



**Open Report on behalf of Glen Garrod,
Executive Director Adults Care and Community Wellbeing**

Report to:	Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date:	20 September 2022
Subject:	Serious Violence in Lincolnshire - A Partnership Response

Summary:

This report looks at Serious Violence in Lincolnshire and the partnership response to the expected new statutory duty for county councils and other public bodies to be brought in by the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

Actions Required:

The Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee is invited to:

- (1)** Review and comments on the contents of this report; and,
- (2)** review and comment on the proposal to respond to the expected statutory duty by addressing it through an expanded Safer Lincolnshire Partnership framework.

1. Background

Following public consultation in July 2019, the Government announced that it would bring forward legislation introducing a new serious violence duty (the Duty) on public bodies which will ensure relevant services work together to share data and knowledge and allow them to target their interventions to prevent serious violence altogether. This new duty has been legislated for in the Police, Crime, Sentencing, and Courts Act 2022 (the PCSC Act), statutory guidance is expected to be published later in 2022 and the duty come into force in early 2023.

The Serious Violence Duty

The Duty requires specified authorities to identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in their area, the causes of that violence (so far as it is possible to do so), and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence in the area.

The Duty requires the following specified authorities to work together, and to consult educational, prison and youth custody authorities for the area in the preparation of their strategy.

- Police
- Probation Services
- Youth Offending Teams
- Fire and Rescue Services
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- District councils
- County Councils

The PCSC Act does not specify the partnership model through which specified authorities must fulfil their obligations to collaborate. Rather it states that representatives from the specified statutory organisations should collectively decide on the appropriate partnership in which they will work together to undertake the requirements of the duty.

Alongside the duty, the PCSC Act also amends the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to include a requirement for Community Safety Partnerships to formulate and implement a strategy to prevent people from becoming involved in serious violence, both as victims and perpetrators, and to reduce instances of serious violence in the area. Should specified authorities consider the CSP to be the most appropriate local multi-agency structure through which they intend to fulfil the requirements of the duty, then the strategic needs assessment and strategy produced by the CSP may account for both the Serious Violence Duty and Crime and Disorder Act requirements.

Defining Serious Violence

Section 12 of the PCSC Act provides that, for the purposes of this duty, violence includes violence against property and threats of violence but does not include terrorism. Section 12 also provides that in considering what amounts to serious violence in any given area, account must be taken of the following factors:

- a. the maximum penalty which could be imposed for any offence involved in the violence
- b. the impact of the violence on any victim;
- c. the prevalence of the violence in the area, and
- d. the impact of the violence on the community in the area.

This approach allows the response to take account of new and emerging forms of serious violence as they develop and are identified and recognises the geographical difference in the prevalence of different types of serious violent crimes.

In considering how to define serious violence within their area, specified authorities should encompass serious violence as defined for the purposes of the Serious Violence Strategy and include a focus on issues such as public space youth violence.

The Serious Violence Strategy should set out specific types of crime of particular concern, including homicide, violence against the person which may include both knife crime and gun crime, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in county lines drug dealing. These crimes should be at the core of any definition of serious violence for the purpose of its reduction and prevention.

However, there is flexibility for specified authorities in local areas to take account of their evidence-based strategic needs assessment and include in their strategy actions which focus on other related types of serious violence, this could include (but is not limited to) domestic violence, alcohol related violence, sexual abuse, modern slavery or gender-based violence.

The Lincolnshire Response

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire has set out a priority to establish a Violence Reduction Programme, with a £3m commitment.

In September 2021, the Police and Crime Commissioner approached Lincolnshire County Council's Public Health Service for support to develop a Public Health Approach to violence reduction in Lincolnshire. To date, this work has involved a needs assessment and evidence review. The next step will be to develop a strategy based upon local intelligence and evidence of 'what works' to prevent and tackle serious violence.

