimental press coverage
- Lack of employment and opportunity.

- Systemic racism
- Normalisation of weapons and violence

They wanted to see:

- Space and positive activities for young people
- Support for families
- Peer mentoring

What has been done so far in Manchester? - Our approach

The work already undertaken in response to serious violence by Manchester's Community Safety Partnership focuses on 3 main areas: -

- Prevention and early intervention
- Support and Protect
- Disrupt, divert and enforce

In October 2023 the partnership undertook a mapping exercise of services working to reduce serious violence across the city. This has enabled us to understand what is currently on offer across the partnership under each of the workstreams and to ensure better coordination.

Prevention and Early intervention

Community Led Work

Peace Together Alliance is a collaboration of several local Voluntary and Community groups working with people aged 10 – 25 years of age in Moss Side, Hulme and Rusholme. The alliance has been provided with funding from the Greater Manchester VRU to run projects across the three locality areas to address the underlying reasons of violence whilst building aspiration and opportunities for young people.

The Youth Endowment Fund has agreed to support a 5-year investment plan in the Cheetham area of the city to develop a community-led strategy to reduce serious youth violence in the locality. A consultation has been completed with a diverse group of young people from the area to understand what young people's thoughts are about serious violence and the area that they live in. Work is now underway to commission local services to develop an approach in response to the consultation.

Engage Panels

Engage panels are multi agency panels (made up of both statutory agencies and voluntary and Community groups) set up across the city. The panels are focused on supporting children and young people who are "invisible", meaning that they are not currently open to statutory services such as Children's Social Care, Complex Safeguarding or Youth Justice.

Engage panels follow the principles outlined in the Violence Reduction Unit's PPIED (Prevention through Prosecution, Intervention Engagement and Diversion) initiative. This was devised in response to feedback from practice reviews and practitioners who identified that children were being involved in serious incidents but there was no

criminal justice outcome, and they were not getting any intervention or support to address those behaviours. The panel ensures that intervention and prevention support is offered to children and young people who are displaying behaviours which may suggest they are susceptible to being drawn into serious violence.

Remedi

Remedi work with children on a one to one and group basis using restorative approaches to build their understanding of the impact of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour and offending behaviour. Remedi work specifically around young people's needs, equipping them with the tools to make different choices to divert them away from committing crime/anti-social behaviour. The key aim is to reduce the criminalisation of children and young people who are on the periphery of the criminal justice system – bridging the gap between universal and statutory services.

AFRUCA

AFRUCA delivers a holistic menu of services to support children and families in Black and Ethnic Minority communities across the city at risk of or affected by exploitation and youth violence. The Child Trafficking and Youth Violence Programme includes an Early Help Support Programme for Black and Ethnic Minority families affected by county lines child trafficking, a coding project for Children at Risk of County Lines Child Trafficking, a Children at Risk of Serious Violence Project and the Phoenix Project for young women and girls at risk of exploitation.

STEER – Salford Foundation Trust

Steer is a Youth Endowment Fund project providing a one-to-one mentoring service supporting young people 10-17 years old who have been identified as being at risk of violence. Support involves weekly one to one session for up to 6 months delivering core interventions including goal setting, safety mapping, healthy relationships, exploitation, weapon carrying, and anger management, as well as engagement in positive activities.

Keeping Children and Young People Safe

The Community Safety Partnership has used grants from Greater Manchester Combined Authority to target specific activities in areas where there are higher levels of anti-social behaviour and violence relating to young people. One example of this work is:

Manchester Youth Zone (MYZ) is commissioned to engage with young people in North Manchester that includes:

- Street-based detached youth work with children and young people living in communities currently impacted by violence
- Supporting children and young people in delivering meaningful social action projects in their communities and engage in positive activities that helped them to feel safe, respected, hopeful and supported
- Capturing first-hand experiences and exploring alternative models for youth voice

Projects are also commissioned to be delivered in Miles Platting and Newton Heath, Clayton and Openshaw, Gorton and Abbey and Cheetham by local providers.

Youth Justice Prevention and Diversion Teams

Prevention - The Prevention Team is made up of officers seconded by Remedi, supporting children who have not yet entered the justice system. Officers work with children to help them identify what led to their offending behaviours and co-produce interventions to reduce the risk of repeat incidents. Working with children so that they recognise their own strengths and build on their resilience provides them with the tools they need to prevent offending behaviour before it escalates. Remedi specialise in Restorative Justice and work with the children to help them to understand how their actions can impact others' lives as well as their own.

