

Lancashire County Council

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 9th October, 2019 at 10.30 am
in Cabinet Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston**

Present:

County Councillor Andrea Kay (Chair)

County Councillors

N Hennessy	J Mein
I Brown	D T Smith
J Eaton	M Tomlinson
J Gibson	

Co-opted members

County Councillors Jimmy Eaton and Julie Gibson replaced County Councillors Malcolm Barron and Lorraine Beavers respectively.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Paul V Greenall and Councillor Louise Edge, Children's Partnership Board Hyndburn, Ribble Valley, Rossendale.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes from the meeting held on 3 July 2019

Resolved: That the minutes from the meeting held on the 3 July 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Participation Strategic Framework

The Chair welcomed Dave Carr, Head of Policy, Information and Commissioning; Gavin Redhead, Strategy Lead for Participation; and Oliver Moores, Youth Council representative, to the meeting.

The report presented provided an opportunity for members of Children's Services Scrutiny Committee to review the draft Participation of Children and Young People Strategic Framework 2020 – 2023. It also shared a current example of a

participation project that had been co-produced with members of Lancashire Youth Council.

In early 2019 the Strategy Lead for Participation reviewed current participation practice and policy across Lancashire and a number of areas where improvements could be made were identified.

The framework for participation would ensure that there was clear evidence of improved outcomes as a result of family participation and would evidence where changes had been made as result.

Members enquired how all the services and agencies would link so as to work well together. Through the Strategic Framework it was hoped that external services would open up their participation channels to make sure children were influencing these services.

The committee was advised that connecting with schools was a challenge due to the number of schools in Lancashire. It was felt the best approach was to connect them to locality youth councils and they could then bring their voice to Lancashire Youth Council.

The committee raised the question of how Lancashire County Council was going to embed the framework into other agencies i.e. CCGs and local councils, etc. and how would these agencies be supported in the participation process. Members were informed that there were many partnership arrangements in place and a whole range of boards and government structures that could be utilised to support this framework. Regarding support, the county council would be able to highlight good practice but could not be the sole resource for participation. At the moment 35 participation champions had been identified in various services and agencies. Members requested a list of these participation champions for their district councils. They also requested an update in the future on how this work was progressing.

Ollie Moores, Lancashire Youth Council (LYC) representative, was welcomed to give a presentation on the LYC's research into knife crime. This presentation provided members with a good example of how participation with children and young people can be undertaken. When asked if he enjoyed the research process, Ollie pointed out that the best was yet to come when LYC received the data back to see what could be done with this data to make a difference to our communities.

The committee thanked Ollie for a great presentation (see attached).

Resolved: That;

- i. The principles and priorities of the draft Strategic Framework be considered.
- ii. The proposed monitoring and governance arrangements be noted.
- iii. The Lancashire Youth Council research project be noted.

- iv. Details of the network of participation champions when identified be circulated to all councillors to assist with supporting a 'culture of participation'.
- v. A progress report be provided to a future meeting of the committee.
- vi. Information on the questionnaire to schools be circulated to committee members to support generating responses.

5. Inspection of Youth Offending Services in Lancashire

The Chair welcomed Barbara Bath, Head of Fostering, Adoption, Residential and YOT, to the meeting.

The report presented provided the committee with an update following Lancashire's Youth Offending Team (YOT) inspection in April/May 2019 by HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) as a full joint inspection. The inspection covered three domains, Organisational Delivery, Court Disposals and Out-of-Court Disposals. The overall rating was 'Good' with six recommendations made by the inspectorate.

Members were informed that a post Inspection action plan was developed in response to the six recommendations. The plan had been shared with the Lancashire Youth Justice Management Board and key partners were supporting the progress on relevant actions.

Regarding the YOT's current performance it was measured nationally against three indicators, first time offenders, reoffenders and youths in custody. It was reported that it was vital to have participation in engagement with young people and all young people who received a service from the YOT were asked to complete a self-assessment questionnaire on the progress they had made and how the service helped them.

There was an analysis of the feedback from these questionnaires every six months. Feedback was generally positive and that the service had provided them with opportunities and alternatives. Parents were also asked to feedback.

In terms of the Action Plan and the 'buddy' system for individual practitioners and managers to be offered one to one support with a 'buddy', the committee enquired how far this had progressed. Members were advised that the YOT had already started to identify a buddying process for practitioners and managers and this process was now being embedded. The committee was informed that there had been staff vacancies that had impacted on caseloads. However there had now been appointments made to these vacancies and staff would be appointed buddies on commencement of employment.

It was noted that the National Youth Justice Board had this year launched new national standards that all youth offending teams had to work to and this put greater emphasis on Lancashire's Youth Offending Management Board to have more strategic governance overview.

