

Title: Serious Violence Duty  
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 Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jim Sinnott  
 Wards of the District directly affected: All

<b>Approvals required</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>		Councillor Jim Sinnott
<b>Finance</b>		Andrew Rollins
<b>Legal Services</b>		
<b>Chief Executive</b>		Chris Elliott
<b>Head of Service(s)</b>		Marianne Rolfe
<b>Section 151 Officer</b>		Andrew Rollins
<b>Monitoring Officer</b>		Graham Leach
<b>Leadership Co-ordination Group</b>		
<b>Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?</b>	Yes	
<b>Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?</b>	No	
<b>Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?</b>	No	
<b>Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?</b>	Yes, Forward Plan item 1,390	
<b>Accessibility Checked?</b>	Yes	

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## Summary

To provide Cabinet with an understanding of the requirements on the council in meeting the Serious Violence Duty and to sign up to the Partnership Agreement to discharge the Duty in the form of a countywide, and local delivery plan.

## Recommendations

- (1) That Cabinet approve the proposed approach set out in the Partnership Agreement (Appendix A) to discharge the duty.
  - (2) That Cabinet notes that scrutiny of delivery of the duty is included and reported to Overview & Scrutiny Committee under the Council's duty to scrutinise Crime & Disorder in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006
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### 1 Reasons for the Recommendations

- 1.1 On 31 January 2023 a new duty on the Council came into effect – the Serious Violence Duty. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 sets out the new duty on 'specified authorities', including Warwick District Council, to conduct a Strategic Needs Assessment; (2) develop a Serious Violence Prevention Strategy; and (3) develop and implement a Serious Violence Delivery Plan for the local area.
- 1.2 The Duty requires specified authorities to work together to share information, target their interventions, collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities.
- 1.3 The Act also introduces Serious Violence Homicide Reviews which requires specified authorities to carry out a Review into the circumstances of certain homicides where the victim was aged 18 or over, and the events surrounding their death involved, or were likely to have involved the use of an offensive weapon. These Reviews will be similar to Safeguarding Serious Case Reviews or Domestic Homicide Reviews.

#### 1.4 Background

- 1.4.1 The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 - Serious Violence Duty came into effect on 31 January 2023.
- 1.4.2 The above Act places a duty on specific organisations known as the 'specified authorities' to plan and collaborate to prevent and tackle serious violence in their local area. Specified Authorities are:
  - **Local authorities** – District/Borough and County Councils
  - **Police** - Chief Officers of police for police areas in England and Wales
  - **Justice** - Probation Services and Youth Offending Teams
  - **Fire and rescue authorities** operating in England and Wales
  - **Health** - Integrated Care Boards including Public Health
- 1.4.3 There is also a requirement that educational authorities (schools, colleges, independent educational establishments, and approved premises) and secure estates (prisons and youth custody), must collaborate with specified authorities to prevent and reduce serious violence in the area. These are referred to as

relevant authorities.

- 1.4.4 The Home Office has amended the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Sections 5,6,17 and 18, to require Community Safety Partnerships to prepare strategies to prevent people from becoming involved in serious violence in the area and reducing instances of serious violence in that area.
- 1.4.5 The Police and Justice Act 2006 19 (11) Local Authority scrutiny of crime and disorder matters has been amended to include serious violence.

## **1.5 Why has the duty been introduced?**

- 1.5.1 Serious violence has a devastating impact on the lives of victims and families and instils fear within communities and is extremely costly to society. Incidents of serious violence involving knives and other weapons has increased significantly, with regular media broadcasts of young people sustaining life changing injuries or death as a result.
- 1.5.2 The Duty is a key part of the Government's programme of work to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence: taking a multi-agency approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focusing on prevention and early intervention, and informed by evidence.
- 1.5.3 In addition to tough law enforcement, there needs to be an understanding in order to address the factors that cause someone to commit violent crime in the first place, this includes where coercion is a factor regarding vulnerable children and adults, in particular where they are groomed, exploited, or cuckooed. The Duty aims to ensure that agencies are focussed on their own activity and multi-agency work to prevent and reduce serious violence in their area.

