

SERIOUS VIOLENCE RESPONSE STRATEGY

SUFFOLK
2024-27



Foreword

Serious violence is a complex and serious issue that is not unique to Suffolk.

It has devastating consequences for survivors, victims, perpetrators and their families as well as the wider community. Sadly, we are seeing an increase in incidents of serious violence across the UK.

Suffolk remains a very safe place to live and visit, with lower levels of weapon-related serious violence than other parts of the country. However, we are not complacent, and recognise the need for strong partnerships to ensure this type of crime does not increase.

In January 2023, the Government introduced a new Serious Violence Duty on public bodies to ensure relevant services work together to share knowledge and target interventions to prevent serious violence.

Suffolk's Safer, Stronger Communities Board (SSCB) is a well-established partnership with strong collaboration and a proven track record of delivery. The partnership includes representatives from Community Safety Partnerships, District and Borough Councils, Suffolk County Council, Police, Police & Crime Commissioner, Youth Justice Service, Probation Service, Integrated Care Boards, Safeguarding and the Criminal Justice Board, who are united in a shared ambition to prevent and reduce serious violence in Suffolk.

We welcome the funding and support from the Home Office to help us make a lasting impact in Suffolk.



Bobby Bennett
Suffolk County Council
Cabinet Member for Equality and Communities
Chair of the Safer, Stronger Communities Board

Contents

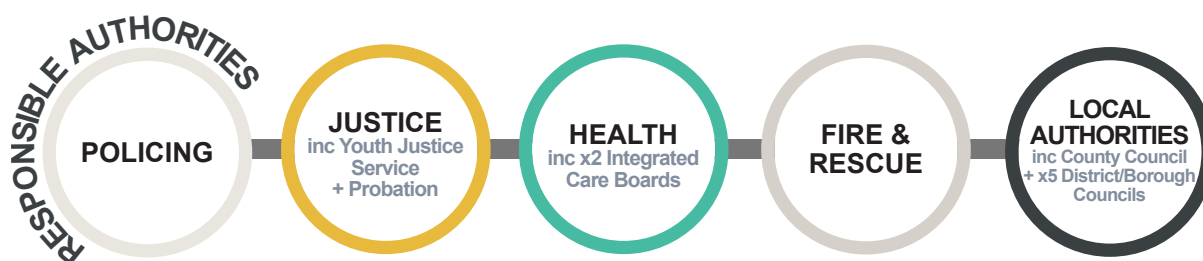
Foreword	2
Executive Summary	4
Serious Violence Duty Overview	4
Current Response to Serious Violence in Suffolk	4
Serious Violence Definition	5
Strategic Needs Assessment.....	5
Vision and Priorities	5
Introduction & Background	6
Serious Violence Duty Partnership	7
The Current Suffolk System	7
Safer, Stronger Communities Board.....	7
Criminal Exploitation Work Programme.....	8
Violence Against Women and Girls Work Programme.....	8
Combating Drugs Partnership	9
Approaches	9
Public Health Approach	9
Serious Violence Definition	10
Strategic Needs Assessment	11
Strategic Needs Assessment Findings	11
Risk factors	12
Wider determinants	12
The Social Gradient	13
Asset Based Community Development	13
Violence Profile	14
Community Voice	15
Our Vision and Priorities	17
Theory of change	18
Links to Existing Work Programmes	19
Strategy Management & Performance Framework	19
Appendix A - Current Suffolk System Governance for Serious Violence	20
Appendix B - Existing Work Programmes, Delivery Plan Overviews	21
Glossary of Terms	22

Executive Summary

Serious Violence Duty Overview

The Serious Violence Duty is new to public sector duty holders and its partners, however, preventing and reducing serious violent crime has been a core theme of several existing work programmes in Suffolk for many years.

Tackling serious violence is key to maintaining and nurturing safe communities across our county. Prevention is at the core of any successful violence reduction approach. It requires a long-term commitment by a range of agencies, individuals, and communities to prevent the physical and psychological damage that violence can cause for individuals, families, our communities and wider society. By adopting a long-term approach, predicated on public health and community safety outcomes we stand a greater chance in delivering the support families and young people need to prevent violence now and for future generations.



At the beginning of 2023 all duty holders formed the Suffolk Serious Violence Duty Partnership. The partnership aims to carry out the requirements of the serious violence Duty by working together to prevent and reduce serious violence in Suffolk.

The partnership group steers activity and ensures all requirements of the duty are undertaken, making decisions on behalf of the Suffolk system, reporting to the Suffolk Safer and Stronger Communities Board which provides strategic oversight for all community safety priorities in Suffolk.

Current Response to Serious Violence in Suffolk

Suffolk has an existing system response to serious violence which is managed through three work programmes, Violence Against Women and Girls, Criminal Exploitation, and Combating Drugs Partnership.

These work programmes are managed centrally by teams within Suffolk County Council's Public Health and Communities Directorate, but many statutory organisations, voluntary community organisations, and social enterprises are part of these work programmes, with recognition that no one organisation can prevent or reduce serious violence alone. These organisations make up the multi-agency partnerships which deliver many of the interventions tackling serious violence in Suffolk.

“We need more services/activities/schemes for young people in the right places at the right time for the right kids. We need to make this part of our communities and empower community leaders/mentors.” – Member of the community

Serious Violence Definition

The Suffolk System is keen to reflect a definition based on national and local evidence which allows us to respond to Serious Violence in a flexible but focused way. The definition for Suffolk includes: The use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person, or against a group or community. This can include:

- Homicide
- Violence Against the Person (with injury, including weapons crime)
- Criminal Exploitation (including gangs, county lines and modern slavery)
- Violence Against Women and Girls (including rape and sexual assaults)
- Hate Crimes

Strategic Needs Assessment

The Strategic Needs Assessment took a long-term view of data where possible, looking back five years to truly understand how levels of crime and disorder, social care, health, probation, education, fire and rescue and youth justice data have changed. To develop a successful strategy for Suffolk, it was essential to engage with public sector organisations, the voluntary sector, education settings, and communities, all of which have knowledge and experience of serious violence and its affects.

The assessment found that young people are disproportionately affected by violence when compared to Suffolk's population as a whole, and there are strong links to areas with deprivation, poverty, poor educational attainment, and school exclusions. We also know from evidence reviews and speaking to local professionals, practitioners, and members of the community that protective factors such as supportive role models, mentors, increased educational attainment and employment are all ways to improve life outcomes for young people and prevent and reduce violence.

Vision and Priorities

Our vision for Suffolk: ***We will use a whole system approach to tackle serious violence in Suffolk, focusing on young people and communities at risk of becoming involved in serious violence, creating a safer place for communities to live and thrive.***

Prevention is at the core to any successful violence reduction approach. It requires a long-term commitment by a range of agencies, individuals, and communities to prevent the physical and psychological damage that violence can cause for individuals, families, our communities and wider society. By adopting a long-term approach, predicated on public health and community safety outcomes we stand a greater chance to deliver and support families and young people to prevent violence now and for future generations.



