
Developing and Launching a Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategy

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny
Commission

City Mayor Manifesto Commitment

- In the **City**, our pledge is to do more to **help prevent and deter** individuals and groups committing acts of serious violence and carrying/using knives.
- To ensure a **collaborative** approach with the **Community**, the **Violence Reduction Network**, **Partner Agencies** and **Voluntary Groups** to understand the causes of serious violence and the use of knives and develop a strategy that defines our approach
- To utilise this joined up, **coordinated approach** to confront serious violence and knife crime and to ensure that we **commit to early intervention, prevention and provision of services**

Knife Crime: Police Recorded Crime Data

- Includes any crime where a knife is seen, used or threatened.
- This means Leicestershire Police record crimes where there may have been no knife present but just a threat made.
- Around 20% of these includes possession of offensive weapons where police have proactively targeted or attended incidents where a person is found with a knife.
- Leicester has seen an increase in knife crime over three years that peaked in early 2019 and has been declining steadily since

What the Data Told us Then

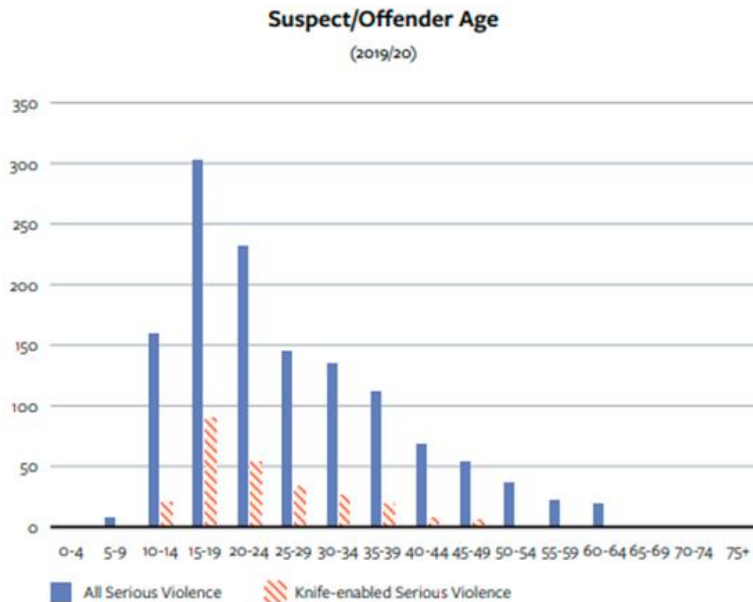


Figure 9: Volume of suspects/offenders of serious violence and knife-enabled serious violence in Leicester by age group (Apr 19 - Mar 20) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

Knife Enabled
Serious Violence
Victims

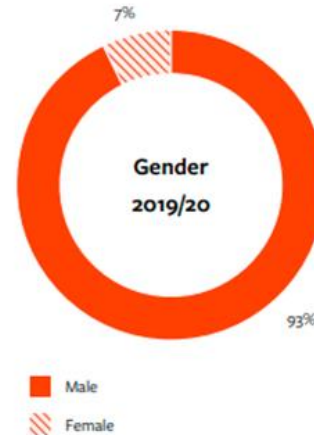


Figure 6 : Gender of knife-enabled serious violence victims (Apr 19 - Mar 20) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

Knife Enabled
Serious Violence
Suspects/Offenders

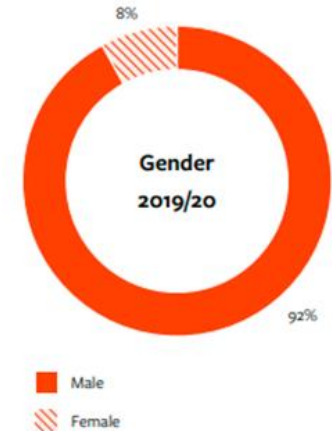


Figure 7: Gender of knife-enabled serious violence suspects/offenders (Apr 19 - Mar 20) (Source: Leicestershire Police)

