

SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

24 NOVEMBER 2023

Serious Violence Duty

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1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out work being undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to implement the Government's Serious Violence Duty in Surrey.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Home Office have brought forwards new legislation to tackle serious violence. The Serious Violence Duty's purpose is to ensure that relevant services work together to share data, intelligence and knowledge to understand and address the root causes of serious violence. It also allows the specified authorities to develop and target their interventions to prevent and stop violence altogether.
- 2.2 The Duty aims to ensure that agencies focus their activity on reducing serious violence whilst also providing sufficient flexibility so that the relevant organisations will engage and work together in the most effective local partnership for any given area. However, it is strongly encouraged that local areas adopt a public health approach to reducing violence.
- 2.3 The full Serious Violence Duty guidance can be found online:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1125001/Final_Serious_Violence_Duty_Statutory_Guidance_-_December_2022.pdf

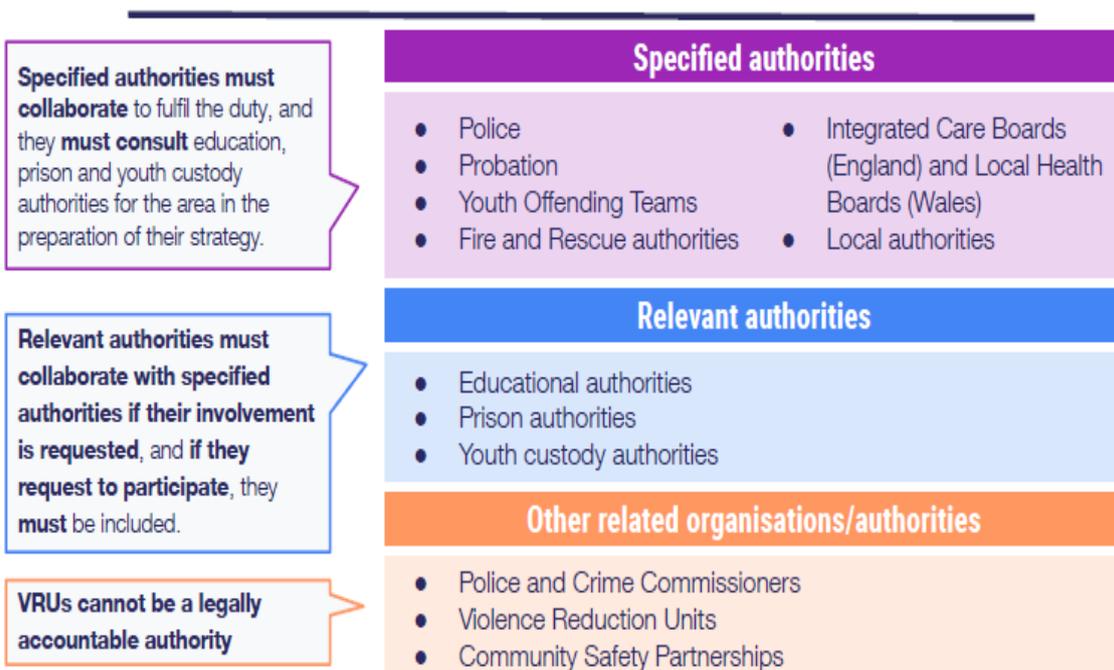
5 SPECIFIED AUTHORITIES

- 5.1 The following organisations have a statutory responsibility to comply with the new Duty:
- Surrey Police
 - Surrey County Council acting as the Local Authority partner, the Education Authority and the Youth Justice Service
 - Surrey Public Health
 - Surrey Fire and Rescue

