

VIOLENCE REDUCTION NETWORK

**LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE
& RUTLAND**

Response Strategy: Preventing Serious Violence

**Leicester, Leicestershire
and Rutland**

2020-2023

Refreshed December 2022



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1. Introduction

Background

In 2018 the Government published the Serious Violence Strategy in response to national increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide. The following year Home Office funding was announced and allocated to 18 police force areas across England and Wales for the purpose of establishing a local Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). Based on the Scottish model, the expectation on VRUs is to adopt a public health approach in understanding and responding to serious violence in their local area. The core function of VRUs is prescribed as:

“...to offer leadership, establish a core membership and, working with all relevant agencies operating locally, provide strategic co-ordination of the local response to serious violence”.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) successfully secured funding and established the Violence Reduction Network (VRN) in September 2019. With the core membership comprising of partners from across the system and supported by a central co-located team, the VRN is a wide alliance of communities, organisations and existing partnerships determined to tackle the root causes of serious violence. The primary focus since 2019 has been on preventing and reducing public place violence with a particular focus on young people (under 25s).

The forthcoming Serious Violence duty supports the work of the VRN by placing a statutory responsibility on several of our core members as well as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to adopt a public health approach in tackling serious violence

locally. There are other recent and relevant policy changes including the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (2021) and the ‘From Harm to Hope’ Drugs Plan (2021). Over the last year, senior leaders have refreshed the priorities and delivery structure of the Strategic Partnership Board to align these areas of related policy, strengthen connections between them and enable us to further progress our collective work to prevent and reduce all types of violence and vulnerability across LLR.

This Strategy

This three-year strategy was first published in 2020 and this refreshed version outlines the programme for 2023. It is based on the assumption that LLR will receive further grant funding from the Home Office, although a significant proportion of the planned activity will be delivered within existing resources across the partnership. A new strategy will be produced in 2023 to deliver on the core membership’s statutory responsibilities as part of the Serious Violence duty. The new strategy will reflect the updated local definition of serious violence which is currently under discussion.

This strategy sets out the LLR-wide strategic response to public place serious violence affecting our young people and communities over and above the many routine services and interventions already being delivered. It illustrates how the VRN adopts a public health approach, uses data and evidence to understand serious violence and its root causes, invests in evidence-informed responses and evaluates impact with a view to longer-term investment if found to be effective.

It draws on the findings and recommendations of previous Strategic Needs Assessments including the most recent version published in December 2022 (7) and draws on our learning to date. It also provides an outline of the VRN’s approach such as our core principles and our Violence Prevention Framework. These continue to be used by partners to develop internal and multi-agency policy and practice in a way which is consistent with the evidence-base and makes a positive and effective contribution to our local violence prevention system.

The strategy then sets out priorities, planned activity and success measures across four strategic themes:

1. Leadership and Cultural Change
2. Data Sharing, Evidence and Evaluation
3. Prevention
4. Criminal Justice and Enforcement

Finally, the VRN’s Data Strategy, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework, plans for Sustainability and the refreshed Governance Structure are also outlined.

2. About the Violence Reduction Network

Vision and Mission

We are ambitious in our vision given the devastating impact that violence can have on children, young people, families and communities. All people, and in particular children, have a right to be safe and live their lives from violence. We recognise the multiple challenges involved, particularly within the current post-pandemic socio-economic climate. However, as the causes of violence are preventable, we believe it is possible to make significant strides towards realising our vision:

VISION

We believe violence is preventable.

Our vision is for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to be a place where people can lead their lives free from violence and the fear of violence.

The causes of violence are multiple and complex and the solutions lie across the system; within and across communities and a diverse range of organisations. We believe everyone has a role to play but it is particularly important to involve those individuals and communities most affected by violence. Collaboration and courage are vital. This has informed the approach that we have taken in establishing our Unit as a Network and this is reflected in our mission:

MISSION

Our mission is to achieve 'prevention through connection' by building an inclusive, collaborative and courageous network which will drive the short and long-term change required to successfully tackle the causes and consequences of violence.

Focus

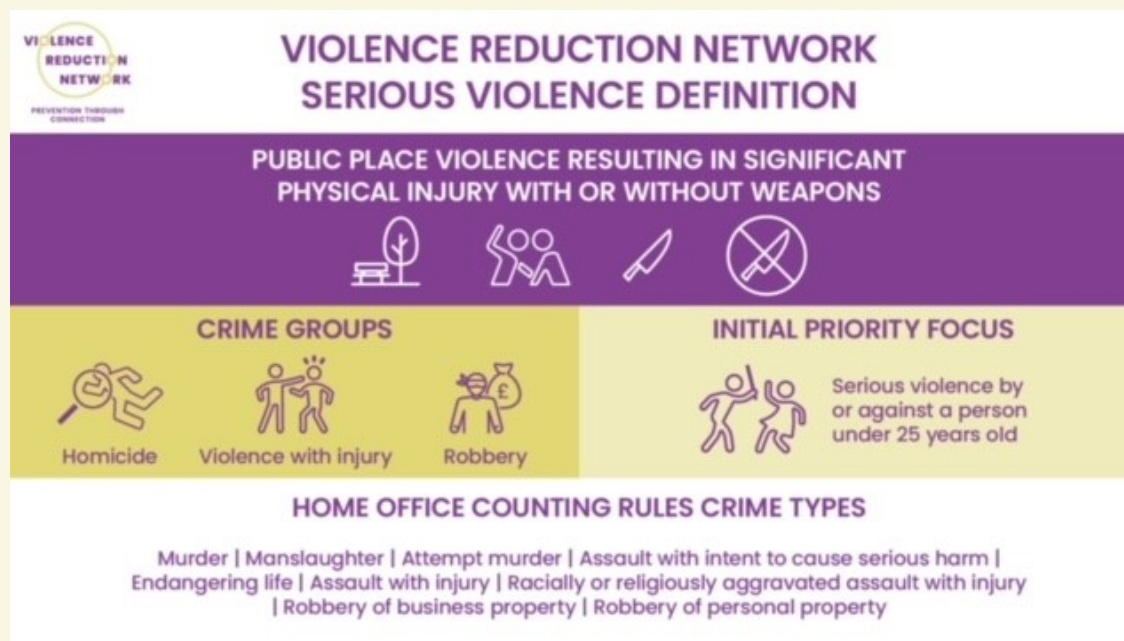
The VRN embraces the World Health Organization's (WHO) broad definition of violence:

"The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation". (WHO, 2002)

The current focus of the VRN's work and this strategy defines serious violence as *public place violence resulting in significant physical injury with or without weapons*. This includes all ages although we have a priority focus on under 25s. Our definition is drawn from applicable crime types within Home Office crime groupings: Homicide, Violence with Injury and

Robbery. Sexual violence and/or serious violence in domestic settings, such as domestic abuse, are currently excluded.

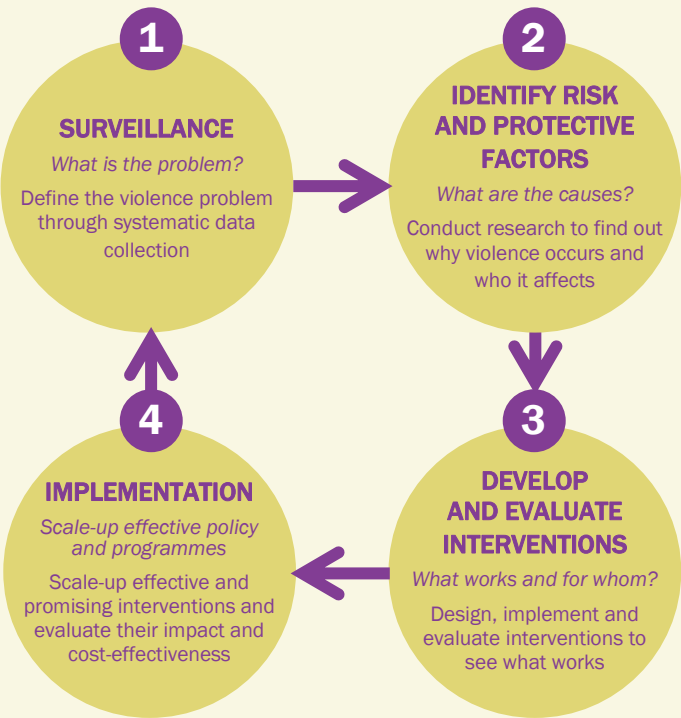
Although our focus is on public place serious violence, we recognise the multiple forms of violence affecting communities and young people, and the links between different types of violence. Research highlights these connections, together with the common risk and protective factors and the importance of deploying strategies which simultaneously address multiple forms of violence. We will therefore continue to collaborate with other local Boards and partnerships, and invest in strategies to prevent wider harm affecting our communities. The VRN's core members are currently re-visiting the local definition of Serious Violence for the purposes of the new duty.



3. Our Approach

A Public Health Approach

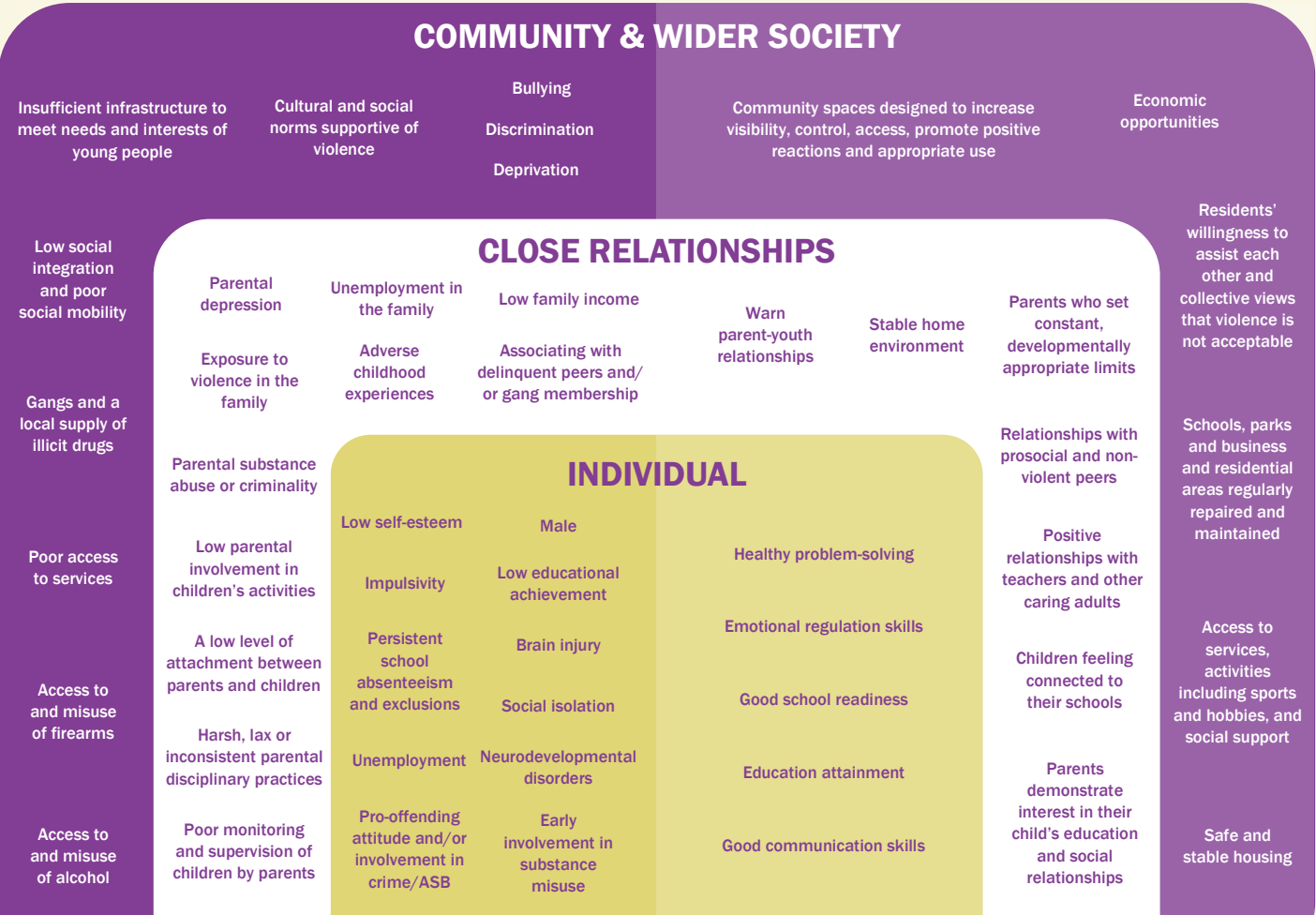
The VRN has incorporated a public health approach into its processes, principles and framework. Our work continuously follows the public health four-step process as outlined below:



The four steps of a public health approach to violence prevention (World Health Organization, 2002)

In understanding and responding to the risk and protective factors of serious violence, we will continuously operate across all four levels of the public health ecological framework to ensure that strategies address not only individual level factors but also those that occur within relationships and the wider community and societal context.

Our SNA highlighted the known risk and protective factors relating to violence affecting young people and a summary is provided below. We will continuously seek to align resource to reducing risk factors and strengthening protective factors in the design and delivering of strategies and interventions.



3. Our Approach

Our Core Principles

Drawing on a public health approach, we have developed and agreed **seven** core principles which will guide all elements of our work. These are:

1 Empower everyone, including young people and communities, to play a role in preventing violence. We will seek to widen involvement, particularly amongst those most affected by violence, so that solutions are more relevant, responsive and effective. We will also promote leadership amongst young people, communities and at all levels in organisations to build capacity and the reach of our work.

2 Secure maximum impact through maintaining a population focus. When allocating resources and targeting prevention activity we will ensure this reaches the populations most at risk and impacts positively on reducing inequalities.

3 Ensure our work is evidence-informed. We will use data and insights and gather knowledge from a range of sources to improve our understanding of the nature and causes of violence locally and in shaping our responses. We will seek to share this knowledge across and beyond the Network so to promote a shared understanding and improve our collective effectiveness.

4 Adopt a life-course approach. We recognise that prevention holds the greatest potential if we invest in healthy child and adolescence development, actively support transitions and promote resilience in individuals, families and communities. We will seek to prevent violence at the earliest opportunity and within each developmental stage in life with a particular emphasis on early year's development and deploy relational, contextual and trauma-informed approaches.

5 Promote and support whole-system thinking and action. We will continuously seek to lead and collaborate across the whole system, promoting joint working, strengthening connections and problem-solving between agencies and within communities where challenges or barriers arise.

6 Add value and create sustainable solutions. We will seek to strengthen existing structures and services wherever possible including investing in capacity and asset-building. We will invest additional resource only where there are identified gaps and with a view to making the case for mainstream investment.

7 Aim to continuously learn and improve. We will assess the effectiveness and impact of our work including seeking stakeholder feedback, evaluating interventions and sharing learning across the local and national violence reduction and prevention network.

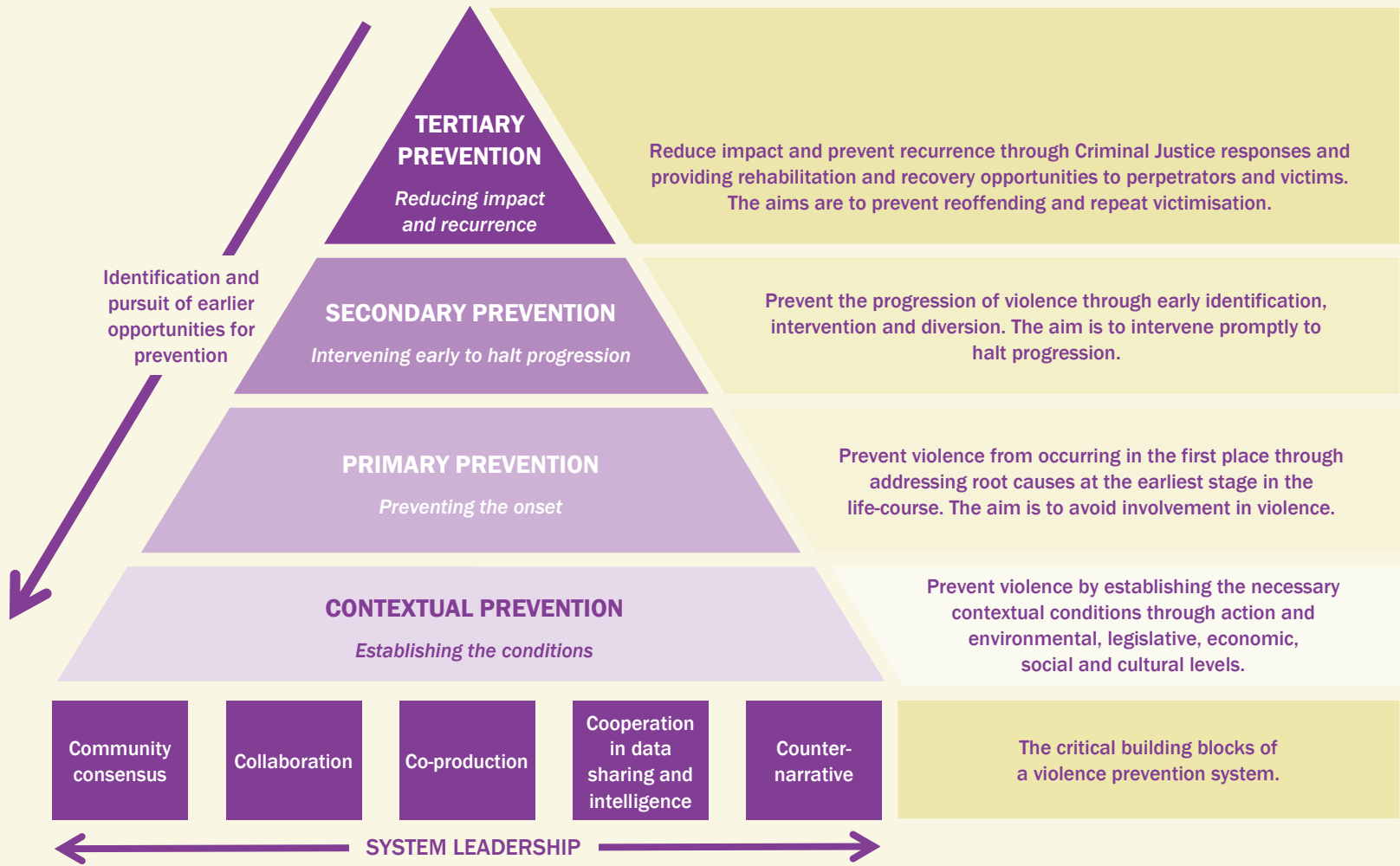


Our Violence Prevention Framework

Through drawing on the public health approach, guidance from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparity (OHID) and our core principles, the VRN has developed and adopted a framework which has been used to develop this strategy and continuously guides implementation and delivery. A brief explanation of each component is provided.

System leadership which challenges silo working and instead facilitates collaborative working across organisational boundaries is essential to tackle the root causes of serious violence and to secure a long-term impact. The VRN is committed to tackling system-wide issues which otherwise may not be prioritised and could compromise our overall effectiveness. To support system-leadership the framework incorporates the “5 C’s” as our critical building blocks:

Community Consensus
Communities play a central and invaluable role in enhancing our collective understanding of serious violence and producing effective and sustainable prevention responses. We will work with communities as continuously seeking to increase their influence and involvement. This year, we are co-producing a shared model to strengthen community involvement in the VRN and as we implement the duty.



3. Our Approach

Collaboration

A diverse range of partners across the system need to collaborate to successfully tackle the causes of serious violence. The VRN partnership will think and operate across organisational boundaries and build a culture of constructive challenge and accountability in achieving our shared priorities.

Co-production

Co-producing the design, delivery and evaluation of services can result in more responsive and effective services and increase their legitimacy. The VRN will develop concrete and meaningful involvement opportunities for young people (and other intended beneficiaries).

Cooperation in data sharing and intelligence

Sharing relevant data and investing in shared infrastructure and analysis is a key enabler to more accurately understanding serious violence, its causes and the impact of different strategies and interventions. The VRN partnership will prioritise data sharing and usage and promote a culture of continuous learning.

Counter-narrative

Preventing violence requires credible and concrete alternatives, particularly for young people. This includes ensuring communication and campaigns convey hope and opportunity for change rather than narratives which may convey negative stereotypes or inadvertently cause fear and/or perpetrate pro-violence social norms. The VRN will work locally and nationally to develop a culture which champions young people, provides opportunities and promotes the social norms we wish to see.

Levels of Prevention

Our framework incorporates four levels of prevention:

- **Contextual Prevention:** the aim is to prevent violence by creating the necessary conditions including environmental, legislative, economic and social-cultural change. Contextual prevention can have the most far-reaching impact.
- **Primary Prevention:** the aim is to prevent violence occurring in the first place through addressing root causes and strengthening protective factors at the earliest stage of the life-course as possible.
- **Secondary Prevention:** the aim is to prevent the progression of violence through early identification and the provision of timely, tailored and effective support and/or intervention
- **Tertiary Prevention:** the aim is to reduce impact and prevent recurrence through criminal justice responses and providing effective support and/or interventions for victims and perpetrators to enable recovery and desistance.

The primary, secondary and tertiary levels of prevention focus on different populations starting with a universal 'for all' focus and becoming more targeted and specialist as risk and the development of violence increases.