The committee enquired about education and job prospects for young people in the service. It was noted that after the YOT's restructure in 2018, a Specialist Education and Employment Training Officer post was created. Also the YOT was able to accredit young people with an AQA. The AQA was an education charity that provided qualifications that enabled young people to progress to the next stage in their lives.

The question of how the participation strategy would fit into the YOT was raised. Members were informed that the YOT had been given permission for two apprenticeship posts to lead in participation.

It was pointed out to the committee the number of first time offenders was reducing nationally and locally. This was down to diversions from putting young people through the criminal justice system. Since the restructure the YOT now had a prevention service and a diversion service and it was hoped this would reduce the number of young people that went through the courts.

Resolved: That;

- i. The report be noted.
- ii. A briefing note be provided to committee members in March 2020 on the post inspection action plan progress.

6. Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019/20

The new work programme for the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/20 municipal year was presented.

The topics included were identified at the work planning workshop held on 22 July 2019.

Regarding the November 2019 meeting, topic of Permanence would now be an agenda item along with Child Poverty. In terms of the Child Poverty item, the committee was asked to select key focus areas to be included as part of the item. The following areas were selected:

- Holiday hunger
- Food banks
- Poverty fuelling knife crime
- Housing and housing conditions
- How it effects education and the difference the pupil premium makes
- Armed forces funding
- Data on child poverty at district and Lancashire level

Given the number of topics listed, it was suggested by the Chair that child poverty topics were broken down and included in every meeting of the committee.

Resolved: That;

- i. The report presented be noted.
- ii. The topic of Permanence be included on the agenda for the November 2019 meeting of the committee
- iii. The key focus areas listed be included as part of the child poverty item.

7. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

8. Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee will take place on Thursday 28 November 2019 at 10:30am in Cabinet Room 'D' (The Henry Bolingbroke Room) at the County Hall, Preston.

L Sales
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall
Preston

LYC and Knife Crime: Stop Blaming, Start Listening.





Last year 27,460 young people in Lancashire voted in the Make Your Mark Youth Parliament ballot.

LYC want to think about knife crime & young people differently



- Research and social action with young people
- Research, teaching and networking concerned with young people's participation, inclusion and empowerment
- Focus on changes that young people seek by building links between young people, academics, policy makers and practitioners.



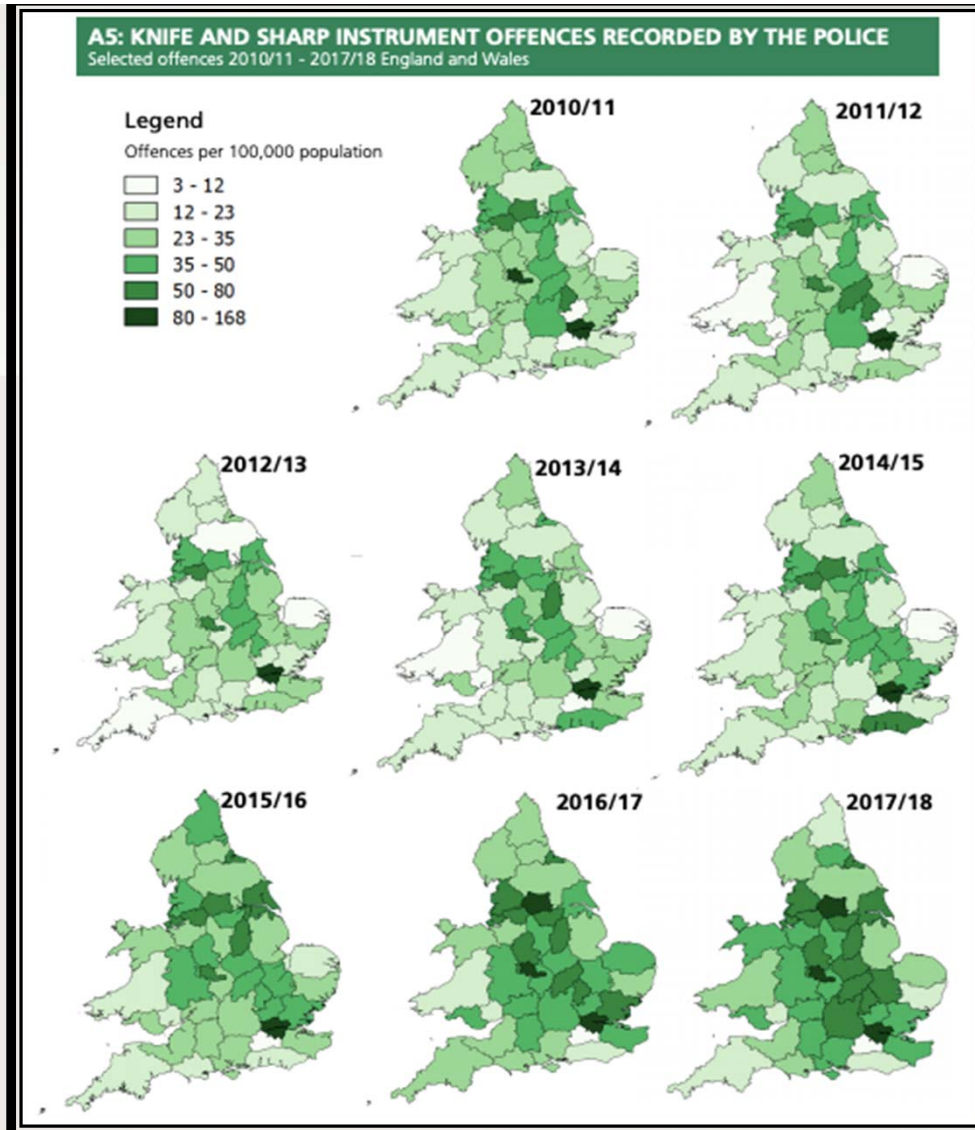
- Change perspectives about young people for good
- Raise awareness about what is really happening in Lancashire
- Challenge media representations that say knife crime is a problem of youth
- Understand why young people carry knives or get involved
- Change young people's attitudes

