

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Social Inclusion and Community Safety Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 22/11/22

Subject: Progress Report on the Gangs, Violence and Exploitation Unit

Report author: Gemma Lightfoot, Gangs, Violence and Exploitation Unit Manager and Elliot Williams-Fletcher, Gangs, Violence and Exploitation Unit Analyst

Responsible Director: Matthew Hooper, Chief Officer, Safer Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services

SUMMARY

This report provides PAC Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the work and performance of the Council's Gangs Violence and Exploitation Unit (GVEU) reviewing its work and progress since its establishment in September 2020.

There are no decisions required from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the committee to note and comment on the report and its contents.

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	A safer borough increases opportunities for all. Encouraging young people to lead healthy and fulfilling lives with aspiration leads to prosperity.
Creating a compassionate council	The GVEU is a front-line service for parents / carers and young people, many of whom are in crisis and require long term support.
Doing things with residents, not to them	The GVEU listens to young people, parents / parents and voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners to develop the opportunities and projects they require
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The GVEU works hard to deliver a financially efficient service and projects and has also received over £125k funding from external sources

Taking pride in H&F	The GVEU works to tackle serious youth violence in the borough to make the borough a safer place
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	The GVEU has worked closely with the climate change team by linking them in with the communities we work with to further raise their profile and aims

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

1. Background

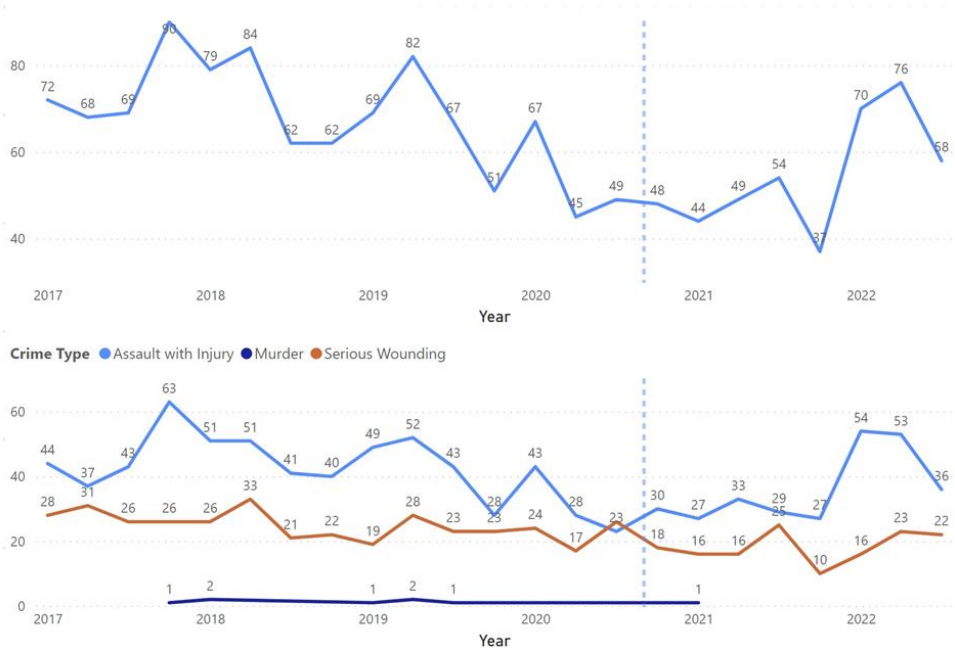
2. The Gangs, Violence and Exploitation Unit (GVEU) was introduced in September 2020, due to a recognition by the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Council concerning increased serious youth violence on the borough.
3. The focus of the GVEU is to work with young people involved in, or at risk from gangs, violence or exploitation who are 10-25 years old of age. Further areas of work include working with families affected by serious youth violence, residents, and the voluntary and community sector (VCS).
4. The initial development of the GVEU began in the difficult period of the pandemic. The team completed training in systemic and trauma informed practice. This time was used to develop our relationships internally, and to develop long term relationships with external partners, many of whom are in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), with whom we have worked to develop and enhance our strong relationships.
5. It was important to the GVEU from the outset to listen to the community, parents / carers and young people. At an induction event held to inform the Unit of its mission, purpose and importance, the former Deputy Leader spoke, as did two parents from the borough whose children have been affected by gangs, violence and exploitation. Feedback from the parents and other attendees was extremely positive. Siraad Aden, a bereaved mother, said of the induction: "You encouraged me to speak up about me and my family's feelings. You gave me the opportunity to speak about the problems with society today. Me and my children thank you, for helping me get to this stage. Thank you."
6. It is a credit to the team that in 2021, as a result of the GVEU's success and achievements, the Unit was the recipient of the Team of the Year at the Council's Star Awards.