“We need to get to kids more. They need to know what is right and wrong, and this needs to come from parents, schools, clubs and other community networks.” – Member of the community

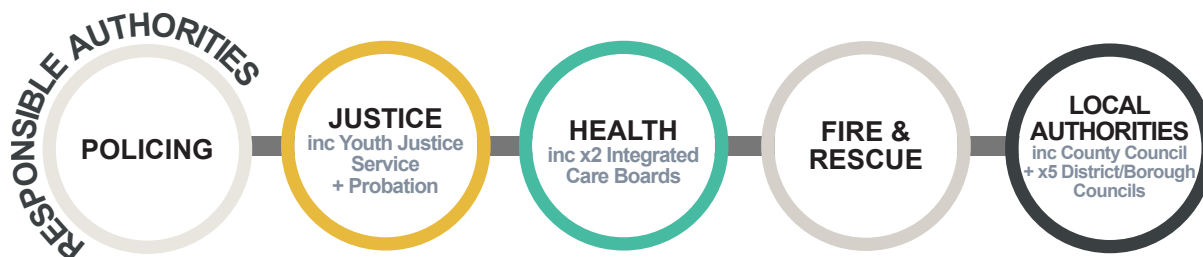
The four themes below are the basis of the delivery plan required to address the findings of the strategic needs assessment and meet the evolving needs of the communities in Suffolk. These priorities will be delivered from January 2024 as part of the existing serious violence work programmes in Suffolk. We will continue to use a public health approach and work in collaboration to build on our existing programmes of work so that the cycle of serious violence is broken.

Introduction & Background

The Serious Violence Duty¹ was introduced in January 2023. The Duty covers the requirements for a local government area to work together and plan 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 the local area.

Although the Serious Violence Duty is a new duty, which all duty holders in Suffolk are responding to, there is a legacy in Suffolk of preventing and responding to serious violence in several existing work programmes, thematic groups and, voluntary and community sector organisations.

The duty holders who have produced this strategy and associated Strategic Needs Assessment are all part of existing strategic groups, preventing and reducing crime and disorder in Suffolk. The duty holders are specified below within the categories set out in the new duty.



In addition to the duty holders above, the partners also worked directly with the Police and Crime Commissioner, and their office, and engaged with local strategic education bodies, prison service and voluntary, community and social enterprises. Although working with these partners is specified within the statutory guidance, the Suffolk System regularly works with these partners on strategic priorities related to serious violence and other priorities.

The partnerships existing in Suffolk know that tackling serious violence at its core is difficult, wide ranging and requires a whole system approach to enable any measurable impacts in our communities. No one organisation can tackle these issues and this strategy sets out Suffolk's ambition to prevent and reduce violence making Suffolk a safer and more prosperous place.

¹ The new duty is available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1125001/Final_Serious_Violence_Duty_Statutory_Guidance_-_December_2022.pdf

Serious Violence Duty Partnership

At the beginning of 2023 all duty holders formed the Suffolk Serious Violence Duty Partnership. The partnership aims to carry out the requirements of the serious violence duty by working together to prevent and reduce serious violence in Suffolk.

The partnership group steers activity and ensures all requirements of the duty are undertaken, making decisions on behalf of the Suffolk system, linking closely to the Suffolk Safer Stronger Communities Board which provides strategic oversight for community safety priorities in Suffolk.

The partnership has a wide range of skills and influence across Suffolk, and this has been utilised to ensure a system-wide approach to understanding more about the issues relating to serious violence, what the potential barriers and solutions are and how best to implement responses. The partnership ensures a robust strategic needs assessment of serious violence is undertaken and a new strategy is implemented for Suffolk.

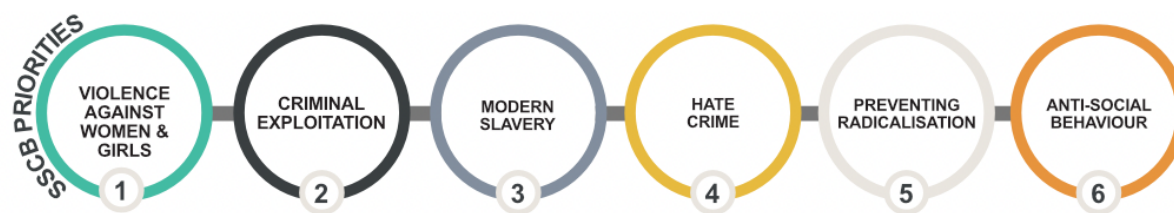
On completion of the strategy the partnership will meet quarterly to monitor progress and where needed may merge in to existing work programmes being delivered in Suffolk.

The Current Suffolk System

Responding to serious violence is not new for Suffolk. Suffolk has a well-established system response to three key workstreams (see figure 1), all of which address serious violence issues.

Safer, Stronger Communities Board

The Safer, Stronger Communities Board² (SSCB) provides strategic direction and leadership on wider issues and determinants arising from the following agreed priorities:

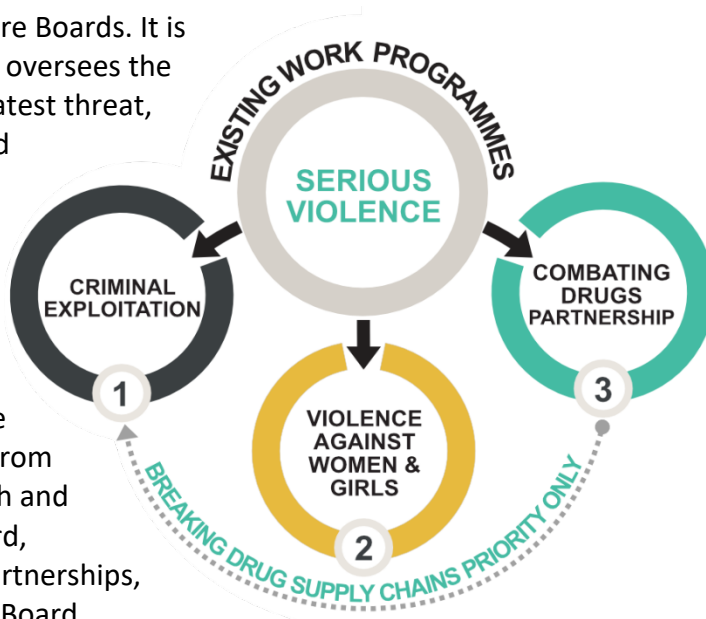


The Safer, Stronger Communities Board meets quarterly, and its membership is made up of senior elected councillors and officer roles from a range of organisations including County, District and Borough Councils, Suffolk Police, Police and Crime Commissioner, Community

² To learn more about the Safer Stronger Communities Board please visit the SSCB [webpage](#).

Safety Partnerships, and Integrated Care Boards. It is supported by a programme office that oversees the delivery of issues that present the greatest threat, risk, and harm to Suffolk residents, and reports regularly to Suffolk Public Sector Leaders and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).

There are several established partnerships which interconnect with the priorities of the SSCB. We continue to work collaboratively with partners from Community Safety Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Board, Criminal Justice Board, Children's and Adult's Safeguarding Partnerships, Youth Justice Board and Safer Schools Board, ensuring that we align our strategic priorities to reduce the impact of serious violence in our communities.



Criminal Exploitation Work Programme

This work programme³ has been in place since 2017 and is about tackling the Criminal Exploitation of young people and vulnerable adults in Suffolk. The work programme uses a Public Health Approach to tackle the issues of exploitation related to gangs (local) and county lines (national and local).

The work programme is coordinated by Suffolk County Council's Public Health and Communities Team, and delivered by Suffolk Youth Justice Service, Suffolk Police and several other partners. There is a mature and comprehensive training programme which has reached 1000s of staff across the Suffolk system and includes dedicated resources to develop national/local intelligence sharing between partners, to maximise positive outcomes.

Violence Against Women and Girls Work Programme

This work programme⁴ has been in place since 2017 and is about ending violence against women and girls. It uses a Public Health Approach to tackling violence and abuse, looking to combat the root causes and break the cycle of abusive behaviours. The work programme is very well established and is supported by many partners across the Suffolk System.

