



SAFER
WEST SUSSEX
PARTNERSHIP

The Safer West Sussex Partnership

**County Community Safety Agreement 2016 – 20
August 2020**

Important Notes – COVID-19 Pandemic

Extraordinary Implications affecting the SWSP Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2020 and County Community Safety Agreement 2020

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, proactive community safety activity; ordinarily the mainstay of strategic community safety partnerships, has been temporarily reduced, both locally and nationally, to make way for emergency measures to be put in place. These measures involve front line policing, health protection and the creation of local authority community hubs to service vulnerable communities and those most in need.

The Government-imposed lockdown has had a significant impact on the national and local economy and the lives of communities. This includes an impact on the pattern of crime and disorder and the threats and risks posed by different forms of behaviour, which are significantly different to normal.

In recognition of these extraordinary circumstances, a decision was taken locally to change the scope of the SWSP Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2020 (SIA), that informs the County Community Safety Agreement (CCSA), this year by:

- a) focusing its analysis of crime trends on the previous 12 months (April 2019 - March 2020) together with a provisional analysis of the immediate effects of COVID-19;
- b) limiting the scale of its impact on communities and services to just the next 12 months.

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This decision also brings us in line with the emergency legislation - [Local Government and Police and Crime Commissioner \(Coronavirus\) \(Postponement of Elections and Referendums\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2020](#) that extends the elected period for regional Police and Crime Commissioners for a further 12 months; and enables us to continue to align our SIA and CCSA with PCC priority setting.

For the remainder for 2020/21, the focus of the SIA and CCSA must be on existing partnership priorities; whilst paying close attention to new and emerging issues. Depending on the impact of arrangements for the easing of lockdown measures, some areas of business will/may still need to take precedence to allow emergency response work to continue.

A jointly-funded partnership analyst has recently been recruited. Over the forthcoming months, this post-holder will produce problem profiles of all the current strategic priorities and undertake a comprehensive strategic intelligence assessment of threat, risk and harm to help the partnership set its priorities for the next 4-year period 2021 - 2025.

County Community Safety Agreement (2020 – 2021)

In the light of this, this CCSA will be limited to a reach of a 12-month period, whilst plans are put in place to engage in its formal review and renewal for a further 4-year term from 2021 – 2025.

COVID-19 Impact of Lock-Down and Social Distancing on crime figures

The full impact of the Government-imposed lockdown implemented in March 2020 is still emerging and won't be fully known or understood for some time. However, we do know that crime figures are likely to be impacted for this period at least; with an anticipated reduction in some offences, as opportunities for offenders to commit crimes have become fewer, and an increase in others – with some possible causal relationships between the two.

Emerging issues of concern during this period which have been noted by both Europol and the National Crime Agency include offences such as cyber-crime, fraud and online scamming. Cyberattacks against organisations and individuals are expected to increase; along with obtaining property by deception.

Another area of concern is Domestic Abuse with the number of offences during this period, being expected to rise exponentially. Over the first 6 weeks of lockdown, Domestic Abuse figures were already 2 - 4% higher than comparable periods last year and stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour and harassment ('non injury' crimes) were beginning to overtake traditional 'with injury' crimes for the first time. This is significant given last year's spike in violent crime and the implications for services working to secure safety for vulnerable people at home.

During the lockdown period, Sussex Police has had to deal with a number of COVID-19 related public order offences attracting media attention. The incidence of these is not, however, expected to impact on long term trends and should be viewed as a response to the tight parameters imposed by government lockdown coupled with the need to keep the public and serving officers safe.

As the County begins to mobilise towards a more stable and 'normal' pattern of life, the Safer West Sussex Partnership (SWSP) should take time to assess the ramifications of COVID-19 on communities; and its impact on wellbeing in the context of community safety.

Introduction

Community Safety responsibilities are primarily set out in the [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#). The Act details the requirement for Responsible and Cooperating bodies including local Authorities, the Police, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Drug and Alcohol Action Teams, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Probation services to develop policy and operational approaches to prevent crime and disorder, combat substance misuse and reduce reoffending.

Since the introduction of the subsequent [Crime and Disorder \(Formulation and Implementation of Strategy\) Regulations 2007](#) all two-tier local authority areas have been required to have in place a county strategy group and to publish a county community safety agreement. In West Sussex the county strategy group is referred to as the Safer West Sussex Partnership (SWSP).

This County Community Safety Agreement (CCSA) sets out the Safer West Sussex Partnership's commitment to addressing the crime and disorder issues impacting on West Sussex. The document reflects both national and local priorities and acknowledges the importance of anticipating and implementing legislative changes that impact upon community safety, criminal justice and the wider roles and functions of public, private and voluntary sector agencies.

The 2016-20 CCSA was designed to be a flexible document, which could be adapted based on new and emerging priorities, the priorities of key strategic boards from within the SWSP, which include national areas of focus and statutory duties, and West Sussex County Council cross-cutting boards.

The 2017-20 strategic areas of business for the partnership have been previously agreed by partners at the Safer West Sussex Partnership Executive Board and are aligned with the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's four-year plan. Whilst the priorities have remained the same for the 2019 - 20 period revisions to content have been made in order to provide the most accurate picture of each priority.

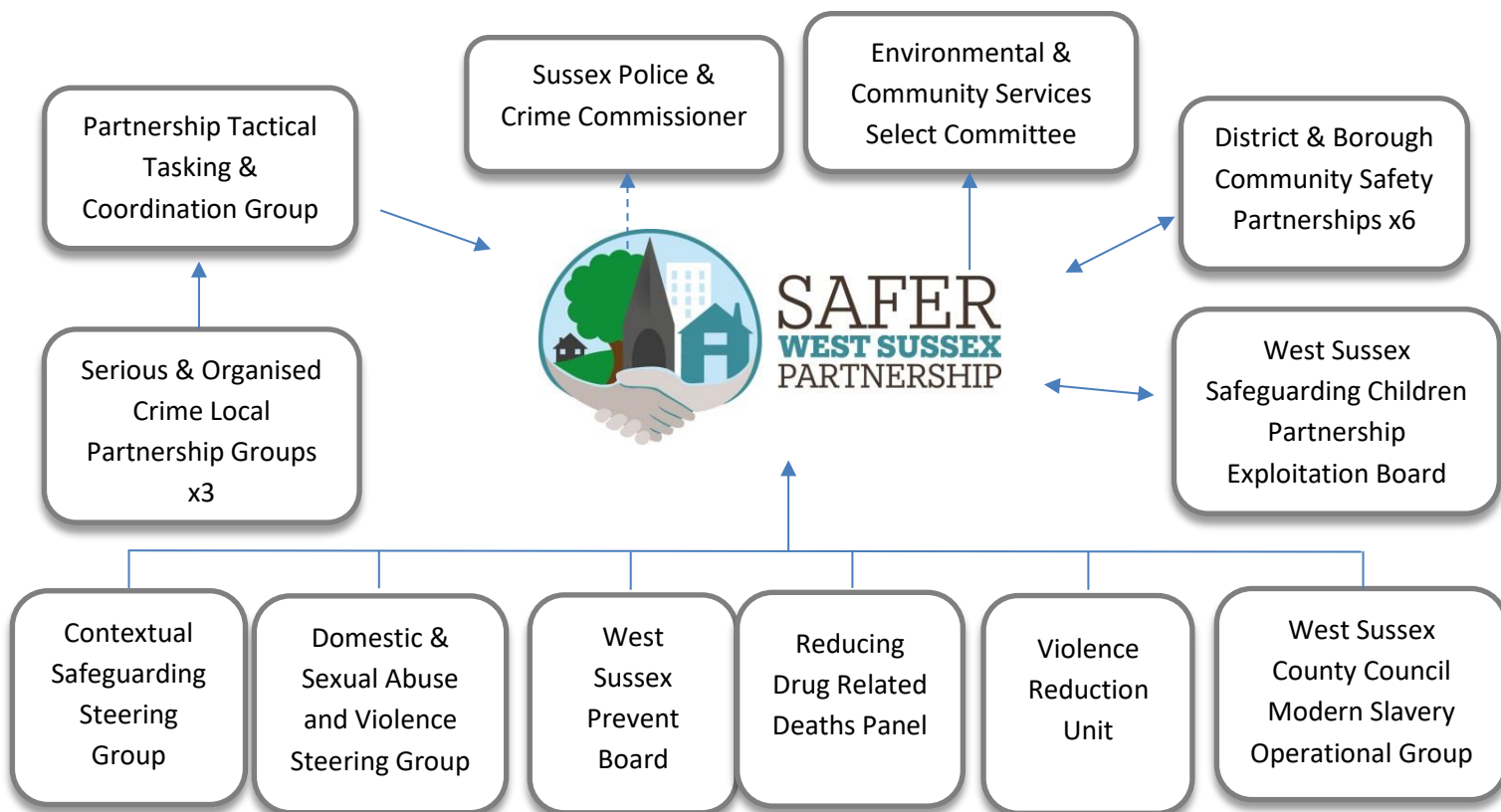
In relation to exploitation, for example, the agenda has been broadened; acknowledging the fact that it affects both children and adults and can therefore be relevant to all the current priorities. [The West Sussex Exploitation Strategy](#) draws together all forms of exploitation under one high level strategic 'umbrella' and has been designed to sit above or alongside existing thematic strategies that have been developed for the separate work streams including (but not limited to) Child Sexual Exploitation, Criminal and Ideological Exploitation.

In line with the statutory requirement to consult the public on their views on crime and community safety the West Sussex Community Safety and Wellbeing Team has been actively engaging and consulting with residents across a range of priority areas including CSE, Prevent, Cuckooing and Modern Slavery. Acknowledging the national increase in cyber-related or enabled crime, the team has conducted surveys aimed at gathering feedback on resident perceptions and experiences of cybercrime and online safety over the last 12 months, and more specific research on how parents and carers feel about keeping their children safe online.

Partnership Model

In West Sussex the strategic coordination of community safety on behalf of the 6 local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and the funding and commissioning of related activities takes place through the Safer West Sussex Partnership Executive (SWSPE), comprising representation from each of the statutory and co-operating bodies.

The Safer West Sussex Partnership meeting structure:



Following agreement from all partners the core SWSP Executive was merged with the Drug and Alcohol Board (DAB) in 2018 and now serves the functions of both Boards.

The Executive has links to a number of other strategic boards within the County Council including the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Children’s Safeguarding Board, and the Adult Safeguarding Board. The relationship between these boards is formalised in a newly developed protocol, which sets out the governance arrangements, the roles and responsibilities of the boards, and how they will work collaboratively to promote the welfare of children and adults in West Sussex.

The Partnership Tactical Tasking and Coordination Group (TTCG) meets monthly to identify specific areas of threat, harm, risk or vulnerability from performance assessments or emerging patterns of crimes or incidents.

The group provides a mechanism that enables partners from a wide range of organisations to identify crime and disorder priorities within the county-wide or local Community Safety Agreements which require resourcing, expertise or interventions from more than a single organisation, or additional specialist

resources. The organisations involved include Sussex Police, West Sussex County Council, West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, all West Sussex Districts and Boroughs, and Change, Grow, Live (CGL), the County Council's commissioned alcohol and drug service provider. There are three Serious & Organised Crime Local Partnership Groups that report into the TTCG.

Targeted work by organisations on priority areas of business, particularly those which present threat, risk or harm to or from individuals or communities, is co-ordinated and managed effectively and strands of work are systematically reviewed and evaluated to ensure the best possible use of collective resources and expertise.

As in other two-tier authority areas the district and borough CSPs are also vital in delivering the work-streams identified as county-wide. Local priorities, driven by trends in key crime types and the views of local residents remain important but there is a greater emphasis now, as a result of reduced budgets and resources, on moving away from 'business as usual' to a focus on the greatest areas of threat, risk and harm. This does not mean local issues will be ignored but it does mean agencies need to consider who is most vulnerable in their communities and direct resources accordingly to reduce avoidable demand.

The Partnership receives its community safety funding from the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (OSPCC). Following a review of the funding arrangements in 2017 and a consultation phase with partners the Police and Crime Commissioner has implemented a new funding model going forward from 2019.

In line with the legislative requirements of the [Police and Justice Act 2006](#), West Sussex County Council's Environmental and Community Services Select Committee provides the annual scrutiny function for the SWSP and its partners.

