



**West
Yorkshire
Policing
& Crime**

**Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire**



**Alison Lowe
Deputy Mayor for
Policing & Crime**

Item 7

Report to: Police and Crime Panel

Date: 12 April 2024

Subject: **Violence Reduction Partnership Update**

Report of: Alison Lowe, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

Author: West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership, West Yorkshire
Combined Authority

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Police and Crime Panel on the work and progress of the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP).
- 1.2 To provide the Police and Crime Panel with information on the Serious Violence Legal Duty, and the collaboration between the VRP and key partners in this area.

2. OVERVIEW

- 2.1 The VRP was first introduced in 2019 following funding from the Home Office to establish a Violence Reduction Unit in the county.
- 2.2 In June 2023, the Violence Reduction Unit undertook a re-brand to become known as a VRP to better reflect this being a partnership approach to serious violence.
- 2.3 Under the Serious Violence Duty, the Mayor holds powers to distribute funding, convene partnerships and to scrutinise the response of the specified authorities.
- 2.4 The Serious Violence Legal Duty (SVD) commenced on 31 January 2023, placing joint, and equal, responsibility on Police, Local Authorities, Probation, Fire and Rescue, Youth Justice Services (YJS) and Integrated Care Boards (ICB) to, through a partnership approach, identify and respond to the causes and impact of serious violence. The VRP are not a specified authority under the SVD, but have played a key role in supporting partners to prepare for the new responsibility.

3. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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- 3.1 Various equality, diversity and inclusion factors are embedded in the work to address serious violence in West Yorkshire and are touched on in the following report.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN WEST YORKSHIRE

- 4.1 The focus of the work of the VRP is on children and young people, although work is undertaken more widely in order to address wider issues linked to serious violence.
- 4.2 Specific work has been undertaken to put children and young people at the heart of the work of the VRP, and that of its partners, particularly through the development and implementation of Child First. This work aims to follow a trauma informed approach and to put children’s voices at the centre, involving them in decisions whenever possible.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications to be considered in this paper.
- 5.2 Top level information on budget allocations for the VRP and the SVD can be found in the following report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal implications to be considered in this paper.

7. SUPPORTING PAPERS

- **Violence Reduction Partnership Update**
 - **Appendix A** - WY ATR Programme Structure 23-24
 - **Appendix B** - Serious Violence Funded Interventions

CONTACT INFORMATION

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West Yorkshire Combined Authority – Violence Reduction Partnership – Serious Violence Duty

Update to the Police and Crime Panel – April 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) was first introduced in 2019 following funding from the Home Office to establish a Violence Reduction Unit in the county. We undertook a re-brand to become known as a VRP in June 2023 to better reflect this being a partnership approach to serious violence.
- 1.2. We have received £4,388,080 in 23/24 (Year 2) from the Home Office as part of a three-year arrangement to continue to lead and coordinate the local response to serious violence. For the financial year 2024/25 we have been allocated £4,341,877 to continue this work. A Delivery Plan setting out our approach for this next financial year was submitted to the Home Office on 8 March 2024, as requested and we are awaiting confirmation this has been accepted.
- 1.3. As in previous years, there are several requirements attached to this grant, including the need to secure match funding from local partners in the form of resources, staffing or contributions to intervention delivery. Details of the required amounts for 2023-24 and 2024/25 are below:
 - 2023/24: 15% of a VRU's 2021/22 allocation = £505,500
 - 2024/25: 20% of a VRU's 2021/22 allocation = £674,000

2. Serious Violence Duty

- 2.1. Under the Serious Violence Duty, the Mayor holds powers to distribute funding, convene partnerships and to scrutinise the response of the specified authorities. Additional funding to support delivery of the Serious Violence Duty was allocated by the Home Office to the Mayor to cover labour and intervention delivery costs for specified and relevant authorities as outlined by the Duty. This money was for the periods January to March 2023, and financial years 2023-24 and 2024-25, and for West Yorkshire amounts to:
 - 22/23 labour costs: £21,553.33, non-labour costs: £42,728.41
 - 23/24 labour costs: £101,161.78, non-labour costs: £129,017.47
 - 24/25 labour costs: £96,302.13, non-labour costs: £65,436.47