The work programme is coordinated by the Suffolk County Council's Public Health and Communities directorate, however initiatives are delivered by many partners across the Suffolk System, all working to prevent and reduce violence and abuse. As part of the work programme there is a very successful Domestic Abuse Champions training programme

³ To learn more about the Criminal Exploitation Work Programme please visit:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/community-safety/criminal-exploitation>

⁴ To learn more about the Violence Against Women and Girls work programme please visit:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/community-safety/domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence>

which now has over 1300 members, who are all trained on how to spot the signs of abuse and how to make referrals. Our commissioned services and specialist Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector play an essential role in the delivery of this multi-agency work programme.

Combating Drugs Partnership

This work programme is implementing the 10-year Government Drug Strategy⁵ – "From Harm to Hope", co-ordinating the Suffolk response to the 3 elements of the national strategy: 1. Breaking drug supply chains, 2. Deliver a world class treatment and recovery system, and 3. Reduce the demand for recreational drugs. The work programme provides a comprehensive partnership response, delivering the local drug strategy delivery plan, and giving strategic direction to implementation, all informed by findings and recommendations of a health needs assessments and drug market profiles.

The above work programme priorities and overviews of their delivery plans are available in Appendix B. and show the connectivity between them. The serious violence duty partnership is a sub group of the SSCB and may be incorporated into existing steering groups in future reviews of governance.

Approaches

Public Health Approach

The World Health Organisation suggests that serious violence can be tackled like an infectious disease, that requires a data and evidence led approach to understand what causes it, find interventions to prevent it and ultimately find a cure. This is the basis of what is known as a 'Public Health Approach'.



This approach has been adopted in Suffolk for several community safety-based priorities, such as Violence Against Women and Girls and Criminal Exploitation of young people and vulnerable adults. Growing evidence shows that violence is preventable. By understanding the risk and protective factors for individuals, families, and communities, we can develop more effective prevention strategies. There is recognition that Serious Violence doesn't sit in isolation and is often a complex myriad of contributory factors and root causes.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives>

What are the issues: Collecting data and intelligence allows us to identify individual and community risk levels and protective factors. This information can be used to target interventions to those most at risk.

What are the causes: Many risk factors, such as social networks, employment access, housing, education, and environment, can make individuals, families, and communities vulnerable to violence. However, these same factors can also be protective factors, leading to reductions in violence.

What works for whom: Across a person's lifetime, evidence-based interventions can reduce the risk of violence and support communities, families, and individuals in preventing violence and intervening early. One size does not fit all with bespoke interventions, which are often more successful than a universal approach.

Scale effective programmes: Using a strong base of existing partnerships in Suffolk presents an opportunity to collaborate, evaluating, and implementing violence prevention interventions across the county.

Serious Violence Definition

Violent crime is a broad category, encompassing numerous different kinds of violent incidents. In Suffolk, our scope includes: The use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person, or against a group or community. This includes:

- Homicide
- Violence Against the Person (with injury, including weapons crime)
- Criminal Exploitation (including gangs, county lines and modern slavery)
- Violence Against Women and Girls (including rape and sexual assaults)
- Hate Crimes

We acknowledge that unforeseen changes may arise due to national or local external factors. While we've established a definition of serious violence for Suffolk, this doesn't prevent the periodic review of other issues or offense types for inclusion in this strategy, its update, or associated programs.

Strategic Needs Assessment

This strategy is based on a robust assessment of serious violence in Suffolk, which has been undertaken by the Suffolk Office of Data and Analytics (SODA)⁶. The aim of this assessment is to understand the causes of serious violence in our communities and the potential solutions and remedies, as well as identifying key locations, cohorts of victims and perpetrators, if there are any disproportionalities within the population, and the key risks to becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.

The Strategic Needs Assessment is based on seven elements which have been undertaken using partnership data, professional knowledge and insight, community experiences and national research.



Strategic Needs Assessment Findings

Suffolk is a largely rural county; 40% of the population live in rural areas compared to those classed as urban, and Suffolk has over 50 miles of coastline with several large and small coastal towns. At the last census (2021) there were approximately 760,000 people living in Suffolk, an increase of just over 32,000 people (4.5%) since 2011. While population density has increased across all of Suffolk's districts and boroughs, this is still only around half the England and Wales average (200 usual residents per square kilometre in Suffolk vs. 395 nationally).

Coastal communities are generally more deprived, while rural towns perform relatively well against the national picture in terms of income, employment, and health. However, education and housing do not perform as well compared to the national averages. Deprivation is a common risk factor for young people being victims and perpetrators of violent crime and has been identified by the strategic needs assessment as a key area for focus.



While the causes of violence are complex and its effects can be felt by anyone, some people are at greater risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence, such as those who experienced

⁶ To learn more about SODA please visit their [webpage](#).

adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) like domestic abuse, childhood trauma, abuse or neglect, or those who struggle with substance misuse and addiction. People with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are also more vulnerable to criminal exploitation. Many causal factors are shared nationally and internationally and are not specific to Suffolk. The same can be said of risk and protective factors, however these are somewhat easier to identify at a local level.

Risk factors in a person's life can threaten development, limit social and economic opportunities, increase the likelihood of mental and physical health issues, criminal involvement, substance misuse, the risk of exploitation or abuse in later life. These risk factors exist at different levels, such as individual personal networks, community/society, and interact in complex ways especially when we consider health inequalities. Risks factors that increase the likelihood for violence can include unemployment, poverty, unstable housing, homelessness, social isolation, and stigma.

Protective factors are those that reduce the likelihood of violence occurring in the first place, for example doing well at school, healthy relationships, positive role models, academic support, employment opportunities, which all prevent and reduce the cycle of violence.

These are broken down into different categories shown in figure 2 with the key partnership-based work streams that are tackling violence in Suffolk and are also looking at these risk and protective factors.