- **Universal** (primary prevention): aimed at the whole population
- **Targeted** (primary and secondary prevention): aimed at populations which can be identified as greatest risk

- **Specialist** (tertiary prevention): aimed at populations who have committed violence and/or experienced victimisation

Many partner's role may be focused on one or two levels of prevention whereas some will have a role spanning all four levels. The VRN partnership aims to articulate and strengthen the whole system's response across all four levels. Importantly, it also continuously seeks to identify and pursue the opportunities for upstream prevention including those available to criminal justice agencies.

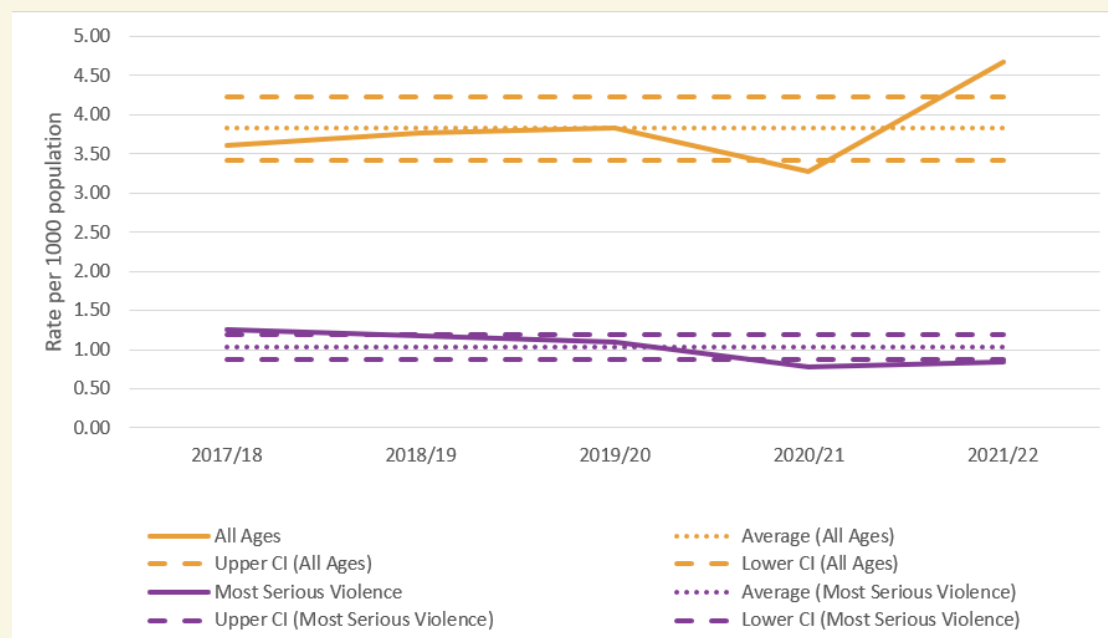
4. Strategic Needs Assessment 2022

Our latest Strategic Needs Assessment (2022) builds on previous assessments with the aim of increasing our collective understanding of the types, distribution, extent and impact of serious violence locally; establishing the prevalence of known risk and protective factors; and outlining the latest evidence-base as to which strategies and interventions are most likely to be effective in both preventing and reducing its occurrence. The SNA Executive Summary can be found here (7).

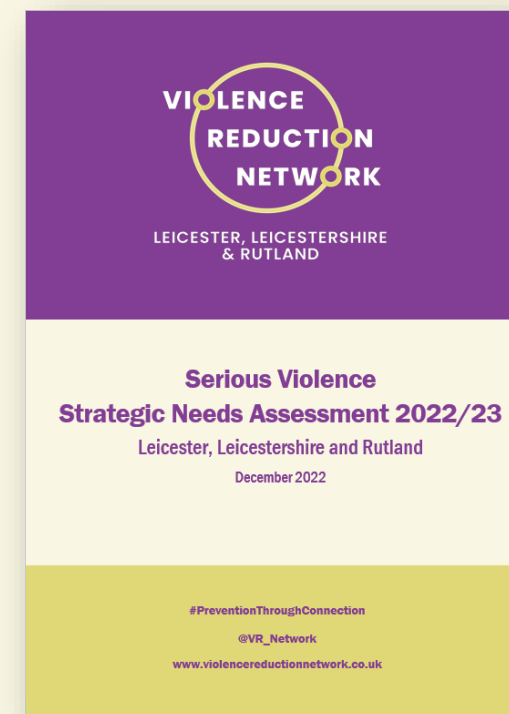
In 2021/22, we have seen an increase in public-place serious violence in comparison to the previous year, exceeding rates seen across the last five financial years. This upward trend has been driven by

‘S47 – AOABH assault occasioning actual bodily harm’ (ABH) offences which typically involves less serious injury. As seen from the chart below, high-harm offences have continued to decrease over the past five years.

This SNA again highlighted that the vast majority of residents in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland have not directly experienced public-place serious violence over the last 18 months. However, analysis highlights that some people and places are at greater risk of being directly affected by serious violence than others. There are also certain risk factors which are more prevalent and some of these are particularly stark when focusing on cohorts who



Rate (per 1000 population) of all reported serious violence offences and the ‘most serious violence’ offences in public places across LLR (2017/18 - 2021/22) (Source: Leicestershire

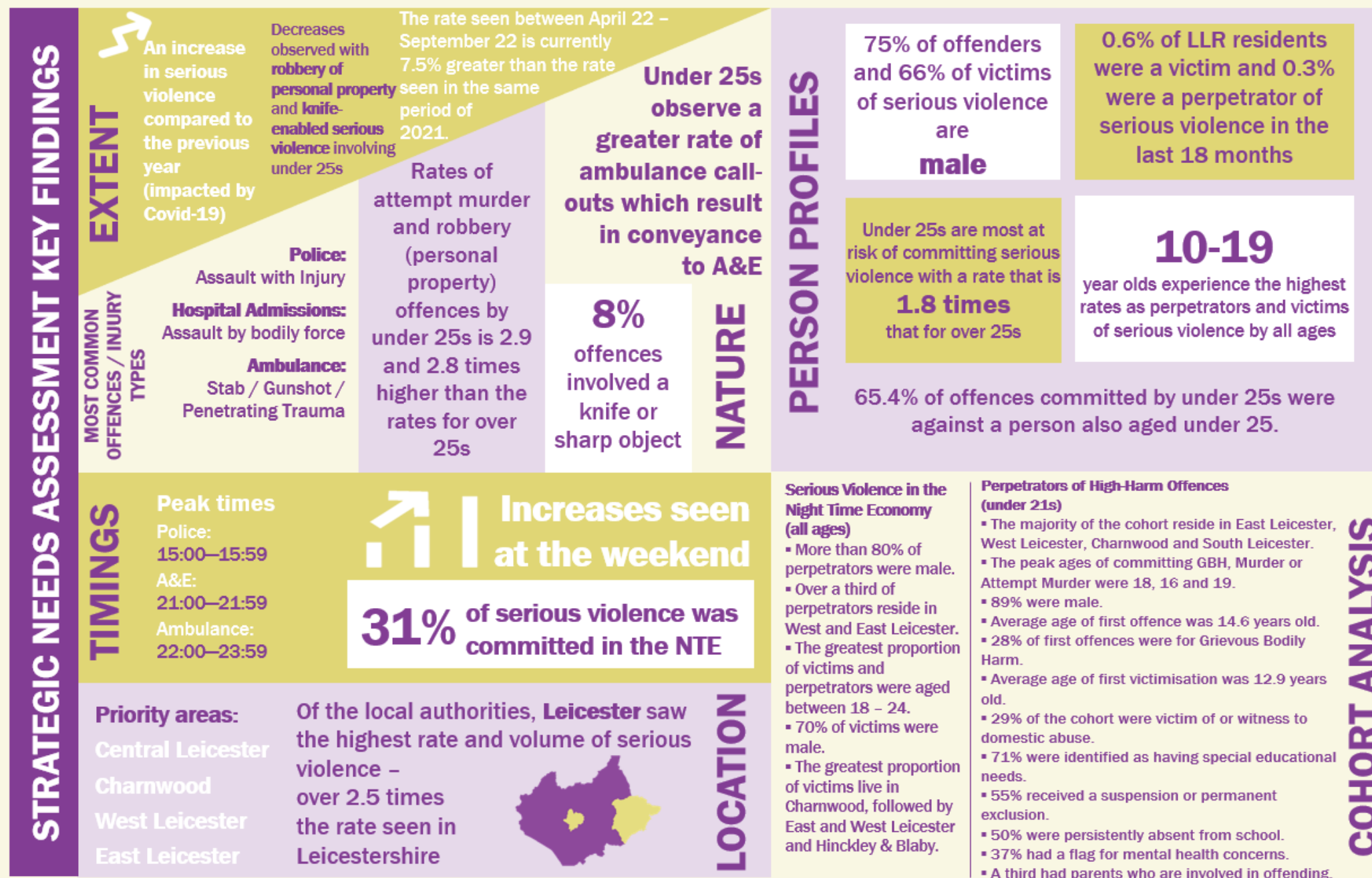


have repeatedly committed serious violence offences and those who have committed the most harmful offences of murder, attempted murder and grievous bodily harm.

This SNA has re-confirmed that the VRN’s priority focus on under 25s and the City and Charnwood remains necessary. It also reinforced the need to recognise the importance of gender with the vast majority of high-harm serious violence being committed by males.

Finally, a significant proportion of serious violence continues to be committed in the night-time economy and after-school, emphasising the need to strengthen responses within these contexts.

4. Strategic Needs Assessment 2022 Findings



4. Strategic Needs Assessment 2022 Findings

Effective Strategies and Interventions

The SNA reviewed the latest research and evidence to enhance local understanding of the strategies and interventions which are most likely to have an impact on prevention and reduction.

Six strategies for preventing violence involving young people, with related interventions, were identified as having some evidence of effectiveness (CDC, 2016):

1. **Promote family environments that support health development** – this includes parenting programmes, family nurse partnerships and therapeutic approaches to trauma.
2. **Provide quality education in early life** – this includes bullying prevention, school-based programmes and classroom management.
3. **Strengthen young people's skills** – this includes universal school programmes (e.g. social skills training) and behavioural / skills-building interventions.
4. **Connect young people to trusted adults and activities** – this includes mentoring programmes, after-school programmes and recreational activities.
5. **Create protective community environments** – this includes limiting alcohol and weapon access, data sharing, hotspot and problem-solving policing, environmental design and community norm change.
6. **Intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk** – this includes therapeutic and cognitive-behavioural approaches for perpetrators, hospital-based interventions and substance misuse programmes.

The strategy also draws on the Youth Endowment Fund's (YEF) toolkit and seeks to test effective and promising approaches locally whilst simultaneously contributing to the national evidence-base.

