



TRAFFORD COUNCIL

AGENDA PAPERS MARKED 'TO FOLLOW' FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, 12 March 2024

Time: 6.30 pm

Place: Committee Rooms 2&3, Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford,
M32 0TH

A G E N D A	PART I	Pages
1. ATTENDANCES		
To note attendances, including officers, and any apologies for absence.		
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST		
Members to give notice of any interest and the nature of that interest relating to any item on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.		
3. MINUTES		1 - 14
To receive and, if so determined, to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2024.		
4. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC		
A maximum of 15 minutes will be allocated to public questions submitted in writing to Democratic Services (democratic.services@trafford.gov.uk) by 4 p.m. on the working day prior to the meeting. Questions must be relevant to items appearing on the agenda and will be submitted in the order in which they were received.		
5. PRESENTATIONS BY STUDENTS FROM TRAFFORD COLLEGE		Verbal Report
To receive presentations from young people who study at Trafford College.		

6. WORKING COLLABORATIVELY TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE EXPLOITED OR INVOLVED IN KNIFE & VIOLENT CRIME 15 - 36

To receive a report from the Head of Service Vulnerable Adolescents.

7. TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR

For Members to discuss any items they would like to suggest to be considered during the next municipal year.

8. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)

Any other item or items which by reason of:-

- (a) Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the Chairman of the meeting, with the agreement of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, is of the opinion should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency as it relates to a key decision; or
- (b) special circumstances (to be specified) the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency.

9. EXCLUSION RESOLUTION

Motion (Which may be amended as Members think fit):

That the public be excluded from this meeting during consideration of the remaining items on the agenda, because of the likelihood of disclosure of "exempt information" which falls within one or more descriptive category or categories of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, as amended by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, and specified on the agenda item or report relating to each such item respectively.

SARA TODD

Chief Executive

Membership of the Committee

Councillors D. Western (Chair), R. Duncan (Vice-Chair), J. Bennett, Z.C. Deakin, S. G. Ennis, S. J. Haughey, E.L. Hirst, E.R. Parker, R. Paul, S. Procter, O. Sutton, D. Acton (ex-Officio) and D. Butt (ex-Officio).

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact:

Harry Callaghan, Governance Officer,
Tel: 07977 717252
Email: harry.callaghan@trafford.gov.uk

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday, 12 March 2024

This agenda was issued on **Tuesday 5th March 2024** by the Legal and Democratic Services Section, Trafford Council, Trafford Town Hall; Talbot Road, Stretford, Manchester, M32 0TH

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 JANUARY 2024

PRESENT

Councillor D. Western (in the Chair).

Councillors R. Duncan (Vice-Chair), J. Bennett, Z.C. Deakin, S. G. Ennis, S. J. Haughey, E.L. Hirst, E.R. Parker, R. Paul, S. Procter, O. Sutton and D. Butt (ex-Officio)

In attendance

Councillor K. Carter	Executive Member for Children and Young People
Karen Samples	Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance
Sarah Butters	Head of Education Places, Access, and Vulnerable Children
Janine Day	Director of Operations at Early Break
Shona Gallagher	SEND Improvement Lead
Aimee Hodgkinson	Public Health Commissioning Manager
Kate Shethwood	Public Health Consultant
Sally Smith	Lead for SEND and Inclusion
Harry Callaghan	Democratic Officer

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D. Acton, Jill McGregor, and Pamela Wharton.

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

35. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Four questions were received for the meeting with the questions and responses below.

The first question was from Ms. Jones.

- 1. With the number of children from the local area attending Urmston Grammar diminishing over the last decade, resulting in now almost two thirds of UGS pupils coming from outside the local area, what is there being done around access to Urmston Grammar for children from West Trafford?*

The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance responded verbally in the meeting and the written response is below.

“Urmston Grammar school is an academy and therefore independent of Trafford LA. They operate according to their funding agreement between the individual

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academy trust and Secretary of State. There is no mechanism for an academy to return to local authority control.

An admissions authority is the body responsible for setting a school's admissions arrangements (i.e., how it will allocate places) and for some aspects of administering the admissions process.

Applicants wishing to be considered for admission to a Grammar School in Trafford must first be successful in the entrance examination for the preferred grammar school.

Any decisions regarding these arrangements sit solely with the school, not the LA.”

The second and third question were received from Dr. Kelly. The statement asked to the officer was quite lengthy, and the responses below are regarding the two questions asked by the resident.

The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance provided a verbal response in the meeting and the written responses and questions can be seen below.

2. *What actions are the Council taking to ensure that Trafford schools are coding absences appropriately to ensure SEMH children are identified and supported as early as possible, AND ensure that parents are not subject to fines or prosecution for their SEMH child's non-attendance?*

“The Pupil Absence Team advises schools in accordance with the following:

The Department for Education (DfE) summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance links to the DfE Working Together guidance stating that school staff should advise parents/carers to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. School staff must record absences as authorised where it is not possible for a pupil to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).

Our Trafford Emotionally based school non-attendance (EBSNA) guidance document states: the absence should be authorised if school is satisfied that the reasons given are genuine and should therefore be coded I (illness) in the school register. DfE guidance is clear that schools should authorise absence due to both physical and mental health related illness.

Our Trafford Model Attendance policy does not differentiate between types of illness but does state:

In the majority of cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence unnecessarily. In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical

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evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

For information, the House of Commons Education Committee report in September 2023 recommended that the DfE should introduce a mental health absence code and set clear thresholds for its use. These thresholds should ensure only serious cases of mental health problems necessitate absence. This will eliminate the need to repeatedly provide medical evidence in cases of known mental health difficulties.

Penalty Notices and prosecutions will only be considered by the Trafford Pupil Absence team as a very last resort in all cases of irregular attendance when the school has exhausted all appropriate supportive strategies in accordance with the Working Together agenda.”

3. *Will the Council take steps to ensure schools in Trafford recognise that parents have the necessary authority to decide whether their child is too unwell to attend school and that mental health is a valid reason for non-attendance?*

“From the Trafford Model Attendance Policy: Where a child has an emerging a pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child’s parent. We will invite parents to attend school-led Attendance Support meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to liaise with the child’s healthcare professional.

It is at the school’s discretion whether to authorise an absence, based on the individual circumstances of each case. We accept that mental health issues are a main driver of illness absence in schools and as such we work closely with schools to ensure that they offer appropriate advice to parents where mental health may be a reason for absence. Such advice may include for school to introduce an Individual Healthcare Plan agreeing to reasonable adjustments to a pupil’s timetable (closely monitored and reviewed by all parties), using the EBSNA toolkit to identify the reasons for absence as early on as possible, and to signpost to appropriate agencies, for example, the School Nursing service, Educational Psychology, counselling services, Early Help, CAMHS, and/or a potential referral to our Medical Education Service.”

The final question was also received from Ms. Jones.

The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance provided a verbal response in the meeting and the written response can be seen below.

4. *Can the Council consider providing a fully non-selective secondary school in Urmston to both avoid discrimination faced by non-Catholic*

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families forced to separate siblings and improve provision for LGBTQ+ pupils who may not thrive in a single sex setting?

*Could a non- selective school be provided through either:
 Removing the selective status of UGS, given that only 10% of local children are admitted there currently or converting one or both single sex schools to co-educational?*

If so, would either change need to be Council or parent driven and how can this be affected if the latter is the case?

“There are two routes to setting up a new school. The local authority route needs to be clear that a new school is needed in that locality (i.e., based on the number of spaces required).

There is insufficient demand to establish a new school in this locality and therefore an application would be unsuccessful.

The selective status of Urmston Grammar School cannot be removed by the local authority. It is an academy and therefore Councils have no powers to direct academies to change their status.

The department’s National and Regional directors and their teams, together with the education and skills funding agency, provide robust educational and financial oversight of all academy trusts.”

36. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st November 2023 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

37. SUBSTANCE AND ALCOHOL SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Public Health Consultant introduced the report which had been circulated with the agenda. The report detailed the developments and leadership ongoing around substance and alcohol use for young people and how the Director of Operations at Early Break was in attendance to add detail to the wider programmes of work. The Public Health Consultant highlighted to the Committee that there was a new alcohol substance misuse and gambling group formed in Trafford that reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board, which had a nearly finalised action plan.

The Director of Operations at Early Break spoke to the work ongoing at Early Break and how focused they were on prevention, and not just to deliver treatment services, which they felt would strengthen the report. The Director of Operations pulled out the highlights of this work. This included working with families and operating a structured approach, working closely with young people with parents who had experience of substance misuse. Further to this, the Committee were informed of a group in the Northwest, chaired by Early Break, which looked at new

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and existing substance issues and collaborated closely with academics across the region to look at what education needs to be pushed out.