The Safer Lincolnshire Partnership have agreed to establish a Serious Violence Core Priority Group to develop a Violence Reduction Strategy for Lincolnshire that is informed by the needs assessment and evidence review and that will put Lincolnshire in a strong position to respond to the Serious Violence Duty anticipated early next year. This group as part of the current Safer Lincolnshire Partnership will be led by the OPCC but will necessarily work closely with other Partnerships and Core Priority Groups where activity must align such as the Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Partnership, the Reducing Reoffending, Substance Misuse Core Priority Subgroups and Youth Offending Management Board.

A Public Health Approach

A public health, place-based, whole system approach for violence prevention involves:

- Defining the problem: Using local data that shows the types of violence that are most prevalent and impactful in Lincolnshire, who commits and is a victim of it, and where it occurs, a violence reduction partnership must agree the definition and scope of violence for the purposes of a Violence Reduction Programme for Lincolnshire.
- Reviewing risk and protective factors: The goal of violence prevention is to decrease risk factors and increase protective factors.
- Developing and evaluating a strategy: A needs assessment based on data and an evidence review of what works will inform a strategy with evaluation built in from the start. The strategy should be developed based on a review of the evidence of

what works to tackle the priorities identified by the data, with interventions addressing primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.

- Disseminating and implementing the strategy: As the strategy and its interventions demonstrate their effectiveness, this supports commissioning and implementation efforts to broaden its reach.

Strategic Needs Assessment-April 2022

Key Findings of the Needs Assessment and Evidence Review:

- There were 2209 serious violence offences in Lincolnshire in 2021. This is up 13% over the previous 12 months (January to December 2020). Lincolnshire is ranked 25th in the country in terms of the lowest amount of violence against the person (VATP) offences per 1000 residents. Lincolnshire residents have a 3% chance of being a victim of violent crime.
- Violence has long-lasting, damaging impacts on physical and emotional health. Exposure to violence, especially as a child, makes individuals more likely to be involved in violence in later life.
- Violence shows one of the strongest inequalities gradients, with emergency hospital admission rates for violence being around five times higher in the most deprived communities than in the most affluent.
- Violence prevention is a critical element in tackling other public health issues. Violence impacts on mental wellbeing and quality of life, prevents people using outdoor space and public transport, and undermines community cohesion.
- Taking a multi-agency partnership approach across the county can prevent and reduce violence.
Building on community partnership structures, with multi-agency input into them, is essential for successful violence prevention.
- Targeting appropriate interventions throughout the life course can reduce individuals' likelihood of being involved in violence, lower the chances of repeat violence, and ensure that those affected by violence get effective support.
- A wide range of evidence-based interventions are available. Programmes that support parents and families, develop life and emotional management skills in children, work with high-risk youth, and reduce the availability and misuse of alcohol are some proven effective interventions for reducing violence.
- Data on violence have become increasingly available from health services, police, other routine sources, and a variety of surveys, but improvements in data sharing are needed. Data identify individual and community level risk and protective factors. This data can be used to target interventions at those most at risk, as well as monitor progress. Better use of data sharing agreements means more effective, targeted use of resources.

Next Steps

Following the publication of the Strategic Needs assessment in April and the adoption of Serious Violence as part of the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership a Core Priority Group has formed and had an initial meeting. It is to be chaired by the Deputy Police and Crime

Commissioner, Phil Clarke. The PCC has agreed to fund the appointment of a coordinator for this group. The coordinator will be employed by Lincolnshire County Council on a fixed 2-year contract. Recruitment is complete and they are expected to commence this role in September 2022. The PCC has recommissioned the author of the Needs Assessment to begin work on developing a strategy.

2. Conclusion

Working jointly with the PCC, Lincolnshire partners have been able to analyse the picture of serious violence in Lincolnshire and have already set up a partnership to address the issues ahead of the expected statutory duty. The next phase will be to focus on the development of a strategy to address any issues currently not addressed elsewhere in the partnership landscape. Lincolnshire remains one of the safest places in the country, to live work and visit.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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