



# WBCSP

## **Wigan Borough Community Safety Partnership**

Serious violence strategy  
2024-2025

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## Foreword by Councillor Dane Anderton



The Serious Violence Duty, enacted through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, is a significant legal obligation that we in Wigan Borough approach with utmost determination. Our comprehensive strategy emphasizes the active collaboration of relevant services and community groups, working in unison to proactively prevent and diminish serious violent crime. Our interventions are thoughtfully crafted using a trauma-informed and whole-family approach, leaving no room for complacency.

Through extensive consultations, we have identified key concerns within our Borough, particularly in relation to the use of weapons such as knives and dangerous dogs, drug-related issues, and organized crime, each contributing to the broader challenges of exploitation and sexual violence. Consequently, a pivotal focus of our action plan is a dedicated commitment to understanding and addressing the factors leading individuals, especially young people, into the realm of violent crime. Our future actions will be relentless in supporting a positive change in behaviour.

To foster safer and more resilient communities, we will adopt a public health approach, prioritising the health, safety, and overall wellbeing of our residents. This involves close collaboration with essential agencies, including health, education, the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit, law enforcement, local authorities, criminal justice entities, voluntary and community groups, as well as our local communities. Together, we aim to build a collective front against serious violence, cultivating environments that unequivocally promote the prosperity and security of all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DK Anderton'.

**Councillor Dane Anderton**  
**Portfolio lead for Police, Crime and Civil Contingencies**  
**Wigan Council**

## Introduction

This is Wigan Borough's first strategy for the prevention and reduction of serious violence in our Borough, which came out of the National Serious Violence Strategy which was published in April 2018 in response to increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide in almost all police forces across England. Our strategy will be a continuously reviewed process and we recognise that future strategic needs assessments will be able to provide us an ever-greater insight into the issues faced across Wigan and Leigh. We are already working towards improved data sharing and more in-depth community insight and engagement, which will better equip us with the knowledge to make informed decisions on the direction of our problem solving.

Wigan Borough's Serious Violence Strategy adheres to the guiding principles set out by the Government in 2021, which states that we will work within the framework of a public health approach:



This strategy focuses on prevention and early intervention, delivering programmes, support, and protection to those who we believe to be at risk of serious violence across the Wigan Borough.

Wigan Borough's Community Safety Partnership recognises that in order to effectively embed a public health approach to serious violence we must ensure that we have a robust understanding of the presenting issues and driving factors at a local level.

Taking this one step further in Wigan, we are aware that not every area within our borough has the same issues, and therefore we do not follow a 'cover all' approach, we focus on equity not equality. We understand that each area or issue has its own circumstances and therefore we allocate our resources dependant on what is required to address the concern. It is essential that we understand the picture of serious violence in Wigan in order to ensure that we can respond to trends and drivers efficiently and effectively. Our current data comes from a variety of anonymised data sources, including Greater Manchester Police, Youth Justice, and Education, however, we are building on our data sharing capabilities as a partnership to improve our understanding and ultimately our actions.

We acknowledge that the data received from Greater Manchester Police is subject to slight differences in ward boundaries to the Local Authority ward boundaries, and as such will provide a small deviance in location data.

## Definition of serious violence

The Home Office serious violence strategy defines serious violence as specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, and gun crime and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in gangs and county lines drug dealing.

Wigan Borough's Community Safety Partnership Board has done extensive consultation, speaking to businesses, community groups and the relevant and specified authorities to consider the issues prevalent in our local area, and as a result have defined serious violence as:

*“Serious physical violence, including sexual violence (non-domestic related), or the threat of such violence towards another person(s) which often involves the use of a weapon.”*

It is recognised in the Strategic Needs Assessment that domestic abuse is an area of concern in Wigan, but as there is already in existence a recent (2021) Domestic Abuse Strategy which is delivered by the Community Safety Partnership and local voluntary and community groups, we did not wish to dilute the work of the Serious Violence Duty by duplicating work that already has such a comprehensive plan.

Therefore, this strategy will focus on organised crime and the impact on criminal exploitation, the use of weapons including, firearms, knives and dangerous dogs, and serious sexual violence outside of a domestic setting.

Links to other cross-cutting strategies to which this one is aligned can be found below:

[Wigan's Community Safety Strategy](#)

[Wigan Safeguarding Partnership - Guidance and Policies](#)

[Wigan's Education Inclusion Strategy](#)

[Wigan's Domestic Abuse Strategy- DA strategy \(wigan.gov.uk\)](#)

[Greater Manchester's Serious Organised Crime Strategy](#)