The table below provides a summary of approaches and interventions with their estimated impact on violence and the quality of existing evidence.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON VIOLENCE	APPROACHES	EVIDENCE QUALITY			
		Low	High		
High	Focused Deterrence				
	Social Skills Training				
	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy				
	Sport programmes				
	A&E navigators				
	Trauma-specific Therapies				
Moderate	Pre-Court Diversion				
	Mentoring				
	Restorative Justice				
	Hot Spots Policing				
	Multi-Systemic Therapy				
Low	After-School Programmes				
	Interventions to Prevent School Exclusions				
	Anti-Bullying Programmes				
	Adventure and Wilderness Therapy				
	Parenting Programmes				
Unclear	Police in Schools				
	Knife Surrender Schemes				
	Media campaigns				
	Trauma-informed Training and Service Redesign				
Harmful	Boot Camps				
	Prison Awareness Programmes				

Strategic-level recommendations

The strategic-level recommendations are those which will require cross-sector collaboration and chief officer/senior manager support.

- 1 Continue to discharge the VRN's core function in ensuring it operates across the system, connecting and collaborating with other relevant strategic and operational developments.
- 2 Continue to improve both access to and quality of multi-agency data particularly in relation to known risk and protective factors.
- 3 Work with the Strategic Partnership Board to increase future capability in data sharing through improving connectivity between systems.
- 4 Increase the use of VRN data and evidence products in strategic planning and operations within partner organisations and Community Safety Partnerships.
- 5 Continue to prioritise the under 25 age group and the geographical areas identified as most at risk of serious violence (City: East, West and Central, and County: Charnwood).
- 6 Strengthen the focus on preventing and reducing serious violence within the existing partnership work around the Night-Time Economy (NTE).

- 7 Continue to enhance understanding around serious violence occurring during the after-school peak and strengthen the VRN's partnership with schools to address known education-related risk and protective factors.
- 8 Strengthen strategic and operational work to tackle the higher prevalence of risk factors identified in the cohort analysis (e.g. mental health, substance misuse and early involvement in offending).
- 9 Ensure that the importance of gender and the associated cultural norms are understood and factored into prevention activity across the partnership.
- 10 Strengthen strategic and operational work to tackle the harmful effects of social media.
- 11 Continue to embed evaluation and learning across the system.

Intervention-level recommendations

The intervention-level recommendations build on the evidence-informed approach that the VRN is already taking in relation to intervention design and delivery.

- 12 Continue to design and test primary and early intervention approaches.
- 13 Continue to invest in 'teachable moment' interventions and progress to evaluation

phase.

- 14 Build on evaluation findings to strengthen local out of court/diversionary interventions across the partnership.
- 15 Provide specialist education, training and employment support and sport/recreation opportunities.
- 16 Design, implement and evaluate a focused deterrence intervention.

5. Strategic Themes and Priorities

This strategy has four inter-related strategic themes:

1. Leadership and Cultural Change
2. Data Sharing, Evidence and Evaluation
3. Prevention
4. Criminal Justice and Enforcement

Simultaneously working across these themes will

ensure that we are taking a whole system approach, which gives sufficient immediate attention to addressing the issue of violence whilst also working towards the longer term change required to secure a sustainable impact. An outline of our progress and learning in 2021/22 can be found in our Annual Report. The priorities for the year ahead within each theme are summarised below with the planned

activity and the local success measures outlined over subsequent pages. How these contribute to the overall impact of reducing serious violence is captured within the VRN's Theory of Change (see appendix A). The annual Programme Plan will also be updated by the VRN central team with details of owners, actions and timescales to ensure delivery continues at pace.

1 Leadership and Cultural Change	2 Data, Evidence and Evaluation	3 Prevention	4 Criminal Justice and Enforcement
<p>Aim: To secure system-change through investing in the leadership and cultural change necessary to prevent violence in the long-term.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Improve awareness and understanding of the VRN and the public health approach to preventing violence 1.2 Implement the new serious violence duty at organisational and system level 1.3 Influence Commissioners and local providers to utilise data and incorporate evidence-informed interventions into service design and delivery 1.4 Further understand and address the inequalities driving serious violence locally 1.5 Align this strategy with recent and relevant policy to support a whole system approach to tackling violence 1.6 Support the development of Trauma-Informed Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland 1.7 Empower everyone to play a role in preventing violence 1.8 Challenge social norms supportive of violence and promote an alternative narrative 1.9 Improve local understanding of social media and develop a shared strategy to harness prevention opportunities and reduce its potential harm 1.10 Secure the financial and cultural sustainability of the VRN and its work 	<p>Aim: To maximise our impact on serious violence through making the best use of multi-agency data, insights and evidence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Support the partnership to improve data sharing, data quality and longer-term data capabilities across the system 2.2 Strengthen VRN data outputs to increase strategic and operational data usage across the partnership 2.3 Improve the robustness of evaluations conducted by the VRN and across the system 2.4 Continue to make improvements to the effectiveness of VRN-supported interventions 2.5 Increase knowledge exchange activity to share learning across and beyond Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland 	<p>Aim: To prevent serious violence through developing responses that address its causes, reduce known risk factors and strengthen protective factors.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Support parents and families to provide safe and supportive environments for their children 3.2 Collaborate with communities and community-based organisations to develop solutions and create positive and safe environments 3.3 Support schools and colleges to implement strategies most likely to prevent and reduce violence 3.4 Identify and pursue violence prevention opportunities within health settings 3.5 Connect young people to trusted adults and provide diversionary activities which will reduce the risk of involvement in violence 3.6 Provide concrete and credible opportunities to support rehabilitation and recovery 	<p>Aim: To secure reductions in serious violence through evidence-informed criminal justice and enforcement approaches</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Strengthen multi-agency management responses to high-risk cohorts 4.2 Improve the support offered to victims, families and communities to enable recovery from experiences of serious violence 4.3 Improve the targeting and effectiveness of enforcement activity 4.4 Strengthen violence prevention activity in the Night-Time Economy (NTE) 4.5 Implement the new 'Harm to Hope' Drugs Strategy locally maximising the opportunity to prevent and reduce drugs as a driver of violence

Theme 1: Leadership and Cultural Change

Overarching Aim:

To secure system-change through investing in the leadership and cultural change necessary to prevent violence in the long-term.

Why it is important:

To make a demonstrable and sustainable impact on serious violence locally, we need to think and act differently and increase our focus on tackling the root causes and invest in upstream prevention. Adopting a public health approach provides a framework for this but requires system leadership and a cultural shift across the system to realise its benefits. A shared understanding and commitment to the key elements of this approach and a willingness to truly collaborate, including with communities as partners, will be key. It is also likely to require using existing resources in different ways in the context of significant economic and social challenges. The Serious Violence Duty will mandate Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and some statutory partners to adopt this approach but this will not make it any less challenging. A key focus this year will therefore be to collectively prioritise the system leadership and collaboration required to fully embed the VRN's approach and priorities including within and across organisations and partnerships. Cross-cutting priorities which require whole-system approaches are also included within this theme.

PRIORITIES

ACTIVITIES

SUCCESS MEASURES

1.1 Improve awareness and understanding of the VRN and the public health approach to preventing violence

- Continue the webinar series and accompanying briefing to promote the VRN, the different elements of a public health approach and learning to date
- A programme of Network events to strengthen connections and coproduction across different elements of the system
- Continued investment in the VRN website and our social media presence to provide accessible and up-to-date information and resources for partners

- **Short-term:** The VRN delivers a webinar series and programme of Network events, produces a briefing and develops more content for the website and social media platforms
- **Medium-term:** The partnership / community groups have improved understanding of the VRN, public health approach and local violence prevention system, and make greater use of data and evidence to inform strategy and delivery
- **Long-term:** Increased efficiency and effectiveness of statutory and community responses to preventing serious violence

1.2 Implement the new serious violence duty at organisational and system level

- Provide briefings and hold planning sessions with duty holders and CSPs on the SV Duty
- Roll out the Self-Assessment Tool and collate to provide a base-line for monitoring progress and success in implementing the duty
- Embed the refreshed governance structure for the VRN and co-produce a new Serious Violence Strategy reflecting the agreed local definition and the insights gained through Network events and other involvement activity
- Co-produce a model for 'with and for communities' and a development plan to strengthen community and young person involvement across the VRN partnership

- **Short-term:** The VRN delivers briefings and planning sessions which are attended by duty holders and duty holders complete the self-assessment tool. The core membership co-produces new Serious Violence Strategy, and all Boards within the governance structure has delivery plan. Community development plan developed.
- **Medium-term:** Duty holders and CSPs are ready to effectively discharge the SV Duty. Violence prevention strategies are evidence-informed, data-driven and involve communities and young people
- **Long-term:** Whole systems, public health approach embedded across LLR resulting in increased cross-sector, multi-agency and integrated working. There is increased organisational and sector leadership within the VRN partnership

5. Strategic Themes and Priorities: Leadership and Cultural Change



PRIORITIES	ACTIVITIES	SUCCESS MEASURES
1.3 Influence Commissioners and local providers to utilise data and incorporate evidence-informed interventions into service design and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce briefings on VRN learning to date for relevant Commissioners Identify and influence forthcoming local commissioning which is relevant to the VRN's aims Offer information and support to local providers to ensure applications for funding are data and evidence-informed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: The VRN produces briefings on learning to date and meets with Commissioners to share data, evidence and learning. The VRN provides support to relevant funding applications Medium-term: Increase in the commissioning of evidence-informed interventions and targeted provision in areas most affected by SV Long-term: Improved efficiency and effectiveness of interventions leading to a reduction in serious violence
1.4 Further understand and address the inequalities driving serious violence locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake further analysis to inform local targeting of resource at our most 'at risk' groups including in relation to care-experienced young people and neuro-diversity Identify and formulate action plans to directly address disproportionality issues particularly in relation to access to services and achievement of positive outcomes Use the core membership's collective influence to shape national and local policy to tackle inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: The VRN undertakes further analysis on the most 'at risk' groups and disproportionality, and works with core membership to develop action plans Medium-term: The partnership has improved understanding of the needs of 'at-risk' groups and disproportionality, Actions plans and core membership's collective influence are used to target resource and improve local services Long-term: Local services are more effective, responsive and proportionate leading to reductions in serious violence
1.5 Align this strategy with recent and relevant policy to support a whole system approach to tackling violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support the implementation of the new 'Harm to Hope' Drugs Strategy and work collaboratively with the Combatting Drugs Partnership on the common drivers and causes. Contribute to the development of a local strategy to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Continue to align local work to prevent public place violence with the work of the Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) Operational Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: The partnership develops a new drugs strategy and a VAWG strategy. The VRN continues to meet with the CCE Ops Group Medium-term: Strategies are integrated and incorporate common approaches, shared priorities, activities and outcomes. There is alignment of relevant operational activity focusing on exploitation and violence Long-term: Reductions in risk factors associated with SV (e.g. drug use), and reductions in VAWG and serious violence
1.6 Support the development of Trauma-Informed Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish a LLR-wide strategy and framework for becoming a trauma-informed area Design and roll-out an organisational framework for becoming trauma-informed Continue to invest in the delivery of a cross-sector workforce development strategy Identify new partnership opportunities to develop preventative and early intervention responses to childhood trauma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: LLR-wide strategy and framework are published. Organisations are aware of and adopt the framework. The VRN produces briefing on evidence-informed responses to childhood trauma. Increase in number of TI training sessions and staff trained Medium-term: Improved understanding and use of TI practices. Increase in organisations changing policies and practices to be more trauma-informed Long-term: Improved levels and quality of engagement between services and children and families leading to reduction in risk factors associated with serious violence