What is knife crime?

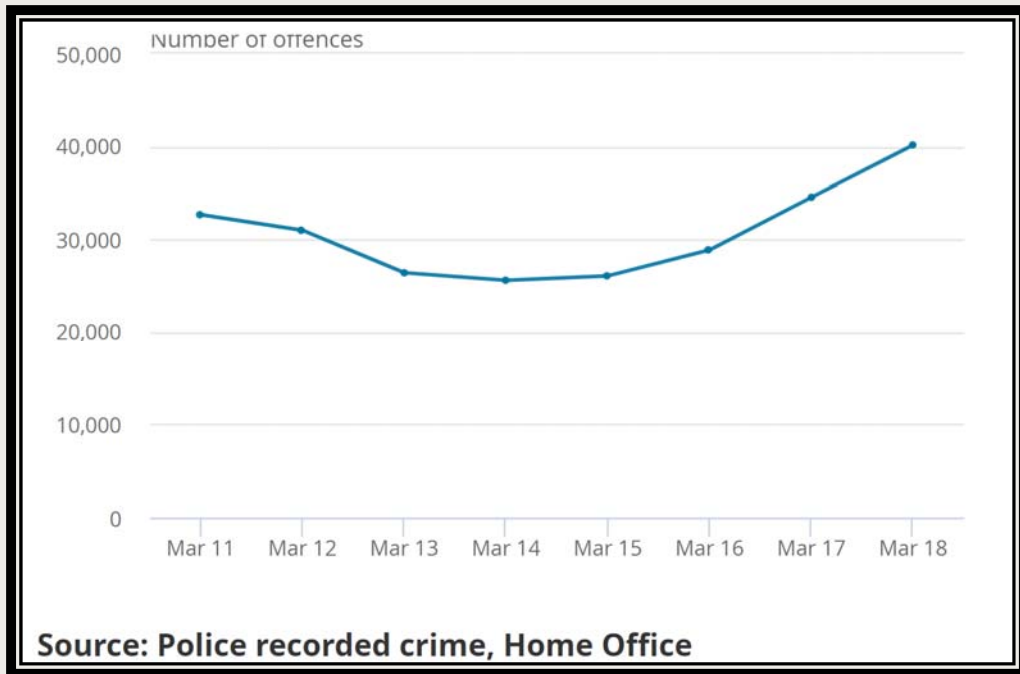
- Carrying an offensive weapon or something with a blade or sharply pointed object in public or at school
- Using these to threaten or hurt someone
- Under 18s buying knives / selling to under 18s

Not a problem in Lancashire?

Trusted2Know.co.uk, Lancashire Constabulary (2015), suggests that 'we do not have a massive knife crime problem in Lancashire and are experiencing the lowest crime rate in the county in over thirty years'.



A “virulent disease”?



Ashton argues that a trend of harsher sentences has not succeeded in quelling the problem, and that we ‘are now at a stage which requires stronger community organisation and participation linked to whole-systems action’ (Ashton, 2019:165).

A problem of youth?