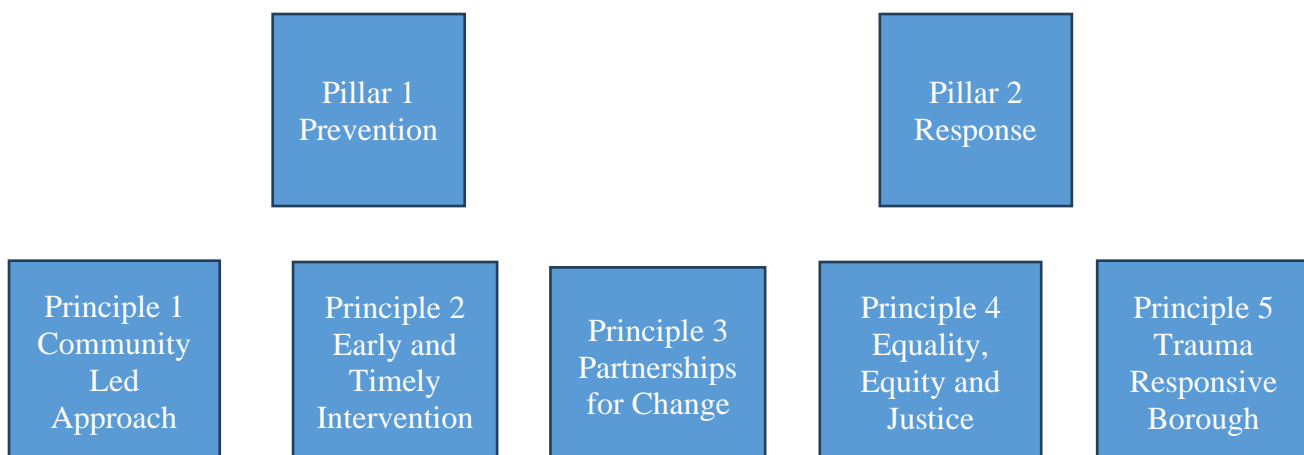
[Greater Manchester's Violence Reduction Strategy](#)

## Introduction to the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit

The Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) is a team of subject leads and experts from Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), Greater Manchester National Probation Service, Public Health, NHS, Education, Community Voluntary Sector, Victim's Voice, Youth Justice, and Local Authorities, addressing the underlying causes of violence and working together with communities to prevent it.

The VRU is crucial to assist us embed our public health approach, understanding violence at a local level, support us in establishing evidence-based interventions, and trialling community-led projects.

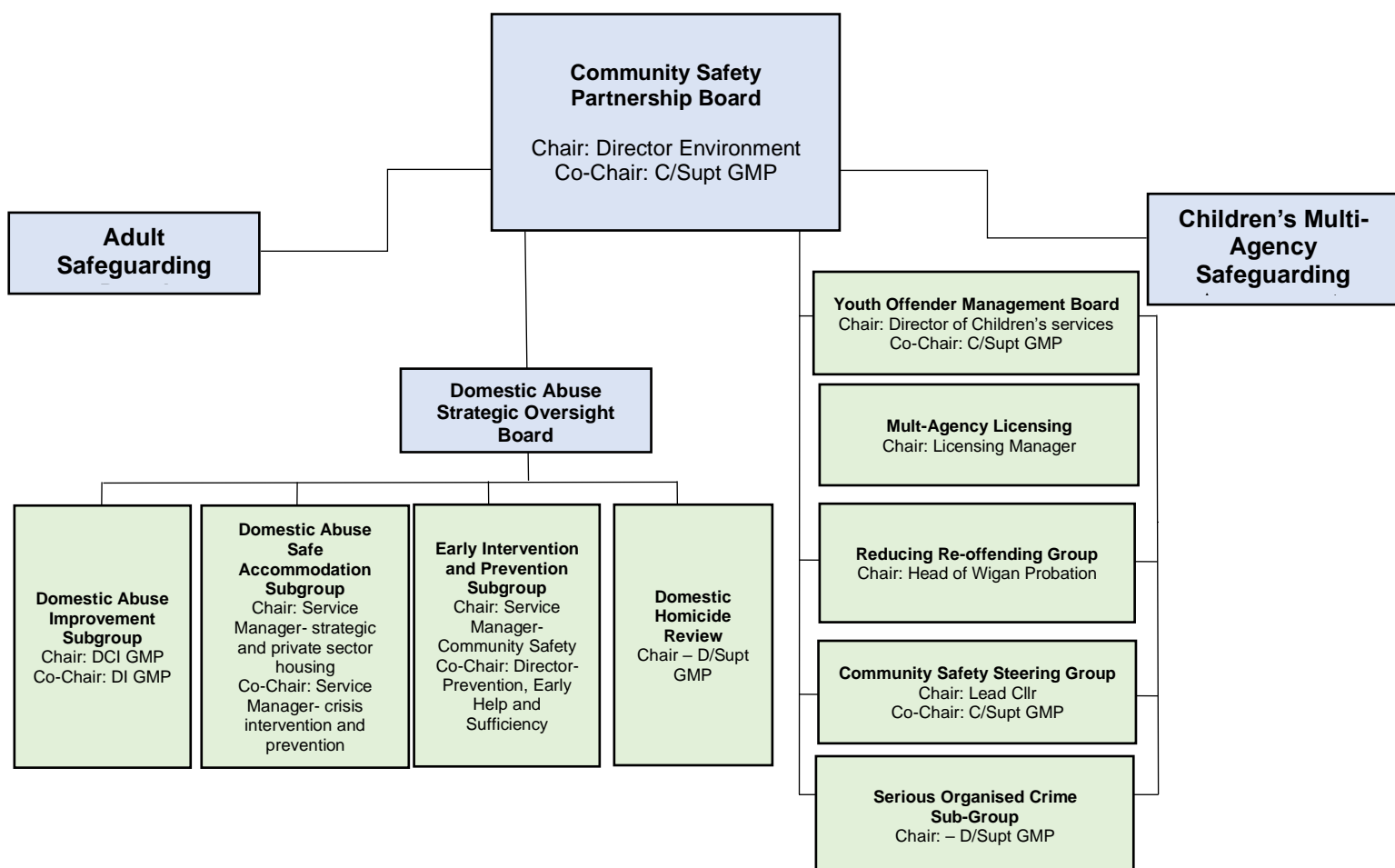
The recently published "Greater Than Violence Strategy" lays out the Greater Manchester response in 2 pillars, supported by 5 Principles, which we will be utilising as the foundation of our work in the Wigan Borough.