5. Strategic Themes and Priorities: Leadership and Cultural Change

PRIORITIES	ACTIVITIES	SUCCESS MEASURES
1.7 Empower everyone to play a role in preventing violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the Live Safe website into an overarching brand for awareness raising and signposting in relation to violence and other harm and continue to update with new content Design and schedule a series of Live Safe webinars/workshops for young people, parents/carers and professionals Develop and promote a common bystander methodology for adoption across the partnership to prevent and tackle different forms of violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: The VRN produces a range of LiveSafe resources, delivers webinars and works with partnership to develop a common bystander methodology Medium-term: Increased engagement with LiveSafe website and resources. Improved understanding of different harms and bystander approaches amongst young people, parents/carers and practitioners Long-term: Increased uptake of local services for support and young people diverted from harm leading to reductions in serious violence
1.8 Challenge social norms supportive of violence and promote an alternative narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to extend the Make a Stand Against Violence and the We Don't Carry Campaigns into other settings Continue to invest in and develop Mentors in Violence Prevention to support children, young people and adults to contribute to healthy social norms Develop a strategy around boys and men which seeks to challenge and tackle harmful social norms Invest in a local campaign to celebrate young people and promote an alternative narrative which also challenges negative perceptions and misconceptions Implement a revised partnership Communication Strategy to ensure consistent narrative around violence and to increase public confidence and involvement in responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: Existing campaigns visible in new settings and a new campaign is developed to celebrate young people. The partnership has an agreed approach and plan for a shared Comms Strategy. There is an increase in schools—including primary schools—adopting the MVP programme. New strategy for boys and men and new campaign which celebrates young people Medium-term: Increase in the promotion of evidence-informed campaigns with positive narratives. Increase in reach and engagement with VRN campaigns and the MVP programme. Improved understanding of how to tackle harmful social norms Long-term: The public - including young people - are equipped with the knowledge, confidence and tools to support 'at-risk' young people leading to reductions in serious violence. Reduction in the risk factors associated with serious violence (such as social/community norms supportive of violence)
1.9 Improve local understanding of social media and develop a shared strategy to harness prevention opportunities and reduce its potential harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure external expertise and consultancy to understand the links and opportunities to reduce the potential harm caused by social media Develop a plan for how the partnership will enhance its use of social media to keep young people safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: Sessions on social media and links to serious violence delivered to VRN and wider partnership. Social media plan developed Medium-term: Improved understanding and increased confidence in addressing social media use with young people. Greater investment in evidence-informed resources and interventions to keep young people safe online Long-term: Reductions in young people accessing harmful content online.
1.10 Secure the financial and cultural sustainability of the VRN and its work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce and implement a partnership sustainability plan to ensure the approach, work and impact of VRN is sustained in the long-term 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: The core membership produces a sustainability plan Medium-term: The sustainability plan is implemented Long-term: The approach and impact of the VRN is sustained

5. Strategic Themes and Priorities

Theme 2: Data, Evidence and Evaluation

Overarching Aim:

To maximise our impact on serious violence through making the best use of multi-agency data, insights and evidence.

Why it is important:

Data, evidence and evaluation are core components of a public health approach to preventing serious violence. In order to develop effective responses, we need to understand what violence looks like within our local areas such as what forms it takes, where it occurs, how frequently it's happening and who the victims and perpetrators are. We also need to understand the factors that protect people or put them at risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence. It is this data, coupled with evidence from the growing body of research on 'what works' in preventing violence, that should be used to inform the design and implementation of interventions, services and strategies to give ourselves the best chance of achieving positive and sustainable impacts. Having evidence-based responses isn't enough; we need to know if what we're doing is working. Evaluation matters because it helps us to understand how our interventions are being implemented and whether they are effective and cost-efficient. As a partnership, we should be committed to sharing learning and to the continual improvement of our interventions, services and strategies to ensure that they're benefiting those most in need.

PRIORITIES

ACTIVITIES

SUCCESS MEASURES

2.1 Support the partnership to improve data sharing, data quality and longer-term data capabilities across the system

- Continue to identify and access local datasets on violence and the associated risk and protective factors, and make improvements to the Serious Violence Dashboard
- Work with partners to identify and improve data quality issues
- Support the strategic partnership to produce a Data Sharing Strategy
- Support the strategic partnership to produce a plan for designing and implementing a more sophisticated data sharing platform

- **Short-term:** The partnership has access to data through the Serious Violence Dashboard and the number of datasets within it, increases. The VRN core team meets with data controllers to discuss data quality
- **Medium-term:** The partnership has access to new and improved data and develops a strategy to improve infrastructure and capabilities
- **Long-term:** The partnership has access to automated data on at-risk children and families through a new LLR-wide dashboard

2.2 Strengthen VRN data outputs to increase strategic and operational data usage across the partnership

- Continue to host workshops with CSPs and other partners to demonstrate how the multi-agency data dashboard can be used to inform decision-making
- Support CSPs in priority areas to produce place-based SNAs and strategies
- Develop an Injury Surveillance Dashboard which can be used by relevant partners to inform strategic and operational responses
- Continue to enhance data-driven cohort identification

- **Short-term:** CSPs and other partners attend VRN workshops, and relevant partners have access to Injury Surveillance Dashboard. VRN core team develop insight reports on priority issues highlighted in SNA
- **Medium-term:** CSPs and other partners have improved access to, understanding of and confidence in using data to inform strategic planning and operations
- **Long-term:** Improved targeting of resources and interventions which leads to reductions in serious violence across LLR

5. Strategic Themes and Priorities: Data, Evidence and Evaluation

PRIORITIES	ACTIVITIES	SUCCESS MEASURES
2.3 Improve the robustness of evaluations conducted by the VRN and across the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the use of validated tools and comparison groups in VRN evaluations where possible Conduct experimental evaluations—such as randomised control trials—of two VRN interventions Support the wider partnership to develop Theory of Change, monitoring and evaluation plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: The VRN increases the number and quality of impact evaluations. There is increased activity to monitor and evaluate interventions and services across the partnership Medium-term: The VRN and wider partnership has an improved understanding of whether local interventions are effective Long-term: Improved efficiency and effectiveness of interventions leading to a reduction in serious
2.4 Continue to make improvements to VRN-supported interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the learning from the internal, independent and national evaluations to improve the design and delivery of VRN interventions Identify local and national funding opportunities which test new interventions or make effective interventions sustainable Continue to share learning from the VRNs monitoring and evaluation with relevant Boards and delivery partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: The VRN and delivery partners make improvements to interventions based on the monitoring and evaluation findings. The VRN works with partners to submit funding applications Medium-term: VRN interventions are effective at engaging ‘at-risk’ young people and reducing the risk factors associated with SV Long-term: Reductions in serious violence across LLR
2.5 Increase knowledge exchange activity to share learning across and beyond Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver webinar series and accompanying briefing to promote the VRN, the different elements of a public health approach and learning to date Accessible and engaging open access resources such as an Executive Summary of the VRN’s Strategic Needs Assessment and Briefing Reports Present at local, regional and national knowledge-exchange events and organise a programme of sessions for the National VRU Learning and Evaluation Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term: The VRN organises and has good attendance at the webinar series and the Learning and Evaluation Network sessions, and participates in a wide-range of events. The VRN produces insight reports on priority issues identified in the SNA Medium-term: The partnership has improved understanding of SV data and evidence of ‘what works’, and uses it to shape responses Long-term: The interventions and services delivered by the partnership are more effective and efficient which leads to reductions in serious

Theme 3: Prevention

Overarching Aim:

To prevent serious violence through developing responses that address its causes, reduce known risk factors and strengthen protective factors.

Why it is important:

Prevention is at the core of a public health approach and is more ethically desirable, cost-effective and sustainable than responses which solely focus on responding to violence once it has occurred. Whilst our preference is to prevent violence in the first place through primary prevention activity, it is also important to prevent progression through intervening early and to prevent its continuation through providing concrete and credible opportunities for rehabilitation and recovery. Each of our priorities within this theme focus on a particular part of the system wherein valuable opportunities exist to pursue prevention activity. Some of these relate to universal services and assets such as parenting and families, communities, health and education, whereas others are more targeted such as diversion, rehabilitation and recovery. All of the current VRN-funded interventions fall within the Prevention strategic theme. They are identified in bold and summarised in Appendix B.

PRIORITIES

3.1 Support parents and families to provide safe and supportive environments for their children

ACTIVITIES

- Plan and commence phase 2 of the Families Affected by Parental Imprisonment (FAPI) project
- Continue to pursue Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) work across the partnership
- Ensure the development of Family Hubs, the Supporting Families Programme and wider Early Help partnerships support the prevention and escalation of violence
- Undertake a strength and gap analysis of local provision of evidence-based parenting programmes
- Provide parents/carers with accurate and accessible information on issues relating to children/young person safety and involve parents

SUCCESS MEASURES

- **Short-term:** The partnership delivers on action plan on RPC and FAPI project, the VRN and Supporting Families identify opportunities to strengthen offer for families most at-risk. The VRN produces insights note on local provision of parenting programmes and 'what works'. The VRN identifies opportunities for parents and carers to inform local decision-making, and produces content for LiveSafe website
- **Medium-term:** Increased support for children and families affected by imprisonment and conflict. Investment in evidence-informed parenting programmes. Improved awareness and access to support for parents/carers.
- **Long-term:** Reductions in the risk factors and increase in young people being diverted from crime and serious violence

5. Strategic Themes and Priorities: Prevention



PRIORITIES

ACTIVITIES

SUCCESS MEASURES

3.2 Collaborate with communities and community-based organisations to develop solutions and create positive and safe environments

- Implement a shared model for 'with and for communities' and a development plan to strengthen community and young person involvement across the VRN partnership
- Continue to pursue national opportunities for young people to shape policy and solutions including through collaborating with the national Hope Collective
- Undertake a feasibility assessment for the extension of Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) into community settings
- Extend the reach and impact of the Community Leadership Programme and co-develop a sustainability model for the Community Leaders Network
- **Continue to pilot the new Community Mentoring Project (CMP) in three VRN priority areas**
- Develop physical 'safe zones' and spaces for young people to seek safety and support
- Align the VRN's work with community hubs and PCC People Zones wherever relevant to preventing and reducing violence