A knife to the heart of Britain: Shocking scale of youth knife crime is revealed as children with stab wounds DOUBLE in five years and knife-point robberies rise 50%, after two more teenagers are killed

Camber, Daily Mail, 4/3/19

The teenagers who are getting away with knife crime: Seven blade-carrying yobs as young as 13 walk free from courts in just one week

Camber, Daily Mail, 10/3/19

NEWS

O'Neill, Times, 16/3/07

Youth knife culture killed my son'

by Sean O'Neill

THE mother of a schoolboy abbed to death by teenagers ho stole his designer baseball p called yesterday for ugher sentences to tackle the life culture among young peo-

from a knife and nothing is being done about it," Mrs Rodney said. "Tomorrow, next week, next year, somebody else could be in my shoes, because it is out of control."
Mrs Rodney, 38, from Fulham, southwest London,

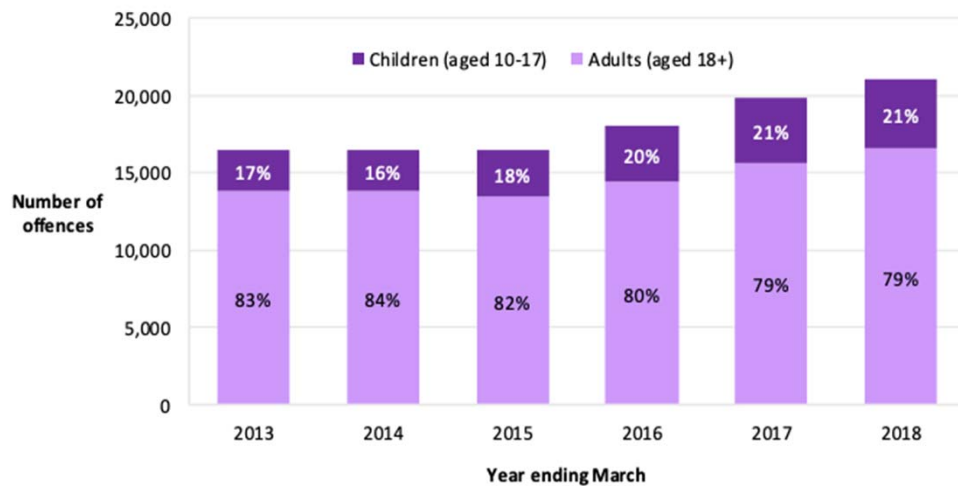
the court, was acquitted of murder and manslaughter and cleared of robbery. Scotland Yard said last night that officers were still searching for a third youth who is alleged to have struck the single knife blow that killed

about the killing. A youth was charged with Kieran's murder, but the case against him was dropped in November last year because there was insufficient evidence to prosecute successfully. He is believed to have been the teenager wearing a

snatched his black New Era cap from his head. When Kieran tried to grab the hat, the youth stabbed him. Witnesses said the killer's hand moved extremely fast, as if he were throwing a punch, and Kieran was thrown backwards.

A problem of youth?

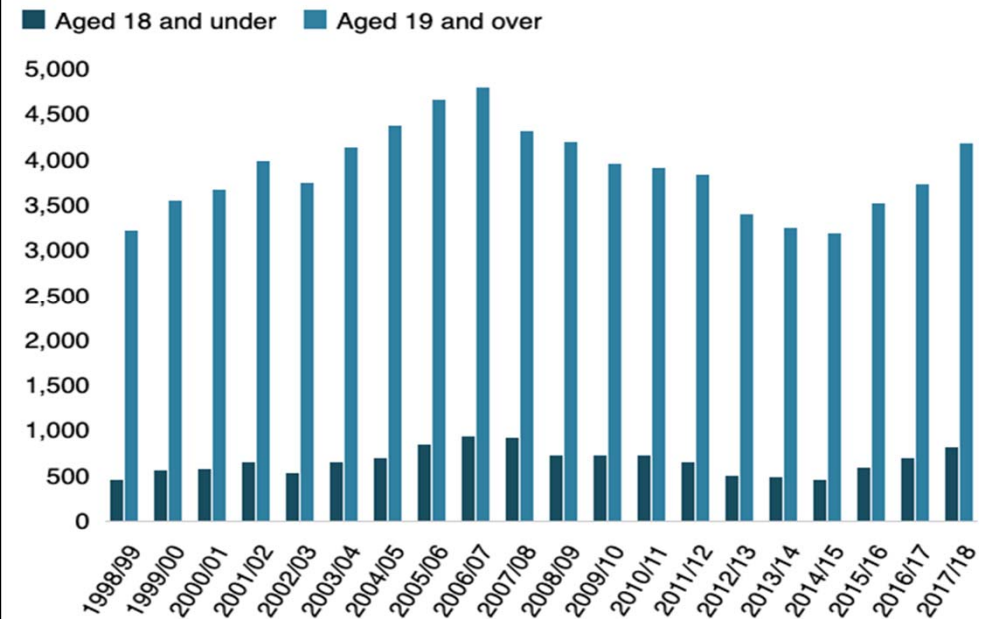
Figure 11.5: Number and proportion of knife or offensive weapon offences resulting in a caution or conviction, by age group, England and Wales, years ending March 2013 to 2018¹⁵⁹



