

## Youth Violence Commission

### Briefing Note for 21 May Evidence Session on Policing and the Criminal Justice System

The Commission is particularly keen to hear from practitioners, experts and young people. The questions asked at the session may include:

- The issue of a breakdown in trust between police and some communities is of real concern to the Commission. To what extent do you think this is a significant problem with regard to youth violence and why?
- How can trust be established, especially between the police and young people, and what are the barriers to achieving this?
- The Macpherson Report into the police handling of the tragic Stephen Lawrence murder said there had been "institutional racism" and made 72 recommendations. Twenty-five years on, to what extent have the clear lessons from Stephen's murder been learnt by the MPS and other forces across the UK? What more needs to be done?
- What are the pros and cons of "Stop and Search" in addressing youth violence and could it be applied in a more effective way?
- Scotland's Violence Reduction Unit has adopted a public health approach to violence reduction (and is the only police member of the WHO's Violence Prevention Alliance). They have seen excellent results. What lessons can others learn from the VRU's success and why haven't all police forces adopted similar, integrated approaches?
- What role does community policing play in helping to prevent serious youth violence and how effective are current community policing approaches in this respect?
- How does the criminal justice system help to deter young people from engaging in serious violence and where could it be better?
- What are your thoughts on the current allocation of resources across prevention, intervention, and suppression activities? Are these activities prioritised and resourced appropriately?
- What changes in the law, if any, could help to reduce serious youth violence?
- If you could change one thing about the police or the criminal justice system to help to tackle serious youth violence, what would it be?

#### Evidence Sessions

The Policing and Criminal Justice Session will be the final one in a series of six that have been held by the Commission. The previous sessions were:

- 16 October 2017: Youth and Community
- 11 December 2017: Public Health and Mental Health
- 26 February 2018: Early Years, Education and Employability
- 26 March 2018: Housing, Communities, Relationships and Faith Groups
- 23 April 2018: Media, Music and Role Models

It is worth noting that in these sessions, many issues relevant to the theme of “policing and the criminal justice system” have already emerged, including:

- Evidence of a considerable and problematic lack of trust between many young people and the police, leading to a “wall of silence” in some communities.
- Resentment, especially from young black boys, at the apparent widespread and prejudiced use of stop and search.
- Adverse childhood experiences and mental health issues as root causes of youth violence, leading to calls for a more trauma-led approach from public servants - including the police - who work with young offenders.
- The need for much closer cooperation between the full range of children and young peoples’ services, with Scotland’s VRU seen as an exemplar of successful integration.
- Examples of good practice in terms of community policing and young people, especially where police officers work closely with primary and secondary schools.
- Poor quality alternative education provision and permanent exclusions as risk factors for progression to serious violence, particularly for children who are already vulnerable to negative, external influences.
- Frustration at the lack of progress on implementation of recommendations from major reviews into young people and the criminal justice system, including the December 2016 Taylor Review of the Youth Justice System in England and Wales<sup>1</sup>.

### **Safer Lives Survey**

The Commission’s “Safer Lives Survey” was conducted in January/February 2018 and asked young people various questions relating to the levels of violence that they are exposed to in their everyday lives, including: how often they experience serious violence, how many people they know who carry weapons, who sell drugs or who have been victims of serious violence, as well as where they feel most safe and who they would turn to for help if they felt vulnerable to serious violence. Over 2200 young people between the ages of 8 and 24 completed the survey. Headline findings will be shared with MPs and Peers on 14 May and the full analysis is due to be published in autumn 2018.

For this session it is worth noting some of the early data from the survey responses:

- 46% of the respondents think the police make young lives safer
- 21% do not think the police make young lives safer
- 33% neither agree or disagree that police make young lives safer

Less than half (46%) of the young people who completed the survey would ask police for advice if they were worried about being a victim of crime.

Initial analysis also indicates a link between drugs and serious violence. Respondents who answered that they knew people who sold drugs were exposed to highest levels of violence. Respondents who answered that drugs were readily accessible in their neighbourhood knew the highest numbers of victims of serious crime.

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<sup>1</sup> [Review of the Youth Justice System in England and Wales](#)

## **Key documents**

There is a wealth of academic papers, policy documents, statistical publications and other material on policing and the criminal justice system. (See Annex A below). Most witnesses will be familiar with some, if not all, of this material. As background for this session it might be worth noting the following recent publications:

### ***Amnesty International, Trapped in the Matrix – 9 May 2018<sup>2</sup>***

The 55-page report raises serious concerns about how individuals come to be placed on the database, how the information is shared with other agencies such as housing associations and schools, and the adverse effect that being listed on the Matrix can have for the young black males who are disproportionately impacted. The researchers spoke to more than 30 professionals who use the Gangs Matrix, including the police and other organisations, as well as community members and young people affected by the Matrix.

