

Report by the Crime and Disorder Committee



Work Plan Study on Sexual Violence

August 2021 – March 2023

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Link to meetings:

[3 August 2021](#)

[28 September 2021](#)

[23 November 2021](#)

[18 January 2022](#)

[15 March 2022](#)

[5 April 2022](#)

[14 June 2022](#)

[9 August 2022](#)

[29 November 2022](#)

[21 March 2023](#)

1. Chair's Foreword and Acknowledgements



The Crime and Disorder Committee has reviewed Sexual Violence which happens anywhere and everywhere. The Members 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 Saksena

Chair of the Crime and Disorder Committee

Membership

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

Membership 2022/23 Municipal Year

Councillor Saksena (Chair)	Councillor Mrs Brown
Councillor Patel (Vice Chair)	Councillor Coupland
Councillor Adair	Councillor Green
Councillor Afzal	Councillor Hart
Councillor Mrs Atkins	Councillor Pomfret

2. Recommendations to Cabinet – Specific/Measurable/Achievable/Realistic/Timely

	Recommendation	Date to be implemented	Officer & Organisation Responsible
1.	That the voluntary sector be approached regarding the establishment of a working group.	December 2023	Cllr Coupland
2.	That the Chair of the Licensing Sub-Committee be approached regarding the display of notices promoting the “Ask Angela” initiative.	June 2023	Chair of Crime and Disorder Committee
3.	That the following issues identified on the City Centre tour be investigated further: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable areas in the Lord Street/Tithebarn Street area requiring better lighting/CCTV; • Improved lighting needed close to premises such as Blitz and the Warehouse and in the alleyways off Church Street; • Addressing the lack of public conveniences perhaps through the provision of pop-up toilets; • The supply of personal alarms to women and applying for funding from the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner. 	December 2023	Community Safety Manager
4.*	In terms of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), the following were identified: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That work be undertaken with groups that it is difficult to engage with; • That further work be carried out with handing out fliers, perhaps in conjunction with neighbourhood shops; • That partnership working with the Eastern European community and the relevant officer at Lancashire Constabulary be established. 	December 2023	Community Safety Manager
5.	That UCLan be asked to pledge to sign up to a campaign to address drink spiking, similar to that at Lancaster University That Member input into the design and distribution of information leaflets be encouraged and welcomed.	December 2023	Community Safety Manger

* The Committee recognises the recommendations of the PSPO and ask that issues such as drug use be included.

3. Background/ Aims of the Study

3.1 At its meeting held on 3 August 2021, the Committee considered the draft scoping document for the work plan study now renamed Sexual Violence. The Committee agreed that the study should also take into account the work plan study on Child Sexual Exploitation.

Members also agreed to add the Foxton Centre, the Women's Refuge, UCLan and the voluntary sector to the list of organisations to be invited for interview.

3.2 At the meeting held on 28 September 2021, the Community Safety Manager gave a presentation on the end to end Review of the Criminal Justice System Response to Rape by the Government. Ms Hatton reported on key points including:-

- a sharp decrease in prosecutions since 2016/17;
- an increase in the reporting of rape;
- 3% of adult rape offences assigned a police officer in 2019/20 were given an outcome of charged/summonsed;
- majority of victims are female but also has a devastating effect on men
- perpetrated at a higher rate against disabled women and those who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or other.

The Committee discussed ways that the Council could assist victims and it was proposed that relevant voluntary organisations be asked to set up a working group and feed into the study.

The Community Safety Manager gave a presentation summarising the Tackling Violence against Women and Girls Strategy which was published by the Government in July 2021. The national strategy was shaped by responses from the call for evidence. Crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls were identified.

Ms Hatton reported on the harmful effects on victims/survivors, family and friends and also wider society. It was also noted that local people want information regarding local services and organisations. The Committee discussed measures aimed to assist potential victims including information displayed on screens on trains and the "Ask for Angela" initiative. The Chair proposed that the proposed Chair of the Licensing Sub-Committee be approached regarding the display of notices promoting the "Ask Angela" initiative.