7. Team overview

8. The team consists of a manager who is responsible for leading and managing the Unit, a Policy and Service Development Officer, four gangs outreach workers, two ASB co-ordinators, a dedicated GVEU analyst alongside a team of six council-funded police officers.

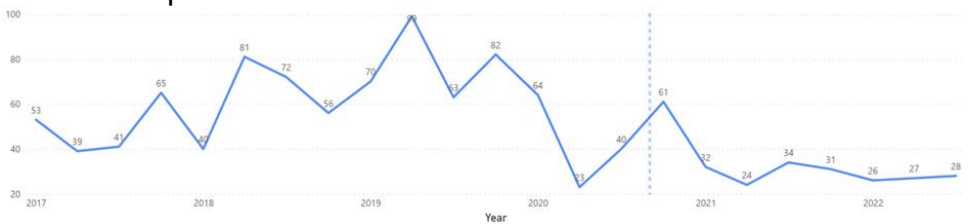
9. Our GVEU workers are assigned cases and work with young people, and their families, to build trust, understand the needs of the young person and the risk(s) they face as we work to support them away from gangs and/or serious youth violence.
10. The outreach workers have been trained in systemic and trauma informed practice. One to one work and family visits are conducted with young people affected by serious youth violence, gang-related violence and exploitation on a weekly basis, whereby the outreach team assist to manage the risks they face and work towards their aspirations. The outreach work is not time bound.
11. Our two ASB Co-ordinators lead on our enforcement action with our police colleagues, along with leading on housing moves for families within our cohort.
12. The GVEU Analyst provides data support to the GVEU which largely revolves around providing, both proactive and reactive, criminal network analysis alongside performance analysis. Crime analysis is also provided in the form of reports and dashboard for the GVEU.
13. Our Policy and Service Development Officer (PSDO) is responsible for the development and the implementation of policy initiatives through high level project work and partnership working with both operational, senior colleagues and other partners. The PSDO also identifies new areas of opportunity and innovation for the GVEU.
14. The Police Officers within the unit act on intelligence received with their proactive team colleagues. They provide a daily intelligence briefing, lead and participate in police operations, lead on child criminal exploitation reports and apply for Criminal Behaviour Orders.
15. **Key principles**
16. The Unit has the following key principles:
 - Community Participation** - Our communities, particularly our young people, are engaged and active in designing the services they use
 - Community Support** - Communities and families are well supported to tackle issues of exploitation and know where to look for help
 - Community Resilience** - Working with communities and the third sector to build an anti-violence culture
 - Early Intervention** - Our service is trauma-informed and targeted at dealing with vulnerabilities early to reduce the impact of adverse experiences
 - Prevention** - Our young people are provided with the best youth services in London which encourage positive activities and appeal to everyone
 - Protection** - We will use all available legislation to ensure our communities are protected from criminal behaviour