**Governance**

Governing a partnership approach to serious violence is essential to the delivery of this strategy, as no organisation can resolve the problem of serious violence on its own.

Wigan Borough’s Community Safety Partnership Board will provide oversight of responses to the Serious Violent Duty and its implementation in the Wigan Borough and will be responsible for ensuring prevention, early intervention and safeguarding are integrated in our responses. The Board will oversee the implementation of the Serious Violence Duty through a public health approach and support partnership working.





## What have our local communities told us about serious violence?

Our residents are the experts in what they are experiencing in their area. By listening to their concerns and working together on solving the problems, we will be able to achieve sustained results, rather than short term solutions that have been identified by professionals, “doing to” the communities.

We have adopted the Community-led programme, which has been developed by the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit, and used this as a template when consulting our communities. Through this process we were able to identify their local priorities and then work with the communities to deliver community-based services in response to those needs.

Throughout the 12 GMP districts, there were 25 serious violent crime hot spot beats identified in early 2023 in line with Home Office guidance. Of those 25, 4 beats are within the Wigan Borough: Wiga Central, Leigh East, Leigh West and Atherton.

During a pilot of the Community led approach in Worsley Hall, the communities told us that they were concerned about:

- Drugs and the related issues
- Lack of provision for young people
- Poor connection with GMP
- Anti-social behaviour
- Mistrust of local service providers
- Lack of role models and aspirations

They wanted to see:

- Sports based intervention.
- Targeted mentoring for at risk/vulnerable to criminal exploitation
- Detached youth work/ youth club
- Raise aspirations including employment and education support.
- Positive role models
- Parent support/engagement
- Single sex provision for girls

This feedback is echoed across the Borough, and we have started to document the extensive work which is already underway across all specific and relevant authorities. This will form the beginnings of our action plan for the Wigan Borough, which will be built on as the partnerships, data and consultations develop.

## What are we currently doing in the Wigan Borough?

Throughout 2023 the Community Safety Partnership undertook various consultation exercises which helped to identify a number of services working to reduce serious violence across the Borough. This allows us to understand what is currently on offer across the partnership aligned to the pillars of Prevention and Response and ensures better co-ordination, avoids duplication, and creates collaboration where there may not have been previously.

### Family Hubs

Wigan has given a commitment to develop 7 family hubs across the Borough in line with the 7 neighbourhoods. The first hub went live in October 2023 in the Wigan Central area with 24 different organisations offering different services over 4 weeks period. This includes housing, Start Well, Embrace, DWP, CAB, CAMHS just to name a few.

### Healthy schools' program

The Healthy Schools programme is a framework based around a whole school approach to physical, social, emotional health and wellbeing. This programme supports schools to systematically develop and improve health outcomes and embed them into the culture of their school through:

- Promoting healthy school activities that directly improve the health and wellbeing of school communities.
- Provide resources and opportunities that reduce health inequalities.
- Support frameworks that provide strong school cultures and healthier choices.
- Celebrate positive actions and identify next steps in provision.

How is this being delivered?

- Creating an individual school health profile through annual conversations. This builds on the school Nurse profile and Healthy schools rating scheme
- Monthly school and parent newsletters.
- Monthly meetings where healthy schools' team and providers meet to discuss relevant health and wellbeing topics, as well as up and coming campaigns.
- Annual celebration events, inviting all Wigan schools.
- Share content and outcomes with parents through social media networks.

### Police School Engagement Officers

GMP have committed 20 Police Officers across Greater Manchester to be School Engagement Officers. The role of these officers within schools is to provide crime prevention and safety advice to young people inclusive of specific work relating to knife crime, serious violence, anti-social behaviour, drugs and how to stay safe online. GMP currently has School Engagement Officers working with 21 schools across the north, central and south areas of Manchester and feedback from headteachers has been universally positive.

In Wigan, the school-engagement officers link in with all the partners from Operation Bluefin to support ASB work on the district. They also partake in weeks of action such as Serious Violent Crime and Hate crime weeks.

### **Domestic abuse strategy**

In the Wigan Borough there is an extensive level of support for all victims affected by Domestic Abuse including those in safe accommodation. This includes:

- A local dedicated helpline for anyone requiring advice and support around Domestic Abuse including victims, affected others and professionals.
- 1 to 1 support provided by a team of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) including a Young Person's Domestic Violence Adviser (YPDVA)
- A team of Domestic Abuse community workers providing support to victims at an early intervention stage
- Drop-in Domestic Abuse support sessions at community venues across the Borough
- Community Domestic Abuse links with Primary Care and Education settings allowing for selective enquiry and healthy relationships sessions.
- Sanctuary Scheme provision available to victims who remain within their own home.
- Domestic Abuse counselling and group programmes for those recovering from abuse.
- MARAC governance meetings held 3 times a week, supporting a multi-agency approach to those most at risk from Domestic Abuse
- Perpetrator Programmes, this includes parallel support for victims and families. As well as specific programmes for younger people who have been showing signs of abuse towards parents and carers.
- An established refuge offer, this provision includes Domestic Abuse support workers and is open to women and children and those out of Borough. Residents can also be supported to access refuge outside of Wigan via our partnership offer.
- A bespoke training offer provided by our Community Domestic Abuse Service available to all sectors. We also offer Domestic Abuse Awareness to all of our residents via e-learning.
- A tailored awareness programme designed by those with lived experience to raise awareness of the signs of Domestic Abuse and where to seek support.
- A lived experience forum we can utilise to design and evaluate services.
- Wigan also use existing legislation and duties to hold perpetrators to account and support families affected by Domestic Abuse
- Prioritisation for accommodation for victims of Domestic Abuse. An established partnership Domestic Abuse Board to oversee the lifetime of this strategy.
- A network of Domestic Abuse champions across the whole system
- An internal HR policy ensuring victims of domestic Abuse within Wigan council are supported.