Ms Salma Ali and Ms Julie Humphrey from Preston Domestic Violence Services attended the meeting for interview in relation to the work plan study. The Committee were given details of the work of the organisation and support given to victims of domestic violence/abuse.

The Committee also considered local data for sexual violence.

3.4 At the meeting held on 23 November 2021, the Community Safety Manager gave a presentation on the findings and recommendations on the work plan studies on the Victims of Domestic Abuse and on Child Sexual Exploitation which are relevant to the study on Sexual Violence.

The Community Safety Manager also gave a presentation providing an overview of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 which received Royal Assent in April 2021. She also reported on the stages of the Act relevant to the work plan study and how they will be implemented.

Ms Claire Powell, Area Manager for Lancashire Victim Services and Victim Support, attended the meeting for interview in relation to the work plan study. The Committee received a presentation on the work of the organisation and statistics relating to Preston where there were 156 incidents of rape and serious sexual assault in 2020/21.

3.5 At the meeting held on 18 January 2022, Ms Catherine Smith, CEO at Trust House Lancashire, Mr Darren Lynch, Safeguarding Manager at LCC and Mr Paul Blackett, Co-ordinator for Preston Street Pastors attended the meeting for interview in relation to the work plan study.

The Committee discussed the Police and Crime Plan for Lancashire 2021-2025 and in particular priority three – Tackling Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. Members discussed key players in addressing the issue.

3.6 At the meeting held on 15 March 2021, the Committee undertook a walking tour of areas in the city centre which are hotspots for incidents of anti-social behaviour including sexual violence. Members discussed measures that could be taken to improve the situation including better lighting and licensing matters.

The Community Safety Manager reported on the Preston District Profile in conjunction with the Lancashire Community Safety Strategic Assessment. The document provides statistics of crime and road safety together with social and demographic inequalities.

She also gave a presentation on the Lancashire Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2022-2025. The strategic assessment is a statutory requirement for community safety partnerships as outlined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It provides an account of long-term issues and threats from crime and anti-social behaviour across Lancashire.

3.7 At the meeting held on 15 March 2022, The Community Safety Manager gave a presentation on the Lancashire Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2022-2025. The strategic assessment is a statutory requirement for community safety partnerships as outlined in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It provides an account of long-term issues and threats from crime and anti-social behaviour across Lancashire.

The executive summary gave details of key issues and matter including:-

- Key risks and threats;
- Health and wellbeing issues;

- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Victims, vulnerability and safeguarding;
- Domestic abuse;
- Hate crimes;
- Violence Reduction Network;
- Serious Organised Crime;
- Road safety.

It was recommended that further work be carried out on domestic abuse, exploitation (criminal/sexual), vulnerability and safeguarding and cybercrime. The Community Safety Agreement will feature key themes identified. The Assessment and Local Profiles will be used as evidence.

She also reported on the Preston District Profile in conjunction with the Lancashire Community Safety Strategic Assessment. The document provides statistics of crime and road safety together with social and demographic inequalities.

3.8 At the meeting held on 5 April 2022, The Community Safety Manger gave a presentation on the work of the Street Monitors including photos of incidents. The Committee were informed that this was a new initiative, which commenced in December 2021. There is a focus on the streets as well as licensed premises. The monitors work in a team of two between the hours of 10pm on Saturdays until 4am on Sundays. The personnel are provided by Elite Security (NW) Ltd., a local company which has worked with the Council to develop a scheme specific to Preston.

The cost of the monitors is modest however, a recent application for funding to the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner had been unsuccessful. This would result in the scheme having to finish earlier than planned. Members raised the implications of this and alternatives for funding.

The importance of educating people in order to prevent anti-social behaviour was also raised.

Members discussed door supervisors and whilst recognising the good work carried out most of the time, it was requested that consideration be given to adequate training and duty of care.

3.9 On the 14 June 2022, The Community Safety Manager submitted a copy of the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee report on Spiking which was published on 26 April 2022. Ms Hatton gave a presentation on key findings of the document.