### ***Home Office Serious Violence Strategy - April 2018<sup>3</sup>***

The Strategy is framed around four key themes: tackling county lines and misuse of drugs, early intervention and prevention, supporting communities and partnerships, and an effective law enforcement and criminal justice response. Some of the key points to note for this session are:

- While overall crime continues to fall, homicide, knife crime and gun crime have risen since 2014 across virtually all police force areas in England and Wales.
- These increases have been accompanied by a shift towards younger victims and perpetrators.
- Violence may also be facilitated and spread to some extent by social media. A small minority are using social media to glamorise gang or drug-selling life, taunt rivals and normalise weapons carrying.
- There is no evidence that falls in stop and search are driving an upward trend in serious violence. Rather, research evidence suggests the police should focus on improved targeting of known offenders and hot-spot locations.
- Being in care and school exclusion are markers for increased risk of both victimisation and perpetration.
- Mental health issues are more prevalent in individuals involved in violence than in any other comparable group.
- Police forces in Wales, working with Public Health Wales, will develop and test a new, trauma-informed and integrated model with a focus on ensuring that the police can better understand and address the impact of ACEs on victims and perpetrators of serious violence.

### ***The Lammy Review – 8 September 2017<sup>4</sup>***

The Lammy Review is an independent review of the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals in the Criminal Justice System. The review

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/met-police-using-racially-discriminatory-gangs-matrix-database>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-strategy>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lammy-review-final-report>

found that BAME disproportionality in the criminal justice system costs the taxpayer at least £309 million each year, as well as a number of other concerning statistics. For example, the proportion of BAME young offenders in custody rose from 25% to 41% between 2006 and 2016, despite the overall number of young offenders falling to record lows. It contains 35 recommendations, including: introducing assessments of a young offenders' maturity, exploring how criminal records could be 'sealed', and allowing some prosecutions to be 'deferred'. The Review also urges the justice system to take major steps to increase diversity and transparency.

## Key statistics

### Police funding

The table below shows the Expenditure met by Tax and Grants for the 43 territorial forces in England and Wales between 2007/08 and 2017/18. Please note that data for 2017/18 are estimates:

		EXPENDITURE MET BY TAX AND GRANTS, ENGLAND & WALES						
		<i>£000s, grossed data</i>						
		Funded by						
		Total Financing Provision	Revenue Support Grant	Formula Grant	Police Grant	Redistributed Non-Domestic Rates	Legacy Council Tax Grant	Council Tax Requirement
2007/08	Actuals	11,116,279	587,856	-	4,851,253	2,848,292	-	2,828,878
2008/09	Actuals	11,526,616	518,529	-	4,994,984	3,014,397	-	2,998,706
2009/10	Actuals	11,376,089	747,273	-	4,606,269	2,880,135	-	3,142,412
2010/11	Actuals	11,541,185	559,239	-	4,625,466	3,165,051	-	3,191,429
2011/12	Actuals	11,575,777	895,841	-	4,802,376	2,615,298	-	3,262,262
2012/13	Actuals	11,184,570	150,881	-	4,500,258	3,206,976	-	3,326,455
2013/14	Actuals	11,140,036	-	3,227,077	4,916,298	-	-	2,996,661
2014/15	Actuals	11,211,881	-	2,946,116	5,340,009	-	-	2,605,780
2015/16	Actuals	10,947,622	-	2,729,200	5,198,483	-	298,258	2,721,682
2016/17	Actuals	11,060,539	-	2,934,740	4,400,592	-	398,238	3,326,968
2017/18	Estimates	11,084,501	-	3,010,031	4,207,892	-	416,378	3,450,200
<i>Percentage change 2007/08</i>								
<i>Actuals to 2017/18 Estimates</i>		-0.3%		-13%			37%	

Source: CIPFA, Police Service Statistics Actuals and Estimates, various years

According to the data, total funding for the territorial police forces in England and Wales in 2017/18 - at just under £11.1 billion - is slightly lower (0.3%) than that in 2007/08. The table is in cash terms. In real terms (2016/17 prices) taking inflation into account, funding for forces in England and Wales in 2017/18 is around 27% lower than in 2007/08 (calculated using standard HMT GDP deflators).