### **Youth engagement**

Funding has been invested in a targeted programme of youth provision. This involved support workers attending hotspot areas identified through the Operation Bluefin (anti-social behaviour) governance meeting which includes representatives from Wigan Council, GMP Wigan District and voluntary sector organisations. The necessity for this programme of work provided by organisations external to Wigan Council was borne out of our community consultation. Residents stated there can be a distrust of council services and a lack of diverse activities. The commissioned providers have gained insight into the needs of the community which we may not otherwise have been able to achieve.

### **VRU funded work**

Funding received from the VRU has benefitted a number of opportunities across the Wigan Borough. We have been able to fund 2 full time posts with a focus on violence reduction and the identification on young people involved in anti-social behaviour, focussing on early detection and diversion methods.

We have commissioned a programme from Wigan Athletic Community Trust- Pathway to Participation which is a partnership approach between Wigan Athletic Community Trust and Wigan Family Welfare in Leigh supporting young people aged 11-16 of any gender, who may have poor mental health and other additional support needs and have been referred into Family Welfare for intervention. The project is referral-based from local partner agencies, schools etc taking young people with low-confidence, anxiety, social isolation, and who are becoming known locally for anti-social behaviour and involvement in violence (perpetrators, victims or domestic abuse).

The Wigan Borough Community Safety Partnership recognises that engagement in full-time, good-quality education is a strong protective factor against young people being drawn into serious violence. The effects of permanent exclusion for a child can be long-lasting and life-limiting. Education providers are well placed to identify those at risk of serious violence and deliver interventions through their trusted relationships with children and young people.

As a result of this we are piloting a programme of support for young people in a high school provision who are on the cusp of exclusion due to violent offending. The aim is to provide targeted support bespoke to the individual, with the hope that through the interventions, they will be able to remain in mainstream education.

There has also been the opportunity through the funding to provide free sports provision on an outreach basis for areas identified as high risk of violence or antisocial behaviour, working in collaboration with local providers including Smart Body Sports, Wigan Warriors and WN7, who already support young people across our borough, and therefore have trusted relationships which are being developed.

### **UMAY**

The UMay app is due to be launched in the Wigan Borough imminently. This app was developed in France and allows the user to share a real-time itinerary with friends and family, find the nearest venue for support if feeling unsafe, vulnerable, or threatened, and locate hotels registered to the scheme around the world. The Wigan Borough would be the first location in the UK to use the UMay app.

### **Operation Bluefin**

'Op Bluefin' is a weekly Community Safety Partnership multi-agency governance meeting focussed specifically on Youth related ASB to agree appropriate hotspot deployment of resources based on previous 7-days data and any emerging threats. The objective of the meeting also agrees appropriate interventions against identified young people aligned to the 'Youth ASB Resolution Model' and through the 'contact card' process of sharing information regarding identities of those suspected to be involved in causing ASB so that appropriate interventions aligned to the stepped Youth ASB Resolution Model can be considered. The meeting also directs services and voluntary services to locations for delivery of diversion activities.

Through diversion and the restorative approach, the following reductions in reported Youth related ASB have so far been achieved:

- 2021-2022: 26% reduction.
- 2022-2023: 34% reduction.
- Overall reduction 51%

### Community Resilience Team

The Community Resilience Team deal with issues of neighbour related anti-social behaviour, neighbour noise nuisance and as part of a wider multi-agency partnership under Operation Bluefin, the enforcement aspect of youth related ASB. The service operates regardless of tenure and from a position of neutrality in seeking to address issues between residents wherever possible working with residents to resolve issues between parties by problem solving the underlying issues which may present as anti-social behaviour, if need be utilising enforcement through the Courts where issues persist. Where support is forthcoming from complainants and issues are continuing a stepped approach is undertaken as detailed in the ASB Resolution Model, a copy of which is available on the Council website [www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk). This approach closely aligns to legislation detailed within the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

### Targeted Youth Support Services

GM Safeguarding Adolescent Framework Principles (2022) were launched in the Wigan Borough in November 2023.

This approach follows six principles:

1. Tailored support recognising adolescents are not a homogenous group.
2. Strengths based approach where young leaders also develop peer to peer actions.
3. Practice which is non judgemental, trauma informed and restorative.
4. Key workers will be relational, persistent and consistent for adolescents.
5. Adolescents have agency and decision making power on the support they would like and when.
6. The role of parents and carers is valued and they are supported to improve young peoples wellbeing.

Collectively the six practice principles aim to inform a shared approach for all professionals.

