



NORTHUMBRIA
POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER

violence
reduction
unit

Improving lives to prevent crime

20 21

SERIOUS VIOLENCE RESPONSE STRATEGY

Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit



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FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Our region has come a long way in a short time in terms of preventing violent crime, but the strategy set out here shows we are committed to doing even more.

When my Violence Reduction Unit was first created, we knew the scale of the task before us, and we knew that a public health approach could help steer people away from criminality.

Great success has come from that approach. We are educating young people, we're working closely with high risk individuals and we are doing our bit to rebuild those neighbourhood services lost to austerity.

Nowhere is this approach more obvious, and more rewarding, than in our youth diversion efforts. What unites the football coach with the neighbourhood police officer is the common sense belief that we cannot just arrest our way out of our problem. We need somewhere to send young people where they can be inspired and motivated. And where we can offer that support, it has clear results.

But over the last year and half we have seen the task in front of us get harder. The pandemic, and the measures brought in to control it, have brought new challenges in our mission to reach young people and offer them an alternative to crime.

I'm proud of how this region has responded to those challenges. We have seen great dedication from people committed to helping improve the lives of others, and it is clear that the crime prevention goal is one shared across the Northumbria area.

Now, we need as a region to be ready for what come next, and to focus our efforts on our core mission. As the pandemic restrictions are lifted, crime, including violent crime, will rise. We will direct our resources at the families most in need of support and the individuals most at risk from a violent lifestyle.

We'll need to be focused on the long term goal, but ready with the localised interventions that produce results.

I think this response strategy shows how we can work together as a region to ensure that even in tough times, we are making the region safer.

KIM MCGUINNESS

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

OUR VISION



Northumbria is a place where individuals, families and communities thrive, making the most of the opportunities to live, learn and work free from the fear of violence.



Our public health approach to tackling serious violence requires commitment from all partners. This is a long term process and in order to change culture we need to:

- Better understand the problem
- Understand the makeup of our communities
- Highlight what works well
- Adapt and develop existing practice to meet the need

There is a strong commitment across Northumbria to tackle the root causes of violent crime.

Through the VRU we have established the following partnership framework:



OUR VISION

The Year 3 approach will build on what has worked well to date as well as strike a balance between commissioning targeted interventions and delivering direct through the VRU. While the four key themes of Youth Diversion, Reducing Offending, Working with Families, Connecting Communities, continue to influence all of our interventions, all VRU activity has been detailed below, linked to the wider PCC vision of:

FIGHTING CRIME



PREVENTING CRIME



IMPROVING LIVES

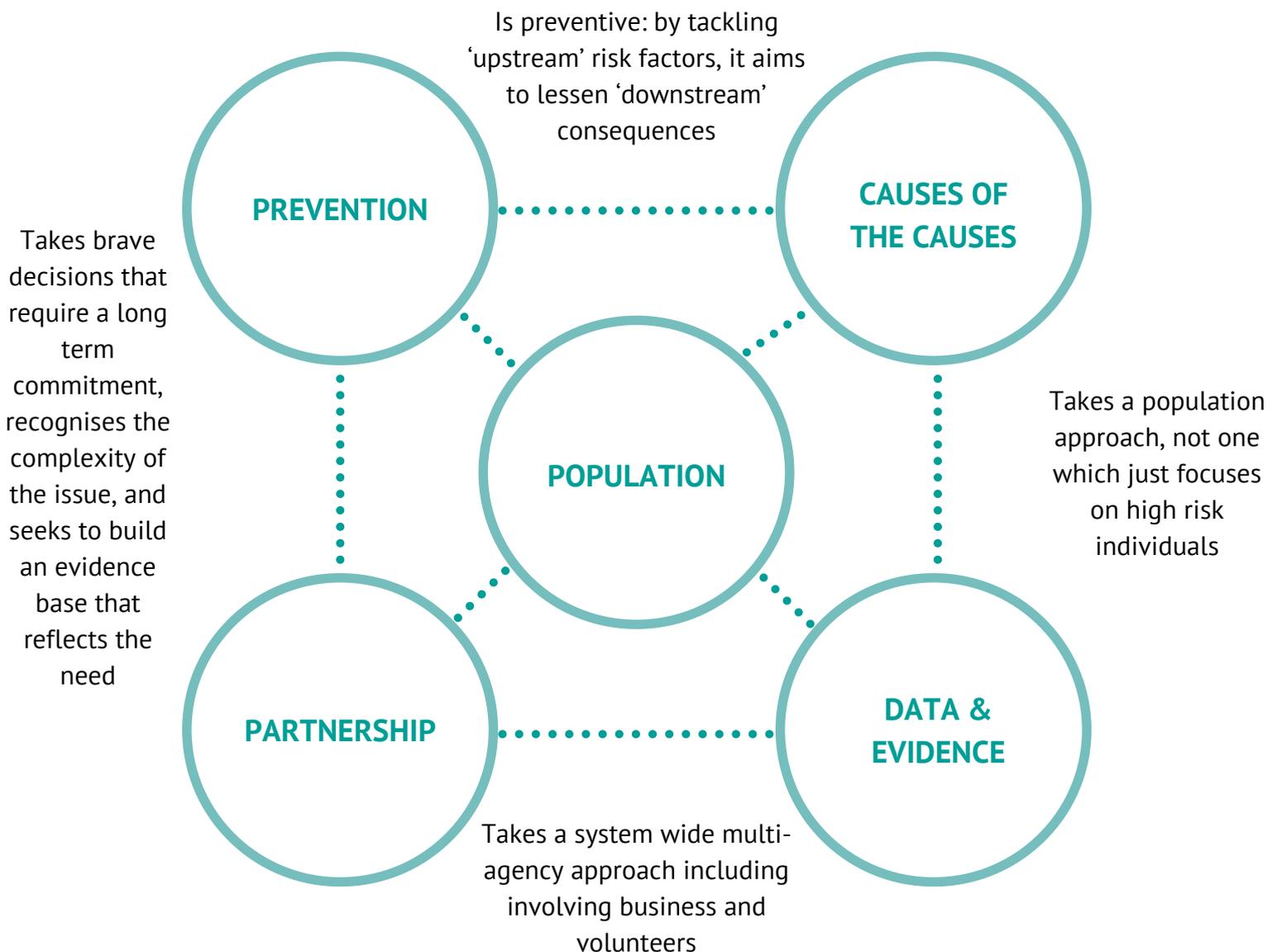


OUR PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

The public health approach to violence prevention seeks to improve the health and safety of all individuals by addressing underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or a perpetrator of violence.

The approach consists of four steps:

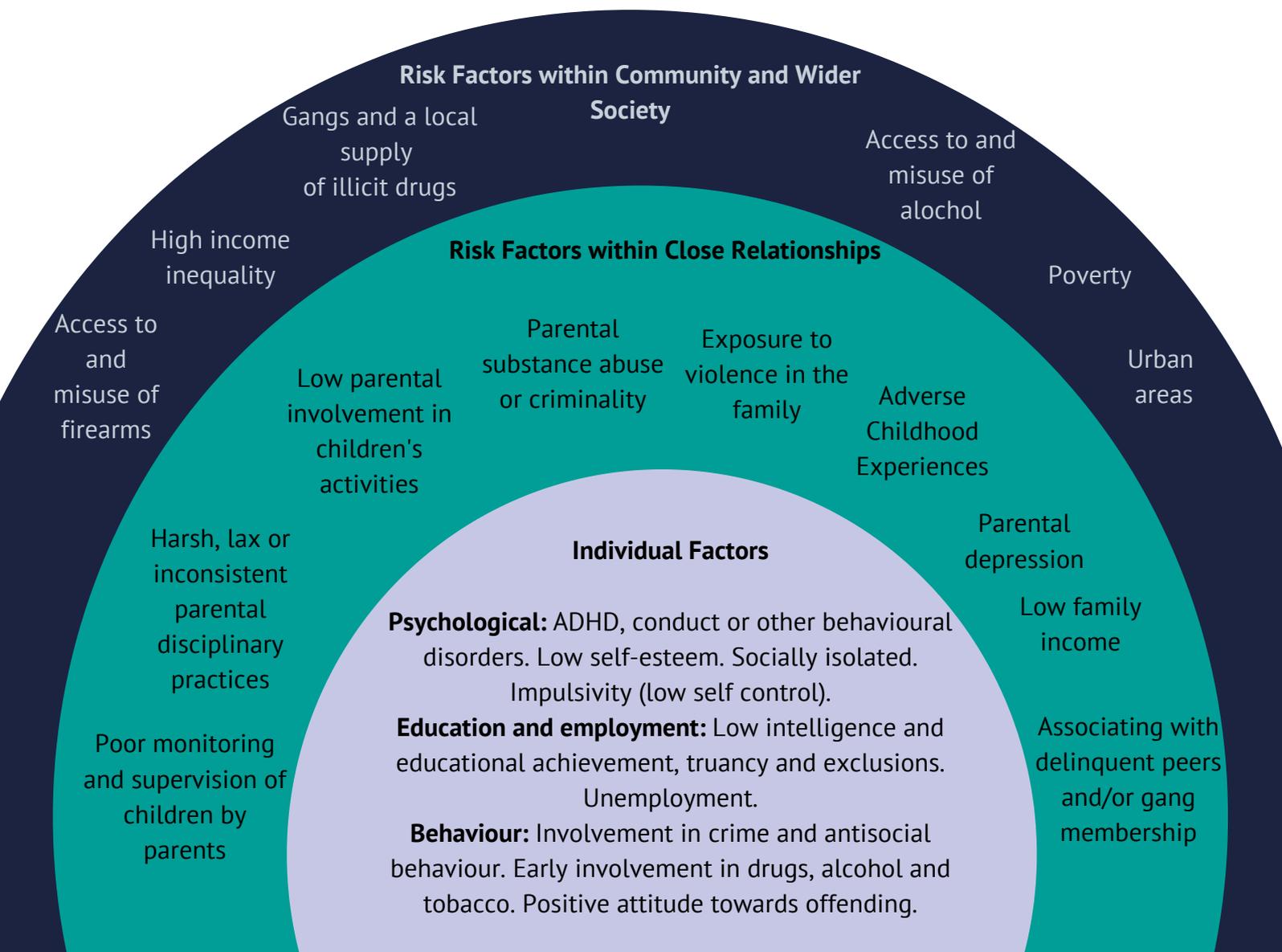
- Work out what is the problem, what effect does violence have on our Communities
- Why does violence occur? What are the causes of violence and what factors increase or decrease the risk of violence occurring?
- To find out what works to prevent violence by designing, implementing and evaluating interventions.
- To implement effective interventions in a wide range of settings to tackle violence and the causes of violence and evaluate their impact