3. Serious Violence Legal Duty (SVD)

- 3.1. The Legal Duty commenced on 31 January 2023, placing joint and equal responsibility on Police, Local Authorities, Probation, Fire and Rescue, Youth

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Justice Services (YJS) and Integrated Care Boards (ICB) to, through a partnership approach, identify and respond to the causes and impact of serious violence by:

- Sharing data, consulting with communities for the purposes of developing a Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA).
 - Developing a Response Strategy based on the identified need.
 - Publishing the Needs Assessment and Response Strategy (by 31 January 2024).
 - Implementing, monitoring, and reviewing the Assessment and Response Strategy.
- 3.2. For the purposes of the SVD, local authority YJSs are a separate specified authority, and so are treated as independent to the local authority and therefore responsible for engaging with the partnership. The VRP are however not a specified authority under the SVD.
- 3.3. To respond to the duty and responsibilities, West Yorkshire partners agreed to build on existing partnership arrangements:
- Identified a Strategic ‘Duty Holder’ from each organisation who has strategic responsibility.
 - On behalf of specified authorities, the VRP coordinated and facilitated the development of the Needs Assessment and Strategy in 23/24.
 - Duty Holders are to be represented on West Yorkshire Strategic Executive where decisions regarding Serious Violence Duty and funding would be made.
 - Implementation of the SVD Strategy to be undertaken through place based (Community Safety Partnership/SV) partnerships with representation from all SVD specified authorities at local level.
 - All districts to develop an Implementation Plan detailing their delivery of the Strategy.
 - Duty Holders to be held accountable to the Deputy Mayor through reporting to the Partnership Executive Group (PEG).
 - On behalf of specified authorities, the VRP submitted the SNA and Response Strategy to the Home Office, both are published on VRP and Police websites (31 January 2024) with other duty holders also providing a link.
 - SVD funding has been equally split amongst specified authorities and five CSPs (Community Safety Partnerships) to implement the Duty.
- 3.4. The VRP collated and submitted an advanced delivery plan to the Home Office at the end of January 2024 detailing activities to be delivered to the end of March 2025.
- 3.5. Standard monitoring is also required for the end of each quarter from the five coordinating CSPs to include an Annex A (financial return) and Annex B (activity return).
- 3.6. The Knowledge Hub have continued to work with all responsible authorities to develop the data ask in relation to the information suggested within the duty guidance. Apart from prisons, all data areas have been developing well.

4. Governance

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- 4.1. The VRP continue to report into the Policing and Crime Executive within the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and work with core members (as determined by the Home Office) and wider partners from across the system through our Partnership Delivery and Serious Violence Executive Group. Accountability also continues through the Home Office reporting arrangements.

5. Key areas of work

5.1. West Yorkshire Adversity, Trauma and Resilience Programme (ATR)

- 5.1.1. The VRP continue to work with the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership (Integrated Care Board - ICB) on the joint Adversity, Trauma and Resilience programme, with the shared ambition of working together with people with lived experience and colleagues across all sector organisations to ensure that West Yorkshire is a trauma informed and responsive system by 2030. You are invited to register for access to the trauma-informed hub, using this link: www.westyorkshiretraumainformed.co.uk.
- 5.1.2. This programme works across the whole system and the governance/formal meeting structure managed jointly by the ICB and VRP is attached as Appendix A.
- 5.1.3. Some recent highlights from the programme include:
- Trauma Informed training provided to the senior management team at HMP Wealstun and next steps planning to support the prison to become a trauma informed organisation and setting. Review of the current support and activity in HMP Leeds is also ongoing.
 - Fourth annual three-day Knowledge Exchange held during early March, providing an opportunity to share good practice, and learning from across West Yorkshire and globally using a mixed online and in person approach. All content from the virtual event during Days 1 and 2 is available via our Hub.
 - Education Awareness week from 19 February.
 - Continued organisation and facilitation of a Trauma Informed North Group for strategic leads from across the North of England.
 - Included as a case study in Home Office Trauma-Informed Practice: Learning from Experience of Violence Reduction Unit delivery 2021-2023 report.
 - Launch of the readiness checklist and charter for organisations to assess their status on being trauma informed.
 - Launch of the maturity matrix for Place to complete to understand the status on being trauma informed across their system.
 - Development of programme Outcomes Framework that will be available during early 2024-25.
 - Applications received for the Adversity, Trauma and Resilience Fellowship programme during 2024-25.
 - Development of a Training Coordinator post that will be hosted by the ICB and part funded by the VRP during 2024-25.

