



Home Office

Serious Violence Duty

Preventing and reducing serious violence
Draft Guidance for responsible authorities

June 2022

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Summary

About this guidance

1. This guidance is issued by the Secretary of State as statutory guidance under Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (“the PCSC Act”) and has been produced to support organisations and authorities exercising functions in relation to the Serious Violence Duty.
2. The guidance sets out case studies demonstrating effective partnership working, advice on data sharing, information on monitoring and inspection and advice on working with the voluntary and community sector and young people. This guidance also provides links to existing guidance and information rather than repeat or reproduce it here.
3. The guidance outlines the changes made to section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, requiring Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to formulate and implement a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence.
4. This guidance is for specified authorities defined in section 11 of and Schedule 1 to the PCSC Act (Chief Officers of police, fire and rescue authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups [Integrated Care Boards]¹, Local Health Boards, local authorities, youth offending teams and probation services), prison authorities, youth custody authorities and educational authorities (as defined in section 12 of and Schedule 2 to the PCSC Act), local policing bodies, and any person prescribed in regulations under section 10 of the PCSC Act.
5. Specific guidance is also included for authorities operating in Wales, which reflects the distinct Welsh legislative and operational context.

¹ Clinical Commissioning Groups will be replaced with Integrated Care Boards from 1 July 2022 as part of the Health and Care Act 2022.

Chapter One: The Duty

Introduction

6. Following public consultation in July 2019², the Government announced that it would bring forward legislation introducing a new serious violence duty (“the Duty”) on a range of specified authorities. This will ensure relevant services work together to share information and allow them to target their interventions, where possible through existing partnership structures, to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities.
7. The Government also announced that it would amend the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to ensure that serious violence is an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships and by making sure they have a strategy in place to explicitly tackle serious violence.

The Duty

Why has the Duty been introduced?

8. Serious violence has a devastating impact on lives of victims, families and instils fear within communities and is extremely costly to society.
9. The Duty is a key part of the Government’s programme of work to prevent and reduce serious violence: taking a multi-agency approach to understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focusing on prevention and early intervention, and informed by evidence.
10. In addition to tough law enforcement, we need to understand and address the factors that causes someone to commit violent crime in the first place. The Duty aims to ensure that agencies are focussed on their activity to reduce serious violence whilst also providing sufficient flexibility so that the relevant organisations

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/serious-violence-new-legal-duty-to-support-multi-agency-action>

will engage and work together in the most effective local partnership for any given area.

What is the Duty?

11. The Duty covers the requirements set out in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the PCSC Act. It requires specified authorities³ to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence (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 also requires the specified authorities to consult educational, prison and youth custody authorities⁴ for the area in the preparation of their strategy.
12. The Duty does not require the creation of new multi-agency structures. Local senior leaders, as set out in this guidance, may use existing local structures where possible to comply with the requirements of the Duty to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence in their local areas and, ultimately, to improve community safety and safeguarding.
13. The Duty requires the specified authorities to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. In doing so, local areas are encouraged to adopt the World Health Organisation's definition of a public health approach, which can be summarised as follows:
 - Focussed on a defined population;
 - With and for communities;
 - Not constrained by organisational or professional boundaries;
 - Focussed on generating long term as well as short term solutions;
 - Based on data and useful information to identify the burden on the population, including any inequalities;

³ As defined in section 11 of and Schedule 1 to the PCSC Act.

⁴ As defined in section 12 of and Schedule 2 to the PCSC Act.

- Rooted in evidence of effectiveness to tackle the problem.⁵

14. The World Health Organisation provides a useful framework with four steps⁶ for implementing a public health approach to understanding and preventing serious violence.

15. It should also be recognised that enforcement and criminal justice-based activity is a critical part of a public health approach. In adopting a public health approach, this should not be seen to in any way undermine or prevent the need for the valuable and vital work of the police and other partners in relation to enforcement and criminal justice-based activity. This is clear in advice from the College of Policing and Public Health England⁷ concerning public health approaches in policing⁸.

16. Specified authorities across England and Wales must identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, and, so far as possible to do so, identify the causes of that violence. To do so, specified authorities should undertake an evidence-based analysis of the causes of serious violence within their area and use this analysis to develop a local strategic needs assessment which should inform the local strategy. The strategy, which specified authorities must prepare and implement, should contain bespoke solutions to prevent and reduce serious violence in their area. This must be kept under review, which should be done on an annual basis and updated when necessary.

17. The Duty is intended to create the right conditions for authorities to collaborate and communicate regularly, using existing partnerships where possible and to share information and take effective coordinated action in their local areas. All organisations and agencies subject to the Duty will be accountable for their activity and co-operation.

⁵ https://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/public_health/en/

⁶ [Violence Prevention Alliance Approach \(who.int\)](#)

⁷ On 1 October 2021, Public Health England transitioned to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, within Department of Health and Social Care, and the UK Health Security Agency (a new executive agency of DHSC).

⁸ <https://www.college.police.uk/about/public-health>

Who must comply with the Duty?

18. The Duty requires the following specified authorities within a local government area to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence:

- Police
 - The Chief Officer of police for police areas in England and Wales
- Justice
 - Probation Services
 - Youth Offending Teams
- Fire and Rescue
 - All fire and rescue authorities operating in England and Wales⁹
- Health
 - Clinical Commissioning Groups [Integrated Care Boards]¹⁰ in England
 - Local Health Boards in Wales
- Local authorities
 - A district council
 - A county council in England
 - A London borough council
 - The Common Council of the City of London in its capacity as a local authority
 - The Council of the Isles of Scilly
 - A county council in Wales
 - A county borough council in Wales

⁹ This includes Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners solely in their capacity as fire and rescue authorities and in the exercise of those functions.

¹⁰ Clinical Commissioning Groups will be replaced with Integrated Care Boards from 1 July 2022 as part of the Health and Care Act 2022.

19. Some of these authorities will be devolved in Wales. This guidance includes a specific chapter on the Welsh context, which will be relevant to any authority (devolved or non-devolved) delivering the Duty in Wales.
20. The Duty does not specify a 'lead' authority to be responsible for coordinating activity or prescribe a structure within which specified authorities are expected to work. It is for the specified authorities to come together to decide on the appropriate lead and structure of collaboration for their area. Some localities may choose to use Violence Reduction Units (VRU) to lead on the work (if there is one present) or their local Community Safety Partnership (CSP), whilst others may use other partnerships such as the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, Criminal Justice boards or Health and Wellbeing boards. It may also be the case that collaboration via a number of different partnership structures is preferred depending on the local context.
21. Local policing bodies, being Police and Crime Commissioners, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Common Council of the City of London in its capacity as a police authority, may choose to collaborate with local partnerships and take a convening role in order to support the development and implementation of the local strategy. In line with the current arrangements within CSPs, responsible authorities must co-operate with the local policing body if that local policing body chooses to assist or monitor the specified authority in exercising its functions under the Duty. This also applies to Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners in their capacity as local policing bodies and in the exercise of those functions.
22. In recognition of the vital role schools play in safeguarding children and young people, educational institutions¹¹ including; local authority maintained schools, academies, independent schools, free schools, alternative education providers and further education providers, must be consulted by the specified authorities in the preparation of the strategy. Section 15 of the PCSC Act also provides that educational authorities must collaborate with specified authorities, if their involvement is requested. Educational authorities can also request to participate in partnership arrangements and in this event the specified authorities would be required to collaborate with them. A strategic education representative(s) or representative education group for the local area should be chosen by the

¹¹ As defined in section 12 of and Schedule 2 to the PCSC Act.

partnership to provide a link between the responsible authorities and individual institutions. Educational authorities may also be required under the Duty to carry out actions specified in a strategy which have been agreed by the partnership in collaboration with the strategic education representative(s) or representative group. However, in certain circumstances those duties do not apply¹².

23. Prisons protect the public and play an integral role both in the rehabilitation of those prisoners who have committed violent offences and who may in the future, and have been, be among those more likely to be subject to violence. As with educational authorities, prison and youth custody authorities are required to be consulted by the specified authorities in the preparation of the strategy. Section 15 of the PCSC Act also provides that they must collaborate with specified authorities if their involvement is requested. This means that individual institutions are required to collaborate and actively participate when requested to do so by the specified authorities for the area. Prison and youth custody authorities can also request to participate in partnership arrangements, and in this event the specified authorities would be required to collaborate with them. Prison and youth custody authorities may also be required under the Duty to carry out actions specified in a local strategy, and to collaborate with an educational authority, or another prison or youth custody authority in the local government area. However, in certain circumstances those duties do not apply¹³. The duties described above are placed on the governor or director of the relevant custodial institution. However, for adult prisons, Prison Group Directors may ensure engagement between prison authorities and specified

¹² Section 15(7) of the PCSC Act provides that an educational authority is not subject to a duty in subsection (3), (4) or (5)(b) of section 15, if or to the extent that compliance with the duty: (a) would be incompatible with any other duty of the authority imposed by an enactment (other than subsection (5)(b)), (b) would otherwise have an adverse effect on the exercise of the authority's functions, (c) would be disproportionate to the need to prevent and reduce serious violence in the area to which the duty relates, or (d) would mean that the authority incurred unreasonable costs. Subsection (8) provides that in determining whether subsection (7) applies to an authority, the cumulative effect of complying with duties under this section must be taken into account.

¹³ Section 15(7) of the PCSC Act provide that a prison authority and a youth custody authority is not subject to a duty in subsection (3), (4) or (5)(b) of section 15, if or to the extent that compliance with the duty: (a) would be incompatible with any other duty of the authority imposed by an enactment (other than subsection (5)(b)), (b) would otherwise have an adverse effect on the exercise of the authority's functions, (c) would be disproportionate to the need to prevent and reduce serious violence in the area to which the duty relates, or (d) would mean that the authority incurred unreasonable costs. Subsection (8) provides that in determining whether subsection (7) applies to an authority, the cumulative effect of complying with duties under this section must be taken into account.

authorities where it is considered relevant and necessary for the prevention and reduction of serious violence. They may also be nominated to represent relevant youth custody authorities.

24. Specified authorities may wish to engage with educational, prison and/or youth custody authorities in order to:

- Seek local useful information which may contribute to the diagnosis of the local strategic needs assessment.
- Request data to feed into an evidence-based analysis of local causes of serious violence.
- Deliver any actions resulting from the strategy at an individual institution level which have been pre-agreed with the relevant institution/s.
- Assess the effectiveness and outcomes of any actions resulting from the strategy involving or delivered by individual institutions.

Defining Serious Violence

25. Section 13 of the PCSC Act provides that, for the purposes of the Duty, violence includes domestic abuse, sexual offences, violence against property and threats of violence but does not include terrorism. Section 13(6) also provides that in considering whether violence amounts to serious violence, specified authorities must take into account 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 strategy 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.

26. In considering how to define serious violence within their area and taking into account the factors in section 13(6), specified authorities should encompass serious violence as defined for the purposes of the Serious Violence Strategy¹⁴ and include a focus on issues such as public space youth violence. The Serious Violence Strategy was published in response to rises in certain types of public space violent crimes.
27. The Serious Violence Strategy sets 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.
28. However, there is flexibility for specified authorities in local areas to take account of their evidence-based strategic needs assessment when defining serious violence and, taking into account the factors in section 13(6), they can include in their strategy actions which focus on other related types of serious violence, this could include (but is not limited to) alcohol related violence, modern slavery and violence against women and girls¹⁵, including domestic abuse and sexual offences.
29. Section 13 of the PCSC Act makes clear that domestic abuse and sexual violence are included in the definition of violence for the purpose of the Duty. Specified authorities should refer to Chapter 2: Strategic Needs Assessments of this guidance for further information on conducting needs assessments for domestic abuse and sexual offences.
30. Section 13(3)(a)(i) of the PCSC Act specifies that domestic abuse is defined as per section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 ('the DA Act')¹⁶. The DA Act defines domestic abuse as behaviour (either single incidents or a pattern of behaviour) between those who are over 16 years old, 'personally connected' and, goes beyond

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>

¹⁵ The Tackling VAWG Strategy 2021 defines VAWG as acts of violence or abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls. Crimes and behaviour covered by this term include rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation forced marriage, and 'honour' killings), as well as many others, including offences committed online. While we use the term 'violence against women and girls', this refers to all victims of any of these offences.

¹⁶ [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/12/section/1)

just physical violence to include violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual abuse, economic abuse, and psychological, emotional or other abuse. The [draft] Domestic Abuse Act Statutory Guidance provides clear information on what domestic abuse is and how to identify it¹⁷.

31. Sexual violence is defined in section 13(4) and (5) of the PCSC Act as meaning an offence under the law of England and Wales specified in Schedule 3 to the Sexual Offences Act 2003, other than the offence of fraudulent evasion of excise duty. In determining whether an offence is specified in Schedule 3 to the Sexual Offences Act 2003, any limitation in that Schedule referring to the circumstances of a particular case (including the sentence imposed) is to be disregarded. This definition includes rape and indecent assault.

Defining the Local Area

32. The “local area” within which specified authorities are expected to work collectively is, at a minimum, within a local government area.¹⁸

33. However, a local partnership can extend its coverage to a wider area such as a police force area, if that is what is agreed for the area. The strategy can cover an area broader than a county so long as all of the specified authorities for that area are involved in its preparation and implementation.

34. The legislation is intentionally flexible to allow specified authorities to determine the geographical extent of their collaboration (subject to the minimum specified area). There is no universally “correct” approach when determining the size of the area within which the partnership will operate. The chosen area will most likely align with the local partnership through which the Duty is delivered. Representatives from the specified authorities should collectively decide on the appropriate partnership through which they will work together to undertake the requirements of the Duty.

¹⁷ [Draft Domestic Abuse Act statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674211/Draft-Domestic-Abuse-Act-Statutory-Guidance.pdf)

¹⁸ A local government area is defined in section 11 of the PCSC Act as: (a) in relation to England, a district or London Borough, the City of London, the Isle of Wight and the Isles of Scilly; and (b) in relation to Wales, a county or county borough.

35. In order to comply with the Duty, it is not necessary to create a new partnership. Instead, the specified authorities can use existing partnerships where possible and with appropriate modifications. For example, specified authorities may wish to create a sub-committee to an already established partnership, such as a Community Safety Partnership or multi-agency safeguarding board. Alternatively, they may wish to strengthen the connections between multiple existing partnerships operating within a geographic area. For example, connecting the work of multiple Community Safety Partnerships operating in the same police force area to develop a more effective strategic approach to tackling serious violence. The Duty is an opportunity to simplify and add focus to existing partnership arrangements rather than add additional complexity to the current multi-agency landscape.
36. Section 9 of the PCSC Act allows two or more specified authorities to collaborate to prevent and reduce serious violence in a “relevant area”¹⁹. This means that authorities are permitted to work across local government boundaries and in doing so, collaborate on strategies which cover areas greater than that which they primarily provide services in. This could include collaboration with authorities in neighbouring areas or those further afield. Where appropriate, bodies and agencies may choose to work across local government boundaries and even nationally where there is the need to tackle specific serious violence issues (e.g. in the case of county lines drug dealing or instances where individuals are placed in custody or care outside of the local authority responsible for them).