#### Vision

- All young people living in the Wigan Borough feel safe, are safe and are supported to thrive and reach their full potential as adults
- To achieve our vision, the Safeguarding Adolescent Service will focus on the harms young people can face in context outside of the family, so we can respond with the right conversation and the right action at the right time, in alignment with Greater Manchester's Safeguarding Adolescent Framework principles (2022).
- It will require a shared understanding and strong collaborative working with partner organisations, as well as with young people and families directly.

#### Baseline Measures- examples

- There will be a reduction of young people entering care, as they will be supported to stay safely within their families.



- More young people who are in care will be supported to be safely reunified with their birth family or supported to achieve stability and permanence within the context of being cared for. There will be a reduction in placement breakdowns.
- More young people will access appropriate and sustainable education, training and employment with improved attendance and fewer suspensions/ exclusions.
- There will be a reduction in young people going missing, especially repeatedly.
- There will be a reduction in young people engaging in ASB or offending (including towards family members within the home) with more diverted from the formal Youth Justice system and fewer entering custody.
- There will be an increase in young people supported having their health needs met and experiencing positive mental and physical health outcomes.
- Qualitative experience of young people and families and distance travelled.

### **Youth Offending Team**

The team is multi-agency and contains staff from social care, health, probation, education, and police. They ensure young people are in suitable education, training, or employment during and at the end of their order.

They have utilised the VRU practitioner budget, in a variety of ways including applying for funds to support young people to progress, purchasing items such as appropriate clothes for job interviews, driving lessons that will support them to gain employment and IT equipment that will enable them to progress in today's high-tech society.

### **Restorative Justice**

The team work with young people who have offended or are involved in committing anti-social behaviour, or those at risk of offending or anti-social behaviour. This work can be done on a one-to-one basis with the young person or with a group of young people, and can take place in school, at their home address or at a community venue.

Restorative practice helps those who are harmed by crime or anti-social behaviour and the person responsible for the harm to communicate with each other in a safe way. The harmed person gets the chance to explain to the harmer how the behaviour has affected them, and this process allows the person who has harmed someone to say or show that they are sorry. This process also gives the harmed person the chance to choose an outcome, for example: if they would like a letter of apology, or the harmer to do some reparation work within the community or have a face-to-face meeting with the person who has harmed them.

### **Reparation and Unpaid Work**

This enables young people to make amends when they have harmed someone or damaged something by completing reparation, as requested by the victim, or issued from court as part of a Court Order. Reparation or unpaid work includes an array of outcomes, such as: painting, gardening, and building wooden planters. It takes place within the harmers own communities and provides the opportunity for young people to learn from their mistakes and also develop new skills.

### **PIED**

Wigan hold weekly PIED (Prevention Intervention Education Divert) meetings. All children that have had direct involvement with the Police in the past 7 days are discussed. The PIED meeting offers multi-agency support for children & families that are at risk of becoming involved in the Youth Justice System.

The aim of the meeting is to ensure all children and families are offered support from one of the agencies at the meeting (if not already open to support) to divert them away from offending / youth violence.

### **Turnaround**

Turnaround offers early intervention and support via a comprehensive assessment with the aim of preventing children going onto offend or re-offend. This is a voluntary offer to children and families.

The Turnaround worker completes the assessment that helps create an individual plan that is agreed between the child, parents, carer, and Turnaround worker. The plan includes the voice of the child and encourages them to identify what support they need.

Turnaround workers work creatively with a wide range of community partners including Wigan Youth Zone, Leigh Youth Hub, Wigan Athletic Life Chances, Sting Like a Bee Project, CAMHS, We Are With You, Education Workers, Schools and Social Care to help support children and families.

### **Early Help**

Wigan's Threshold Document has recently been reviewed identifying clear distinctions between:

- Level 1 universal support.
- Level 2 Earliest Help.
- Level 3 Early Help
- Level 4 Children in Need of help and protection.

The Early Help assessment document has been reviewed in line with the National Supporting Families' outcomes framework, which takes a whole family approach in line with 10 categories, this includes crime. Wigan has also recently launched a new digital portal which enables approved partners to directly access the Early Help case Management system (EHM). A large-scale training programme has also been commenced to expand the number of partners who can access the system with a view to increasing the number of partners led Early Help offers.

### **Complex Safeguarding Hub**

Wigan Borough's Complex Safeguarding Team is a multi-agency co-located team who are based at Wigan Police Station. The team is made up of children's social care (social workers and exploitation workers), police, health, targeted youth support services and trusted relationship psychologist. The team work to reduce risks posed to the children as a result of exploitation and practitioners embed trauma informed approaches to supporting children at risk of / subject to exploitation.

The Complex Safeguarding Team work collaboratively with multi agency members to ensure safeguards are in place across all contexts. The Complex Safeguarding Team work in conjunction with the allocated social worker and other partners and agencies to provide specialist support, advice, and intervention. The team offer training and development, as part of Wigan Children Safeguarding Board offer, as well as offering bespoke sessions to schools, children's homes, partners, and services across the Wigan Borough, which includes online CSE and county lines.

Wigan Borough's Complex Safeguarding Team hold a multi-agency Daily Governance Meeting (DGM) with representatives from Social Care, Police and Health with the purpose to assess, agree and review information and referrals identifying children at risk or subject to child exploitation. Actions are set within DGM, and multi-agency responses agreed. Information in this meeting may come from various sources including:

- CE1 referral form completed by the allocated social worker.
- Police Reports/ Intelligence sharing.
- Information from partner agencies and services.