5.2. Child First

- 5.2.1. The VRP launched an ambition to be a Child First VRP – this is about following a trauma informed approach and putting children’s voices at the centre of everything we do, involving them in decisions whenever possible. Seeing children as individuals, recognising their strengths, and building positive relationships. We recognise there are fantastic examples of this work across West Yorkshire, so we are building on this to create a co-ordinated, consistent approach so all services a child meets will work in this way.
- 5.2.2. Before we can implement a Child First approach, we need to know what it means to ‘be’ Child First. To do this, we are co-producing a framework with children across West Yorkshire.
- 5.2.3. A Child First working group has also been established with a wide array of partners also keen to be Child First.
- 5.2.4. If anyone would like more information around the approach and our ambitions moving forward, please get in a touch and a member of the Knowledge Hub will be able to support.

5.3. Knowledge Hub

- 5.3.1. All of our published VRP research is published at the following [link](#).
- 5.3.2. In January 2024, five locality based Strategic Needs Assessments were developed and shared with partners along with a public facing West Yorkshire wide [Strategic Needs Assessment](#).
- 5.3.3. A comprehensive [evidence synthesis](#) has also been produced exploring the root causes of violence, the risk and protective factors that can influence or deter a person's involvement in violence and exploitation. This report is derived from the rolling research programme undertaken by the Knowledge Hub. The product compliments the Needs Assessments to allow a holistic view to be taken in violence reduction activities.
- 5.3.4. Finally, the refreshed WY wide [Response Strategy](#) has also been produced and published
- 5.3.5. Key to successful delivery of programmes and interventions is a culture of continuous evaluation. The Knowledge Hub are managing several commissioned evaluations to explore the impact of the A&E Navigator programme, the Custody diversion programme, the Ivison Trust’s Parent Liaison Officer programme, our Mentoring scheme in schools and the innovative Online Harms Social Media programme.
- 5.3.6. A Theory of Change and Evaluation Toolkit is due for imminent launch across the partnership which will in turn help partners across West Yorkshire to deliver informed interventions, capture relevant data and ultimately evaluate the impact of their work.

5.4. Intervention Delivery 2023/24

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- 5.4.1. A programme of interventions are commissioned by the VRP and partners, designed to deter, reduce and navigate people away from violence. Interventions are evidence led, and are designed to develop evidence and learning through delivery of test bed pilots. These interventions operate on a West Yorkshire and place-based level working with partners across the VCSE and statutory sectors, including by providing funding to each CSP.
- 5.4.2. Up to the end of December 2023, 53 interventions have been funded through core VRP budget.
- 5.4.3. We are required by the Home Office to deploy resource equivalent to no less than 30% of the value of our 2023/24 core grant on the delivery of interventions assessed by the Youth Endowment Fund toolkit as either high impact or moderate impact with a high evidence confidence rating. This equates to £1,316,424 during this financial year and has been used to fund 20 interventions including A&E Navigator services in Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees, with a service in Wakefield currently being implemented; a West Yorkshire Custody Diversion programme with Liaison and Diversion and St Giles Trust; a West Yorkshire Focussed Deterrence intervention with local authority partners and West Yorkshire Police and a small number of local interventions with CSPs.
- 5.4.4. A further £793,396 of our overall budget has been utilised to fund the remaining 30 interventions which includes mentoring activity in schools and HMYOI Wetherby, education programmes using VR technology, targeted work focussed on online harms and a wide range of smaller community-based interventions to support a local CSP led response.
- 5.4.5. As part of the SVD activity there has been 10 interventions commissioned using the additional monies provided by the Home Office to support duty holders in their implementation and response to the SVD. An overview of all interventions is provided on Appendix B.
- 5.4.6. During the first nine months of 2023/24 these interventions combined have engaged with and supported 10,630 young people aged 24 or under, 401 individuals aged 25 or over and provided workforce training and development to 125 individuals.