The Director of Operations also spoke of referral performance, which was now better than in 2019/20. The Committee were reassured that data showing an increase in use of the youth offending service was not a concern, rather that it was due to a designated officer now in place to support young people. Other themes such as outreach, pathways for cared for children, and recent earning of the Rainbow flag, which showed accessibility for LGBTQ+ young people to access the service was also shared.

The Public Health Commissioning Manager spoke of the emerging substances for young people. The Committee were informed that work was ongoing around youth vaping which had become a more prevalent issue in recent years. This included teaching the associated risks of vaping in schools and providing webinars to parents alongside education colleagues. Feedback from these webinars were shared, with education around unregulated vapes being required being a common theme. The Committee were also referred to ongoing research projects on youth vaping. The Public Health Commissioning Manager also mentioned the increasingly emerging substance use of ketamine, with work ongoing alongside physical health colleagues to raise awareness of the dangers of ketamine use.

The officers were thanked for the report and Councillors were offered the opportunity to ask questions.

Councillor Paul asked if the services liaise with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to remove access to drugs and alcohol. The Director of Operations responded that Early Break had started getting referrals from GMP as part of the service aim for early intervention and prevention. It was also added that a group of young people, who had developed training and creative resources called 'stressed out brain,' which worked with young people to find what messages would be helpful to get the issue of substance misuse across. The Public Health Commissioning Manager mentioned that GMP were also in attendance at the Alcohol, Gambling and Substance misuse partnership.

Councillor Bennett asked how they recognise children who have a gambling problem. The Operations Director identified that it was difficult, with one of the preventative measures involved being looking at children who were heavily involved with gaming and the relationship this had or could have had with gambling. The Public Health Consultant added that understanding was more limited than alcohol and drugs. However, there was good training from people with a lived experience of gambling issues, which had received funding from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA).

Councillor Ennis referred to page six, table two of the report, which outlined a breakdown of substances Trafford young people referred to Early Break reported using, with the figure for cocaine rising from 7% in 2019/20 to 15% in 2022/23 and enquired why this had happened. The Director of Operations at Early Break responded that during lockdown, dealers began offering the drug at much lower

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quantities than grams. She felt that it was a collaborative issue, which had not been helped by its association with wealth.

The Chair followed this question by asking if the service splits figures by different areas, and whether different drugs were used more prominently in wealthier or more deprived areas. The Director of Operations responded that cocaine was an issue across the borough, not just in the wealthier areas. The Chair asked further if this led to an increase in crime. The Director of Operations responded that it did lead to further criminal exploitation. The Public Health Consultant added that there had been a violence needs assessment submitted to the Home Office, which looked at taking a public health approach to violence reduction, which had provided some trends.

Councillor Duncan asked whether partners were working with headteachers and families to help tackle the rise in drug use over recent years, and wondered if this was linked with the rise in vaping. The Director of Operations mentioned that the link was there as vaping had exploded over recent years. They mentioned work ongoing with schools, especially safeguarding leads within schools, and that all the work Early Break does cooperates with the family. In terms of families, the Public Health Commissioning Manager expanded on the hidden harm audit which was being developed, and aimed to make sure that services were asking the questions around the whole family and the impact of hidden harm.

Councillor Procter also raised concern at the rise in ketamine usage and how this would be dealt with. The Director of Operations at Early Break responded that they were leading on this regionally, looking at the evidence, harms, and information that was given to young people, whilst also ensuring that it was credible to maintain trust with young people accessing the service.

Councillor Parker asked if work was being done around the rise in colourful vaping shops on the high street. The Public Health Commissioning Manager added that public health pays toward a trading standard post that looked at this and forms part of their work. The Public Health Consultant noted recent Government policy on vaping, and the hope that that this would reduce the colours and marketing of vaping. It was also mentioned that colleagues in trading standards and regulatory services, were very much on board with dealing with this issue.

Councillor Hirst asked whether there was different substance misuse with older adolescents compared to younger children. The Director of Operations responded that the older age range was much higher when Early Break started work on substance use, with the work on early intervention playing a role in supporting bringing this down. Councillor Hirst followed this by asking if there were a smooth transition when a young person turns twenty-one and began accessing adults' services, or were they held onto. The Director of Operations informed the Councillor that young adults do tend to stay with Early Break until they turn twenty-five and transition into adults' services.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

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38. SEND INSPECTION REPORT

The SEND Improvement Lead introduced the report on behalf of the Corporate Director for Children's Services, which provided an overview of the SEND Inspection Framework, the activity that took place during the inspection in October 2023 and summarised the findings and subsequent actions. The previous inspection had taken place in 2017 under a different framework.

There were three possible outcomes from the inspection, and the outcome for Trafford was that arrangements led to inconsistent outcomes for young people. The SEND Improvement Lead shared that, as highlighted in the report, the Council had to produce a comprehensive self-assessment during the inspection process. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) had fed back on this, that Trafford knew their service well, with the evaluation accorded with what they had found of the experience of children. The SEND Improvement Lead shared the next steps following the report which included a strategic improvement plan that needed to be published by the 14th February and an upcoming meeting with the Department for Education (DfE) as part of their monitoring arrangements.

The Committee were shared some of the positives and areas for improvement in the report included below.

The inspection had been clear that there were passionate people in Trafford working hard with children and young people who were ambitious in wanting to improve experience, however, the self-assessment had shown that translation of this into strategic intent and practice on the ground was too inconsistent.

Furthermore, the inspection highlighted that there was good work in terms of parental engagement and through the Lived Experience Advisory Panels (LEAP). The inspection had made clear that the children's voice was not the strongest in Trafford and was to be an area of focus to improve, with work also to be done on improving the systems response to neurodiverse children and young people.

Signs of improvement had shown in educational healthcare plans (EHCP), however, some variability in the service remained. Further to this, support in preparation for adulthood had been an issue in Trafford for a long time and this was highlighted in the inspections, with work on this needing acceleration.

The Committee were provided with the next steps following the inspection, with an ambition's plan being produced, and were offered the opportunity to ask questions. The Committee were also offered the opportunity to receive the action plan at future meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Ennis asked if the officers could elaborate further on each of the six work streams behind the six pillars within the ambitions plan. Secondly, what efforts beyond the parent carer forum were being made to reach new SEND experienced families, and how they will improve. Furthermore, Councillor Ennis asked if the Committee could have access to the SEND data dashboard.

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The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance responded positively to the ambitions within the plan and that those were identified as the correct ambitions to have by the inspectors. Each ambition had an ambition lead, who attended a steering group which had them reporting back on the pace, traction and activity that sat behind the individual ambitions, with KPIs in place which fed into the data dashboard. The Director informed that they could bring the data dashboard in future updates. The inspection, however, had found that the strategic work compared to what was taking place on the ground was not consistent across the board. The Director for Education Standards, Quality, and Performance proceeded to provide the Committee with the themes of each ambition.

The SEND Improvement Lead recognised that there was not an equal spread of parental engagement across the Borough. The parent carer forum had a massive role to play in driving engagement, with regular conversations happening to see how it could be improved to also engage with families who may want to engage on a more individual level. On the data dashboard, the SEND Improvement Lead added that in some areas the service was rich in data, whilst in others it was underdeveloped, with work ongoing to improve this.

Councillor Procter raised concern on not listening and reacting to the voices of children well and enquired as to what the plans were to do this more effectively. Councillor Procter asked further what plans were in place to ensure consistently good annual reviews.

The SEND Improvement Lead recognised that despite some lovely examples coming through in the inspection, there was a mapping exercise taking place to improve learning from these positive experiences and spread this across. There was also a need to resource improving children's voices as to drive practice it needs support and would not happen by itself. The service was also aware that improvement needed to be made to make sure children across various levels of need were having their voice heard, as the ability to use voices varied. The workforce also needed to be confident and able to engage with children with SEND.

The Lead for SEND and Inclusion responded that there was some good practice on annual reviews, however, monitoring on completing the circle on a review had not been there with action planning around improving reviews sitting within ambition three. The Committee were shared some work that had begun on improving this, especially for children moving from year six to seven.

Councillor Sutton asked whether the Council were already aware of the issues with neurodiversity and early identification, and the time between identification and response prior to the inspection, with some cases taking years. Secondly, Councillor Sutton asked what awareness the Council had to additional barriers, such as children living in Trafford but attending school in another authority, and what was being done to overcome this. Councillor Sutton also asked about the Council's knowledge of individual schools who were coding SEND absences properly.

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The SEND Improvement Lead assured that the Council was aware of the issue between identification and response. It was clear that there was going to be difficult partner conversations, with a mismatch in resource for diagnosis and the process that takes place. The Council was aware that this was an issue that needed to be dealt with but recognised that it will likely remain an issue in the meantime. The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance added that a commissioning strategy was going to be developed at pace, aiming to raise awareness of bringing the right level of service to the need required. There was also work to be done on workforce development to ensure that schools could meet the needs of children and young people.