What the Data is Telling us Now

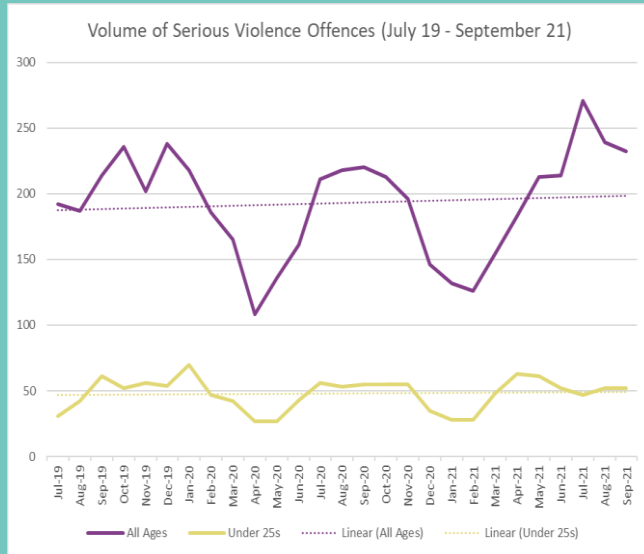


Figure 2 shows the volume of **serious violence offences in public places in Leicester from Q2 2019/20 – Q2 2021/22** for all ages and where the suspected perpetrator is under 25 years

When **comparing Q2 2021/22 with Q2 2020/21**, serious violence offences involving all ages has increased by 14.3% and offences by those under 25 decreased by 7.9%

when looking at **the year prior to the Covid-19** pandemic respective increases of 25.1% and 12.7% were observed.

When **comparing to the previous quarter (Q1 2021/22)**, offences involving all ages increased by 21.6%, however for under 25s a decrease of 14.2% was observed.

What the Data is Telling us Now

	ALL AGES								U25						
HO Group Desc	Q2 2019/20	Q2 2020/21	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	% Change from Same Quarter of 2019/20	% Change from Same Quarter of 2020/21	% Change from Previous Quarter		Q2 2019/20	Q2 2020/21	Q1 2021/22	Q2 2021/22	% Change from Same Quarter of 2019/20	% Change from Same Quarter of 2020/21	% Change from Previous Quarter
Assault with Injury	380	461	484	577	51.8%	25.2%	19.2%		88	92	135	108	22.7%	17.4%	-20.0%
Assault W/I Cause Serious Harm (\$18)	26	45	32	44	69.2%	-2.2%	37.5%		6	17	16	7	16.7%	-58.8%	-56.3%
Racially/Religiously Aggravated Assault with Injury	*	7	10	5	-	-28.6%	-50.0%		*	*	5	0	-	-	-100.0%
Robbery of Personal Property	165	123	70	103	-37.6%	-16.3%	47.1%		33	48	16	33	0.0%	-31.3%	106.3%
Robbery of Business Property	10	*	6	6	-40.0%	-	0.0%		*	*	*	*	-	-	-
Endangering Life	5	7	6	6	20.0%	-14.3%	0.0%		*	*	*	*	-	-	-
Murder (Attempt)	*	*	*	0	-	-	-		*	*	*	0	-	-	-
Manslaughter	0	0	0	0	-	-	-		0	0	0	0	-	-	-
Murder	*	*	*	*	-	-	-		*	*	*	*	-	-	-
Drug-related Serious Violence	22	51	41	47	113.6%	-7.8%	14.6%		*	13	7	14	-	7.7%	100.0%
Alcohol-related Serious Violence	143	129	119	238	66.4%	84.5%	100.0%		26	26	20	53	103.8%	103.8%	165.0%
Knife-enabled Serious Violence	90	88	52	79	-12.2%	-10.2%	51.9%		21	35	18	24	14.3%	-31.4%	33.3%

What the Data is Telling us Now

Comparing (Q2 2019/20, Q2 2020/21, Q1 2021/22 & Q2 2021/22)

The **most common classification type for all ages** this quarter is 'Assault with Injury' with 577 incidents, followed by 'Robbery of Personal Property' (103).

This is the same where the suspected perpetrator is **under 25**, 'Assault with Injury' with 108 incidents followed by 'Robbery of Personal Property' (33)

'Alcohol-related Serious Violence' has increased across all three periods for all age groups.

Definition of Serious Violence

The serious violence definition used for the purpose of the rest of this section is that adopted by the Violence Reduction Network partnership:

'Public place violence resulting in significant physical injury with or without weapons'

The definition includes all ages and the following crime groupings:

- Homicide
- Violence with injury
- Robbery of personal property
- Robbery of business property

The focus of the Violence Reduction Network and Leicester's Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategy is on public place serious violence, and the data in this section refers to this. It does not include sexual violence or serious violence in domestic settings, including domestic abuse, as there are other strategies in place to tackle these.

