

Date	18/01/2023
Brief	Serious Violence Duty – Approach in Swindon & Wiltshire
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1.0 **Purpose**

1.1 Update to PCC on the Serious Violence Duty, the proposed approach in Swindon and Wiltshire and provide an update from the Police Commander for Swindon on the actions taken across this community following recent serious violence.

2.0 **Serious Violence Duty**

2.1 Following public consultation in July 2019, the Government announced that it would bring forward legislation introducing a new Serious Violence Duty (SVD) on a range of specified authorities, namely; chief officers of police, fire and rescue authorities, integrated care boards, local authorities, youth offending teams and probation services. Under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 the duty is designed to ensure relevant services work together to share information and allow them to target their interventions, where possible through existing partnership structures, collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities.

2.2 The Government also announced that it would amend the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to ensure that serious violence is an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships and by making sure they have a strategy in place to explicitly tackle serious violence.

2.3 Under the Duty, local policing bodies (i.e. PCCs and Deputy Mayors of Policing) are encouraged to assist specified bodies in delivery of the requirements, and will be responsible for allocating grant funding for authorities under the Duty.

2.4 The Home Office is making funding available to support delivery of the new duty and this is being allocated across police force areas. OPCCs apply for the allocated funding on behalf of the specified authorities, and this is a mix of labour and non-costs. The allocated funding for Wiltshire force area over the next three years is set out below and we are awaiting final confirmation from the Home Office that we have secured this funding following our recent application:

- FY22/23: £30,000
- FY23/24: £254,867
- FY24/25: £248,884

3.0 Proposed Approach in Swindon & Wiltshire

- 3.1 OPCC officers are working closely with Wiltshire Police and have initiated discussions with the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Executive Groups in both Swindon and Wiltshire about how the Duty will be discharged in our area, and we have convened a joint CSP Executive meeting on 6 February to discuss next steps. The Duty requires us to develop a strategic needs assessment, examining all available data (police, health, justice etc.) in order to understand the complex factors contributing to serious violence in our area. This will then be utilised to inform the development of a local response strategy for Wiltshire and Swindon to reduce serious violence through bespoke and local interventions but built on best practice from across the country.
- 3.2 Other OPCCs and specified authorities across the country are utilising some of labour funding available through their allocation to pay for a Serious Violence Duty Coordinator to lead this work on behalf of the authorities in their area. We are proposing a similar approach to ensure that we have dedicated resource to coordinate the delivery of the strategic needs assessment and the local response strategies. We are also proposing that this role sits within the OPCC, who will act as the lead convener of the specified authorities to ensure effective partnership working and joined up approach across the organisations involved.
- 3.3 We are proposing that the existing Community Safety Partnership governance structures are utilised to manage and coordinate delivery of the duty; both CSPs already have early intervention and violence reduction sub-groups both of which are chaired by Wiltshire Police (Phil Staynings for Swindon and Liz Coles for Wiltshire). This will ensure effective and streamlined governance whilst also ensuring that other organisations who form part of the CSP but are not specified authorities under the duty, can actively contribute to this work.
- 3.4 Swindon are more advanced in their violence reduction work given some of the challenges in their communities, and work has already been commissioned to analyse police, health and justice data to understand causation factors in more detail. They have developed an action plan using a public health approach with a range of primary, secondary and tertiary interventions and the Swindon CSP sub-group oversee delivery of this work. This is being shared with Wiltshire colleagues already, but the Duty will help support more joined up work across areas as the strategic needs analysis and local response strategies are developed.
- 3.5 Serious Violence Duty funding for local response strategies across Wiltshire and Swindon will be allocated based on the requirements identified through the strategic needs analysis and governed by the CSP Executive Groups with input from all partners. This will ensure that we are targeting funding on the interventions and in the locations that have best impact on reducing serious violence in our most vulnerable communities.
- 3.6 We are engaging with Leaders Unlocked about how we can use the next period of activity with the Youth Commission to focus on youth violence and help us understand the problem from their lived experience, as well as identifying possible solutions which we can feed into the local response strategies.
- 3.7 We will provide a full update to you following the joint meeting of the CSP Executives on 6 February and regular progress reports going forward.

Appendix A – Update from Wiltshire Police Swindon Commander

Street Level violence and approach

- The Town centre has seen an increase in possession offences, much of this is driven by proactive policing. We have used Fortitude staff to target this alongside NPT and have a multi-agency knife crime forum for children and young adults which adopts a targeted approach. This is a small number of people causing high harm and mostly aligns to local line drug activity.
- We have utilised Sec 60 approach where appropriate and we have already undertaken some community consultation in preparation for the future. I have spoken to Susie Kemp and Michael O'Connor (head of YJS) about this. Both are supportive given the challenges we face in Swindon, but the usual caveats apply linked to proportionality, stop search linked to members of the public that are BAME etc.

Gang, local line and CL activity

- Whilst we have challenges with county lines the majority of knife crime in Swindon at present is linked to local lines with an age group of 14 – 25 predominately responsible. Our youth violence thematic desk in intel helps join the dots.

CPT broad areas of focus to restore confidence

- We have numerous specific operations to target this issue (Op Thesus - Eldene and Op Juvenis - Penhill). Each of these have a 4p plan wrapped around them. Op Sceptre is a national initiative linked to knife crime and we run these about four times a year. We are running one at present this week. The focus is on community engagement. We are exploring permanent amnesty bins moving forward.
- We have worked with BTP at the railway station as a visual deterrence and also with trading standards to target and restrict the sale of bladed weapons with retailers.
- We have made use of criminal and civil orders to manage threat and risk - we have successfully applied for closure orders, injunctions and criminal behaviour orders and these have had huge impact in reducing threat and risk locally.

Related partnership and CSP initiatives

- We have worked with the Youth Commission to shape priorities around knife crime which will aid in building trust and confidence with young people. Members of the Youth Commission have been helpful in providing valuable advice and guidance at stop search scrutiny panels.
- My team are working closely with SBC and have brought together a Police and Schools Panel - this brings us closer to safeguarding leads within education where we share information and intelligence effectively. We have looked at approaches linked to child criminal exploitation and agreed a process linked to the recovery of bladed weapons in educational settings.
- Youth safety strategy - I've worked closely with Michael O'Connor in bringing this strategy together. This has led to some brilliant tactical approaches around 'reachable teachable moments'. An example of this would be working with young people and their families whilst at youth court. We use these moments as opportunities to divert people away from the choices they currently take.
- I chair the Early Intervention and Violence Reduction sub-group on Swindon Community Safety Partnership. With SBC colleagues we have brought together a public health action plan which adopts a primary, secondary and tertiary approach. We have agreed a set of priorities which are owned and updated through this group.