The Missing from Home service is embedded within Wigan Borough's Complex Safeguarding Team to ensure a co-ordinated, multi-agency collaborative approach is undertaken in identifying those children who are at risk of or subject to child exploitation. Wigan Missing from Home Team ensures that children who go missing are independently interviewed within 72 hours of notification. Offering Independent Return Home Interviews (RHI) with the child helps to establish support that may be required, as well as preventing repeat incidents. Information gathered from return interviews can be used to inform the identification, referral, and assessment of any child sexual/criminal exploitation concerns. Trauma informed and Contextual Safeguarding approaches are embedded as part of response to children who have been missing from home or care, and completion of return home interviews provide the opportunity to reflect the voice of the child, highlight any further support needs.

### **Oasis Navigators**

The Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit Navigator Project has commissioned OasisUK to deliver youth intervention services in hospitals across the region, with the Wigan Royal Albert Edward Infirmary being one of these. The Hospital Navigator model places a youth worker at the A&E departments during peak times. The team identify young people aged 10–25 presenting at A&E with a possible serious violence-related injury, helping them to cope and recover from their experience, and assisting with access to local support networks to prevent the potential of further violence.

In addition to this, Greater Manchester's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) has invested £750,000 to develop a programme of support for parents and carers who have concerns about their child. They may have noticed a change in their child's behaviour, and/or, suspect that their child is involved in violence, criminality or potentially being exploited. The service is free and confidential, and also delivered by OasisUK.

The service will provide family support workers who will offer 1:1 support including information and advice, advocacy, emotional support, signposting, and therapeutic training. Peer support groups will also be formed for parents and carers across Greater Manchester to connect with others who have been through similar experiences.

### **Prevention Hub**

The Prevention Hub is a multi-agency team and provides a Boroughwide response to repeat demand and working with those at crisis in a timely manner. With access to several partnership systems, they contribute to multi-agency safeguarding checks to ensure the correct response is offered by the partnership. Workstreams include:

- Repeat adult missing from home
- Repeat vulnerable adult reports from the Police.
- Repeat A&E demand



- Repeat callers to Police.
- Repeat Northwest Ambulance demand
- Asylum and Refugee re-settlement
- Repeat victims of crime
- Repeat crime locations.
- Suicide Prevention intervention and reporting
- MATAC – Working with repeat Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse
- Assisting with a key worker response within Channel

The aim of the team is to ensure the provision of care and support to meet the individual needs by utilising partnerships from public, private and community sectors. The team take a holistic approach to crisis management to identify clients support needs and recognise their underlying issues and not only addressing the presenting issue. They work together to problem solve demand and create greater outcomes.

The team take a partnership approach to shared risk management and negotiate the appropriate support based on common goals and identify and report any system blockages when required.

### **Night time economy**

Home Office funding has allowed some Hot Spot policing in areas identified as being a risk for high harm offending. As a result Friday evenings in Leigh and Saturday evenings in Wigan see an enhanced police presence. In addition to this, officers from the CID and non uniformed departments also work at these locations on cancelled rest days. This allows more staff to be on duty in highlighted areas at the times when serious violent offending is most prevalent.

The police licensing officer also creates a briefing pack highlighting those premises that have featured for recent violent offences. The duty sergeant then carries out a licensed premise visit to each of these to check that license conditions are being adhered to.

Additionally our town centres are addressing safety and perception of safety issues with the continued presence of highly visible Safety Marshalls and Taxi marshals. Wigan town centre has received Purple Flag accreditation and we are currently working towards this for Leigh town centre.

### **Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service**

GMFRS has recently enhanced the Prevention function with the safer Communities & Interventions area of work. In the last 12 months they have developed several new interventions to address deliberate fire setting, ASB, & serious violence in greater Manchester, these are:

- Atlas project – Adults with Firesetting convictions
- Adapted Atlas – Knife & Car Crime (In progress)
- HMP Forest Bank – Violence & Deliberate Fire Setting
- Youth Mentoring – Knife Crime (Victims)

The Atlas Project is the first of its kind with no other public service or agency providing fire safety awareness embedded in a rehabilitation programme for adults convicted of any firesetting crime. This is not only locally, but nationally and internationally. With a set of aims and objectives, GMFRS has developed a pilot in response to an identified need to provide a tailored intervention to adults who been convicted due to a history of deliberate firesetting behaviour. The projected outcomes of the proposed pilot are to:

- Protect the public
- Prevent victims
- Reduce re-offending and
- Respond efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of our communities, consequently reducing risk and the demand on blue light service

Following the successful implementation of The Atlas Project, GMFRS have utilised the Atlas methodology to create interventions for people within the criminal justice system, with a focus on knife and car crime. This will support the aim to reduce violence and improve the communities of Greater Manchester.

After initial consultation with HMP Forest Bank, GMFRS propose the below aims and objectives to support prisoners to make positive steps to developing and building personal resilience. This will address individual underlying issues and not just the crime they have been convicted or remanded for. This approach will help to identify core problems and how GMFRS and HMP Forest Bank can work together to address.

#### Aim

- To develop an evidence-based approach to identify, assess, tackle, and reduce violence and ASB within HMP Forest Bank
- To develop an evidence-based approach to understand and change the thinking, attitudes and behaviours which may lead prisoners to reoffend.
- To provide HMP Forest Bank with a programme that can be included in the rehabilitative activity and provide support to those on remand or convicted.