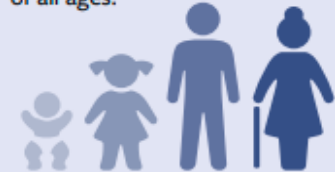
Violence Reduction Network's knife-enabled serious violence definition

Knife-enabled serious violence is defined by offences which fall under the definition which mention knife, as well as mentions of stab, sharp, blunt, blade, etc. The offences are reported as involving a knife or sharp instrument when the weapon is present during the offence or the threat is believed to be real. The weapon does not

Violence Reduction Network Serious Violence Definition



with the inclusion
of all ages.



Public place violence resulting in significant physical injury with or without weapons

Crime groups:



Initial priority focus:

Serious violence by or against a person under 25 years.

Exclusion of sexual violence and/or serious violence in domestic settings, including domestic abuse.



Home Office Counting Rules Crime Types:

Murder | Manslaughter | Attempt Murder
Assault with Intent to Cause Serious Harm | Endangering Life



New Serious Violence Duty

Domestic abuse and sexual offences should be considered as seriously as knife crime and homicide, the government announced

Changes to legislation currently being considered in Parliament will make clear that a new legal duty requiring public bodies to work together to tackle serious violence can also include domestic abuse and sexual offences.

The change to the Serious Violence Duty will be made via an amendment to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

Involving Communities

3.2. Conversations with community, experts, and others

With the use of police data and analysis, we were able to identify the top eight locations across Leicester that recorded the greatest number of knife crime offences in 2018 and 2019. This data informed the chosen areas in which community conversations were carried out.

Community leaders started the conversations, asking questions such as:

- What and where knife crime issues exist within the local area and community?
- Why people carry knives and become involved in knife crime and other serious violence?
- How knife crime has impacted on and affected local communities?
- How communities, organisations and services can help to reduce knife crime and serious violence?

The identified areas for community conversations were:

- Belgrave
- Braunstone
- Beaumont Leys
- New Parks
- Saffron/Eyres Monsell
- Highfields
- St. Matthews
- City centre

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION: ST MATTHEWS AREA



Helping to shape the citywide knife crime & serious violence strategy

Let's talk about knife crime

COME AND BE PART OF THE DISCUSSION

Wednesday 19 February 2020
2.00pm - 3.30pm

St Matthews Neighbourhood Centre
10 Malabar Road
Leicester, LE1 2PD

Contact Rukhsana Hussain 07466 868 651 for more details



Leicester City Council

What did the Community Tell us?

2.2. What did the community tell us?

Knife crime and serious violence destroys lives and devastates families. During our community conversations the following was shared with us:

"I've lost more than 10 people in 5 years"

"Now I carry a knife for my own protection. **Everyone carries one, it isn't a big deal, I am not going to stab anyone**"

"My closest friends always carry knives – **it doesn't faze me anymore**"

"My next-door neighbours son died of a knife crime. This affected me deeply because I watched that boy grow up in front of me, **he was like a son**"

"Lost a family member to knife crime"

"I worry more now about my teenager's safety than I ever did when he was little"

"there is not enough engaging activity for young people to steer them away from gang culture"

"if young people felt more supported, it would deter them from making bad decisions. It is necessary for authority figures to show young people that making **the right moral decision will lead to a more rewarding life**"

"young people that commit this type of violence **feel they have no support and that no one is helping them**"

"financial hardship, drug and alcohol abuse. As well as young people feeling pressure to feel part of a group. **Tackling these issues would lower youth crime** and encourage young people to create better life choice's"

Co-designed with Communities



We provided opportunities for people across Leicester to help shape the Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategy.