Members discussed the report and raised various issues including:-

- high levels of non-reporting (c.75%);
- North-West showing higher numbers of incidents than London;
- need to educate/reach all communities;

- training through licensing, perhaps with certificates issued and/or champions being appointed.

Members also discussed how/if the issue is addressed in schools and other ways of educating everyone, including parents and young people. Ms Hatton reported that some matters formed part of the Safer Streets Bid including the design of an information leaflet and work with students.

3.10 On 9 August 2022, Ms Michaela-Clare Addison and Ms Beverley Lodge from the Sexual Violence Team at Lancashire Victim Services attended the meeting for interview in relation to the Work Plan Study on Sexual Violence. The Committee received a presentation on the work of the organisation and relevant background information.

The work with victims was also detailed and Members were given information on the Sexual Offences Act 2003, relating to consent to sexual activity in England and Wales. Ms Addison and Ms Lodge also reported on illegal acts such as sharing indecent images.

They undertake work with young people in school to raise awareness about consent for sexual activity. An explanation was given about situations in which a person does not have the freedom and capacity to agree to sexual activity. The presentation reported on responses to the trauma of sexual abuse, rape or any kind of sexual violence and on ways to support someone displaying signs of trauma from sexual violence.

The Community Safety Manager referred to the planned use of foil blankets to cover and protect the dignity of vulnerable persons in the city centre. There was also information provided on common myths surrounding sexual offences.

It was noted that there had been a 22% increase in reported offences in 2022 and it was suggested that lockdown may have played a part. Members enquired if a breakdown of data from schools could be provided, and the presenters agreed to supply this.

Also, the Community Safety Manager gave a presentation on Operation Night Guardian, an operation by Lancashire Constabulary which aims to deter offenders preying on vulnerable people in the environment of evening and night-time hospitality businesses. It also aims to increase the likelihood of offenders being caught.

Practical measures are taken to prevent and detect drink spiking. The scheme also allows the police and licensees to act quickly to reports. Emotional and practical help is supplied to victims and the vulnerable, and work is to be carried out with Community Safety Partnerships and the Street Pastors. The scheme is funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire.

3.11 At the meeting held on 11 October 2022, the Community Safety Manager updated the Committee on measures being taken to address drink spiking. As part of the Safer Streets programme, forums will be held on a number of dates. These sessions will be open to members of the public, Councillors and relevant employees

of licensed premises. The aim of the sessions will be to heighten awareness of spiking, especially at busy times such as Halloween, the Football World Cup and Christmas.

The Community Safety Manager gave a presentation on the proposed Serious Violence Duty and implications for the Council. She reported that new guidance notes had not yet been presented but some of the measures to be included in the strategy are already being undertaken such as partnership working.

3.12 At the meeting on 29 November 2022, the Committee discussed the work plan study on Sexual Violence and recommendations for the study. It was proposed that the recommendations be incorporated into the study, and it be submitted to the next meeting.

3.13 At the meeting held on 21 March 2023, the Committee considered the draft Work Plan Study on Sexual Violence. Members agreed the recommendations and provided details of timescales and officers responsible for them. The study was improved for submission to CMT.

Corporate Management Team Comments

Legal

There are no legal implications other than those addressed in the body of the report.

Financial

Recommendation 1 - There will be printing costs if the notices are to be supplied ready for display rather than self-printed by the venue. Some venues already display them in e.g. in toilet cubicles and the quantity required would need to be calculated based on numbers of licensed venues.

Recommendation 2 - The site in question is where the Youth Zone is to be constructed and is currently a small park which is not illuminated on the site itself. The lighting proposal may be for temporary LED lighting as an interim measure until the site is developed but has not been costed up and there is no budget currently available. A CCTV camera with infra-red (night vision) has already been installed. This is linked to the monitoring facility in the Guildhall and was paid for via the CCTV budget last year.