In response to the second question, the Lead for SEND and Inclusion responded that there was an aim to develop a contact list for people across Greater Manchester to help navigate cross border issues. Further, speech and language therapists have an agreement that they will work across borders, however, this was a challenge in other services. When requesting data from schools in other local authorities, the Lead mentioned that this was received when requested.

In response to the final question, the Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance mentioned that red, amber, green (RAG) ratings were in place for schools, to monitor how they were coding emotionally based school non-attendance (EBSNA). Those that fall below average on performance were then contacted.

Councillor Duncan raised concern over online interaction and meetings and felt that if parents were told that meetings would be in person, attendance would happen. The SEND Improvement Lead responded that parent and carer engagement was mostly face to face. However, it was clear that a diverse range of engagement was important to suit needs of individual children. Meetings had also taken place with special school heads to look at how best to garner the voice of the young people. The Lead for SEND and Inclusion added that diversity in offer was important, something that had been seen in tutoring.

Councillor Ennis enquired as to why health professionals do not receive the EHCPs that they fed into as this made them unable to cross check their professional advice. Secondly, Councillor Ennis felt that the strength of feeling around issues in transition to adulthood was not replicated in the report and hoped that this would be being worked on in future plans. Finally, the Councillor felt that educational psychology (EP) was spoke of a service which was performing well, which he felt was divorce from reality, wondering if the officers had any thoughts.

The Lead for SEND and Inclusion answered that there was work being done to improve sharing of draft EHCPs but felt that it was about ensuring decent quality assurance of advice coming from health professionals, so plans would not need to be checked because everyone would be aware of what was within them. It was felt that the plans should be getting shared, however possibility of feedback at that point was limited due to the timeliness of reports.

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The SEND Improvement Lead assured Councillor Ennis that the strength of concern around preparation for adulthood (PfA) was heard, with work being done to improve this, including a PfA workshop. However, it was important that people knew that it was a work in progress.

In response to the Councillor's final question the Director for Education Standards, Quality, and Performance was aware that teachers were having issues with accessing the EP service. The service had been through staffing issues over the previous year, with maternity cover and recruitment difficulties. Assurances were given that the team was now up to capacity and aiming to balance out need, but that difficulties were still being faced.

Councillor Hirst issued concern with timescales, with the issues of transition to adulthood and the voice of the child being issues six years ago when they sat on the corporate parenting board. Councillor Hirst wanted to know if there was any timescale to bring parents faith back into the service.

The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance recognised that work had been done recently to strengthen governance arrangements. An individual had been hired with a wealth of expertise to help this. OFSTED were confident that with those arrangements, the service was in a place to have a grip on previous issues. The SEND Improvement Lead added that the SEND system was very stretched, with a need to measure pace of improvement, whilst also making sure parents and carers were aware of what challenges were going to be faced.

The Executive Member for Children and Young people paid tribute to the officers in attendance for their individual work and the work done by their teams, recognising that improvements were not near the end, but that plenty of work had already taken place.

Councillor Haughey highlighted earlier reference that the service was now fully staffed, despite issues of low employment rate, and raised concern as to whether with increased numbers of young people with SEND could the service slip backwards. The Director for Education Standards, Quality, and Performance responded that the service was aware that it needs to work within its means regarding staffing. However, assurance was given that the governance arrangements that were in place, would not allow the service to slip back. The Lead for SEND and Inclusion added that the inspection had highlighted issues within the whole service, and that everyone was aware of the part they had to play to drive improvement.

The Chair mentioned finally an appetite of members to do further work on SEND Tribunals and transition to adulthood, and asked if the Committee would be interested in completing a piece of task and finish work in one of these areas. The Committee agreed to explore moving this.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.

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- 2) That the results of the ambitions plan, next steps following on from the inspection, and the SEND data dashboard, be brought to future meetings of the Committee.
- 3) That the Committee explore establishing a task and finish group on either SEND tribunal or preparation for adulthood.

39. SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING

The Head of Education Places, Access, and Vulnerable Children spoke to the report which outlined the Councils approach to school place planning in the borough and was shared as part of the agenda.

The Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children shared key statistics and information from the report. Firstly, the Council had secured significant amounts of education contributions through section 106 agreements in areas where large levels of development was taking place. This contributed to basic need money which the Council receives from the Department for Education (DfE). Pupil forecasting and accuracy remained strong. Furthermore, regarding entry to reception, 94% of children received first school preference. The Committee were referred to decreasing birth rates in Trafford, which would result in less need for primary school places in some areas of the Borough. However, the Committee were informed that this was expected to be offset in other areas of the borough due to migration into Trafford, with significant spikes of in year school applications in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Secondly, the Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children spoke of the pressures of sufficiency for places at secondary schools in the borough, which was especially an issue in the Central and South of the borough. This was seen in the number of first choice schools offered to young people and families (75%) being much lower than the national levels (82%). The strategy to support families on this issue in recent years had been to provide tailored advice, to make sure that they apply for all their local non-selective schools, so to protect as many places as possible for Trafford residents. The Committee were informed that this had largely been a successful position.

Finally, the Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children highlighted access to selective schools from out of borough families, with this seeing a 1% increase in 2023, with 363 children in year seven. In non-selective schools there were ninety-four out of borough children in schools in Trafford in year seven. The Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children did mention to the Committee that there were 211 Trafford residents choosing to access schools outside of the Borough. Reassurance was given that the Council was confident in the strategies in place to protect as many places as possible for Trafford residents.

The Committee were offered to ask any questions.

Councillor Duncan asked how the Council prioritises school preference. The Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children responded that parental

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preference was the priority, with the highest possible preference offered as they could. The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance added that when looking at sufficiency planning and whether further places were required, this data had helped to support the generating of further funding.

Councillor Deakin enquired whether section 106 agreements included in the report were for the financial year to date and if the discrepancy between the amount taken for primary and the amount taken for secondary could be explained. The Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children responded that it was not measured to a financial year, rather a cumulative total since the Council had been using its current methodology. They added that the difference was from the methodology used to calculate the numbers and was linked to the surplus number of secondary places in three schools in Partington, Stretford and Flixton.

Councillor Procter's first question referred to section 1.4 of the report and priority to remove vertically grouped classes and asked why due to the benefits for children of different abilities being grouped together. The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance responded that funding arrangements that inform a school budget could be complex and as such may not have been the best option in terms of staffing a school. It was further added that it also had its operational issues.

Secondly Councillor Procter asked why the expansion of Davyhulme Primary school was being kept as a future option, when a commitment was made in the planning of nearby Trafford Waters to build a school. The Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children responded that planning permission for the school was now approved 9 years ago and was still something being worked through, with several changes made to projections of pupil place planning in this time. She added that the planning was for a single-entry primary school, something the DfE no longer did due to financial challenges, and concluded that strategic thinking was to be needed moving forward when considering the school in Trafford Waters. The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance added that feasibility of expansion was considered for all schools and that was why Davyhulme was considered at the time. Reassurance was given that this was only an option, and not something to progress unless they really had to.

Councillor Sutton asked whether Willow's Primary school's intervention space would be reopened as the use of Broomwood for this ended that year. The Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children responded that additional classroom had been achieved in the short term and a decision would be made at the end of March depending on capacity.

Councillor Ennis asked if there was data to support a new school in South of the borough due to proposed expansions forthcoming in the area. The Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children responded that the Council had explored creating a new school in the South, but this did not currently meet the necessity. The Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance added that to build the smallest of secondary schools, you need demand of 750

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23 January 2024

places and when discussions were had with the DfE it was determined that the demand was not there. However, Director of Education Standards, Quality, and Performance did mention that feasibility was constantly taking place in the South of the borough. The Executive Member for Children and Young People added that consistent lobbying took place with the DfE, which was unsuccessful.

Councillor Paul asked where the increased demand for school places from developments in New Carrington and Timperley wedge would attend and if there were any statistics on this. The Head of Education Places, Access and Vulnerable Children responded that regarding New Carrington, a full and detailed analysis had been done with an expansion of Broadoak expected to deal with the issue. She also mentioned that there was an appetite to expand the three primary schools in the area, however, with the time the development will take, these plans were likely to be down the line. Regarding Timperley wedge, the lowest rising birth rates were in the area, so the plan would be to utilise the projected surpluses.

The Chair thanked the officers for the report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.32 pm and finished at 8.46 pm.

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TRAFFORD COUNCIL – CHILDREN’S SERVICES

Report to: Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee
Date: 12.03.2024
Report for: Information
Report of: Tracey Staines, Head of Vulnerable Adolescent Service
Catherine Marland, Violence Reduction Coordinator
Report Title Working collaboratively to reduce the number of young people exploited or involved in knife and violent crime.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of how Trafford Children’s Services are working collaborative with colleagues and partners to prevent and reduce the number of young people involved in violence, gangs, and knife related behaviour.

The data shows an increase from 8,815 violent crimes committed by Trafford adults and young people in 2021 / 2022, to 9,316 in 2022/ 2023. Most of the violent crime in Trafford is perpetrated by adults, and according to the Greater Manchester Police data, only 13% of this type of crime was committed by children / young people. The data also records 15% of young people as the victim of violent crime.