Key Engagement and Actions

In order to take this work forward, two groups (steering and taskforce groups) were established, outlined below is the roles of these groups: -

- **Steering group:** strategic and statutory partners (internal & external) who promote, highlight and steer the work undertaken to develop and implement the strategy
 - **Taskforce group:** community leads within various local communities of Leicester city (from 8 areas identified through datasets that report on knife related crime). Group members will be able to deliver community related work to support the development and implementation of the strategy.
- ✓ Created stakeholder and community groups to drive the strategy
 - ✓ Held public conversations with communities across Leicester
 - ✓ Met with those who have lived experience
 - ✓ Met with University criminology academics to discuss strategy
 - ✓ Held an expert Session with specialist criminologist on this agenda
 - ✓ Developed a strategy document from all feedback and launched it
 - ✓ Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission of Leicester City Council
 - ✓ Meeting with ward councillors
 - ✓ Employed a designated officer to support and lead on the strategy

Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategy

New knife crime strategy launched in Leicester

Published on Friday, July 9, 2021



AN INNOVATIVE new knife crime strategy that has been designed by and for local communities is being launched in Leicester.

The Leicester Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategy 2021-23 has been developed by the city council and partners including the office of the police and crime commissioner. Its development has been led and shaped by local communities, after a series of public 'community conversations' about knife crime.

The strategy sets out how the city council and partners will work to tackle knife crime locally, to help prevent and deter individuals and groups from committing acts of serious violence and carrying or using knives.

Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategic Priorities

1.0 Our vision and commitment to addressing knife crime and serious violence

Our vision

Our vision is to strive to help prevent and deter individuals and groups from committing acts of serious violence and carrying/using knives.

Our commitment

Leicester City Council will work with partners to establish and deliver the city-wide Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategy.

Leicester Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategy

2021-2023

July 2021



Strategic Priorities

- Providing support and opportunities
- Preventing crime and ensuring people feel safe and protected
- Involving the community
- Collaborative working with partners across Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland
- Enhancing the feeling of safety in outdoor spaces and developing community resilience



Strategy Recommendations

Change - Develop - Create

Working together to achieve more

Change

Changing cultural
behaviours, systems
and practices

Develop

Developing access
to facilities, educational
support and projects

Create

Creating co-production
& opportunities to listen
to communities

Key Recommendations

Education

- Evidence demonstrates that low attendance and exclusion from school can leave young people vulnerable to entering criminality. We want to work with education establishments to minimise the number of school exclusions, with exclusion used as a last resort after all alternatives have been explored.
- Improve and audit the alternative school provision across the City, to have a fuller understanding of the provision being offered in People Referral Units.

Jobs and Training

- Demonstrate a commitment to the ex-offender programme, which creates employment, training, and social opportunities for ex-offenders. As well as supporting the identification of Department of Work and Pensions financial opportunities.
- Support young people to gain employment, we will work to identify internal and external training and employment opportunities for 16-24 year olds, to enable signposting of relevant support.

Facilities

- We will work with local partners to improve the physical environment of community spaces to increase accessibility and reduce anti-social behaviour. For example, this may include Shops front improvement schemes, ballparks and play areas, and effective enforcement of Public Space Protection Orders.

Community

- Develop a Community Mentoring Programme with the community, specifically targeting young people at risk of knife crime either as a perpetrator or victim. Importantly the service should use the reach of local communities to engage young people and connect them to the services and resources they need.
- Support a community and youth led media campaign to promote community assets; this includes positive activities and recognising active role models or community leads.



Change.....

- Work with education establishments to minimise the **number of school exclusions**, with exclusion used as a last resort after all alternatives have been explored
- Develop a monitoring system that provides live information regarding the status of **looked after children** which includes a missing persons status, to improve visibility
- Work with partners to develop the **Prevention of Offending Pathway** (POP) and align intervention programmes to ensure support is available for each young person that needs support
- Ensure that our workstreams relate to the objectives and plans of the **Children in Need** team to support better coordination of support, making sure the assessor is conscious of strategy links and associations
- Incorporate the upcoming Government **serious violence duty** within the work of community safety and the knife crime and serious violence strategy
- Improve and audit the **alternative school provision** across the City, to have a fuller understanding of the provision being offered in People Referral Units.
- Work with local partners to **improve the physical environment** of community spaces to increase accessibility and reduce anti-social behaviour
- Work with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to create a new **people zone** in the City, which will support community groups to have a central voice and role in area activity and investment
- Review and **monitor knife crime data** and measure the impact of our work throughout the period of the strategy
- Support the Police to tackle issues related to the supply of **drugs and exploitation** of vulnerable people

Develop.....