Diversion – The Diversion Team has a broad range of expertise from Youth Justice, Police and Victim Liaison. The Team supports children who have entered the justice system for low-level offences. Similar to the Prevention offer, the team works with the children to help them identify what led to their offending behaviours and how this resulted in them entering the justice system. Officers co-produce interventions with the children and use strengths-based approaches to support them to build resilience. The team encourages children to take ownership of their behaviour so they can recognise this in the future and reduce the risk of re-offending.

Work in schools

Manchester Community Safety Partnership recognises that engagement in full time, good quality education is a strong protective factor against young people being drawn into serious violence.

The effects of permanent exclusion for a child can be long lasting and life-limiting. Exclusion from school has been found to be a key factor in the stigmatisation of a young person, resulting in reduced life chances, limited opportunities for self-development and inhibited engagement in wider society. From a public health approach, the label of having been excluded can socially shape the actions of a child through to adulthood, often resulting in a cyclical reproduction of that stigma.

Education providers are well placed to identify those at risk of serious violence and deliver interventions through their trusted relationships with children and young people.

Inclusion Strategy

The Inclusion Strategy focused on Manchester Early Years' Settings, Schools, Post 16 providers, parents/carers, Local Authority Services, Health Services, Voluntary and Community Sector Services, Greater Manchester Police and many other partners are all committed to promoting the inclusion and preventing the exclusion of Manchester's children and young people.

The full inclusion strategy can be found at

https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/7154/manchester_inclusion_strategy_november_2019_%E2%80%93_july_2022

Manchester Schools Early Intervention

The Safeguarding in Education Team developed an early intervention and prevention programme offer for Manchester schools which focuses on raising awareness of the consequences and impact of knife crime, serious youth violence and child criminal exploitation. The programme has included a range of interventions which have been commissioned and delivered in high schools, and, more recently, a

programme of activity has been developed for primary-aged children. Over the past twelve months, the focus has been to support Primary schools with raising children's awareness of the consequences of knife crime and how to keep safe in their communities. During the period September 2022 - July 2023 Education Safeguarding commissioned two programmes that were offered to primary schools across the city of Manchester:

GANGs – Get Away N Get Safe is an intensive five session educational, preventative, and diversionary intervention which aims to educate children and young people on the dangers and consequences of criminality, anti-social behaviour, knife crime, drugs, exploitation, organised crime lifestyles for the individual, their families, and the wider community.

RUDE – Respect Understanding Danger Equality takes a more generic approach in teaching children how to keep safe, recognise dangers and who to go to for help and support and focuses on engaging children in discussion and activities around respecting one another, being kind, understanding and exploring different communities and cultures.

SAFE taskforce

Manchester was invited to set up a Safe Taskforce with the Department for Education.

Having engaged schools across a local authority area, with multi-agency structures and local experts, SAFE has commissioned evidence-based interventions to support young people at risk of serious violence and re-engage them in their education.

The taskforce commissioned a variety of local mentoring services to provide one to one school focused intervention to reduce involvement in serious violence, improve attendance at school, improve behaviour in school and within the community and improve social and emotional regulation and well-being.

Since phase one of the taskforce was launched 121 children have received holistic support from mentors with early indications of positive impact. There will be both local and national evaluation of the project in 2026.

Alternative Provision Taskforce

The Alternative Provision Taskforce has been set up within The Manchester Pupil Referral Units to support young people in alternative provision settings. The aim of the taskforce is to utilise specialised key workers from Youth Justice, Remedi, Complex Safeguarding, Mental Health and education reduce truancy, not in education, employment, and training (NEET) rates, the risk of involvement in serious violence and improve mental health and wellbeing.

Feedback from young people working with one of the providers in the PRU taskforce is outlined below: -

“It was a positive thing to do because I’ve got better now, I was a little bad kid before and now I can actually stay in class. I learnt to keep calmer and learnt about the crimes like if I fight someone and the punishment I could get.”

“I like the sessions and I think there helping me with my issues in and out of school”.

“Reyanne helped me see a different perspective of things and that violence isn’t always the answer.”