- **Short-term:** Community members attend Network events, and participate in the Community Leadership Programme and Network. New community model is developed and young people take part in local/national events. 'Safe Zones' and 'People Zones' are implemented. CMP is implemented and tested
- **Medium-term:** Increased community and young person involvement and confidence in VRN and the wider partnership's decision-making. Community members and young people have increased access to support services and resources. Community leaders are equipped with the knowledge and tools to develop community-led solutions. Through CMP, young people receive evidence-informed support and access to concrete pro-social activities (e.g. sport) and education, training and employment opportunities
- **Long-term:** Interventions and services are more responsive to and effective at meeting community needs. Reductions in the risk factors associated with serious violence and in serious violence

3.3 Support schools and colleges to implement strategies most likely to prevent and reduce violence

- Roll-out the School's Guide to Violence Prevention
- **Continue to roll-out Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP), develop a model for primary school settings and agree a sustainability plan**
- **Deliver the Reach Programme in pilot schools and co-operate with the national evaluation**
- Continue to extend the principles and approach of Operation Encompass to other known adverse childhood experiences
- Support the Trauma-Informed Schools Network
- Improve identification and pathways for children most at risk through the LLR-wide Inclusion and Attendance group
- Continue to collaborate with the local Alternative Provision Taskforce in Leicester Partnership School

- **Short-term:** Schools engage with the Guide and the Trauma-Informed Schools Network. Increase in the schools delivering MVP, in the number of children identified as 'at-risk' and receiving support through Op Encompass, the Inclusion and Attendance Group and the Reach Programme. The VRN and AP Taskforce identify opportunities for collaboration
- **Medium-term:** Young people have improved knowledge and confidence in identifying harmful attitudes and behaviours and supporting their friends. Increased understanding and effective use of whole school/college strategies and interventions, and of TIP. Reductions in bullying and wider violence in school, and in fixed-term and permanent exclusions within cohorts and at a system-level
- **Long-term:** Reductions in serious violence

5. Strategic Themes and Priorities: Prevention



PRIORITIES

ACTIVITIES

SUCCESS MEASURES

3.4 Identify and pursue violence prevention opportunities within health settings

- Continue with the Health Violence Reduction Group (HVRG) to strengthen the Health sectors role in preventing violence
- Improve the quality of the Information Sharing to Tackle Violence (ISTV) data set
- Implement the use of Injury Surveillance in partnership with wider VRN partners
- **Continue to embed the Violence Intervention Project (VIP) in the local Emergency department and evaluate impact**
- Review how the concept of 'reachable moments' could be implemented in other health settings

- **Short-term:** Health strategy developed and Injury Surveillance System used by partnership. The VRN and HVRG identify how to improve the quality of ISTV data. Evidence of VIPs impact is generated and new health settings for intervention identified
- **Medium-term:** Improved quality and increased use of health data to inform strategy and operations. Increase in the number of 'at-risk' young people being supported by an intervention proven to work
- **Long-term:** Improved efficiency and effectiveness of the partnership's responses to serious violence. Reductions in serious violence

3.5 Connect young people to trusted adults and provide diversionary activities which will reduce the risk of involvement in violence

- Collaborate with statutory and voluntary youth sector services to develop a cross-sector community of practice
- **Continue to invest in the Early Intervention Service (EIS)** until the end of 2022 and ensure a smooth transition to business as usual
- Undertake a review of local diversionary activity with the aim of developing a whole-system evidence-based approach
- Embed the use of VRN data in local grant schemes to support more effective design and targeting of diversionary activity
- Collaborate with the Business, Sport and Physical Activity and Arts and Culture sectors to maximise diversionary opportunities for young people

- **Short-term:** Increased collaboration between the statutory and voluntary youth sector services. Local quality mark and standards developed. Implement recommendations for improving the EIS and produce business-case. Review of OOC completed. Local grant schemes are based upon VRN data and evidence. The VRN identifies diversionary opportunities in Business, Sport and Physical Activity, Arts and Culture
- **Medium-term:** Increased quality and consistency in and collaboration between the statutory and voluntary youth work provision. More effective, diverse and better targeted diversionary opportunities for young people. The EIS is sustainable
- **Long-term:** Reductions in anti-social behaviour, crime and serious violence, and in first-time entrants into the CJS

3.6 Provide concrete and credible opportunities to support rehabilitation and recovery

- **Continue the Violence Intervention Project (VIP) pilot** in police custody and evaluate early impact
- Collaborate with the Adult Vulnerability and Offending (AVO) Board to strengthen rehabilitative pathways
- Review the availability of restorative justice and in particular Victim – Offender conferencing with a view to shape the local recommissioning of victim services
- **Continue to invest in and evaluate a specialist intervention aimed at improving access to Sports and Education, Training and Employment opportunities**

- **Short-term:** VIP in Custody and specialist ETE and sport interventions are evaluated and improved based upon findings. Review of local restorative justice provision is undertaken and recommendations produced. The VRN and AVO Board identify ways of strengthening rehabilitative pathways
- **Medium-term:** New evidence-informed restorative justice provision implemented leading to improved victim satisfaction. Increased numbers of perpetrators receiving effective support which strengthens protective factors
- **Long-term:** Reductions in repeat offending and in serious violence

Theme 4: Criminal Justice and Enforcement

Overarching Aim:

To secure reductions in serious violence through evidence-informed criminal justice and enforcement approaches.

Why it is important:

Whilst prevention activity is critical to ensure the causes of violence are addressed and longer-term change is secured, the criminal justice system and both civil and criminal enforcement also play a critical role and particularly in relation to addressing and responding to the criminal drivers and immediate risks relating to violence. Furthermore, the visible and fair upholding of the law can provide reassurance and build confidence amongst victims, witnesses and communities. The priorities outlined below focus on strengthening the existing system by ensuring sufficient focus on the issues highlighted within the SNA and ensuring approaches and interventions are as effective as possible. The link between this theme and prevention will also be continuously pursued to ensure upstream prevention and early intervention opportunities are routinely identified and pursued within the peer groups and families of those already involved in violence.

PRIORITIES

ACTIVITIES

SUCCESS MEASURES

4.1 Strengthen multi-agency management responses to high-risk cohorts

- Continue the design work for a local Focused Deterrence (FD) programme for young people and adults involved in serious violence with a group dynamic
- Secure local and external investment for the Focussed Deterrence programme
- Strengthen multi-agency enforcement and engagement activity aimed at reducing weapon (knife) carrying
- Ensure an evidence-informed process is in place for young people transitioning between the youth and adult system

- **Short-term:** New FD model designed and funded by local and external sources. A multi-agency plan around weapon carrying developed and review and plan of the transition process produced.
- **Medium-term:** Increased identification of and engagement with 'at-risk' and 'high' harm networks of young people, and with those who transition from Youth Justice
- **Long-term:** Reduction in organised crime and serious violence including knife-enabled offences. Reductions in breach rates in young adult cohort

4.2 Improve support offered to victims, families and communities to enable recovery from experiences of serious violence

- Conduct a local strength/gap analysis of current provision for victims/families of serious violence offences
- Undertake a rapid review of effective support and interventions including those involving both victim and offender
- Produce a proposal for the recommissioning of victim services
- Agree a multi-agency response to serious incidents to support recovery and reduce risk of further related incidents

- **Short-term:** Assessment of local provision for victims/families of serious violence, and insights report on effectiveness of support for victims including restorative justice. Agree multi-agency response following community-based incidents
- **Medium-term:** Victim services recommissioned in line with evidence-base. Multi-agency response to communities implemented
- **Long-term:** Increase in victim satisfaction and reduction in repeat victimisation. Improved community confidence and perceptions of safety

5. Strategic Themes and Priorities: Criminal Justice and Enforcement



PRIORITIES

ACTIVITIES

SUCCESS MEASURES

4.3 Improve the targeting and effectiveness of enforcement activity

- Continue to implement and test hotspot policing and enhance through multi-agency problem-solving
- Test and evaluate street outreach in hotspot areas
- Identify and pursue opportunities to use civil and criminal enforcement in response to serious and organised crime, licensed premises and weapon availability
- Continue to strengthen multi-agency responses to County Lines disruption activity to ensure early intervention and safeguarding opportunities are pursued

- **Short-term:** Hotspot policing and problem-solving approach implemented, evaluation of street outreach programme, opportunities for civil and criminal enforcement identified, review of multi-agency response to County Lines conducted
- **Medium-term:** Effectiveness of hotspot policing and street outreach project understood. New evidence-informed approaches to civil and criminal enforcement implemented for serious violence and organised crime. Increase in at-risk young people identified and supported
- **Long-term:** Reduction in serious violence and organised crime

4.4 Strengthen violence prevention activity in the Night-Time Economy (NTE)

- Embed the use of VRN data, including Injury Surveillance, into the local multi-agency NTE group
- Share and apply learning from the VRN's briefing on NTE violence and effective interventions

- **Short-term:** Injury Surveillance System implemented and used by NTE group to inform prevention responses. The VRN delivers webinar on serious violence in the NTE and 'what works' in tackling it
- **Medium-term:** Operations within the NTE are data-driven and new evidence-informed approaches are implemented
- **Long-term:** Reduction in serious violence in the NTE

4.5 Implement the new 'Harm to Hope' Drugs Strategy locally maximising the opportunity to prevent and reduce drugs as a driver of violence

- Agree a terms of reference for the new Combatting Drugs Partnership operational group
- Agree a common structure for the new SV strategy and the Substance Misuse strategy so they are aligned and support achievement of common outcomes

- **Short-term:** A sub-board is established, a local strategy, plan and Theory of Change are developed
- **Medium-term:** A review is undertaken to assess multi-agency responses to drug use and dealing, and identify opportunities to improve strategic and operational activity
- **Long-term:** New evidence-informed services and approaches are implemented which reduces the impact of drugs as a driver for serious violence

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

The VRN has developed a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Framework which outlines how we monitor our activities and impacts and how the evidence generated through monitoring and evaluation is used to implement, adapt and inform wider practice across and beyond the Network.

As illustrated by our Core Principles, we are committed to continuous learning and improvement, and to understanding the impact of our work. Our approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning incorporates the below:

The Evidence Base

We continuously seek out and make use of emerging evidence on promising practice such as YEF's Toolkit and EIF's Guidebook. We undertake rapid evidence reviews to better understand 'what works' before commissioning or designing interventions. We also pursue opportunities to collaborate with academics and What Works Centres, and commission research to address knowledge gaps.

Local Datasets

We are committed to making improvements to our interactive dashboard to enable the wider partnership to monitor local trends in serious violence and the associated risk and protective factors. The VRN core team will use local data (such as ASB and crime, health, social care, education, substance use data) to monitor the impact that commissioned interventions are having on the local problem and drivers for serious violence (see performance monitoring). We also intend to evaluate the impact that data sharing, such as the Injury Surveillance System, is having on rates and volumes

of violence locally.