What are specified authorities expected to do?

37. Once the specified authorities have identified a partnership structure, the core elements of the Duty are:
- a. Understanding local issues: In order to identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in their areas, and so far as it is possible to do so, the causes of that serious violence, the partnership should work together to establish the

¹⁹ “relevant area”, in relation to a specified authority, educational authority, prison authority or youth custody authority means an area made up of: (a) all or part of a local government area for which it is a specified authority, educational authority, prison authority or youth custody authority, and (b) all or part of one or more other local government areas (regardless of whether, in the case of a specified authority or educational authority, it is also a specified authority or educational authority for the other area or areas).

local 'strategic needs assessment' – identifying the drivers of serious violence acting in the local area and the cohorts of people most affected or at risk. This will require the sharing of relevant data and useful information held by the individual organisations subject to the Duty.

- b. Preparation, publication and implementation of a strategy: In order to prepare and implement a strategy for exercising their functions to prevent, reduce serious violence in the area, the partnership must collectively develop a strategy which should outline the multi-agency response that the partnership will take to address the drivers identified in the strategic needs assessment and work to prevent and reduce serious violence in the specified local area. The strategy should set out how the proposed actions will enhance and complement existing local arrangements responding to serious violence. Part of this work may include consideration of joint funding or investment to support local early interventions and responses. Partnerships will also need to consult with any and all educational institutions, prisons and secure settings situated in the local area, that they consider necessary, as part of this process. Strategies must be published and must not include any material that the specified authorities consider might jeopardise the safety of any person, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime or the investigation or prosecution of an offence or compromise the security or, good order or discipline within, an educational, prison or youth custody authority. Regulations made by the Secretary of State will make further provision for or in connection with the publication and dissemination of such strategies.
- c. Review: The Duty requires that once a strategy has been prepared and published, it must be kept under review. The partnership should review the strategy on at least an annual basis. A review should specifically consider how the interventions and solutions have impacted on serious violence within their area – considering for example crime statistics and accident and emergency data. The review may highlight the need for a refreshed strategic needs assessment and strategy, for example where new and emerging crime types are identified.

38. These core elements are explored in further detail throughout this guidance. All responsible authorities will be accountable for their activity and co-operation in

implementing the strategy. Any and all actions set out in a strategy should be pre-agreed by all specified authorities and any relevant agencies which they may impact. Responsible authorities may wish to identify a senior officer in their agency to have responsibility and authority for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Duty.

Delivery in Wales

Introduction

39. Although crime and justice are not devolved to Wales, key services which help to prevent crime such as healthcare, accommodation, education, employability and substance misuse are devolved. This means that Welsh crime and justice activity happens in a unique delivery and legislative context.
40. Devolved and non-devolved organisations work in partnership in Wales to deliver the best possible outcomes for people and to reflect relevant Welsh Government legislation and strategies in the delivery of services. Organisations such as the Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, local authorities, Local Health Boards, Substance Misuse Area Planning Boards, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service in Wales, Policing in Wales and the Home Office work closely together in Wales to deliver effective services.
41. This supports a distinct approach to the delivery of crime and justice provision in Wales. This approach focusses on recognising the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's), disrupting generational cycles of offending, working together to keep communities safe and preventing reoffending and further harm to victims through trauma-informed practice.
42. This is formalised and sustained by a memorandum of understanding between Public Health Wales, Policing in Wales and criminal justice partners. It is also evidenced joint strategic work such as the Framework to support positive change for those at risk of offending in Wales²⁰, the Youth Justice Blueprint²¹, the Women's

²⁰ [Supporting those at risk of re-offending | GOV.WALES](#)

²¹ [youth-justice-blueprint_0.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)

Justice Blueprint²² and work in areas such as anti-racism and Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV). This work is being delivered within the context of the legislative powers set out in the Wales Act 2017.

43. Drawing on this context, this chapter outlines the specific factors which will need to be considered by relevant bodies when they are delivering on the Duty in Wales.

The partnership context in Wales

44. Every Welsh local area will have a range of existing multi-agency arrangements in place. These existing partnerships will include Public Service Boards (WFG Act), Regional Partnership Boards (SS&WB Act), Regional Safeguarding Boards²³ for both Adults and Children (SS&WB Act), Regional or Local Community Safety Partnerships, Regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Boards (VAWDASV Act).

45. They may also include Regional Housing Support Collaborative Groups, Serious Violence and Organised Crime Boards, Local Criminal Justice Boards, Integrated Offender Management Groups, Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Health Board Stakeholder Reference Groups, Substance Misuse Area Planning Boards, Children and Young People Partnership Boards and Learning Disability Partnership Boards.

46. The PCSC Act does not specify the partnership model through which specified authorities must fulfil their obligations to collaborate to prevent and reduce serious violence. 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. Public Service Boards, Regional Partnership Boards, Community Safety Partnerships and (for parts of the Duty) the

²² [female-offending-blueprint_3.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)

²³ The National Independent Safeguarding Board for Wales has two duties in relation to Regional Safeguarding Boards that are set out in the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014; to provide support and advice to Safeguarding Boards with a view to ensuring that they are effective and to report on the adequacy and effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children and adults in Wales.

VAWDASV Board will already include most or all of the partners who need to be involved.

47. In order to comply with the Duty, it may not be necessary to create a new partnership, and existing partnerships should be used where possible. Where there are strong partnerships that already exist in Wales, they are in a strong position to deliver the Duty in most local areas. In particular, as the Duty includes domestic abuse and sexual violence within its remit, organisations with responsibilities under the Duty may consider how they can address both the Duty and their responsibilities under the VAWDASV Act (see paragraphs 59 to 61 below) without setting up parallel or duplicative arrangements. Specified authorities may wish to consider adapting and revising their current arrangements under the VAWDASV Act, to ensure that these arrangements also address serious violence more broadly in line with the Duty.

48. This may require regional VAWDASV boards to review their membership to ensure that all relevant bodies are engaged and potentially to revise their existing strategies. The Duty reporting can then make suitable reference to regional VAWDASV strategies.

49. The specified authorities within the partnership area should come together, provide information and data, and collaborate in the formulation and agreement of the strategic needs assessment, as already takes place for the Strategic Assessment, Wellbeing Plans and Population Needs Assessment and Action Plans.

Relevant current statutory duties in Wales

50. Services being delivered in Wales need to consider the broader legislative and statutory context. This section outlines some of the relevant duties which partners will need to consider when fulfilling their responsibilities under the Serious Violence Duty in Wales.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

51. The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (“the WFG Act”) puts a responsibility on public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their

decisions, and to work to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. In particular, the WFG Act places a duty on specified public bodies in Wales to carry out sustainable development, acting in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

52. When delivering on their responsibilities under the Serious Violence Duty, authorities should consider how they can maximise their contribution to the well-being goals specified in the Act. They should also consider how to best embed the five ways of working in the Act: prevention, integration, collaboration, long term and involvement.
53. Since the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, there has been a statutory obligation for Community Safety Partnerships to produce evidence-based strategies referred to as Strategic Assessments. In Wales these can be stand-alone documents or incorporated into the Population Needs Assessments and Action Plans or the Wellbeing Plans. The Strategic Needs Assessment for the Duty will need to similarly ensure the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act are met as set out above.

A Healthier Wales

54. Health is a devolved service in Wales but Health Boards across NHS Wales will work with their partners in supporting the Duty. They are responsible for meeting the needs of urgent and emergency care, working with police and other crime agencies and third sector to treat and support individuals. Pressures on urgent care services can be reduced if serious violence can be addressed in the locality so it is important that partnerships are working to tackle the reasons for and interventions to reduce serious violence.
55. Wales takes a public health approach to addressing the underlying causes of crime and the Healthier Wales Strategy seeks to create a better health outcome for all people. The Strategy seeks to fundamentally change Welsh health care in five main ways:
- Health and social care system will work together.

- Prevention by detecting earlier intervention within community settings.
- Get better at measuring what really matters to identify what support is needed.
- Make Wales an attractive place to work in health and social care.
- A single system with everyone working together.

56. Advice services, such as the 111 service, need to develop appropriate signposting to community facilities and support services so that callers seeking help at an early stage are able to be directed to appropriate services for support, including those offered by statutory services and the third sector.

57. Primary and community care services need to be aware of the signs and signals of serious violence, and also be aware of the need to provide safe and secure advice and treatment, and as well as knowing the alternative pathways open to individuals.

58. Health Boards should use their regional partnership board links with social care as well as their safety partnerships to ensure that there is join up between the agencies to best support those suffering from serious violence. Their strategic plans and integrated medium-term plans should reflect the need to play an active part in supporting and delivering against the Duty.

Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015

59. The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act) sets out a duty for local authorities and Local Health Boards to prepare a strategy for the local authority area for tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV). The purpose of the Act is to improve:

- Arrangements for the prevention of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- Arrangements for the protection of victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- Support for people affected by violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

60. This duty is exercised through regional VAWDASV partnership boards who operate under guidance from Welsh Government. The requirements under the VAWDASV Act, particularly the requirement for the local authorities and Local Health Boards to jointly develop a local strategy, align strongly with the responsibilities placed on organisations under the Serious Violence Duty.
61. As noted above, where possible specified authorities should seek to avoid setting up parallel arrangements to cover the VAWDASV Act and the Serious Violence Duty separately. Instead, organisations should look to adapt and revise their current arrangements under the VAWDASV Act to ensure that these arrangements also address serious violence more broadly in line with the Serious Violence Duty. This will require regional VAWDASV boards to review their membership to ensure that all relevant bodies are engaged, and potentially to revise their existing strategies.
62. Welsh Ministers also have a statutory requirement under the VAWDASV Act 2015 to prepare and publish a National Strategy to prevent gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence and to protect and support victims following a general election. The Welsh Government is currently developing its next five-year VAWDASV National Strategy alongside a group of key partner organisations including the police, specialist sector and survivors.
63. The strategy will be published in May 2022 and will be delivered through a Blueprint approach, which brings together devolved and non-devolved organisations, as well as strengthening the partnership between public private and specialist sectors. It will be overseen by a new National Partnership Board co-chaired by the lead Police and Crime Commissioner for Wales. Relevant authorities should consider this revised National Strategy when undertaking their responsibilities under the Duty.

Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014

64. The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales. The fundamental principles of the Act are:

- Well-being – supporting people to achieve their own well-being.
- People – giving people an equal say in the support they receive.
- Partnership – co-operative service delivery.
- Prevention – right need at the right time.

65. Specified authorities, including safeguarding Boards should consider the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the distinct Welsh legal framework for social services when considering how they will fulfil their functions in reducing and preventing serious violence under the Serious Violence Duty in Wales.

Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011

66. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)²⁴ is an international agreement setting out the rights of children. The rationale for the UNCRC is that children's rights need specific consideration due to the special care and protection often needed by children and young people.

67. Children's rights are enshrined in Welsh law under Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 - underlining Wales' commitment to children's rights and the UNCRC. The measure places a duty on Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC when developing or reviewing legislation and policy.

68. Where the Duty impacts children and young people. We would encourage and expect any plans to be grounded in a rights-based approach.

Housing (Wales) Act 2014

69. Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 places responsibilities on local authorities in relation to the prevention and alleviation of homelessness. This includes:

- A duty on local authorities to take reasonable steps where someone is at risk of homelessness within 56 days (s66).
- A duty to take reasonable steps to secure accommodation for someone who is homeless (s73).

²⁴ [United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child: poster | GOV.WALES](#)

- A duty to accommodate for someone who is homeless and falls within a priority need category (s75).
- A duty to provide interim accommodation for someone who is homeless and who may be priority need (s68).

70. Section 70 of the Housing (Wales) Act outlines the list of categories which are considered for priority need status, including a person subject to domestic abuse and a person between 18 and 21 who is at risk of sexual or financial exploitation. The Act is clear that anyone at risk or is being subjected to abuse or domestic abuse should be considered as homeless and be eligible for support to find alternative accommodation.

71. The Code of Guidance²⁵ was updated published in 2016 and provides advice in relation to the duties.²⁶ As a result of the pandemic, supplementary guidance from the Welsh Government included a wider definition of vulnerability to include anyone at risk of rough sleeping from a public health position. This approach will continue beyond the end of the pandemic as the Welsh Government prioritises complete transformation of homelessness services in this term of Government.

72. The responsibilities should be considered by organisations as they act on the Duty.

Socio-economic Duty – The Equality Act 2010

73. The Socio-economic Duty, which has been enacted in Wales but not in England, requires that public authorities, including local authorities, local health boards, and fire and rescue services, should:

“When making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.”

²⁵ [allocation-of-accommodation-and-homelessness-guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-03/allocation-of-accommodation-and-homelessness-guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf)

²⁶ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-03/allocation-of-accommodation-and-homelessness-guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf>

74. The purpose of the socio-economic duty is to encourage better decision making, ensuring more equal outcomes. When developing an approach to delivering on their responsibilities under the SVD, leads in Wales should consider how the plans reduce the inequalities of outcomes resulting from socio-economic disadvantage.

Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021

75. The Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021²⁷ (“the 2021 Act”) established the Curriculum for Wales in law and replaced the basic curriculum (which includes, for example, the national and local curricula set out in Part 7 of the Education Act 2002²⁸). The 2021 Act makes provision about progression and assessment in connection with the curriculum for 3 to 16 year olds. It also has some limited effects on the curriculum for learners above compulsory school age at maintained schools.

76. Organisations should consider the 2021 Act in the context of the Duty when taking forward work which impacts on education settings. The new Curriculum for Wales²⁹, which will be introduced from September 2022, will include a Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience (Area) which has equal status in law to the five other area of the curriculum. It will enhance the new curriculum’s focus on the health and wellbeing of learners which includes mandatory Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)³⁰.

Relevant National Strategies in Wales

77. The following strategies and action plans impact on the strategic context for work to prevent serious violence in Wales. They should be considered by specified authorities when delivering exercising their functions responsibilities under the Duty. The National Strategy for VAWDASV is covered under the section on statutory duties above.

Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019-22

²⁷ [Curriculum and Assessment \(Wales\) Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/12/section/1)

²⁸ [Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/26/section/7)

²⁹ [Curriculum for Wales - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales)

³⁰ [Cross-cutting themes for designing your curriculum - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/cross-cutting-themes-for-designing-your-curriculum)

78. The Welsh Government published their Substance Misuse Delivery Plan (2019-22) in October 2019. The plan is rooted in a harm reduction approach which recognises substance misuse as a health and care issue as opposed to one that is solely related to criminal justice. However, close work is required, and takes place, with the criminal justice sector in order to take forward aspects of the Plan.
79. The overall aim of the Plan is to ensure that people in Wales are aware of the dangers and the impact of substance misuse and to know where they can seek information, help and support. The Plan has been revised in response to Covid-19 to reflect the work that has been, and will be, undertaken as a result of the pandemic.
80. Close partnership working in Wales, particularly between Welsh Government, Area Planning Boards, the substance misuse third sector and the police, ensures that the needs of the most vulnerable substance misuse population are met and the appropriate guidance is in place.
81. We would expect relevant partners to consider the Substance Misuse Delivery plan when considering the Duty.

The whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing

82. The Welsh Government has published a Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being. The Framework is intended to support schools, including pupil referral units and education settings in reviewing their own well-being landscape and in developing plans to address their weaknesses and build on their strengths. The Framework recognises that the school alone cannot meet all the needs of a complex population of children and young people, and sets out the role of regional bodies, the NHS and others such as the third sector, in supporting the school.
83. Schools and local authorities must consider the Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being when developing action plans, strategies and other policies that impact on the well-being of learners, staff and

others working within the school environment. Local authorities will also need to consider the Framework in relation to education other than at school setting.

Youth Work Strategy for Wales

84. Youth work in Wales promotes and actively encourages opportunities for all young people aged 11-25. Effective youth work plays a significant role in helping young people understand their rights, socialise, develop, and access support with a range of issues, including their mental and emotional health or wellbeing. It supports young people to play an active role in their communities and offer support with their engagement in education, employment or training.
85. The Youth Work Strategy for Wales³¹ sets out a shared vision for the future of youth work in Wales and is supported by an Implementation Plan³². These documents will be revised to reflect work being undertaken in response to recommendations set out in the Interim Youth Work Board's report, Time to Deliver for Young People in Wales³³, to develop a sustainable delivery model for youth work services in Wales. A new Youth Work Strategy Implementation Board is being appointed to help take forward the report recommendations. Authorities with responsibilities under the Duty should consider the Strategy and Implementation Plan.

Youth Engagement and Progression Framework and Young Person's Guarantee

86. The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework aims to ensure young people make a positive transition into education, employment or training when they leave school, and reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training. The Framework is built around early identification and prevention, and should be considered by authorities as they discharge their duties under the Duty.
87. The Young Person's Guarantee is the Welsh Government's key commitment to everyone under the age of 25, living in Wales, with support to gain a place in education or training, and help to get into work or become self-employed. Providing

³¹ [Youth Work Strategy for Wales](#)

³² [Youth work and engagement | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#)

³³ [Interim Youth Work Board: final report | GOV.WALES](#)

meaningful opportunities for education, training and employment can divert young people away from perpetrating crime, and this should be considered when delivering on responsibilities under the Serious Violence Duty.

An Anti-racist Action Plan for Wales

88. The Welsh Government recognises that it is time for urgent action to tackle racism. Together with partners and stakeholders, the Welsh Government is developing An Anti-racist Action Plan for Wales, supporting a vision for an anti-racist Wales where partners take a pro-active approach to tackling racism in all of its forms.
89. This will be complemented by a Criminal Justice Anti-Racism Action Plan for Wales, which is being developed collaboratively by Criminal Justice in Wales partners including Welsh Government, HMPPS in Wales, Policing in Wales and Youth Justice Board Cymru. This plan will set out the concrete and tangible action to tackle inequality and to create an anti-racist criminal justice system.
90. When undertaking their duties under the Duty SVD, authorities should take an anti-racist approach and ensure they proactively take steps to address racism in all of its forms.

LGBT+ Action Plan

91. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning people (LGBTQ+), with the + representing other sexual identities, face very real struggles against disadvantage, inequality and discrimination. The Welsh Government has consulted on an ambitious, cross-government LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales, which will seek to tackle the existing structural inequalities experienced by LGBTQ+ communities, to challenge discrimination and to create a society where LGBTQ+ people are safe to live and love authentically, openly and freely as themselves.
92. When undertaking their duties under the SVD, authorities should consider the Plan and seek to challenge discrimination and violence against LGBTQ+ people. This complements existing responsibilities under the Equality Act.

Together for Mental Health

93. Together for Mental Health is the Welsh Government's strategy to improve the quality and accessibility of mental health services. It sets out a number of high-level outcomes aimed at achieving a significant improvement to both the quality and accessibility of mental health services for all ages. The strategy recognises that the causes and effects of poor mental health are complex, challenging and multi-faceted and therefore require an integrated, cross-government and cross-sector partnership approach if we are to achieve these outcomes. This should be considered by authorities as they fulfil their duties under the Duty.

Data sharing in Wales to support the Serious Violence Duty

94. Data sharing is a cornerstone in delivering on the Duty in Wales. Organisations in Wales directly concerned with health, education, safety, crime prevention and social well-being of people have signed up to the Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) which provides a tool to enable the sharing of personal information effectively and lawfully.

95. We would expect WASPI to form the basis of data sharing to support the Duty.

Wales partnerships and partners

96. It will be for the local partnership to decide how best to work together to deliver their responsibilities under the Duty. However, we have highlighted some partnerships in this section that will contribute to the Duty in Wales at a local and/or strategic level.

Substance Misuse Area Planning Boards

97. Within Wales the commissioning of substance misuse services rests with seven Area Planning Boards (co-terminus with health boards). The membership of the APBs includes representatives from the 'responsible authorities', which comprise CSPs, to enable statutory responsibilities in respect to substance misuse to be discharged at a regional level.

The Wales Safer Communities Network

98. The Wales Community Safety Network (The Network) was created following a Welsh Government Review into Community Safety. The Network is there to support future Welsh community safety policy and practice development and to help to build the appropriate skills and knowledge required to implement changes and reflect evidence-based best practice across Wales³⁴ This is delivered through the ongoing development of an online community safety library and resources database for Wales, which includes the strategic assessments.
99. The Network provides support to the Wales Data Analysis Innovation and Improvement Network; Wales Association of Community Safety Officers; All Wales Anti-Social Behaviour Practitioners Network; and Community Justice Cymru all of whom are likely to have information, data and existing service delivery and development that is important to the delivery of the Serious Violence Duty.
100. The Network, Criminal Justice in Wales and Violence Prevention Unit all provide a range of support and information for local specified authorities. Working together to reduce gaps and the risk of duplication, they will work together to provide a range of support utilising the individual remits to support partners to deliver the duty.

The Violence Prevention Unit

101. The Wales Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) is a partnership of people from an alliance of organisations working together to prevent all forms of violence in Wales through a public health approach. The Violence Prevention Unit are a multi-agency team, including members from Police Forces, Police and Crime Commissioners', Public Health Wales, Local Authorities, and the voluntary sector. The VPU is supported by additional commitments from over 30 Welsh partners, under the remit of the All Wales Violence Prevention Board. The mission of the VPU is to prevent Violence in Wales through a public health approach.

³⁴ [Safer Communities for Wales - Wales Safer Communities](#)

102. The VPU Website³⁵ has greater detail of work undertaken by the VPU, including research that helps identify effective practice for violence prevention and some of the services they directly commission to prevent violence. Part of the role of the VPU is utilising multi-agency data, research and analysis to better understand and prevent serious violence. The VPU will be supporting partners to address the requirements of the Duty.

Wales Police Schools Programme (WPSP)

103. The Wales Police Schools Programme (WPSP) operates in all primary and secondary schools in Wales, focussing on early intervention and prevention in relation to a range of issues with children and young people, based in the school environment. The WPSP delivers a balanced programme across all key stages of the curriculum, including topics such as substance misuse, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, bullying, online safety, sexting, child sexual exploitation and consent.

Partnership Agreement for Prison Health

104. In Wales a Partnership Agreement for Prison Health is in place in Wales. This work is monitored by a Prison Health and Social Care Oversight Group which is jointly chaired by Welsh Government and HMPPS in Wales. The Partnership Agreement for Prison Health is a collaborative agreement between Welsh Government, HMPPS, Health Boards and Public Health Wales. It sets out agreed priorities for improving prison health. The priorities are built around the agreement that this is a whole prison approach to improving the health and wellbeing outcomes of prisoners in Wales. They are:

- The wider prison environment and its contribution to improving health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Mental health and the development of agreed standards for mental health services in prisons.

³⁵ [Violence Prevention Unit \(violencepreventionwales.co.uk\)](http://violencepreventionwales.co.uk)

- Substance misuse and the development of a new Substance Misuse Treatment Framework for prisons.
- Medicines Management.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Support Hub

105. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) refer to traumatic childhood experiences which can continue to have an impact on people's well-being across their life course. Research shows there is a strong association between ACEs and crime, as both victim and perpetrator. Research by Public Health Wales (ACEs Study 2015) found that those with four or more ACEs were: 14 more times likely to have been the victim of crime in the last 12 months; 15 more times to have been the perpetrator of violence in the last 12 months; and 20 times more likely to have been incarcerated in their lives. Public Health Wales' research into the prevalence and impact of ACEs in Wales was one of the main drivers behind the establishment of the ACE Support Hub.
106. Funded by the Welsh Government since 2017, the ACE Support Hub (the Hub), supports individuals, organisations and communities to become ACE aware. The Hub has adopted a strengths based approach to preventing ACEs, focussing on sharing evidence and learning from best practice, developing the knowledge and skills of professionals, and driving change and system transformation at both local and national levels.
107. The Hub is currently working with Traumatic Stress Wales on the development of a trauma-informed practice framework for Wales which will be of interest to authorities delivering the Duty. The framework is expected to be published in the summer of 2022.

Community and Voluntary sector (Third sector)

108. The Third sector contributes widely to supporting people in Wales. As recognised in the general guidance, their support in delivering a SVD that properly reflects local issues should be properly considered. This includes the VAWDASV specialist sector, who play an integral part in tackling VAWDASV in Wales.

109. Community and Voluntary Sector (Third Sector) in Wales are a key and important partner across partnerships, including Regional Partnership Boards, Regional Safeguarding Boards and Public Service Boards. Attendance is, as an equal partner, acknowledging the important trusted and independent role that the organisations play in local communities and in providing links with all sectors of local communities. Utilising the skills of the sector is an important element of delivering Welsh legislation. This is supported through Third Sector Support Wales, a partnership of the local Community Voluntary Councils across Wales and the national body WCVA. The collaboration, integration and engagement with this sector will continue to be a key element for delivery of the Duty especially the delivery of local actions at community level.

Engaging with children and young people, victims, survivors and perpetrators of crime

110. Engagement and involvement with all parts of the population across Wales is a key requirement of existing legislation, SS&WB Act, WFG Act and VAWDASV Act to name a few. We expect the existing arrangements to be expanded to include all groups who are currently not engaged with, or to adapt the questions and data gathered to include an element of serious violence and its impact on all parts of the community. This should include children and young people, adults including older people, those from marginalised groups, victims (survivors in the case of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) and perpetrators. This can and should include the collection of data sets and information from community and voluntary groups who are already working in these fields and are engaging with communities in ways that statutory bodies may not be able to.

111. A National Survivor Engagement Framework will be developed in Wales as part of the National VAWDASV Strategy and Blueprint. This will combine multiple ways in which survivors can influence work in Wales and provide a vehicle for survivors to advocate for themselves to educate their peers, communities, colleagues and wider stakeholders. The insight provided by the Framework will be an important source of insight for authorities as they deliver the Duty in Wales.

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Chapter Two: Planning and Collaboration

Collaboration

112. Every local area will have a range of existing multi-agency arrangements in place. These existing partnerships may include Community Safety Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Boards, Serious Organised Crime Partnerships as well as Supporting Families Programme Structures, Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Boards, VAWDASV Boards, Criminal Justice Boards, Violence Reduction Units (non-statutory), Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The National Independent Safeguarding Board for Wales has two duties in relation to Regional Safeguarding Boards that are set out in the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014; to provide support and advice to Safeguarding Boards with a view to ensuring that they are effective and to report on the adequacy and effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children and adults in Wales.
113. As previously set out, the PCSC Act does not specify the partnership model through which specified authorities must fulfil their obligations to collaborate to prevent and reduce serious violence. 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. An example of a multi-agency partnership model is included as a case study below.
114. This flexibility is designed to allow specified authorities to build on existing infrastructure, strengths and capabilities as they consider most appropriate. In order to comply with the Duty, it may not be necessary to create a new partnership, and the specified authorities should use existing partnerships where possible and with appropriate modifications.

115. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities have also produced a useful resource for local system leaders on multi-agency partnership working for the purposes of serious violence prevention.³⁶
116. The specified authorities within the partnership area should come together, provide information and data, and collaborate in the formulation and agreement of the strategic needs assessment. However, it will be for the local partnership to decide how best to work together to deliver the actions identified in the strategy as a result of the initial assessment.
117. There is no “one size fits all” approach, as some specified authorities will need to collaborate with other authorities across a wide geographical extent on some issues (for example, knife crime across London or county lines activity), whereas other bodies may be able to collaborate in smaller areas on other issues (for example, a rise in school exclusions in part of a local authority area leading to an increased risk of serious violence). Similarly, some identified actions may require all specified authorities to work together, whereas other actions may only require the specific attention of one or two of the authorities.

Safeguarding children

118. It is essential that frontline professionals recognise vulnerability in children and young people, regardless of the circumstances around any interaction.
119. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 places a duty on three of the specified authorities (police, health and local authority) as statutory ‘safeguarding partners’ for local areas in England. This duty means that they (and other relevant agencies they consider appropriate) must work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, including identifying and responding to their needs.

³⁶https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/838930/multi-agency_approach_to_serious_violence_prevention.pdf

120. The Serious Violence Duty does not detract from these responsibilities. In collaborating to prevent and reduce serious violence, safeguarding partners have an opportunity to demonstrate and strengthen the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in a local area.

Case Study: Multi-agency Partnership Model

In Swansea, the Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) and partners are delivering a range of interventions and multi-agency arrangements to reduce and prevent violence, and to take a holistic child-centred approach to children and young people involved/at-risk of involvement in violence. The VPU has funded a host of interventions at a primary, secondary and tertiary level, which includes interventions that target the root causes of violence and offer support at what is considered a 'teachable moment'. These interventions sit within a system that has established a range of approaches to target violence.

The Swansea CMET Panel (Missing, Exploitation and Trafficking) is a multi -agency meeting established and led by Swansea Council, meeting on a fortnightly basis, working within a Contextual Safeguarding framework, recognising and responding to the individual needs of young people that have been identified by partners (including South Wales Police, Community Safety, Youth Offending and third sector organisations) providing, or facilitating access to, specialist support services in relation to vulnerabilities such as substance misuse, mental health, homelessness and violence. It also focuses on identified hotspot locations across Swansea and peer groups, providing targeted outreach activity.

The CMET Panel enables young people to be diverted from the risk of exploitation, youth violence and serious organised crime and is critical to ensuring that there is no duplication and a clear referral pathway to specialist interventions.

Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) has been commissioned by the VPU to assess the delivery of these approaches in Swansea collectively, to capture how they operate to identify individuals at risk of/ involved in violence, and the measures implemented to mitigate risk, and prevent further involvement in violence and crime. The evaluation will incorporate the wider approaches of key agencies (e.g. police and community safety partnerships), but with a specific focus on the CMET panel, a multi-agency arrangement to target hotspot areas, while also providing wrap-around support for children and young people at risk.

As part of the evaluation, LJMU will work closely with the organisations delivering interventions as part of the Swansea 'systems approach' to identify opportunities to engage with the communities who they work directly with, to understand the impact and experiences of people directly and indirectly affected by their activity, and propose to carry out interviews/focus groups with community members (including service users, as and where appropriate) and use the findings from these to develop up to 5 case studies to demonstrate impact."