## **1.6 The Proposed Approach**

- 1.6.1 The legislation allows two or more specified authorities to collaborate to prevent and reduce serious violence in a "local area". This means that authorities are permitted to work across local government boundaries and in doing so, collaborate on strategies which cover areas greater than that which they primarily provide services in.
- 1.6.2 The Duty does not specify a 'lead' authority to be responsible for coordinating activity. However, there is a general consensus across partner agencies, including District and Borough Council community safety leads, that Warwickshire County Council is best placed to take the lead on behalf of all the specified authorities for the strategic and analytical work and responses to the Home Office on how the Duty is being met, with local CSPs, Districts and Boroughs leading on local multi-agency delivery plans and interventions.
- 1.6.3 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has specific functions granted to them through the legislation, including a requirement to administer and distribute funding provided by the Home Office. The funding allocated for Warwickshire is £575,214 over 3 years.
- 1.6.4 It has been proposed that funding related to the Serious Violence Duty is provided to Warwickshire County Council to act as lead authority to undertake the following on behalf of all of the specified authorities:

- Undertake a countywide Strategic Needs Assessment but with deep dives into areas most affected by serious violence, or where the causal factors related to serious violence are evident.
- Agreeing a joint Warwickshire Delivery Plan that provides all the specified authorities and Community Safety Partnerships with the evidence that they are meeting the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty.
- Funding a dedicated Countywide lead officer to support all the specific partners to meet the duty. This approach is similar to the Prevent Co-ordinator post already hosted by Warwickshire County Council.
- Development and implementation of a Contextual Safeguarding, Common Assessment Framework for serious violence interventions, delivered to all specified authorities and relevant authorities.
- Training programme for front line teams on the Duty, signs and symptoms of serious violence involvement, intervention options and clear referral pathways. This will include ensuring specified authorities have processes in place for data protection compliance, designated lead officers and referral pathways.
- Expansion of the current Whole Schools Violence Prevention programme, accessible by all secondary schools in the county.
- Develop bespoke interventions that improve pathways into support, such as access to mental health, employment, or vocational attainment.

1.6.5 Local responses, based on the findings of the Strategic Needs Assessments, will be led by local partners through their respective Community Safety Partnerships, with the support of the Warwickshire County Council lead officer as required. Home Office Serious Violence Duty funding will be allocated to each Community Safety Partnership to deliver local responses.

1.6.6 By adopting this approach the burden on all specified and relevant authorities, including Warwick District Council, in meeting the Duty is reduced and South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership will receive funding to deliver tailored local responses, embedded through local community involvement, case management and governance structures.

## **1.7 Progress towards the Duty**

1.7.1 The Home Office have commissioned Crest Advisory Group to reach out and work with the specified authorities on their readiness and to provide tailored support to local areas. The Home Office is convening a National Oversight Group (NOG) which will act as a crucial body, monitoring, and scrutinising Duty activity.

1.7.2 To fulfil the Serious Violence Duty, the Home Office has set out a series of mandatory requirements for specified authorities to deliver against with clear time frames. A considerable amount of work has already been undertaken by officers to prepare for the Serious Violence Duty, as below:

<b>SV Requirement</b>	<b>Current situation:</b>
<p><b>March 2023:</b> Specified authorities will need to provide an existing or produce a new Partnership Agreement (<b>Appendix A</b>) to demonstrate that all the specified authorities under the legislation are included in the local delivery of the Duty, and that decision making is being shared between them.</p>	<p>A Partnership Agreement has been prepared (<b>Appendix A</b>).</p> <p>The Agreement defines the 'local area' as Warwickshire.</p> <p>The Agreement sets out the governance arrangements at county and local CSP/District/Borough level.</p>
<p><b>30<sup>th</sup> April 2023 – Delivery Plan</b> - The specified authorities will need to jointly agree the activity they will deliver under the Duty.</p>	<p>Commencement of a Warwickshire Partnership Delivery Plan is underway.</p> <p>Local CSP/District/Borough delivery plans are currently being developed and the South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership will be considering the delivery plan for Warwick and Stratford Districts at the SWCSP Board meeting on 28 September 2023.</p>
<p><b>January 2024 – Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA)</b> - must be created jointly by all of the specified authorities within a local area in order to formulate a robust, common understanding of the serious violence problem within that area. The SNA will need to be used to develop a definition of serious violence for the purpose of the Duty and inform the development of a local strategy to address findings.</p>	<p>The development of a Strategic Needs Assessment is underway.</p>
<p><b>January 2024 – Local Strategy</b> - the local strategy will need to set out how actions being undertaken by the specified authorities will address findings of the SNA in alignment with the area's local definition of serious violence. This is where the specified authorities can demonstrate that they are meeting the multi-agency elements, providing both short-term and long-term solutions.</p>	<p>The Warwickshire Serious Violence Prevention Strategy has been developed and was approved by the Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board in December 2022.</p>

## 1.8 Evidence Base

- 1.8.1 The increase in serious violence, in particular from county lines drugs related violence, is impacting nationally and locally with children and vulnerable adults both involved in drugs and violence, but also families, local communities and neighbours are adversely impacted.
- 1.8.2 MoRiLE (Management of Risk in Law Enforcement) methodology was adopted in Warwickshire as part of the agreed CSP Strategic Assessment process 2021 – 2025. It's a tool to enable law enforcement agencies to understand their strategic risk and to prioritise use of resources to target at the issues causing the greatest risk by establishing a local picture of harm across South Warwickshire. A MoRiLE assessment is carried out every two years.
- 1.8.3 MoRiLE methodology assesses impact, physical, psychological, and financial harm to individuals, the community, public expectation, and environmental impact – likelihood, confidence, and organisational position, taking account of a law enforcement organisation's capacity and capability to address that threat.
- 1.8.4 Four risk assessment sessions, covering all crime thematic areas, took place between September and November 2022. CSP Analysts scored the Frequency, Volume, Trend and Forecast sections of each theme for each CSP to identify any emerging issues at CSP level. Further analysis of those emerging issues can then be carried out at the request of each CSP.
- 1.8.5 The South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership MoRiLE risk assessment identifies Serious Violence and County Lines as the highest risk for Warwick District with 'catastrophic risk gradings for victims' and the 'highest risk to organisations'. Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse, Rape & Sexual Offences, and Exploitation are also high risks to the district. The current community safety risk assessment ratings for Warwick District are below:

<b>South Warwickshire MoRiLE Thematic Area and Risk Score 2022</b>	<b>Banding comments</b>
Serious Violence	Highest risk score and Catastrophic risk gradings for victim; Highest risk to the organisation
County Lines	Highest risk score and Catastrophic risk gradings for victim; Highest risk to the organisation
Domestic Abuse	High risk scores to victim and organisation; Critical risk gradings
Substance Misuse	High risk scores to victim, moderate to organisation; Critical risk gradings
Rape and Sexual Offences	High risk scores to victim and organisation; Critical risk gradings
Exploitation	High risk scores to victim and organisation; Critical risk gradings

Road Traffic Collisions – Killed and Seriously Injured	Medium risk score to victim, low risk to organisation; critical gradings
Harmful Practices (FGM, HBV, FM)	Medium risk score to victim and organisation; one critical grading
Cyber Fraud	Medium risk score to victim, high risk score to organisation; no critical gradings
Personal Robbery	Medium risk score to victim, medium risk to organisation; no critical gradings
Residential Burglary (Dwelling)	Medium risk score to victim, low risk to organisation; no critical gradings
ASB - Personal	Low risk score to victim, high risk to organisation; no critical gradings
Environmental	Low risk score to victim, medium risk to organisation; no critical gradings
Hate Crime	Low risk score to victim, medium risk to organisation; no critical gradings
DSFs	Low risk score to victim, low risk to organisation; no critical gradings
Vehicle Crime	Low risk score to victim, low risk to organisation; no critical gradings
Business Crime (including shoplifting)	Low risk score to victim, low risk to organisation; no critical gradings
Nuisance	Low risk score to victim, low risk to organisation; no critical gradings