Support and Protect

Complex Safeguarding

The link between exploitation and serious violence is recognised in Manchester. Manchester's Complex Safeguarding Hub supports young people at risk or being exploited, and delivers bespoke interventions based on principles of trusted relationships and trauma informed interventions. The team works closely with multi agency partners to develop effective, joined up safety plans for young people and to support young people realise their aspirations and achieve positive outcomes.

[https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/wp-](https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020-05-27-MSP-Complex-Safeguarding-Strategy-FINAL.pdf)

[content/uploads/2020/04/2020-05-27-MSP-Complex-Safeguarding-Strategy-FINAL.pdf](https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020-05-27-MSP-Complex-Safeguarding-Strategy-FINAL.pdf)

Oasis Navigators

The Navigator Project is a Youth Led Violence Reduction project commissioned by the Greater Manchester VRU. The project launched in April 2021 in a variety of Accident and Emergency Departments in Greater Manchester.

The aim of the project is to support young people presenting at Emergency Departments with injuries caused by involvement in a violent incident. The project has now been expanded to include a pathway for community referrals (including primary care). The project is open to any young person aged 10-25 years old that lives or attends school in Greater Manchester that are impacted by youth violence. The Navigators work with the young person to enable them to reflect and process their experiences following an incident. Navigators support children and young people to create their own bespoke support plan and when they are ready can identify local support networks, community groups and services that can support them long term to achieve their goals.

The Oasis Navigator project has also recently been further expanded to provide a parent and carer service providing one-to-one peer mentoring support to parents and carers who are concerned about their child's behaviour.

Serious Violence Hub

Designated Police officers undertaking proactive operations in the city centre encounter a range of individuals both adults and young people. The Serious Violence Hub connects to Manchester and Greater Manchester safeguarding services to ensure that vulnerable people identified on the street are being referred for the appropriate help and support.

The Children's Society – Parenting Service

Funded by the Community Safety Partnership, the service delivers intensive, therapeutic, trauma focused interventions with parents and carers to enable them to effectively safeguard children and young people and reduce/prevent further missing episodes. The Children's Society build trusted relationships with parents and carers via one-to-one, group work, and informal coffee mornings. They support parents and carers to understand their role within their child's life. They also provide training to residential home staff and foster carers and can create bespoke training packages to frontline workers to help them understand the risks of missing from home/care and indicators of exploitation.

Rock Up

Rock Up works with the youth justice service, offering high quality and creative music making activities. It is a responsive and flexible programme that meets the needs and interests of the young people, supporting them in their own personal journeys

and inspires them to access mainstream and creative provision opportunities. It includes weekly musician in residence workshops and intensive creative music weeks. As part of the Rock Up programme Theatre in Probation and Prisons (TiPP) is supporting Manchester Youth Justice's ambition to become an arts-based service.

Unity Radio

Unity Radio is a series of workshops for young people designing, developing and delivering live radio shows broadcast on Unity Radio. The content of each radio show contains features and discussions between young people, reflective workshops, with critical discussion, educating young people about enhancing their safety, preventing violent crime, and challenging the attitudes that enable violence. This preventative education is focused on promoting positive attitudes around young people their own age, recognising patterns and vulnerabilities that might lead to violent crime, criminal activity, healthy relationships, sexual citizenship and consent, as well as peer schemes, advocates, and role models.

Disrupt, Divert and Enforce

Whilst the focus of this strategy is early intervention and prevention, Manchester Community Safety Partnership remains committed to swift, visible justice for those who commit serious violence offences and exploit others into doing so.

There are currently several ongoing high visibility operations led by GMP which contribute to the reduction of serious violence across the city. These Police led operations are complemented by other enforcement activities (utilising ASB and licensing legislation) undertaken by Manchester City Council's Community Safety, Compliance and Enforcement Services.

When considering enforcement action against individuals involved in serious violence it is important that this is coupled with an offer of support to divert individuals away from further criminality and harm.

Another Chance

Another Chance is a Youth Endowment Funded project that seeks to build evidence on a focused deterrence approach that has seen some success in the United States. The project will take place across the City of Manchester and a defined area of North Trafford until December 2025.

The programme targets 14-25 years old who have been identified as having been involved in serious youth violence such as assaults, knife crime, sexual assault etc. within a group dynamic (two or more people) within the last twenty four months.

Through Power 2 (support provider), the children and young people on the programme are offered the opportunity to work with a mentor to identify support and services that meet their needs and will help them turn their lives around.