This report will provide an outline of the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction strategy which Trafford has aligns with, and offer assurance that our understanding of violence, and knife crime has been informed through a Joint Strategic Needs assessment.

Trafford Children’s Services has continued to evolve in response to the rising concern in youth violence, gang culture and knife crime. This report will provide a summary of the Strategic governance arrangements that are in place that offer a clear line of sight, transparent accountable decision making, and a sharpened focus on targeting resources to ensure that we continue to prevent and reduce youth violence in all its forms.

The Youth Justice Service, Complex Safeguarding, and Youth Engagement Service sit within the Vulnerable Adolescent Service. This report will highlight some of the direct work that our services do, in collaboration with partners to raise awareness, prevent and reduce the number of young people who are involved in violent related behaviour, including some examples about the difference this has made.

Trafford Children’s Services continue to innovate in how we reach young people to tackle youth violence, so it is impactful, and this report shares a summary and link to ‘round midnight,’ an innovative approach used within the Vulnerable Adolescent Service.



Recommendations

- For Scrutiny to note the contents of this report and offer challenge to the service.
- To note the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and collaborative understanding of youth violence in Trafford, and activity to address it.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Tracey Staines

tracey.staines@trafford.gov.uk



Working collaboratively to reduce the number of young people exploited or involved in knife and violent crime.



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Introduction

Violence and knife related crime and behaviour has an impact on all those involved, including young people, their families, victims, and the local community. No singular service can prevent or reduce violence, and this report will reflect on the underlying causes of it, and how we work collaboratively to address it.

The [Serious Violence Duty](#) requires specified authorities work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in our local 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 specified authorities are the police, probation services, youth offending teams, fire and rescue, health, and local authority.

The specified authorities in Trafford, as set out in the Serious Violence Duty, have defined violence as "intentional harm either physical or psychological, that has a substantial or significant impact on the victim or wider community, and which is often related to assaults, weapon-enabled crime, antisocial behaviour or homicide." Trafford's specified authorities and other partners have also worked together to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which will inform our local strategy, this strategy will complement the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit's 10-year [Greater Than Violence Strategy](#).

Trafford is committed to working collaboratively with the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit, and partners to reduce violence, and knife related crime, and improve the lives of children, young people, and their families, as well as being committed to reducing the number of children and young people who are susceptible to being criminally exploited into violence, and knife related crime and behaviours. Within Children Services there are a range of services that are focused on this agenda and they have been brought together as Trafford's Vulnerable Adolescent Service, which sits within Children's Services, and includes the Complex Safeguarding team [SHINE], Missing from home and Care team, the Youth Justice team, and the Youth Engagement Service [YES] and we align with children's social care teams, and partners so that we are best placed to offer the right support at the right time for our children and young people.

This paper will provide a brief outline of the Violence Reduction Unit '*Greater Than Violence*' 10-year strategy, and the statistics and data collated through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Trafford. It will provide an outline of the multi-faceted strategic governance structures that Trafford has in place to oversee the collaborative and contextual safeguarding approach to addressing violence and knife related crime. It will also provide an overview of how services work together with partners through daily operational processes and practice and provide early intervention and it will include how assurance and information sharing works this report will further highlight some of the innovative approaches that are being adopted to address '*gang and knife*' related behaviour.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment [Statistics and data]

National context

In December 2022, the Home Office published statutory guidance for preventing and reducing serious violence, the Serious Violence Duty. The guidance set out the need for a local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and strategy to be developed by local partnerships. In line with this requirement colleagues from across the partnership have worked collaboratively to develop Trafford's Serious Violence Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which has subsequently been submitted to the Home Office in January 2024. A strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence in the area is in development.

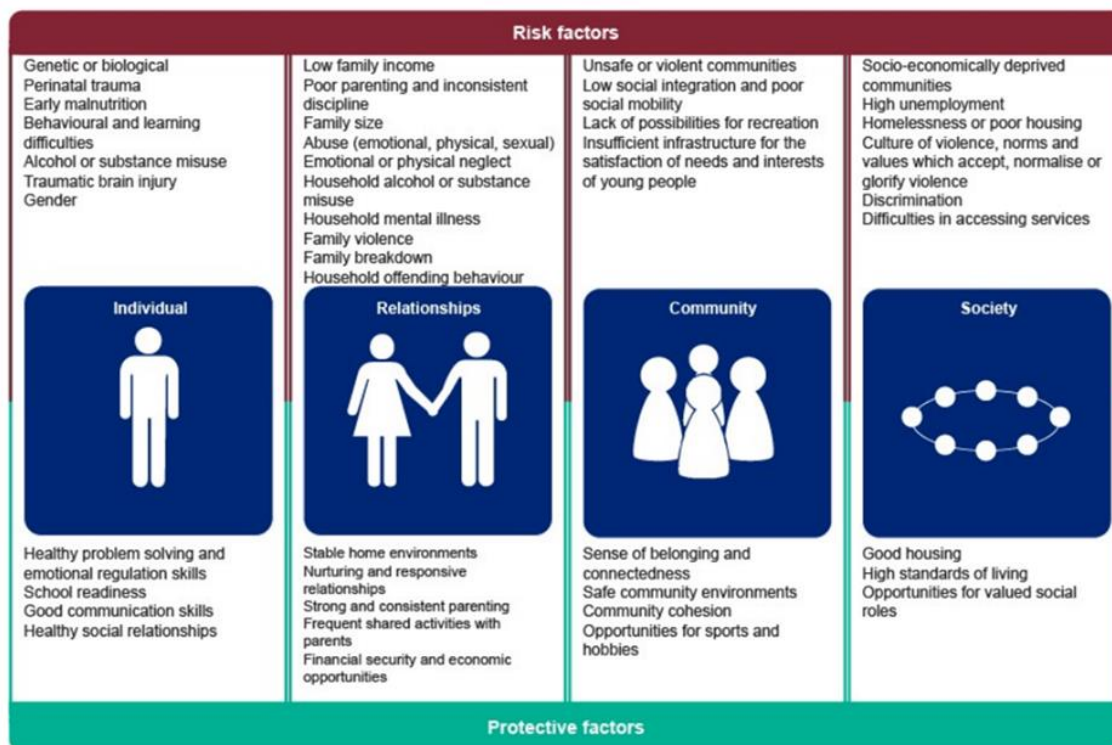
Trafford's serious violence strategy will complement the Greater Than Violence strategy and will utilise the JSNA findings so that our strategy is specific to the needs of our residents.

The Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit (GMVRU) have released a 10 year 'Greater Than Violence' strategy that is founded on two pillars: preventing violence from happening and responding swiftly and appropriately when it occurs and has 5 key principles that underpin the strategy; community led approach, early and timely intervention, partnerships for change, equality, equity and justice and trauma-responsive city-region.

In Trafford we are taking a public health approach to violence reduction. The public health approach requires partners from various disciplines to come together and share data and resources, and design multi agency ways of working that serve the needs of local communities. The underlying principles of a public health approach are that it is:

- focused on a defined population, often with a health risk in common with and for communities.
- not constrained by organisational or professional boundaries
- focused on generating long term as well as short term solutions.
- based on data and intelligence to identify the burden on the population, including any inequalities
- rooted in evidence of effectiveness to tackle the problem.

There are a wide range of factors that increase the likelihood of, and mitigate against vulnerability to violence, and these factors can impact on individuals throughout their whole life course. Risk factors are not direct causes of violence, but exposure to risk factors, or a lack of protective factors in childhood, can increase the likelihood of violence occurring. Effective primary prevention focuses on reducing exposure to those risk factors, and strengthening protective factors before violence has occurred

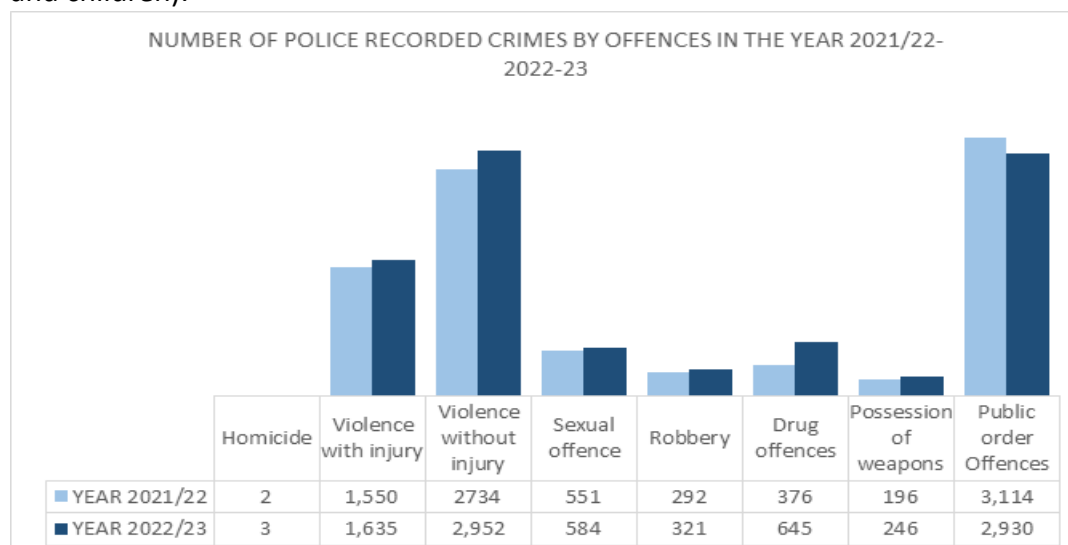


Source: [A whole-system multi-agency approach to serious violence prevention A resource for local system leaders in England, n.d\)](#)

