

Tackling knife crime and the causes of knife crime in Bristol

Bristol City Council believes:

1. Together with agency partners, we are working hard to address the causes of youth violence and trying to engage with young people to help them understand the devastating consequences carrying and using knives can have. This council believes that young people are important and recognises the positive contribution that young people make to the city. Bristol is working to support young people to make more positive choices when it comes to knife crime and youth violence. The impact of knife crime disproportionately impacts the BME communities of Bristol.
2. Knife violence and the impact of violence has increased in recent years. The perception of the danger of knife crime, and fear for one's loved ones has increased. In the year to end September 2022, there was a total of 1,204 incidents involving a sharp object. In that time there were 8 murders that involved a knife, constituting 42% of homicides with the Avon & Somerset area. In addition, there were 164 threats to kill, 12 attempts to kill, 33 rapes, and 597 serious assaults with a knife. [1]
3. Injuries from knife violence increases in times of economic crisis and desperation. In January 2023, a man died in Castle Park due to knife violence, In February 2023, a woman was injured in a knife incident in Filton. One is one too many, and Bristol believes the victims of knife crime should be zero and that zero is possible.
4. The causes of knife crime are complex and multifaceted, and drivers can include the needs of the individual, their relationships, their wider community, their environment, societal factors including social media influence, and educational factors - including school exclusions. All these risks are often compounded by poverty and economic circumstances and disproportionately affect black and minoritized - The communities. The solutions require cross agency working and flexible approaches.

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Bristol City Council notes:

1. The Safer Approach Hub model, The Safer Options approach, Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership, the Youth summit on Violence Reduction, Child Safeguarding Practice Review, Drugs in School Pathway, Education Inclusion Project, Community Guardianship, Safer Streets, the Belonging Strategy, safeguarding webinars for VCSE partners and disproportionality webinars for schools, as well as other projects, as part of the administration's work to tackle youth violence.
2. The Drug and Alcohol Strategy for Bristol 2021-2025 2021

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~~3.2~~ Bleed kits may be added to defibrillation units to provide public access in emergency situations.

~~4.3~~ That our city's centre public realm must be felt safe for all, with increased visibility and safety measures. The council is currently replacing streetlamps with LED bulbs, which improve visibility and can have the brightness increased when needed.

~~5.4~~ ~~That~~ there are hotspots of concern in the city centre, where multi-agency interventions are needed to improve the safety of the environment

~~6.5~~ That there are some great initiatives across our city run by people with lived experience, who are working to help our young people to avoid being groomed into causes of knife crime. However, some of these projects are unable to access formal routes of funding.

~~7~~ ~~The~~ risk factors at the route-root of knife crime are complex. A contextual safeguarding approach is essential to tackling serious violence systemically and strategically. The causes of knife crime are complex but rooted in poverty and fostered by school exclusion. The solutions require cross-agency working and flexible approaches.

~~8~~

~~9.6~~

~~10~~ ~~That the requirement to save in energy costs should not be to the detriment of personal security.~~

Bristol City Council resolves to:

~~1~~ ~~As part of the budget planning process for the next municipal year, call on councillors to~~ Assign more funding to the authorities' to the Safer Approach Strategy of early intervention and preventative measures, 2024 and continue to seek government grants to complement these strategies in the meantime.

~~2~~ ~~Assign more funding to the Drug and Alcohol Strategy for Bristol 2021-2025~~

~~3.1~~ Work with stake holders to increase coverage of Bleed Kits and training on the use of them into night-time economy venues across the city.

~~4.2~~ Request that the improvement plans for Castle Park are implemented as soon as the plans are finalised and fully consulted upon.

~~5~~ Work to produce a joint strategic needs assessment to define serious violence in Bristol. This assessment will form an evidence-led basis for the creation of both a local strategy and an Avon and Somerset-wide strategy, to tackle knife crime and other forms of serious violent crime.

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3.

~~6. Invest £655,000 over the next two years to upgrade CCTV on council housing across the city.~~

7. Explore other routes of funding for grass roots projects tackling knife crime.

4.

~~8. Produce a strategy to tackle the negative views held by many of what it means to be neurodivergent so that all our young people can access the support they require.~~

5. Work with city partners to tackle all the root causes of knife crime – such as by increasing support for at risk young people in the education system; engaging with community groups to improve their capacity to prevent serious violence; and improving the sharing of intelligence and information between agencies.

~~Invest £655,000 over the next two years to upgrade CCTV on council housing across the city and to also ensure street lighting and CCTV is installed, replaced & functioning in areas that are identified through in areas such as Lawrence Hill, Queens Square, Redcliffe & other known hotspots. the evidence-based joint strategic needs assessment, as well as invest £655,000 over the next two years to upgrade CCTV on council housing across the city.~~

9.

6. W together with local councillors, communities, police teams and the licensing team to identify licenced premises which fuel anti-social behaviours at the root of knife carrying and review the licence compliance.

7. Continue to work with the Bristol Nights Board and the wider Night Time Economy on preventive measures, noting the success of the harm reduction training, the Bristol Rules Campaign, anti-drink spiking kits, and the Women’s Safety Charter

8.

Request the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership feed into the Local Plan consultation, as a means to design blind spots and other factors relating to serious violence out of Bristol’s built environment.

9. Request the Mayor and relevant Cabinet member to report back to Council on progress on these actions in March 2024.

10.

Motion submitted by: Councillor Mohamed Makawi

Date Submitted: 2 March 2023

Notes:

[1] [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk) (sept 2022 data set, table 5)

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