OUR PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

Defining violence

The World Health Organisation defines 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.



SUMMARY OF YEAR 2 INTERVENTIONS AND PROGRESS

Commissioned Interventions

22

Respondents to our Youth Survey

1374

Version of our Insight Report

2ND

Women have received a conditional caution through the Out of Court Disposal Women's Pathway.

366

Reduction in young people coming to the attention of the police achieved by YOLO project

87%

Educated through our Violence Reduction Liaison Officers

8869

Co-commissioned interventions with CSPs

10

Community Hubs

3

People engaged, 75 of those being young people via our Community Hubs

240

Knife Crime and Domestic Abuse sessions delivered

556

OUR DATA

In the 12 months to September 2020 the Northumbria Police Force Area recorded **45,807** offences of violence against the person – just over **125 per day**, including:

16,458 incidents of violence without injury	13 homicides	13,056 incidents of violence with injury
16,266 incidents of stalking and harassment	A further 3,926 sexual offences and 1,067 possession of weapon offences were recorded within Northumbria	One third of recorded violence against the person is flagged as domestic abuse, with women four times as likely as men to be a victim
A further 3,926 sexual offences and 1,067 possession of weapon offences were recorded within Northumbria	There were over 38,000 incidents of domestic abuse in Northumbria during in the 12-months to March 2021 – equating to 107 incidents per day, and of these 25,000 are recorded as crimes - almost 69 per day.	

A&E data during 2020 shows the following admissions:

831 admissions as a result of an assault, with 21% relating to under 25s.	There were 157 admissions due to an assault with a sharp object, 23% of which related to under 25s.	Half of all violent crime is alcohol-related and studies show that as alcohol consumption increases, so does violent offending.
Alcohol consumption and intoxication is also exploited by offenders committing sexual violence in Northumbria.	Across Northumbria there are estimated to be over 21,800 dependent drinkers, representing 18.62 per 1,000 population.	14,705 adults recorded as having a serious mental illness.

We are still understanding the impact of COVID in relation to our data. The above figures show that there is still a great deal of work to do. Tackling serious violence will not happen overnight, this is a long term process that requires commitment from all partners across Northumbria.

OUR EVALUATION

In 2020/21 the VRU and the Police conducted a joint evaluation into the Year 2 activities of both the VRU and Northumbria Police, the aim of which was to complete a process and impact evaluation of three identified work packages.

Key highlights identified include;

- The investments in the VRU and through the Police Surge Fund have identified savings of £7.5 million a year to the public purse, the wider criminal justice system and the NHS. Total cost savings per annum are summarised in the table on the following page
- Very good synergy between the VRU and Surge Fund provision - as a result of which delivery is effective and efficient.
- Relationships between the VRU and its partners and funded interventions are positive, with a broad appreciation of the move towards a public health approach and the merits of violence prevention rather than having to deal with its consequences.
- The VRU's Insight Report helped inform an appreciation of the linkages between different service providers when it comes to the causes and impacts of violent crime.
- Partnership working has been especially effective where collaborators can appreciate the benefits in a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach, based on a shared understanding of the issues, and can rely on other partners to play their part in bringing about positive change.
- Community Safety Partnerships are thought to be achieving a coordinated response to violent crime, plugging gaps and tailoring interventions, working inside communities, adopting a collective responsibility, understanding/investigating root causes and developing a strengthened knowledge base.
- Particular achievements have been noted in respect of the following:
 - Working with schools - identifying those at risk, sharing information);
 - Young People's Risk Partnership meetings - seen as essential in targeting/identifying young people at risk);
 - YOT partnering - working well with other partners in preventing youth crime;
 - Link workers attending multi-agency meetings (picking up those individuals that other services are unable to deal with)

