

Report by the Crime and Disorder Committee



Work Plan Study on Knife Crime

October 2019 – August 2022

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Link to Meetings:

[1 October 2019](#)

[19 November 2019](#)

[21 January 2020](#)

[17 March 2020](#)

[04 August 2020](#)

[29 September 2020](#)

[17 November 2020](#)

[19 January 2021](#)

[16 March 2021](#)

[08 June 2021](#)

[3 August 2021](#)

1. Chair's Foreword and Acknowledgements

Foreword by the Chair, Councillor Jonathan Saksena



The Crime and Disorder Committee has reviewed Knife Crime which happens anywhere and everywhere. The Committee wanted to consider the implications arising from this type of crime as a community safety issue for the City and its residents.

The Committee is wholly supportive of the individuals and organisations who work in partnership to combat such crime.

I would like to thank everyone involved in this study which has proved to be very interesting and worthwhile.

Councillor Jonathan Saksena

Chair of the Crime and Disorder Committee

Membership of the Committee

The study was undertaken by the following Members:-

Membership 2019/20 Municipal Year

Councillor Saksena (Chair)	Councillor Green
Councillor Patel (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Pomfret
Councillor Adair	Councillor Warren
Councillor Mrs Atkins	Councillor Walker
Councillor Corker	Councillor Warren

Membership 2020/21 Municipal Year

Councillor Saksena (Chair)	Councillor Coupland
Councillor Patel (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Green
Councillor Adair	Councillor Landless
Councillor Mrs Atkins	Councillor Pomfret
Councillor Corker	Councillor Potter

Membership 2021/22 Municipal Year

Councillor Saksena (Chair)	Councillor Coupland
Councillor Patel (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Green
Councillor Adair	Councillor Hart
Councillor Mrs Atkins	Councillor Pomfret
Councillor Bax	Councillor Potter

Scoping

Introduction

1. In October 2019, a Draft Scoping Document was presented to the Members of the Crime and Disorder Committee on Knife Crime. The scoping document was re-submitted in November 2019 with a few amendments.
2. It was noted that the Departmental Link officer was the Community Safety Manager assisted by an officer in Member Services.
3. In December 2019, Members of the Crime and Disorder Committee received a presentation on Knife Crime by Princes' Trust Representatives.
4. In January 2021, Representatives of youth services provided presentations.

Scoping of the Topic

5. The Scoping document had since been amended as it is a working document. The final version can be found at **Appendix A** of this report.
6. The aims of the review were to consider the implications of Knife Crime for communities in Preston and identify how the Council can work in partnership with other organisations to address and help prevent the rising problem of Knife Crime.

Possible Outcomes

7. The Committee understands the possible outcomes of the review will be :-
 - (i) greater understanding of factors influencing knife crime;
 - (ii) greater understanding of the detrimental effects and consequences for individuals and communities;
 - (iii) more effective intervention to prevent and reduce the harm caused and to disrupt criminality;
 - (iv) recommendations for additional local measures which the Council, working with partner organisations, could introduce to reduce the harm arising from knife crime and associated factors, including drug misuse, 'county-lines', gang rivalries and criminal exploitation.
8. A number of individuals, both internal and external, and organisations would be invited to participate in the study to enable the Committee Members to make valid recommendations. Details can be found in the Scoping document at **Appendix A** to this report.

Recommendations to Cabinet-Specific/ Measurable/ Achievable/ Realistic/ Timely

	Recommendation	Date to be implemented	Officer & Organisation Responsible
1.	That resources be requested from Lancashire Violence Reduction Network through the Community Safety Partnership to provide sustainability for community organisations and increase engagement. Also, to offer support to individuals and groups at risk of involvement in knife crime.	Completed	Assistant Director (Head of Advice and Community Services) CSP
2.	That the Council promotes and supports the Preston North End Community and Education Trust (PNECET) Kicks Programme and Divert Youth and involves them in partnership interventions to reduce knife crime.	Commenced	Community Safety Manager Preston City Council
3.	That the Council supports an increase in numbers of knife bins located throughout the city and encourages their use.	Already met February 2021 – Completed (Located in Council car park on Gamull Lane)	Knife Crime Reduction Sergeant Lancashire Violence Reduction Unit Community Safety Manager Preston City Council
4.	That in making decisions on health related measures, the link between mental health, deprivation and vulnerability to involvement in knife crime be taken into consideration by the Council.	To be agreed	Assistant Director (Head of Advice and Community Services)
5.	That the Council supports and assists in achieving the objective of improving feelings of safety on the street and in other public spaces so that where people have felt a need to carry a knife for their own protection, this is no longer the case. This was incorporated into the Safer Streets Bid.	Based on outcome of bid – commenced	Community Safety Manager CSP
6.	That the Council contributes funding to organisations such as the JJ Effect and Wot Wud U Do to work with schools and young people, to reduce their risk of involvement in knife crime.	Completed – contributed to Wot Wud U Do	CSP