Performance Monitoring

We monitor local trends in serious violence on a weekly basis and provide quarterly reports to our Board. CSPs now have the ability to monitor trends and performance at a locality level through accessing the Serious Violence Dashboard. The dashboard also enables us to track and monitor system-level progress towards reducing risk factors, strengthening protective factors and reducing violence overall.

We have implemented monitoring frameworks across VRN-supported interventions and we analyse this data to learn more about the young people and families accessing these services. We use this monitoring data to further develop and improve these interventions to ensure that they are reaching the individuals who need them most and that they are achieving the intended outcomes. In combination, our performance monitoring also enables us to monitor progress of the VRN programme as a whole against the success measures outlined in Section 5 of this Response Strategy and in our Theory of Change (Appendix A). A more detailed list of the impact measures and risk and protective factors that we monitor through the dashboard and/or our monitoring framework are outlined below.

Home Office Impact Measures

- A reduction in knife-enabled serious violence and especially among those victims aged under 25.
- A reduction in all non-domestic homicides and

especially among those victims aged under 25.

- A reduction in hospital admissions for assaults with a knife or sharp object and especially among those victims aged under 25.

Wider VRN Impact Measures

- Reductions in serious violent crime
- Reductions in anti-social behaviour
- Reductions in child criminal exploitation
- Reductions in knife-enabled violence
- Reduction in non-domestic homicide
- Reduction in re-offending
- Reduction in the severity of offending
- Reduction in first-time entrants into the CJS
- Reduction in children in the CJS
- Reduction in hospital admissions for violence-related injuries

VRN Risk and Protective Factors

- Improved understanding of harmful attitudes and behaviours
- Improved understanding of and confidence in being an active bystander
- Development of a positive relationship with a role model
- Improved communication skills
- Improved emotion and behaviour management
- Improved feelings of safety, confidence and mental wellbeing
- Increased access to local support services and

6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

community-based opportunities

- Increased access to support services for the whole family (e.g. housing, benefits, parenting programmes)
- Increased participation in pro-social activities (e.g. sports, art, music)
- Increased attendance and attainment at school/ college
- Improved aspirations, work readiness and employability skills
- Improved life skills (e.g. living independently, managing finance)
- Reduction in accessing harmful content online
- Reduction in positive attitudes towards offending
- Reduction in association/involvement with peers involved in crime
- Reduction in substance misuse
- Reduction in bullying and violence within the school environment
- Reduction in fixed-term and permanent exclusions
- Reduction in the number of young people not in education, training or employment

Insights and Feedback

We aim to embed opportunities for different beneficiary groups – including young people, families, community members, victims, perpetrators and professionals – to share their insights and to shape services and interventions. We collaborate with our partners to strengthen their community involvement work to ensure that diverse voices are

listened to.

Knowledge Exchange

We have adopted a reciprocal approach to knowledge exchange by facilitating opportunities for beneficiary groups to share grassroots insights, and by using a range of engaging and accessible approaches to share new evidence and learning from within and beyond the VRN. This will include a webinar series, insight reports, presentations at local, regional and nation knowledge-exchange events, and a progress of sessions for the National VRU Learning and Evaluation Network.

Evaluation

We will continue to improve the robustness of evaluations conducted by the VRN and across the system. This will include:

- Process Evaluations - When implementing new interventions we conduct process evaluations to assess how they're being delivered and what's working well or needs improving.
- Impact Evaluations - Where possible we will undertake impact evaluations to provide an objective assessment of what difference VRN-supported interventions are making.

We will support partners to evaluate new and existing interventions including developing a Theory of Change, intervention blueprints, monitoring frameworks and evaluation plans. We will promote the University of Leicester's VRIN training on evaluation across the partnership.



7. Governance and Accountability

The VRN Response Strategy and its delivery is overseen by the core membership through the sub-regional Strategic Partnership Board (SPB). In 2022, senior and chief officers refreshed the SPB priorities and delivery structure to reflect the inter-connections between different types of violence and vulnerability and the relevance of a public health approach to all it's business.

The purpose of SPB is to:

“provide the system leadership and strategic coordination necessary to prevent and reduce harm across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR)”

The Board focuses on areas of harm which necessitate a system-level response such as substance misuse, public place serious violence, child criminal exploitation, domestic and sexual violence, serious organised crime and modern slavery. As these complex social issues typically require a high level of system collaboration and coordination, SPB and its Exec seeks to provide this

through adopting a public health approach across all areas of business.

SPB is chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire and is attended by chief officers and elected members from across the partnership. The SPB Executive, which meets bi-monthly, provides direct governance for the VRN and it's work. Senior Officer membership is drawn from the following:

- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Leicestershire Police
- Integrated Care Board
- Leicester City Council
- Leicestershire County Council
- Rutland County Council
- District Councils (Charnwood, North West Leicestershire, Hinckley and Bosworth, Blaby, Oadby and Wigston, Harborough, Melton).
- School Headteachers x 2
- HMP Leicester
- Leicestershire Fire and Rescue

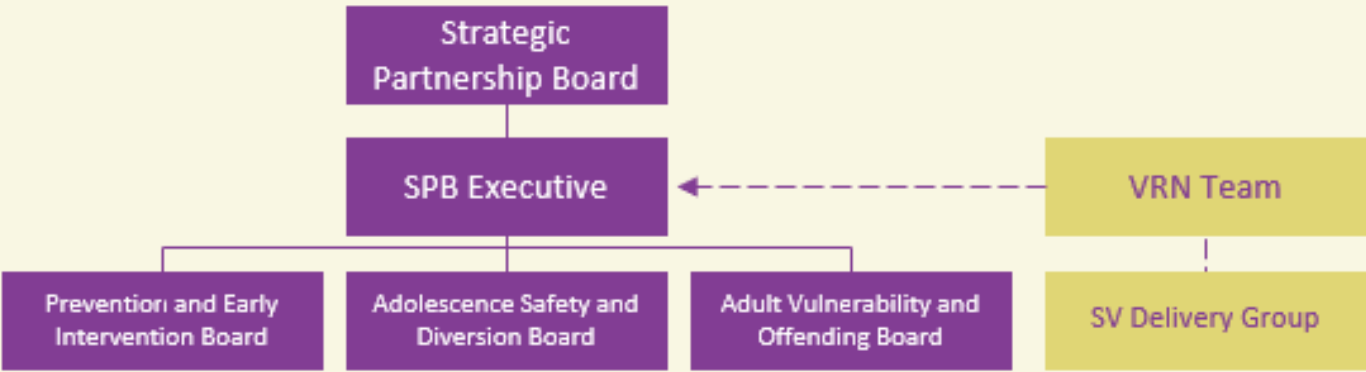
- East Midlands Ambulance Service
- University Hospital Leicester
- Turning Point (substance misuse provider)
- Community Leaders x 2
- Probation Service
- Voluntary Action Leicestershire
- Active Together

In relation to the VRN and this strategy members of SPB Executive hold the following responsibilities:

- Championing and applying the priorities, principles and methodology of the VRN within and beyond their own organisation
- Leading the cultural change required to secure a paradigm shift towards prevention and earlier intervention
- Ensuring their organisation contributes to this response strategy, where relevant leading on agreed areas of activity
- Monitoring and scrutinising VRN performance
- Providing governance and support for the VRN central team and delivery against the Home Office grant agreement

Consistent with a public health approach, SPB's sub-board structure is organised along the lines of the life-course, the different levels of prevention and has several cross-cutting workstreams to maximise impact across the system. The VRN's Response Strategy is delivered within and beyond the entire SPB delivery structure

The sub-boards and their purposes are:



7. Governance and Accountability

Prevention and Early Intervention Board: To prevent vulnerability and the early onset of offending/violence through strengthening known protective factors and ensuring relevant strategies/services are targeted at the populations/cohorts most at risk.

Adolescence Safety and Diversion Board: To prevent and reduce vulnerability and involvement in offending/violence through safeguarding, early intervention and diversion

Adult Vulnerability and Offending Board: To prevent recurrence of victimisation and offending/violence through deploying Criminal Justice responses and providing opportunities for rehabilitation and recovery.

Each of these sub-board has oversight responsibilities for relevant types of harm and sets annual priorities aimed at further strengthening partnership responses. Alongside the sub-boards, there are four cross-cutting workstreams over which SPB Exec has direct oversight:

- Data, Evidence and Evaluation
- Communications and Campaigns
- Reducing Inequalities
- Community Involvement

The VRN central team is a small multi-disciplinary co-located team which is led by the VRN's Strategic Director. This team provides a dedicated, additional resource to drive the work of the VRN forward in collaboration with the wider partnership.

The role of the VRN Team is to:

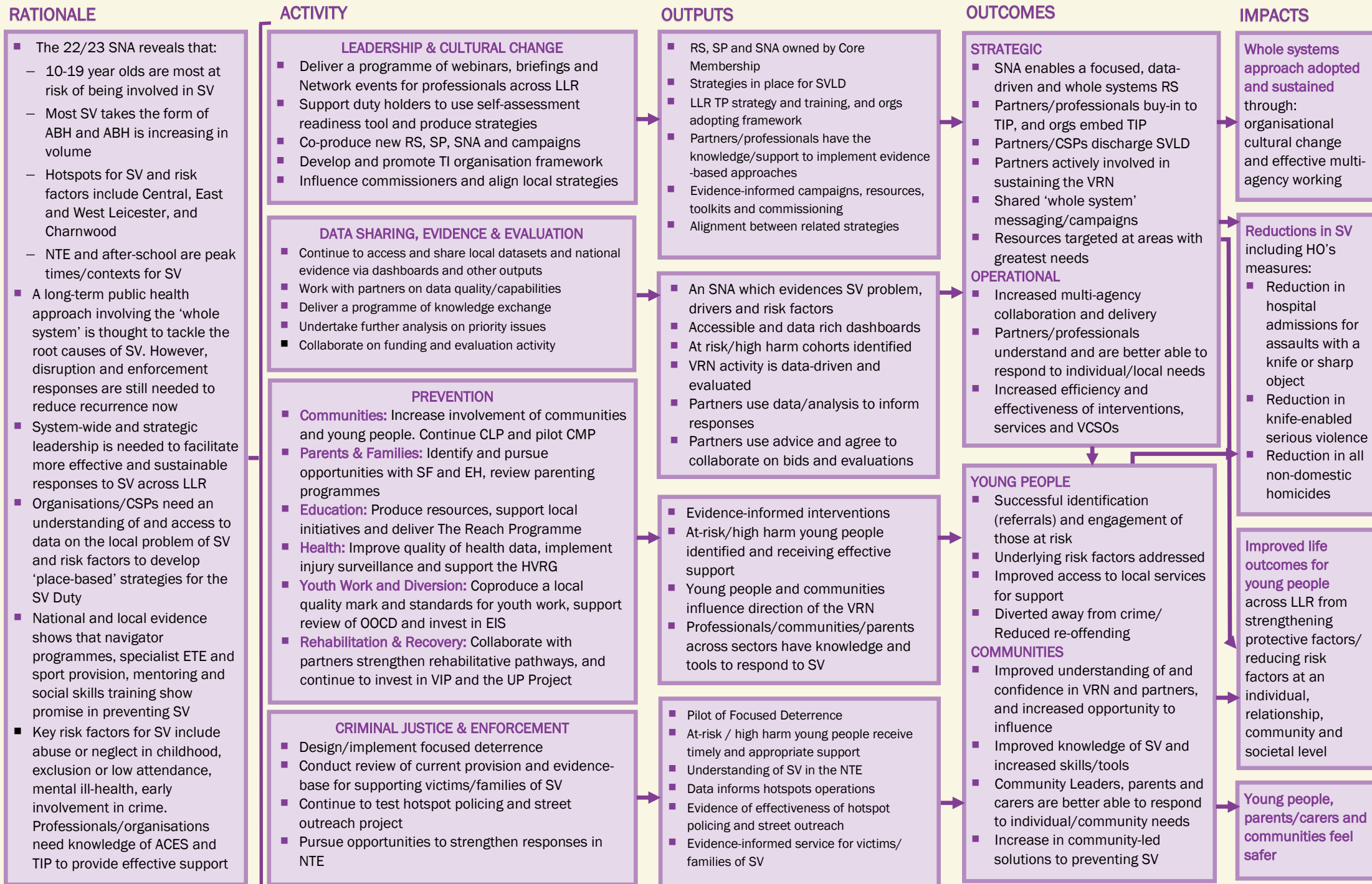
- Champion the VRN's vision, core principles and approach across the system
- Co-ordinate and promote strategic messaging and campaigns around serious violence
- Ensure young people and communities are fully involved in the Network
- Generate and provide multi-agency data products, including performance and financial information for the Board, and support the development of the necessary information sharing infrastructure
- Improve strategic co-ordination of serious violence prevention activity, improving consistency with the evidence-base and reducing duplication
- Generate and cascade resources including providing briefings on the SNA findings, the evidence base and relevant local and national developments
- Collaborate with CSPs to develop place-based responses to serious violence
- Support organisations, other Boards and partners to strengthen their violence prevention offer
- Design, test and evaluate new interventions
- Promote and embed the Network within partnership and community arenas to broaden membership and reach
- Produce mandatory products for the Home Office and meet other requirements of the grant agreement

