

Consideration	
Public	
Report to:	Police and Crime Panel
Date of Meeting:	28th March 2022
Report of:	PCC: Violence Reduction Unit
Report Author:	Natalie Baker Swift
E-mail:	natalie.baker-swift@notts.police.uk
Other Contacts:	
Agenda Item:	6

Violence Reduction Unit: Update

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide Police and Crime Panel members on the progress of the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) during 2021/22 and plans for the forthcoming funding period.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members note the contents of the report.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure that Panel members are briefed on VRU activity.

4. Summary of Key Points

4.1 Background

The VRU is governed and enabled by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire (OPCCN), whose VRU team members coordinate the multi-agency partnership development and delivery work. Established in 2019, the VRU brings together specialists from public health, clinical commissioning, police local authorities, education and community organisations with a shared goal to reduce serious violent crime and the underlying causes countywide. The focus of the VRU is on a whole system approach to violence reduction providing strategic leadership and coordination.

The VRU reports its delivery progress and emerging issue into the Strategic Violence Reduction Board. Chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), arrangements also include multi-agency stakeholders such as the Directors of Public Health, Directors of Children's Services, Chief Constable, the CCG and representatives from education.

VRU activity falls within the 'Prevention Strand' of the PCC's Make Notts Safe Plan.

4.2 Progress during 2021/22

4.2.1 Serious Violence Duty

The VRU is leading on the implementation of the Serious Violence Duty on behalf of the partners in the City and County. The Duty, which is due to receive Royal Assent in Spring 2022, forms part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

The Duty will require agencies to work together to share data and knowledge and allow them to target interventions to prevent and reduce serious violence. Agencies named in the Duty includes Local Authorities, Police, Fire and Rescue, Probation, Health and Education. Alongside the Duty there will be an amendment to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to ensure that serious violence is an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships by making sure they have a strategy in place to tackle violent crime.

In practice this means partners will be required to:

- undertake an evidence-based analysis of the causes of serious violence in their area;
- develop a strategic needs assessment based on the analysis; and,
- develop and implement a strategy with solutions to prevent and reduce serious violence in their area, which will need to be reviewed every year.

In readiness for the Duty additional agencies have been invited to attend the Strategic Violence Reduction Board as core members, this includes Probation, Fire and Rescue, the Safer Nottinghamshire Board and Crime and Drugs Partnership, representing CSPs in the County and City, respectively. The PCC will continue to Chair the Board, in line with her 'convening' and 'conductive and incidental' powers.

4.2.2 Strategic Workstreams

Trauma Informed Strategy

The PCC and Strategic Violence Reduction Board approved a proposal to implement a countywide Trauma Informed Strategy which will seek to embed trauma informed approaches within all services, including police, health and local authorities. Workshops have taken place during 2021/22 to inform the language, principles and framework of the strategy and to secure partnership buy in to proposed approaches.

An outline strategy will be presented to the PCC and the Strategic Violence Reduction Board for approval in March 2022 prior to implementation. Key deliverables will include workforce development and review of organisational policy and procedure to ensure a trauma informed approach.

Youth Work Strategy

During 2021, the VRU worked with the National Youth Agency (NYA) to utilise stakeholder engagement across the statutory and voluntary sector in Nottingham City and County to develop and deliver a Youth Work Strategy. The Strategy and its programmes will achieve a positive impact against VRU and PCC aims to reduce youth violence and increase community safety by increasing the quality, capacity and confidence of practitioners and organisations that work with young people in the youth diversion space.

Key objectives within the programme include:

- All projects that work with young people for Youth Diversion sign up to the principles set out in the **Youth Charter**;
- All practitioners working in Youth Diversion in Nottingham City and County have access to high quality **Training Pathways** to better meet the needs of young people and communities; and,
- All organisations working in Youth Diversion in Nottingham City and County are committed to improving the quality of their service to young people and achieving excellence against the **Quality Endorsement Framework**.

Youth Charter

The PCC and the Interim Head of the VRU launched the Youth Charter at Parliament in November 2021. The Charter gives young people a stronger voice on the issues that impact them and sets out their expectations around the delivery of youth provision across the county. It also invites youth workers and organisations that work with young people to pledge their commitment to a set of standards designed by young people themselves.

Quality Endorsement Framework and Training Pathways

The Quality Endorsement Framework and accompanying Training Pathways Framework will be implemented during 2022/23. This programme of work is being overseen by a multi-agency steering group, which also includes members of the voluntary and community sector as well as a youth participation group.

Data, evidence and insight

The VRU has recently refreshed the Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) to provide an up-to-date reference tool for those seeking information about violence and violence reduction in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and secondly to provide information for practitioners and policy makers to shape our approaches to violence reduction.