Contextual Safeguarding

[Contextual Safeguarding](#) is a multiagency whole-systems child welfare approach to tackling harmful sexual behaviour and exploitation which has been developed by Dr Carlene Firmin at the University of Bedfordshire. The approach goes beyond traditional principles of child protection built on parental capacity to safeguard, to recognise the impact contexts outside the immediate family/home can have on a young person's risk or likelihood of experiencing harm.

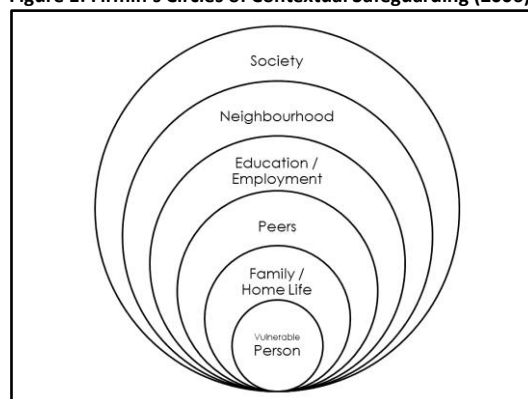
This is referred to as *extra familial risk* and can relate to peer groups, education/employment settings, neighbourhoods and wider communities. The approach recognises a whole range of different agencies have a role to play in tackling exploitation and seeks to change the environments in which harm occurs rather than simply addressing individual risk. In this way, adopting a Contextual Safeguarding approach in West Sussex is a natural step towards tackling exploitation and builds upon many years of successful work already undertaken by the Safer West Sussex Partnership and local Community Safety teams across West Sussex.

How are we using Contextual Safeguarding in West Sussex?

In West Sussex, now more than ever there is a requirement for joint working, with less emphasis on community safety being the responsibility of a few key agencies and more on making safety and safeguarding contextual. There is currently a considerable amount of activity across the Safer West Sussex Partnership, led by a range of partners that seeks to deal with the impact of crime on victims and on disrupting offender behaviour. More now needs to be done on collectively understanding the importance of other contexts in shaping the overall picture of wellbeing, crime and offending. This can only be achieved through integrated responses across teams within County and district and borough local authorities; including safeguarding, education, health and wellbeing services and housing to identify and change offending behaviour and effectively respond to identified issues.

Traditionally, the partnership's work has been informed by the Problem Analysis Triangle (PAT), which considers the elements of Victim, Offender and Location in the development of responses to crime reduction. However, this approach to community safety can now be complemented by Contextual Safeguarding; by addressing risk and harm that takes place outside the family home, and by intervening to create safety in all aspects of a person's life and their wider community.

Figure 1: Firmin's Circles of Contextual Safeguarding (2006)



To further our work in this area and its application, we continue to work with colleagues across East Sussex and Brighton and Hove through the Pan Sussex Contextual Safeguarding Development Group. The group has established a set of Pan Sussex Contextual Safeguarding Principles, which will drive the development of Contextual Safeguarding across the region. In West Sussex, local strategic delivery is managed on behalf of

the Safer West Sussex Partnership by a dedicated Contextual Safeguarding Steering Group which meets bi-monthly.

Pan Sussex Contextual safeguarding Principles

1. Recognise & Respond - Understand, recognise and respond to young people's experiences of harm beyond their families (extra familial risk)
2. Assess & Intervene - Develop effective tools to identify, assess and intervene when extra familial risk and harm are suspected.
3. Expand Our Vision - Expand our vision of child protection and build upon existing criminal justice work to incorporate extra familial contexts into child protection frameworks and referral pathways.
4. Work in Partnership - Work in partnership to engage with individuals & sectors who have influence over/within extra-familial contexts to reduce harm and increase welfare.
5. Capable & Competent Systems - Ensure our systems are capable and competent to work contextually, looking for opportunities to developed shared resources and systems where appropriate.
6. Monitor Outcomes - Monitor outcomes of success in relation to contextual, as well as individual, change.

Increased focus on Community Tensions Monitoring

Over the past 12 months local, national and international events have brought into focus the need for a collective, agile and proactive mechanism for risk assessing and responding to community tensions.

The MET Police and the Institute for Community Cohesion (ICoCo) defines Community Tension as *"A state of community dynamics which may lead to disorder, threaten the peace and stability of communities, or raise the levels of fear and anxiety in the whole, or a part of, the local community"*.

Tension monitoring cuts across all crime priority areas. In addition to services tasked with ensuring the protection of communities it requires input from services with a broad knowledge of what communities are experiencing and feeling. The process itself seeks to connect dots and join strands to develop an overall picture.

In West Sussex a mechanism has been developed that enables the timely and proactive sharing of key information between partners in relation to community tensions. This includes a network of local and strategic partnership forums that identify, monitor and mitigate emerging and known tensions. The approach varies across each District and Borough based on local needs and resources.

The County Council also has its own Community Tension Monitoring group which complements this network and has enabled partners to create a process for consistently recording tensions.

Strengthening the partnership response to Hate Crime

Hate crimes and incidents remain a deeply unique, personal and traumatic experience for the victims and communities that experience and witness them. Hate crime is also recognised as being both an indicator and a driver of wider extremist views and activity that can radicalise individuals and communities.

Reporting continues to show a complex picture; reporting of hate incidents continues to increase both locally and nationally whereas the National Crime Survey suggests fewer people are experiencing hate crimes. Despite this there is widespread recognition between partners and communities that the scale of the issue is still underrepresented.

In 2017/2108 there was a record number of hate incidents reported to the Hate Incident Support Service (HISS). This resulted in 935 reports in total which is a 46% increase on the previous year. Race is the predominant motivation of perpetrators accounting for 62% of all reports. Despite the increases the Gatwick reporting area continues to provide incredibly low returns for a community that is extensive both in terms of numbers and its diversity.

SWSP will continue to work collaboratively to challenge hate incidents and support victims by:

- Continuing to diversify material and resources available to support victims and promote reporting channels for vulnerable groups. In particular, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities' Communities (SEND);
- Collaboratively identify and put in place proposals to increase reporting at Gatwick;
- Enhance school reporting information to maximise understanding of key trends and indicators within the partnership and this community;
- Develop a SWSP engagement plan for hate crime and quick time response during high impact events;
- Identify how the partnership can work collaboratively with Crown Prosecution Service to increase the number of flagged cases for hate crimes in Sussex.

Safer West Sussex Partnership Priorities for 2019-21

The priorities listed in this section have been continually revised over the last 3 years as a result of ongoing assessments from lead partners based on the levels of threat, risk and harm posed under these strands of work, and on the understanding that interventions and delivery mechanisms put in place in the last 12 months may have impacted to the point that a work-stream is no longer considered to be a priority.

Responses to what are regarded as ‘volume crimes’, including burglary, theft, robbery, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage are the responsibility of a number of key agencies within the Safer West Sussex Partnership, such as Sussex Police, District and Borough Councils and other criminal justice agencies, and are supported by robust strategies and embedded delivery structures. Whilst these specific crimes are not listed as priorities within this document, they are very much business as usual for agencies within the Partnership with a commitment from all to ensure that levels of crime remain low across the County.

The chosen priorities have been drawn from a combination of relevant local profiles, legislative requirements from National Government and feedback from partner agencies regarding identified threats and risks. The table below details the priorities from the Strategic Intelligence Assessment (2020) with items in red (bold type) showing emerging or potential areas of concern that have been identified during the COVID – 19 lockdown period.

Strategic Priority	Key issues
Drugs and Alcohol	Increasing threat (↑11% last year) in all localities (except Crawley) County lines activity and DRD remain a threat Risk of drug users being exploited during lockdown
Domestic and Sexual Abuse	Escalating (↑19% last year) Considerable area of concern during lockdown Nationally, 49% increase in calls to the National Domestic Abuse helpline run by Refuge
Preventing Radicalisation and Violent Extremism	Continued area of concern with potential for escalation. National Crime Agency report rate of hate crimes against Chinese people (Jan-Mar) three times higher than previous years Racist graffiti (targeting Chinese) in WSx localities. Potential for radicalisation
Child Exploitation	Continuing area of concern, linking with other strategic priorities including modern slavery, SOC and drugs/alcohol. Concerns regarding young people being drawn into perpetration by organised groups and gangs. Potential for increase in non-contact abuse associated with lockdown and escalation of risk during missing episodes.
Modern Slavery	Emerging area of concern involving serious exploitation.
Serious Organised Crime	SEROCU warning of a range of Fraud and Cyber Crime attacks being organised by OCGs seeking to exploit COVID-19.
Serious Violence	Serious Violence including Knife Crime Linking with priority workstreams such as County Lines Taking a public health approach to reducing serious violence

A number of these priorities are unchanged from 2018/19, but where there is new data or analysis of the problem or where there has already been some partnership activity the revised information is included in the relevant section.

All priority areas have associated multi-agency action plans, the governance of which sits with the Safer West Sussex Partnership Executive Board.

Other workstreams

There are a number of other workstreams that are not reflected in this document as priorities in their own right. This is because they are cross-cutting areas of work that support the delivery of more than one priority. These include:

- the development of the Reducing Offending Strategy, which will consider some of the key challenges to rehabilitation in West Sussex;
- multi-agency activity on consultation and engagement;
- communications including reassurance to ensure that residents feel safe in their communities.

Child Exploitation

Context

Child Exploitation (CE) is a form of child abuse which can include the sexual, criminal and drug related exploitation of children and young people. It occurs where anyone under the age of 18 is persuaded, coerced or forced into activity in exchange for, amongst other things, money, drugs/alcohol, gifts, affection or status.

A common feature of child exploitation is that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and therefore does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation. This is especially evident in instances of online sexual exploitation whereby the young person may never physically meet the person exploiting them or have any knowledge that their self-generated imagery has been sold or forwarded on. No matter the circumstances, a child can never consent to their abuse, even where they believe they are voluntarily engaging in activity with the person who is exploiting them.

Current picture for West Sussex

Local responses to Child Sexual Exploitation have been well established over the last six years, governed by the West Sussex Safeguarding Children's Board multi-agency Child Exploitation Group which meets bi-monthly supported by a weekly Missing and Exploitation Operational Group. During 2017/18 responses to Child Sexual Exploitation were broadened to tackle all forms of exploitation affecting children and young people. This shift has been in recognition that criminal exploitation has become a much more prevalent issue both nationally and locally. Criminal exploitation can involve children and young people being exploited to carry and distribute drugs, weapons and other illicit goods for the gain of others. Some of this activity is linked to serious organised crime, some to gangs and some fuelled by peer on peer exploitation and bullying.

Prevalence

At present just over 200 children and young people are known to be at risk of or are currently being sexually or criminally exploited in West Sussex. This figure relates to the number of children or young people who have had a Child Exploitation Notification (risk assessment) completed whereby their risk was rated as either High, Medium or Low. This figure has remained static over the past 12 months. However, we acknowledge that the true level of victimisation will be higher as national research shows that BAME communities and boys chronically under-report their experiences of exploitation and those affected by exploitation often take many years to disclose their abuse, if at all. Our data suggests the majority of those affected by sexual exploitation are girls; with boys more commonly identified at risk of/affected by Criminal Exploitation. This is reflected nationally too, however, we must be mindful of any perceived barriers to reporting that could impact this.

Despite a growing understanding of the different forms of exploitation experienced by some young people, in West Sussex there remain significantly more children and young people identified at risk of sexual exploitation than criminal exploitation. However, schools and community groups are providing anecdotal

evidence to suggest the issue of criminal exploitation is much bigger than our recorded crime and incident statistics and child exploitation cohort indicate. Going forward, we will continue to develop our understanding of this to ensure we respond in partnership to these risks and other threats as they emerge.

Strategic Delivery

The Safer West Sussex Partnership continues to progress relevant prevention activity mandated in the West Sussex Child Exploitation Improvement Plan which is governed by the West Sussex Safeguarding Children's Board. Locally work has been developed in line with the County being a national, early adopter of contextual safeguarding practice; with activity gaining traction in terms of developing locality based contextual responses to exploitation in partnership with our District and Borough colleagues and wider stakeholders. We continue to work with the University of Bedfordshire and the Contextual Safeguarding Network to further develop our expertise.