- 1.8.6 MoRiLE takes into account the risk to victim, organisation and community based on volume, frequency, rate of offences per 1,000 population, the likelihood of the offence occurring, the future trends and the capacity and capability of the organisation to manage the issue.
- 1.8.7 So for example, FGM is medium risk as the reported volume and rates are low but the risk to the victim when an offences occurs is high, and the risk to the wider community is low. When taking into account reported volumes and therefore likelihood of offences based on what we know, the risk is relatively low but there is a risk to the organisation as this is an unknown area with intel gaps. So, the MoRiLE matrix takes account of all of these individual factors and the overall risk score is generated.
- 1.8.8 Vehicle crime volumes may be relatively high but the risk to the victim and community is moderate. Predicted trends in volumes do not suggest this to be an area that is likely to increase in volume, so this also reduces the risk score. The organisation manages this issue well, so it is also lower risk. The matrix scores are a guide to establish a basis for where to focus resources based on need and risk rather than just volume.
- 1.8.9 Also, we have to base the scores on actual incidents occurring in Warwickshire so, FGM is obviously a serious crime but reported offences in Warwickshire are very low. Vehicle crime volumes may seem relatively high but when considering the rate per 1,000 population they may not be as high as the volumes seem. MoRiLE is not about seeing an issue as 'good' or 'bad', but rather about whether the risk is being managed effectively, whether it is an

emerging area of concern, and whether more resources need to be focussed on a specific concern more than another to tackle an increased risk to the victim, community, and organisation

## **2 Alternative Options**

- 2.1 To reject the proposed approach and put in place local arrangements and resources, however this would negatively impact on partnership working, information sharing and collaboration and would not be meeting the requirements of the duty.

## **3 Legal Implications**

- 3.1 Warwick District Council is a 'specified authority' and therefore required to implement the duty.

## **4 Financial**

- 4.1 There is a requirement of staff time, however, once the countywide and local delivery plans are established, there may be financial implications to deliver them. Other than staffing, the aim to is deliver interventions using Home Office funding or through the annual Community Safety Partnership grant funding application to the OPCC.

## **5 Business Strategy**

- 5.1 Warwick District Council has adopted a Business Strategy which sets out key areas for service delivery. Each proposed decision should set out how the report contributes to the delivery of these strategic aims. If it does not contribute to these aims or has a negative effect on them the report should explain why that is the case.
- 5.2 Health, Homes, Communities
- 5.3 Green, Clean, Safe
- Low levels of crime and ASB
- 5.4 Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
- Vibrant town centres
- 5.5 Effective Staff
- All staff are properly trained
  - All staff have the appropriate tools
  - All staff are engaged, empowered, and supported
  - The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours
- 5.6 Maintain or Improve Services
- Focusing on our customer's needs
  - Continuously improve our processes

## **6 Environmental/Climate Change Implications**

- 6.1 No implications.

## **7 Analysis of the effects on Equality**



7.1 No specific implications.

## **8 Data Protection**

8.1 The data protection implications are managed in accordance with the Safe in Warwickshire Community Safety Information Sharing Agreement.

## **9 Health and Wellbeing**

9.1 Serious violence and its causes and impacts are inextricably linked with health and wellbeing, including substance misuse, mental health, and feelings of safety. The Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board has endorsed the Serious Violence Strategy.

## **10 Risk Assessment**

10.1 As previously evidenced by MoRiLE (Management of Risk in Law Enforcement) data, serious violence and county lines are the highest community safety risks to the district and its communities. The Serious Violence Duty puts a requirement on the Council and other specified authorities to have plans in place to address these risks.

### **Background papers:**

Warwickshire Serious Violence Partnership Agreement (Appendix A)

### **Supporting documents:**

[Safer Warwickshire Serious Violence Prevention Strategy.pdf](#)

[Serious Violence Duty – Statutory Guidance](#)

[Police and Justice Act 2006 19 \(11\)](#) - amendments

[Crime & Disorder Act 1998](#) – amendments