## Stop and Search

Statistics on stop and search in England & Wales can be found in the Home Office Collection: [Police powers and procedures England and Wales statistics](#). Table SS.15 showing number of stops and arrest rates for England and Wales from 2001/2 to 2016/17 - is reproduced below:

**SS.15: Persons stopped and searched, and subsequent arrests, all stops and searches<sup>1</sup>, England and Wales<sup>2</sup>**

<i>Numbers and percentages</i>		<b>England and Wales</b>	
<b>Year</b>	Total searches	Total Arrests	Arrest rate (%)
2001/02	759,900	99,388	13
2002/03	939,648	116,799	12
2003/04	789,880	96,647	12
2004/05	903,105	97,014	11
2005/06	924,951	99,314	11
2006/07	1,007,604	112,761	11
2007/08	1,106,502	122,425	11
2008/09	1,309,548	117,524	9
2009/10	1,297,300	110,599	9
2010/11	1,291,753	115,650	9
2011/12	1,189,882	108,875	9
2012/13	1,017,542	105,826	10
2013/14	904,038	108,351	12
2014/15	541,144	74,800	14
2015/16	383,595	60,288	16
2016/17	303,845	51,813	17

*Source: Stop and Search collection, Home Office*

### Notes

1. Does not include searches under section 44/47A of the Terrorism Act 2000. This legislation was amended by the Home Secretary in 2011 and had not been used up to the year ending March 2017.
2. Data from 2009/10 onwards includes the British Transport Police (BTP). BTP did not provide data to the Home Office prior to 2009/10, therefore data from before this period are not directly comparable with more recent years.

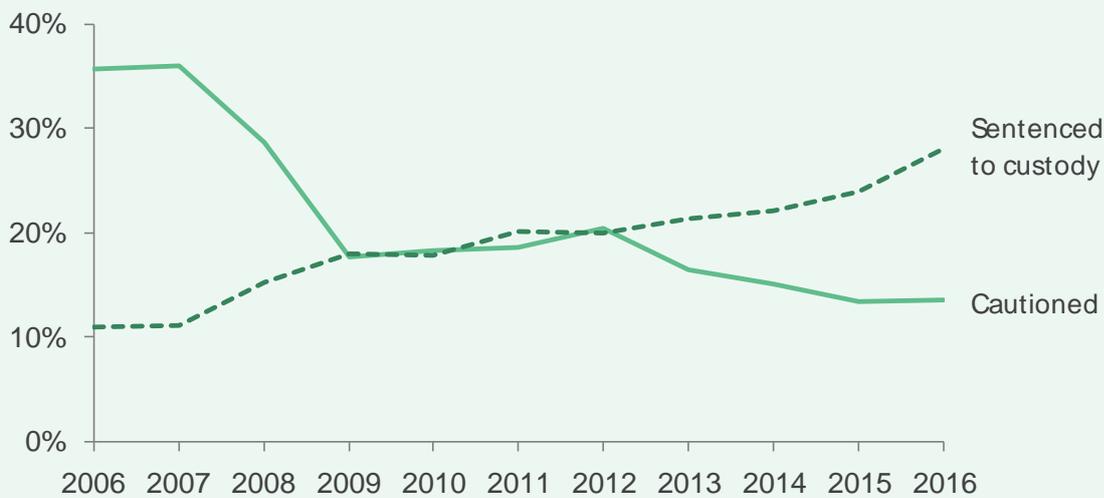
## Knife possession and sentencing

Data on sentencing for violent crime and knife possession is published by the Ministry of Justice in its [Criminal justice statistics](#) series. In 2016, there were 8,100 proven offenders for whom knife possession was the principal offence, compared with 9,800 in 2006. In 2016, 28% of proven offenders received an immediate custody sentence, compared with 11% in 2006. As the chart below indicates, there has been a steady rise in the percentage of proven offenders receiving a custody sentence and a simultaneous fall in the percentage receiving a caution.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> A caution is a formal warning given to a person who has admitted to an offence. Such offences do not go through the court system so no sentence is imposed.

## PROVEN OFFENDERS CAUTIONED AND SENTENCED

For possession of knife offences, England and Wales



Source: Ministry of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly, December 2016; Outcomes by Offence

The proportion of custodial sentences for knife possession which were longer than one year went from 3% in 2006 to 14% in 2016. The length of sentences for knife possession offences increased between 2006 and 2016, from an average of 3.4 months to 6.5 months. When suspended custodial sentences are included, the proportion receiving a custodial sentence rose from 17% to 51% between 2006 and 2016.