Key Achievements

The partnership continues to deliver high quality training to raise awareness of exploitation and promote resilience among young people. These have included, engaging with Key Stage 2 pupils from all Crawley junior and primary schools and participating in the West Sussex Schools annual Safeguarding Conference whereby teachers and educationalists were trained to understand exploitation and ways to understand risk and harm contextually. In addition, a range of bespoke Contextual Safeguarding training sessions have been delivered to local practitioners including Crawley Borough and Arun District Councils partnerships as well as YMCA Downslink group.

The partnership has also been heavily involved in the creation of a new Education for Safeguarding curriculum toolkit which will support schools across West Sussex to fulfil their statutory duty to teach good quality, needs based relationships, sex and health education lessons from September 2020. An innovative online system called Education for Safeguarding has been developed which is the first of its kind nationally. The West Sussex Contextual Safeguarding Team (on behalf of the Safer West Sussex Partnership) is a key strategic partner in Education for Safeguarding and has contributed to the creation of content and is also represented on the project board and core development group. Education for Safeguarding is fundamental to the work of the partnership as this universal needs-based education provision will ensure that all pupils across West Sussex receive accurate, timely and appropriate access to information and resources to help them make more informed decisions about the way they spend time on and off-line and how they manage relationships as they grown through childhood and adolescence into adulthood. By investing our expertise in developing quality needs based universal education provision, we are equipping our next generation to have the skills needed to become strong, resilient and prosperous members of our communities.

Next Steps

To aid the development and embedding of Contextual Safeguarding internally; West Sussex County Council's Community Safety Team recently restructured and rebranded as a Contextual Safeguarding Team. Work continues to encourage a whole system change towards embedding contextual safeguarding

practice throughout the organisation and wider partnership. We recognise this is a long-term objective, requiring significant strategic commitment from senior leaders together with a strong vision for the future and a cultural shift in terms of the way the organisation responds to risk and vulnerability.

With this in mind, awareness raising activity and community prevention work will continue to be prioritised going forward; enabling long term social and cultural change to gain traction and take effect. The partnership is committed to challenging communities and practitioners to accept that Child Exploitation *can and does* happen in West Sussex and continues to seek their help reporting and managing concerns.

Partnership activity to widen the scope of child exploitation will be driven forward and delivered by the Contextual Safeguarding team within West Sussex County Council working internally and across agencies to embed contextual safeguarding practice beyond the remit of traditional community safety teams.

Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse

Context

[The Pan Sussex Strategic Framework for Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse 2020 - 2024](#) is aimed at making Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence ‘everybody’s business’, ensuring that national and local government, agencies, partners and the community work together to prevent anyone at risk of or suffering from Domestic Abuse becoming victims and to provide the right support to those who have experienced abuse. Domestic Abuse is not acceptable, and it is not inevitable. The right interventions at the right time can stop abuse from occurring, recurring, or escalating. We want to ensure that, across Sussex, quality, coordinated responses from the statutory and voluntary sectors are consistently available, not only to support victims and survivors, but also to address perpetrators’ behaviour effectively.

The Vision for Sussex:

“We want to see an end to domestic abuse in Sussex. We are committed to preventing domestic abuse, improving the support and protection for victims and their children, and ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions”.

Collaboratively, we are working towards a future where everyone from child to adult can live safe lives, without the threat or experience of domestic abuse and sexual violence (including stalking and harassment and harmful practices) because it is not tolerated by our communities or our organisations, and where, when someone becomes a victim of domestic abuse they are believed, not blamed, treated with dignity and respect and supported to feel safe within their community, whilst seeing their offenders held accountable for their behaviours with targeted behavioural change programmes and/or brought to justice.

“Across Sussex, we will work together, breaking down barriers between sectors and services, in neighbourhoods and communities, recognising that Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence is everyone’s business; and that responsibility for tackling the issue is truly shared”.

Pan Sussex, our strategic vision will be supported and delivered through a joint action plan, utilising both local authority and partnership expertise to prioritise:

1. The victim/survivor at the centre of service delivery;
2. Clear focus on perpetrators in order to keep victims safe;
3. Strategic, system-wide approaches to commissioning, acknowledging Domestic Abuse can happen to anyone in any circumstances, whilst recognising the gendered nature of Domestic Abuse, and the disproportionate effect on women
4. Safeguarding individuals at every point via locally lead specialist services
5. Raising community awareness and understanding of domestic abuse, and involve, engage and empower communities to seek, design and deliver solutions to prevent Domestic Abuse in all its forms.

Current picture for Sussex

Pan Sussex, we are committed to achieving and maintaining strong and effective partnership working across domestic abuse and sexual violence services. At a time of national austerity, the need for more

effective and efficient ways of working together to tackle domestic abuse and sexual violence is paramount. It is essential that all partners and stakeholders share in the development and implementation of a long-term vision, strategy and subsequent Action Plan.

The Pan Sussex Collaborative Strategy, shaped and developed by the collaborative work of a wide range of stakeholders and service users, sets out a number of principles and strategic intentions with the ultimate intention of a County free from domestic abuse and sexual violence. The accompanying action plan for this work supports the strategy with a focus on the aforementioned priorities:

- **Prevention and Early Intervention** – working together to prevent domestic abuse from happening in the first place, or from happening again by changing attitudes and challenging behaviours, not just as professionals, but in our communities. By using evidence-based approaches we will protect victims of abuse and try to break the cycle of offending.
- **Service Provision** – Together we will provide quality, coordinated and accessible interventions and support, reflective of what people want and need. We will work with victims and survivors to improve our understanding of their experience of our services. We will commission and develop services intelligently, providing the appropriate services to prevent abuse in a long term and sustained way. We will assist in enabling recovery and recognise the impact of Domestic Abuse on **all** of those affected by it, and provide holistic, victim centred services.
- **Partnership Working** – Pan Sussex we will work collaboratively in and with a broad coalition of partners to develop and provide consistent quality services across all sectors for those at risk of or suffering from Domestic Abuse.
- **Perpetrator Accountability** – Domestic abuse can only end if we address those that are perpetrating abuse. This means challenging the social norms that facilitate abuse, intervening with those on the cusp of offending, those already causing serious harm, and all stages in between. At least 80% of Domestic Abuse Survivors, who should inform our work, feel that, quality interventions for perpetrators are a key point in reducing Domestic Abuse. Together we will work with partners to strengthen the Criminal and Civil Justice response to perpetrators. We will work with all partners including non-criminal justice agencies to strengthen their part in assessing, controlling and minimising the risk(s) posed by perpetrators. We will robustly manage repeat offenders and as a priority consider perpetrator programmes for early intervention and behavioural change.

Next Steps

The Pan Sussex Strategy will continue to drive partnership work to reduce domestic and sexual violence and abuse whilst also noting that this can only be achieved by successfully ‘bridging the gap’ between services. There is clear acknowledgement of the correlation between co-occurring needs, particularly around women who are subject to multiple disadvantage (mental health and substance misuse) and domestic abuse and that partners must work together to ensure the best outcomes for families across the County.

Sussex has a range of domestic abuse services provided by the voluntary and statutory sector aimed at responding to domestic abuse. These services focus on both victim-focused and family based support and include an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service provided by the local authority, a range

of medium risk and step down and recovery services and refuge services, including innovative 'community refuge' model provided by third sector partners.

Worth Services provide the county wide IDVA service and was established in 2004 to address the safety of victims at high risk of harm from domestic and sexual violence and abuse. Independent domestic and sexual violence advisors work with victim/survivors to assess and understand risk, and develop comprehensive individual safety and support plans for victim/survivors and their children, incorporating both immediate and longer term support. The Worth Services team are part of MASH, the County Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and are located across the Early Help Hubs of which there are 5 across the County.

Highest risk victim/survivors are referred by IDVA's, or any other agency to one of 4 Multi agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC's) held across the county. A MARAC is a multi agency meeting where relevant and proportionate information is shared, and action plans are collaboratively designed to reduce risk and increase safety. Whilst the primary role of the MARAC is to safeguard adult victims, the MARAC will also make links with other agencies and multi agency meetings to safeguard children, and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator.

WSCC Safeguarding in Education and Schools, have co-designed the Relationship and Sex Education, previously PSHE, curriculum for West Sussex. Giving children and young people the best start in life is imperative and this can only be achieved by ensuring our schools have the right tools and confidence to teach our children and young people about healthy relationships, recognising the signs of domestic abuse and sexual violence, and equip them to be and feel safe.

Information on legislation and its local application; local data and profiles relevant to domestic and sexual violence and abuse including stalking and harassment and harmful practices; and needs assessments and reviews is available at *Safe Space: Sussex*. Partners aim to maintain an up to date and relevant information resource to help in our response.

It is important to recognise that anyone, whatever their gender, age, ethnicity, capacity or sexual orientation can be a victim or perpetrator of domestic and sexual violence and abuse. The programme of services we provide should enable access for everyone. We are committed to ensuring that marginalised groups and individuals have fair and equal access to services.

We recognise that some parts of our communities face additional barriers to accessing services and commit to working together to break down these barriers. Services should respond to differing needs both in terms of the support needed and how it is provided; taking into account geographical challenges across Sussex; whilst respecting the need for positive action when it is necessary to protect those at risk.

West Sussex is one of two Safelives 'Beacon' sites of best practice. Safelives interventions in these sites will create systemic change, by introducing a 'whole picture' approach, working alongside existing services to improve responses to domestic and sexual abuse and violence, and challenge perpetrator behaviour.

A review of new learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) will be undertaken across the whole county to ensure that learning from DHRs as well as relevant recommendations from Serious Case Reviews

and Safeguarding Adult Reviews is embedded into multi-agency practice as well as ensuring that inter-agency information sharing on risk remains a priority.

There are timely opportunities to further develop partnership approaches, especially in respect of Early Intervention and Perpetrator Accountability, and the Sussex wide Integrated Offending Management Programme to bring all offenders into scope.

The profile of Stalking and Harassment has been significantly elevated on the national agenda and further strengthened by the [Stalking Protection Act 2019](#). The Safer West Sussex Partnership welcomes this dedicated focus and recognised that improved levels of understanding and awareness across the partnership workforce and within our communities will be an essential step to tackling this pernicious behaviour which can lead to some of the most serious crimes including domestic violence, sexual assault and murder. The added areas of focus in the existing Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence priority within the County Community Safety Agreement will underpin the commitment to respond to the widening challenges in respect of these behaviours.

Partnership activity to focus on driving forward the Pan Sussex Framework for Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse and coordinating and delivering the West Sussex action plan will be delivered by the West Sussex Domestic and Sexual Abuse and Violence Steering Group.

Drugs and Alcohol

Context

Impact of Drug Use

[The National Drug Strategy, 2017](#) sets out the challenge in terms of the social, health and economic cost of drug use in England and Wales:

- The social and economic cost of drug supply in England and Wales is estimated to be £10.7 billion a year, just over half of which (£6 billion) is attributed to drug related acquisitive crime.
- Drug related and drug enabled activities are key drivers of new and traditional crime: possession of drugs; crimes committed to fund drug dependence; the production and supply of harmful substances often linked to serious and organised crime.
- Drug market violence can be associated with human trafficking and modern slavery.
- Drugs can play a role in facilitating child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse.
- The use of illicit drugs in prisons has an impact upon violence, self-harm and suicides.

Drug use and drug dependence are known causes of premature mortality. [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\) figures for England and Wales \(August 2019\)](#) demonstrate a continued increase in drug deaths and the highest annual increase since records began in 1993. Most deaths were due to opiates such as heroin, but [cocaine deaths doubled in three years](#).

Impact of Alcohol Use

Alcohol is one of the three biggest lifestyle risk factors for disease and death in the UK, after smoking and obesity. In England, alcohol misuse is the biggest risk factor attributable to early mortality, ill health and disability for those aged 15 to 49 years.

Alcohol is a causal factor in more than 60 medical conditions, including: mouth, throat, stomach, liver and breast cancers; high blood pressure, cirrhosis of the liver; and depression. Binge drinking can lead to injuries, anti-social behaviour and other societal harm.

While overall alcohol consumption rates in England have fallen by around 18% since 2004, more than ten million people (24% of the population) drink at levels that increase the risk of harm to their health.

