

Community Oversight Group (COG) Terms of Reference

1. Background

- 1.1 Established in 2019, the local Violence Reduction Network (VRN) is a wide alliance of groups and organisations which have a shared determination to prevent and reduce violence and make our communities safer. The VRN focuses on all types of violence but has a priority focus on violence affecting young people particularly in public spaces.
- 1.2 One of our core principles is to work with and for communities (including young people) as we know collaboration and drawing on community insights and expertise will enhance our understanding of violence and its causes, and it will improve the effectiveness of local responses.
- 1.3 We have created a Community Partnership Framework (see Appendix A) which shows our approach to partnering with communities to embed genuine and meaningful community partnership across LLR. This has been co-produced with communities from the outset. We have also created a one-page infographic of the Framework (see Appendix B). The Community Partnership Framework highlights four key activities within our approach including Inform, Consult, Collaborate and Empower and some of the activities that are being delivered or will be delivered.
- 1.4 Our Community and Young Person Involvement Plan for 2025-26 (see Appendix C) highlights our plans for the year 2025-26. This includes developing a peer-research and social action project, delivering youth-led events and co-design working including Young Futures Prevention Panels and Live Safe.
- 1.5 One of the ways the VRN collaborate with communities is through the continued investment into a Community Oversight Group (COG) through members directly influencing, shaping, and scrutinising the VRN's interventions and projects. The group also plays a vital role in overseeing the delivery of the VRN's wider community involvement work with a view to ensuring it continuously develops in line with our Community Partnership Framework.

2. Members

- 2.1 The COG comprises of ten members of the community aged 18-25 who have an established interest and experience within the violence prevention arena, particularly in relation to keeping young people safe. This may be through relevant community work and/or through lived experience. Importantly, members are committed to the VRN's belief that violence is preventable and the Network's core principles (see Appendix D).
- 2.2 To ensure that communities most affected by violence are represented, members include people who meet the following:

- Aged 18-25
- Live or work across Leicester, Leicestershire or Rutland
- Have knowledge and/or experience around violence and/or the factors that can influence violence
- Passionate about making positive change in their communities

2.3 People with previous convictions are eligible but are asked to disclose their convictions, in confidence, to the VRN's Community and Young Person Involvement Manager at the time of application so suitability can be confirmed. All members are asked to provide an up-to-date DBS certificate (expenses can be claimed back) following selection to confirm suitability and any disclosures made.

2.4 Members of the VRN team and other relevant partners also attend the COG.

3. Recruitment

3.1 The opportunity to become a COG member is advertised openly on the VRN's website, social media channels and the VRN Community WhatsApp group. The VRN's Community and Young Person's Manager also promotes the opportunity through a wide range of community groups. Members will serve 7 months on the group before it is reviewed. COG members will be given the opportunity to extend if interested.

3.2 Interested individuals complete a short survey on Microsoft Forms or alternatively interested individuals can complete and submit a short video answering each of the questions and send it to vrn@leics.pcc.pnn.gov.uk. Following this, a member of the VRN will contact interested COG members through their chosen method of communication. Those that meet the eligibility criteria and can demonstrate how their experience will benefit the work of the VRN will be asked to attend an interview. The interview panel will comprise of staff from the VRN team, a COG member from the previous membership and a young person. Alongside suitability and eligibility, decision-making will also aim to ensure that the membership is as diverse as possible.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Responsibilities of members of the COG are to:

- Be a member for a minimum of seven months.
- Attend a two-hour in-person induction session on commencement of membership in September 2025. All meetings will take place in community venues within Leicester.
- Attend a minimum of 5 two-hour in-person interactive meetings between September 2025 and March 2026 and within these:
 - Provide input into the design of new interventions and projects.
 - Review the performance of existing interventions and projects and support the VRN team and wider partnership to continuously improve both reach,

effectiveness and any risks and issues including in relation to potential disproportionality.

- Monitor and support the delivery of the VRN's Community Partnership Framework including in relation to the communications plan.
- Participate in the evaluation of the VRN programme and any relevant evaluations of interventions and projects.
- Contribute to the development and review of the VRN's strategy and annual spending plan including in relation to decision-making over future investment in interventions and projects.
- Meeting dates are scheduled in advance around COG availability and members are expected to attend all meetings or provide a suitable reason for non-attendance.
- There may be additional meetings throughout the year that COG members are invited to attend but these will be optional.
- All members are asked to agree to a code of conduct at the beginning of membership. An individual's membership on the COG may be disbanded at the discretion of the VRN Director in the unlikely event that they are involved in behaviour that could undermine the work and reputation of the VRN.

4.2 Members will be required to undertake preparation (reading papers, listening to webinars) in advance of meetings. They will be asked to submit any questions ahead of the meeting ready for discussion in the in-person meeting. They may also wish to attend broader VRN and community events, meetings, and training opportunities on a voluntary basis. If members do not undertake preparation, they will be asked to revisit the Terms of Reference and consider whether the role is right for them.