2. Background/ Aims of the Study

- 2.1** At its meeting held on 1 October 2019, the Committee considered the draft scoping document and added individuals and organisations to the list of those to provide relevant evidence. An updated version was approved at the meeting held on 19 November 2019 and it agreed that the Prince's Trust be invited to make their presentation on knife crime to all Members (Appendix A).
- 2.2** Chief Inspector Sansbury of Lancashire Constabulary sent his apologies to the meeting held on 21 January 2020. The Community Safety Manager then gave a presentation on Serious Violence Strategy Development. She reported that the vision for Lancashire is for every person living or working in the area to feel safe from violence and violent crime. The Committee were given details of priorities and strategic principles. Ms Hatton also gave details of crime statistics for each ward in the city including the type of crime including knife offences. Members also discussed the presentation on knife crime by the Prince's Trust.
- 2.3** At the meeting held on 17 March 2020, the Community Safety Manager reported that apologies had been received from officers from Lancashire County Council Trading Standards and Preston Vocational Centre. She reported that they would attend future meetings once the position on the Covid-19 virus was clearer.
- 2.4** The next meeting of the Committee was held on 4 August 2020 following cancellation of the meeting scheduled for 9 June due to Covid-19. The Community Safety Manager gave a presentation on the Lancashire Serious Violence Strategy 2020-2025 and its relevance to the work plan study. The Committee had received a presentation on the Strategic Needs Assessment relating to the Strategy.

Members were informed that the time frame for the Strategy had been amended due to restrictions caused by Covid-19. It was now scheduled, following consultation, to be presented to the next meeting of the Community Safety Executive Group.

Ms Hatton reported that the Home Office had, last year, allocated funding to 180 police forces in areas considered at risk of serious violence. This funding had continued into the current financial year. The four key priorities of work are prevention, enforcement, culture and evidence base of what works. Members were updated on the work of the team involved in the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network of which Ms Hatton is a member representing the Community Safety Partnership and the Council.

- 2.5** On 29 September 2020, Mr Chris Wilkinson, Trading Standards, Lancashire County Council and Mr Martin Grayston, Preston Vocational Centre attended the meeting for interview.

Mr Wilkinson gave a presentation on the work of Trading Standards including the investigation of complaints and prosecution of offences. Advice is also provided to businesses on legislation and issues requiring civil advice to members of the public.

The Committee were provided with statistics on activities in 2019 and 2020 on test purchases of alcohol and tobacco and on subsequent actions. In terms of knife test purchasing, in 2019/20 the Home Office Programme expanded and asked that this take place in Preston. This is premises based, not online, and the outcome is reported on a monthly basis. Members were also given details of online resources on the LANCAN website.

Mr Grayston, Centre Manager, Preston Vocational Centre gave a presentation on the establishment of the centre and on the work that it has carried out over the past 11 years. The centre provides training and learning opportunities for young people together with the forming of relationships with positive role models. The majority of users are from People Referral Units, which are referrals from schools.

Members were also given details of the user groups for the centre and the multi-agency activity from the Twilight Sessions in Construction which were held each Monday and Thursday. These sessions were supported by Lancashire's Police and Crime Commissioner and Home Office funding. They provided a positive diversion for young people which is off the streets in a safe and stable environment and help young people before they reach crisis point.

3.6 At the meeting held on 17 November 2020, Mr Omar Khan, Preston United, Mr Ronan McMahon, Active Lancashire and Ms Melissa Brown, Preston North End Community and Education Trust (PNECET) attended for interview.

Mr Khan reported that his organisation works predominantly with young people to deter anti-social behaviour, crime and disorder and gang related youth crime. Sports are used to engage with young people and there are currently around 190 participants. This has been reduced due to Covid-19.

Mr Khan carried out an exercise to demonstrate preconceived ideas regarding knife crime. This included the age, gender, ward and ethnicity of a victim or perpetrator. He emphasised the need to change our mind set and create a more positive environment for young people.

Members were given details of a weekly youth club for young people from the Deepdale/Plungington area. Mr Khan also gave details of the partnership working with the Council and Active Lancashire.