- Surrey Heartlands ICB
- Frimley ICB
- Surrey Probation Service

- 5.2 Community Safety Partnerships are also subject to the Duty and the Government have amended the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to ensure that Community Safety Partnerships have an explicit role in evidence based strategic action on serious violence.
- 5.3 As CSPs are subject to both the new Crime and Disorder Act requirements and the Duty, this will enable them to escalate local serious violence issues to a higher strategic level where necessary.
- 5.4 The Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the areas are not a specified authority, but local policing bodies will be responsible for allocating grant funding for authorities under the Duty and are encouraged to have a convening role.
- 5.5 In Surrey the Police and Crime Commissioner has agreed to take the convening role to support the specified and relevant authorities meet the requirements and to ensure the funding is spent in line with the Home Office criteria.
- 5.6 The Duty provides sufficient flexibility so that the relevant organisations will engage and work together in the most effective local way and through local partnerships. Individual organisations listed as specified authorities have a requirement to ensure they are delivering against the Duty.

Who are the specified and relevant authorities?



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6 INITIAL ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The Home Office commissioned Crest Advisory to work with local areas to assess their readiness to deliver the Duty and provide tailored support. After thorough consultation, Surrey have been assessed as 'preparing'. It was stated that partners are motivated and engaged and needs assessments, strategies and community engagement in related areas provide a strong basis to meet Duty requirements.

7 DEFINING SERIOUS VIOLENCE

- 7.1 Each area should determine what amounts to and is defined as Serious Violence in their local area. The guidance makes clear that violence is not limited to physical violence against the person. It provides that, for the purposes of the Duty, violence includes:
- domestic abuse,
 - sexual offences,
 - violence against property
 - threats of violence but does not include terrorism.
- 7.2 This does not mean that specified authorities will be compelled to take action on these crime types specifically linked to the Duty alone, but instead that they should consider whether violence of these kinds amounts to serious violence in their area, in accordance with the factors set out above.
- 7.3 Specified authorities should also include a focus on public space youth violence including; homicide, violence against the person which may include both knife crime and gun crime, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in county lines drug dealing.
- 7.4 In determining what amounts to serious violence in their local area, the specified authorities must take into account the following factors:
- the maximum penalty which could be imposed for any offence involved in the violence;
 - the impact of the violence on any victim;
 - the prevalence of the violence in the area, and
 - the impact of the violence on the community in the area.

8 WHAT ARE SPECIFIED AUTHORITIES EXPECTED TO DO?

- 8.1 **Strategic needs assessment:** In order to identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in their areas, and so far as it is possible to do so, the causes of that serious violence, the partnership should work together to establish the local 'strategic needs assessment' – identifying the drivers of serious violence acting in the local area and the cohorts of people most affected or at risk. This will require the sharing of relevant data and useful information held by the individual organisations subject to the Duty.
- 8.2 Surrey will need to create problem profiles for different types of violence that we currently don't have an accurate picture of, e.g., town centre violence and serious

youth violence. Other areas, such as domestic abuse, will require less focus in this particular phase of Duty preparations as we already have a detailed understanding of this issue in our county.

8.3 **Preparation, publication and implementation of a strategy:** The local partnership must collectively develop a strategy which should outline the multi-agency response that the partnership will take to address the drivers identified in the strategic needs assessment and work to prevent and reduce serious violence in the specified local area. The strategy should set out how the proposed actions will enhance and complement existing local arrangements responding to serious violence. Part of this work may include consideration of joint funding or investment to support local early interventions and responses.

8.4 The Need Assessment and Strategy must be published as soon as possible when finalised, with the first strategy due by the 31st of January 2024. These documents must be kept under review on at least an annual basis.

9 GOVERNANCE

9.1 A Serious Violence Operational Group has been established, with representatives from each specified authority, focusing on the following aims:

- Oversee the successful adoption of the Serious Violence Duty for the Health and Wellbeing Board, in line with the Home Office's milestones,
- Support the wider partnership in its awareness and understanding of the Serious Violence Duty,
- Define serious violence,
- Coordinate the sharing of relevant data, insights, and information to inform the problem profile/strategic needs assessment for the area,
- Support the development and implementation of a strategy to identify and mitigate the risks identified and agree an approach to preventing serious violence (by January 2024),
- Review the strategy and delivery plan annually to ensure it remains current and is reducing violence across Surrey.