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Key Findings

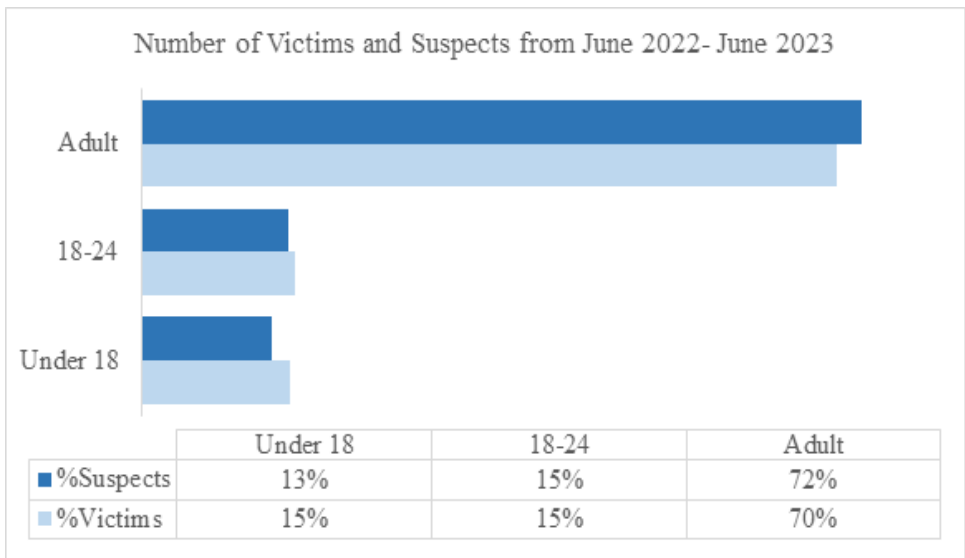
Positively, the rate of violent crime in Trafford perpetrated by adults, children and young people was lower than our statistical neighbours, and Greater Manchester in the year ending March 2023.

However, between June 2022 and June 2023, we saw increases from the previous reporting year in violent offending (please note that these figures include crimes perpetrated by adults and children).



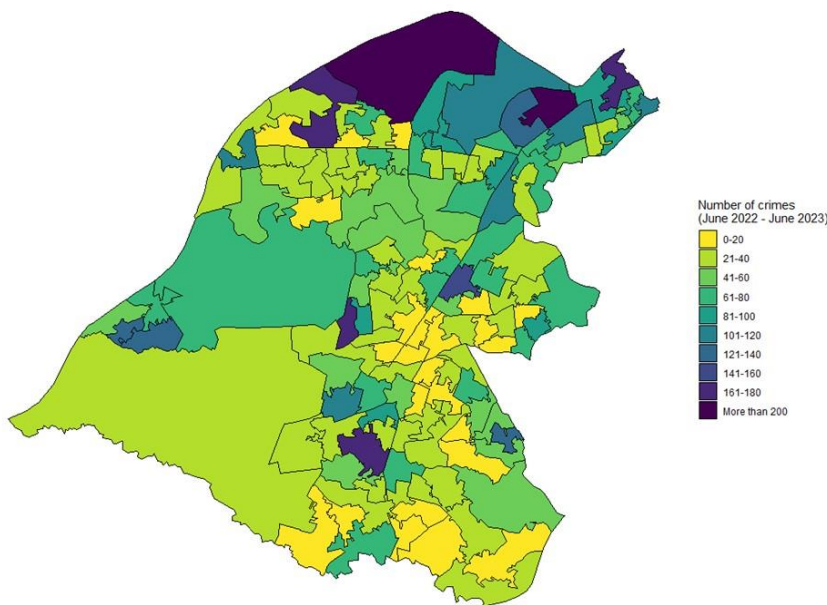
Source: [Office for National Statistics 2023](#)

According to crimes recorded by GMP, children were suspects in only 13% of the violent crime in Trafford between June 2022- June 2023.



Source: [Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership \(2023\)](#)

With the figures adjusted for population size, 36% of violent crimes committed in the year ending June 2023 were in the North Neighbourhood, 24% in the South Neighbourhood, 20% in both the West and Central Neighbourhood. Colleagues in Greater Manchester Police work in collaboration with partners and respond to the local crime profile using powers such as ‘stop and search’ or targeting areas through specific police operations.



Trafford Youth Justice data (2022/23) reports on all offences, noting that 51 young people aged between 10, and 17 years old received a *substantive outcome*, (Court conviction / Youth Conditional Caution) having committed 104 offences. The number of young people who have received a substantive outcome is similar to that of our ‘statistical neighbour’ [comparator

group], and consistently lower than regional and national data comparator groups. Substantive outcomes do not include Community Resolutions or support through Mentoring or Prevention.

The pattern of *offending* for young people in Trafford since 2019 shows that most have received a substantive outcome because they have committed a violent offence against the person. In 2022/23, (24) offences of this *type*, ranged from possession of a knife or offensive weapon (15); Assault (7); Wounding (1); inflicting grievous bodily harm (1) and Harmful Sexual Behaviour (13). In total, over a third of substantive outcomes were for violence against the person.

Youth Justice has continued to see an increase in violence against the person. At the end of Quarter 3, in 2023/24 (27) young people received substantive outcomes for (46) offences, with (23) of these offences falling under the violence against the person category. Over half of the young people who have received a substantive outcome in this period did so for a knife related offence, (11 possession of knife, 1 threatening with blade, 10 assault, 1 wounding).

Whilst this may appear to indicate that youth violence is increasing it should be noted that due to small numbers of young people, a single incident, or individual young person can significantly *bias* the data, for example 1 young person accounts for (6) of the assault offences this year over 3 different dates and this presents as (60%).

Corporate and strategic governance

To ensure we have both a strategic collaborative approach to tackling serious youth violence and knife crime, Trafford partners have developed and implemented a clear governance arrangement in terms of criminal exploitation into violence, and knife related crime and behaviour. This includes having several boards and forums in place and representation within the GM structures including:

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority [GMCA] Violence Reduction Unit [VRU]
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority Transforming YJ delivery [GMCA YJ]
- Complex Safeguarding Executive board [CSEB]
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority Complex Safeguarding Hub
- Youth Justice Board [YJB]
- Trafford's Youth Justice Management Partnership Board
- Community Safety Partnership [CSP]
- Serious Violence Strategy Working Group
- Greater Manchester Police Challenger programme and Serious Organised Crime Partnership Board
- Serious Organised Crime Tactical Group
- Violence Reduction Coordinator [Sits within Public Health but funded by CSP]

Trafford Children's Services

- The Government's Prevent agenda and channel panel.
- Trafford Strategic Safeguarding partnership, exploitation sub-board/ other boards [TSSP]
- Youth Justice [YJ] and Complex Safeguarding [SHINE] Assurance Meeting
- Knife Crime scrutiny panel

The governance structure provides a corporate, strategic, and operational line of sight, which is important because it ensures that the right resources can be made available, and that clear and accountable decision-making is transparent and remains focused on the objective to prevent and reduce child criminal exploitation, violence, and knife related behaviours.

Collaboration and operational delivery

Greater Manchester Police *Programme Challenger* was developed to tackle the rising concerns of serious and organised crime. Programme Challenger is a partnership response to address serious and organised crime. Challenger is made up of several agencies, who work together to support the relentless pursuit of disrupting serious and organised crime, as well as reducing the risk to those who are vulnerable.

In line with this, Trafford Police and partners have developed a Serious Organised Crime Partnership Board and representatives from Trafford Children's Services contribute to the implementation of the Programme Challenger Strategy 2022 - 2025, as referred to below. The collaborative implementation of the strategy translates into tactical and operational activity, and practitioners work together using an approach based on the '4P's': *to Prepare, Pursue, Prevent and Protect* our children, young people, families, and communities.