If those identified as part of this project continue to commit criminal offences, then consideration will be given to utilising enforcement powers to address behaviour. Such powers may include (but are not limited to); Policing powers, Youth Justice powers and civil enforcement tools and powers.

SHiFT

SHiFT Manchester launched in October 2023 based within Manchester Youth Justice. The practice has a particular focus on reducing the use of custody for children and an interest in improving outcomes in this area by preventing the need for custodial remands and sentences through intensive levels of community support and improving resettlement outcomes as young people transition from custody to the

community, reducing the need for recall. The practice will work alongside some of the most vulnerable children from across the city to break the destructive cycle of crime and influence system change, with a particular focus on challenging disproportionality.

Projects and Evaluations

Due to several of the above projects and programmes being in their infancy there is currently little robust evaluation of their effectiveness in terms of serious violence reduction.

To assist with embedding the public health approach this strategy commits to working with partners to understand and evaluate the effectiveness of our projects and programmes. Each individual project has an appropriate evaluation method that will contribute to the overarching performance framework for the Strategy.

Learning from Reviews, Research and Activity –

Child safeguarding reviews -

Sadly, there continue to be serious incidents in the city and wider where children are killed or seriously hurt as a result of serious violence. Reviews have been undertaken in response to some of these incidents and the learning from these reviews and research is key to improving our approach to serious violence in the city. Some of the key areas for improvement include:

- Better understanding of how strategic plans will drive improvement in front line delivery
- Treat encounters with under 18's as children first, reference vulnerability and exploitation
- Involve the family in assessments especially fathers
- Continue to develop trauma informed approach in practice across all agencies.
- Improve joined up work across services e.g., complex safeguarding, Youth Justice, and local teams
- Recognise the importance of transitions
- Focus on equality and disproportionality
- Importance of work in schools and education, particularly reducing the impact and incidence of exclusion from education
- More consistent working and approach across Local Authority boundaries

Youth Justice Research Manchester Metropolitan University –

In 2020 research was commissioned by Manchester City Council's Youth Justice Service and funded through the Youth Justice Board's Reducing Serious Youth Violence fund to develop understanding of the drivers of Serious Youth Violence. The research brings together key areas of practice; Serious Youth Violence, ACEs, trauma-informed practice, and youth participation – to investigate the complex relationship between Serious Youth Violence and ACEs. This is detailed in the report published in 2021 which includes a number of recommendations on trauma informed practice which can be found at the link below.

<https://www.mmu.ac.uk/media/mmuacuk/content/documents/mcys/Serious-Youth-Violence-Report---MCYS.pdf>

We will continue to learn from further research and our communities. We will embed this learning into our key priorities and interventions to reduce serious violence across Manchester.

Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) – Serious Youth Violence

In September / October 2023 Manchester underwent a JTAI in relation to Serious Youth Violence. The inspection was led by Ofsted and involved a total of twelve inspectors from Care Quality Commission, Ofsted (schools and social care), His Majesty's Prisons Inspectorate and His Majesty's Inspectorate Constabulary Fire & Rescue Services.

The scope of the inspection considered 3 broad areas.

- **Strategic Partnership responses to serious youth violence** (how well do partners work together, understand and respond to issues in Manchester)
- **Intervention with individual and groups of children** affected by serious youth violence and criminal exploitation (how do partners provide timely, purposeful and impact positively into children and their family's lives)
- **Intervention in places and spaces** (contextual safeguarding and how partners use intelligence to inform activity and disrupt)

The inspection identified a number of strengths in the partnership as well as some areas for improvement –

The full report can be viewed at <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50234228>

Key Priorities and Actions

In response to what children and young people have told us, what our local communities say about serious violence and our learning so far, we will continue with our current priorities: -

- Early intervention and Prevention
- Support and Protect
- Disrupt, Divert and Enforce

We will develop these approaches along with evidence-based interventions with a strong focus on early intervention and prevention.

Early Intervention and prevention

- We will continue to develop prevention and early intervention panel through our Engage model. These panels will allow statutory agencies and the local voluntary and community groups to identify children and young people at risk of serious violence at the earliest opportunity and to offer them a variety of support and interventions to divert them away from serious violence.
- We will continue to develop the SAFE taskforce, with support from the Department of Education, to work with schools across the local authority area. The taskforce will utilise multi-agency structures and local experts to

commission evidence-based interventions to support young people at risk of serious violence and re-engage them in their education.