He reported that Preston United aims to start work with young people from age six and engage with them for 12 years providing a positive role model. He also referred to the connection between drugs and knife crime and the need for greater engagement with schools. Finally Mr Khan reported on how Covid-19 had affected the work with young people leading to the production of video diaries to maintain contact with young people.

Mr McMahon reiterated the positive work carried out by Preston United. The organisation operates at ground level with a great understanding of localities. There is a focus on protecting factors rather than risk factors and support given to health and mental wellbeing through the consistent presence of relatable persons with lived experience.

Ms Brown gave a presentation on the work of PNECET. She gave details of what the organisation is and its aims in terms of community engagement, education and health and wellbeing. The Committee were given information on PNE Premier League Kicks Programme which is largely funded by the Premier League and developed through local partners. Free weekly football sessions are organised and aimed at 8-18 year olds. The sessions are delivered in targeted areas working with the Police, Community Safety Partnership and GENGA.

PNECET uses crime statistics data which enables the organisation to provide evidence of the contribution to the reduction in anti-social behaviour and also to identify areas of need. The Committee was also provided with details of feedback from users.

Ms Brown reported on the DIVERT scheme which works with young adults in custody providing them with opportunities in training and employment with the aim of reducing offending. She also gave details of the work carried out in response to Covid-19.

The Community Safety Manager referred to a paper that she had prepared giving details of youth service activity and spaces during Covid-19. She agreed to circulate this to Members.

- 3.7** At the meeting held on 19 January 2021, Ms Emily Brocklebank from We are With You and Mr Byron Highton from the JJ Effect attended for interview in relation the work plan study.

Ms Brocklebank informed the Committee that the organisation was formerly known as Addaction. The organisation offers free, confidential support to people in England and Scotland who have issues with drugs, alcohol or mental health. She gave a presentation which gave details of partner organisations such as Education, Prince's Trust, YOT, Probation, Police, Housing, Children's Social Care, Health, concerned others and self-referrals.

Members were also informed of the effect of Covid-19 on the service which has meant officers working from home, the holding of digital appointments and a reduction in the number of referrals. Details were also provided on primary substances recently recorded at assessment both in Preston and Lancashire. Discussions were held on the link to impulsive and violent behaviour and influences which may include knife crime.

Members requested further information on a breakdown of figures by ward and numbers of referrals of BME persons either by a partner organisation or self-referral.

Mr Highton gave a presentation on the work of The JJ Effect. He reported that the organisation was set up in March 2020 following lockdown due to Covid-19. Since that time, it has engaged with almost 100,000 people across the UK. The organisation runs a scheme entitled On the Ropes at Smart Fitness in Deepdale which provides activities and food parcels to young people and their families. He gave details of his work prior to this following the death of his brother Jon Jo in 2014.

Mr Highton also gave details of partnership working with PNE- Back on Track team, the Police, schools including pupils and teachers, the Crown Prosecution Service and parents. Members were also informed of the charity work of the organisation.

Following the presentations, the Community Safety Manger reported on information for youth service activities during lockdown.

- 3.8** At the meeting held on 16 March 2021, Mr Ben Hunt of Community Engagement Officer, PCC, Ms Lisa Curtis and Ms Wendy Moss of Inspire and Mr Dave Clayton of Wot Wud U Do attended for interview.

Mr Hunt gave a presentation on the work of his team. He gave details of the Youth Forum which he chairs and which the Council took over administration of in 2020. The forum brings together a number of youth support organisations and focusses on young people with organisations such as UCLan, LCC, NHS and Mind.

The Committee were also updated on work with the DWP, Prince's Trust and Community Gateway to provide a pathway to education and training for young people. The effect of Covid-19 on this is being examined and mental health support is being provided.

Ms Curtis and Ms Moss gave a presentation on the work of their organisation, particularly in light of Covid-19. The Committee were given details of partnership and outreach work through the New You scheme. A timetable of activities and the services offered were also provided.

Members were updated on the new homelessness service which will run until March 2020.

Mr Clayton gave a presentation on the work of his organisation which is a social enterprise working with young people aged 11-18. Since Covid-19, work has moved online and involves 15 PowerPoint presentations and interactive videos. This has posed challenges to the relationship with young people but the subjects of the presentations provide focus and discussion opportunities.

The Committee was given details of the present work including work with schools and young people's services.