Critically this approach promotes the sharing of Police intelligence and operations, and information about our young people, and families. This enables us to identify those who are most at risk of becoming involved in violence and knife crime, or those who are already involved so we can target resources and interventions to tackle that. Programme Challenger supports a better understanding of what is happening in our community which leads to a collaborative approach to disrupt criminal activity through civil and criminal powers, for example increased 'stop and search' procedures in a specific area, and detached outreach youth work to promote safer community spaces. The Programme Challenger Strategy 2022 – 2025 is attached as an appendix.

The Youth Justice Service, Complex Safeguarding team, Youth Engagement Service, and Social Care work within the Programme Challenger framework, and have a good understanding, and contribute to specific Police Operations being delivered across Trafford, through the structures referred to in Appendix 2. There can be many Police Operations running in parallel, in response to serious organised crime, criminal activity, but also to prevent serious violence and knife crime behaviours.

Funding and income streams

Alongside the support that children and young people access from the Vulnerable Adolescents Service, through the Serious Violence Grant funding, interventions and support are commissioned to prevent, reduce, and respond to serious violence. The [Youth Endowment Fund Toolkit](#) provides the evidence base for selecting effective interventions. Trafford received £150,000 in 2023/24 in serious violence grant funding, and additional funding of £11,182 (labour) and £10,000 (non-labour) funding to support the development of the serious violence duty requirements. Additionally, children, young people and families in Trafford can access offers from complimentary funding streams as detailed in the table below.

Program Name	Funding Stream	Cost
Sports Based Mentoring	Serious Violence Grant	£30,000
Navigator- Wythenshawe Hospital	Serious Violence Grant	£20,000
Primary School Workshops	Serious Violence Grant	£12250
Voluntary mentoring with Trafford Youth Justice	Serious Violence Grant	£50,000
Violence Reduction Co-ordinator post	Serious Violence Grant	£50,000
Bespoke Interventions	Serious Violence Grant	£10,000
Schools Engagement Officer	Violence Reduction Unit	
Oasis PACS	Violence Reduction Unit	
Oasis Navigator	Violence Reduction Unit	
Another Chance	Youth Endowment Fund	
STEER (Salford Foundation)	Youth Endowment Fund	

In Trafford we recognise that exclusion from school is one of the 'child-level risk factors for being vulnerable to exploitation or grooming by gangs' (Longfield, 2019). [The Knife Crime and Youth Violence Protocol](#) for Education is available to support schools in responding to a violent incident in school and offers schools the opportunity to be involved in a multi-agency meeting to identify the most appropriate support for the child or young person. These meetings aim to work with the school and other relevant professionals to build a package of support around the young person and the school to prevent a permanent exclusion, and therefore reduce the risk of exploitation.

Example of a Knife Crime and Youth Violence Protocol Multi-Agency Meeting

A child in a primary school brought in a bladed article and explained to teachers that this was due to fears around being bullied, the school used the protocol to guide their response to managing the immediate situation. The school contacted the Violence Reduction Co-ordinator, and a multi-agency meeting was held.

The meeting included representation from the school, including pastoral support, Greater Manchester Police, Trafford Youth Justice, Trafford Council Education of Vulnerable Children team, Community Safety, and the Violence Reduction Co-ordinator. In this instance, the family were updated by school following the meeting.

Multiple options for support were discussed, with colleagues from the school providing invaluable insight into the child's lived experience and the need of the family, to enable the most appropriate and timely support to be suggested. An early review of the child's education health care plan (EHCP) was requested, the family were offered a 1-2-1 session with the youth justice police officer to understand the legal repercussions to carrying a weapon, and the school were provided with some resources to complete with the child to support their understanding of knife crime, and a Child and Family assessment was completed. This student was not permanently excluded from their education setting.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) have committed to a Contextual Safeguarding approach, originally developed by a Professor of Social Work d Dr Carlene Firmin, at the University of Bedfordshire's Contextual Safeguarding Network. The Contextual Safeguarding Framework was created to address the social and cultural contexts in which violence and abuse occurs, keeping children and young people physically, emotionally, and mentally safe from significant dangers they may experience outside of their home, beyond their families. In our interconnected modern world where many young people have access to the internet, contextual safeguarding is an ever more important consideration in reaching and protecting young people. Trafford's Children's Services are actively involved in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Complex Safeguarding hub and are committed to Contextual Safeguarding.

Trafford Children's Services have responded to Contextual Safeguarding as a specific area of concern by bringing some service areas together under the Vulnerable Adolescent Service, to promote a coordinated and targeted response to address the issues facing children, young people [typically but not exclusively adolescents], their families, and the community.

The complex safeguarding issues vary in significance across Trafford, but are far reaching and impactful on all those involved, for example,

- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Serious Organised Crime, Gangs, Urban Street Gangs
- Violence of any kind
- Knife crime
- Exposure to drug related behaviours
- Online grooming
- Peer-on-peer exploitation / relationship abuse
- Radicalisation

- Modern Day Slavery

The Vulnerable Adolescent Service brings together the following services, in collaboration with partners to prevent, reduce, and respond to the complex issues that our children, young people and families face, and notably work to reduce the risk factors, and promote protective factors referred to on page 4 of this paper.

- Youth Justice
- Complex Safeguarding [SHINE]
- Missing from Home and Care
- Youth Engagement Service
- Children's Rights Service

Youth Justice

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 established the statutory responsibilities for Youth Justice and required each local authority to establish a '*Youth Offending Team*,' now referred to as a Youth Justice Service. Youth Justice is accountable to the Youth Justice Management Partnership Board and is governed by the Youth Justice Board and Ministry of Justice. His Majesty Inspectorate Prisons [HMIP] is the inspection body.

Trafford Youth Justice is a multi-agency resourced team, who work together to prevent, reduce, and respond to young people who are exploited into, or involved in violence and knife related crime, in addition to other behaviours. The staffing establishment consists of a Head of Service Vulnerable Adolescent Service, Practice Manager, Team Leader, Case managers and practitioners, a mental health practitioner, victim / restorative justice practitioner, and Referral Order volunteers. Our partners include a seconded police officer, specialist nurse, speech and language therapist, probation officer and children's adolescent mental health link designated link worker.

The Youth Justice landscape has evolved significantly since the 1998 Act and national, regional, and local indicators report a rise in the number of young people who have complex and competing needs, linked to the trauma they have endured through adverse childhood experiences. Trafford Youth Justice has seen an increase in the seriousness of behaviours, and the number of young people who sexually harm others, and / or who pose a high or very high risk of serious harm to others, and high or very high risk of re-offending through violent and knife related behaviour, drug and alcohol use, and Urban Street Gang associations or those exploited into Serious Organised Crime.

The Youth Justice Board has introduced new Key Performance Indicators that now requires Youth Justice Services to report on the performance, and practice around violence and knife related behaviour, in addition to other risk and protective factors.

- To treat children fairly and reduce over-representation of certain groups of young people [disproportionality].
- To prevent harm through experiencing exploitation.
- To reduce offending, and re-offending.
- To reduce the use of custody for young people, and/or to improve the experience of custody and ensure effective resettlement.
- All young people must have suitable and stable accommodation.
- All young people must have the right Education, training, and employment (ETE) opportunities and be supported to attend.
- Young people with SEND/Additional Learning Needs will have an advocate in youth justice to support them to achieve.
- Young people will have access and support for their mental and physical healthcare, and emotional wellbeing.
- Young people will have access to substance misuse services and support.
- Young people will be diverted from the criminal justice system through the delivery of out of court disposals.
- The partnerships / management Board will be well attended and ensure effective service delivery.
- Youth Justice will work collaboratively with wider services, including social care and partners to reduce the over-representation of cared for children in the criminal justice system, and to ensure young people are safeguarded.
- Serious youth violence through knife and gang related behaviours is an evolving concern and youth justice interventions need to evolve to reflect the current landscape.
- Restorative Justice is fundamental to providing a Youth Justice Service and the victims of crime have a right to be heard.

Youth Justice support young people through the assessment, planning, and intervention, process, delivering 1-1 and group work activity to address the range of contextual safeguarding issues across three domains: Prevention, Diversion and Court/Custody when violent and knife related behaviour is a feature.

Prevention/ Mentoring: Youth Justice offer an early intervention and mentoring service to prevent young people and their families becoming embroiled in violence and knife related behaviours. With no legal framework this is a consent based mentoring scheme using a strengths and ambition led relational approach, to support young people to make good decisions so that they are more likely to achieve their aspirations. We have implemented the 'Turnaround' Ministry of Justice funded initiative that promotes work with brothers, sisters, parents, and wider family members to break familial intergenerational cycles of violent behaviour and build resilient families to sustain change. [Turnaround Programme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk). The Ministry of Justice has supported Trafford through a £298,299.94 grant,

funding the mobilisation phase, staff, IT equipment, training, and bespoke activities for our young people and families between December 2022, and March 2025.