#### Objectives

- Reduce prisoner violence against themselves and others utilising cognitive-behavioural techniques
- Improve prisoner pro-social attitudes and goals for the future through problem solving, perspective taking, managing relationships and self-management
- Support and educate prisoners using a whole approach and not centred around their crime
- Reduce reoffending
- Support HMP Forest Bank to embed purposeful activity within the prison
- Promote restorative justice and allow prisoners the chance to reflect and address their crime

The mentoring pilot will be coordinated by Prevention Education staff and delivered by Firefighters, who will volunteer in their own time. It will utilise the Developing Resilience qualification, developed by the National Fire Chief's Council as part of the Early Intervention Implementation Framework and accredited by Prince's Trust, to help encourage engagement and provide recognition of programme completion.

The aims of the pilot are:

- 1:1 support
- Group sessions
- Creating positive pathways for younger people
- Youth projects to heighten sense of achievement
- Build trust and relationships between young people and emergency services
- Providing a positive future to those involved in the programme

- Developing our workforce within GMFRS

### **GMP Policing Operations**

There are currently a number of ongoing GMP operations which contribute to the reduction of serious violence across the Borough including: -

The Challenger Partnership Board has been created as a multi-agency approach to tackling Serious Organised Crime (SOC) and safeguarding any adults at risk of SOC. This monthly meeting enables all partners to look at issues causing greatest harm to their service and agree on a pragmatic, right agency, right powers approach to remove the risk and safeguard persons and the community.

Reporting to this Board is the Tactical Task & Finish Group who meet to agree the course of tactics to be deployed against identified nominals/locations agreed in the Partnership meeting. The objective being to utilise the full range of enforcement powers available to different agencies in line with the "Achilles Heel" approach to dismantle/disrupt Organised Crime Group (OCG) activity and to bring a long-term legacy of support to ensure SOC activity is not allowed to embed in communities and trying to make Wigan the most hostile environment for organised criminals and their families to live and operate it.

Op Portlock is the multi-agency approach to tackle county lines in the Wigan Borough. The Worsley Hall area of Wigan has been identified as one of the highest risk SOC vulnerability areas of Greater Manchester due to the influx of Merseyside OCG's operating county lines into the area. Since Op Portlock was commenced in July 2023, and through the joint working relationship with partners the following results have been achieved as of November 2023:

- Warrants executed within Portlock area since mapping = 14 (13 positive)
- Arrests = 31
- Seizures = 24 separate seizures
- Drugs seized = Crack Cocaine, Cocaine, Heroin, Cannabis
- Weapons seized = Machetes x 4, Knives x 3, Taser x 1
- Amounts = approx. half kilo Heroin & Cocaine & quarter kilo of Cannabis
- Persons Safeguarded / Protected = 7
- Premises Closures = 4

Op Portlock is a long-term approach but has already delivered a decrease in the risk (Management of Risk in Law Enforcement, MoRile score) and displacement of embedded county lines activity.

Operation Sycamore is GMP's response to tackling serious violent crime, with a focus on knife crime. The aim of the operation is to prevent and reduce serious violent crime, by disrupting the supply of knives in to the UK, by raising awareness of the dangers of knife crime, and providing young people with positive alternatives to crime. As part of the operation, officers regularly undertake a range of activity including targeted operations, weapon sweeps, visits to habitual knife carriers, and education sessions in schools to explain the dangers and consequences that come from carrying a knife

Other live policing operations remain ongoing in respect of organised crime resulting in arrests and convictions, and will continue.

The ongoing work in the above GMP operations in relation to the reduction of serious violence is further complemented by other enforcement activities undertaken by Wigan

Borough Council's Community Safety, Compliance and Enforcement Services. Some of these activities include:

- Public Space Protection Order – One of the widely accepted drivers of serious violence relates to the consumption of alcohol. There is currently a town centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in place across both Wigan and Leigh town centres, including Scholes Precinct, The Parsonage Retail Park (incl. Asda and B&Q) and The Loom retail park. This Order prohibits the consumption of alcohol in any public place (other than licensed premises) within the specified geographic location. Officers from the Community Resilience Team (CRT) and the Licensing Team conduct joint operations with GMP in hotspot areas to raise awareness of the PSPO, offer support to those breaching the PSPO and consider enforcement action in cases of non-compliance.
- Injunctions and Criminal Behaviour Orders – The Community Resilience Team work closely with various GMP teams to secure Orders against the most persistent and serious offenders to deter them from engaging in further offending and anti-social behaviour across the Borough. If granted, orders can include exclusions from specified areas, non-associations and positive requirements aimed at compelling individuals to engage with support to address the underlying factors of offending behaviour.

### **Inclusion Strategy**

The Inclusion Strategy focused on Wigan Early Years' settings, schools, post-16 providers, parents/carers, local authority services, Health services, voluntary and community sector services, Greater Manchester Police and many other partners that are all committed to promoting the inclusion of and preventing the exclusion of Wigan Borough's children and young people.

The full Inclusion Strategy can be found at [Inclusion in Wigan](#)

### **The West London Zone approach**

Several schools in the Leigh and Atherton area have been awarded West London Zone school funding, with the project due to commence in September 2024.

This will be a 3-year, £3 million pilot, working with 400 children and families, delivering in a group of primary and high schools, with an aim to:

- Improve attendance.
- Reduce exclusions.
- Reduce mental health referrals.