3.9 At the meeting held on 8 June 2021, the Committee agreed the recommendations for the study (see page 7). It was also proposed that Byron Highton from the JJ Effect be invited to make his presentation to all Members of Council.

Financial and Legal Implications

Financial

There are no direct financial implications from this report however some of the recommendations have required external funding in order to complete.

Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. If however the Council is to tackle this form of violence, an effective response requires action from a wide range of organisations, a focus on prevention and early intervention, and the use of evidence led methodology to find out which interventions work most effectively.

Corporate Management Team Comments

Corporate Management Team welcomes this work plan study report looking at how the Council can support work to tackle knife crime. CMT supports the request made to Lancashire Victim Services for funding to sustain work in this important area. CMT notes and welcomes the work of PNECET, Divert Youth and other key groups who work in the community to address these issues and will continue to promote and support these organisations. CMT supports the introduction of an additional knife bin on Council land and will continue to ensure the Council works in Partnership with the Lancashire violence reduction unit. Through our work with partners across the health economy we will endeavour to ensure to that the link between deprivation, vulnerability and mental health in making individuals vulnerable to involvement in knife crime is addressed. Through the Safer Streets funding Bid the Council has secured investment in diversionary activities, engagement and education for young people.

Monitoring Arrangements

This report will be submitted to the Council's Corporate Management Team for their comments and prior to submission to a meeting of the Council who are the decision makers in this instance.

Cabinet will be asked to minute their response to the recommendations formally. Officers will endeavour to implement any approved decisions and a six monthly report will follow on the progression of the outcomes.

Cabinet Response

That Cabinet

- (i) Noted the Work Plan Study report; and
- (ii) Agreed that a meeting be arranged by the Deputy Chief Executive with Members to progress Recommendation 4 and consider Recommendation 6.

Work Plan Study

Scoping Document on Knife Crime

Scope

The study will consider the implications of knife crime for communities in Preston, including how the Council should work in partnership with other organisations to:

- raise awareness of the risk of serious harm associated with carrying and using knives and other weapons for protection (e.g. knuckle dusters, baseball bats, axes, machetes etc.), or to threaten, intimidate or cause injury to others;
- take measures to restrict sales of and manage accessibility by children/young person's to knives and other bladed implements which can be used as weapons to inflict intentional, serious injuries;
- raise awareness of factors which lead to individuals carrying knives and other weapons and measures being taken to address these through early intervention, including work with primary schools, secondary schools and colleges;
- spread knowledge of how and where to report concerns about knives and other weapons being carried or stored in connection with criminal activity, including anonymous reporting via Crimestoppers;
- assist in identifying individuals, whose personal circumstances increase their vulnerability to becoming a victim or perpetrator of knife crime;
- assist in delivering actions to safeguard victims and support recovery and build resilience for vulnerable individuals and families;
- provide a strong partnership which is effective in disrupting criminal activity involving weapons and their use in threatening and exploiting and harming individuals including work to support Operation Edge;
- consider the deployment of stop and search and dispersal powers by the Police, the circumstances in which they are deployed and their effectiveness in disrupting criminal and serious anti-social behaviour to prevent violence;

1a.	Scrutiny Chair: Councillor Jonathan Saksena	Contact Details 07807 648640 cllr.j.saksena@preston.gov.uk
1b.	Member Services Officer Ms J Pollock Scrutiny Support Manager	Ext: 6305 j.pollock@preston.gov.uk
1c.	Departmental Link Officer: Ms A Hatton Community Safety Manager	Ext: 3438 a.hatton@preston.gov.uk
2.	Which of our Corporate Priorities does this topic address? <u>Corporate Plan</u> <u>Your City-</u> Improving assets and infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Protect individuals and communities from knife crime and its harmful effects, including fear of crime and concerns about personal safety. <u>Your Council</u> – Demonstrating good governance, openness and transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work in partnership to reduce the harm caused by knife crime and its associated factors to individuals and communities. ➤ Provide transparency and openness in measures taken protect individuals against knife crime and its effects. <u>Fairness For You</u> - An economy supporting prosperity and promoting fairness in working lives and practices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remove deterrents to investment and opportunity which will benefit all by promoting fairness in working lives and supporting prosperity. 	
3.	What are the overall aims and objectives in doing this work? The work plan study will consider the harm posed by knife crime in Preston having regard to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) definitions of knife crime and offences involving serious violence; (ii) profiles of the offences, offenders and victims; 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (iii) national factors which influence the local profiles, including illicit drug markets and organised crime; (iv) relevant legislation, national and local strategies; (v) social, cultural and other issues which influence vulnerability of victims and motivate of offenders; (vi) measures to increase individual and community resilience, including trauma informed approaches; (vii) safeguarding measures and support available to aid victims' recovery, including whether services are accessible, sufficient and sustainable; (viii) work in community settings to raise awareness and take measures to deter children and young people from carrying knives; (ix) effective disruption and prosecution of offenders; (x) ways in which the Council's services (e.g. Environmental Health Licensing and Grounds Maintenance, Parks and Neighbourhood Services) can do to contribute to partnership intelligence and intervention;
4.	<p>Possible outputs/outcomes to this review are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) greater understanding of factors influencing knife crime; (ii) greater understanding of the detrimental effects and consequences for individuals and communities; (iii) more effective intervention to prevent and reduce the harm caused and to disrupt criminality; (iv) recommendations for additional local measures which the Council, working with partner organisations, could introduce to reduce the harm arising from knife crime and associated factors, including drug misuse, 'county-lines', gang rivalries and criminal exploitation.