OUR EVALUATION

Area of saving	Key Assumption	Annual Saving (£)
Homicides	1 fewer per annum (arbitrary assumption)	820,000
Violence with injury	10.5% reduction (applying a 15% discount to the actual reduction between 2019/20-2020/21)	253,756
Youth offending	6.0% reduction (the actual reduction between 2019/20-2020/21, considered to be so conservative as not to require any additional discounting)	34,083
Other criminal justice costs	The actual changes in numbers of each of the offences cited between 2019/20-2020/21 (positive and negative) discounted by 15%	1,649,592
Prison costs	The actual changes in relevant crimes committed between 2019/20-2020/21 discounted by 15%	1,280,160
Wider fiscal, economic and social costs	The actual changes in relevant crimes between 2019/20-2020/21 discounted by 15%, plus 1 less homicide	3,487,700
TOTAL		£7,525,291



Violence Reduction Liaison Officer Leonie Kameli delivering the Education Teams 'Knife crime for practitioners' training for paediatrics staff at the Great North Children's Hospital

THEORY OF CHANGE & MEASURING IMPACT

Our Theory of Change sets out the activities, anticipated outputs and outcomes and intended impact we will deliver throughout the year. In delivering our Theory of Change we will work collaboratively with partners, stakeholders and intended beneficiaries facilitating a range of activities that includes:

- Strategic Management via the Northumbria Violence Reduction Strategic Board
- Engagement and consultation with partners, stakeholders, communities and beneficiaries
- Governance arrangements that support and enable our Insight work, Impact Assessment, Co-Production and the delivery of our violence reduction interventions.
- Evaluation and impact assessment that demonstrates the effectiveness of our work and overall contribution to reducing serious violence and the contribution to the Northumbria Police and Crime Plan

The short and long term success measures that are linked to our Theory of Change will enable us to track the progress of our activities and impact during the year. These measures will be monitored quarterly and will measure the reduction in;

- Knife enabled serious violence
- Hospital admissions for knife related serious violence
- Homicides
- Anti-social behaviour in intervention areas
- First time entrants into the criminal justice system
- Repeat offending within harm hotspot/intervention areas

Tracking these measures ensures our focus on reducing serious violence is maintained across all VRU activity. In turn the ongoing monitoring of our measures of success through the implementation of our Theory of Change will help identify any gaps or barriers in our processes which will then inform the activity of the Serious Violence Strategic Board, our engagement and consultation with partners, stakeholders and intended beneficiaries and the development of any new approaches required.

THEORY OF CHANGE & MEASURING IMPACT

Inputs:

- Funding
- Staffing
- Partners
- Stakeholders

Activities:

- Strategic Board
- Sub groups
- Insight work
- Local partnerships

Outputs:

- Governance
- Knowledge exchange
- Co-production
- Stakeholder engagement
- Initiatives

Outcomes:

- Year 3
- Year 4
- Year 5

Impact:

- Reduce knife enabled serious violence
- Reduce hospital admissions
- Reduce homicides

VRU YEAR 3 APPROACH



IMPROVING LIVES



IMPROVING LIVES

What will we do:

We will seek to improve lives through the provision of family and youth support within areas of most need. This will include improvement of access and the promotion of services that support individuals and families within their local area. The key emphasis is on early intervention with a focus on utilising the expertise of local practitioners as well as ensuring that services are shaped by individuals with 'lived experience'. This approach has two elements; the promotion of universal services to all and the targeting of specific services to those who need them at the earliest opportunity.

Interventions:

Community Link Workers - Connecting individuals and families to services

The aim of the VRU Community Link Workers is to engage with vulnerable individuals within the identified localities to reduce their risk of becoming involved in violence and associated activity, either as a victim or perpetrator. Throughout year 2 the Link Worker approach was developed and piloted in a number of areas.

The Current Link Workers in Gateshead, North Tyneside, Ashington and Berwick will continue in 2021/22. In addition to this there will be a further two Link Worker Posts in South Tyneside and Sunderland. One of the posts will be linked to the Alcohol Harm Reduction Team based within Sunderland A&E.

Benefits:

Link Workers are able to deliver bespoke interventions within the community adopting a social prescribing approach. They are able to build up trust with individuals and have the ability to engage with other support services to assist in meeting the identified needs of individuals.