Harmful alcohol consumption not only impacts on individuals, but also on their families and communities, as well as society as a whole. The annual cost of alcohol-related harm in England is estimated to be £21 billion pounds, including £7 billion in lost productivity through unemployment and sickness, a burden of £3.5 billion to the NHS and £11 billion in crime and disorder.

In 2015, victims believed the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol in over half (53%) of all violent incidents, (704,000 offences). 64% of stranger violence and 70% of violent incidents at weekends, evenings and night-time, were alcohol-related.

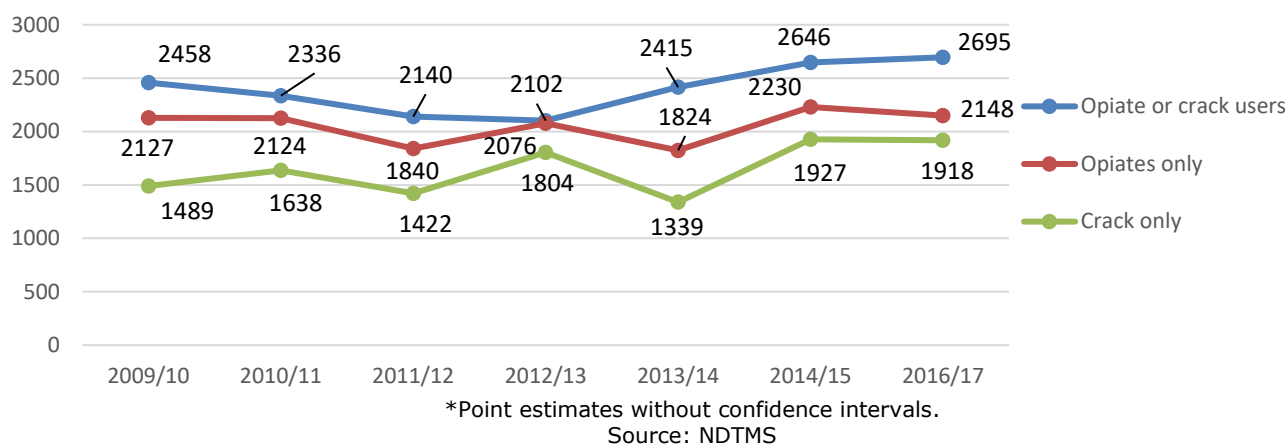
Current picture for West Sussex

Prevalence in Adults

Opiate and Crack Cocaine Use

The estimated number of opiate and / or crack users (OCUs) in West Sussex is calculated by the [National Drug Treatment Monitoring System \(NDTMS\)](#), based on modelled estimates of use in the population at local authority level.¹ These prevalence estimates give an indication of the number of OCUs in each local area that are in need of specialist treatment, though confidence intervals are wide, which makes tracking trends over time difficult. It is also important to state that populations can be hidden from support systems and that within these wide margins there may be many individuals unknown to us. The point estimate for opiate use in 2016/17 (2,148), for example, ranged from 1,212 to 3,121 individuals. It is necessary then to rely on proxy indicators and mapping of wider inequalities to help communities and ensure access to services is as streamlined and barrier-free as possible.

Estimated population of West Sussex in need of specialist opiate or crack treatment



New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)

[New Psychoactive Substances \(NPS\)](#), formally known as legal highs, contain one or more chemical substances which produce similar effects to illegal drugs. They include stimulants, sedatives, hallucinogens and synthetic cannabinoids (such as Spice)². NPS prevalence data is not available at local level. NPS prevalence data in England and Wales is limited to the annual crime survey. This shows that the prevalence of NPS is generally low compared with well-established drugs such as cannabis, powder cocaine and ecstasy. The survey findings suggest that the overall trend in NPS use is decreasing, although data from NPS drug seizures suggests that supply is increasing.

Poly drug use seems to be one of the features of NPS use – i.e. people who use them tend to also be using other drugs.

Alcohol

At present there is no national model that estimates the prevalence of alcohol dependence reliably at a local level. The Department of Health has commissioned Sheffield University to develop a model to

estimate the prevalence of dependent drinking in local populations by severity (i.e. Increasing Risk, Higher Risk, High Risk). We do not yet know when this data will be available.

In the meantime, the Public Health England: Risk Factors Intelligence (RFI) team have used data from the Health Survey for England, collected between 2011 and 2014, to estimate that:

- 23.7% of adults (over 18) in West Sussex are drinking above the lower risk limits of 14 units per week;
- 14.4% of adults (over 18) engaged in binge drinking on their heaviest drinking day in the past week;
- there are 6,967 adults with an alcohol dependency in the County;
- 2710 children in West Sussex live with an adult with alcohol dependency.

Young People

Risk factors for drug and alcohol use by children and young people

As with adults, young people do not develop problems with alcohol or drugs in isolation. Many young people being supported by specialist treatment services also have multiple other problems or vulnerabilities that are linked to their substance misuse. These include:

- Mental health issues;
- Experience of Domestic violence or sexual exploitation;
- Not being in Education, Employment or Training (NEET);
- Being exposed to parental substance misuse;
- Being in care or a care leaver.

For some young people these wider issues may be the cause of their substance misuse problems, and for others, a consequence.

[“These young people are already at a significant disadvantage in life and, without effective joined up support, there is a very real risk that their lives get derailed, that drug \[and alcohol\] misuse continues into adulthood and negatively impacts future generations”.](#)

Prevention is key, and the most effective approaches focus on building wellbeing and resilience amongst children and young people, as well as building adult capabilities to improve child health outcomes.

National Trends

- Alcohol remains the substance most commonly used by young people, although this is a declining trend locally and nationally; however, cannabis is the substance that young people most frequently present to treatment for, followed by alcohol;
- National data shows that between 2003 and 2014 there was a decline in the proportion of young people who had ever had an alcoholic drink;
- In 2018, 44% (confidence interval 41-46%) of young people said they had ever had an alcoholic drink, the same as in 2016 (NB Data prior to 2016 is not comparable due to a change in national survey questions);
- [Drug use among young people, appears to be on the increase nationally. This is a reversal of the declining trend seen since 2001.](#) Drug use by young people remains lower than alcohol use.

Local Prevalence Data

[The What About YOUth \(WAY\) survey 2014](#) was a one-off survey designed to collect robust local authority level data on a range of health behaviours amongst 15 year-olds, including whether they smoke, drink alcohol or have taken drugs.

Table 1, below, shows some of the findings for West Sussex **Table 1. Findings from the What About YOUth (WAY) Survey 2014**

West Sussex	England	How does West Sussex Compare
Regular drinkers (drinking at least once a week)		
7.70%	6.20%	statistically similar
Drunk in the last 4 weeks		
19.70%	14.60%	worse
Ever had an alcoholic drink		
69.00%	62.40%	higher
Ever tried cannabis		
13.60%	10.70%	worse
Used cannabis in the last month		
6.20%	4.60%	worse
Used drugs (excluding cannabis) in the last month		
1.30%	0.90%	statistically similar

This data tells us that, compared to the England average, young people in West Sussex are more likely to binge drink (drink to get drunk), and that they are both more likely to have ever used cannabis and to have used it in the last month.

Findings from 'Lifestyles of 14 to 15 year-olds in West Sussex 2015' included:

- 3.7% of 14-15 year- olds surveyed regularly drink alcohol;
- 36.3% of 14-15 year- olds surveyed occasionally drink alcohol;
- Of the 40% of 14-15 year-olds who drink occasionally or regularly, 89% drink once a week or less, 9% drink 2-3 times per week, 2% drink on 4 or more days per week;
- Beer is most commonly consumed by boys and spirits are most commonly consumed by girls;
- Of the 40% of 14-15 year-olds who drink occasionally or regularly, 43.9% occasionally drink with the intention of getting drunk, and 11.6% regularly drink with the intention of getting drunk;
- The proportion of young people who drink alcohol in their own homes has increased in recent years from [47% in 2009 to 61% in 2014](#).

Key information in the West Sussex 'Local Alcohol Profile':

Under 18s admissions for alcohol-specific conditions have been on a downward trend in recent years, but are starting to plateau, following an increase in admissions for Under 18-year-old males. Admissions for males and females remain similar to the England average. The current West Sussex rate of hospital admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions in under 18s (male and female) is 34.6% per 100,000 population. [This is statistically similar to the England average of 31.6%](#).

Data from [‘Problem parental drug and alcohol use: a toolkit for local authorities’](#).

In West Sussex:

- 1494 adults with an alcohol dependency live with children
- 2710 children live with an adult with alcohol dependency
- 667 adults with an opiate dependency live with children
- 1180 children live with an adult with opiate dependency
- Alcohol is a risk factor in 21.8% of West Sussex Children In Need assessments, compared to 18.7% regional and 18.0% England average
- Drugs are a risk factor in 22.5% of West Sussex Children In Need assessments, compared to 19.4% regional and 19.4% England average

County Lines

An additional and emerging risk is the criminal exploitation of children by gangs and organised crime networks, who recruit children to sell drugs. The gangs deliberately target vulnerable children, and groom, threaten or trick them into trafficking their drugs. Children are made to travel across counties, and they use dedicated mobile phone ‘lines’ to supply the drugs, hence the term [‘county lines’](#).

Substance Misuse Deaths

Between 2016 and 2018 there were 119 deaths with an underlying cause of drug poisoning. Of these 119 deaths, 82 were further classified as “drug misuse deaths”. These are deaths due to drug abuse or drug dependence or where the underlying cause of drug poisoning relates to a substance controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Between 2015 and 2017 there were 124 deaths, of which 82 were drug misuse deaths.

The West Sussex rate of death is below the national average, but the focus to further reduce drug deaths remains a partnership priority.

West Sussex Public Health and Social Research Unit has worked with the local Coroner’s office to undertake an audit of drug related deaths. This involved reviewing individual files of 123 deaths registered in 2015, 2016 and 2017. A copy of the audit is available on the West Sussex JSNA website.³

This is an important piece of work, and its findings will shape partnership activity over the next year to reduce drug deaths. The work is co-ordinated through the multi-agency ‘Reducing Drug Related Death’ panel.

Next Steps

Priority Activities for 2020-2021.

1. Carry out a West Sussex drug and alcohol needs assessment study to inform future commissioning activity and partnership work to reduce the harms from alcohol and drugs.
2. Work together to deliver the multi-agency Reducing Drug Related Death action plan, building on the findings of the [WSSC. \(2019\). Drug Related Death Audit](#).

3. Expand the provision of Naloxone (the opiate antidote) to a broader range of settings, including a scheme to distribute through pharmacies.
4. Understand more about the best ways to help people who are sleeping rough to have improved access to health services, through the delivery of the Hospital Admission Reduction Pathway (HARP) project, which is funded by Public Health England and designed to support homeless or insecurely housed adults who have substance misuse and co-occurring mental health needs.
5. Improve joined up/multi agency working, particularly to engage and effectively support adults who have substance misuse and co-occurring mental health needs in order to meet their treatment and support needs.
6. Carry out analysis of the size and scale of the illegal drugs market in a local town in order to better understand the demand and supply, and to create sustainable, multi-agency interventions, using a public health approach.

Modern Slavery

Context

Modern Slavery is a serious crime that violates human rights and affects the communities that we live in. It shatters the lives and families of men, women and children, resulting in generational cycles of crisis, hardship and loss. Victims of slavery are forced, threatened or manipulated into situations of subjugation, degradation and control which undermine their personal identity and sense of self. If they are able to escape or leave the control of their exploiters, victims are still in situations of vulnerability, and remain at risk from re-trafficking, exploitation and further harm. They require multi-disciplinary, professional support to remain safe, sustain recovery from their traumatic experiences and rebuild their lives.

The [Modern Slavery Act \(2015\)](#) encompasses human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced labour. It is an extremely serious crime where children, young people or adults are exploited for criminal gain. Offences carry life imprisonment penalties.

Children, men and women are highly likely being exploited in our towns, communities and businesses every day in West Sussex. The victims are hidden from view, or in fact hidden in plain sight. Communities may never know this cruel practice is taking place on their streets and under their noses.

Modern slavery victims can be and are recruited anywhere in the world including any Sussex town or village and have a large range of threats, deception or other coercion tactics imposed upon them to facilitate their movement and subsequent exploitation. Some of these can be as simple as the promise of lucrative work, but others such as brutal spiritual ceremonies can be highly traumatic for victims and unfamiliar to our services and professionals.