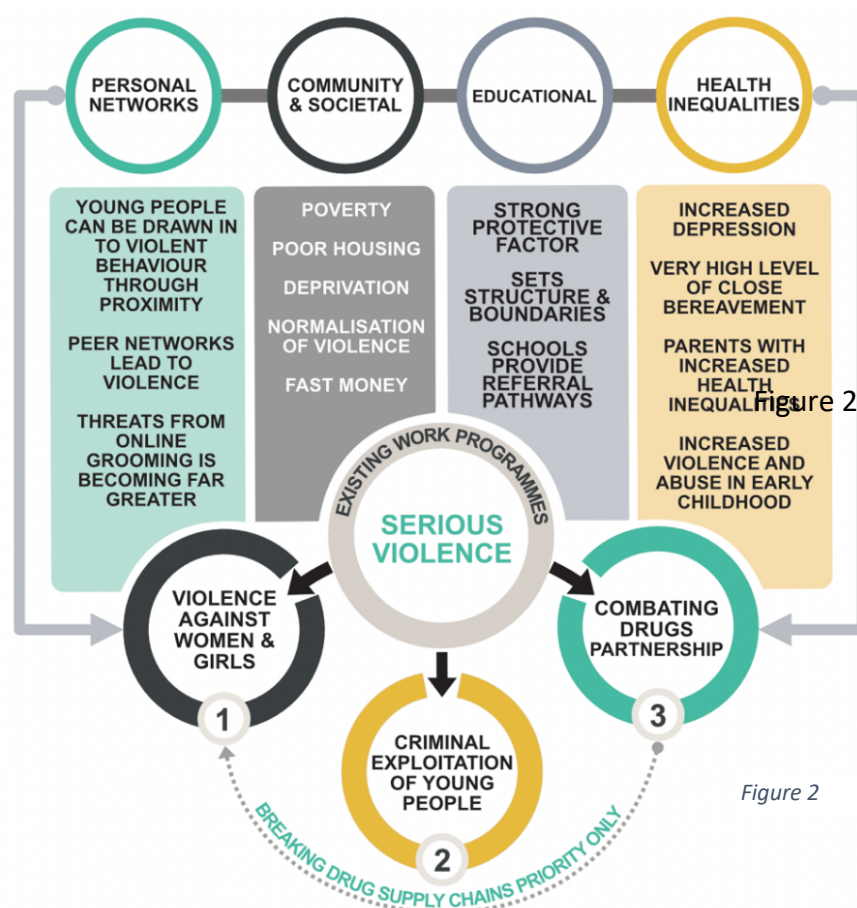


Figure 2

Wider determinants

have the greatest influence on our physical and mental health. These are the fundamental elements into which we are born, how we grow up and where we live. Poverty and social inequalities are major drivers for increases in serious violence and can set a pattern of risky lifestyle behaviours. The pressures of housing, debt, food and energy costs and the current

“Young people try to get excluded (from school) on purpose - there isn't always role modelling in their lives around the importance of going to school.” – Professional

cost of living crisis on families can lead to exploitation with the lure of financial rewards offered by criminal gangs through exploitation and coercion.

The most powerful risk factors for serious violence for children and young people aged 7-15, were poor relationships with peers or having delinquent peers. The Early Intervention Foundation's review of preventing gang and youth violence⁷ found a more limited number of risk factors at the community/societal level; however, factors include prevalence of gangs, deprivation, poverty and income inequality (wider determinants).

Some of the strongest protective factors are within educational networks, where strong role models, peer networks and educational attainment can prevent the likelihood and risk of being a victim and/or perpetrator of violence which can escalate to serious violence in a short space of time.

In addition to these risk and protective factors, it is important to consider the effects of health inequalities⁸ as factors that may contribute to being a victim and or perpetrator of violent crimes. Health outcomes are shaped by social determinants of health like housing and income, health-related behaviours, and by people's access to and experiences of healthcare.

The Social Gradient⁹ is the starkest example in health, which describes differences in life expectancy between deprived and affluent areas. There is almost a 20-year gap between healthy life expectancy in the most and least deprived parts of England. In Suffolk there are deprived areas of the county that do experience health inequalities, combined with increased risk factors which lead to conditions where violence is very likely, and this is reflected in the data from the strategic needs assessment.

Serious violence cannot be tackled in isolation and must be addressed through prevention strategies which address multiple risk factors and promote protective factors.

Asset Based Community Development

We believe communities have a wealth of assets which should be built on to help prevent and respond to serious violence. This applies at a very local level, where much of the public sector assessment of needs and service planning has previously been deficit-based: recognising all the faults, weaknesses and deprivations of communities. An Asset Based Community Development approach turns this on its head and builds on the assets that are found in the community and mobilises individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to realise and develop their strengths.

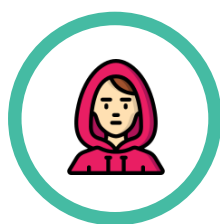
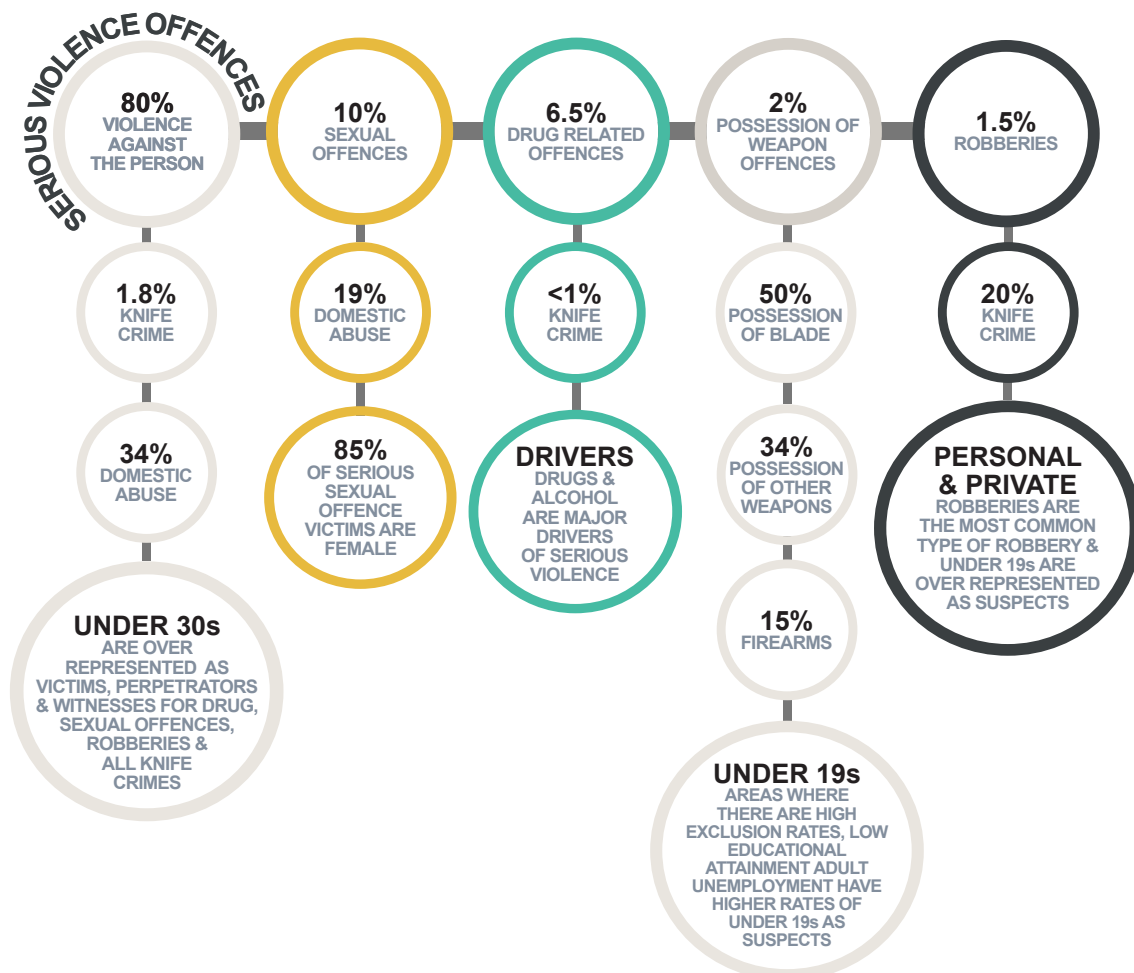
⁷ Early Intervention Foundation – Preventing Gang and Youth Violence: A review of risk and protective factors <https://www.eif.org.uk/report/preventing-gang-and-youth-violence-a-review-of-risk-and-protective-factors>

⁸ The King's Fund – What are Health Inequalities <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/what-are-health-inequalities>

⁹ UK Health Security Agency- Closing the Gap and Reducing Health Inequalities <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2017/09/08/closing-the-health-gap-and-reducing-inequalities/>

Violence Profile

The Strategic Needs Assessment took a long-term view of data where possible, looking back five years to truly understand how levels of crime and disorder, social care, health, probation, education, fire and rescue and youth justice data have changed.