Measures of success:

- Number of people engaged
- No. of young people with an action plan
- No. of young people demonstrating reduced risk to violence and ASB
- No. of community activities and services adapting / improving their local offer for the benefit of young people

Impact in phase 2:

- 166 people supported by our Community Link Workers

IMPROVING LIVES

Community Hubs - Family based interventions in local areas

Community Hubs aim to provide family-based intervention within areas identified as harm hot spots. During Year 2, three hubs were supported in Gateshead (Thrive), Sunderland (SARA) and North Tyneside (Barefoot Buddies). All projects aim to support families through early intervention and with input from individuals with 'lived experience'. There is an emphasis on peer support and community engagement as well as a commitment to involving individuals with 'lived experience'. As part of year 3 delivery, all three current projects will be continued until the end of March 2022. In addition to this work is ongoing with partners to support the development of a community hub in Byker.

Benefits:

Community hubs provide a vital resource for local residents, improving and promoting access to services as well as providing opportunities to engage residents in the development and delivery of interventions. The activity within community hubs helps to build and maintain community resilience reducing the risk of vulnerable individuals and families being exploited.

Measures of success:

- Reduction in crime and ASB within Community Hub areas
- Increase in the take up of Early Help services and support
- Reduction in the number of frontline safeguarding referrals

Impact in phase 2:

- 240 people engaged and supported across our 3 hubs - including 75 young people
- A reduction in crime experienced in 2 of the 3 communities where our hubs are located



Northumbria PCC, Kim McGuinness, with Northumbria Polices Chief Inspector Rob Bosson - responsible for Prosecution & Victim Services

IMPROVING LIVES

Local youth fund - Projects shaped by young people, for young people

Through the work of the VRU Ambassadors and links with youth organisations the Local youth fund will provide young people with the opportunity to develop their own proposal and bid for funding to support this. Funding will seek to support projects that could include social enterprise, youth engagement, increased sport and recreation opportunities, intergenerational projects and community action. A small resource has been allocated to each Local Authority area and the fund will be open to all young people with a particular focus being placed on areas identified as 'harm hot spots'. The fund will be co-ordinated by the VRU team and will involve a local partner in each authority area.

Benefits:

Providing young people with the opportunity to develop their own project will help to build confidence, experience and skills that young people can apply to other aspects of their lives.

Measures of success:

As part of successful grant allocations there will be a varied range of measures agreed depending on the project. However, in terms of general measure of success for the Fund, the following have been identified:

- Number of young people involved in the Youth Safety Ambassador forum who develop new skills; promotion of funding, evaluation and planning
- Number of youth enterprise organisations that supported the development of a bid
- Number of individual young people who participate in developing a Violence Reduction Youth Fund bid

“ This is a real gap in service provision that you're filling ”

IMPROVING LIVES

Domestic abuse - Working with perpetrators and building family and community resilience

In Year 2 there was a successful application for funding to deliver the DRIVE project that focuses on high risk, high harm, serial perpetrators of domestic abuse. DRIVE will reduce reoffending and improve the safety of adult and child victims. In Year 2, a skilled local DRIVE delivery team was recruited; engagement events were held with strategic and operational partner agencies; and information sharing protocols were put in place to ensure that all of the key agencies could work together to support this new intervention. In Year 3, DRIVE will offer one-to-one support for those who wish to change their abusive behaviour and will work alongside the police and other partners to tackle the behaviour of those who don't. Domestic abuse interventions will continue as part of Year 3 as well as ongoing services and developments to further support victims and their families. Tackling Domestic Abuse continues to be a significant priority for the VRU and in order to add further value to the current approaches being taken, an additional project called 'Ask Me' will be implemented as an intervention in Year 3.

The Ask Me Scheme will be delivered across Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland in 2021/22 and will train members of the community to become Ask Me Ambassadors. Tackling domestic abuse is everyone's business and communities are often the first-place victims and survivors reach out for help. Training members of the community to become active bystanders will help to build community resilience and provide more opportunities for early intervention. Training will provide individuals with the required skills to understand what a safe response looks like (listening, believing and validating); as well as provide skills to enable them to support victims to seek the help they need by guiding them to the right support as early as possible. The scheme will be co-ordinated by Wearside Women in Need in partnership with Harbour Support Services.

Measures of success:

The following measures will be monitored across the three Local Authority areas:

- Number of Ask Me programmes completed
- Number of people trained to be Ask Me ambassadors
- Number of new Ask Me Ambassadors
- Number of community listening / community engagement events

Impact in phase 2:

- 185 attendees at our Drive Workforce Development sessions

VRU YEAR 3 APPROACH



PREVENTING CRIME



PREVENTING CRIME

What will we do:

We will prevent crime by taking a direct approach to intervening with those who are showing signs of vulnerability or are on the fringes of criminal/anti-social activity. This will take the form of direct intervention with young people as well as working with other services and organisations to address wider needs of other family members such as siblings. The overall aim is to reduce crime and instances of violence as well as reduce the risk of vulnerable individuals being exploited by others.

