

HILLINGDON'S KNIFE CRIME REDUCTION PLAN

Relevant Board Member(s)	Councillor Jane Palmer
Organisation	London Borough of Hillingdon
Report author	Jacqui Robertson
Papers with report	None

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To update the Board of the multi agency actions being taken in Hillingdon to reduce knife crime as detailed in the Hillingdon partners Knife Crime and Serious Violence Plan 2019-20.
Contribution to plans and strategies	Hillingdon's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2021
Financial Cost	There is no direct cost arising from the recommendation set out in this report.
Ward(s) affected	All

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Health and Wellbeing Board acknowledges and endorses the multi agency work being taken in relation to knife crime.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

What is knife crime?

There is no Home Office definition of 'knife crime'. The phrase was adopted by the media and is now popularly used to refer primarily to stabbings but also to the illegal carrying of knives by people in a public place or other premises. However, 'knife-enabled crime' includes a variety of other offences involving a bladed weapon.

Knife crime includes:

- carrying a knife
- trying to buy a knife if you are under 18
- threatening someone with a knife
- owning a banned knife
- injuring or fatally wounding somebody with a knife

- intent to injure or harm somebody with a knife
- a robbery or burglary where a knife was carried as a weapon

What's the law?

Setting aside the damage inflicted by a knife on a life, the potential legal consequences for those who carry, and use in acts of violence, a knife are severe. For simply carrying a knife in a public place, the maximum penalty if convicted is four years in prison. Those found on more than one occasion to be in possession of a knife face a minimum sentence of six months. Offences when a knife is used on another person or in the commission of a crime (i.e. street robbery), the punishments become even more life-changing. Using a knife or another bladed instrument, depending on the circumstances and nature of injuries caused, can lead to offenders being charged with a range of offences, from assault to Section 18 Causing Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) with intent, from attempted murder to manslaughter and ultimately murder. Such offences can lead to many years in prison. While committing murder carries a mandatory life sentences, offenders can also be sentenced to life in jail for committing a Section 18 GBH offence. If someone is injured or killed by a knife while you are present you too could be prosecuted. You could potentially be sent to prison for murder in a joint enterprise.

Statistical Data

Using statistical data obtained from the Metropolitan Police during the year December 2018 – December 2019, 411 knife crime offences were recorded and during the month of December 2019 there were 26 recorded knife crime offences.

The table below shows recorded knife crime offences for each of the London boroughs for December 2019. Of those, Hillingdon remains one of the safer boroughs in London, with the 9th lowest number of knife crime offences (joint with two other boroughs).

Borough	Type	Number
Westminster	Knife Crime	129
Enfield	Knife Crime	64
Southwark	Knife Crime	63
Haringey	Knife Crime	58
Barnet	Knife Crime	55
Hackney	Knife Crime	52
Newham	Knife Crime	51
Brent	Knife Crime	50
Camden	Knife Crime	50
Tower Hamlets	Knife Crime	48
Kensington and Chelsea	Knife Crime	48
Croydon	Knife Crime	44
Lewisham	Knife Crime	43
Islington	Knife Crime	42
Ealing	Knife Crime	41
Greenwich	Knife Crime	40
Wandsworth	Knife Crime	35
Lambeth	Knife Crime	35
Redbridge	Knife Crime	29

Borough	Type	Number
Waltham Forest	Knife Crime	29
Barking and Dagenham	Knife Crime	27
Hillingdon	Knife Crime	26
Hounslow	Knife Crime	26
Bexley	Knife Crime	26
Harrow	Knife Crime	23
Bromley	Knife Crime	19
Hammersmith and Fulham	Knife Crime	18
Havering	Knife Crime	13
Sutton	Knife Crime	9
Merton	Knife Crime	8
Richmond upon Thames	Knife Crime	8
Kingston upon Thames	Knife Crime	7

Boroughs in Police West Area Basic Command Unit shown in bold text

Since the last report was submitted to the Board on the 24th September 2019, the number of reported incidents in knife crime in Hillingdon is shown in the table below:

Month	Crime Count
September 2019	22
October 2019	47
November 2019	24
December 2019	26

Over the four month period there is an average crime count of 29.75 reports.

Over the last decade, there have been peaks, troughs and a spike again in knife crime across London Boroughs. It is clear that knife crime has a detrimental effect to the health and wellbeing of all, causing fear, anxiety and trauma to both victims, their families and the wider community as a whole due to the direct effects caused by persons that carry and use a knife.

Through the London Knife Crime Strategy, that is the Greater London Authorities comprehensive plan of partnership action to tackle the immediate threat to safety posed by knife crime in London, there are six action strands included, those being:

- Targeting lawbreakers
- Offering ways out of crime
- Keeping deadly weapons off our streets
- Protecting and educating young people
- Standing with communities, neighbourhoods and families against knife crime
- Supporting victims of knife crime

These action strands are mirrored in Hillingdon's Community Safety Partnership Knife Crime and Serious Violence Plan 2019/20.