## SENTENCING TRENDS FOR KNIFE POSSESSION

Proceeded against at magistrates' courts, found guilty and sentenced at all courts

	Cautioned	Sentenced to custody	Sentence length: over 1 year	Sentence length: under 1 year
2006	36%	11%	3%	97%
2007	36%	11%	5%	95%
2008	29%	15%	8%	92%
2009	18%	18%	10%	90%
2010	18%	18%	9%	91%
2011	19%	20%	11%	89%
2012	20%	20%	11%	89%
2013	16%	21%	14%	86%
2014	15%	22%	15%	85%
2015	13%	24%	16%	85%
2016	13%	28%	14%	86%

Source: Ministry of Justice, CJS Outcomes by Offence 2006 to 2016: Pivot Table Analytical Tool for England and Wales, May 2017

The figures given in the table on court proceedings relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with.

The table shows offences under the code '10D Possession of article with blade or point'.

## Annex A – Literature

### ***Police, drugs and serious youth violence***

- Commons Library Debate Pack 2018-0009, [County lines exploitation in London](#), 15 January 2018
- HM Government, [Ending gang violence and exploitation](#), January 2016
- Home Office, [2017 Drug Strategy](#), July 2017
- APPG on Runaway and Missing Children and Adults, [Briefing note on the event on disrupting exploitation of children along 'county lines'](#), 4 December 2017
- Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing, [Ending gang and youth violence case studies](#) (at the bottom of the page you can download the case study on tackling gang and youth violence), 2015

### ***Police and prevention activities***

- A Joint Inspection by HMI Constabulary, HMI Probation, Care Quality Commission and Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, [A Joint Inspection of Youth Crime Prevention](#), 2010
- National Foundation for Educational Research, [Police Officers in Schools: A scoping study](#), 2011
- National Policing Improvement Agency, [Community engagement in policing: Lessons from the literature, Andy Myhill](#) (First published 2006, reprinted 2012)
- College of Policing, [Preventing Youth Gang Involvement for Children and Young People \(7-16\) using opportunities provision What Works Briefing](#), 2013
- The Early Intervention Foundation, [Preventing Gang and Youth Violence: Spotting Signals of Risk and Supporting Children and Young People](#), 2015

### ***Race and community relations***

- Home Affairs Committee, [The Macpherson Report—Ten Years On](#), July 2009
- Equality and Human Rights Commission, ['Police and Racism: What has been achieved 10 years after the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report?'](#), 2009
- The Runnymede Trust ["The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry 10 Years On: An Analysis of the Literature](#), 2009
- Runnymede Trust, [Runnymede Perspectives: Justice, Resistance and Solidarity Race and Policing in England and Wales](#), 2015
- Bedfordshire police, [Race and policing - Chief Constable Jon Boutcher reflects on 25 years since Stephen Lawrence murder](#), 19 April 2018 - Chief Constable Jon Boutcher, the national police chiefs' lead for Race, talks about changes in policing ahead of the 25th anniversary of the murder of Stephen Lawrence.
- Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, [Stephen Lawrence – 25 Years On](#), 20 April 2018

## **The Youth Violence Commission – Background**

Following a debate in Parliament, a Cross Party Commission was launched in 2017 to examine the root causes of youth violence in England, Scotland and Wales. The Commission is consulting young people and working with academics and practitioners to better understand how serious violence manifests itself in many young people's lives. The Commission has the support of MPs from across political parties, but it is not funded by Government, nor is it an All Party Parliamentary Group. It will produce a written report with policy recommendations to address serious, youth violence issues.

### **Commissioners**

- Vicky Foxcroft, Chair of the Commission, Labour, Lewisham Deptford
- Chuka Umunna, Labour, Streatham
- James Cleverly, Conservative, Braintree
- Mark Field, Conservative, Cities of London & Westminster
- Chris Stephens, SNP, Glasgow South West
- Norman Lamb, Liberal Democrat, North Norfolk

### **Scotland – sharing good practice**

The Youth Violence Commission is in contact with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in Glasgow. This has included a fact-finding visit in early October 2017. The VRU is a police and government unit which tackles violence by working with partners to achieve long-term societal and attitudinal change. The VRU's adoption of a public health approach to violence has had outstanding positive outcomes.