Interventions:

Youth Navigators - Working to prevent young people entering the Criminal Justice System

The aim of the Youth Navigators is to reduce the risk of young people being drawn into the criminal justice system as well as reduce associated risks of further vulnerability and ASB. Three Youth Navigators will be based within the three area commands across Northumbria. The Navigators will sit as part of the Northumbria Police Divert Team and work closely with Youth Offending team's and associated partners. Navigators will attend the respective Youth Panels where young people who are eligible for a deferred prosecution/Outcome 22 will be provided with an opportunity to work to address their issues. Work with the young person will also extend to their wider family network to identify and address any associated issues, including early intervention work with siblings.

Benefits:

Youth Navigators will provide a 'whole family approach' identifying the key issues and exploring with the young person the factors that led to them being involved with Police and Youth Offending. The approach seeks to support and complement existing activity.

Measures of Success:

- Increase in the number of young people receiving an 'Outcome 22'
- Reduction in offending among identified cohort and their connected family
- Increase in compliance with activity and take up of additional support services
- Increase in school attendance
- Reduction in associated ASB

PREVENTING CRIME

Continuation of YOLO Provision - Effectively diverting our most vulnerable young people

YOLO has continued to have a positive impact on some of our most vulnerable young people, and there is a commitment to continue and develop this provision to ensure that it is accessible to the most vulnerable young people within the areas of most need. Continuation funding for Year 3 will ensure that this provision continues to be offered and develops further. Work is ongoing to expand the referral process to offer up the provision to more young people and this will be reviewed throughout the year. Tailor made interventions will be developed with each young person and this will include some agreed outcomes and measures of success. There will be a closer link to the work of the Youth Navigators and the newly established Divert Team within Northumbria Police to enable the intervention to be accessed by a wider cohort.

Measures of success:

There will be a range of individual measures of success agreed with each young person as part of their involvement with the intervention. There will also be a number of individual case studies shared throughout the year to support evidence of impact. However, in terms of high-level measures of success it is envisaged that the following will be used:

- Reduction in young people being exposed to serious violence
- Reduction in reported ASB in areas where interventions are taking place
- Reduction in offending behaviour of young people involved in the project
- Number of young people engaged with the project

Impact in phase 2:

- 103 young people received mentorship, support and interventions from the Newcastle United Foundation through the YOLO project
- The YOLO project has achieved an 87% reduction in young people coming to the attention of the police, and a 66% increase in school attendance for those engaged



Newcastle United Foundation Youth Mentors, Graeme Barber and Nick Cassidy, receiving bleed pack training as part of our YOLO programme

PREVENTING CRIME

Education Engagement Team - Working with schools, communities and practitioners

In 2020, the work of the Education Engagement team evolved in light of the restrictions and emerging challenges caused by COVID. This led to the development of virtual delivery and an expansion into youth and community settings. There is a commitment to roll out Adversity Awareness Training to community settings and local partners as well as a commitment to the delivery of a practitioner-based knife crime awareness session to support teachers and community leaders. A key development this year is the creation of a programme of interventions and activities within Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Education Providers. The aim is to work with teaching professionals to develop a project-based learning approach.

Benefits:

An effective Education Engagement Team is key to the continued success of the VRU. The range of interventions on offer to schools and community settings has expanded and will continue to develop. The team will continue to enhance the community offer as well as continue to expand interventions into Colleges and Universities.

Measures of success:

- Number of sessions delivered, per subject
- Number of participants (young people and adults)
- Number of PRUs/SEND engaged
- Number of PBL activity
- Number of times resources downloaded from the website
- The number of people who reported an increase in understanding in [the subject]
- Number of young people surveyed following an intervention
- Number of young people involved in shaping delivery model
- Impact – on the young people, what difference has the session made to their thinking and behaviours

Impact in phase 2:

- The Education Team have delivered 556 Knife Crime and Domestic Abuse sessions to;
 - 173 schools, non-school groups, community organisations
 - 8869 young people
 - 23 Project Based Learning sessions delivered at River Tyne Academy

VRU YEAR 3 APPROACH



FIGHTING CRIME



FIGHTING CRIME

What will we do:

We will fight crime through intensive intervention and diversion for those involved in serious violence and vulnerable to wider criminality. We will Bring key agencies together to provide an operational and problem-solving response in areas of most need, identifying and working with those who are at risk of causing the most harm to communities.

Interventions:

VRU Short Sentence Diversion Programme - Community solutions to reducing reoffending

Building on from the exploratory approach in year 2 via the 'Whole System Approach' and working with Police and Probation colleagues, there will be a programme of activity delivered via a dedicated resource to an identified cohort of individuals who are causing the most issues within communities and are repeatedly entering the judicial system. This proposed approach will take the form of a dedicated resource team working directly with Police and Probation colleagues to manage a cohort of offenders, addressing their immediate offending behaviour, working with training and community providers to support where possible a reconnection with communities as well as routes into employment.