The impact is huge, both on human lives and our economy, with estimates putting its cost to the UK at as much as £4.3 billion in 2016/17. The average unit cost of a modern slavery crime, £328,720, is higher than the unit cost of any other crime type, apart from homicide.

The complexity and crossovers with other crime areas makes it very difficult to quantify the scale of those living in modern day slavery. Individuals may be trafficked into, out of or within the UK.

The most robust estimate to date of the scale of modern slavery in the UK was produced by the Home Office in 2014. The estimate suggested that there were between 10,000 and 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in the UK in 2013. It is likely however, to be many times this number today. A study of modern-day slavery by the Walk Free Foundation says there could be two slaves for every 1,000 people in the UK - amounting to 136,000 victims across the country.

The National Crime Agency (NCA) assesses that the actual scale of modern slavery in the UK is gradually increasing and, if drivers remain at their current levels, will continue to do so over the next three years. The three main sources of data available on the potential scale of modern slavery in the UK come from:

Referrals of potential victims to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), the UK's identification and support system for victims of modern slavery. In 2018, there were 6,986 potential victims referred to the NRM (a 36% increase from 2017), of whom 45% (3,128) were exploited as children. NRM data is taken from a live management system and as such, subject to change as new information is discovered and records updated accordingly.

Where an adult victim cannot be identified, or does not give informed consent to be supported, "*first responder*" organisations, which includes law enforcement agencies and county, district and borough councils are additionally required to notify the home office. In 2018, the total number of 'duty to notify' notifications slightly decreased from 1,846 in 2017 to 1,551. The majority of the 1,551 potential victims were male - 819 (53%), whereas 719 (46%) were female, and in 13 (0.8%) referrals the gender was unknown. In contrast, the majority of victims referred were female in previous years.

Where credible suspicion is obtained that a person is a potential victim of modern slavery, there is an obligation for a recorded crime and criminal investigation to be commenced that links with every NRM or home office notification.

The number of modern slavery crimes recorded by the police. In the year to March 2019, police in England and Wales recorded 5,059 modern slavery offences, a 49% increase on the previous year. Police Scotland recorded 159 crimes for human trafficking and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) recorded 38 offences.

The number of NRM referrals has increased every year since the NRM was introduced in 2009. The increase in NRM referrals is likely to be indicative of greater awareness of the NRM and improved law enforcement activity, although a higher incidence rate cannot be ruled out. The increase may also be related to an increase in the recorded NRM referrals related to the county lines criminal business model of exploiting vulnerable individuals and other forms of criminal labour exploitation.

In 2018, among potential adult victims, the most common reported exploitation type was labour exploitation (52%) followed by sexual exploitation (33%). Among potential child victims, the most common reported exploitation type was also labour exploitation (63%), followed by sexual exploitation (20%). This pattern was broadly similar to 2017 and 2016. The NRM records victims of forced criminality under the labour exploitation category. Of the 3,990 labour exploitation referrals in 2018, 47% (1,868) were recorded as forced criminality. Of these referrals, 1,333 (71%) concerned exploitation as a child and 535 (29%) concerned exploitation as an adult.

In 2018 potential victims of modern slavery were reported to originate from 130 countries; this represents a 12% increase on the number of countries of origin of potential victims referred in 2017. The most common country of origin reported for adult potential victims was Albania (19%) and for those exploited as children was the UK (45%). The majority of adult potential victims from Albania (67%) claim to have been sexually exploited, whereas the majority of those claimed to have been exploited as children in the UK were victims of labour exploitation (70%), a category which includes criminal exploitation. The latter could be explained by the continuous increase in the recorded NRM referrals related to county lines.

On 29 April 2019, the Home Office launched the new Single Competent Authority (SCA) to run the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). As part of the Serious and Organised Crime Group, this unit is responsible for the identification of modern slavery victims across the UK and for the management of victim support in England and Wales. The SCA has been formed as part of a wide programme of reform to the NRM, which also includes improvements to the identification process and the support provision for victims. The SCA is also responsible for the management of the Victim Care Contract, through which the Government provides support to victims of modern slavery in England and Wales. There are separate arrangements for support in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

In England and Wales, the support is currently provided through the Salvation Army, which uses a network of subcontractors to provide accommodation and support services. The SCA has casework teams in seven locations and operates in all four nations of the UK. It currently employs over 130 staff who are at the heart of the decision-making process. The unit also comprises a technical specialist and case preparation team, a post-decision and training team and a casework support team. Moving into a single, expert case-working unit has allowed a more streamlined approach to the way in which decisions are made, enabling high quality, consistent and timely decisions for potential victims of trafficking of all nationalities.

More still needs to be done to identify those victims still trapped in modern slavery both nationally and here in West Sussex. The more people who understand what modern slavery is, how to spot the signs and what the needs of a survivors are, the more survivors we can identify and work together to ensure the appropriate support is provided. Increased awareness and reporting helps law enforcement to tackle the perpetrators of modern slavery as well as protecting victims.

It is imperative that our services, leaders and staff have knowledge and insight into all issues of complex safeguarding. This will ensure that both our action plan and operational delivery are focussed on what needs to be done to tackle the issue and that we extend our reach and ability to identify victims who come into contact with services, and how to report concerns or suspicions when they do.

The Role of Councils

Councils can play a key role in tackling modern slavery. Their role can be separated into four distinct areas:

1. Identification and referral of victims (as above-to comply with S.52 MSA 2015)
2. Supporting victims – this can be through safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs and through housing/homelessness services. This may be in conjunction with national contracted support providers (Salvation Army)
3. Community Safety services and disruption activities
4. Ensuring that the supply chains councils procure from are free from modern slavery.

Modern slavery intersects with many different areas that councils are involved with, and a number of different officers may come across it in the course of their everyday duties:

- in housing and homelessness services, councils may see people who are at risk of trafficking through the provision of homelessness services, or through inspections of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) they might come across modern slavery victims living in substandard accommodation
- community safety officers may come across trafficking or modern slavery whilst working on issues around serious and organised crime, gangs, drug selling and other crimes committed within their area – like cannabis cultivation and begging
- Trading Standards, licensing and environmental health and other regulatory services (e.g. fire safety) may encounter victims or perpetrators whilst inspecting premises such as nail bars and regulating other businesses, such as taxis and private hire vehicles
- councillors may hear concerns from residents about particular businesses or houses in their areas
- those working with local partners on resettling new arrivals may find that trafficking or modern slavery has been present in refugees and asylum seekers' routes into the UK
- customer services may come into contact with victims through their ordinary dealings with the public
- children's safeguarding services will deal with trafficked children or children who have been exploited
- adult safeguarding services may have a role supporting adult victims with care and support needs.

This list is not exhaustive and there will be many other places where council staff and councillors may come across modern slavery or trafficking.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015

As previously mentioned, from 1st November 2015, to comply with S.52 of the Modern Slavery Act specific public authorities have a duty to notify the Secretary of State of any person identified in England and Wales as a suspected victim of a modern Slavery offence. It should be noted that the detail required to populate NRM submissions often requires an understanding of modern slavery and the methods of control used by offenders. Often this can only be meaningfully achieved by a thorough cognitive interview of any potential victim.

Under Article 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights, the law enforcement community are obligated to respond to and investigate Modern Slavery and as such detailed referrals are essential.

An Adult at Risk as defined by the [Care Act \(2014\)](#) states that Local Authorities must make enquiries, or cause others to do so, if it believes an adult is experiencing abuse or neglect. An enquiry should establish whether any action needs to be taken to prevent harm or stop abuse or neglect and if so by whom.

Victims of modern slavery therefore may not necessarily have the impairment or injury that would meet the eligibility for care and support under the Act. However, they may be survivors of modern slavery who are subsequently identified via local safeguarding processes, and there may be victims of modern slavery

who are subsequently identified as having care and support needs, and thus entitled to support under current legislation.

Although human trafficking often involves an international cross-border element, where victims are taken from or brought to the UK, facilitated travel entirely within the UK, even short distances is increasingly relevant. It is possible to be a victim even if consent has been given to be moved. Children cannot give consent to being exploited therefore the element of coercion or deception does not need to be present to prove an offence. Section 56 (3) defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.

Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015

In July 2018, the UK Government commissioned an independent review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The aim of the Review was to identify where the Act is working well, what can be improved in the implementation of the Act, and whether specific areas of the legislation need to be strengthened.

The Review was undertaken by Parliamentarians Frank Field MP, Maria Miller MP and Baroness Butler-Sloss. The final Review report was laid in Parliament in May 2019. The final Review made 80 recommendations across four themes:

- The Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner
- Transparency in Supply Chains
- Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (formerly Advocates)
- Legal application of the Modern Slavery Act

The Government response to the Independent Review was published on 9 July 2019. The Government has accepted or partially accepted the majority of the Review's recommendations. Key measures that Government will take forward in response to the Review include:

- Creating an HMG International Modern Slavery and Migration Envoy to represent the UK's interests internationally and drive the global response to modern slavery forward.
- Consulting on measures to strengthen transparency in supply chains legislation, including extending the transparency requirements to the public sector and improving the quality of statements.
- Creating a free online central reporting service for business' modern slavery statements, to empower consumers, NGOs and investors to scrutinise the action that businesses are taking to prevent modern slavery in their supply chains.

Current picture for West Sussex

The Law enforcement response to Modern Slavery is owned by the National Crime Agency. In terms of the Policing response, the National portfolio is held by Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer of Devon and Cornwall. Each of the 43 Police forces are now required to develop their response to Modern Slavery

specifically in terms of the 2020 National policing standards which contains 62 elements. Modern slavery is high harm, serious organised crime carrying a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

Driven by EMPACT (European Multi-disciplinary platform against crime threats) the NCA co-ordinate law enforcement intensifications to address high risk exploitation themes to drive intelligence and increase awareness. This is called Project Aidant. There are five intensifications expected to be run during 2020 and activity will take place across Sussex during these operations.

During the period of 1st April 2019 – 29th Jan 2020, Sussex Police recorded 517 crimes classified for Modern Slavery offences. These relate to offences identified by Sussex Police activity or via victim referrals originating in other relevant agencies (Including local authorities). Of the 517, 67 related to exploitation or trafficking entirely outside of England and Wales, and a further 38 were identified as requiring investigation in a different police force.

In terms of local demand, of the 517 crime, 281 were recorded in West Sussex and is impacted by crime allegations origination from the home office detention estate located at Gatwick. An indicator is that during the 3rd quarter of 2019, only three other forces in England and Wales received more referrals than Sussex from Home Office immigration enforcement. It should be noted that the police are not the only law enforcement body investigating and prosecuting Modern Slavery offences in Sussex.

Again, using Q3 2019 figures from the Home Office (competent authority) the profile of recorded exploitation in Sussex largely follows national trends. Victims who are UK Nationals represent the highest numbers and are predominantly, but not exclusively males (Adult and U/18) exploited for labour. The impact of referrals originating from operational activity in a specific category at any one time can however be significant. Additionally, it is becoming increasingly recognised that there are large crossovers with other significant crime types such as the sexual and criminal exploitation of children.

Strategic Delivery

The Safer West Sussex Partnership and the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner is committed to working with partners in a more structured approach in order to identify victims of slavery, signpost support and disrupt and prosecute the traffickers to prevent slavery.

The Police and Crime Commissioner funded a new post in 2018 to deliver effective progress in the response to Modern Slavery in Sussex. This role will include working with partners to better understand the complexities and scale of modern slavery and human trafficking across Sussex and, provide the right level of interventions and support to victims.

Within the police, there are more than 20 personnel across the force that receive enhanced training and tactical knowledge to support their colleagues. In West Sussex, a Detective Chief Inspector, a Detective inspector and an intelligence specialist provide these roles.

The Sussex Modern Slavery Network formed in 2017 has provided a framework for bringing together all the organisations across Sussex who have a part to play in the fight against Modern Slavery.

In February 2019 this group was re-named the Sussex Anti-Slavery Network meeting every 4 months and initially chaired by Sussex Police's Force Manager for Modern Slavery.