17. **Key Performance Indicators** - The Unit's KPI's are as follows:
18. ***To increase the number of referrals made to the GVEU***
There have been 79 referrals since the GVEU was established. There have been 38 from October 2021 to September 2022.
19. ***To increase the number of education and awareness sessions delivered to residents (young people & parents/carers)***
Since the GVEU was established there have been 65 GVEU led training and awareness sessions, with a total of 937 attendees. 38 GVEU led training and awareness sessions with a total of 671 attendees have been held from October 2021 to September 2022. Additionally, the GVEU has commissioned a total of 17 Street Doctors Sessions with a total of 126 attendees, of which 8 have occurred from October 2021 to September 2022 totalling 53 attendees.
20. There have been 120 Detached Outreach Sessions delivered since the project was launched with 1,479 attendees. From October 2021 to September 2022, there were 73 Detached Outreach Sessions with 891 attendees in total.
21. ***To increase the number of Hammersmith and Fulham and police enforcement interventions***
As a service the GVEU has overseen the investigations and delivery of:
32 Child Criminal Exploitation reports,
16 Criminal Behaviour Order applications, and
9 recalls to prison
23. The data below covering crime and ambulance call outs covers all incidents involving young people aged 10 to 24 that occurred in Hammersmith and Fulham. This means therefore that much of the included data will relate to incidents outside of the scope of the Gangs, Violence, and Exploitation Unit.
24. ***To reduce the number of violent crimes committed by young people***
251 non-domestic violence assault with injury, serious wounding, or murder offences were committed by young people aged 10 to 24 from October 2021 to September 2022.
25. This was 29% higher than the previous 12 months and 13% higher than the 12-month period before that. There have been no murders since 2021. Serious Wounding has seen a 5% reduction compared to the previous 12 months and an 18% reduction compared to the 12 months before that. Whilst Assault with injury saw a higher rate in Q1 and Q2 2022 this fell in Q3.



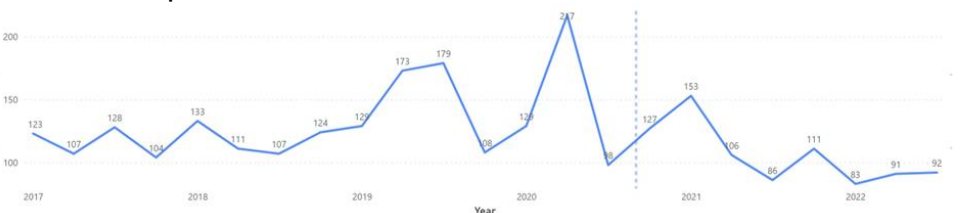
26. **To reduce the number of robberies committed by young people**
 There were 112 robbery offences committed by young people aged 10 to 24 from October 2021 to September 2022.

27. This was 26% lower than the previous 12 months and 46% lower than the 12-month period before that.



28. **To reduce the number of drug related offences committed by young people**
 377 drug offences were committed by young people aged 10 to 24 from October 2021 to September 2022.

29. This was 20% lower than the previous 12 months and 32% lower than the 12-month period before that.



30. ***To reduce the number, and seriousness of injuries, caused by youth violence***

Data on ambulance call outs for September 2022 is not yet available. In the previous 12 months for which we have data available, September 2021 to August 2022, there were 32 ambulance call outs for young people aged 10 to 24.

31. This was 39% lower than the previous 12 months and 62% lower than the 12 months period before that.

32. *Data note - The data used for the KPI's above is correct as of 24/10/2022. The Unit was established in September 2020, during the period of rolling national and regional lockdowns to prevent the spread of COVID-19 that occurred between 23/03/2020 and 22/02/2022. These lockdowns limited the Unit's ability to provide training and outreach work, meaning that lower numbers of education and awareness sessions could be provided than anticipated. Reduced professional interactions with young people, because of the pandemic infection control, will also have reduced the number of referrals to the Unit. The restrictions also reduced the number of offences generally and will have impacted A&E admissions. The Unit is a priority service and continued to come into the office and deliver a service to the best of its ability during the pandemic.*

33. **Further operational work**

34. The GVEU has developed a Vulnerability Tracker. Professionals recognised a clear trajectory for young people who are affected by GVE. We have, therefore, created a vulnerability tracker to identify those young people we need to work with at the earliest opportunity. In partnership with the police and Children's Services we assess young people across 5 subcategories: welfare, victim of crime, criminal behaviour, county lines and other risk factors. In total we score across 25 categories which include, amongst others, mental health, whether the young person is currently wanted / missing, whether they are in employment, education or training and whether they associate with others who are being exploited. There has been hugely positive feedback from partners that the tracker is welcomed and impressive.