Benefits:

This approach provides opportunities for individuals to seek stable and sustainable solutions to reduce their risk of reoffending and to assist with reconnecting with communities and their families.

Measures of success:

Measures will be determined as part of the project development and local measures will largely be agreed as part of the individuals personal plan. However, some general measures will include:

- Reduction in frequency and gravity of offending by cohort
- Reduction in number of short sentences of cohort
- Increase in compliance with associated orders/programmes
- Increase in access and compliance with treatment services
- Continuation of stable accommodation
- Increase access to employment, training and education opportunities

Impact in phase 2:

- Levels of serious violence offences have reduced in the 12-months to April 21 by 7%
- Levels of hospital admissions (all ages) due to an assault have fallen by 21% in the 12-months to 31st March 2021

FIGHTING CRIME

Continuation of the Out of Court Disposal Officer and the Women's pathway - Reducing reoffending and understanding its impact

This approach seeks to engage people at the earliest opportunity as they enter the criminal justice system. The aim is to deliver the Conditional Caution disposals in order to divert individuals away from the criminal justice system and reduce reoffending.

Benefits:

This is about increasing opportunities to address offending behaviour, diverting individuals to other avenues of support and reducing the risk of re-offending.

Measures of success:

Number of restorative justice/community resolution interventions

Increased level of victim satisfaction

Increased referrals and compliance with V-awareness Programme

Increased use of Conditional Cautions for both male and females

Number of referrals of cohort to support services

Reduction in repeat offending

Impact in phase 2:

- 366 women have received a conditional cautioning through the Out of Court Disposal Women's Pathway
 - 83% of the women who complied with the pathway did not go on to reoffend
 - 86% of those who complied with the V Aware programme did not go on to reoffend

SUMMARY OF INTERVENTIONS AND IMPACT MEASURES TABLE

P&C Plan Theme / VRU Intervention

Primary Measures of Success

Fighting Crime

Targeted Violence Reduction Approach

1. Reduction in re-offending rates (% of all those accepting an OOCB)
2. Reduction in gravity of offending by cohort
3. Reduction in number of short sentences of cohort
4. Compliance with associated orders/programmes (% of those who are identified)

Out of Court Disposals

1. Number who accept an OOCB and are compliant with the requirements.
2. Reduction in re-offending rates (% of those accepting an OOCB)
3. Number known to be accessing needs specific support post OOCB (% of those accepting an OOCB)
4. Number who enter volunteering/training/employment (% of all Employment pathway)

Preventing Crime

Youth Navigators

1. Reduction in re-offending rates (% of those accepting support from a Youth Navigator)
2. Number demonstrating improved engagement in education (% of those accepting support from a Youth Navigator)
3. Number demonstrating reduced risk off violence and/or ASB (% of those accepting support from a Youth Navigator)
4. Number engaging with support post Outcome 22 (% of those accepting support from a Youth Navigator)

YOLO

- 1.Reduction in re-offending rates (% of all those accessing YOLO)
2. Number with improved school attendance
3. Number who's risk of committing serious and violent offending was reduced
4. Number with no further Police involvement/intelligence

SUMMARY OF INTERVENTIONS AND IMPACT MEASURES TABLE

Education Engagement Team	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Number of education sessions delivered in harm hotspots.2. Number of participants reporting increased awareness of risk taking behaviour and harm3. Number of participants reporting increased awareness of knife crime4. Number of participants reporting increased awareness of child criminal exploitation
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Improving Lives

Link Workers	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Number reporting increased resilience, feelings of safety and ability to cope2. Number reporting improved confidence to make positive choices in the lives3. Number demonstrating improved engagement in employment and career progression opportunities4. Number demonstrating reduced risk to violence and/or ASB
Community Hubs	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Number of families that have improved financial resilience2. Number of families that are able to keep a family home3. Number of families reporting increased trust and confidence in services4. Number of young people with reduced risk of CCE
Ask Me	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Number of Ask Me programmes completed2. Number of people trained to be Ask Me ambassadors3. Number of new Ask Me Ambassadors4. Number of community listening / community engagement events

EMERGING AREAS FOR YEAR 3

SERIOUS VIOLENCE LEGAL DUTY

The upcoming Serious Violence Legal Duty, and the requirement for Community Safety Partnerships to have a strategy to tackle violent crime provides us with a great opportunity to build on our excellent partnership work. There is a role for the VRU to provide regional support and co-ordination assisting with the development and delivery of local serious violence strategies as well as assisting with the development of local needs assessments.

SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Supporting effective recovery for individuals and communities from the harms of substance misuse and reducing the risk of violence arising from risk taking behaviours.

The relationship between misuse of substances (alcohol and drugs) and crime/violence is well-documented. Directly, substance misuse increases the likelihood of being involved in violence, including domestic abuse. The indirect vulnerabilities caused by being raised in households where alcohol and drugs are frequently available not only affect the individuals' prospects but also create an opening for serious organised crime. The recent pandemic has created changes in how people access and use substances, including alcohol, and we expect to see those changes reflected in data in the coming months, including an increase in violent incidents as the restrictions are lifted. It's important that we address alcohol and substances as we take on the Public Health Approach and acknowledge some of the wider determinants of behaviour.

What We Will Do:

The VRU has a key role to play in the Northumbria wide approach to reducing alcohol and substance misuse harm, working with partners across healthcare, community recovery, policing, education and local authorities to develop a working strategy and action plan. Throughout year 3, we will:

- Identify hotspot areas for substance misuse related violence
- Build lasting relationships, support training needs and bring services together around the individual to better support recovery
- Work with the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System to support Alcohol Harm Team roles
- Support our education team to develop and deliver resources around substance misuse and prevention
- Support Northumbria Police short sentence diversion programmes and joint working with community recovery teams

EMERGING AREAS FOR YEAR 3

Measures of success:

- Development of a working strategy and action plan to prevent substance misuse and related vulnerabilities, support recovery and reduce related harms
- Reduction in violent incidents involving alcohol or substance misuse in our harm hotspot areas
- Number of schools engaged in programme
- Number of referrals and success stories into community recovery from policing involvement
- Reduction in County Lines activity for young people

SAFEGUARDING

Meaningful engagement with safeguarding and exploitation prevention initiatives across Northumbria to protect the young and vulnerable from violence.

We often talk about contextual safeguarding and protecting those most vulnerable and we have supported projects which work in this arena. We now want to offer more support to those working directly to safeguard our young people, and to do this we will develop a work plan for the VRU.

What We Will Do:

Develop a Safeguarding strategy and action plan, with a contextual safeguarding approach, to detail our support for interventions working directly to reduce exploitation of young people.

Work with local authorities to support their Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking (MSET) and Safeguarding meetings, offering support where necessary.

Encourage the sharing of vital information between LAs, Northumbria Police and Healthcare services

Identify hotspot areas for development, including providing training and education or direct intervention where necessary.

To promote and commission work to integrate a contextual safeguarding approach and system change to keep our young people safe from harm.

Benefits:

By helping to keep our young people safe, we can prevent crime and violence and improve prospects for individuals. In addition, supporting training and education allows us to build long lasting relationships with providers and support ongoing provision.

Measures of success:

- Development of a working strategy and action plan
- Number of individuals supported through initiatives/interventions provided through VRU

OUR NEXT STEPS

Year 4:

A joined-up approach to addressing all vulnerability: The root causes of violence can apply to all areas of vulnerability and we cannot look at violence in isolation. As we refine our partnership approach, we will look to ensure that we are addressing all aspects of vulnerability as well as explore how the work of the VRU could expand and add value to wider issues within communities.

Established teams in 'harm spot' areas: By year 4 we will have clear evidence of what works, and we will have clear commitment from partners. Using our collective data and intelligence, partners will be able to commit resources within our areas of most need to address issues and reduce violence and other forms of vulnerability.

Sustaining community hubs: The commitment to community hubs will continue and we will work with communities to explore how they can be sustained. We will explore opportunities to develop 'centres of excellence' within our communities, looking at ways to share best practice, develop expertise and commission local communities to deliver some services.

Peer support within communities and schools: In order to sustain our approach, we need to build capacity within communities and schools. We will look to expand the role of community and youth peer support, highlighting the importance of informal networks and support.

Year 5:

Established joint delivery model across Northumbria to tackle violence: By year 5 our public health approach will be well established, and we will have an effective delivery model across Northumbria with buy in from all key partners. This model will operate at a neighbourhood level targeting resources at communities who need it most. As we move towards the next stages of our public health approach it will be crucial to sustain this model for future years as well as refine it to meet the emerging needs of our communities

An increase in the take up of early help services: Through working more with communities and promoting access to services at the earliest opportunity. We will be able to see an increase in families accessing services and opportunities within their communities at the earliest point. By bringing services closer to communities and promoting the importance of community and peer support this should lead to a reduction in demand for frontline services, allowing organisations to invest more in community-based services.

Reduction in violence: At this point we will have better informed communities and partnerships and we will have a clear process in place for how we tackle violence in Northumbria. Our vision is that all the work to this point will lead to a meaningful reduction in violence and we will need to ensure that we have the processes in place for this to continue beyond year 5.





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