Key Objectives for the coming year

Objectives for the network to work towards in 2020/21 with reporting against the networks DASHBOARD include:

1. Aim for credible and meaningful membership of National Networks Coordinators Forum
2. Ensure every FIRST RESPONDER agency is making progress towards meaningful S.52 compliance.
3. Maintain support for each local authority area (I.E. East – West – Brighton and Hove) to have a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) network and if possible, a dedicated role and CPD maintenance of the network.
4. Maintain network meetings to allow the intelligence trends and gaps to be shared and encourage the use of partnership intelligence submission forms.
5. Make progress towards controlled inclusivity in respect of Faith, business and wider NGO communities.
6. Make progress towards public sector S.54 MSA 2015 involvement (Supply Chain)

East and West Sussex County Councils, Brighton and Hove City Council, Sussex Police, East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service and Immigration Enforcement are amongst those within the network. The network does not have a statutory role but does feed into the three respective community safety partnerships and seeks to coordinate activity to prevent duplication and ensure a collaborative Sussex wide approach.

West Sussex Modern Slavery Multi-Agency Operational Group

In order to deliver the strategic objectives of the Sussex Anti-Slavery collaborative network, a West Sussex County Council Modern Slavery Operational group has been formed first meeting in October 2018.

It is the practical doing and getting our own processes and practices in place for our organisation and meeting our duty under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 that necessitates an operational group to enable us to achieve this.

The West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board and Safeguarding Adult Board in partnership with Community Safety and Wellbeing in 2018 conducted some specific work around modern slavery in order to review our modern slavery resources and guidance available for professionals and across the authority.

In order to gain an understanding of the current level of our workforce's knowledge and understanding around this aspect of safeguarding staff were asked to complete a short survey on Modern Slavery. The survey was shared widely across WSCC in order to gather as many responses as possible.

The results of this survey were used to help inform the WSCC Modern Slavery Action Plan which has delivered work against its key 5 objectives this year. These objectives will continue to be owned and delivered by the Operational Group in 2020/21:

- Identify and Prevention: Increased awareness and understanding of Modern Slavery, Exploitation and Human Trafficking.
- Develop integrated training and development opportunities, practice tools, guidance and resources.
- Increased support and protection for people who are being exploited, and those at risk of exploitation
- Greater success in detection, disruption and prosecution.
- To engage and empower our communities to actively participate in tackling modern slavery and trafficking.

Key Achievements delivered this year include:

Establishing a West Sussex SPOC network of professionals, whereby 43 professionals across customer facing services have received enhanced training and awareness raising on Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism. SPOCs will continue to facilitate the sharing of information and guidance across their respective services to ensure that their staff and teams understand and are compliant with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 over the coming year.

A Modern Slavery Basic Awareness Raising Package has also been developed this year and is accessible to all WSCC staff and our District and Borough partners via the WSCC Learning and Development Gateway. 338 professionals received Modern Slavery training delivered by the Community Safety and Wellbeing Team during 2019.

The availability of this face to face training resource was promoted to all WSCC staff via an internal campaign which ran on Anti-Slavery Day on the 18th October 2019. This included a poster campaign targeting our staff across all our hubs. These posters were designed to stimulate professional curiosity amongst our workforce and encourage staff to make the link to Modern Slavery if they notice something which they feel is out of the ordinary.

The campaign also included the promotion of the new New Digital Modern Slavery National Referral Mechanism Referral Form and served to raise awareness of the new Single Competent Authority (SCA) to run the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

Next Steps

Both the Sussex Anti-Slavery Network and West Sussex Operational Group will continue to work collaboratively to deliver work to achieve their respective objectives for 2020/21 as outlined above.

Preventing Radicalisation and Violent Extremism

Context

The Prevent Strategy is part of the Government's wider Counter-Terrorism strategy, CONTEST. CONTEST is organised around four principal work-streams:

- **Prevent:** to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- **Pursue:** to stop terrorist attacks.
- **Protect:** to strengthen our protection against terrorist attack.
- **Prepare:** where an attack cannot be stopped, to mitigate its impact.

Prevent addresses radicalisation to all forms of terrorism, including the extreme right-wing, and the non-violent (which can popularise views that terrorists exploit), prioritising according to the risks faced.

The Prevent Strategy identifies 3 key objectives:

- Tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism.
- Safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention, identifying them and offering support.
- Enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

The success of Prevent is seen as dependent on a wide range of statutory and community organisations. As a result, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed a duty on a number of statutory sectors to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent Duty. Under the duty, local authorities, schools, further and higher educational establishments, the health sector, police, prisons and probation must have an understanding of the level of risk of radicalisation in their area, work in partnership, and share information appropriately. Those in leadership positions must promote the importance of the duty, ensure it is implemented effectively and that staff, especially those on the 'frontline', are adequately trained.

For the County Council to meet its obligations under the duty, WSCC has a nominated Prevent Lead and Countering Extremism Team who deliver Prevent Training to County Council staff, partners, communities and schools within West Sussex.

To address the identified risks, a multi-agency West Sussex Prevent Board has been established, accountable to the Safer West Sussex Partnership, and an action plan drafted. Objectives include supporting partners to achieve compliance with the Prevent Duty, awareness raising of Prevent amongst local communities to increase referrals and implementing recommendations from the Parsons Green review of 2018.

A Prevent delivery forum has been established in order to strengthen links between Prevent and local communities, district/borough councils and the Voluntary Community Sector. Its function is to identify opportunities for joint working on engagement and awareness raising activities.

Prevent training and engagement

A key obligation for local authorities under the Prevent Duty is to train 'appropriate front-line staff'. This has been a key function of the WSCC Prevent Training Officer, and between 2015 and 2019, 367 Prevent training sessions were delivered to 7105 West Sussex staff, schools, communities and partners across West Sussex.

The Prevent Education Officer (PEO) works specifically with schools in Crawley to ensure their compliance with the Prevent Duty. Since the Prevent Education Officer came into post in April 2018, 70% of Crawley schools have received Prevent training, with over 800 staff trained in 2019.

Other key pieces of work within Crawley have included delivering safeguarding workshops to parents and careers around critical thinking, online safety and radicalisation, as well as assemblies and workshops delivered to over 500 students in KS2,3 and 4 by the end of December 2019. Additional support for schools includes audits on their practice and provision, policy development, curriculum implementation or meetings around their current ethos. Furthermore, all Crawley schools receive regular information and updates via a monthly schools' Prevent newsletter, as well as advice and support following incidences and ongoing resources which respond to issues and current affairs – both local and national. The PEO also works with other key Prevent and safeguarding team members to form part the core 'Education for Safeguarding' team. Phase 1 was launched across all schools in West Sussex in 2019, and introduced a bespoke toolkit to meet the needs of the DfE Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education framework 2019, and to provide a key cornerstone on Prevent and critical thinking (Digital and media cornerstone). Feedback from initial launch was very positive and this work will be ongoing in 2020.

Crawley will no longer be considered a priority area as of April 2020, so one key challenge will be to ensure the sustainability of school engagement going forwards.

The Prevent Coordinator, also working exclusively in Crawley, has engaged with a range of community partners and has held 2 community roundtables (attended by the Home Office, Civil society organisations, community members and faith organisations); visits to faith institutions and community organisations; special events and Prevent briefings in order to raise the profile of Prevent locally, dispel myths about the purpose of Prevent and raise community confidence to make referrals if they identify concerns.

Key Prevent messages were delivered within wider safeguarding sessions provided for community members and professionals across the county during 2018/19. These were delivered in partnership with NSPCC (online safety), Barnardo's (CSE) and WSCC Digital Safe Life Leads. Bespoke online radicalisation training was delivered, in conjunction with the WSCC Digital Safe Life Officers, to foster carers and social workers. Further sessions will be available in 2020 for other services. Members of the Counter Extremism Team have been working with the WSCC Digital Safe Life Lead to create content for the Digital Media Literacy cornerstone of the aforementioned new Education for Safeguarding curriculum toolkit. Content will support teaching staff to discuss a range of online safety risks and opportunities including online radicalisation, influences and manipulation as well as ways to promote critical thinking and debating skills. This will play an important role in developing a counter narrative to online extremism.

Channel

Channel is a key aspect of the Prevent Strategy and was also placed on a statutory footing in 2015. Channel is a voluntary programme which aims to support vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist related activity. Therefore, it seeks to:

- Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist activity;
- Ensure that individuals and communities have the ability to resist all forms of terrorism and violent extremist activity likely to lead to terrorism.

The Channel process uses existing partnership working between the police, local authorities, statutory partners, and the local community to support those who are vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremism by:

- identifying individuals and groups at risk of being recruited by violent extremists and referring them to a multi-agency panel;
- assessing the nature and extent of that risk through multi-agency panels, chaired by the local authority (WSCC and CBC); and
- considering how best to safeguard an individual through a support package tailored to their needs. This may include referring cases to intervention providers to develop the most appropriate support package to protect the individual at risk.

Each referral is monitored closely and reviewed regularly by the panel until it is considered that the risks have been reduced.

Channel statistics

The Home Office releases retrospective Channel figures annually. Nationally, in 2018/19, of the 5,738 individuals referred 24% were referred for concerns related to Islamist radicalisation and 24% were referred for concerns related to right-wing radicalisation. 38% were referred with a mixed, unstable or unclear ideology. Continuing an upward trend there was a 6% increase in the number of recorded referrals for concerns related to right-wing radicalisation.

Of the 561 individuals who received Channel support, 45% were referred for concerns related to right-wing radicalisation and 37% were referred for concerns related to Islamist radicalisation.

Of the individuals referred to Channel nationally, 58% were aged 20 years or under. Those aged 20 years or under also made up the majority of the individuals discussed at a Channel panel (64%) and of those, who went on to receive Channel support (66%). The education sector made the most referrals, accounting for 33%.

This range of ideologies and extremist concerns is reflected in the training delivered to professionals, partners and community members. Training content is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure exploration of both local and national risks and priorities.

Current picture for West Sussex

Partners have identified a number of radicalisation risks in West Sussex, which are in common with many other areas across the country. This is not an exhaustive list and not in any particular order, and as national and international events fluctuate, the picture and levels of risk may change:

- **Animal Rights extremism** – given its rural geography, this still poses a risk to West Sussex. Aspects of this type of protest have previously included violence and it is possible that it may still attract support.
- **Extreme Right Wing** - The number of referrals adopted as Channel cases for concerns related to right-wing radicalisation has increased by 50% from March 2018 to March 2019, continuing the upward trend since 2015. Referrals relating to right-wing radicalisation discussed at a Channel panel were proportionately more likely to be adopted as a case (47%) than those with concerns related to Islamist radicalisation (39%), or any other radicalisation concerns. In West Sussex we have seen graffiti that makes reference to Extreme Right-wing symbols and ideology. Concerning right wing viewpoints have been expressed and supported through online platforms in West Sussex that promote and engage community voices. Right wing groups like British Movement have posted leaflets through doors and placed posters in public high-trafficked locations within West Sussex. In December 2016, National Action became the first Extreme Right group in this country since 1940 to become proscribed; an impact felt locally as the group's co-founder previously lived in West Sussex. Subsequent groups formed by members linked to National Action have also been proscribed, for example NS131 and Scottish Dawn. This suggests increasing support for narratives traditionally associated with the Far Right and well organised campaigns and protests, some of which are conducted predominantly online, allowing a wider reach.
- **Islamic extremism** – with the conflict and humanitarian suffering in Syria, and Daesh attempting to establish a Caliphate in recent years, a small number of individuals from Sussex travelled or may have been attracted to travelling to these countries. However, as the territory Daesh hold reduces, their members may seek to return to their country of origin, some with the aim of carrying out terrorist acts. Daesh continues to encourage its supporters across the world to carry out lone actor terror attacks and this has had some success in both Europe and the UK. In addition to Daesh, Al Muhajiroun (ALM) is a proscribed group which has had some presence in West Sussex. ALM has been connected with terrorist attacks within the UK and overseas, including the murder of Lee Rigby in 2013 and the London Bridge attack in 2017.
- **Single Issue Extremism** – there is no definitive single issue currently, but this category can include environmental, planning, even arms and food production issues.

Next Steps

Key objectives for the coming year

We will continue to deliver training to WSCC staff and partners ensuring that content is relevant, localised and up to date, offering bespoke training where there is an identified need. Further promotion of Prevent to communities within West Sussex is planned to raise awareness and ensure that myths about the agenda continue to be challenged and that confidence is increased. This will be through poster campaigns, social media promotion and community awareness-raising sessions. We will continue to deliver training and

support to schools along with developing resources and lesson plans that support critical thinking skills. We will deliver further bespoke training to IPEH and fostering services along with sessions developed for adult services. Further engagement with community groups to identify perceptions of Prevent and increase confidence is currently being developed to improve the profile of Prevent within the community.