Strategic Needs Assessments

121. A strategic needs assessment will enable a local area to identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in their partnership area and, so far as is possible to do so, the causes of that serious violence as required by the PCSC Act, providing information on current and long-term issues relating to serious violence and the cohorts most vulnerable to involvement in their partnership area. This will provide a greater understanding of established and emerging serious violence trends, priority locations or other high-risk issues. An example outlining the overall aims and framework of an existing strategic needs assessment is included as a case study below.

122. The strategic needs assessment should be formulated following an evidence-based analysis of information relating to the violent crime types, the drivers of crime within the partnership area and the cohorts most vulnerable. This will require the gathering and analysis of data from all partners, so far as is possible, including (but not restricted to):

- Local and national crime data, (including National Crime Survey (e.g, police recorded crime by crime type, crime outcomes and profiles of victims and offenders),
- Hospital data on serious violence injuries,
- Education data (e.g. attendance, suspension and exclusion),
- Anonymised prison data (e.g. types of offences),
- Local data (e.g. census information),
- ONS data, e.g VAWG offences,
- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme data,
- MARAC data,
- Children’s social care data,
- Outcomes of homicide reviews including in areas such as domestic homicide, child and adult safeguarding, mental health and offensive weapons homicide reviews,
- Input of organisational information and experience and where appropriate knowledge and useful information from specialist voluntary sector organisations and young people (e.g. data on violence against women and girls). The National Statement of Expectations and VAWG Commissioning Toolkit³⁷ set out data sources which could be considered when assessing the specific needs of victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence,
- VAWG Performance Framework³⁸ will also outline data Police should collate,

³⁷ [Commissioning services to tackle violence against women and girls - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) The National Statement of Expectations provides guidance for local areas on how to commission effective support services for victims of VAWG. The NSE is underpinned by a separate Commissioning Toolkit, which compiles information in a practical way to demonstrate how commissioning VAWG services can be done to meet needs effectively.

³⁸ [Violence against women and girls: Outcomes and performance framework \(prgloo.com\)](https://prgloo.com)

123. Local areas may wish to seek additional analytical support and expertise in formulating their strategic needs assessment. Office for Health Improvement and Disparities have also published a useful resource for local areas on the development of local strategic needs assessments.³⁹
124. The strategic needs assessment may also identify data or intelligence gaps, where the partnership is lacking information or knowledge and requires further information. Involving a range of staff and partners in the development of the strategic needs assessment will improve the analysis and lead to a clearer picture of the local areas' problems. For example, incidents of domestic abuse and sexual violence are underreported to the police and other statutory agencies so other data sets will augment understanding of the local picture for these crime types. Partnerships may also find it useful to gather qualitative data as part of this process.
125. The results of the strategic needs assessment should be used by the partnership to define their serious violence issues and formulate and prioritise bespoke actions to prevent and reduce serious violence that the partnership will take forward (the strategy).

Case Study: Violence Prevention and Reduction Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance, September 2019

The West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance was set up using funding from the PCC and with the support of the police and health.

A joint police and health teams work with organisations such as councils, hospitals and charities to help them to provide services that will prevent violence, using best practice and evidence of where violence takes place.

Needs Assessment Aims:

To identify, collate and assimilate existing data across partner agencies and associated systems with regards to violence prevention need:

- Epidemiological approach - time, person, place

³⁹ [Serious Violence Duty: strategic needs assessment guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424242/Serious_Violence_Duty_-_strategic_needs_assessment_guidance.pdf)

- Comparative approach - regional and national comparators
- Corporate approach - compilation of any stakeholder consultation already undertaken at local authority level or qualitative research where it exists

To determine and understand current violence prevention provision across partner agencies in relation to need and to identify gaps in provision:

- Focus on violence with injury (except for domestic abuse and knife crimes)
- To enable triangulation with hospital data
- To consider the crimes associated with evidenced harm
- To complement other analysis underway that are considers “all crimes”

Needs Assessment Framework:

1. Primary prevention - Preventing involvement in violence
2. Secondary prevention - Preventing recurrence following early involvement in violence
3. Tertiary prevention - Reducing harm and preventing further violence where violence is established
4. Enforcement and criminal justice
5. Attitudinal change

Data sources: West Midlands Police data, Community Rehabilitation Company data, Youth Justice Board data, Public Health England Fingertips, Department for Education, Local surveys, Local authority-led consultation, Health and justice deep dive

The Strategy

126. The strategy should be prepared by the specified authorities following the identification of the kinds of serious violence that occur in the partnership area and, so far as is possible to do so, identification of the causes of serious violence in that area through a comprehensive strategic needs assessment. It should comprise a range of new and existing actions that the partnership will take forward to prevent and reduce the serious violence issues and drivers that have been identified.

127. The PCSC Act requires that the strategy is published, kept under review and revised from time to time. The strategy should be reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis and specified authorities should collectively decide if any new action is required or if a revised strategy is needed. There is nothing to prevent specified authorities from reviewing and revising their strategic needs assessment and strategy (or part thereof) on a more frequent basis if required.
128. The strategy could usefully include, but is not limited to, the following:
- a. Arrangements being using to deliver the Duty and who is the lead co-ordinator,
 - b. Governance, including how the partnership will fulfil the requirements of the legislation, regular meetings, monitoring arrangements and process and dates for review,
 - c. Framework, for gathering and analysing data,
 - d. Who (such as the voluntary and community sector, young people and communities) the partnership will work with; why they have been chosen; and how they will collaborate,
 - e. Consultation arrangements with young people and communities,
 - f. Geographical boundaries (especially if the arrangements operate across more than one local authority area) and how this links to Crime and Disorder Act requirements,
 - g. How engagement with education and prisons will be managed effectively to ensure their involvement,
 - h. How appropriate links will be made with safeguarding arrangements,
 - i. Involvement of the PCC,

- j. Set out what the arrangements are for commissioning additional services under the strategy and how links are made to existing funding partnership for prevention and reduction activities,
 - k. What the arrangements are for independent scrutiny of the strategy,
 - l. A high level (non-sensitive) summary of the strategic needs assessment,
 - m. Actions (including early intervention preventative action) to be undertaken by the whole partnership area, by sector/partners and wider actions (where appropriate – cross boundaries or nationally), how the identified actions enhance or complement existing actions/or arrangements within the local area,
 - n. An executive summary of the serious violence strategy,
 - o. Where applicable the annual assessment of the partnership's performance against the previous years' strategy.
129. Specified authorities may also want to be mindful of timing the development of their strategies and actions to coincide with budgetary or spending decisions within their local area – this will enable an evidence-based assessment of where funds are best diverted to. Any actions falling on educational institutions, prisons or secure settings should be subject to an agreed cost assessment to ensure affordability alongside current spending obligations. Where funding is not available through local budgets, partnerships may want to consider pooling and/or directing resources to where they are needed most.
130. Prior to finalising the strategy, gathering the views and ideas of the voluntary and community sector, children and young people, adult victims (including survivors) service users and businesses operating in the area is strongly encouraged. Further advice and guidance on this process is outlined in Chapter 3 of this guidance. Specified authorities may also wish to refer to strategies published by neighbouring areas to check for consistency of approach if there is a need to work across local authority boundaries on common issues.

131. The Equality Act 2010 places a legal obligation on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations, between persons with different protected characteristics. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. When developing their local strategies, which will include actions and interventions for their local areas, specified authorities must comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Specified authorities should also monitor the impact of their local strategies on those with protected characteristics on an ongoing basis.

Arrangements for publication and dissemination of the strategy

132. The Secretary of State will make regulations for or in connection with the publication and dissemination of the strategy⁴⁰.

133. It is proposed these will require for the responsible partnerships to publish their first serious violence strategy within a year of the date of the implementation of the serious violence duty. Areas where work is already underway on preventing or reducing serious violence may wish to publish an interim strategy earlier.

134. It is proposed that the specified authorities will need to publish their first serious violence strategy and any subsequent revised strategy on a public facing website for public inspection. It is also proposed that the weblink for the initial published strategy and any subsequent revised strategy will be shared with the Home Office.

135. It is proposed that specified authorities should disseminate their strategy through their individual agency and partnership annual reporting processes, including their serious violence strategy, and progress on actions and the outcome of subsequent reviews of their strategy.

⁴⁰ These regulations will be made prior to the Serious Violence Duty being commenced and the final version of this guidance will be updated to reflect the final content of the regulations.

136. Assessment/strategies can be incorporated into existing products (for example, CSP strategies) if it is clearly identified. Or, specified authorities may develop a bespoke individual strategy in response to the Duty.

137. An example of a strategy and associated actions is included as a case study below. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities have also produced a useful resource for local system leaders on partnership working for the purposes of serious violence prevention.⁴¹

138. Specified authorities in Wales will be required to publish a Welsh language version of their strategy.

Case Study: Wandsworth Community Safety Partnership – Knife Crime & Serious Violence Plan 2019/2020

The Wandsworth CSP have produced an action plan to support their strategy for reducing knife crime and serious violence in 19/20. Actions are grouped by topic with measurable outcomes, lead organisations and operational contacts. The groupings and a high-level summary of actions included are as follows:

1) Governance:

Oversight of plan implementation

Ensuring serious violence issues are discussed at relevant meetings

Action Plan publication and communications strategy

2) Targeting Lawbreakers

Relevant analysis and review of strategic assessment

Gangs and drugs market profiling

Continuation of existing anti knife-crime operations

Review of existing enforcement actions

3) Keeping deadly weapons off our streets

⁴¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/838930/multi-agency_approach_to_serious_violence_prevention.pdf

Delivery of Trading standards training

Development of programme of 'sweeps' of streets/open spaces

Engagement with local businesses

4) Protecting and education young people

Engagement with local primary and secondary schools on serious violence issues

Continue to support young people back into education, employment and training

Monitor exclusions and 'off-rolling' data

Continue work to support children in care and care-leavers

Evaluation of existing youth programmes

5) Standing with Communities, Neighbourhoods and Families Against Knife Crime

Develop and extend Knife Crime Community Forum

Improve engagement with young people

Inform and engage VCS organisations with plan aims

Develop and publicise advice for parents

6) Supporting Victims of Knife Crime

Continue to develop assessment process for victims

Introduce scheme to provide support in schools for victims/witnesses

Ensure local trauma centre/emergency department identifies victims and shares data as appropriate

7) Offering Ways out of Crime

Bespoke interventions for adults and young offenders

Develop a schedule of early interventions

Collate a directory of local diversionary activities

Improve liaison with local employers

Information Sharing

Background

139. To recognise the importance of effective multi-agency information sharing, the Serious Violence Duty legislation, Part 1 of Chapter 2 of the PCSC Act, includes specific provisions to support partners to share information, intelligence and knowledge to prevent and reduce serious violence.
140. The provisions will not replace existing data sharing agreements or protocols that are already established, including those under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The new information sharing gateways for the purposes of the Duty are intended to enable the sharing of relevant data where existing powers alone would not be sufficient.
141. Health and social care authorities should be aware that there are restrictions under the powers in sections 16 and 17 on the disclosure of patient information and/or disclosure of personal information by a specified health or social care authority.
142. Each authority will already routinely collect information on a particular aspect of a local area's strategic needs assessment. The legislation enables such information to be appropriately shared with the partnership in order for all aspects of serious violence to be adequately considered. Information sharing can also help to support a partnership's aims by:
- a. Providing a shared understanding of the problem – information brought together from a range of organisations/agencies can be used to identify patterns and trends, geographical hotspots and vulnerable cohorts. Such information can also be reverted to for evaluation purposes;
 - b. Fostering a multi-agency response – including a range of information sources in the initial strategic needs assessment will help to engender a natural multi-agency response as each organisation/agency will have a clear role to play in addressing local issues;
 - c. Supporting partnership working – regular sharing of information may help to build and/or improve inter-agency relationships as partners will be working together on shared issues with a common goal.

143. Effective data sharing is also a key focus of the current Violence Reduction Units (VRUs), supported by funding from the Home Office. VRUs provide a dedicated resource, a clear place to coordinate information as well as strategic leadership to respond to the findings of any analysis. As set out in interim guidance⁴² to VRUs, information and intelligence sharing should primarily consist of sharing anonymised aggregated data to inform the strategic, tactical and operational response to serious violence.
144. It is acknowledged that the 'Information Sharing to tackle Violence (ISTV)' approach to information sharing should be adopted as a baseline and continually improved upon where possible. VRUs are currently working to achieve the following three levels of information usage in order to support their work to prevent and reduce serious violence:
- a. Level 1 – Information used to inform the strategic needs assessment in order to understand local issues;
 - b. Level 2 – Information used to better identify hotspot locations and support a targeted approach;
 - c. Level 3 – Information used to better identify individuals at risk for high-intensity support programmes.

The legislation – Disclosure of Information (Section 16)

145. Section 16 of the PCSC Act provides a permissive information sharing gateway that enables specified authorities⁴³, local policing bodies, educational, prison and youth custody authorities to disclose information to each other for the purposes of their functions under the Serious Violence Duty. Information sharing to support effective collaboration with partnerships should be considered carefully and in line with data protection requirement ensuring that any disclosure is necessary and proportionate for the proposed purpose. See paragraphs 152 onwards for further information.
146. The powers permit requests to be made for sharing information but does not require this. For example, a clinical commissioning group may choose to respond to

⁴²Violence Reduction Unit Interim Guidance. March 2020.

⁴³ As defined by section 11 and Schedule 1 of the PCSC Act.

- a request under section 16 to disclose aggregated management information about hospital attendances where serious violence was suspected, which could support the development of a local problem profile / strategic needs assessment.
147. Personal Information may be disclosed under section 16 by specified authorities (with the exception of health or social care authorities), local policing bodies, educational, prison and youth custody authorities.
148. Disclosure of patient information by specified authorities, local policing bodies, educational, prison and youth custody authorities is not authorised under these powers (section 16(4)(a)), nor is disclosure of personal information by specified health or social care authorities (section 16(4)(b)).
149. Anonymous information may be disclosed under section 16 by all specified authorities, including health or social care authorities, and local policing bodies, educational, prison and youth custody authorities.
150. Section 16(3) provides that disclosures under section 16 do not breach any obligation of confidence owed by the person making the disclosure, or any other restriction on the disclosure of information (however, imposed). Disclosure must also be:
- a. in accordance with the data protection legislation (section 16(4)(c), and
 - b. not prohibited by any of Parts 1 to 7 or Chapter 1 of Part 9 of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (section 16(4)(d)).
151. Section 16(7) provides that this information sharing gateway does not otherwise affect existing powers to disclose information. Personal data may still be shared where appropriate and consistent with the existing legal frameworks and mechanisms that are already established between local partners (e.g. MARAC and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) arrangements).
152. Health and care practitioners must follow the information sharing guidance of their professional regulator when deciding whether they may disclose confidential patient information to local policing bodies or other authorities. Further information on disclosures for the protection of patients and others under these existing

mechanisms can be found in the GMC guidance on Confidentiality: good practice in handling patient information⁴⁴

Supply of information to local policing bodies etc (Section 17)

153. The PCSC Act also creates a power under section 17 for local policing bodies (Police Crime Commissioner and equivalents) to request any specified authority and any educational, prison or youth justice authority within its police force area to supply it with such information as it may specify.
154. The purpose of this power is to enable or assist local policing bodies to take a convening role supporting the development, implementation and monitoring of the local strategy and its effectiveness.
155. Where a request is made under section 17(1), the person or body to whom it relates must comply and supply the requested information, subject to the limitations in subsection (6). The information requested must be held by the person to whom the request is made and must relate to that person, a function of that person, or a person in respect of whom a function is exercisable by the person requested to supply the information.
156. Personal Information may be disclosed under section 17 by specified authorities (with the exception of health or social care authorities), local policing bodies, educational, prison and youth custody authorities.
157. Disclosure of patient information by specified authorities, local policing bodies, educational, prison and youth custody authorities is not authorised under these powers (section 17(6)(a)), nor is disclosure of personal information by specified health or social care authorities (section 17(6)(b)).
158. Anonymous information may be disclosed under section 17 by all specified authorities, including health or social care authorities, and local policing bodies, educational, prison and youth custody authorities.