Diversion: The term *out-of-court disposal* refers to resolving a situation without going to court. Disposals can be informal (non-statutory) or formal (statutory) and do not involve a decision made through the Court. Informal options may include no further action, a community resolution, or a deferred prosecution; and formal options may include a Youth Caution, or Youth Conditional Caution. Disposals tend to follow a model of assessment and intervention, and whilst Youth Justice practitioners deliver the interventions, the Police impose the sanction. It is recognised that diversion is not appropriate in all cases and will depend on the gravity of the behaviour/offence, and potential or actual harm caused, which can then result in a substantive outcome. Greater Manchester Youth Justice Services are scrutinised through a formal panel process involving the Crown Prosecution Service when a young person has received a diversionary disposal for a violent or knife related behaviour, and we are assured that Trafford is compliant with this.

Court / Custody: The Court are legislatively bound when remanding young people to custody, or to the care of the local authority; and in sentencing young people to either a community, or custodial sentence, showing regard to the principle aim of preventing offending, and the welfare of the child. Young people will appear before the Court when the seriousness of the offence warrants it. Trafford Youth Justice provides an assessment via a pre-sentence report to the Court to advise of the most appropriate sentence, considering the young person's individual circumstances. On occasion this may include an assessment of dangerousness if the young person persistently commits violence or knife related crime. Every young person supported through a community or custodial sentence has an intense programme of work that ranges from one, two or three appointments each week, or up to twenty-five hours of intervention and electronically monitored curfew if the Court impose an Intense Support and Surveillance condition. The Court can impose this option as part of a bail programme, community order or as a licence condition following release from custody. All of which are 'enforceable,' and the Youth Justice service can return the young person to Court through breach procedures if they re-offend or fail to comply with the Order.

Child A- Example of a knife crime awareness session with the seconded police officer

AIM – To complete a Knife Crime Awareness session with Child A to raise awareness of the subject.

LINK- This session links to Child A's intervention plan, who is on ISS Bail from Court.

METHOD – A face to face discussion has been arranged for Child A to attend *Talk shop*. Also present in today's session is the Youth Justice Health Practitioner sat to observe.

OUTCOME – Child A engaged extremely well in today's session, asking a lot of questions, and joining in the discussion. I asked Child A why he thought young people carried weapons and his response was 'Because they want to.' I asked him to think further,

and he then replied, 'to use to rob people.' Denise (health practitioner) asked why you would use a knife to rob someone, and Child A's response was 'it would intimidate them more than not having a weapon.' This led to further discussion around why young people carry weapons.

We then spoke about the law and consequences of the offence 'Possession of Bladed Article in a Public Place.'

Child A showed a good understanding of this offence and asked a lot of 'what if' questions around the offence.

Child A asked if you could collect certain type of knives if they were in your house and not taken out into public. He also talked about being able to buy knives in local shops and Army Stores, so that he thought not all knives were illegal. Again, we went over what the definition of the offence was and when it would be illegal to be in possession of a knife.

As well the offence of Possession of Bladed Article, we spoke about Possession of an Offence Weapon in Public Place.

We discussed 'what is an offensive weapon' and Child A again had a lot of questions about different types of weapons. Child A asked questions about whether it was an offence to carry a taser if it was just one of the handheld ones. He explained he understood it was a criminal offence to have a taser that you shot, but thought it was not an offence to have a handheld taser.

Child A then showed good understanding of the subject.

I asked Child A what he would do in a situation if his friend got stabbed. Child A thought hard before answering and said, 'I'd get off as I don't want to get arrested and be the only person still there if his friend was stabbed and killed' I asked him again and said what if it was your 'best friend' and he really needed your help. He replied 'I would ring 999 but not speak. I'd put some pressure on the wound, but then I'd still get off' I tried to explain to him that the injured person may really rely on his help and that it looks far more suspicious if he ran off.'

We then got round to talking about basic first aid, and Child A was able to talk about this and knew what first aid he would give to a person with a stab injury.

We talked about who was affected by knife crime and he replied 'everyone.' But then when we broke this down, Child A didn't think that Communities were affected and couldn't understand why we thought communities would be affected by incidents that happened.

I did wonder if Child A lacked empathy a little or whether just didn't quite understand some parts of the discussion, although he engaged and expressed his opinions.

YOUNG PERSON - At the end of the session, without any prompting Child A said 'I felt that was very informative and I have learnt things that I was not already aware of. I did not know about tasers being classed as firearms. I knew quite a lot of what we talked about but not everything.'

SAFEGUARDING – No safeguarding issues raised.

Youth Engagement Service and Children's Rights Service

Effective youth work helps young people to identify their social and development needs and involves them in shaping services designed to meet those needs. It is an opportunity to develop their own skills and life chances to create a better future for themselves and their communities. The Youth Engagement Service works in partnership with statutory services including Greater Manchester Police, Schools, Community Safety, Health, Youth Justice, SHINE, and social care district teams. This collaboration through forums such as the Serious Organised Crime Partnership Board supports the youth engagement service to target resources in the right local area, and outreach support can last between 2-3 weeks to several months. Youth workers spend time to build relationships with young people in the local community and educate them around the risks of being exploited into violence, knife, and gang related behaviours.

The youth engagement service hosts and chairs Trafford youth network, which consists of approximately 15 providers of youth work in the borough. The network includes statutory, voluntary and charity sector partners who deliver joint activities across the borough, targeted at engaging young people and supporting them to take part in positive activities designed to divert, and prevent them, from being involved in violence, knife, and drug / gang related behaviours.

Trafford's Youth Engagement Service delivers a broad spectrum of activities to address risk and promote protective factors through supporting young people to engage in education/training and employment, and by delivering individual and group work in 'Talk Shop' or through the detached youth work team 'Street Talk' as outreach work to prevent and reduce violent crime, and anti-social behaviour across its diverse communities.

Street Talk works closely with Foundation 92, Gorse Hill Studios, Early Break, Mancunian Way, TUF*C, Greater Manchester Youth Federation and Sale Moor Community Partnership, and all are involved in delivering positive and constructive activities across Trafford. Street Talk uses the mobile unit to engage with thousands of young people every year, in parks, on the street, at community venues and hubs in every part of the Trafford borough.

The youth engagement service plays a fundamental role in coordinating interventions across Trafford with the Community Safety partnership, and the wider youth network.

In the last 12 months between January 2023 and December 2023 the Street Talk team have engaged with young people across the following areas:

- 24 young people involved in knife related crime.
- 41 young people involved as a victim, or perpetrator of bullying.
- 31 involved in general anti-social behaviour, or crime.
- 10 young people involved in homophobic/hate crime or racism.
- 29 young people who needed support because of domestic abuse, conflict in the family home, or violence.

- 40 young people supported to feel safe.
- 15 young people who needed support due to the law, or policing.

Complex Safeguarding service [SHINE]

The complex Safeguarding team submitted its annual report [2022 – 2023] to the Scrutiny Committee in November 2023 and this provided an overview of collaborative working to prevent and respond to child criminal exploitation. Greater Manchester's definition of complex safeguarding is, "Complex Safeguarding is criminal activity (often organised), or behaviour associated with criminality, involving children and young adults (often vulnerable) where there is exploitation and/or a clear or implied safeguarding concern." (Complex Safeguarding Delivery Plan 2019). The current data shows that more young people are open to SHINE for child criminal exploitation than child sexual exploitation, and that young males between 11 and 17 years old are more likely to be associated with violence, knife, or gang related behaviour and activity, including serious organised crime. Trafford's data is not dissimilar to Greater Manchester's, showing some increase in the number of young people who are criminally exploited into County Lines, and Serious Organised/ Acquisitive/ Drug or Urban street Gang related behaviours. Quite often these young people are already supported through child in need or child protection plans, or are cared for / care experienced, and can also be known or open to Youth Justice, or the Youth Engagement Service. SHINE remains integral to working collaboratively to gather information, and share intelligence to prevent and reduce violence, knife, and gang related behaviour in Trafford.

Young person example of collaborative approach to addressing violence and knife related behaviour.

Child B is 16-year-old boy. He, and his family have been known to Social Care since 2012, and he has been supported through child in need, and child protection plan because of his adverse childhood experiences. Child B has been cared for since 2022 and is placed with his parents, sharing their parental responsibility with the local authority.

Child B has been known to the Youth Justice Service through an informal, and formal out of court disposal since 2018 [Community resolution and Youth Conditional Caution], for '*Using threatening abusive words with intent to stir up racial hatred*', '*common assault*', and '*possession of a controlled drug Class B-Cannabis*'. Child B has committed further offences of the '*Possession of a knife/ sharp pointed article in a public place*,' and an '*Affray*' and has appeared before the Court and is now bailed with an intense Supervision and Surveillance requirement. Child B must engage in 25 hours of positive and constructive activities, and direct work with Youth Justice; he has an electronically monitored curfew from 7 pm – 7 am, and he must sign in at the police station each weekend.

Child B has been known to SHINE since 2022 under the category of child criminal exploitation. SHINE have completed a contextual safeguarding assessment, and ambitions / aspirations plan with Child B.