The SNA uses police, health, ambulance and contextual data as well as outcomes from qualitative research to inform recommendations.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions and measures set in response to COVID-19 have had a big impact on social patterns of behaviour and violence. Interpreting the COVID-19 impact within local crime and contextual data is an ongoing process, and the narrative in the SNA draws out patterns in the data

that are pre-pandemic, the findings during periods of lockdown, and emerging trends in the more recent recovery phase.

The SNA will be presented to the Strategic Violence Reduction Board on 31st March for formal sign off by core members. Recommendations will then inform the Serious Violence Response Strategy for 2022-25.

A multi-agency steering group is being implemented in early 2022/23 to ensure a more cohesive approach to data sharing, insight and analysis. The steering group will lead on the development of a three-year data sharing plan and a data dashboard to inform strategic and local problem solving in regard to serious violence.

4.2.3 Interventions

During 2021/22 the VRU have allocated 40% of Home Office funding to the commissioning of interventions which aim to support children and young people who may be impacted by serious violence. 28 interventions have been commissioned, including targeted outreach, counselling, mentoring and diversionary activity.

As of February 2022, a total of 2799 children and young people have been reached through both group and one to one interventions, outcomes include:

- Reduction in violent incidents of those participating;
- Increased access to appropriate pathways of support;
- Reduced offending or reoffending;
- Improved emotional resilience, mental health and wellbeing;
- Increased aspiration;
- Decreased substance misuse;
- Improved skills and readiness for education, training and employment;
- Improved confidence and motivation; and,
- Improved peer and family relationships.

Interventions are being evaluated to ensure the VRU are able to determine impact and add to the local evidence base to determine 'what works' in relation to serious violence.

Outcomes from evaluation will be included in the VRU Annual Report.

4.3 Additional funding

The VRU were successful in securing additional funding from the Home Office and the Youth Endowment Fund during 2021/22 for the provision of two custody-based interventions:

- Divert Plus – youth justice led provision in custody (City and County) to support children aged 10-17 years who will be provided with access to speech and language therapy, restorative justice and community led mentoring.

- U Turn – community led provision in custody (City and County) to support children and young people aged 16-25 years who will be supported by a community mentor to access education, training and employment.
- Total funding awarded for 2021/22-23/24 is £1,497,550

4.4 Planned activity 2022-25

The VRU have been undertaking engagement with stakeholders across the partnership in recent months to inform the proposed strategic framework – please see Appendix A.

The framework and findings from the SNA will inform the Serious Violence Response Strategy 2022-25 which will be governed by Strategic Violence Reduction Board and refreshed on an annual basis.

5. Financial Implications and Budget Provision

5.1 Funding 2022-25

A provisional allocation of funding has been confirmed by Home Office until end of March 2025. Core funding will remain at £880,000 with an additional grant being provided over the three-year period, the annual totals are as follows:

Year	Amount
22/23	£1,414,226
23/24	£1,058,313
24/25	£1,047,170

In addition to the above there is an expectation from the Home Office that VRU partners will provide match funding of 10% in year one, 15% in year 2 and 20% in year 3 of the core grant.

6. Human Resources Implications

- 6.1 The additional funding anticipated from the Home Office will enable an increase of resource in the VRU team to ensure sufficient capability and capacity to deliver the proposed programme of work. This will include increased project management resource and the recruitment of youth work and trauma informed specialists to lead respective work streams.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1 The work of the VRU supports the PCC's equality duties and commitments and that the VRU works proactively seeks to address disproportionality in offending and victimisation.

8. Risk Management

8.1 Risk around the VRU programme is managed by the VRU Portfolio Officer, on behalf of the Head of VRU. Any risks are escalated to the PCC and Strategic Violence Reduction Board, where necessary.

8.2 There are no direct risks as a result of this report.

9. Policy Implications and links to the Police and Crime Plan Priorities

9.1 The implementation of the VRU Response Strategy and activity outlined in this report supports the delivery of the Prevention priority within the PCC's Make Notts Safe Police and Crime Plan.

10. Changes in Legislation or other Legal Considerations

10.1 The Serious Violence Duty is expected to receive Royal Assent in Spring 2022. For further information on the duty please see [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill 2021: serious violence duty factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-serious-violence-duty-factsheet).

11. Details of outcome of consultation

11.1 Not applicable.

12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix A Strategic Framework

13. Background Papers (relevant for Police and Crime Panel Only)

13.1 Not applicable

For any enquiries about this report, please contact:

Natalie Baker Swift, Head of VRU
natalie.baker-swift@notts.police.uk