⁴⁴ General Medical Council. Confidentiality: good practice in handling patient information, paragraphs 50 - 76.

159. Section 17(5) provides that disclosures required by section 17 do not breach any obligation of confidence owed by the person making the disclosure, or any other restriction on the disclosure of information (however imposed). Disclosure must be:

- a. in accordance with the data protection legislation (section 17(6(c))), and
- b. not prohibited by any of Parts 1 to 7 or Chapter 1 of Part 9 of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (section 17(6)(d)).

160. Section 17(7) provides that any information supplied to a local policing body under this section must be used only by that body for the purpose of enabling or assisting it to perform its functions under section 14. That is to say, it could be used only for purposes connected with assisting and monitoring specified authorities in the exercise of their functions under the Serious Violence Duty. For example, it could not be shared with the police or other law enforcement agency for other purposes.

Regulation making powers (section 10)

161. Section 10 of the PCSC Act provides a power for the Secretary of State to make regulations conferring powers on specified authorities to collaborate with prescribed persons (and vice versa). These will be put in place when local areas experience legal challenges working together. Section 10 also provides a power for the Secretary of State to make regulations authorising the disclosure of information between a prescribed person and specified authorities, local policing bodies, educational, prison and youth custody authorities.

162. Any such information sharing gateway would be subject to similar limitations on what can be disclosed to those found in sections 16 and 17.

Data protection

163. All responsible authorities should already have arrangements in place that clearly set out the processes and principles for sharing information internally. In addition, these arrangements may cover sharing information within the local partnership and with external bodies. Where relevant they should include the

purpose for sharing the data, what is to happen to the data at relevant points and clarity on respective roles. Data sharing agreements may need to be established where they are not already in place⁴⁵.

164. Disclosures of personal information (excluding patient information and/or personal information for health and care authorities) under sections 16 and 17, and under any regulations made under section 10 would only be permitted if they do not contravene data protection legislation as defined in section 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018.
165. In circumstances where health and care authorities consider that disclosures of personal data not authorised by this legislation are required to support the prevention and reduction of serious violence, this should be done in accordance with existing guidance⁴⁶ and the relevant data protection frameworks.
166. Specified authorities should design privacy into their partnerships from the beginning of the process and before exercising the relevant functions under the PCSC Act, including for example, having all appropriate agreements and notices in place and being able to exhibit good evidence of compliance with the data protection legislation.
167. When disclosing personal data or otherwise processing personal data in order that effectively anonymised data might be shared, all responsible authorities:
- a. Must comply with the processing conditions under data protection legislation - including being transparent about the purposes for which your organisation processes personal data and the circumstances in which you might do so when complying with the Serious Violence Duty.
 - b. Should be aware of the exemptions from certain UK GDPR provisions contained in Schedule 2 to the Data Protection Act 2018, to the extent that the application of those UK GDPR provisions would be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. Where those

⁴⁵ [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

⁴⁶ General Medical Council. Confidentiality: good practice in handling patient information

purposes would not be likely to be prejudiced any processing must comply with the UK GDPR as normal.

Case study: Example of effective data-sharing model (influencing and impacting mainstream delivery)

The Essex Violence & Vulnerability (V&V) Partnership is a forum which successfully brings together agencies and organisations across Southend, Essex and Thurrock to develop joint strategies and direction for tackling serious violence across Essex. This includes the effective sharing of data to ensure approaches are delivered in response to identified needs. The Partnership enables organisations to identify issues so that a joint approach can be taken to solving them. As part of the Partnership’s work on data-sharing, one of the issues identified across the partnership has been the timely sharing of information across the criminal justice (CJ) agencies, compounded by Covid. The Partnership has considered how this issue has impacted on how young people enter the criminal justice system, who are involved in serious violence and gangs and at risk of exploitation in the pre-court period (and recognising that this period can be over many months). The Partnership engaged with relevant teams from Essex Police, Probation, and Youth Offending Services to understand the issues being faced by the individuals and the agencies involved. The Partnership developed a plan which met the needs of all services by ensuring:

- Prompt and secure dissemination of bail / ‘released under investigation’ (RUI) data
- Appropriate training and guidance in information sharing to teams across the agencies
- Review of information sharing processes between the agencies

This led to the identification of aspects of the system which were causing blockers between agencies, and measures were put in place to improve information sharing between the teams. Following on from this, tailored approaches in Southend, Essex and Thurrock, have been developed, designed to build on the increased intelligence and information sharing between Essex Police and other multi agency partners from this work. An example of this in Essex, is a pilot “Reroute” which aims to work across Essex Police and Essex Youth Offending Service, to support, protect and enforce against those young people who are either released under investigation or are on police bail.

Chapter Three: Engagement

Police and Crime Commissioners, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Common Council of the City of London

168. Local policing bodies, being Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and the Common Council of the City of London, have an important part to play in convening partner agencies and are responsible for the totality of policing in their area, as well as services for victims of crime.
169. Local policing bodies may choose to assist specified authorities in the exercise of their functions to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence and may monitor specified authorities' exercise of those functions. PCCs (and in London the MOPAC and the Common Council of the City of London) are not subject to the Duty, however, as with PCCs and the MOPAC's existing functions in relation to Community Safety Partnerships, they may choose to collaborate with local partnerships and take a convening role in order to support the development and implementation of the local strategy.
170. This also applies to Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners in their capacity as local policing bodies and in the exercise of those functions.
171. Regulations conferring functions on local policing bodies will be made under section 14 of the PCSC Act⁴⁷. It is proposed that these will confer functions for local policing bodies to provide funding to specified authorities and to convene and chair meetings to assist the specified authorities with the exercise of their functions under the Serious Violence Duty. This could consist of allowing a local policing body to require representatives of the specified authorities as well as the option to include education, prisons and youth custody, for any area within the police area to attend a

⁴⁷ These regulations will be made prior to the Serious Violence Duty being commenced and the final version of this guidance will be updated to reflect the final content of the regulations.

meeting to assist in the formulation and implementation of strategies. Specified authorities, including education, prisons and youth custody if required, are to send representatives and the number and seniority of representatives and which strategy/strategies are to be discussed.

172. We will provide further guidance to local policing bodies on their role in providing funding.

173. Local policing bodies may also monitor specified authorities exercise of their Serious Violence Duty functions. Specified authorities must co-operate with a local policing body when required to do so by virtue of section 14 of the PCSC Act, however the local policing body should consider the proportionality of additional requests and anticipated costs to specified authorities before making any such requests. This includes requests for information made under section 17 of the PCSC Act in order to fulfil their role of enabling and monitoring the effectiveness of local strategies.⁴⁸ Such requests must only be for information held by the authority to whom the request was made, and the information must only relate to that authority, a function of that authority except where functions are contracted out. There must also be sufficient safeguards in place to ensure that information is disclosed in line with relevant data protection legislation.

Violence Reduction Units

174. Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) are non-statutory, collaborative partnerships. Currently there are 20⁴⁹ VRUs that have been established with the help of Home Office funding in areas of England and Wales that experience highest volumes of serious violence, though other areas may also independently choose to set up similar partnerships.

175. VRUs implement a 'public health' approach to tackling serious violence, which follows the 5Cs; Collaboration, Co-production, Co-operation in data and

⁴⁸ As set out in section 14 of the PCSC Act.

⁴⁹ The 20 areas in receipt of a VRU funding allocation from the Home Office are as follows: Metropolitan Police, West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Northumbria, Thames Valley, Lancashire, Essex, Avon and Somerset, Kent, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Bedfordshire, Sussex, Hampshire, South Wales, Cleveland (since 22/23 and Humberside (since 22/23).

intelligence sharing, Counter-narrative, and Community Consensus.⁵⁰ This approach aims to support long-term reductions in serious violence by understanding the root causes and intervening with both short and long term solutions to prevent those most at risk from becoming involved in serious violence in the first place.

176. A VRU's core function is to lead and co-ordinate the local response to serious violence in their areas. As systems leaders, VRUs bring together insights and expertise from key local partners to identify the drivers of violent crime, defining the populations and areas most at risk, and work in collaboration with them, using the current evidence-base, to determine, agree and deliver the targeted activity that can best prevent and impact on serious violence.
177. VRUs bring together, at a minimum, the Chief Constable for the area, the Police and Crime Commissioner, local authorities with responsibility for the geographical areas principally targeted by the activities of the VRU, the Clinical Commissioning Groups [Integrated Care Boards]⁵¹, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities/Wales and the Youth Offending Team; as well as representatives of local education institutions, community groups including young people, the voluntary sector and relevant local educational institutions.
178. Local partnerships and CSPs will wish to work closely with VRUs (if there is one present in their area) in the development of the Strategic Needs Assessment and Response Strategy. Specified authorities may wish to incorporate, align or refer to these products in the development of their strategy. However the geographical areas covered by VRUs are at police force or regional level and as such may be too broad to act in place of a local needs assessment/strategy on behalf of CSPs/local partnerships.
179. As VRUs also commission local services to deliver interventions and, in fulfilling their core function, are expected to hold significant information about the current provision in the region. Through their co-produced Strategic Needs

⁵⁰ As set out in 'A whole-system multi-agency approach to serious violence prevention' by Public Health England (now OHID):
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/83893/0/multi-agency_approach_to_serious_violence_prevention.pdf

⁵¹ Clinical Commissioning Groups will be replaced with Integrated Care Boards from 1 July 2022 as part of the Health and Care Act 2022.

Assessments, VRUs will also hold information about the impact of violence on local communities including the impact of health disparities.

Voluntary and Community Sector

180. Throughout England and Wales, there are many voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations working to tackle serious violence or serious violence related issues and ultimately improve outcomes for young people.
181. These organisations are often highly skilled and knowledgeable on specific local issues and communities. The voluntary sector can provide essential expertise, often from people with personal experiences of violence. Locally based organisations are often very trusted in communities, and as such can engage with people within the community, in a way that public bodies may not be able to. This may also be further enhanced through the recruitment of individuals with personal experience. By engaging with the voluntary and community sector, specified authorities may therefore gain a richer understanding of the serious violence issues within their local areas.
182. The VCS comprises a range of organisations, including but not limited to; community groups, voluntary organisations, faith and equalities groups, charities, social enterprises, housing associations and the specialist violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence sector. All of which may be relevant to engage with as part of the initial identification of the local strategic needs assessment, the development of the response strategy, its subsequent implementation and review.

What to consider when engaging with the VCS

183. Collaborative working with the VCS is key to deliver policies that tackle the issues that matter to communities and to strengthen the resilience of this sector in addressing these issues. In order to achieve better outcomes, statutory partnerships and VCS organisations should work together to build effective working relationships. However, it is important that VCS organisations maintain their independence in order to uphold their role as advocates for their beneficiaries and the community and preserve the trust of their service users.

184. Early engagement ensures that the key stages of policy development can reflect the expertise of this sector and can provide valuable insight into how policies are likely to impact communities. Expectations should also be set in line with the capacity of the organisation in question.
185. It is also important to give proper notice of funding opportunities or decisions and ensure that funding terms are fair and enable local organisations to participate.
186. The Compact is a voluntary agreement which may be used as a vehicle to foster strong, effective partnerships between statutory partnerships and VCS organisations. Its principles apply to all relationships between VCS organisations, local authorities and public bodies that are distributing funds on behalf of the government. Many local areas in England also have a local Compact or other arrangement to promote effective partnership working.

Children and Young People

187. Engaging children and young people are important to make sure they have a say on the issues which affect them and that they care about. This is especially important for those who are in receipt of services that the agencies and bodies involved in the partnership provide and who also may be particularly vulnerable, for example, offenders who are children or young people and those involved in the criminal justice system, out of mainstream schooling, and/or looked after children and/or victims of crime.
188. The Government has carried out comprehensive research into the drivers of violent crime and the characteristics of perpetrators and victims.⁵² We know that there are overlapping risk factors of becoming a victim and/or perpetrator of serious violence and these risk factors apply at an individual, family and community level. Partnerships should be mindful of this overlap when engaging with children and young people and developing interventions which are targeted at or may affect them.
189. It is also important to consider how safe children and young people feel when going about their daytime and evening activities, to address their concerns and

⁵² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>

ensure that they are aware of the work being undertaken in their local area to prevent and reduce serious violence and improve their community safety. Most local authorities or areas have a local youth council which provides opportunities for young people to work with decision-makers on a range of issues, such as the prevention of knife crime. Some areas also have young mayors, youth police and crime commissioners and youth forums within VCS youth organisations which could all be engaged.

190. The quality of engagement is extremely important to support young people when they are volunteering their time to improve their communities. Young people are diverse, and this should be reflected in efforts to seek views on evidence and issues for the partnership. Some young people may need their support workers (youth workers, mental health worker, looked after key worker etc.) to be involved to effectively engage in consultations and community planning. Specified authorities may also want to consider allocating an appropriate budget for out of pocket expenses prior to engagement.

191. The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) was established in 2019 following a £200m endowment from the Home Office. The 10-year programme aims to support this Government's response to serious violence by developing the evidence base on what works to prevent young people from becoming involved in violence and making this accessible to front-line policy-makers and practitioners. The YEF have developed a Toolkit which summarises the best available research evidence about different approaches to preventing serious youth violence. It is based on real life data about what has happened when these approaches have been used before. It provides an insight on 17 different approaches, with more to be added in the future. For each approach it explains what it is, how effective it's likely to be, how confident you can be in the evidence of its impact, as well as indicative costs and links to related resources and programmes.

Case study: Example of effective engagement and collaboration with communities

The Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit provides leadership and the strategic coordination of the local response to serious violence, bringing together various partners to achieve this outcome. In addition to significant co-working with a variety of partners, the VRU places great importance in community engagement and ensuring the needs of local young people shape both strategy and delivery. Community voices are therefore incorporated within the VRU structure, with representatives joining the Oversight Board in 2021.

In 2020, the VRU worked with the Police Gangs Superintendent to establish a County Lines Reference Group, where representatives from community organisations meet with the Gangs Team leadership and the VRU Directors. Community representatives have the chance to hear about and comment on the work being carried out to tackle County Lines and the associated exploitation, and the forum is where they can hold decision makers to account.