As Crawley is no longer considered a priority area and the support provided has changed, WSCC will undertake to work closely with Crawley Borough Council to identify and address risk through a multi-agency approach. Relationships with schools will continue to be built so that they feel confident and able to spot the signs of radicalisation and refer appropriately. Ensuring schools are completely engaged with the British Values and that these underpin their curriculum and ethos will be a priority, as well as allowing time for critical thinking and debate. We will continue to identify, provide and sign post to relevant support available to schools and communicate this using a variety of methods that include the Prevent pages on the Services for Schools site, DSL meetings and regular training for the community as well as professionals is key to ensuring compliance and further increasing confidence so community training packages will continue to be developed, reviewed and promoted. Given the high percentage of people referred into Prevent with Special Educational Needs, there is an increased need to develop resources for this community, and therefore this will continue to be a key action in the coming year.

Serious and Organised Crime

Context

The Safer West Sussex Partnership has made a commitment to seeing a reduction in levels of Serious and Organised Crime in our county.

The main categories of serious offences covered by the term are: child sexual exploitation and abuse; illegal drugs; illegal firearms; fraud; money laundering and other economic crime; bribery and corruption; organised immigration crime; modern slavery and human trafficking; and cyber-crime. We recognise that serious and organised criminal's activities will impact across all our SWSP identified priorities.

One of the greatest challenges we face as a partnership in dealing with serious and organised crime is its hidden nature. Each of us is affected by serious and organised in some way and each and every one of us has a role to play in fighting it, as it is not a threat law enforcement can fight alone, a societal response is required.

The National Crime Agency's Strategic Assessment of Serious Organised Crime in 2019 describes in detail the growing and ever-changing nature of the threat posed by SOC to individuals, communities and to wider society:

- Serious and organised crime (SOC) affects more UK citizens, more frequently than any other national security threat.
- SOC crime kills more of our citizens every year than terrorism, war and natural disasters combined.
- SOC costs the UK at least £37 billion each year – equivalent to nearly £2,000 per family. This is likely to be a significant underestimate.
- There are more than 4,542 organised crime groups active in the UK.
- There are believed to be at least 181,000 people involved in serious and organised crime in the UK – more than twice the strength of the regular British Army.
- Referrals of potential victims of modern slavery have increased by more than 80% since 2016.
- The number of 'County Lines' drug supply lines has increased from 720 to around 2,000 in little over a year.
- The number of referrals to the NCA from industry of online child sexual abuse and exploitation have increased by 700% since 2012.
- Financial losses from fraud soared by 32% between April and September 2018. There were 3.6 million incidents of fraud reported in England and Wales in 2018.

The National Crime Agency (NCA) assesses that the threat from serious and organised crime is increasing and serious and organised criminals are continually looking for ways to sexually or otherwise exploit new victims and novel methods to make money, particularly online. Hierarchies and infrastructure of old-style Organised Crime Groups have fragmented into more dynamic groups of younger offenders who use technology and capitalise on networking to carry out multiple types of crimes as long as it makes them a profit while still employing extreme violence.

A large amount of serious and organised crime remains hidden or underreported, meaning the true scale is likely to be greater than we currently know. Although the impact may often be difficult to see, the threat is real and occurs every day all around us. Serious and organised criminals prey on the most vulnerable in society, including young children. Organised criminals target members of the public to defraud, manipulate and exploit them, sell them deadly substances and steal their personal data in ruthless pursuit of profit. Often intimidation is used to create fear within our communities, and this can prevent communities coming forward to report the groups and individuals involved.

Crucially we need the public and professionals and partners to be our eyes and ears, to be alert to the signs of serious and organised crime in our communities across West Sussex, much of which is hidden in plain sight. To report any concerns, and to consider their own behaviours and choices which may, however, unwittingly support serious and organised crime, from the use of recreational drugs to cheap and exploited labour in nail bars, car washes and elsewhere and purchasing counterfeit goods.

In 2020/21 we will continue to work in line with the Government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2018. The 2018 strategy updates the previous strategy from 2013, retaining core parts of the original framework (in particular, the original '4Ps' framework of Prepare, Protect, Prevent and Pursue). It builds on this in four key ways:

- A focus on developing new data, intelligence and assessment capabilities to penetrate and better understand serious and organised crime;
- Building up resilience within communities to reduce opportunities for exploitation by serious and organised crime;
- Using new preventative methods and education to divert more young people from serious and organised crime;
- Establishing a single whole-system approach, integrating more closely with the private sector to pool resources, develop new capabilities and design out vulnerabilities.

There has never been a dedicated funding stream in the UK to tackle SOC. In October 2019 the government announced a new review to look to identify ways of bolstering the response to threats such as county lines, people trafficking, drugs, child sexual exploitation, fraud and illicit finance.

The review will support the implementation of the SOC 2018 Strategy and will be led by Sir Craig Mackey QPM former deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. The review will consider the powers, capabilities, governance and funding required to tackle today's threats across law enforcement and the justice system in England and Wales, including the NCA, local police forces and regional organised crime units. The report is expected to be delivered to the Minister for Security in spring 2020.

Current Picture for West Sussex

In response the Safer West Sussex Partnership has developed a local response to tackling and disrupting SOC across the county. Three SOC multi-agency partnership groups have been formed aligned to the three policing hubs across West Sussex.

Agencies represented include Sussex Police, the South East Regional and Organised Crime Unit, Immigration Enforcement and the Gangmaster and Labour Abuse Authority, but the groups also have

access to a wealth of powers available to councils and partners that can disrupt the activity of organised crime groups.

In 2019/20 these groups have facilitated multi-agency information sharing and discussion on Organised Crime Groups and their activity within West Sussex and a number of ongoing interventions focusing on the greatest areas of threat, risk and harm locally.

In November 2019 work to educate and divert young people from serious and organised crime was undertaken by the Crawley and Mid Sussex SOC Group and Safer Crawley Partnership by hosting an event at the Hawth Theatre in Crawley to provide St Giles Trust SOS project workshops to over 1,300 school pupils to build resilience to gangs and exploitation.

West Sussex was identified to trial the 'direct input' of intelligence from partners under the various County and District Community Safety Partnerships and the three SOC Groups. This has provided an alternative for professionals and specific partners to have a way of submitting intelligence they hold that's potentially faster and more efficient, enabling Sussex Police to assess research and develop the intelligence picture quicker and feed back to partners.

As a result of the success of this scheme, in 2019/20 it was rolled out across Sussex and the guidance has recently been refined to help partners and improve the quality of intelligence being submitted.

Submissions have increased across West Sussex this year from both county and district and borough council partners and services and also from health and education providers. Submissions by crime type have included Modern Slavery, Drugs including Cuckooing and adult and child safeguarding concerns, Child Sexual Exploitation and intelligence submitted on Firearms amongst many other crime types incorporating a range of violence and theft offences.

Exploitation is inextricably linked with Serious Crime and Organised Crime Groups and as such work across the three locality-based SOC groups in 2019/20 had a continued focus on Cuckooing and County Lines.

As in other areas of the South East, drugs lines from the Metropolitan Police area impact on our county. 'County lines' is a term used by Police and partner agencies to refer to drug networks, both gangs and organised crime groups, from large urban areas such as London, who use children and young people and vulnerable adults to carry out illegal activity on their behalf. Gangs dealing drugs is not a new issue but the extent to which criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults, as well as the increasing use of violence, has become an inherent part of it through 'County Lines' makes it especially damaging.

We estimate that there are between 80-90 County Lines operating at any time across Sussex, although this number fluctuates on an almost daily basis as we disrupt lines and others are set up. In addition to this there are other locally-based dealers. In total we estimate that there are currently more than 350 telephone numbers (known as deal lines) which are used to facilitate the supply of controlled drugs across Sussex.

The organised crime groups tend to use a local property, generally belonging to a vulnerable person, sometimes a drug user, as a base for their activities. This is known as 'cuckooing' and will often happen by force or coercion. The demographic of West Sussex means the young population are vulnerable to being

used as 'clean skins' by the gangs, whereby county lines exploit young local individuals for financial, sexual or criminal purposes.

Police and partnership disruption activity and tactics coordinated through these groups in 2019/20 has resulted in the execution of warrants, closure orders, multi-agency days of action against licensed premises and taxi companies, work with youth groups and schools, liaison around rehousing of residents, Joint safeguarding visits to cuckooed properties, stop and search, high visibility patrols and public and social media engagement.

During the most recent County Lines Intensification Week which ran from 7th - 13th October 2019 as part of national activity, police and partners' work to combat illegal drugs in Sussex was promoted under the 'Fortress' brand.

This brand has been launched to encompass all our drug-harm reduction work and is already used by police in Hampshire and there are plans to roll this out further across the South East, which will continue to strengthen the unified voice from police and partners that says this is a hostile environment for drug supply.

During this week alone 29 arrests were made across Sussex, and £35,000 worth of class A drugs as well as 30 mobile phones were seized. Joint operations to target transport networks were conducted and two court-issued Drug Dealing Telephone Restriction Orders (DDTROs) were executed by officers in Eastbourne and Crawley, closing down local 'deal lines'.

In addition, just two weeks prior to this intensification, police investigating another 'County Lines' operation had executed a search warrant at an address in Ashington West Sussex, where they seized drugs and cash. Two men aged 48 and 49, and a woman aged 42, were arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to supply Class A drugs. They were interviewed and released under investigation. Officers had also obtained a DDTRO on the phone number used and it was disabled.

During the same week, safeguarding action was taken resulting in partnership cuckooing visits to 48 vulnerable individuals who had been identified at risk of being 'cuckooed' to check on their safety.

Next Steps

In December 2019 a new proactive police unit commenced operation which will help make Sussex a "hostile environment" for dangerous and persistent criminals targeting the county.

The Tactical Enforcement Unit will be dedicated to capturing some of Sussex's most wanted and prolific offenders, including those involved in serious violence, organised crime and county lines drugs gangs.

The team, made up of officers with specialist skills in proactive policing, will carry out targeted disruption, enforcement and patrol activities wherever it is most needed. One initial central team made up of eight PCs, a sergeant and led by an inspector, will grow to form three geographically-based enforcement teams, one each based in East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton and Hove, by April 2020.

The Tactical Enforcement Unit will be a visible, proactive deterrent to those at the centre of the serious offending, supporting local policing teams in dealing with specific spikes in crimes that impact on the

community. They will work where the need is greatest and provide public reassurance by being present and proactively disrupting and taking off the streets some of our most prolific criminals.

The new unit has been established through an uplift in police officers with the force on track to recruit a net gain of 129 officers by March 2021, thanks to a combination of additional precept and Government funding.

The work of the multi-agency SOC groups is informed by the West Sussex Serious and Organised Crime Local Profile, which represents a snapshot in time of the threat, risk and harm from Serious Organised Crime and Organised Crime Groups in West Sussex including current and emerging trends.

The highest priority areas for West Sussex have been assessed as being 'Drugs and Related Harm', 'Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse', and 'Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime'. All the OCGs in West Sussex have been identified as being involved in drug supply.

In 2020/21 the three SOC groups will each have a dedicated focus on a specific threat and will develop and deliver their respective Action Plans and local partnership intelligence picture of these threats and share best practice across West Sussex in prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in serious and organised crime (**Pursue**); preventing people from engaging in this activity (**Prevent**); increasing protection against serious and organised crime (**Protect**); and reducing the impact of this criminality where it takes place (**Prepare**).

Serious Violence

Context

Serious violent crime is increasing nationally and whilst such crimes amount to 1% of all recorded crime the impact of serious violent crime on society is significant and long lasting. Many of the victims are vulnerable, at risk for exploitation and never recover from the impact of the violence they are subjected to. The cycle of violence devastates the lives of individuals, families and communities.