Services are working together to deliver a programme of support to address Child B's violence and knife related behaviours. Direct interventions have been specifically designed for Child B.

3 sessions of knife crime awareness.

3 sessions first aid.

A programme of education

Weekly pro-social activities [kick boxing]

Sessions of building positive relationships and understanding the pull of negative associates.

Sessions to promote ambition through sports.

Police support to report his experience as a victim of violence.

Collaborative approach and outcomes

Positively Child B has shown self-discipline, and a genuine interest and talent in sport-based activity. Child B has engaged in a weekend kick boxing competition and is spending more time pursuing pro social interests.

Child B has had an opportunity to build trusting relationships with professionals. Initially he had no understanding of violence, or the impact that his drug use had on his daily life. Following support, he has shown a better understanding of himself, and what he wants to achieve.

Child B has tentatively engaged with other services, for example 42nd St, although he is not ready to fully access this yet.

Child B has a better understanding of how his cannabis use has led him to make some poor decisions linked to his violence and knife crime behaviour, and how older associates have exploited him. Child B has had specific support to address his cannabis use. He gradually reduced this and stopped using cannabis approximately 4 months ago. Child B has spoken about how he has benefited from this.

Child B has shown that he understands pro-social friendships and has demonstrated his ability to pull away from those peers. He has started to reflect on his future goals.

Child B has been supported to engage in a music provision which he is thoroughly enjoying. He is on his 5th round of this and will obtain an arts award as a result. He has access to a laptop, so that he can make music in his own space, and his interest in this area has led him to consider future career options in the sound engineering industry.

Child B was not comfortable with I.T. when he started to work with services. He has been supported into an I.T. course which has increased his confidence in this area. Child B is currently completing searches to find out what he wants to do.

Child B will appear in Court and is likely to be sentenced to a Community Order and we will continue to work with him to prevent a lapse into violence, and knife crime behaviour.

Innovation [Violence, gang, and Knife related behaviour]

Immersive Virtual reality- In collaboration with the 'Round Midnight' Organisation who have developed the Virtual Decision Programme, Trafford's Youth Justice, Complex Safeguarding and Youth Engagement Service are transforming the way that we engage young people, so that the work that we do is meaningful to them and hopefully will have a lasting impact.

Trafford are using immersive and interactive virtual reality headsets that young people wear to watch realistic scenes acted out by other young people and professionals. The scene provides them with an opportunity to make any one of several decisions about what they would do next given the same circumstance, and the scene subsequently acts out the consequences of their decision making. This then generates a reflective conversation with the practitioner. The programme can be delivered on a 1-1, or in a group, and reaches young people from aged 10 years to 17 years old. Trafford have 2 modules, Gangs, and Knife crime.

[Round Midnight - Creative arts and EdTech](#)

In summary, Trafford we will continue to work across services, and with partners to ensure the best outcomes for our children, young people, and families.

The JSNA will lead to the development of our serious violence strategy, will utilise partnership working to organise and coordinate a measured approach to preventing, reducing, and responding to serious violence and knife crime.

Services will continue to work in partnership to address risk factors for violence and strengthen protective factors. Children and young people who are at risk of, or involved in serious violence will have access to support from our Vulnerable Adolescent Service, and Social Care through current strategic and operational activity.

Collectively we expect to see more young people and families work with services at an earlier stage as Youth Justice sharpen the focus on their mentoring, and prevention offer, linking in more closely with health and schools. Complex Safeguarding will offer support and advice to our colleagues in Early Help, to help prevent those who are the most susceptible from being exploited into violence and knife crime.

Our young people, and their families will report feeling supported, and safe, and will be less likely to get involved in violence and knife crime. We would like to see fewer young people committing repeat violent offences, and more attending and engaging with school, or other education and constructive activities. The collective goal is for our young people to be supported to achieve their ambitions.

Appendix 1

Programme Challenger Strategy 2022 – 2025

Programme Challenger Strategy 2022 - 2025

Greater Manchester’s partnership approach to tackling serious and organised crime in all its forms

Vision

To enable individuals and communities to be free from the harm caused by serious and organised crime through the strength of our partnership.

Aims

- 

1. To increase our understanding of current and emerging threats (through effective horizon scanning), to enable threats, opportunities, and demand to be proactively mapped and predicted
- 

2. To support an enhanced partnership response through effective information sharing and intelligence development
- 

3. To work collaboratively to develop innovative, evidence based, preventative approaches, which focus on identifying and supporting those at risk of engaging or re-engaging in serious and organised crimes
- 

4. To pursue relentlessly disruption and targeted action against the highest harm serious and organised criminal, stopping the problem at source, and capitalising on opportunities to seize assets from criminals at every opportunity
- 

5. To support, through our partnership, opportunities to build resilience to serious and organised crime within communities, with a focus on preventing people becoming victims and perpetrators
- 

6. To ensure that victims receive appropriate and timely support and are safeguarded from harm

Objectives

Measures

<p>PREPARE the Greater Manchester partnership to tackle and mitigate the impacts of serious and organised crime</p>	<p>Partners are aware of the Serious and Organised Crime threat in Greater Manchester, with all serious and organised crime threats fully mapped and risk assessed, with effective partnership 4P plans in place to tackle them</p>
<p>PREVENT organised criminal activity from taking place</p>	<p>Ancillary and offender management orders are used effectively to prevent continued criminality and enable better sentence planning from court to prisons and community</p> <p>Individuals and support agencies are aware of what serious and organised crime is and how to identify it early</p>
<p>Use all of our powers to PURSUE people involved in serious and organised crime</p>	<p>Serious and organised crime threats, including organised crime groups, priority individuals and vulnerabilities, are disrupted and dismantled</p>
<p>PROTECT our communities and individuals from the harm caused by serious and organised crime</p>	<p>Communities are provided with access to funding and opportunities to build resilience against serious and organised crime, enabled by financial assets recouped from proceeds of crime in relation to organised crime groups</p> <p>Support the development of effective safeguarding of children and adults who are affected by serious and organised crime</p>



Appendix 2

Multi agency operational activity to prevent, reduce and respond to young people exploited or involved in violence, knife, and gang related behaviours.

Daily risk management meeting – This is a multi-agency meeting. Any young person who has come to the attention of the police within the preceding 24 hours through being stopped and searched, arrested, missing from home or care, or where exploitation indicators are present is discussed at this meeting. Partners from Greater Manchester Police, Youth Justice, Health, complex safeguarding, and the First Response service attend this meeting. This provides partners with an opportunity to identify and discuss young people early and offer a referral pathway to youth justice or complex safeguarding. Sharing this information and intelligence supports us to work collaboratively and target resources to identify and respond swiftly to youth violence and knife crime.

Weekly youth justice multi-agency triage panel – Any young person who has been referred to the youth justice service will be discussed at the multi-agency triage panel and be given

an opportunity to be signposted to another service, to engage with a mentor through the prevention offer or be considered for an out of Court disposal. The violence reduction coordinator attends this panel, and professionals discuss how best to prevent and reduce the risk of violent and knife related behaviour.

Weekly multi-agency SHINE panel – The lead district social worker can refer any young person who is vulnerable to child criminal exploitation to the SHINE panel.

Programme CHALLENGER: Serious organised crime partnership board – This is a strategic meeting so that partners can contribute to the Challenger *4P* plan in relation to the local profile risks and threats across Trafford, and any specific police operations. This board also considers the threat from neighbouring authorities, such as county lines so that we can work together to target resources to prevent organised criminal activity, reduce, and disrupt violent and knife related crime on an individual and broader basis in Trafford. A tactical operational sub-group sits underneath this board and is responsible for implementing the *4P* plan.

Prevent agenda; CHANNEL multi-agency panel [monthly] – As per the Home Office PREVENT strategy the Channel panel is a multi-agency meeting to discuss any adults or young people who are at risk of being radicalised and 'recruited' or exploited into extremist and violent terrorist activities. The Head of Service for Vulnerable Adolescents chairs this panel.

Trafford Strategic Safeguarding partnership [TSSP] exploitation sub-board (6 weekly) – The partnership exploitation sub-board is affiliated with Trafford Children's Services Ambitions for Children and Young People plan, and the *4 P* approach.

PPIED Prevention by prosecution, intervention, education, and diversion Panel- this multi-agency panel discusses young people who have been named as a suspect on a crime and no further action is taken. The panel aims to identify young people who are vulnerable to becoming involved in crime, and not receiving support and signpost them to the most appropriate service.

Knife crime scrutiny panel-is a partnership panel, consisting of the Crown Prosecution Service, Youth Justice, and Greater Manchester Police representative. This panel audits the decision making against the gravity matrix and procedures, for young people who have been given an out of court disposal for a knife related offence. Trafford are compliant with this.

Knife Crime and Youth Violence Protocol Meetings- A multi-agency team meeting, to share information and offer support to the education setting when a young person has brought a weapon into school, to prevent an exclusion.