As well as community organisations, the group has representatives from education and faith groups who are able to contribute to the discussion and ensure that their views are heard. In 2021, the work of the group led to the VRU providing additional funding to parent support groups for those parents whose children have been exploited by county lines. Parents now attend the Reference Group, and their experience helps shape the planning for future work, and the VRU meet with the parents outside of the group to follow up on discussions.

The community representatives of the Reference Group have two seats on the VRU Oversight Board, which ensures that the discussions within the Board and the planning of the work of the VRU reflect the needs of local communities. The community representatives are often the most active and vocal of the Board members and ensure that decisions are informed by the needs of the communities that they reflect.

Chapter Four: Sector Specific Guidance

Police

192. The police have a critical role to play in enforcing the law to protect the public. However, the requirements relating to the Duty make clear that a partnership response to serious violence, involving a range of lead agencies, is required. Collaboration with partners can aid early identification and diversion from involvement in serious violence which are crucial in reversing the increase in harm largely caused by and against young people. Existing work to investigate, disrupt, deter and enforce using the full range of policing powers and tools available (for example, stop and search) should still continue as well as work undertaken within statutory safeguarding arrangements to support vulnerable children and young people, referring to support and healthcare services where appropriate.

193. The Duty applies to the Chief Officer of police for all police force areas in England and Wales. The Chief Officer should ensure that there is appropriate representation to all partnerships operating within their force area. This representative should be able to:

- Engage fully with local partnerships, including by establishing and maintaining the use of anonymised information from NHS emergency departments regarding the locations in which people are injured in violence and weapons used
- Share relevant police data and information to inform the strategic needs assessment for the local area (for example; data on numbers and trends in violence against the person including knife crime, gun crime, homicides and drugs as well as domestic abuse or sexual violence related incidents, information on local serious violence hotspots including people and places, information on county lines networks etc.)
- Support the development and implementation of a strategy to address the risks identified
- Facilitate the use of a relevant risk assessment tool

- Support work to deliver prevention and early intervention and explain to partners how their data can help inform this work
- Explain to partners how civil injunctions can be effective to reduce serious violence

194. The Duty does not apply to ports policing, nuclear policing, the Ministry of Defence Police or British Transport Police, however where such forces operate within a local area, the Chief Officer could usefully consider how to engage such forces where necessary.

Justice

Prisons

195. Prisons help to protect the public and play an important role in the rehabilitation of people who have committed violent offences. Prison populations include offenders that can contribute to violence both in the prison, and in the wider community, through demand for drugs and contraband and participation in organised crime. The prison population also includes prisoners who are at risk of being a victim of violence, particularly domestic abuse in the case of female offenders.

196. There are a number of different categories and types of prison, containing different cohorts of prisoners and therefore not all will have relevance for the local partnerships. Many may also house a population that has very little connection with the local authority area in which they are located. For this reason, specified authorities must consult prison authorities in the preparation of the local strategy, but prison authorities may also choose to collaborate with a specified authority or another prison authority, a youth custody authority or an educational authority in that area of their own volition, or any of those other bodies may require them to collaborate. Where prisons choose, or are requested, to actively collaborate with the partnership, they should be asked to input into the development of the strategic needs assessment and consent to any actions in the strategy which may apply to them.

197. Where and when requested, a prison must comply with actions in a local strategy, so long as they:

- are compatible with any other statutory duties;
- would not have an adverse effect on the exercise of the authority's functions;
- are not disproportionate to the need to prevent and reduce serious violence locally; and
- would not mean that the prison authority incurred unreasonable costs.

198. Local partnerships should engage prisons in their area early and regularly throughout the development of the strategy, to ensure that:

- There is a shared understanding about the relationship between the prison and serious violence in the local area.
- There is an informed view about how partners can support in-prison efforts to reduce violence and rehabilitate prisoners.

199. When considering the evidence that a prison can contribute, local partnerships should try to look beyond the headline violence data. This may be supported by involving prison staff, Prison Group Safety leads in the consultation process.

200. Prisons co-operate closely with wider law enforcement in investigating criminality, pursuing suspects, and ensuring the security of prisons and the protection of the public. Insight from these institutions can inform the work of the local partnership, although the ongoing co-operation through existing structures should continue in any case.

201. The governor or director of the prison is responsible for complying with the Duty. They may wish to identify a suitable representative, such as a Prison Group Director, who should be able to:

- Engage with the relevant partnership to prevent and reduce serious violence.

- Share and contextualise anonymised aggregate prison data that is published or collated for business as usual purposes by the prison or HMPPS nationally.
- Support the development and implementation of a strategy to address the risks identified.
- Communicate the role of prisons in cutting crime and the rehabilitation of prisoners, and work with community partners to develop work in this area.

202. Prisons already work alongside police and probation through existing multi-agency partnerships, such as the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Schemes, to assess and manage eligible violent offenders at a strategic level. Some prisons also participate in local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and Violence Reduction Units (VRUs). However, many prisons are not routinely involved in the partnerships that may be chosen to deliver this Duty. Partnerships should consider this in how they support prisons' involvement and take a pragmatic approach to how prisons are involved in partnership arrangements.

Children and Young People Secure Estate

203. The Children and Young People Secure Estate (CYPSE) settings protect the public and have a critical role to play in the care and rehabilitation of children who have committed or may be at risk of becoming involved in serious violence. Working with other agencies and organisations they can plan and deliver evidence-led child centred approaches which can help to prevent and reduce serious violence. This includes violence reduction within secure establishments themselves, and in the wider community.

204. The Duty will apply to secure establishments in the same manner as prisons (detailed above).

205. Governors of Young Offender Institutions, Governors or Directors of Secure Training Centres, Registered Managers of Secure Children's Homes and heads of Secure Schools are responsible for complying with the Duty. Governors of Young

Offender Institutions and Governors of Secure Training Centres may wish to identify a representative, this may be through the representation arranged by the regional Prison Group Director. The representative should be able to:

- Engage fully with the local partnership to prevent and reduce serious violence both in the community and within secure establishments
- Support the development of the evidence-based strategic needs assessment and publication and implementation of the strategy to address the drivers of serious violence within establishments and within the local partnership area
- Identify opportunities for agencies to work across local authority boundaries to tackle specific serious violence issues
- Share relevant aggregated and anonymised data, operational knowledge and experience transparently (for example; data and trends in drug dealing, resettlement needs, security issues, violence against staff and contraband, knowledge and experience on background profiles of children and young people who have offended, useful information which may support crime prevention, and, where appropriate, knowledge and information from resident children and young people themselves)
- Review and build upon existing partnerships wherever possible (e.g. Youth Offending Teams, Children's Social Care, Secure Children's Homes⁵³, NHS and Education providers)
- Identify impacts of serious violence within the local community e.g. violence against staff and young people within establishments

206. Local Partnerships need to support the work of secure establishments and recognise children in custody and resettling them back to the community, within the context of their life experiences. To jointly recognise that the vulnerability and complexity of the children is not mutually exclusive from the risk they may pose to others and that addressing the former is key to mitigating the latter. It is important that Local Partnerships help every child and young person involved in offending to feel safe, to support them in healing from trauma and to develop more positive

⁵³ For the purposes of the duty, all types of residential care for looked-after children, including secure children's homes, will be the responsibility of the local authority in which they are located. The onus will therefore be on the local authority to ensure engagement between the partnership and such institutions where necessary.

identities, where they can be celebrated for the positive contributions they can bring to local communities.

Youth Offending Teams

207. Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are multi-agency teams responsible for helping to cut crime and for the supervision of children subject to pre-court interventions and statutory court disposals.

208. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, YOTs have a duty to co-operate as a multi-agency entity to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area and drive a strategic effort to prevent offending by children and young people. They play a critical role as they are well placed to identify children and young people known to relevant organisations and agencies who are likely to be involved in perpetrating serious violence. Through existing partnerships, they collaborate with partners to aid early identification and diversion from involvement in serious violence.

209. The YOT must comply with the Duty, and should nominate a representative from the team who should be able to:

- Engage fully with the relevant local partnership to prevent and tackle serious violence, and where applicable, as a core member of the local Violence Reduction Unit.
- Share relevant aggregated and anonymised data, where practicable, to support the development of the evidence-based problem profile/strategic assessment (for example; information on local serious violence hotspots, information on county lines drug dealing networks and wider child criminal exploitation etc.)
- Support publication and implementation of the strategy to address the risks identified, ensuring that children and their interests are fairly represented in such discussions.
- Identify and act to ensure children's best interests, including safeguarding requirements and reducing vulnerability to criminal exploitation, are kept at the forefront of any strategic planning.

- Advise on appropriate responses to increase levels of safety within the local partnership area, and enable children to be able to move beyond their offending.
- Assist in the delivery of prevention and early intervention initiatives where possible, and explain to partners how their input can help enhance this work.
- Work across local authority areas and organisational boundaries where children are not located in the partnership area (for example, when leaving custody or in county lines cases where children may be far from their home area.)

Probation

210. Probation helps to protect the public and cut crime, with a focus on overseeing the rehabilitation activities for those on licence or service community sentences. At a local level, the Probation Service are responsible for assessing violent offenders in prison to prepare them for release on licence to the community, supervising them when they are released and initiating recall where necessary for public protection and helping ensure violent offenders who are serving community sentences meet the requirements ordered by the courts. They have a distinct role to play in reducing and preventing re-offending through the delivery of rehabilitative activities and interventions amongst violent offenders as well as communicating with and prioritising the wellbeing of victims of violent offences, when the offender has received a prison sentence of 12 months or more, or is detained as a mental health patient.

211. Probation services also work alongside police and prisons through existing multi-agency partnerships, such as the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Schemes, to assess and manage eligible violent offenders at a strategic level.

212. The Duty applies to a provider of probation services under section 3(6) of the Offender Management Act 2007. Local Delivery Unit (LDU) heads who represent the Probation Service at Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) should be

responsible for ensuring that there is appropriate representation to the partnership. The representative should be able to:

- Engage fully with the local partnership to prevent and reduce serious violence.
- Share currently collated and/or published data and information to inform the strategic assessment for the local area (for example; Offender management quarterly statistics – key statistics relating to offenders who are in prison or under Probation Service supervision and/or Criminal court statistics – National Statistics on cases in the magistrates' courts and Crown Court.)
- Use relevant risk assessment tools to inform the individual needs assessment of individual offenders.
- Support the development and implementation of the local strategy to address the risks identified.
- Collaborate with local partners to help reduce instances of re-offending amongst violent offenders and protect vulnerable groups (for example, victims of domestic abuse.)

Health

213. Violence is a major cause of ill health and poor wellbeing, and is related to the difference in health status, social determinants of healthcare and health related behaviours between areas and communities; it is strongly related to inequalities. Data has shown that the poorest fifth of people in England have hospital admission rates for violence five times higher than those of the most affluent fifth.⁵⁴ It affects individuals and communities and is a drain on health services, the criminal justice system and the wider economy.

214. Preventative interventions aimed specifically at reducing inequalities to prevent violence and address its root causes, especially those in early childhood, improve multiple long-term outcomes including the prosperity for violence, education, employability and health.

⁵⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216977/Violence-prevention.pdf

215. Within the health sector in England, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)⁵⁵ are specified authorities for the purposes of the Duty as they are best placed to lead and assure local input to and delivery of serious violence prevention strategies. The Health and Social Care Act 2022 provides for the establishment of Integrated Care Boards (ICB) to replace Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Act places a duty on to set out any steps it proposes to take to address the particular needs of victims of abuse, including domestic and sexual abuse.
216. All CCG functions and duties will transfer to an Integrated Care Board (ICB) when they are established from 1 July 2022, along with all CCG assets and liabilities including their commissioning responsibilities and contracts. Relevant statutory safeguarding duties of CCGs will transition to ICB executive leads.
217. ICBs, subject to the Duty from 1 July 2022, are partnerships of health and care organisations that will come together to plan and deliver joined up services and to improve the health of people who live and work in their area. They exist to achieve four aims:
- improve outcomes in population health and healthcare
 - tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience, and access
 - enhance productivity and value for money
 - help the NHS support broader social and economic development.
218. The ICB⁵⁶ executive chief nurse is likely to stand up place-based partnership structures of clinical leads to collaborate with local safeguarding partnerships and Safeguarding Adult Boards. These partnerships need to be preventative: VRUs, Community Safety Partnerships; personal experience victim and survivor advocacy

⁵⁵ Clinical Commissioning Groups will be replaced with Integrated Care Boards from 1 July 2022 as part of the Health and Care Act 2022.

⁵⁶ Clinical Commissioning Groups will be replaced with Integrated Care Boards from 1 July 2022 as part of the Health and Care Act 2022.

services, sustainable peer support community assets, police and crime commissioners and education leads.

219. The accountable officer of a ICB⁵⁷ should ensure that there is appropriate representation to the partnership. As part of the partnership, this representative will be expected to:

- Facilitate the sharing of relevant anonymous health data and information to inform the problem profile/strategic needs assessment for the area (for example, number of violent injuries treated within NHS urgent care settings),
- Support the development and implementation of a strategy to identify and mitigate the risks identified and agree an approach to preventing serious violence, managing related health problems, and improving wellbeing/resilience of the community
- Facilitate appropriate commissioning (and co-commissioning) within the local health system to prevent, treat and manage serious violence as set out in the strategy (for example, mental healthcare services, commitments on maternity and neonatal care, and children's and young people's mental health, in the NHS Long Term Plan)
- Where possible, (co-)commission support services for those at risk of or involved in serious violence (including from the voluntary and community sector)

220. Depending on the geographic boundaries of the partnership(s) in their commissioning area, ICBs⁵⁸ may need to:

- Engage directly with all serious violence partnerships in their area, or
- In some areas, there will be more than one ICB per partnership area. Although each ICB must comply with the Duty, they may consider it appropriate to nominate a 'lead' or consider a 'hosting' arrangement for input and active engagement into the serious violence partnership on behalf of

⁵⁷ As above

⁵⁸ Clinical Commissioning Groups will be replaced with Integrated Care Boards from 1 July 2022 as part of the Health and Care Act 2022.

other Integrated Care System or group of ICBs. In this case, the serious violence lead should ensure the input of all ICBs in the geographical footprint.

221. NHS England and NHS Improvement will have a scrutiny and assurance role in holding ICBs to account for their input into local serious violence partnerships for any matters laid within guidance, including through the Safeguarding Accountability and Assurance Framework⁵⁹ and Safeguarding Commissioning Assurance Toolkit. ICBs should contact their NHS England and NHS Improvement Regional Safeguarding Lead for support.

Sharing of patient and personal information

222. Under the Duty there are specific limitations under section 16 and 17 of the PCSC Act on the disclosure of information by health and social care authorities. Patient information is not permitted to be disclosed and health and social authorities can only share anonymous data. Further details can be found in the Information Sharing chapter of this guidance.
223. If patient or personal information is shared by a health or social care authority, such disclosures must be consistent with the existing legal framework, which includes both the Common law duty of confidence, as well as the Data Protection Act 2018. The General Medical Council (GMC) have produced guidance on this⁶⁰.