5.5. Women and Girl's Safety Unit

- 5.5.1. A new unit has been established to help tackle violence against women and girls. The launch of the unit was formally announced on the 8 March 2024, to coincide with International Women's Day and the Women of West Yorkshire event.
- 5.5.2. The Unit consists of representatives from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, the Violence Reduction Partnership and West Yorkshire Police. The Unit's work will focus on expediting the delivery the West Yorkshire Safety of Women and Girls [Strategy](#) and holding West Yorkshire Police to account, with a particular focus on improving investigations, and risk assessments.
- 5.5.3. To support this work, the Violence Reduction Partnership are producing a detailed violence against women and girls Problem Profile for West Yorkshire.
- 5.5.4. Note that more detail was provided to the Police and Crime Panel at the March 2024 Panel meeting, in the West Yorkshire Safety of Women and Girls Update paper.

5.6. Community Engagement

5.6.1. Leaders Unlocked

Leaders Unlocked have re-launch into their second year of delivery and have recruited children & young people aged 14-25 to join a new youth commission, providing them with the skills training, tools and support to A focus was placed on children in this recruitment round to align with our child first ambition.

In October we held our first West Yorkshire Youth Commission event where the findings from their first-year work was presented. as part of the 'Big Conversation' on their agreed priority issues:

Their first meeting was held on the 16 March to welcome new members and introduce them to the VRP. The WY Youth Commission's focus will be on creating a four-pillar campaign around their priority issues working alongside our own communications and engagement team. Please see Communications section for more details.

- Rehabilitation and prevention
- Community relationships and life
- Attitudes, and violence towards women
- Gangs, drugs, and knife crime

5.6.2. VRP Community Advisory Group (CAG)

We have held two online interim meeting sessions and one face to face community advisory group meetings. These meetings entailed; updates from the VRP on our updated needs assessment and response strategy. This meeting was followed on by discussion of key priority areas CAG wanted to focus on for the new financial year. We also set up our first VRP Facebook which will allow CAG members to support us with our key messaging and connections with the community.

5.6.3. CREST Advisory, Home Office Support

The work with CREST Advisory concluded at the beginning of October 2023. Crest Advisory have supported us with our community engagement framework as well as provided us with a slide deck outlining good practice around community engagement and community co-production nationally across various VRU/ VRP's. The final draft engagement framework has been completed and our engagement lead is finalising this product for partners to utilise by March 2024.

5.6.4. Inclusive Engagement

As part of our ongoing work with the engagement framework and engagement strategy the engagement lead will be discussing with wider teams, West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Policing and Crime Team around inclusive engagement and ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of our engagement work.

5.6.5. Coproduction

Bradford Youth Justice were awarded £24,000 for this year's coproduction work. The research completed by CNet, a third sector organisation, highlighted the need for further work which will seek to focus on community cohesion supported by working with local grassroots organisations. Bradford Youth Justice and two community organisations (rap artist and drama therapist) have come together in consortium to work with the community to promote community cohesion and develop appropriately co-produced resources. The project will involve working with up to 80 young people across the Bradford City Ward area. The aim is to empower the voices of vulnerable young people across the area through 1-1 mentoring, creative group sessions and finally to host a large community event to showcase this work on the 28 March as part of Bradford anti-violence month. This event had attendees from across the community including parents, professionals, and young people.