Youth Violence – Almost a third of all serious violence (28%) is related to young people under the age of 19 and a further 20% are aged between 25 and 29. Suffolk’s younger population is ethnically more diverse than Suffolk’s population as a whole. Based on Police data, between 2018 and 2023, those under 19 from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British backgrounds are more likely to report/be identified as being victims of serious violence.



Domestic Abuse – A third of all violence against the person incidents in Suffolk are related to Domestic Abuse. Recorded domestic abuse in Suffolk has reduced by 71 incidents, between 2021-22 (7948 incidents) and 2022-23 (7877 incidents). 39% of all domestic abuse is recorded as ‘violence without injury’, 29% is related to ‘stalking and harassment’, and 25% is related to violence with injury (serious violence). Exposure to violence in a family setting is a big risk factor for being a victim or perpetrator of violence.

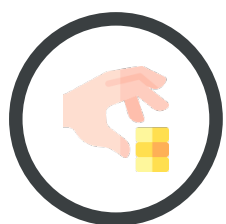
“We need to get to kids more. They need to know what is right and wrong, and this needs to come from parents, schools, clubs and other community networks.” – Member of the community



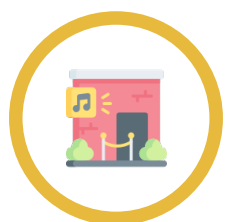
Sexual Offences – 1 in 10 of all serious violence offences in Suffolk are related to sexual violence. Recorded sexual offences in Suffolk are slightly above the national and regional average, although between 2021-22 (2716 incidents) and 2022-23 (2717 incidents) there has been a rise of 1 recorded incident. In 63% of sexual offences the perpetrator is known to the victim and 42% of physical abuse, 63% of psychological abuse cases and 25% of sexual abuse cases are not linked to the victim's home.



Knife Crime – Knife incidents increased by 25 incidents (854 to 879) across Suffolk between 2021/22 and 2022/23, however Suffolk remains a county with some of the lowest rates of knife crime in the country. Over half of all knife crimes are related to possession of weapons, a quarter are related to incidents with injury and the rest are related to incidents without injury or robbery. People under the age of 30 are disproportionately involved in knife crime as those who report, identified as a victim or perpetrator.



Robbery – Robbery incidents in Suffolk are very low. In 2022/23 there were 278 incidents recorded across the county. 93% of robberies relate to private or personal property. The majority of incidents are concentrated in densely populated urban areas and 47 incidents were related to the use of a weapon.



Night-time Economy – Approximately 14% of all serious violence is related to the Night-time economy (NTE). Of this, 80% is related to violence against the person, 7% is related to sexual offences, 7% is related to drug offences, 2% is related to possession of weapons offences and 2% is related to personal robbery. In addition to the categories above, 15% is thought to be related to domestic abuse and knife crime is flagged in 18% of all offences.

Community Voice

To develop a successful strategy for Suffolk, it was essential to engage with public sector organisations, the voluntary sector, education settings, and communities, all of which have knowledge and experience of serious violence and its effects. The aim of engaging with these groups was to gain a deeper understanding of serious violence (specifically) and what the current and future challenges and opportunities are.

Ultimately, the aim of engaging people is to help shape Suffolk's response to serious violence and develop effective ways to reduce serious violence within our communities, by recognising, valuing, and acting on the experience and knowledge of those we engaged.

We engaged with people in different ways depending on the audience, which has given us a range of responses and knowledge to feed into our strategic needs assessment and strategy,

“Serious violence is bound up with other issues such as county lines, trafficking and migration. We have a far better understanding of where the hotspots are, about what happens and where it happens, but we're not any further forward on knowing how to deal with it or what to do about it.” – VCSE

much of this is reflected on each page of this strategy. We used surveys for professional and practitioners, interviews for stakeholders and system leads, focus groups at a local level with specific groups/teams, we've spoken to young people specifically about their views and experiences and we have also presented at many forums informing people about the new duty and asking for their feedback.



We had over 200 responses to the surveys we ran across the engagement cohorts and reached approximately 300 people in total via our combined engagement routes. Figure 3 below gives an overview of what was learnt through the engagement as part of the strategic needs assessment.

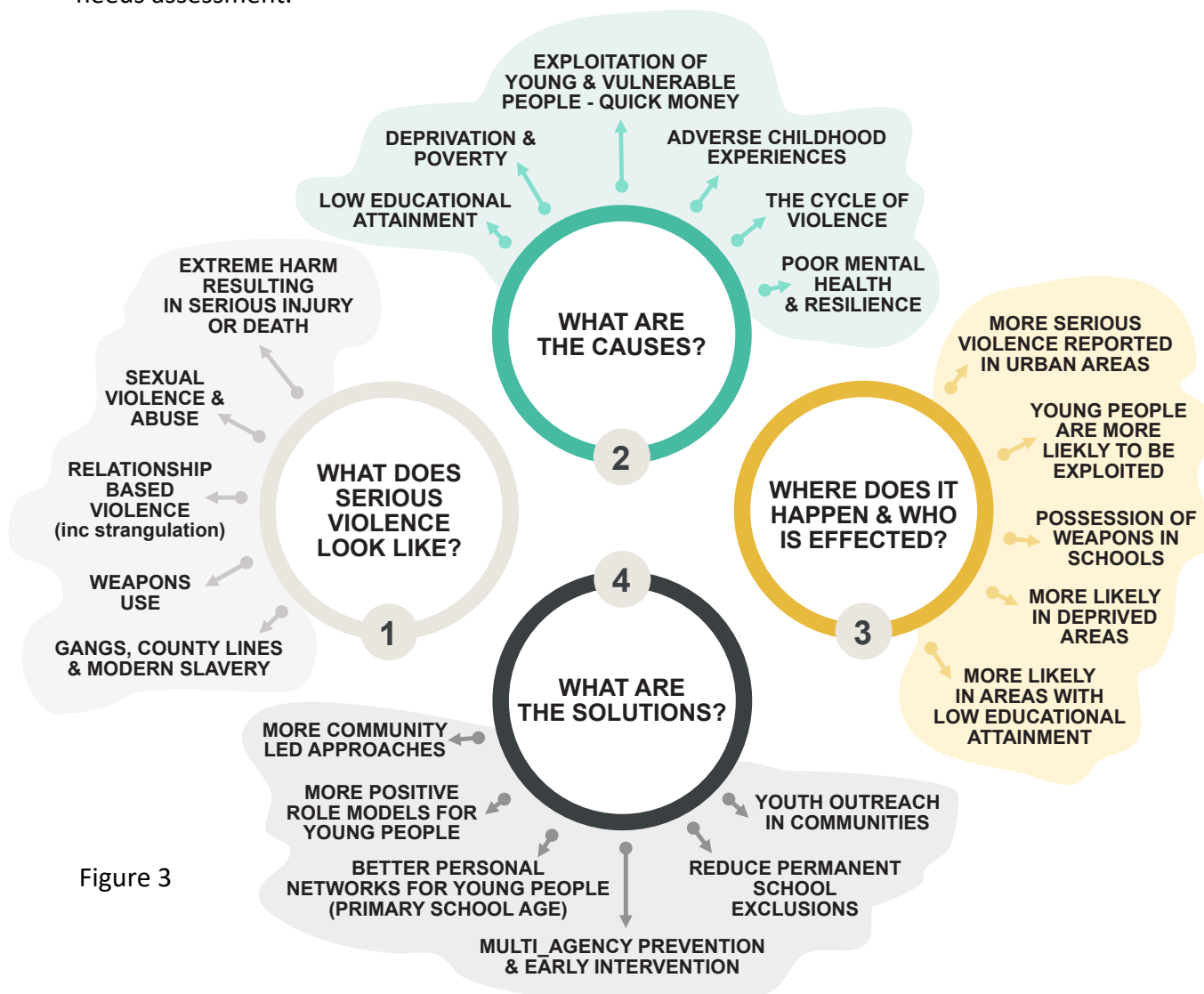


Figure 3

“Communities as a whole need to play more of a part – it’s the responsibility of all of us to tackle this. Without a whole community effort it’s not going to work.” – VSCE

There were lots of common ideas and thoughts of what constitutes serious violence, what the causes were, where and who it affected and what some of the potential solutions were. This shows that there is widespread understanding of the issues across multiple sectors but also there are shared visions of solutions to the issues.

