

Report of the Task and Finish Group on Drug Gangs, Knife Crime and County Lines, established by the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

Report by Lead Member of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor Carlo Guglielmi
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1. Purpose of the Report

The issue of drug gangs, knife crime and County Lines was discussed at Full Council on 12 December 2018 and the following motion passed:

'This Council recognises the impact of drug gangs, knife crime and county lines as a local, regional and national issue.

This Council commends the work of multi-agency statutory and voluntary partners in Essex, Southend and Thurrock in relation to these issues, particularly given the judgement of "Outstanding" by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation, following a recent inspection.

This Council is pleased to see this work is being recognised by the Home Office in awarding the sum of £640k to the Police, Crime and Fire Commissioner's Office to further expand this multi-agency work.

This Council therefore:

- *Calls upon all political parties to work together to drive down the impact of drug gangs, knife crime and county lines on the residents of Essex.*
- *Requests that the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee has oversight of and contributes to the multi-agency strategy and its development.'*

The Committee resolved to establish a Task and Finish Group to look at the issue in more detail. Working closely with Tanya Gillett, Head of Youth Offending, the Group held twelve evidence sessions over five main evidence days between August – December 2019. Discussions were held with a variety of witnesses including a National Crime Agency Co-ordinator for County Lines, Essex Police, the Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, representatives from community and voluntary groups, County Council Cabinet Members and County Council Officers.

The conclusions of the Task and Finish Group are presented to Council.

2. Recommendation

To note the attached report.