5.6.6. Bradford Multi-Faith Event

The VRP hosted our first Multi-Faith Event on 26 February, introduced by West Yorkshire's Inclusivity Champion, Fatima Khan-Shah. Our aim was to showcase the work of the faith community in its support in the reduction of serious violence, and bring together multi-faith communities to discuss what more can be done to tackle serious violence. This event was held in partnership with the West Yorkshire Police Safer Communities team in Bradford. We had a range of speakers attending to discuss our new VRP faith & belief toolkit workstream led by the Knowledge Hub which will provide faith communities with the recognition and support to building a strong, effective, and sustainable partnership to reduce serious violence. We also had speakers from the West Yorkshire Police Engagement Team, Safer Communities Team in Bradford, VRU West Midlands faith lead, Bradford cathedral education leads, and guest speaker Sarvat Mulla on strengthening faith communities, discussing spiritual based abuse.

We held an asset mapping workshop to discuss four key questions:

- What faith groups/organisations do you know of in West Yorkshire and what do they offer? Both within places of worship and in the community
- Is there an appetite for a West Yorkshire wide faith network?
- How can the VRP support and collaborate with your faith community?
- How does your faith community engage with young people?

The feedback from the event has been extremely positive. We were able to engage with new partners, put steps in place to support the new faith and belief toolkit workstream and discuss the priorities of the faith community who have requested support for local faith networks. Our faith work is now ongoing, we are planning to work alongside the Inclusivity Champion to map out our next steps

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and in the next few months engagement will be supporting faith consultations to support the faith and belief toolkit.

5.6.7. Showcase event

A full day showcase event has been scheduled for 14 May 2024.

5.6.8. Community Leaders Programme

We have commissioned our first Community Leaders Programme which started w/c 7 February 2024. As part of our first cohort, 20 community leaders and emerging leaders are taking part in training over three months which include areas such as leadership, project management, community empowerment and trauma informed training. By investing in our community, we can ensure that they are equipped with the right skills and knowledge to increase their impact across the community. The final showcase event is scheduled alongside our showcase event in May.

5.6.9. Education Engagement, 'Just Don't' Campaign

The Mayor's 'Just Don't' male behaviour change campaign was launched in September. Following on from this, engagement has been working to further develop education networks across West Yorkshire to see how we can further support raising awareness of our work. As a result, we have attended six schools/colleges from Oct-Dec 2023, to promote this campaign and we continue to do so in this quarter. We have collected a variety of feedback from young people, reaching approximately 500 people at secondary school level. Young people were engaged in discussions around sexual harassment and experiences in West Yorkshire. We were able to promote support and signposting networks, and feedback to school's the areas of need that young people have flagged at their school.

5.7. Communications

5.7.1. Community Leaders Programme

In February we announced our new West Yorkshire community ambassadors, who are being supported to become leaders in tackling serious violence. We also captured a series of videos of the community leaders talking about the benefits and their ambitions to address serious violence as part of this work. These have been published across our social media platforms and continue to be shared.

5.7.2. West Yorkshire Youth Commission Campaign

Following the West Yorkshire Youth Commission's publication of their 'Big Conversation' report containing a series of aims and partnership recommendations, we are planning a four-strand campaign during 2024/25 responding to the key themes which they identified. This is to be a co-produced campaign with the Youth Commission members, working with them from beginning to end in shaping the approach and content. Preparatory work has now begun, and an initial meeting was undertaken with members at the end of February to develop the content of the brief.

5.7.3. New Animation Series

We are planning a further series of VRP online animations, building on the previous assets developed in 2022/23. These will cover our Child First ambitions, the contents of the latest Needs Assessment and Response Strategy as well as

further focus on the West Yorkshire Youth Commissions objectives. These are due to be finalised by the end of March 2024.