Many of the solutions suggested were based on the need for positive role models for young people, a sense of community and belonging to a group, the need for community led solutions and responses for young people and more outreach work by trained professionals and practitioners who can offer alternative narratives and live courses/paths for young people who were being, or likely to be, criminally exploited.

Engagement will continue to be a key priority of the serious violence related work-streams, as it is of great value to engage with individuals with lived experience of serious violence (as victims/survivors and perpetrators) and ensure that their knowledge and experience informs strategy development and decision making.

Our Vision and Priorities

Our vision for Suffolk is: ***We will use a whole system approach to tackle serious violence in Suffolk, focusing on young people and communities at risk of becoming involved in serious violence, creating a safer place for communities to live and thrive.***

The four themes below are the basis of the delivery plan required to address the findings of the strategic needs assessment and meet the evolving needs of the communities in Suffolk. These priorities will be delivered from January 2024-2027 as part of the existing serious violence work programmes in Suffolk.



We will continue to use a public health approach and work with local partners and communities to understand the impact of violence and address the risks that contribute to it.

1. **Prevention and early intervention:** Focus resources and commissioning of interventions that are preventative, improving outcomes for young people.
2. **Safety of young people:** Use evidence led approaches to identify communities of greatest need.

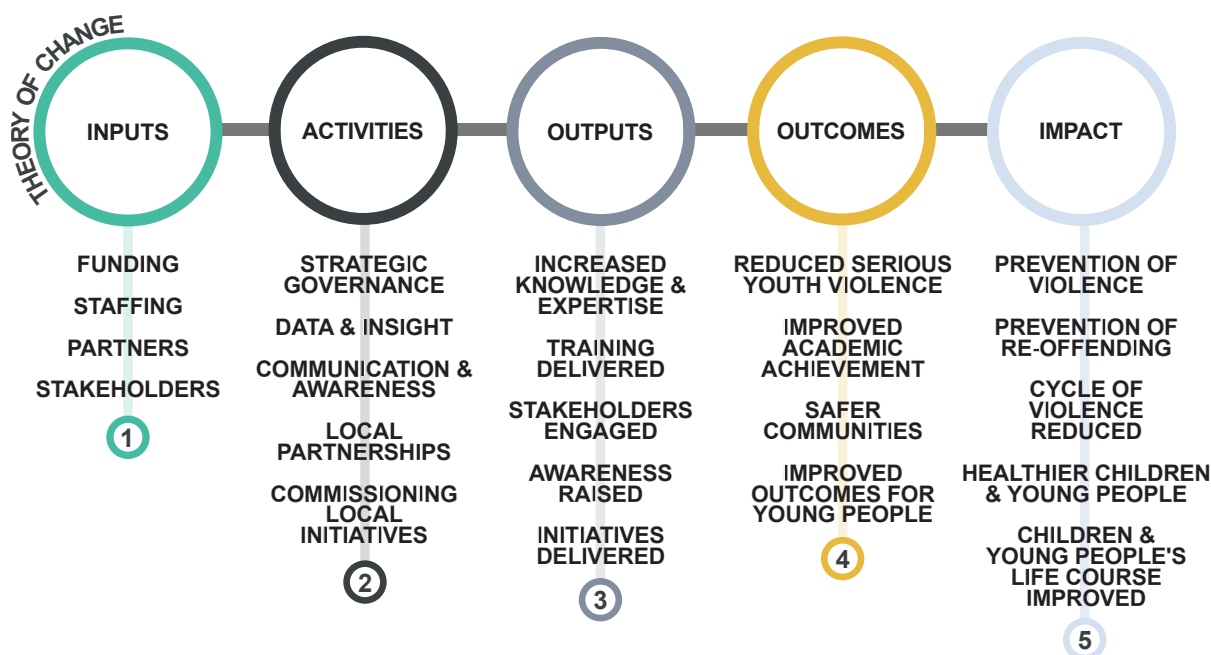
“It’s males who are 15-18 years old who we see getting involved in serious violence in Suffolk. These are also the fastest growing group coming in to care.” – Professional

3. **Communication and engagement.** Work with communities to continue to develop innovative solutions and promote successes. Use engagement opportunities to support evaluation of initiatives and review strategy aims.
4. **Strengthening the System:** Continue to collaborate, innovate, and work in partnership to create a whole system approach to tackling serious violence.

Theory of change

Theory of change (TOC) is a framework for understanding and addressing complex social problems. It is a process of identifying the root causes of a problem and developing strategies to address them. TOC is based on the belief that change happens over time and that it is important to understand the relationships between different factors that contribute to a problem.

Below is an overview of the theory of change for Suffolk and shows the overall expected inputs and impact. This model is based on long term ambition and requires flexibility to change to internal and external influences. TOC is also a useful tool to help aid the overall evaluation of this strategy and where needed make improvements to increase the impact.

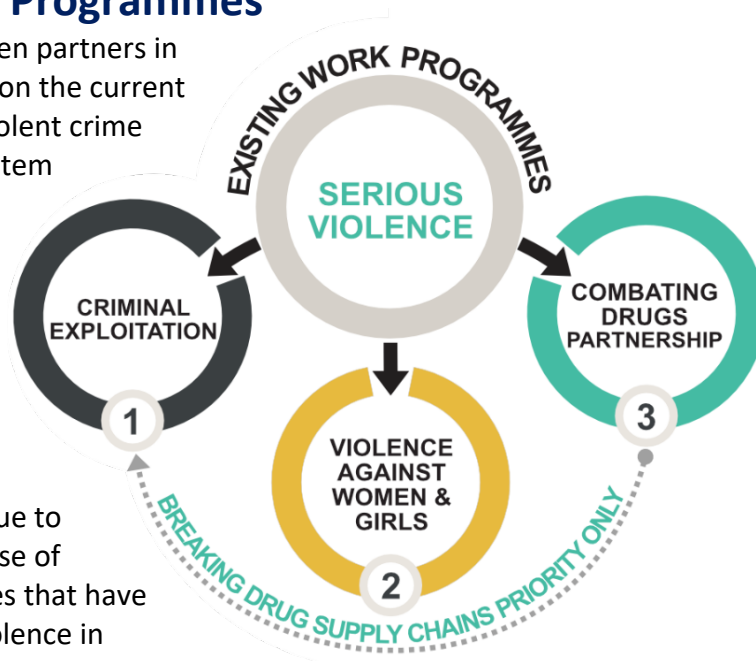


“Young people are trying to climb the local hierarchies, trying to be top dog. Violence becomes an initiation for people, to be part of that community and be respected” – Practitioner

Links to Existing Work Programmes

The Serious Violence Duty has given partners in Suffolk the opportunity to reflect on the current countywide system for tackling violent crime and there are elements of this system that will continuously be strengthened or improved as we learn, adapt to changes in our communities and look to evidence what works.