35. The GVEU has developed and implemented a Risk & Aspiration Plan. It is our single assessment and development framework which we use for every young person referred to the GVEU.

36. The GVEU has produced Gangs, Violence & Exploitation awareness sessions. A session is appropriate for parents, carers and professionals and develops their awareness of GVE and issues surrounding it. This is delivered in partnership with Resilience (the young person's arm of Turning Point). The GVEU consulted with the Anti-Tribalism Movement (VCS organisation) on the presentation, which has now been delivered to the Parenting Awareness Programme and Parent / Carer Champions, amongst others, with great feedback. There is also another awareness session which is aimed at Year 6 children which, again, has been delivered to great success and feedback.

37. The GVEU has built partnership working as we recognise that sharing our intelligence, ideas and professional experience is critical to effectively reducing

risk and best supporting families and young people. Therefore, the GVEU sits on: Risk & Wellbeing Panel, Safeguarding Adolescents at Risk Panel, Out of Court Disposal Panel, Cuckooing Panel and No Further Action (NFA) Panel (discussion to provide support for young people who have been NFA'd for a serious offences). The GVEU also convenes the Ending Gangs, Violence and Exploitation Panel which discussed over 18's who are at risk / involved in GVE.

38. Projects

39. The GVEU also develops and funds several projects:
40. Detached outreach project – the GVEU utilises the uplift grant we receive from the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to match fund Harrow Club to deliver the detached outreach service in the borough. There are fortnightly partnership meetings attended by the GVEU, Harrow Club, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, Youth Justice Service and the Exploitation lead from Children's Services where we inform Harrow Club of the areas we want the detached outreach to focus on. They engage with young people and encourage them to participate in diversionary activities such as music, sport, youth club.
41. South Fulham Capacity Building project - Following a successful bid to the VRU the Unit received £68k in grant to deliver a project to build resilience to violence within a community. The area chosen for the project was South Fulham. The project is being delivered by the GVEU in conjunction with Harrow Club and ASE and funds several projects in the area.
42. We have empowered the community to utilise Sands End Arts and Community Centre (SEACC) which they felt detached from, and they now meet there on a weekly basis for parent / carer coffee mornings, which have included training on first aid and trauma informed approaches. Parent and carers have found this a safe space to talk about the issues affecting them and their children which then feeds into the monthly meeting where professionals attend and are themed with topics such as housing, ASB, hate crime etc.
43. The parents / carers developed their confidence to host their own even event assisted by ASE to celebrate Eid which was attended by residents and community partners with great feedback.
44. In response to listening to parents / carers the grant funds late-night youth project running on Friday's from 9pm until midnight at Sands End Youth Club.
45. The Rebel Records project has also been delivered as part of the wider project. Rebel Records are an independent record label in Sands End made up of writers, producers and sound engineers, many of whom grew up in Fulham and are achieving great success. Their studio is state of the art, and they are committed to early intervention with young people and working with them to achieve their aspirations. We have completed a 10-week programme that runs Saturday all day for a group of 5 young people. There is a learning programme that enables the young people to learn about all aspects of music such as production / engineering, writing, marketing, management and financial skills. Due to the success the young people wanted to continue and a phase 2 of the

project was developed for them for an additional 10 weeks. Another initial 10-week programme has commenced for another group of young people.