9.2 The Operational Group will report into a Serious Violence Reduction Executive. Their remit will be for:

- Members to provide strategic support and updates
- Providing leadership and removing strategic challenges and barriers.
- To work as a partnership and make joint decisions to deliver the Duty, particularly overseeing the development of the Strategic Needs Assessment, Serious Violence Reduction Strategy and Delivery Plan.
- Support national Campaigning and awareness raising

9.3 The Executive will report into the Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Assembly and to the Community Safety Partners as required. There will be a supportive relationship between the Executive and the Prevention and Wider Determinant Board.

10 INFORMATION SHARING

- 10.1 Duty legislation includes specific provisions to support partners to share information, intelligence, and knowledge to prevent and reduce serious violence (see sections 16 and 17 of Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the PCSC Act). These provisions create information sharing gateways to permit disclosure to a specified authority of information held by specified authorities. The new information sharing gateways are intended to enable the sharing of relevant data where existing powers alone would not be sufficient.

11 FUNDING

- 11.1 To support the local partnership in meeting the requirements of the Duty and to develop interventions the Home Office have allocated each local policing area funding.
- 11.2 *Surrey's allocation is:*
- 22/23 - Labour Costs: £47,417.32, non-labour costs: £0
 - 23/24 - Labour costs: £222,555.91, non-labour costs: £119,212.44
 - 24/25 - Labour costs: £211,864.69, non-labour costs: £334,965.78
- 11.3 Labour costs broadly include the costs associated with preparing and developing the SNAs and local strategies for the local government area or areas (which coincide with or falls within your police area), including familiarisation costs, training, meeting costs, analysis, and strategy development.
- 11.4 Non-labour costs include the costs associated with implementing the specified authorities' local strategy to reduce serious violence (e.g., interventions). This can include the salary costs for delivering these interventions. Funding is not for capital expenditure except where it can be legitimately used to strengthen the response to Serious Violence i.e. CCTV
- 11.5 Local policing bodies (PCC) are the grant holders for Serious Violence Duty funding. Reason being they occupy unique positions due to their responsibility for the totality of policing in their area, services for victims of crime, and shared objectives on prevention and reduction of serious violence.
- 11.6 Together, the specified authorities should be jointly accountable for delivering the key milestones of this grant, following allocation of funding by the local policing body. Joint decision making needs to be at the center of all Duty-related activity. It is for this reason that a requirement of funding is for each area to produce or repurpose a partnership agreement by the end of the 22/23 financial year to demonstrate how they intend to strengthen their local multi-agency structures.

12 Delivery to date

- 12.1 To date work has progressed under the direction of the Surrey Serious Violence Operational Group. This group have overseen the recruitment of the Serious Violence Programme Lead, the development of a Partnership Agreement and the return to the Home Office of the draft delivery plan.

12.2 In line with the Home Office expectations the partnership is near completion of Surrey's first Serious Violence Needs Assessment, which was developed by the Surrey Office of Data Analytics. The data and supporting information in the Needs Assessment was used in a workshop in September to inform a wide range of partners in setting the partnership priorities and begin to write Surrey's Serious Violence Reduction Strategy.

12.3 The Strategy is currently in the draft stages and will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in December before it is submitted to the Home Office in January.

13 Conclusion

13.1 Serious violence has a devastating impact on lives of victims and families, and instils fear within communities and is extremely costly to society. The Serious Violence Duty provides an opportunity to work together to prevent harm and increase confidence in neighbourhoods. With insight and data we can develop interventions and support which will not only reduce the violence but prevent the causal factors that allow violence to grow. The role of the ICB is paramount to understanding the wider determinants of serious violence and supporting the placed based preventative work.

9 CONTACT INFORMATION

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