5.7.4. Leeds Knife Angel

The VRP communications team [supported the arrival of the Knife Angel](#) to Leeds throughout February. In particular, [the use of VRP funded virtual reality headsets](#) that were used during this period. During the month, students from 22 schools attended the Royal Armouries Museum to take part in an immersive virtual reality learning package. The technology provides various scenarios associated with serious violence and prompts users to consider their response. The VRP comms team filmed training taking place among those partners delivering the tool and posted online videos and interviews with key agencies during the knife angel's presence in the city. It prompted lots of coverage both locally and nationally about the VR headset approach, including a 3-minute package on BBC Look North. The month also officially kickstarted Project Shield, which is the city's longer term co-ordinated response to knife crime, based on a more positive and hopeful conversation with young people, underpinned by a strong partnership approach to identify and protect those most at risk. More than 5,000 young people are estimated to have taken part across the city's 44 secondary schools and a range of other youth organisations.

5.7.5. Bradford Knife Angel Legacy/ Anti-violence month

The VRP communications team is assisting in the publicity of activities during Bradford's anti-violence month across March and April. We are part of a partnership press release to launch the series of events, which is born out of the previous presence of the Knife Angel to the city. We are filming with young people at Bradford College as part of a youth conference. They are sharing their views/feelings on issues of serious violence, which will be posted on our social media channels and across those of our partners. Likewise, we are filming with young people involved in the VRP funded 'Breaking the Cycle' sculpture work, which will again be used for social media purposes.

5.7.6. Trauma Informed Education Awareness Week/ Knowledge Exchange

A trauma informed education awareness week began on 19 February 2024 led by the West Yorkshire Health & Care Partnership in tandem with the VRP. This was later followed by a 'Knowledge Exchange'. Together, [we shared information around our ambitions to become trauma informed system by 2030](#). This included the use of the VRP animation on the theme as well as other assets specifically prepared for the week.

5.7.7. Bradford Multi-Faith Event

We published a press release around the VRP led multi-faith event in Bradford on 26 February 2024 and how the faith community has a critical role in supporting our approach to ensure West Yorkshire remains safe, just, and inclusive. This generated lots of interest and coverage across both print and broadcast media. Videos of the different faith organisations attending were captured, sharing their views on the role that faith/ belief can play in influencing important agendas. The content was shared on social media and continues to be used in conjunction with our progress from the meeting.

5.7.8. Child Exploitation Awareness Day

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On national child awareness exploitation day on 18th March, we continued to highlight our [ongoing partnership campaign ‘start the conversation’](#), part funded via the VRP and led by WYP. This campaign encourages conversations between parents/ carers and young people about online safety/ awareness.

5.7.9. Celebrating Education Event

A press release and social media filming is planned for a VRP led event ‘Celebrating Education’ at the end of March. It brings together key agencies and groups to share information and knowledge to create supportive learning environments.

5.7.10. Spotlight Features

We continue to film ‘spotlight features’ on our VRP interventions and partnership workstreams to showcase the work taking place across West Yorkshire to address serious violence. Most recently, we have captured content from the Youth Association on the subject of Knife Crime, the work of Getaway Girls, and also the feedback from young people at Hemsworth’s Outwood Grange Academy about their use of the virtual reality headsets.

5.7.11. Retail Crime/ Violence National Publication

In March, the West Yorkshire VRP funded use of SmartTag technology to combat retail crime and violence was [showcased in the Association of Police and Crime Commissioner’s national publication](#) ‘In Focus’ (P.17) following a submission by the VRP comms team.

5.7.12. Partnership Newsletter

Since its inception in July 2023, the Violence Reduction Partnership has continued to publish an external Newsletter capturing key activities and opportunities, ensuring awareness of the ongoing efforts to address serious violent crime. Partners are encouraged to share the documents across their networks, which is published on the VRP social media pages and sent via e-mail. The next edition is due by the end of March 2024.