

Date:

11 September 2018	Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with Ethnic Minorities
Subject:	Knife crime
Lead contact and contact details:	Neil Thurlow, x3240
Position and organisation	Head of Community Safety, Merton

Actions required and by when:

- A. All to work through the knife crime action plan and commit to undertaking actions in the meeting
- B. All partners, with front line officers, to advise on weapons sweeps and weapon sweep training

1 Executive summary

- 1.1 Knife crime and knife related homicides in London is continuing. 2018 has been subject to unprecedented murder rates and, for every stabbing seen, Assistance Commissioner Hewitt advises we should view these as potential murders rather than minimising the damage caused such is the gravity of risk and harm
- 1.2 Merton has not been unaffected by this increase in murder rate and knife crime. We have had one murder on borough, we have seen one ex-Merton young person killed in Camberwell and, through work undertaken by the YOT, they estimate that London's murders can be linked back to Merton, in some way, in an alarming 20% of cases
- 1.3 Merton, along with all boroughs in the BCU, and London as a whole, now needs to complete a knife crime plan working on five strands of business ranging from prevention to prosecution.
- 1.4 We cannot rely on the police to solely enforce their way out of this pandemic and, through work at a regional level, c/o MOPACS knife crime summit, and nationally c/o the Home Office Serious Violence Strategy, Community Safety Partnerships are at the forefront of this work

2 Details of actions required

- 2.1 The bulk of the actions will be worked through in the meeting as we discuss and look at the Knife Crime Plan collectively. It is to be assumed that all partners of the Safer and Stronger Executive (SSE) board, whether in attendance or not, will be allocated actions to be completed over the coming weeks, in advance of the next board
- 2.2 Partners are asked to consider how they may contribute to knife/weapon sweeps in the borough. This is a useful community engagement and reassurance tool allowing weapons to be taken from the streets safeguarding our communities. Partners should advise if they can be part of any weapon sweeps in the future
- 2.3 Where partner agencies may come upon a weapon, via front line staff e.g. wardens, park keepers, street cleaners etc. they are asked to consider what skills/training is

required for their staff to safely secure any weapons and police are asked to provide training, if requested, for this

3 Partners roles and consultation process (if needed)

- 3.1 Consultation will be undertaken in the meeting primarily
- 3.2 Partners will be asked to contribute remotely to the proposed plan should there be time for this

4 Timetable for work

- 4.1 All works on the plan must be complete and signed off by Friday 14 September in accordance with MOPAC/the Met timelines

5 Crime and disorder implications

- 5.1 Knife crime is a strategic priority for the Met and MOPAC as one of five stated areas of work
- 5.2 Knife crime, fear of knives, use and sighting of knives, all add to feelings of safety which is a key priority
- 5.3 Where knife crime is feared in an area the fear can become a self-fulfilling concern/area of focus as more people carry knives as they fear being victims of knife crime

6 Appendices and background papers

- 6.1 Knife crime action plan which will be worked on in the meeting
- 6.2 As a wider overview for knife offences:
 - 6.2.1 In April 2016, Merton's rolling 12-month knife crime offence figure, as on overall offence category was 149. Two years later the figure stood at 180 offences or exactly 15 offences per month.
 - 6.2.2 **In percentage terms for Merton, this is a 21% increase since 2016.** However, Merton's increase is less than half of that seen across London where, in the same two year period the MPS as a whole saw knife crime offences increase by 53% to 14,819
 - 6.2.3 Knife crime offences are further broken down by those resulting in injury.
 - 6.2.4 Over the same two-year period the total MPS figures for knife crime injury rose by 28% (1041 offences), whilst in Merton it rose by less than 2% (1 offence). Again, whilst Merton has seen an increase it has not seen the same increase in the propensity to use knives to injure seen across the MPS as a whole
 - 6.2.5 Where are our offences happening? Figge's Marsh and Cricket Green remain the wards with the highest levels of offences accounting for 30% of all knife crime offences in the borough. Colliers Wood and Pollards Hill follow in third and fourth place respectively.
 - 6.2.6 The number of young victims (under 25) actually fell in Merton from a rolling 12-month figure of 30 in April 2016 reducing to 19 in March 2018. This decline in knife crime injury, on borough, thankfully continues but does not undermine the wider links and concerns stated above
 - 6.2.7 The use of knives to commit personal robberies is of concern across the MPS. Merton is currently averaging one knife point robbery every two months