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Your Reference: London Borough Camden Consultation Response
Our Reference: Serious Violence: New legal duty to support multi-agency action
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Serious violence has devastating consequences for individuals, families, communities and society at large. In 2018 London experienced a particularly tragic year but the issue of youth violence is not confined to the capital alone. It is a national issue. The most recent MOPAC data shows that across Camden the number of violent crimes (non-domestic abuse) has remained relatively stable over the last 12 months, although the seriousness of some offences has increased. In the last 12 months (to the end of March 2019) 526 knife crime offences were recorded following a slow overall decline.

Although we are starting to see an overall decline we do not think this is enough. At Camden we are committed to identifying evidence and partnership based long-term solutions in this area and have been working towards this through our Youth Safety Taskforce. [The Youth Safety Taskforce report](#), published in September 2018, set out 17 recommendations across Camden highlighting that there are no quick fixes to youth violence. The root causes of youth violence include childhood trauma, undiagnosed and untreated mental health issues, inadequate state provision and deficient parental support, poverty and social inequality. Our overarching approach is to address these root causes by working with practitioners, service providers, charities, community leaders and the police at the local level. This will take time.

To date we have invested over £1m into this area across council services, education, health and the community with a further commitment of £500,000 to invest in implementing the recommendations of the report. As part of our implementation of the 17 recommendations set out in the report we have already taken a number of actions.

As part of our work to identify those at risk of youth violence we have aligned our Youth Offending Service's Youth Diversion Programme (YDP) in police custody. This went live in February 2019, working with Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Early Help to ensure children identified at risk of child criminal exploitation (CCE) are given help, support and protection at the earliest opportunity. The YDP has embedded this as part of its processes and by April 2019 over 40 young people had engaged in this process, including 21 who were screened for CCE risk then appropriately supported, as well as 32 families resulting in five family plans.

University College London Hospital (UCLH) have invested £400,000 to commission Red Thread to be based in their A&E department to engage with people brought in who have been victims of serious violence investing in this 'teachable moment' to make a change in behaviour.

We are committed to embedding trauma informed practice across all areas in the borough. The Camden North Gangs Unit are piloting trauma informed police supervision training. 25 officers have engaged in the first reflective/trauma informed supervision session and it has been agreed that a programme of 20 weeks will commence in May 2019. We have invested £200,000 through our Community Impact Funding to develop trauma informed practice training for all Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) youth workers, as well as bringing in additional funding to train all sports workers, in the borough. We are also developing a trauma informed practice programme of training and support for all Camden schools.

We agree with option one within the consultation that a multi-agency approach is needed to prevent and tackle serious violence and are supportive of this action becoming a legal duty. Camden is already very committed to partnership working across all areas and has this approach embedded within the borough. We feel this approach aligns with our aims, recommendations and aspirations in this area and a new legal duty would strengthen the importance of the work across all agencies. We recognise there is not an expectation that new groups need to be set up, however this option would offer us the most flexibility to build and develop existing structures to allow us to meet this new duty most effectively. At present our work in this area is currently being taken forwards by a multi-agency steering group with representation from many agencies highlighted. We are supportive of any approach which improves information sharing between ourselves and other agencies.

In Camden we are constantly challenging ourselves to do more and are currently exploring options around a cross Council team (Safer Camden Network) focusing on safeguarding against violence. This team will be built on deep partnership working, where we work and deliver jointly with both strategic partners (the Police, NHS, Criminal Justice and Schools), our residents and community groups building shared values of trust and respect. This team will work in the areas of

the Borough where the impact of violent crime and the perception of violent crime are at their highest. They will galvanise hyper local resources in these areas to connect and work together in order to improve the daily lived experience in Camden's communities worst hit by violent crime. The aim is by bringing our existing expertise, and that of our partners and residents together, we can build on the already good work that is taking place, and seek to go from good to excellent.

We strongly feel Government needs further invest in these innovative partnership approaches to ensure they work effectively. In particular we feel there is further investment needed in Police resource to tackle serious criminal gangs to target those 'at the top' of the drugs market who exploit children and young people for profit. In 2018 residents told us what they were most worried about was drug related anti-social behaviour. We feel it is essential that the link between illegal drugs and violent crime is not missed out.

We would require more information about how compliance with this duty would be monitored to ensure this is effectively taken forwards. Given Camden's strong record of effective partnership working in this area we would be happy to support Government to develop and pilot this approach.