



The Association of Youth Offending Team Managers (AYM) response to: Serious Violence Duty survey

About the AYM

The AYM is a professional association representing the majority of youth offending teams (YOT) and their managers in England.

Section 39 (1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the co-operation of the named statutory partners to form a YOT. Section 38 (1, 2) identifies the statutory partners and places upon them a duty to co-operate in order to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area. These statutory partners are the local authority, police, the probation service, and health. To support the YOT, additional partners may also be recruited to the joint strategic effort to prevent offending by children and young people.

The Association is able to draw on the wealth of knowledge and the breadth of members' experience to promote public understanding of youth crime issues and to play its part in shaping the youth crime agenda.

Our members run services providing community-based supervision for children and young people who offend. We also work with children in custody and work closely with staff in secure units and young offender institutions to ensure that young people receiving custody experience as smooth a transition as possible into custody and back in to the community.

The AYM welcomes the opportunity to provide a response to the Serious Violence Duty survey

Q1. Does the draft statutory guidance improve your understanding of the legislation relating to the Serious Violence Duty?

- Yes

Any comments:

In consultation with AYM members everyone is in agreement that it is clear and simple.

**Q2. Are there any specific aspects of the Serious Violence Duty that remain unclear (or are missing) after reading the draft Statutory Guidance?
If yes, can you provide details?**

- Yes

Any comments:

YJS should be a core member of the Violence Reduction Unit?

The AYM and members would suggest this should state 'or equivalent' as all areas for example have Community Safety Partnerships and not Violence Reduction Units?

Unclear – AYM and members responses:

All violence is serious. What does the duty deem as serious violence? Low level violence can escalate to high levels of violence, therefore when does this become a duty, and classed as serious? Does this consider patterns, convictions and violence that does not result in convictions?

Where violence online is captured into this duty, for example cyber-bullying, blackmailing, stalking, revenge porn – these are key drivers for violence.

How the service user's lived experience is captured in this duty for vulnerable groups.

Clarification required regarding the inclusion of Domestic Abuse and VAWG, will this be for mention only as part of the duty as they currently already have their own Strategy and Duty?

Q3. We are keen to include updated case studies to support the statutory guidance and to support continuous learning on serious violence. If you are able to provide a case study, please provide brief details below, including your contact details.

Preventative early intervention team, based in the community, was implemented in 2017 to prevent, identify and respond to extra-familial harm. For example, a strategic plan was developed to disrupt ASB, Serious Youth Violence and potential exploitation in areas of the borough that were identified as 'hot spots'.

A Multi-Agency approach was used to analyse, respond and reduce the exploitation and serious youth violence identified within the areas from a community Multi-Agency partnership approach.

We utilised our own bespoke database to capture trends and themes for children and young people across the borough identified as at risk of extra-familial harm.

The service was promoted and information was received from a range of statutory and voluntary partners including social care, ASB, housing, education, community safety, police, health and third sector organisations.

The information that was captured was analysed and triangulated to present to senior management at a strategic level with recommendations to implement change of good practice to safeguard, disrupt and respond to exploitation within Hillingdon.

This resulted in a decrease in extra-familial harm in the areas identified and the community and safeguarding partners identifying this as a positive and successful good practice that involved Multi-Agency partners from education, health, youth services

Case study provided by: various departments in Hillingdon (Youth Justice Service and Adolescent Development Service, Safeguarding Partnership, Community Safety and Children Services).

Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following suggestions for support for local areas on the Duty?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

National seminars – ***Strongly agree***

Peer support by operational experts -***Strongly agree***

National Facilitators -***Strongly agree***

Local consultancy support – ***Strongly agree***

Other (please state)

Recognise the duties for the police (local authorities and Tri-Borough) and how this can impact the capacity to support Local Authorities. Therefore, for health, police etc, consideration should be made to how this duty would cover or impact how the duty could be fulfilled. For example, intelligence and information sharing across neighbouring local authorities and boroughs.

Understanding the barriers /issues with information sharing and analysing and understanding violence across authorities and boroughs.

Inclusion of partnership agencies that fall outside of the Local Authority, and how they could be supported to work with the Local Authority, including community and charity organisations.

Implementation of Trauma-Informed Practice to align with the Public Health objective of identifying serious violence as a health issue across all services responsible for safeguarding within a local authority and understanding the needs for different vulnerability groups in communities. This would require in depth training for all agencies to understand the duty and their role within this.

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following suggestions for areas of support for local areas on the Duty?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Data and information sharing – **Strongly Agree**

Strategic Needs Assessments [Serious Violence Duty: Draft statutory guidance for responsible authorities' government consultation] - **Agree**

Multi-Agency working – **Agree**

Defining Serious violence other (please state) - **Strongly agree**

This was felt by members to be an area that really needed to be defined, an example was made around the differences in language and practise for example the Police have a gravity matrix of 1 to 4 when looking at offences and the Youth Justice Board have a gravity matrix of 1 to 6+. This causes confusion and misunderstanding

Other points:

Exploration of how systems for recording information can collaborate with different partners to share relevant and appropriate safeguarding information. Partnerships to improve identification, prevention and implement reduction plans to serious violence, with a focus on early intervention to prevent Serious Violence. Partners often miss information due to using various systems and cannot access information from other departments despite working within one Local Authority. Therefore, decision-making can become skewed, because of no duty to share, and lack of access to information particularly when different agencies could be working with the same family without each other's knowledge.

Identification of drivers for serious violence, to understand what resources are required to prioritise issues coming to fruition. Prevention and intervention is vital.

Potential for a a short briefing to be shared across the Local Authority and with partners e.g. 7-minute briefing, a short video/ animation (3 mins) that can focus on everybody plays a part in the duty. The message needs be local authority/ borough-wide.

Gaining support to utilise and analyse data where children/young people and adults indicate the drivers behind Serious Violence that can be shared locally, regionally and nationally.

Kind regards

Roni Checksfield and Kathy Gill

on behalf of the AYM