46. The project also funded a residential for young people led by Harrow Club in October half term. The residential also provided the time for a listening session to take place so we could listen to the needs of young people to take on board when developing future projects and was attended by another one of our partners, Lyceum Gym, to develop this.
47. Following the success of the project the GVEU received an additional £25k funding from the VRU to continue aspects of the project.
48. Mentoring Project - The Gangs Unit successfully bid for funding from the Home Office via the Violence Reduction Unit which has provided for 40 mentoring spaces which are being delivered by the Harrow Club. The mentoring lasts for 6 months and has a very broad remit and can range from early intervention through to advanced stages of youth violence involvement. The reasons for requesting mentoring have been wide ranging from confidence building, request for a male role model, expanding their horizons to getting involved in activities. The Gangs Unit analyst is providing analysis of the mentoring to the Home Office.
49. Notting Hill Carnival / Bank Holiday Weekend - In advance of the Carnival weekend the GVEU led on the partnership work to identifying young people (children and adults) who we would have concerns about attending carnival. As per previous years we identified the young people and tasked a named practitioner to have a conversation with them about their attendance and provided a safety conversation guide for practitioners. Additionally, the GVEU funded a project on the Bank Holiday Monday in conjunction with People Arise Now whereby young people attended a FIFA challenge event and could watch a film and discuss afterwards.
50. The GVEU funded additional sessions of the late-night project to run on Saturday and Sunday and additional youth club sessions to run at White City Youth Club on Sunday and Monday.
51. The purpose of the additional events was to provide diversion and intervention to young people.
52. As part of Carnival planning an outreach worker worked in the CCTV Unit over the Bank Holiday period to identify any concerning activity on the borough involving young people and worked closely with the police, police youth engagement team and our colleagues from the Violence Intervention Project who were based in the youth custody suite for Carnival in Wandsworth.
53. The Gangs Unit are pleased to report that there was only 1 incident of concern to the Unit.
54. Fearless - From our annual VRU funding the GVEU has recently completed a campaign with the Crimestoppers youth brand, Fearless. The aim of the targeted campaign was to encourage and persuade young members of the community to speak up about and report crime. The campaign developed

communications and messaging to engage with young people across the borough with the target of raising awareness of the Crimestoppers / Fearless anonymous service via advertising and promotion.

55. The campaign was largely completed via messaging on social media networks that young people utilise. The Youth Mayor was utilised as an ambassador for the campaign, and he released an advert on social media encouraging reporting to occur within LBHF.
56. The target audience was young people aged 11-16yrs. A campaign landing page and a professional toolkit for partners was also arranged and sent out to the local partnership. The campaign webpage also included downloadable links to campaign materials if required.
57. The campaign has recently completed so we are now waiting for the results to see whether it did encourage anonymous reporting from young people in our borough.
58. Women and Girls project - The Unit further successfully bid for the VRU's preventative critical incident grant (£5k) and was match funded by the wider Community Safety Unit. The funding was allocated to the Women and Girls Network (VCS organisation) for a project to work with women and girls to discuss violence and exploitation concerns with them and advise them where they can seek support and help. The project was delivered in both education and community settings. The key points of focus were emotional wellbeing, goals, aspirations and self-esteem. This project was developed following initial sessions in a school with a girls group led by a Gangs Unit outreach worker and the feedback from that.

59. Future work

60. The GVEU are concerned about the South Fulham and White City areas with regards to gangs, violence and exploitation and are working with the police, external partners and the community to understand and map the issues and take enforcement action where necessary alongside support to families and young people.
61. The GVEU will continue to develop our project work, with plans underway to work with another VCS partner, Gloves not Gunz, to put in place two sport and dance activities in White City and a further dance and wellbeing project for parents / carers. All of these projects will also allow a safe space for young people / parent / carers to discuss their concerns and any support required.
62. We also have project plans underway with Lyceum Gym (based at Sands End Arts and Community Centre) and Lyric Theatre.
63. The GVEU currently take the lead with the Community Safety team on developing our local violence and vulnerability and action plan which has received a "good" rating from the Violence Reduction Unit. Legislation is due to come into force (Serious Violence Duty) which will require specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying

the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence. The GVEU will play a critical part in responding to the duty.

64. The GVEU has recently introduced a case management system, ECINS. This will lead to improved data reporting from our outreach work.