Local Authority

224. Local authorities are responsible for the delivery of a range of vital services for people and businesses in a local area, including but not limited to, children's and adult's social care, children and adult safeguarding, schools, housing⁶¹ and planning, youth services, business support, alcohol licensing, leisure, substance

⁵⁹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/safeguarding-children-young-people-adults-at-risk-saaf-1.pdf>

⁶⁰ <https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/confidentiality>

⁶¹ Registered providers of social housing are not included within the Serious Violence Duty

misuse, community safety as well as public health commissioning, so will have an essential role to play in partnership arrangements.

225. Local authority Chief Executives should ensure that there is appropriate representation to the partnership to fulfil the local authority's duties. This representation may be delegated to an appropriate senior officer.

226. Within the Local Government landscape, specified authorities are:

- A district council
- A county council in England
- A London borough council
- The Common Council of the City of London in its capacity as a local authority
- The Council of the Isles of Scilly
- A county council in Wales
- A county borough council in Wales

227. Local authorities are well placed to complement the work of other agencies and contribute to the prevention and reduction of serious violence by:

- Sharing a range of relevant aggregated data sets for the development of the strategic needs assessment (for example data already collected from local schools and social care services),
- Conducting wider preventative work addressing general factors that contribute to risk and vulnerability (e.g. poverty, housing⁶², family challenges, environment),
- Leading on wider public health commissioning to support prevention and address risk factors or impacts of trauma (e.g. substance misuse services including alcohol treatment services),

⁶² Existing local authorities duties under the Housing Act 1996 are relevant here and should be considered as part of the work to meet the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty.

- Providing information on availability/pressures on local resources including housing, community support, children's social care, etc., and
- Supporting early intervention initiatives which could be required in response to issues concerning child criminal exploitation, gang activity, sexual violence, domestic abuse.

228. Local authorities should also be mindful of all institutions falling within their jurisdiction which may have a specific issue relating to serious violence, particularly when carrying out the initial local strategic needs assessment. This may include residential care facilities for looked-after children, including secure children's homes, supported accommodation and domestic abuse accommodation- based services. Other public spaces such as parks, for which local authorities are responsible, should also be considered as these may be areas where specific forms of serious violence are prevalent.

229. Mayoral Combined Authorities are able to participate in partnership arrangements to support the prevention and reduction of serious violence, however there is no legal obligation for them to do so.⁶³ This is due to the different functions a combined authority might perform, not all of which are likely to be relevant to tackling serious violence. Constituent authorities may choose to collaborate through the overarching structure of a combined authority however they remain individually accountable for their participation.

230. For the purposes of the Duty, local authority Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are a separate specified authority, and so are treated as independent to the local authority. YOTs will therefore be responsible for engaging with the partnership in their own right.

231. Local Government is devolved to Wales and the relevant guidance is contained in chapter one, Delivery in Wales.

⁶³ An exception to this is the Greater Manchester Combined Authority which is subject to the duty, but only in respect of its role as a fire and rescue authority and only in the exercise of those functions. This applies to any future Mayoral combined authorities formed which perform those same functions.

Housing and homelessness

232. Local authorities will be best placed to provide a strategic overview of and information about housing and associated issues in the local area. Existing requirements under housing legislation should be considered as part of the work to meet the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty. It is essential that this includes recognising and protecting the cohorts most at risk of involvement in serious violence.

233. Section 195 of the Housing Act 1996⁶⁴ places a duty on housing authorities to work with people who are threatened with homelessness within 56 days to help prevent them from becoming homeless – ‘the ‘prevention duty’. Section 189B of the 1996 Act⁶⁵ requires housing authorities to help people who are homeless to secure accommodation – the ‘relief duty’. Under these duties, the housing authority is obliged to take reasonable steps to help the person either remain in their existing accommodation (where applicable) or secure alternative accommodation. These duties apply when the housing authority is satisfied that the person is both homeless (or at risk of homelessness within 56 days) and eligible for assistance.

234. Section 177(1A)(b) of the Housing Act 1996⁶⁶ defines violence as violence from another person or threats of violence from another person which are likely to be carried out. This is in relation to whether it is reasonable to continue to occupy accommodation and the circumstances to be considered as to whether a person runs a risk of violence are the same.

235. Section 177(1) of the 1996 Act⁶⁷ provides that it is not reasonable for a person to continue to occupy accommodation if it is probable that this will lead to violence against:

- a. the applicant;
- b. person who normally resides as a member of the applicant’s family; or,

⁶⁴ [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

⁶⁵ [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

⁶⁶ [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

⁶⁷ [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

- c. any other person who might reasonably be expected to reside with the applicant.

236. It will usually be apparent from the homelessness assessment whether the person has had to leave accommodation because of violence or threats of violence. An assessment of the likelihood of a threat of violence being carried out should not be based on whether there has been actual violence in the past. Assessments must be based on the facts of the case and should be devoid of any value judgements about what a person should or should not do, or should or should not have done, to mitigate the risk of any further violence.

237. Certain categories of household have a priority need for homelessness assistance. A person who is vulnerable as a result of ceasing to occupy accommodation because of violence from another person or threats of violence from another person which are likely to be carried out, or who is homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse, has a priority need as set out in section 189 of the 1996 Act⁶⁸.

238. The prevention and relief duties are owed to all eligible persons who are homeless irrespective of 'priority need'. However, if homelessness is not successfully prevented or relieved, a housing authority will owe the main housing duty to persons who are eligible, have a priority need for accommodation and are not homeless intentionally. If the local authority has reason to believe a person has priority need, they also have a duty to provide interim accommodation during the relief duty.

239. Section 193(2) of the 1996 Act⁶⁹ requires housing authorities to secure that accommodation is available for occupation for applicants who have a priority need for accommodation, and as set out in section 176 of the 1996 Act⁷⁰, the accommodation must be available for occupation by the applicant together with any

⁶⁸ [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

⁶⁹ [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

⁷⁰ [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

other person who normally resides with them as a member of the family, or might reasonably be expected to reside with them.

240. Housing authorities have a continuing obligation to keep the suitability of accommodation under review, and to respond to any relevant change in circumstances which may affect suitability. Further information on priority need can be found at Chapter 8 (of the Homelessness Code of Guidance)⁷¹.
241. There are a number of potential accommodation options for victims of serious violence, and housing authorities will need to consider which are most appropriate for each person on a case by case basis taking into account their circumstances and needs. This may include safe temporary accommodation and/or a managed transfer. Housing authorities may, for example, provide temporary accommodation whilst action is taken to exclude or to arrest and detain a perpetrator.
242. Account will need to be taken of any social considerations relating to the person and their household that might affect the suitability of accommodation offered to them to prevent or relieve homelessness, or under the main housing duty.
243. Section 208(1) of the 1996 Act⁷² requires housing authorities to secure accommodation within their district, in so far as is reasonably practicable. However, in circumstances where there has been serious violence or threats of serious violence in a particular locality, there may be clear benefits for the applicant of being accommodated outside of the district to ensure their safety.
244. In some circumstances, housing authorities may need to consider the need for accommodation that would not be found by a perpetrator (which may involve an out of district placement) and which has security measures and appropriately trained staff to protect the occupants. Housing authorities may consider implementing a reciprocal agreement with other housing authorities and providers to facilitate out of area moves for applicants at risk of violence.

⁷¹ [Chapter 8: Priority need - Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/priority-need-homelessness-code-of-guidance-for-local-authorities)

⁷² [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52)

245. In terms of determining the appropriate authority to take a homelessness application (local connection referrals), a housing authority cannot refer a person to another housing authority where they have a local connection if that person or any person who might reasonably be expected to reside with them would be at risk of violence in that other district. The housing authority is under a positive duty to enquire whether the applicant would be at such a risk and, if they would, it should not be assumed that the person will take steps to deal with the threat of violence. For further guidance on local connection see Chapter 10 (of the Homelessness Code of Guidance)⁷³.
246. It is vitally important that housing authorities work together with other services including youth offending teams, educational authorities and national probation services to provide support for victims of serious violence and their household. To ensure people who have experienced actual or threatened violence get the support they need, housing authorities should also inform them of appropriate specialist organisations in the area as well as agencies offering counselling and support.
247. While not subject to the Serious Violence Duty, Private Registered Providers of social housing (PRPs) have a duty under s.170 of the Housing Act 1996⁷⁴ to cooperate with housing authorities – where the authority requests it - to such extent as is reasonable in the circumstances in offering accommodation to people with priority under the authority's allocation scheme. This includes lettings allocated to those requiring urgent re-housing as a result of violence or threats of violence.
248. Similarly, s.213 of the same Act⁷⁵ provides that, where a PRP has been requested by a housing authority to assist them in the discharge of their homelessness functions under Part 7, it must cooperate to the same extent.

⁷³ [Chapter 10: Local connection and referrals to another housing authority - Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

⁷⁴ [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

⁷⁵ [Housing Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Statutory guidance⁷⁶ on allocations issued in 2012, to which local authorities must pay due regard, reaffirms this.

249. Housing is devolved to Wales and the relevant guidance is contained in chapter one, Delivery in Wales.

Education

250. Engagement in education is a strong protective factor against children and young people's risk of involvement in serious violence. Through engaging in good quality education, children and young people feel a sense of belonging, achievement and are equipped with skills and resilience they need to be safe and to succeed in life. Education providers have a vital role in preventing and reducing serious violence by facilitating early intervention, prevention and safeguarding children and young people in their care as a relevant agency within the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
251. Effective collaboration between the local partnership and educational institutions in the local area has the potential to improve police, school and college partnerships and provide support for any existing or planned institution-level interventions. This close collaboration may also add to children and young people's sense of safety in school, college and their local community as they will be more alert to the work taking place in their local area to prevent, reduce and safeguard children and young people against serious violence.
252. In recognition of the vital role schools play in safeguarding children and young people, specified authorities must consult educational authorities⁷⁷ located within the partnership area, including; local authority maintained schools, academies, independent schools, free schools, alternative education providers and further education, in the preparation of the local strategy.

⁷⁶https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60df2d0de90e0771784b991f/Current_allocation_of_accommodation_guidance.pdf

⁷⁷ As defined in section 12 of and Schedule 2 to the PCSC Act.

253. Educational authorities may also choose to collaborate with a specified authority, a prison or youth custody authority or another educational authority in that area of their own volition. Or, if requested by the specified authorities educational authorities must collaborate with other partners in the preparation and delivery of the strategy.

254. Educational authorities as defined in section 12 of and Schedule 2 to the PCSC Act are:

- Governing bodies of maintained schools, further education colleges and sixth-form colleges in England and further education institutions in Wales
- Proprietors of academy schools, free schools, alternative provision academies and non-maintained special schools⁷⁸
- Proprietors of independent schools
- Management committees of pupil referral units

255. A strategic education representative(s) or representative group for the local area should be chosen by the partnership to provide a link between the responsible authorities and individual education institutions. If a representative group is chosen, this can be made up of educational institutions across all age ranges and school or college types.

256. A strategic education representative for the local area should be nominated by the partnership to provide a link between the specified authorities and individual institutions. This role may include:

- Representing the voice of education providers in discussions on serious violence locally
- Assisting the partnership to better understand the education risk factors and vulnerabilities experienced by young people

⁷⁸ In the case of academies and free school trusts, the proprietor will be the trust itself. Multi-academy trusts spanning more than one local area will need to consider whether it is necessary to engage with one or multiple local partnerships.

257. The partnership and the strategic education representative(s) or representative group should:

- Use existing safeguarding structures or other approaches, to consult with the wider group of schools and education providers to gain qualitative insight into the impact of serious violence on the education sector more broadly
- Collectively agree the ways in which the education sector can support the implementation of the strategy to address the local factors that put a child or young person at risk of being a victim or perpetrator of serious violence

258. Individual education providers must be consulted by the specified authorities and the strategic education representative(s) or representative group in the preparation of the local strategy, and as responsible authorities, they should:

- Provide data, as required by existing statutory duties, to Local Authorities. This data will feed into the evidence-based analysis of the risk profile of young people and the causes of serious youth violence for the local serious violence strategy. Examples of this data include data on school provision, exclusions and persistent absence
- Engage with the partnership via the strategic education representative(s) or representative group to provide qualitative insight into the impact of serious violence on the education sector
Engage with the partnership via the strategic education representative to provide insight into the risk factors and vulnerabilities experienced by children and young people in the local area
- Support the development and implementation of the strategy to address the local factors that put a child at risk of being a victim or perpetrator of serious violence
- Where required deliver at an individual institution level actions that are specified in the strategy which have been agreed by the partnership in collaboration with the strategic education representative(s) and wider consultation.

259. Educational authorities may be required under the Duty to carry out actions specified in a strategy which have been agreed by the partnership in collaboration

with the strategic education representative(s) and wider consultation. Where and when requested, an educational institution must comply with actions in a local strategy, so long as they:

- are compatible with any other statutory duties;
- would not have an adverse effect on the exercise of the authority's functions;
- are not disproportionate to the need to prevent and reduce serious violence locally; and
- would not mean that the authority incurred unreasonable costs.

260. Serious violence may also occur in higher education residential accommodation or licensed premises, such as student union facilities. If a local higher education institution considers serious violence to be an issue that is pertinent to them then they are encouraged to feed into the partnership where appropriate.

261. Education is devolved to Wales and the relevant guidance is contained in chapter one, Delivery in Wales.

Fire and Rescue

262. Fire and Rescue Authorities are responsible for the oversight and delivery of Fire and Rescue Services in their area. As of January 2022, there are currently 44 Fire and Rescue Authorities in England, and three in Wales (where Fire and Rescue Services are a devolved responsibility).

263. The Duty applies to the Fire and Rescue Authority for all Authority areas, including Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners, metropolitan Mayors and the London Fire Commissioner solely in their capacity as fire and rescue authorities and in the exercise of those functions. The Fire and Rescue Authority may wish to identify a representative, which may be the operational Fire and Rescue Service for the area, as this may be the body that will have the greatest local knowledge, however the Authority as the duty holder will remain responsible for compliance with the requirements of the duty. The Authority should, therefore, ensure that any suitable representative has responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with the partnership arrangements.

264. Emergency Services are already subject to a statutory duty to collaborate with one another and Fire and Rescue Services have a key role in these partnerships, often occupying a very trusted position by some community groups. The statutory duty only applies in England.

265. Collaboration with partners can aid early identification and diversion from involvement in serious violence which are both crucial in reversing the increase in harm which may be caused by and against young people in the local community.

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Chapter Five: Monitoring and Compliance

Successful partnerships

266. Three key success measures for the prevention and reduction of serious violence are homicide rates, hospital admissions for knife/sharp object assault, and police-recorded knife crime. Outcomes may also be based on: data on police recorded violence offences included in the local areas' strategic needs assessment, this could include (but is not limited to) offences involving firearms, robbery and possession of weapons offences. Data on causal factors of violence may also be of interest.
267. Police data on charge rates for serious violence offences, like robbery; and Ministry of Justice statistics for offenders cautioned/convicted for knife and weapons related offences are also useful sources of information for measuring the success of a partnership.
268. The success measures specified above do not prevent local areas from adopting additional success measures to help track progress in dealing with local serious violence issues. In any event, partnerships will want to tailor the success measures to suit the local strategic needs assessment.

How will partnerships be monitored?