5.	<p>What specific value can Scrutiny add to this work area?</p> <p>To provide an opportunity for the Members to discuss the issues with stakeholders, including victims and families, community representatives and organisations with relevant experience, and consider the implications arising for community safety.</p>	
6.	<p>Duration of the Review?</p> <p>9 months approximately</p>	
7.	<p>What category does the review fall into?</p> <p>Policy Review yes Policy Development yes External Partnership yes Performance Management no Holding Executive to account yes</p>	
8.	<p>What information do we need to undertake the Scrutiny Review?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Preston City Council Corporate Priorities and Projects; ➤ Preston Community Safety Partnership Plan 2019 to 2022; ➤ relevant legislation and guidance; ➤ findings of local and national analysis and research studies; ➤ local statistics, profiles and case studies; ➤ accounts from specialist organisations with experience of working with victims and affected communities; ➤ the 'Glasgow' model; ➤ information on workforce training. 	
9.	<p>Who can provide us with relevant evidence?</p> <p>Members of the Crime and Disorder Committee/ Council Officers, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Environmental Health ➤ Licensing ➤ Neighbourhood, Parks and Grounds ➤ Maintenance Services 	<p>What areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence</p> <p>Consideration of the risks and costs to the Council arising from knife crime.</p> <p>Experience relating to the effectiveness of measures being implemented and what more could be done by the Council and partnership stakeholders.</p> <p>Experience of the effects upon individuals, families and communities.</p>

	<p>Representatives from partner organisations and other stakeholders involved in multi-agency activity including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Health Care trusts; ➤ Greater Preston Clinical Commissioning Group; ➤ Lancashire Constabulary; ➤ Lancashire County Council; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Children’s and Family Wellbeing Service; b. Children’s Social Care; c. Trading Standards; d. Lancashire Youth Offending Team; ➤ Schools and further education providers; ➤ Red Rose Recovery; ➤ Addaction; ➤ Change, Grow, Live 	<p>Experience of action to minimise harm, including early intervention and protective factors.</p> <p>Experience of the investigation of offences, disruption and prosecution offenders and protection of victims.</p> <p>Knowledge of actions to identify suspicious activity/ offences;</p> <p>Experience of safeguarding and providing care and support in the recovery of victims and affected communities.</p> <p>Knowledge of the implications of reducing facilities and activities for young people, with reference to changes provision in Preston.</p> <p>Knowledge of the links between the supply and misuse of illicit drugs, including ‘county lines’ and the use of weapons and ways in which these are addressed;</p>
	<p>Representatives of the victims and communities affected.</p>	<p>Experience of the harm caused, safeguarding measures and recovery support available.</p>

	Victims and family members who have experienced serious violence.	Lived experience of the trauma resulting from injury caused by weapons and the effects on victims and families;
10.	<p>What processes can we use to feed into the review (site visits/observations, face to face questioning, telephone surveys, written questionnaires etc?)</p> <p>Face to face interviews with the parties invited to provide evidence;</p> <p>Statistical data and analysis relating to knife crime and associated factors affecting Preston;</p> <p>Legislation and guidance from Home Office, Local Government Association and other reliable sources.</p>	
11.	<p>Diversity – How will we address the diversity standards in order to uphold the Council’s Single Equality Scheme?</p> <p>The scope of the review will take into account the extent to which knife crime impacts upon families and individuals in the community and these may differ according to age, gender, sexual identity, disability and ethnicity. The draft recommendations will have an equality impact assessment.</p>	