Specialist support (new posts) will work with a range of risks and/or difficulties across social/emotional, academic progress, attendance and challenges at home which are below the thresholds for statutory services and generally not already known to Childrens Services. This could include school-based interventions such as tuition, counselling, speech, and language therapy. Also, community prosocial interventions which may be universal and targeted services for children and family and include our current services and voluntary sector.

## Key priorities and actions

In response to learning so far, we will continue work across the Borough under the Pillars of Prevention and Response and following the five Principles.

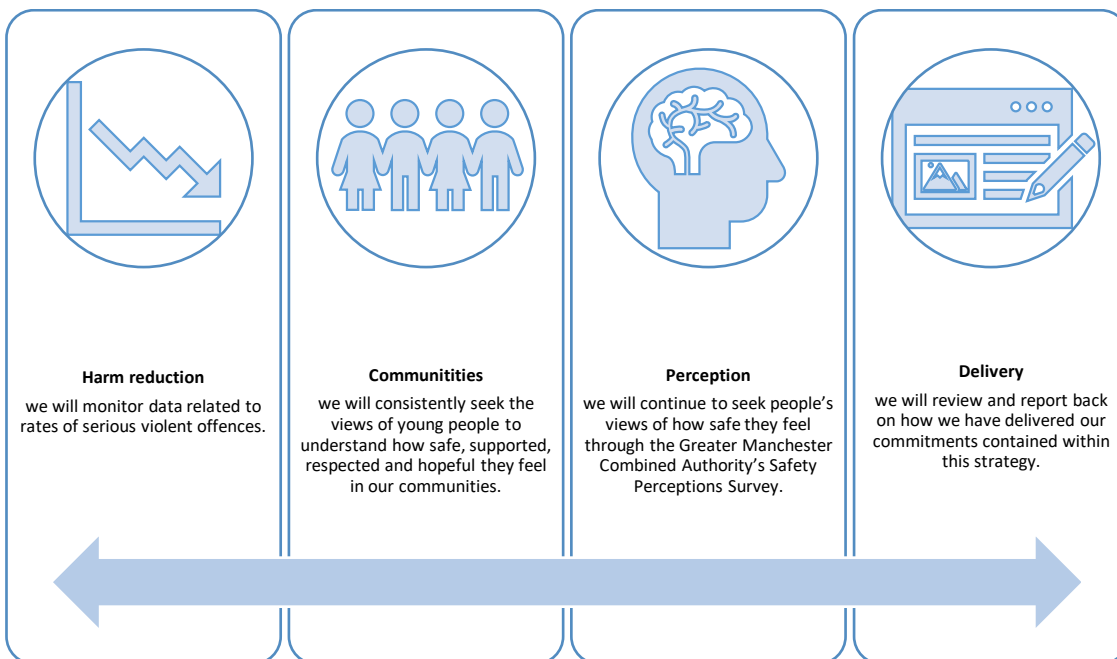
- A community led approach.
  - Early and timely intervention
  - Partnerships for change
  - Equality, equity, and justice
  - A trauma responsive Borough
- 
- We will continue to develop the focussed pupil work in schools, especially for those on the cusp of exclusion.
  - We will utilise multiagency structures and local experts to commission evidence-based interventions to support young people at risk of serious violence and re-engage them in their education.
  - We will have a strong focus on young people missing from education.
  - We will encourage collaboration with both statutory and voluntary and community groups to upskill in terms of awareness and understanding of the issues being faced by young people, and to deliver consistent and bespoke support and interventions to divert children and young people away from serious violence.
  - We will improve support offers for those who are vulnerable and require extra support when transitioning from childhood to adulthood, including a focus on care leavers.
  - We will improve information and intelligence sharing between prisons and community services to ensure that we are able to better support individuals upon their release from prison to reduce reoffending.
  - We will maximise enforcement opportunities for those identified as persistent offenders of serious violence through effective partnership work across the community safety partnership and criminal justice.
  - We will ensure that there is always an offer of support available to those who are identified as perpetrators of serious violence, to ensure they can divert away from serious violence even when enforcement action has commenced.
  - We will continue to engage and consult with our communities at a local level to understand their views and concerns about serious violence, especially where there are underreporting issues.
  - We will work in partnership to continue to support victims of serious violence, their families, their peers, and their communities in a timely and effective manner.
  - We will continue to develop a trauma-informed workforce across the partnership, increasing awareness and improving our responses to individuals who have suffered adverse childhood experiences.
  - We will conduct an equality impact assessment to ensure that our processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups.
  - We will continue to develop relationships with partners across the borough to ensure we provide the best response to serious violence for our residents.

## Measures of success

Key to the successful implementation of this strategy is ensuring that we connect the strategic priorities and principles with operational staff across the partnership. This will assist in embedding a co-ordinated and effective approach to reduce incidents of serious violence.

In order to comply with the Serious Violence Duty, this strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis. This will enable us to respond to any emerging trends or patterns relating to serious violence and confirm that our response remains effective.

We will measure the effectiveness of our response by embedding a performance framework focusing on the following areas:



As this strategy will focus on organised crime and the impact on criminal exploitation, the use of weapons including, firearms, knives and dangerous dogs, and serious sexual violence outside of a domestic setting, this is where we will be concentrating in terms of measuring success.

Our data comes from a number of sources, but in the main, we will be reporting on figures from GMP serious violence crime data.



## Declaration

This strategy has been co-produced and will be co-delivered by Wigan's specified authorities in partnership with required authority partners and in consultation with the voluntary sector and communities across Wigan.

