

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12th June 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Organised Crime Gang – Childhood Criminal Exploitation

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To receive a presentation in relation to Halton Councils response to Organised Criminal Gangs and the Government Strategy to tackle “County Lines” and Childhood Criminal Exploitation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) the report and presentation on Halton Councils Criminal exploitation Project be noted; and**
- 2) the Board consider the information presented and raise any questions of interest or points of clarification following the presentation.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

ORGANISED CRIMINAL GROUPS (OCG)

The Serious and Organised Crime Strategy places significant emphasis on the importance of effective local partnerships. Strong multi-agency working, a key commitment of the Strategy, can be supported by a shared view of the threat set out in a Local Profile.

To support this we have now established a partnership group chaired by the Chief executive to tackle organised crime groups in Halton. (Operation Portfolio).

The aim of Operation Portfolio is to deliver an effective partnership response to the threat posed by serious crime and organised crime groups impacting on communities in Widnes and Runcorn.

The group has a number of key objectives which are highlighted below:

Objectives

- Identify and research the threat posed to local communities by serious and organised crime in Widnes.
- Document the threat posed by serious crime, Organised Crime Groups, Urban Street Gangs, cross border criminality and thematic serious crime threats in a format which can be shared. This document is termed be the 'Widnes Local Profile'.
- Single or group 'Partnership Profiles' will be the information basis for assessment of specific individuals, Organised Crime Groups, Urban Street Gangs, or locations.

Partnership Profiles will be produced by police for each meeting

- Identify and establish a partnership group to use all available civil, criminal and legal powers to implement enforcement, disruption and safeguarding tactics to reduce the threat.

The group meets on a bi monthly basis and agrees a partnership action plan against a number of key nominals that have been identified by the partnership profiles. This group is now currently working on two profiles with Partners

This will now be a standing item on the Safer Halton Partnership agenda.

COUNTY LINES

County lines is the police term for urban gangs supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines". It involves child criminal exploitation (CCE) as gangs use children and vulnerable people to move drugs and money. Gangs establish a base in the market location, typically by taking over the homes of local vulnerable adults by force or coercion in a practice referred to as 'cuckooing'.

County lines is a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, gangs, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons; and the response to tackle it involves the police, the National Crime Agency, a wide range of Government departments, local government agencies and VCS (voluntary and community sector) organisations.

4.0 Criminal Exploitation Project – Risk and Resilience, reducing the risk of Criminality and Gang involvement for Young People

RNR is a Ground-breaking project aimed at raising awareness of and protecting young people from Child Criminal exploitation in a project run in

Halton delivered by Addaction; this will support vulnerable young people from being exploited by more sophisticated criminals. The project has the aim of preventing children from being drawn into criminal activities by older criminals and gangs. Approximately 30 young people will take part in the project delivered to groups and one to one and will have the support of the Amy Winehouse Foundation delivering substance awareness, and Gangs line delivering targeted support around reducing the risks of gang involvement and criminality. The project will target the most vulnerable young people in Halton, those affected by parental substance misuse, missing from home, poor self esteem, economic issues for parents and their own substance misuse. The team will be delivering 3 programmes with some of the most vulnerable identified young people for 6 weeks to look at risk taking behaviour, self esteem, peer pressure, substance misuse, exploitation and gangs, the law, and the future. Delivery of this has started at Horizons, and is booked at the Bridge school and Weston Point College in the New Year.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The policy implications of the review relate primarily to the Safer Halton priority. However this is a cross cutting work area which has wider implications on other areas of council business.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the health, safety and well-being of young people. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities.

8.0 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

9.0 A Healthy Halton

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the Health, safety and well-being of the residents of Halton. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities.

10.0 A Safer Halton

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the Health, safety and well-being of the residents of Halton. County lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation has a devastating impact on young people, vulnerable adults and local communities.

11.0 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

12.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None

13.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

14.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.