269. Partners are required to work together to establish the local problem profile/strategic needs assessment and prepare and implement a strategy, which should be reviewed on an annual basis.⁷⁹ In doing so, partnerships are expected to be able to self-monitor and collectively evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the local strategy. Partnerships may wish to seek additional support from an external evaluator, such as a university research group, to support them with this process. Police and Crime Commissioners, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the

⁷⁹ By the provisions in Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the PCSC Act.

Common Council of the City of London, will also have a discretionary power to monitor the performance of the local partnership against its shared objectives. Government departments may also monitor progress in relation to the Duty requirements and provide advice/support to local areas where required. A cross-Whitehall board will deliver national oversight, consider published strategies, the impact of the Duty and act as a central point for resolving strategic delivery challenges.

270. CSPs have a statutory requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to keep the implementation of their strategies under review for the purposes of monitoring effectiveness and make any changes to such strategies where necessary or expedient and to publish the outcomes of each review.
271. Routine inspection programmes undertaken by individual inspectorates may also consider the organisational response to local serious violence issues.

Secretary of State powers

272. Where the Secretary of State is satisfied that a specified authority, educational, prison or youth custody authority has failed to discharge certain duties imposed under the PCSC Act⁸⁰, for example following an inspection as set out above, section 18 of the PCSC Act provides that the Secretary of State may issue directions to responsible authorities for the purpose of securing compliance with that duty. This power does not apply to probation services provided by the Secretary of State or to governors of prisons, young offender institutions, secure training centres or the principal of a directly managed secure college. For such institutions, the Secretary of State for Justice may use existing mechanisms to secure compliance with statutory duties, if required.
273. Directions given under section 18 of the PCSC Act may require the relevant specified authority to take such steps as in the opinion of the Secretary of State are necessary, for the purpose of securing compliance with the Duty. This direction can

⁸⁰ In relation to a specified authority a duty imposed by section 8, 14(6), 15(3) or 17(4) of the PCSC Act, and in relation to an educational, prison or youth custody authority a duty imposed by section 15(3), (4) or (5)(b) or 17(4) of that Act.

be enforced by a mandatory order, that is an order granted on application to the Administrative Court in England and Wales, to compel a public body to comply with a legal duty. The Secretary of State must obtain consent of the Welsh Ministers before giving a direction to a devolved Welsh authority.

274. We believe that where a direction is required and that local policing bodies have a key role in instigating this process. We expect these powers to be seldom used and will only be utilised where all other means of securing compliance have been exhausted.

275. Where local policing bodies exercise their powers under section 14(2) of the PCSC Act to monitor the exercise by specified authorities of their functions under sections 8 or 9 of the Act, section 14(3) provides local policing bodies with the power to report their findings to the Secretary of State. In exercising this power local policing bodies should initially contact in writing the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Depending on the specified authority in question, the Secretary of State would either consider the report or would liaise with her counterpart in the relevant Government Department.

Chapter Six: Community Safety Partnerships – Serious Violence Strategies

Introduction

276. Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), formerly known as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, were established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to help tackle crime and reduce reoffending. There are around 300 CSPs in England and 22 in Wales.⁸¹
277. CSPs are made up of ‘responsible authorities’ which are: police, probation service, local authorities, health, fire and rescue authorities who are responsible for developing strategies for reducing crime and disorder, combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances, and reducing re-offending in their areas.⁸² There has also been a mutual duty on PCCs and CSPs to cooperate on reducing crime and offending since the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.⁸³
278. The responsible authorities have a statutory duty to work together to: reduce re-offending; tackle crime and disorder; tackle anti-social behaviour; tackle alcohol and substance misuse; and tackle any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment.⁸⁴ CSPs may also work with any other local partners they wish to, including business representatives and the voluntary and community sector.
279. In carrying out their statutory duties, CSPs also have further obligations including: setting up a strategic group to direct the work of the partnership; to

⁸¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-crime-prevention/2010-to2015-government-policy-crime-prevention>

⁸² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/part/II/chapter/II/crossheading/crime-and-disorder-strategies>

⁸³ As set out in section 10 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

⁸⁴ As set out in section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

regularly engage and consult with the community about their priorities and progress achieving them; to set up protocols and arrangements for sharing information; analyse a wide range of data, including recorded crime levels and patterns, in order to identify priorities in an annual strategic assessment to set out a partnership plan and monitor progress; produce a strategy to reduce reoffending; and commission domestic violence homicide reviews.

Preventing and Reducing Serious Violence

280. Alongside the duty, the PCSC Act also amends the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to include a requirement for CSPs to formulate and implement a strategy to prevent people from becoming involved in serious violence, both as victims and perpetrators, and reduce instances of serious violence in the area.
281. 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. The PCSC Act allows for wider co-operation between CSP members and responsible authorities subject to the Serious Violence Duty, including the sharing of data and information, for that purpose.
282. In recognition of a CSPs wider remit in relation to community safety, and that many issues concerning violent crime can be interrelated, a CSP may choose to incorporate their strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence into a wider plan which also encompasses their other priorities. This will also help to ensure that individual strategies are aligned without being duplicative.

Case study: London Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)⁸⁵

Putting community and young people at the heart of our work to have a sustainable long-term approach towards reducing violence is one of 3 strategic aims of London's VRU.

⁸⁵https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/838930/multi-agency_approach_to_serious_violence_prevention.pdf

The VRU Partnership Reference Group has been set up to provide strategic direction, support and challenge the work of the Unit. The group is chaired by the Mayor and is made up of representatives from community groups and specialists in health, education, police, probation and local government.

One of the first actions of the London VRU is establishing a young people's action group which will be resourced and empowered to lead on parts of the VRU's work programme. Young people will have a stake in all of the Unit's work but particularly on changing the message around violence, ensuring the youth voice is properly representative and by supporting peer-to-peer engagement.

The Unit has also brought together a group of 30 community stakeholders to form a Community Involvement Planning group which has supported the Unit in planning engagement and shaping priorities. In January 2019 approximately 150 community organisations came together to discuss the establishment of the VRU and were able to input ideas.

Through a series of formal and informal meetings, workshops and discussions with various community partners the Community Involvement Planning Group has worked with the VRU to develop a set of commitments for the VRU in its operations across London, with Londoners:

- Work with a wide range of community voices
- Be as accessible as possible and create meaningful opportunities for involvement
- Recognise where communities are coming from
- Amplify community voice
- Ensure community involvement is sustained over the long term
- Involve young people
- Tackle stereotypes

Interaction with existing duties

Statutory duties

283. Relevant duties in Wales are covered in the Delivery in Wales chapter of this guidance.

284. Responsible authorities will want to be aware of the following statutory duties in exercising their functions under this duty:

- The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, The Police Act 1996, the Police Reform Act 2002 and the Policing and Crime Act 2017 underpin the core operational duties of police officers which include; maintaining law and order, protecting the public, prevention and detection of crime, protection of property and the maintenance of civil order. Each police force is overseen by the Secretary of State, and the Chief Police Officer (Chief Constables, Commissioner of the City of London Police and Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police) is held to account by the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, in relation to the Metropolitan Police and the Common Council of the City of London as police authority in relation to the City of London.
- Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) were established by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act') to be directly accountable for individual policing. Their constitution, powers and duties are set out in Part 1 of the 2011 Act.
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)⁸⁶ are clinically-led statutory NHS bodies in England, responsible for the planning and commissioning of health care services for their local area, including mental health services, urgent and emergency care, elective hospital services, and community care. Their statutory

⁸⁶ Clinical Commissioning Groups will be replaced with Integrated Care Boards from 1 July 2022 as part of the Health and Care Act 2022.

functions are set out in the National Health Service Act 2006 and Health and Social Care Act 2012.

285. The duties and functions of local authorities are set out in numerous Acts of Parliament. Particularly relevant functions include:

- The Local Government Act 1972 ('the 1972 Act'), Part IX which prescribes the functions of local authorities, including public health functions and social services functions. The 1972 Act also provides the framework for Local Government in Wales (as amended, including by the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994)
- Functions and duties are further prescribed in section 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the NHS Act 2006 and the NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Core social services, duties and functions are set out in the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. Additional duties and functions are set out in the Children Act 1989 (in respect of children) (safeguarding duties at sections 27 and 47), Children Act 2004 (safeguarding duty at section 11), the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Care Standards Act 2000, the Childcare Act 2006 and the Mental Health Act 1983. In Wales the duties and functions of local authority social services and of regional Safeguarding Boards are set out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and aligned statutory guidance.⁸⁷
- Community Safety duties and functions are set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 ('the 1998 Act') and Police and Justice Act 2006. Under section 17 of the 1998 Act, local authorities are under a duty to consider the crime and disorder implications of all their day-to-day activities. Youth Justice Offending service duties are also set out in the 1998 Act. Criminal Justice duties are set out in the Criminal Justice Act 2003.

⁸⁷ [Safeguarding guidance | GOV.WALES](#)

- Education duties and functions are set out in the Education Reform Act 1988, the Education Act 1996, the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, the Children Act 1989, Education Act 2002 and Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Child Poverty Act 2010. The proprietors of schools have various duties in relation to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children, including co-operation with other schools and with other relevant bodies. Guidance on these various functions is set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
- Core housing duties are set out under the Housing Act 1996.
- Fire duties and functions, predominantly relating to fire safety, are set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2004
- Local Authority duties, as set out in Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, relating to provision of support for all victims of domestic abuse within 'relevant' accommodation.
- The core functions and legal duties for adult prisons are set out in the Prison Act 1952 and the Prison Rules 1999.
- The core functions and legal duties for under 18 Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) and Secure Training Centres (STCs) are set out in the Prison Act 1952 and in the Young Offender Institution Rules 2000 and the Secure Training Centre Rules 1998.
- The National Probation Service supervises high-risk offenders released into the community. Its functions, on behalf of the Secretary of State are to ensure sufficient probation provision is provided including the supervision and rehabilitation of persons remanded to bail, given conditional cautions or charged with or convicted of an offence and giving assistance to courts in determining the appropriate sentences to pass. This is set out in Section 1 of the Offender Management Act 2007.

- Youth Offending Teams are established by local authorities under section 39(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Their statutory duty is to co-ordinate the delivery of youth justice services in the authority's area, and to carry out functions assigned in the youth justice plan formulated by the local authority.
- Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) core functions are set out in The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 ('FRSA 2004') and include extinguishing fires in their area, protecting life and property in the event of fires in their area, rescuing and protecting people in the event of a road traffic collision and rescuing and protecting people in the event of other emergencies. FRAs must also comply with the Fire and Rescue Services National Framework.
- Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 made the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child part of its domestic law. This ensures that children's rights are included in all policy making in Wales.

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Useful guidance and resources

286. Responsible authorities may also wish to refer to the following links to guidance, documents and resources:

- [Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings: Guidance on interviewing victims and witnesses, and guidance on using special measures 2011, Ministry of Justice](#)
- [Advice to parents and carers on gangs 2014, Home Office](#)
- [Advice to schools and colleges on gangs and youth violence 2013, Home Office](#)
- [Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England](#)
- [About the toolkit - Youth Endowment Fund](#)
- [Commissioning services to tackle violence against women and girls - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines 2018, Home Office](#)
- [Caldicott principles as defined in 'The Information Governance Review'](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [DH – Code of practice on protecting the confidentiality of service user information](#)
- [Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Draft Domestic Abuse Act Statutory Guidance: Domestic Abuse Act statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Draft Coercive and Controlling Behaviour Statutory Guidance](#)

- [From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives: a 10-year plan to cut crime and save lives by reducing the supply and demand for drugs and delivering a high-quality treatment and recovery system.](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulations/ Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [GMC 'Confidentiality: good practice in handling patient information guidance' \(May 2018\)](#)
- [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2018, HM Government](#)
- [Information sharing for community safety: Guidance and practice advice 2010, Home Office](#)
- [Keeping Learners Safe, Welsh Government](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education 2020, Department for Education](#)
- [Modern Slavery: Statutory Guidance for England and Wales \(under s49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015\) and Non-Statutory Guidance for Scotland and Northern Ireland](#)
- [Multi-agency public protection arrangements \(MAPPA\) 2012, Ministry of Justice, National Offender Management Service, and HM Prison Service](#)
- [NHS England Safeguarding Policy 2019, NHS England and NHS Improvement](#)
- [National protocol on reducing criminalisation of looked-after children 2018, Department for Education](#)
- [Preventing serious violence: a multi-agency approach 2019, Public Health England](#)
- [Preventing offending and re-offending by children 2019, Public Health England](#)

- [Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk in the NHS: Safeguarding Accountability and Assurance Framework 2019, NHS England and NHS Improvement](#)
- [Serious and Organised Crime Toolkit: An Interactive Toolkit for practitioners working with young people 2021, Home Office](#)
- [Supporting Families Programme guidance 2022 to 2025](#)
- [Safeguarding guidance | GOV.WALES](#)
- [Social services codes of practice | GOV.WALES](#)
- [Supporting male victims - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The Children and Young People Secure Estate National Partnership Agreement 2018-2021, HM Government and NHS England](#)
- [The Early Intervention Foundation](#)
- [The What Works Centre for Crime Reduction](#)
- [Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Violence Reduction Unit interim guidance 2020, Home Office](#)
- [VAWG commissioning toolkit \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, HM Government](#)
- [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015: guidance | GOV.WALES](#)
- [Youth Endowment Fund Evidence and Reports, Impetus and Home Office](#)

Glossary

Term	Definition
Serious Violence	As defined in the Serious Violence Strategy ⁸⁸ 2018, HM Government. The scope of the strategy is concerned with specific types of crime such as homicide, knife crime, and gun crime and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in gangs and county lines drug dealing. It also includes emerging crime threats faced in some areas of the country such as the use of corrosive substances as a weapon.
Serious Violence Duty	A duty placed on local organisations to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. As set out in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022.
Local Area	The primary area within which specified authorities will collaborate in discharging the duty. This may be, as a minimum, a local authority area and, at a maximum, a police force area.
Partnership	An arrangement through which specified authorities will work together to meet the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty.
Strategic Needs Assessment	An analysis of current and long-term issues relating to serious violence and the cohorts most vulnerable to involvement in a local area undertaken to provide a greater understanding of established and emerging

⁸⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>

serious violence trends, priority locations or other high-risk issues.

Strategy

A high-level plan outlining the multi-agency response that the partnership will take to prevent and reduce serious violence in the specified local area.

Specified Authorities

All authorities to whom the Serious Violence Duty applies, as defined in section 11 of and Schedule 1 to the PCSC Act.

Responsible Authorities

All authorities to whom the Serious Violence Duty applies and/or organisations and institutions with a duty to co-operate with specified authorities when requested to do so. As defined in sections 11 and 12 of, and Schedule 1 and 2 to the PCSC Act.

Local Policing Bodies

Police and Crime Commissioners, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), the Common Council of the City of London in its capacity as a police authority and Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners in their capacity as local policing bodies and in the exercise of those functions.

Violence Reduction Unit

Non-statutory partnerships which offer leadership and strategic coordination of the local response to serious violence by bringing together police, local government, health and education professionals, community leaders and other key partners to identify the drivers of serious violence and agree a multi-agency response to them.

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