Recommendation 3 - This relates to street -lighting which is mostly if not entirely provided by Lancashire County Council. It may be possible to increase the intensity of the existing lights, but the costs would be in relation to energy and would be achieved by request to LCC. A new light has been fitted to Turk's Head Yard by an adjoining business owner and there are proposals for alley-gating via the UKSPF capital budget.

Recommendation 4 - An application could be made to the Police and Crime Commissioner for these items and bids can be for up to £10,000 from community groups or the community safety partnership. This has not been costed up but is feasible and they could be distributed by the Street Safety Officers funded via the Safer Streets Fund, and other organisations.

Recommendation 5 - This was raised in relation to a proposed PSPO for Saint Matthew's ward. This has been put on hold until later in the year or next year. It could be adapted for the City Centre PSPO but related to cultural influences of street drinking amongst Eastern European communities. There is currently no budget for printing, but this proposal may be feasible next year using the internal community safety printing budget. It has not been costed at this time.

Cabinet Response

That the Cabinet, having considered the comments of the Council's Corporate Management Team, accepted and approved the recommendations set out in the Work Plan Study report on Sexual Violence.

Appendix A

Work Plan Study Scoping Document on Sexual Violence

Scope

The study will consider the implications of sexual violence in Preston. This will include contextual safeguarding and other measures to reduce the opportunities for sexual violence offences to be committed and trauma informed approaches in providing support for victims.

The role of the Council, working in partnership with other local organisations, will provide the focus for the study, drawing upon the experience of personnel working in different settings.

The study will include information from specialist services, whose work helps aid the recovery of victims. It will also refer to preventative measures, interventions with offenders and support for victims in criminal justice processes.

Analysis of sexual offending in Preston will be considered when assessing the effectiveness of safety measures and how these may be developed to create safer environments for individuals and communities.

1a.	Scrutiny Chair: Councillor Jonathan Saksena	Contact Details Email address: cllr.J.Saksena@preston.gov.uk
1b.	Member Services Officer Ms J Pollock Scrutiny Support Manager	Ext: 6305
1c.	Departmental Link Officer: Ms A Hatton Community Safety Manager	Ext: 3438
2.	Which of our Corporate Priorities does this topic address? <u>Corporate Plan</u>	

	<p><u>Your City</u>- Improving assets and infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Protect individuals and communities from sexual violence and its harmful effects, including concerns about personal safety. ➤ Identify where assets and infrastructure could be developed or adapted to improve safety and provide reassurance to residents and visitors to the city. <p><u>Your Council</u> –Demonstrating good governance, openness and transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work effectively in partnership to reduce the harm caused by sexual violence to individuals, families and communities. ➤ Provide transparency and openness about the measures taken to protect individuals from sexual violence and its consequences. <p><u>Fairness For You</u> - An economy supporting prosperity and promoting fairness in working lives and practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote fairness in the working lives of people and support prosperity by providing a safer environment and one in which concerns about sexual violence aren't a deterrent to business investment or employment opportunities.
3.	<p>What are the overall aims and objectives in doing this work?</p> <p>The overall aim is to achieve a significant and sustained reduction in sexual violence occurring in Preston by implementing the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Analyse the offences of serious violence occurring in Preston to increase understanding of offences which occur in the city, including the profiles of victims, offenders and locations; (ii) Review the relevant legislation, national and local strategies to prevent sexual violence, including the strategic developments in the national agenda for reducing violence against women and girls; (iii) Consider the traumatic effects of sexual offences and detrimental consequences for the physical and mental health of victims to inform recommendations on whether there is the sufficient provision, sustainability and accessibility of specialist clinical and therapeutic support; (iv) Identify the extent to which contextual safeguarding measures are effective for young people and vulnerable adults in circumstances where risks are identified;