The evidence shows that while overall crime continues to fall, homicide, knife crime and gun crime has risen since 2014 across virtually all police force areas in England and Wales. Robbery has also risen sharply since 2016. These increases have been accompanied by a shift towards younger victims and perpetrators. Most of the violence is male on male. About half the rise in robbery, knife and gun crime is due to improvements in police recording. For the remainder, drug-related cases seem to be an important driver. Worryingly the involvement of young people in knife crime has been growing, confirming anecdotal evidence that more boys (and girls) are carrying weapons, being drawn into gangs and exploited by drug dealers.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales, which includes offences that are not reported to police, indicates that overall levels of violence have fallen by about a quarter since 2013. However, the police-recorded statistics - which tend to pick up more "high harm" crimes, have indicated that the most serious violent crime is increasing.

On 9 April 2018, the Government published its Serious Violence Strategy. The scope of the strategy is concerned with 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. It also includes emerging crime threats faced in some areas of the country such as the use of corrosive substances as a weapon. The Strategy places an emphasis on early intervention and prevention and aims to tackle the root causes of violence and prevent young people from getting involved in crime.

Its content and ambitious programme is framed around four key themes:

1. Tackling County Lines and Misuse of Drugs – tackling the significant role of drugs and county lines in serious violence.
2. Early Intervention and Prevention – preventing people from committing serious violence and being drawn into exploitation by building resilience, supporting positive alternatives and providing timely interventions at the “teachable moment”.
3. Supporting Communities and Local Partnerships – putting communities and local partnerships at the heart of our multiple-strand approach to tackling serious violence.
4. Effective Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Response – pursuing those who commit serious violent crime through effective law enforcement and ensuring that the criminal justice system is effective and responsive, especially for victims.

The Home Office includes the following offences in its definition of serious violence:

- Homicide (non-domestic)
- Firearms-enabled offences (excluding those involving air weapons and non-violent offences)
- Knife-enabled attempted murder
- Knife-enabled threats to kill
- Knife-enabled assault with injury
- Knife-enabled assault with intent to cause serious harm
- Knife-enabled robbery
- Other robbery (split by personal and business)

Within the strategy the Home Office has identified the primary national measures of success as being a reduction in hospital admissions for assault with a knife or sharp object (especially among those victims aged under 25); a reduction in knife-enabled serious violence (especially among those victims aged under 25); and a reduction in all non-domestic homicides (especially among those victims aged under 25 involving knives).

Current picture for West Sussex

The Safer West Sussex Partnership is committed to tackling serious violence, pursuing offenders, protecting the most vulnerable in our communities and collaboratively working together to deliver effective early intervention and prevention.

Safer West Sussex Partnership already has the key themes of the Serious Violent Strategy in our priorities, including tackling Serious and Organised Crime (SOC), Child exploitation, Modern Slavery and County Lines. The work led through the local SOC Partnerships, the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Exploitation Group and the partnership tactical tasking and coordination group (PTTCG) have focussed on risk of harm in the areas. However, we felt it was important to recognise the significant impact serious violence has on the community and as such we will focus specific activity in this area. The continued development of contextual safeguarding in the county will support our approach to tackling serious violence.

In November 2018 the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner secured £891,000 from the Government's Early Intervention Youth Fund, under the serious violence strategy from October 2018 through to 31st March 2020.

The PCC commissioned an Early Intervention Youth Programme, (REBOOT) being delivered by YMCA Downlink Group, The Trust for Developing Communities (TDC), Audio Active and the Hangleton and Knoll Project which launched on 20th May 2019. REBOOT aims to engage positively with under 18's at risk of committing serious violence and those who have come to the attention of the police through antisocial behaviour and low level crime identified within the Youth Early Intervention protocol launched on the 1st April 2019 which is embedded within policing and wider partners.

As of January 2020, REBOOT has received 891 referrals pan Sussex with 56% of these cases being closed at stage one. 191 referrals were made to the YMCA coaching service.

REBOOT brings together multiple partners: East Sussex youth offending team, West Sussex youth offending service, Brighton and Hove Youth offending service, YMCA Downslink Group, Trust for developing communities, Audio Active, Hangleton and Knoll, NHS partnership Trust, Sussex Police, Active Sussex, Freedom Leisure, Wave Leisure and Crimestopper's Fearless.

This intervention is for young people at risk of the early indicators leading to serious violence and exploitation if:

1. They are aged between 11-17
2. They've come to police attention in the past four weeks
3. A Multi Agency risk assessment form has been completed
4. They are at risk of one of the key drivers of crime (Opportunity, Drugs, Alcohol, Character and profit)

This programme is PAN-Sussex and is not designed to replace existing practices but provides a new layer of support for those children and young people putting themselves in vulnerable situations. The programme offers a personalised one-to-one support package for young people who are at risk of engaging in serious violence and is separate to the REBOOT Sussex police and partnership protocol. The Sussex PCC has now extended REBOOT funding until 31st March 2021.

On 12 August 2019 the government announced that 18 Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) areas would be awarded £35 million to set up specialist teams to tackle violent crime in their areas, Sussex PCC being one of the 18. Each area was tasked with bringing together a response within a local Violence Reduction Unit (VRU).

The VRU aims would be to bring together different organisations, including the police, local government, health, community leaders and other key partners to tackle violent crime by understanding its root causes. The VRU's are responsible for identifying what is driving violent crime in the area and coming up with a co-ordinated response and with delivering both short- and long-term strategies to tackle violent crime, involving police, healthcare workers, community leaders and others.

In 2019-20 the Sussex PCC was awarded £880k with West Sussex VRU allocated £294k to support targeted work and interventions.

West Sussex VRU funding and approach 2019-20

The VRU funding in 2019-20 focused on three key projects/approaches:

- 1) West Sussex wide - funding was awarded to a series of training programmes, outreach projects and direct interventions with the aim of preventative and outreach workers being skilled up to work with potentially 'at risk' children before existing service entry thresholds are met
- 2) Worthing & Adur - School's Project focussed on targeting the 15 highest risk schools and colleges to educate young people about the short and long-term debilitating effects of stabbing injuries and countering the negative effect of Social Media.
- 3) Crawley - To identify and engage young people at risk of knife, gang and exploitation activity using engagement with high-tech music. One-to-one mentoring; group work in schools and community settings; street-based outreach

Evidence gathered through evaluation indicated that for some young people single interventions or dual interventions have provided the momentum to find their own purpose to achieve and channel successful outcomes. Building on themes of physical exercise, gaining self-esteem through a structured programme of interventions, education and mentoring has proved to be successful with the added value that some providers are investing back by supporting those young people who have been motivated to attend and succeed, to continue onwards with their efforts by offering them a peer mentor independent of WSCC's commissioned services. Aligning with commissioned providers who have an offer beyond that of the commissioned service, and who offer social value within their structure, provides potential to yield more sustainable outcomes for participants and extend the peer mentor model beyond the commissioned service. Interventions like these which provided emotional regulation and a form of mentorship have proved successful in helping young people, not only to channel their energy into a constructed activity, but also helped them to learn clear boundaries, gain confidence and see how to function away from activity they have engaged in previously. Offering physical activity interventions which offer an element of peer-led construct alongside support through the YJS in relation to education, career and training planning is it appears, anecdotally, but with very small numbers notable, a successful combination of interventions.

West Sussex VRU funding and approach 2020-21

In 2020-21 the award from the Home Office via Sussex PCC to West Sussex was £176k for direct interventions and an additional £30k to support the local coordination of the VRU activities.

In March 2021 the Serious Violent Crime Profile was published and this evidence informed the Pan-Sussex and West Sussex specific VRU bid to the Home Office for 20-21 funding. The profile enabled an intelligence led approach to the delivery plan of the West Sussex VRU.

Pan-Sussex wide a definition of serious violence for West Sussex Violence Units (VRU's) has been agreed.

The agreed definition of serious violence for VRUs in Sussex is violence that:

- occurs in a public place, or has a victim, suspect or offender under the age of 25, and
- either causes or is intended to cause serious injury (GBH/wounding criminal definition), or involves the use of one or more of the following:
 - a firearm
 - knife or other bladed/pointed weapon, whether made, adapted or intended as a weapon
 - other offensive weapon (whether made, adapted or intended), including acid or corrosive substance.

This definition was agreed by the Sussex VRU's in response to the Sussex Police Problem profile which detailed a localised picture of evidence of serious violence Pan-Sussex.

A proportion (£30k) of the allocated funding by the Home Office to Sussex Police and to West Sussex VRU has been awarded to the provision of targeted interventions to young people either with known risk factors and/or those young people with known risk factors and that are involved in the criminal justice system. This funding is allocated to the Youth Justice Service (YJS) and will be focussed on providing interventions which

have proven successful during the funding period 19/20. Examples of these will be spot-purchasing individual interventions from Audio Active mentoring programme, Angling 4 Education and Lodge Hill Challenge U.

Secondly funding (£20k) is being diverted to further develop the peer mentoring scheme delivered through St. Giles Trust which has supported a cohort to complete Stage 1 of their Learning to Advise programme. Further investing in the current cohort and extending further to another 5-10 potential mentors will enable us to embed a community model of peer mentorship in the three localities we are focussing our violence reduction plan towards. This will result in a total of 15 qualified peer mentors.

The peer mentors will be deployed into a mentoring role with 17-24-year olds involved with, or at risk of becoming involved with, violent crime. We will also explore support for the youth / adult offender transition and the peer support the mentors could provide during this stage.

Embedding a mentor-led programme in communities where the intelligence indicates a higher risk in the Serious Violent Crime profile will target resources through each of the locality community partnerships and identify key individuals at risk of violence, offenders perpetrating violence, and prevent reoffending. This model will seek to develop accessible resource to reach young people in transition accessing youth offending services and targeting potentially teachable moments.

Through the VRU we will ensure there is collaborative working across the key districts, and across the County, where these projects are tested, and learning shared and disseminated.

Structure and Governance

There are three locality VRUs (one in each area of Sussex: East Sussex, West Sussex, Brighton & Hove), which are responsible for the operational delivery of VRU activity within their area. The overarching pan-Sussex Serious Violence Reduction Steering Group (SVRSG), which comprises the core VRU team has responsibility for strategic coordination of VRU activity across Sussex including all financial and reporting requirements, executive engagement, project management, analysis and development of data sharing agreements and communications and engagement. The team also leads on the collation and sharing of good practice locally and nationally.

The Violence Reduction Unit's (VRU) core function is to offer leadership and, working with all relevant agencies operating locally, strategic coordination of the local response to serious violence. It reports to the Safer West Sussex Partnership Executive Board and the Sussex Criminal Justice Board.

The membership of the West Sussex VRU consists of statutory agency representatives and relevant partners from the voluntary and community sector responsible for delivery of serious violence reduction activity or connected community safety business areas including; National Probation service, Clinical Commissioning Group, all district and borough councils, Sussex Police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Youth Justice Service, WSCC Education, WSCC MASH, WSCC Community Safety, WSCC Communications, Children's Social care and Early Help.

The SVRSG also provides the forum for locality VRUs to share information and good practice, hold each other to account and ensure that delivery of activity on serious violence is consistent with the aims and principles set out by the Home Office.

Next Steps

As detailed in the Child Exploitation section we are working with WSCC Safeguarding in Education and Schools to co-design the Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum for West Sussex which will include content and accompanying resources to address serious violence/knife crime and the impact of social media.

As well as allocating the funds to the above areas of work the VRU has identified three strategic key priorities over the next 18 months between September 2020 and April 2022. These priorities were identified through the vulnerability factors identified in the problem profile:

- 1) We will work together to support children and young people to remain safe in school and to reduce exclusions in all our schools including special schools and APC's.
- 2) Develop our engagement with young people, with community's disproportionality effected by violence and exploitation, and with the wider community so we are able to listen to feedback to help shape our responses
- 3) We will work together to reduce the risk of serious violence among young BAME victims and perpetrators, by understanding the causes, indicators and influences. The VRU and the Youth Justice Board will work in collaboration with key stakeholders to develop a focussed operational plan to reduce the disproportional representation of young black and minority ethnic young people exposed to serious violence and exploitation.

The West Sussex VRU is developing a robust operational plan for 2020-22 and will establish three sub-groups reporting into the VRU, each of which will be tailored to the delivery of the three priorities. These will drive the operational work, identify key challenges, escalate barriers and risk and report on progress to the VRU. Alongside this the National Probation Service has developed a violence and exploitation team who will work with 18-24 year olds most at risk of violence and exploitation.