- Support **informal education programmes** and campaigns across all schools focused on both prevention, impact, consequences and aspirations.
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- Promote and encourage LCC staff to utilise **1-day allowance for volunteer scheme** associated with this area of work
- Provide **discounted rates/free hours** access to local community facilities, and demonstrate commitment to various programmes and activities (e.g. youth activities led by community groups or youth services)
- Identify internal and external **training and employment opportunities for 16-24 year olds**, to enable signposting of relevant support: a) Advice and support b) Training and development c) Real opportunities
- Provide **training** to those working within **community frontline settings** to recognise signs of those in need of support, and signpost to services e.g. shop owners/retail staff, public transport operatives (taxi drivers, bus drivers)
- Access to **bikes and free bus travel** for those actively and positively engaging in intervention programme
- Working alongside LLEP to provide **training and employment** opportunities
- Demonstrate commitment to the **ex-offender programme** and identify DWP financial opportunities

Create.....

- Implement a citywide **peer mentoring programme**
- Promote positive messaging within communities, and challenge the negative narrative of “**stigma communities**”, often related to knife crime and young people
- **Community and youth led media campaign** to promote community assets; this includes positive activities, various facilities, businesses and recognising active role models or community leads. Social norms change/counter-narrative work. Ensure #BlackLivesMatter is incorporated within responses (marketing campaign could include bus advertising)
- Identify opportunities and connection links with **arts and culture groups** and venues e.g. The Curve, The Phoenix, Haymarket theatre, LCB Depot
- Keep a **community forum** to identify community led solutions. Taskforce group and young people to monitor progress of strategy (Links with VRN)
- Ensure a **joined-up approach** with the VRN, OPCC and other partners across LLR to highlight work and increase engagement
- Implement and support **neighbourhood plans and campaigns** to coordinate a multi-service plan to address community issues (details to be confirmed; could include ‘community concerns’ as a standardised agenda item at local ward meetings)

Timeline and Milestones

Timeline	Milestone
Jan 2020	Steering group/ Task group meetings start
Feb – May 2020	Meetings and discussions to set parameters
Feb – Dec 2020	Community Conversations events
Jan – Apr 2021	Working up feedback into a strategy
May – June 2021	Stakeholder reviews and briefings
July 2021	Launch of strategy
Aug – Sep 2021	Recruit Lead
Oct – Nov 2021	Work up recommendations
Dec 2021	Internal discussions
Jan 2022	Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission
Feb – Mar 2022	Finalise and launch recommendations

Bringing Recommendations to Life

Community Mentor Project

The scope of the project

Support 15-25 year old male and females with a particular focus to maximise earlier intervention opportunities for those living in East/ West Leicester or Charnwood, involved in violence or at high risk of involvement.

The objectives of the service

- Build trust and rapport with the young person tailoring support to their wishes and needs
- Act as a role model, educating and encouraging positive social norms and dispelling myths and stereotypes around issues such as masculinity, gangs and weapon carrying
- Offer emotional support and improve social skills

The uniqueness about the project:

- The project was co-designed by the community
- Draws on resources and expertise within communities
- Uses the reach of local communities to engage young people and connect them to the services and resources they need

The Reach Project

LCC have partnered with the Violence Reduction Network and Leicestershire County Council and the Home Office to develop a programme that reaches out to young people who are at risk of exclusion or who have been excluded from education.

The intervention adopts an innovative contextual prevention approach, spanning schools and the immediate community vicinity to proactively identify and engage young people at 'teachable moments in reachable spaces.

Teachable moments' will be used such as school-based behavioural events which are precursors to exclusion and criminal activity (e.g. events relating to the risk factors of truancy/low attendance and behaviours of concern such as aggression and anti-social behaviours, substance misuse and association with delinquent peers).

Evidence demonstrates the local need for a new schools-based teachable moment intervention as:

- 15-19 year olds commit the highest rates of serious violence
- Leicester has higher rates of absenteeism, repeat exclusions and first-time entrants into the criminal justice system compared to national averages



Other LCC Support on this Agenda

- Criminal/ Child Sexual Exploitation support groups (CSE) for girls
- County lines training for staff
- School workshops for knife crime, conflict resolution, drugs and alcohol
- Attendance centre and restorative justice work streams
- School Anti bullying award
- 1-2-1 Youth mentoring
- Youth outreach work and targeted
- Police Op-sceptre engagement support
- School bursary programme to increase engagement in the Arts (Museum)
- Education Welfare Officers offer family support for unauthorised absences

Developing a Knife Crime and Serious Violence Strategy for Leicester

Any questions?