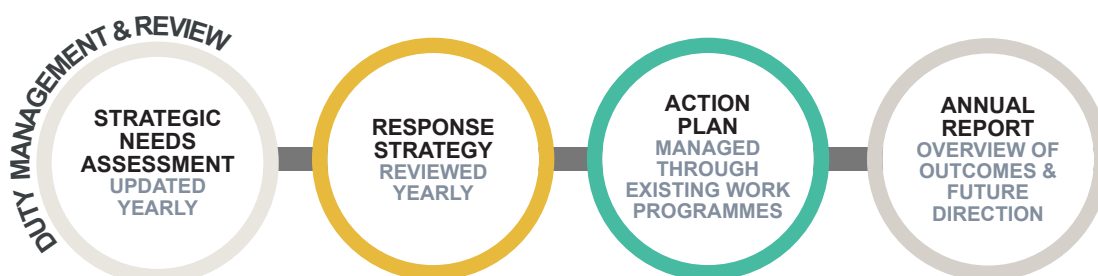
By using the public health approach to our existing work programmes, partners will continue to work together to make the best use of resources and commission services that have the greatest impact on serious violence in Suffolk.



Strategy Management & Performance Framework

This strategy sets out a collective approach to preventing and responding to serious violence in Suffolk and although there are no specific actions in this document, the actions we are undertaking are delivered within existing work programmes, examples of which are included in Appendix B.

In accordance with the new Serious Violence Duty guidance, Suffolk will continue to refresh and improve the strategic needs assessment yearly, or as new data becomes available. We will also look to refresh our serious violence strategy yearly to ensure it reflects the findings of refreshed data but also the views of professionals, practitioners and communities who are delivering services. This update will also allow us to review commissioning arrangements for initiatives/responses operating in Suffolk giving flexibility to adapt and change to our evidence base.



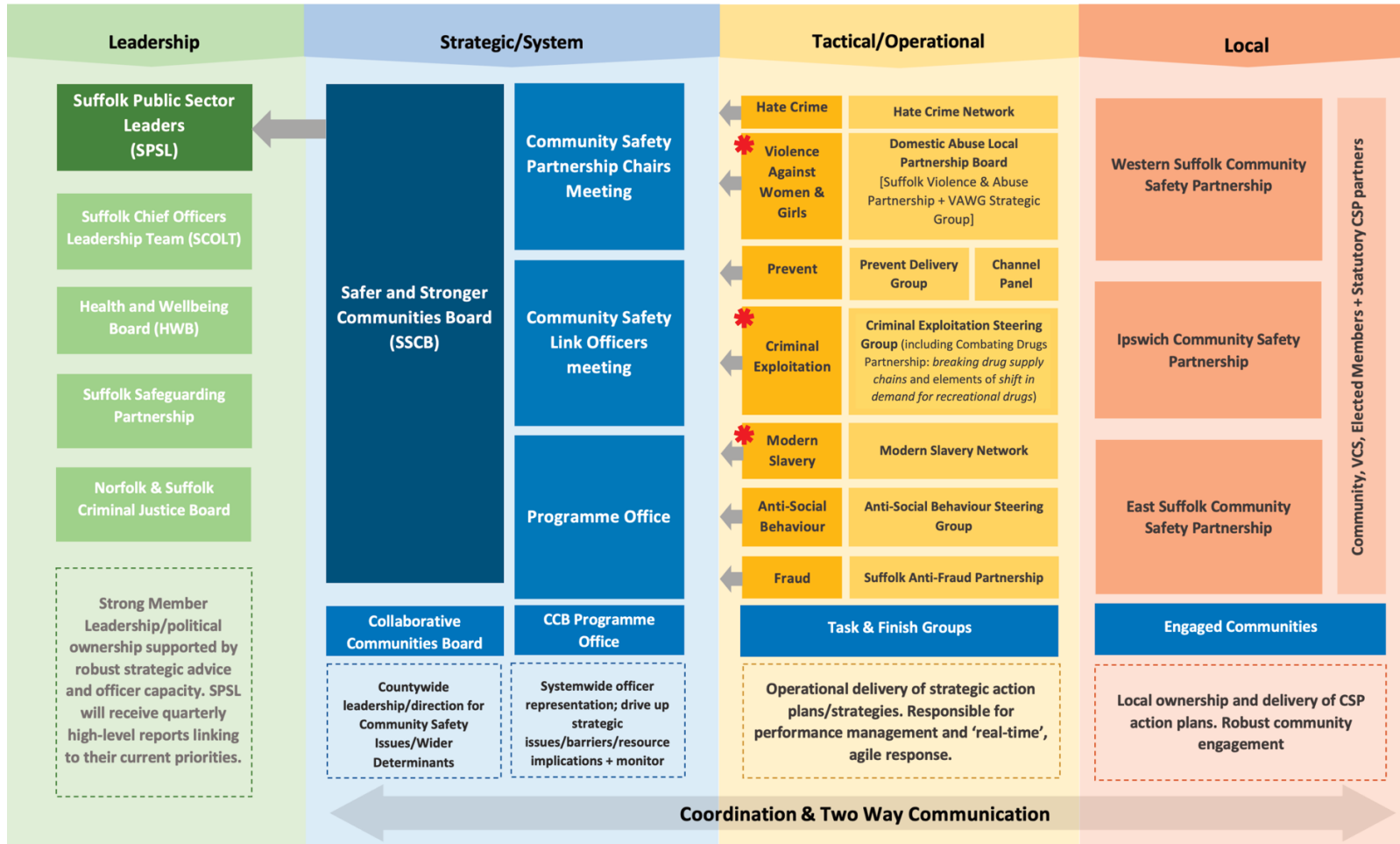
Action planning will be managed through existing work programmes to keep governance agile and responsive to need. An overview of how this programme of work is progressing will be reviewed quarterly in line with current governance arrangements, overseen by the Safer Stronger Communities Board but an annual report will be shared with partners across the Suffolk system detailing progress to date and future ambitions.

“We need more services/activities/schemes for young people in the right places at the right time for the right kids. We need to make this part of our communities and empower community leaders/mentors.” – Member of the community