	<p>(v) Consider the situations which occur in Preston in which risk of sexual violence may be increased (including through the use of alcohol and other substances, limited access to safe transport, concealed public spaces and lack of surveillance) and the improvements which are required to address local issues;</p> <p>(vi) Review the effectiveness of measures to prevent offending and reduce re-offending, including the factors affecting the investigation and prosecution of offenders; sanctions and measures to reduce the risk of re-offending and risk of harm to the public;</p> <p>(vii) Consider the findings and recommendations of previous work plan studies on the following subjects, their relevance to this work plan study and whether the interval since their publication has seen significant changes in circumstances affecting victims, families and communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Plan Study into the Victims of Domestic Abuse August 2015 to August 2015. • Work Plan Study into Child Sexual Exploitation January 2015.
4.	<p>Possible outputs/outcomes to this review are:</p> <p>(i) understanding of factors influencing incidents involving sexual violence to inform policy and decision making by the Council;</p> <p>(ii) liaison with Preston Business Improvement District and businesses serving the night-time economy to review contextual safeguarding and to implement reasonable measures to reduce identified risks;</p> <p>(iii) awareness of measures to increase personal safety and mitigate risks which may occur in different settings and how these could be reasonably implemented;</p> <p>(iv) liaison with teachers, youth workers and young people in both education and community settings to raise awareness of contextual safeguarding, trauma informed approaches and access to specialist services for those at risk of or having experienced sexual violence;</p> <p>(v) understanding the extent of the trauma experienced by victims of sexual violence, its potential long term effects and how these can be lessened by trauma informed approaches in services;</p>

	<p>(vi) awareness of specialist services available to victims of sexual violence, their accessibility and sustainability due to changes in funding and commissioning arrangements;</p> <p>(vii) recommendations for more effective interventions to prevent and reduce the harm caused by sexual violence and to address the behaviour and factors which influence offending behaviours;</p> <p>(viii) recommendations for additional local measures which the Council, working with partner organisations, could introduce to reduce incidence of sexual violence;</p>
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>12 months</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 draft Serious Violence Plan 2019 to 2022; ➤ relevant legislation and guidance; ➤ findings of local and national analysis and research studies; ➤ local statistics, profiles and case studies;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ accounts from specialist organisations with experience of working with victims and affected communities; 	
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"> ➤ Licensing ➤ City Development ➤ Parks and Grounds Maintenance Services ➤ Housing Advice 	<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 incidence of sexual violence in Preston;</p> <p>Experience of the effectiveness of measures being implemented and what more could be done by the Council and partnership stakeholders</p>
	<p>Representatives of partner organisations and other stakeholders involved in multi-agency activity including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lancashire Constabulary; ➤ Security Industry; ➤ Preston Business Improvement District/ local businesses; ➤ The Probation Service; ➤ Lancashire Child and Youth Justice Service; ➤ Children and Family Wellbeing Service; ➤ Lancashire Violence Reduction Network; ➤ Schools and other education providers; ➤ Specialist service providers, e.g. victims' services; Sexual Abuse Referral Centre; Independent Sexual Abuse Advisors (ISVAs). 	<p>Experience of the investigation of offences, disruption and prosecution offenders and protection of victims;</p> <p>Experience of action to minimise harm, including the development of protective measures;</p> <p>Knowledge of actions to identify suspicious activity/ offences;</p> <p>Experience of the supervision and rehabilitation of offenders;</p> <p>Experience of safeguarding and providing care and support in the recovery of victims and affected communities;</p> <p>Experience of action to minimise harm, including the development of protective measures;</p> <p>Experience of the harm caused to victims, safeguarding measures and support available to help to aid their recovery.</p>

	Representatives of the victims and communities affected.	Experience of the harm caused, safeguarding measures and support available.
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 or on-line interviews with the parties invited to provide evidence;</p> <p>Statistical data and analysis relating to sexual violence and associated factors affecting Preston;</p> <p><i>A working group of representatives of third sector organisations providing interventions and support to victims of sexual violence, their families and communities;</i></p> <p>Legislation and guidance from the Home Office, Local Government Association and other reliable sources, including evaluations of work programmes and academic studies;</p> <p>Site visits to relevant locations;</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 sexual violence 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>	