- We will continue to identify and challenge disproportionality in our systems and practices, including the criminal justice system.
- We will embed a trauma informed approach across Manchester's community Safety Partnership. This will include delivering trauma informed training to staff and amending policies and practices to improve our approach to working with people who have experienced trauma.

Support and Protect: -

- We will work with our partners to develop the "think family and community networks" model to ensure that support can be offered to families and support networks of those identified as being at risk from serious violence. This will include but is not limited to; support for parents / carers / guardians, support for siblings and support for peer groups.
- We will improve support offers for those who are vulnerable and require extra support when transitioning from childhood to adulthood.
- We will improve information and intelligence sharing between prisons and community services to ensure we are able to better support individuals upon their release from prison to reduce re offending.

Disrupt, Divert and Enforce:

- We will maximise enforcement opportunities for those identified as persistent offenders of serious violence through effective partnership work across community safety and criminal justice.
- We will continue to develop a multi-agency panel (through our Another Chance Programme) to respond to concerns of serious youth violence where prevention and early intervention are not appropriate. We will include statutory and voluntary and community groups to provide key workers who will deliver consistent and bespoke support and interventions to divert children and young people away from serious violence.
- We will ensure that there is always an offer of support available to those who are identified as perpetrators of serious violence to ensure they can divert away from serious violence even when enforcement action has commenced.

Principles for delivery

Data analysis

- We will continue to review data from a variety of sources to ensure we understand serious violence at a local level and where possible work to identify risk factors and underlying drivers of serious violence.
- We will continue to work with the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit and our voluntary and community sector partners to develop our community-led approach and develop evidence-based interventions.

Listening to our communities:

- We will continue to engage with our communities at a local level to understand their views and concerns with regards to serious violence.
- We will work with voluntary and community representatives to support them to deliver interventions in the areas of highest need.
- We will work in partnership to continue to support victims of serious violence, their families, their peers and their communities in a timely and effective manner.

Partnership

- We will continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders including; health, education, Police, Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit, safeguarding, criminal justice services, voluntary and community groups and communities to reduce serious violence and develop an attitudinal change where violence is not acceptable.
- We will develop our partnership with prisons to improve information sharing and intelligence to support perpetrators of serious violence whilst in custody and upon their release back into the community.
- We will work with our partners in children's and adult social care to improve support for those transitioning from childhood to adulthood to ensure existing support networks do not disappear.

Trauma informed approach

- We will continue to develop a trauma informed workforce across the partnership increasing awareness and improving our responses to individuals who have suffered adverse childhood experiences.
- We will work with perpetrators and victims of serious violence taking a whole familial approach ensuring that we provide support to the families of those affected by serious violence.

Disproportionality

- We will continue to work in partnership to identify where existing processes and systems create disproportionality.
- We will work in partnership to challenge and address the causes of disproportionality we identify to encourage equity and equality in our practice.

Measures of Success

Key to the successful implementation of this strategy is ensuring that we connect the strategic priorities and principles with operational staff across the partnership. This will assist in embedding a coordinated and effective approach to reducing incidents of serious violence.

To comply with the Serious Violence Duty this strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis. This will enable us to respond to any emerging trends or patterns relating to serious violence and confirm that our response remains effective.

We will measure the effectiveness of our response by embedding a performance framework focusing on the following areas: -

- Harm Reduction – we will monitor data related to rates of serious violent offences and homicides.
- Communities – we will consistently seek the views of young people to understand how safe, supported, respected and hopeful they feel in our communities.
- Safety Perception survey – we will continue to seek views of how safe people feel through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Safety Perceptions Survey.
- Delivery against our commitments – we will review and report back on how we have delivered our commitments contained within this strategy.
- Evaluation – we will continue to work with the VRU and partners to understand the effectiveness of our wide variety of interventions to understand their impact on long term violence reduction.

Declaration - new page - use partner logos on this page

This strategy has been co-produced and will be co-delivered by Manchester's specified authorities in partnership with required authority partners and in consultation with the voluntary sector and communities across Manchester.
Greater Manchester Police

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue

Manchester City Council

Manchester Youth Justice

Manchester Probation

NHS Greater Manchester ICB (Manchester Locality)

Manchester's Health and Wellbeing Board