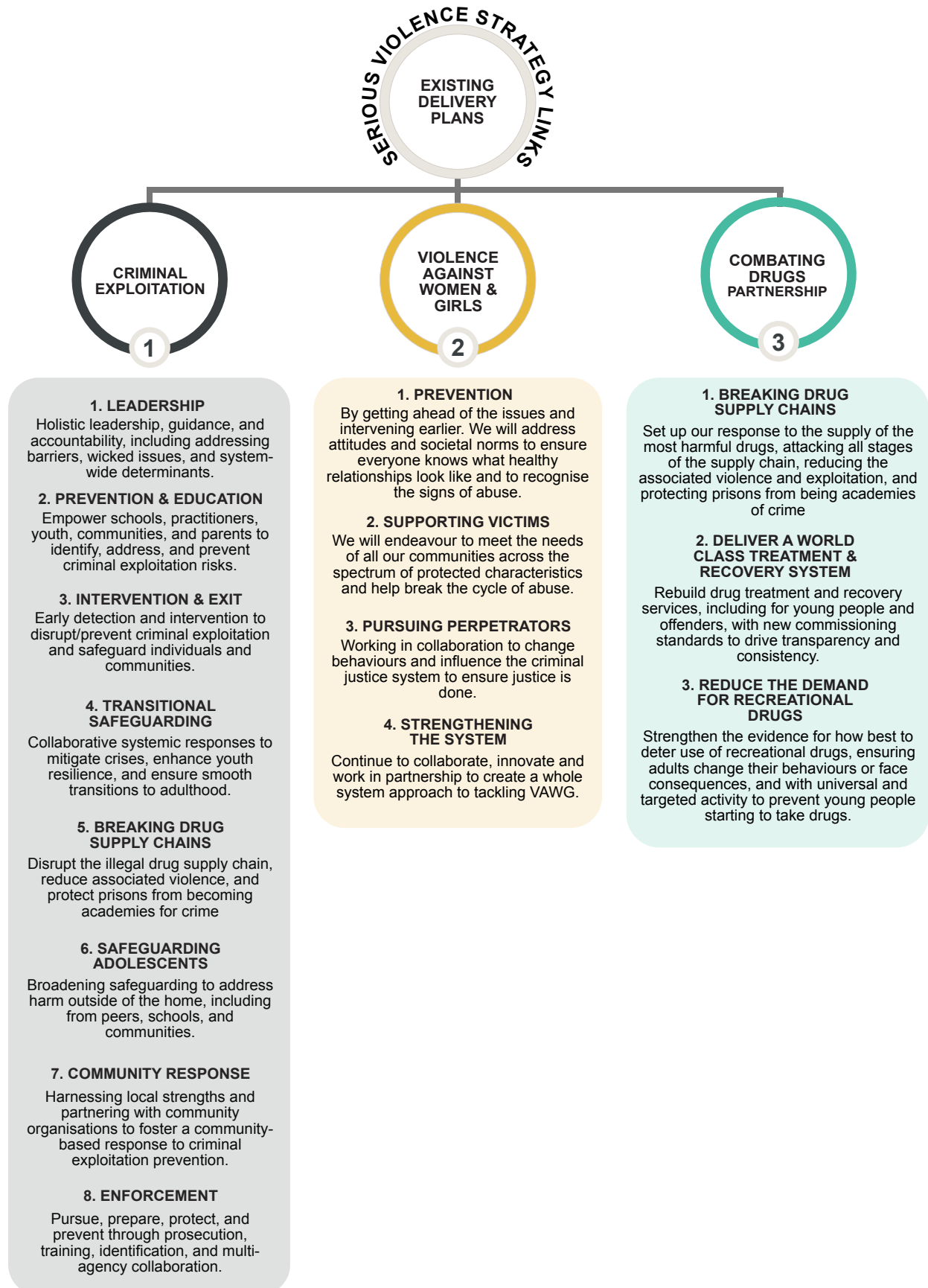
Appendix A - Current Suffolk System Governance for Serious Violence

Safer and Stronger Communities

Governance serious violence priorities marked: *



Appendix B - Existing Work Programmes, Delivery Plan Overviews



Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Asset Based Community Development	Asset-based community development (ABCD) is a bottom-up way of working with communities that focuses on community strengths and assets rather than on deficits and problems. A localised and sustainable way of strengthening communities through recognising, identifying and harnessing existing 'assets'. ABCD builds on the assets that are found in the community and mobilizes individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to realise and develop their strengths.
Combating Drugs Partnership	Is a multi-agency forum established as part of the UK Government's drugs strategy. Bringing together a range of local partners, including enforcement, treatment, recovery, and prevention, to work together to deliver the national strategy's priorities. The CDP provides a single setting for understanding and addressing shared challenges related to drug-related harm, based on the local context, and need.
Criminal Exploitation	A form of exploitation of a person to commit crimes for personal gain. It involves the deliberate manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person who are often vulnerable children and adults.
Domestic Abuse	Involves any incident or pattern of incidents of abusive behaviour between those aged 16 or over who are personally connected to each other, regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, financial, coercive, threatening, or controlling behaviour.
Integrated Care Board	Are statutory bodies that are responsible for planning and funding most NHS services in the area.
Knife Crime	Knife crime is any crime involving a knife or sharp object. Including carrying a knife, owning a banned knife, trying to buy a knife if you are under 18, and/or threatening, injuring, or fatally wounding someone with a knife.
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.
Local Policing Bodies	Police and Crime Commissioners, 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.
Night-time Economy	Pubs, nightclubs and entertainment venues in towns and city centres are often associated with the 'night-time economy'. This consists primarily of bars, pubs, nightclubs, and fast-food outlets, often clustered in town-centres.
Partnership	An arrangement through which specified authorities will work together to meet the requirements of the Serious Violence Duty

Public Health Approach	The public health approach to violence prevention is a four-step process that aims to prevent violence through addressing the factors that increase or decrease the likelihood of violence: -Define and monitor the problem by collecting data on the who, what, when, where, and how of violence. -Identify risk and protective factors that influence the occurrence of violence. -Develop and test prevention strategies that target the identified factors. -Assure widespread adoption of the effective strategies by disseminating and implementing them
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 Police Crime Sentencing and Crime Act.
Robbery	The act of robbery is to steal and to do so use force on any person or puts any person in fear of being subjected to force.
Safeguarding	Safeguarding is protecting children, young people, and adults at risk of harm, abuse, or neglect. It is a collective responsibility of all staff and a core part of providing high-quality care. Safeguarding children, young people and adults is a collective responsibility.
Serious Violence	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 which amount to serious violence, such as the use of corrosive substances as a weapon. For the purposes of the Duty, violence includes domestic abuse, sexual offences, violence against property and threats of violence but does not include terrorism.
Serious Violence Duty	The Serious Violence Duty is new to public sector duty holders and their partners, which creates a new responsibility to prevent and reduce serious violence in communities.
Sexual Offences	A range of crimes can be considered as sexual offences, including non-consensual crimes such as rape or sexual assault, crimes against children including child sexual abuse or grooming, and crimes that exploit others for a sexual purpose, whether in person or online.
Strategic Needs Assessment	An analysis of current and long-term issues providing greater understanding of established and emerging trends, priority locations, root causes, risk and protective factors, gap analysis and community voice.
Strategy	A high-level plan or set of plans intended to achieve a long-term outcome.
Social Gradient	The social gradient in health describes where people less advantaged in socioeconomic position and live in the most deprived areas have worse health outcomes (and shorter lives) than those who are more advantaged.
Specified Authorities	All authorities to whom the Serious Violence Duty applies within the local authority.
Suffolk Safer and Stronger	A multiagency partnership which aims to provide strategic direction and leadership on wider issues and determinants arising from the following agreed priorities:

Communities Board	<p>Violence Against Women and Girls, Men and Boys</p> <p>Criminal Exploitation</p> <p>Modern Slavery</p> <p>Hate Crime</p> <p>Preventing Radicalisation</p> <p>Anti-social Behaviour</p> <p>Fraud</p>
Violence Profile	A violence profile collects local data (including NHS and police data) to present the types, distribution, and extent of violence in a local area.
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.
Violence Against Women and Girls	Violence against women and girls (VAWG) covers a range of unacceptable crimes, including rape and other sexual offences, stalking, domestic abuse, 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and 'honour' killings), 'revenge porn' and 'upskirting,' as well as many others.
Wider Determinants	Wider determinants, also known as social determinants, are a diverse range of social, economic, and environmental factors which impact on people's health. Such factors are influenced by the local, national, and international distribution of power and resources which shape the conditions of daily life.
Youth Violence	Youth violence refers to violence that occurs among individuals aged 10–29 years and can include bullying, both offline and online, physical fighting, to more severe sexual and physical assault, gang-related violence, or homicide. Youth violence results in deaths, injuries, disability, and long-term health consequences including mental health problems and increased health-risk behaviours, which can lead to chronic diseases. It is further associated with higher rates of school-dropouts, negative impacts on cognitive development and opportunities to contribute to their communities.