The West Area Police are reporting that a reduction in robberies and domestic abuse will have a significant impact on decreasing the number of knife crime offences. In addition, as group offending contain a higher proportion of young victims and serious injuries suffered, it can be referred to as a high harm aspect of knife crime, even though it may not be considered high in

volume.

The Police have and continue to run a number of initiatives and they remain focused operations on reducing knife crime and delivery of programmes into schools and prevention projects. Operation Magnitude has commenced which brings in territorial support group officers into Hillingdon for four weeks from 17th February, as well as a week of action from Operation Venice, an anti robbery taskforce.

Key findings of a recent Knife Crime Analysis undertaken by the Police shows that in Hillingdon, current knife crime data show that from 1st December 2018 to 31st December 2019,

- 411 knife crime offences occurred in the London Borough of Hillingdon.
- 28.9% (119) resulted in an injury.
- 45 victims with injuries who were under the age of 25, with six of those being in relation to domestic abuse.
- According to the data, no knife crime offences whereby the victim was under the age of 25, was flagged as being gang related.

The Knife Crime & Serious Violence Strategic Group meets on a monthly basis to monitor and drive the progress of actions in the Safer Hillingdon Partnership Knife Crime and Serious Violence Plan 2019/20. Actions are grouped under the following themes:

- Governance;
- Targeting Lawbreakers (Enforcement and criminal justice response to knife crime);
- Keeping Deadly Weapons Off Our Streets (Addressing the accessibility and availability of knives);
- Protecting And Educating Young People (Recognising the importance of prevention and working alongside schools);
- Standing With Communities, Neighbourhoods and Families Against Knife Crime;
- Supporting Victims Of Knife Crime (Ensuring that improving support to victims is at the heart of a holistic response);
- Offering Ways Out Of Crime (Recognising that young people should be offered interventions which help them move away from criminality).

There are a total of 42 actions within the plan that are currently all on track to be completed by March 2020.

The Hillingdon Community Safety team are instigating a number of additional actions that are connected to Knife Crime & Serious Violence. Officers now completing a wide ranging "mapping project" looking at the use and supply of controlled drugs and psychoactive substances. This work will involve gathering information from various internal teams and external agencies so that we can fully understand the size of the problem, for example the types of controlled drugs and psychoactive substances being used/supplied in the Borough; the locations in the Borough where controlled drugs and psychoactive substances are being used/supplied; known user/supplier profiles; and links to other crimes including Knife Crime and Serious Violence. The outcomes will provide evidence to target interventions in areas and with groups having the highest needs, linking to knife crime.

Community Engagement events continue to be held to raise public confidence in the Police. These events are being run regularly with ward Safer Neighbourhood Teams taking a lead role, events include weapons sweeps in close proximity of a school, educational or other facility known to be frequented by young people.

The Hillingdon Community Safety team has facilitated a programme of partnership work with the Police to address incidents of serious anti-social behaviour in one part of the Borough that involved groups of young person's causing alarm and distress to local residents and traders. This work has culminated with officers working with the management of a local fast food outlet that was identified as the central gathering point for the young persons, gathering intelligence, engagement with the young people and the Police undertaking direct enforcement for drug, weapons and other such offences. The actions taken have had a marked improvement that has been noticed by local residents and local traders. A local business watch group is now being formed that will act as the "eyes and ears" of the local business community.

Due to the successes made in this initiative a further two areas affected by serious anti-social behaviour have been identified. It is planned to use similar methods at these locations to achieve positive outcomes to reduce anti-social behaviour and a fear of crime.

In addition the Community Safety team are driving a series of activities aimed at young people and the community working with a range of partners, including schools. The activities include rolling out programmed activities and one off activities. The activities include but are not limited to the following:

- Test purchase operations (e.g. under age knife sales).
- Knife Crime Conference with the Police
- Weapons Sweeps
- Films / presentations and awareness events across schools
- Targeted Problem Solving
- Drug Mapping Exercise
- MOPAC funded Diversionary Projects
- Monitoring / emptying of Knife Bins
- Police & Army 'outward bound' events

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

5. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

Reassurance that relevant agencies are working together taking a multi strand approach to tackle knife crime and resulting consequences.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

No consultation is required at this stage due to this report being an update report.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

6. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Hillingdon Council Corporate Finance comments

Corporate Finance have reviewed the report and concur with the Financial Implications above, agreeing that there are no direct financial implications relating to the recommendation in this report.

Hillingdon Council Legal comments

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.