Supplementary Tables: Chapter 11, Table 11.12

Hospital admissions for knife assaults

Number of admissions for assault by a sharp object, England



Source: NHS Digital, year ending March

BBC

No one set of statistics that provides a clear picture of what is happening

No separately recorded crimes involving knives until 2007/08.

Making the victim count report (HMICFRS, 2014), -violent offences substantially under-recorded (by 33% nationally) - police forces review and improve their recording processes.

- an increase in the number of crimes recorded by the police does not necessarily mean the level of crime has increased
- for many types of crime, police recorded crime statistics do not provide a reliable measure of levels or trends in crime
- they only cover crimes that come to the attention of the police and can be affected by changes in policing activity and recording practice and by willingness of victims to report

LYC have questions.....

- Why are young people being blamed when most of the recorded crime is by adults?
- As a proportion of the population young people's involvement may be high... BUT ...are more young people being prosecuted because of their relative lack of freedom including being in and around school?

*'assaults resulting in penetrating injuries occur in distinct age-related patterns'
... 'the period immediately after school accounts for a large proportion of incidents in children, and these predominantly occur close to home and school'*

(Vulliamy et al., 2018:1-6)

The Participatory Process

Young people identify the issues

Academics from Social Work, Education, and Film/Media work with YP to YP to refine research questions and identify potential research methods

LYC investigate current literature and work with academics to test potential methods. Proposal designed and ethics application submitted

Questionnaire. LYC to approach their local schools and ask for permission to make the online questionnaire available in school time. LYC work with film/media academics to design and conduct audio-visual tool. Documentary film of process.

LYC share their findings, the audio visual collection and film in schools and at youth events. Invite police and local councilors to engage in discussion of the findings and to discuss how they can give a more balanced indication of what is happening in Lancashire.

Identifying the issues

- UCLan academics visited LYC meeting at County Hall, Preston:
- What do young people know?
- What are their concerns?
- Discussion with Lancashire Constabulary Armed Response representative

Identifying a need and designing research

Knife Crime

How do we know about knife crime?	Where does this knowledge come from?
What is evidence and what is not?	How can we find evidence about knife crime?
Why does it matter what young people know and think about knife crime?	How can we find out what young people think and know about knife crime?
What skills will we need to do this?	Who can help us learn these skills?
Who do we want to participate in this research?	How will we recruit them?

LYC - Knife Crime is related to...

- Problems with intergenerational understanding
- Problems with lack of community
- Young people lack spaces to talk
- Location
- Schools - part of the **PROBLEM** and the **SOLUTION**

‘ample evidence that community-based interventions to reduce environmental contributors to violence and minimise inequality can reduce the incidence of offending, violent injury and incarceration among young people’ (Vulliamy et 2018:5).

Rising incidence of school searches



Workshop 1

- An evening workshop in UCLan (with food)
- What questions need answering?
- How do we obtain responses that can inform research?
- How do we do this ethically?
- What does it feel like to be videoed?
- Reasons for doing a questionnaire or focus group or other method.



Workshop 2

- A whole day workshop in UCLan (more food)
- Refining research questions
- Exploring methods – questionnaire, literature review, interviews, etc.
- Using creative methods – Video booth/ diary room, Animated avatar, Archival searches (news and video)



Digital Questionnaire in schools

- Understanding what is happening in Lancashire
- Experiences around school
- Involve as many young people as possible
- LYC to approach local schools



Storytelling through audio visual techniques

- Anonymous Web based/interactive set of audio stories with avatars or animated characters
- Young people's perspectives
- Perspectives of those affected by knife crime including families, perpetrators and response services



Documenting the participatory process through film

- Young people's experience of taking part is important
- What does this tell us about participation?
- How will we work together on future projects?



Why this process works

- Young people are experts in their lives
- Adults have specialist resources
- Participation is envisaged as an interactive and responsive process
- When we work together, we work for change



The last word from LYC...

“We don’t want to feel threatened”

“Younger kids should not get into knives”

“Don’t give young people a bad name”

And to those already involved in knife crime....

“Stop what you are doing. We want to feel safe walking down the road.”