4.3 The VRN team are responsible for the co-ordination of the COG including recruitment, collating, and producing agendas, papers and minutes and overseeing payments to members. The agenda is sent out to COG members ahead of the meetings and minutes are sent out to all COG members following meetings. The VRN Community and Young Person Involvement Manager chairs the meetings or in her absence, another member of the VRN.

4.4 The VRN Director and Community and Young Person Involvement Manager ensure that insights and perspectives gathered through the group do influence the design and delivery of interventions, projects and the VRN's wider community involvement work. This includes feedback to COG members on how their contributions have made a tangible difference. Where this has not been possible, a clear explanation will be provided to the group.

5. Remuneration

5.1 COG members can claim remuneration for their attendance at their induction and the COG meetings through the COG expenses form. This is to be completed and returned to the VRN Community and Young Person Involvement Officer on a bi-monthly basis.

5.2 COG members can claim £50 in expenses for every meeting that they attend.

5.3 COG members can claim **reasonable** travel expenses for each COG meeting (at 45p per mile if driving in a car, 24p per mile in a motorbike or the rate of public transport cost). If travelling in a taxi, the costs will only be able to be claimed for up to £10.00 per return journey.

6. Review

6.1 This Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.

Appendix A

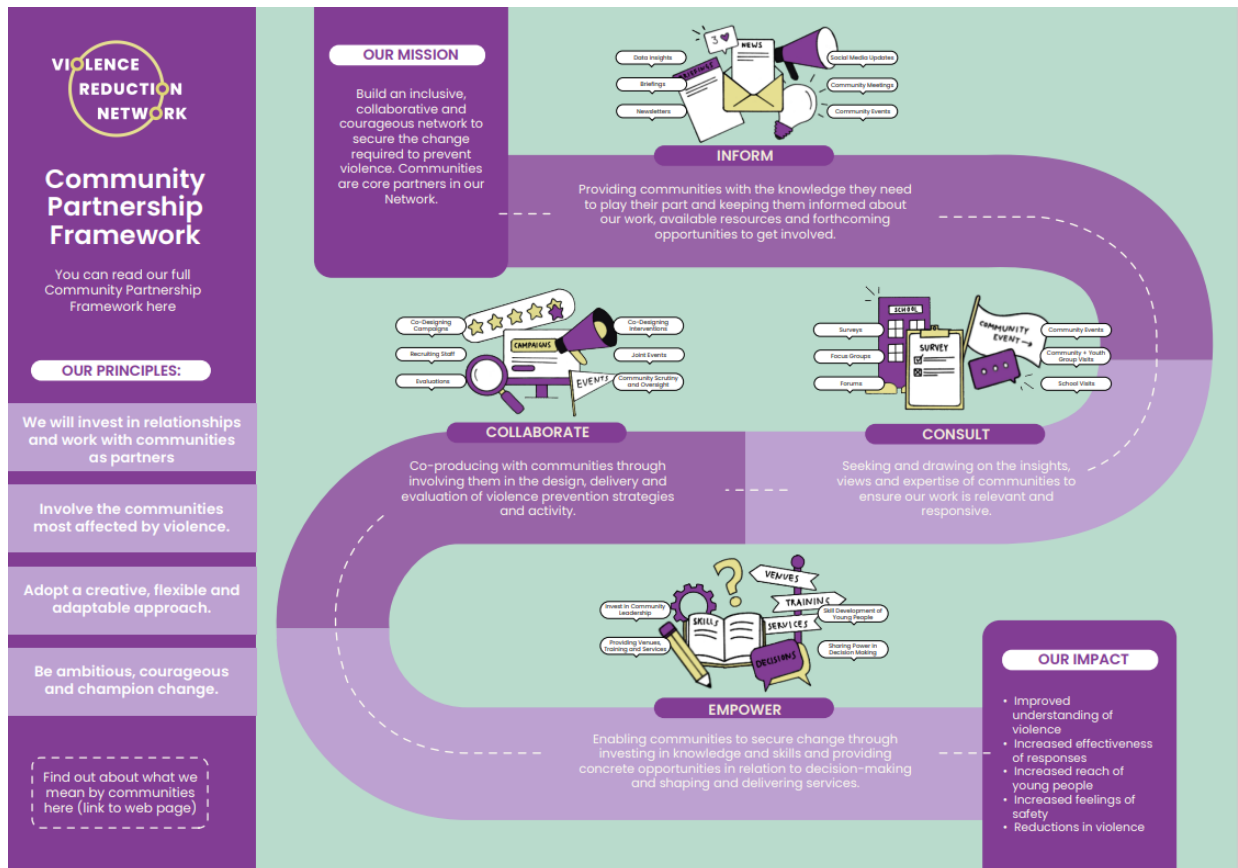
Community Partnership Framework



Appendix B -
Community Partners

Appendix B

Community Partnership Framework infographic



Appendix C

Community and Young Person Involvement Plan 2025-26



CYP Involvement
Plan 2025 (4).pdf

Appendix D

VRN Core Principles



VRN Core
Principles.pdf