The Serious Violence Delivery Group comprises middle and senior managers from the partnership. Chaired by the Director of the VRN, and working closely with the VRN central team, the group provides a 'team around the team' and focuses on implementing key elements of the Response Strategy as agreed with SPB Exec and/or its sub-boards. This year the group has had a specific focus on mobilising for the new Serious Violence duty.

Other Boards are also relevant to the VRN's mission and aims and therefore both Board members and the VRN central team report progress and collaborate with a range of partnership boards including:

- Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategic Board and the Senior Officer Group
- The Safer Leicester Partnership and county-based Community Safety Partnership strategic boards
- Health and Wellbeing Boards
- Local Safeguarding Children's Partnerships and Safeguarding Adult Boards
- Children's Trusts/Children and Families Partnerships
- Early Help and Family Hub Boards
- Youth Justice Management Boards

Appendix A: VRN Theory of Change



Appendix B: VRN Supported Interventions

	Primary Prevention		Secondary Prevention		Tertiary Prevention
	Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)	The Reach Programme	Early Intervention Service	Chance 2 Change	Violence Intervention Project (VIP)
Data driven need and evidence-informed design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Serious violence is most commonly committed by 10-19-year olds (SNA, 2022)Providing quality education in early life and a safe and nurturing educational environment is a protective factor (CDC, 2016)Mentoring programmes and social norm change are likely to have a moderate impact of serious violence (YEF 2021)Evaluations of MVP show that it is effective in improving attitudes and confidence in intervening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Widely recognised that school exclusions increases vulnerability and propensity to violence (UK Gov, 2018)Exclusions in LLR are unequally distributed – 60% reside in just 10 postcode sectors which are in 'hotspot' areas for serious violenceProgrammes which incorporate intensive mentoring, social skills training, mental health support and recreational activity show promise in prevention serious violence (YEF, 2021; CDC, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Leicester has higher rates of first-time offenders and children in the justice system compared to national ratesPre-court diversion has the potential to protect a child against future involvement in violence (YEF, 2021) – it can support reintegration, prevent labelling and avoid the CJSProgrammes which incorporate mentoring and work with families to provide broader contextual support have been shown to be effective (YEF, 2021; CDC, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mapping of local services and interventions highlights gaps within the system which is resulting in some young people – particularly those who are difficult to engage and who are at high risk of involvement in violence – not being offered or able to access much needed supportProtective factors including having a strong connection to caring and trusting adults, and access to and involvement in pro-social and positive activities (YEF, 2021; CDC, 2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">LLR has higher rates than the national average for assault-related admission for a knife or sharp object, and recent trends show an increase in violence-related attendances to A&ELeicester has higher rates of children in the justice system, and the peak ages for committing serious violence is 15-19 followed by 10-14 years.A&E Navigator interventions are likely to have a high impact on preventing violence and pre-court diversion programmes a moderate impact (YEF, 2021)
Description of intervention	The MVP project is a peer-led leadership and bystander programme. MVP trains students as Mentors and equips them with the confidence, knowledge and skills to identify and speak out against bullying, abusive behaviour and violence. It aims to tackle the beliefs, attitudes and culture which can give the message that violence is acceptable. Ultimately MVP promotes the healthy social norms and culture which is known to prevent violence.	The Reach Programme is an intensive six-month mentoring programme aimed at preventing exclusions. At-risk young people receive Social Skills Training, support with their confidence and wellbeing, and opportunities to participate in recreational activity (e.g. sports, arts and music). The Youth Worker will also provide support to the young person's family and work with their friends.	EIS is delivered by Prevention Officers who provide a 12-week tailored programme for young people who receive a community resolution or are at risk of offending. It seeks to prevent offending through improved anger management and well-being, and increasing engagement in positive activities such as ETE. Support is also offered to the families and carers of those engaged with the programme.	This project provides sustained mentoring support from a credible mentor within the community. Mentors will work with individuals at risk of involvement in violence to encourage positive social norms, offer emotional support and aim to improve young people's social skills, whilst supporting them to navigate and access support across the system in order to achieve their goals.	VIP provides timely and tailored support to young people attending A&E or Custody. Commonly referred to as a 'reachable moment', support workers engage with the young person at this critical point and offer support to assist recovery and address pressing issues such as safety and emotional well-being. The workers will continue to support the young person in the community, offering mentoring and practical assistance to empower them to achieve their goals.
Target group	11-16 year olds in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland	10-17 year olds in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland	10-17 year olds in Leicester who receive a police or panel issued CR are at risk of offending	16-25 year olds in the East and West of Leicester, and Charnwood	11-25 year olds who attend A&E for violence related injuries or custody for serious violence offences

Specialist Sport Provision: YEF (2022) rates sport programmes as being likely to have a high impact on crime and violence. This provision will provide young people with swift and long-term access to a broad range of sports and physical activities to run alongside the support that they receive from the intervention which connected with them in a 'reachable space'.

Specialist ETE Provision: Leicester and Leicestershire have higher rates of young people who are NEET when compared to the national average, and ETE are considered protective factors which reduce the risks of (re)offending. This provision will provide specialist employability support and quick access to credible education, training and employment opportunities.

Core Membership Sign Off

Name	Role
Jane Moore	Director of Children and Families Services Leicestershire County Council
Callum Faint	Chief Fire Officer Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service
Bob Bearne	Head of National Probation Service Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland National Probation Service
James Donaldson	Governor HMP Leicester
Tom Walters	Head/Business Development Manager Charles Booth Centre
Martin Samuels	Strategic Director of Social Care and Education Leicester City Council
Cheryl Armatrading	Chief Executive Antoin Akpom Achievements (AAA) Foundation
T/DCC David Sandall	Temporary Deputy Chief Constable Leicestershire Police
Kevan Liles	Chief Executive Voluntary Action Leicestershire

Name	Role
Anne Court	Chief Executive Oadby and Wigston Council
Chris West	Deputy Chief Nursing Officer Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board
Dawn Godfrey	Strategic Director of Children and Families Rutland County Council
Dave Stock	Strategic Relationships Manager Leicestershire & Rutland Sport
Sarah Hancock-Smith	Assistant Regional Head of Operations Turning Point Substance Misuse Services
Richard Lyne	Deputy Director of Service Transformation East Midlands Ambulance Service
Michael Veale	Chief Executive Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland
Rupert Matthews	Police & Crime Commissioner Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland
Grace Strong	Strategic Director Violence Reduction Network Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Contact Details



If you have any questions in relation to this summary or would like to find out more about the Violence Reduction Network, you can contact us at:

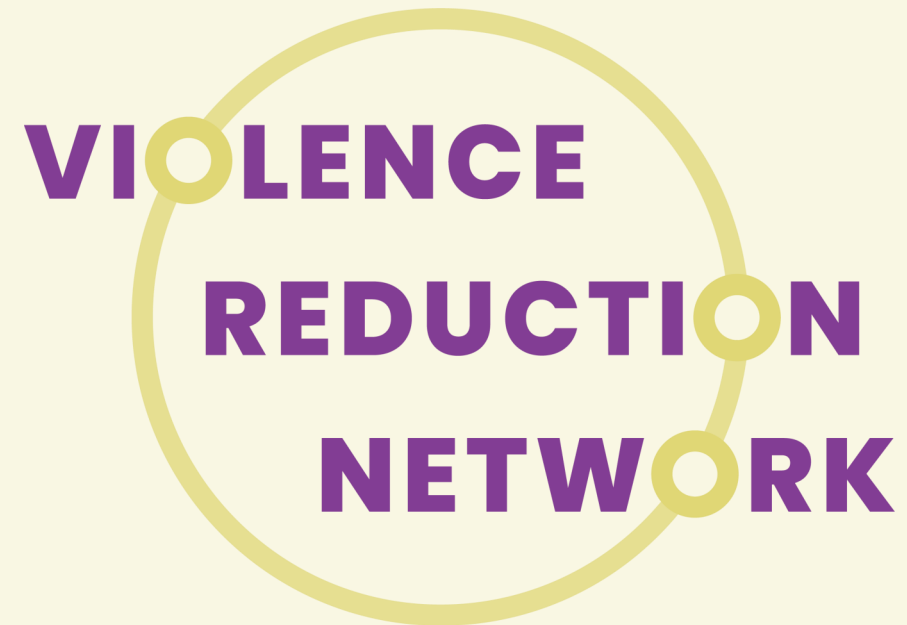
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You can also find details of our work at:

www.violencereductionnetwork.co.uk

You can keep up-to-date with VRN developments at:

[@VR_Network](https://twitter.com/VR_Network)



**LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE
& RUTLAND**