

Terms of reference Youth Select Committee Inquiry Knife Crime

Background to the inquiry

Over 1.1 million young people declared knife crime their biggest concern in [a UK-wide ballot](#) of young people aged 11 to 18. Research published by the [House of Commons Library](#) in November 2018, stated knife crime, particularly where it affects young people, has been a 'persistent and growing concern' for successive governments.

Since the announcement of the Youth Select Committee's inquiry there has also been several announcements by the Government, such as the introduction of knife crime prevention orders and investment in early intervention projects. The Spring Budget also included an additional £100 million; to pay for additional overtime targeted specifically on knife crime and to fund new Violent Crime Reduction Units to deliver a "wider cross-agency response".

Call for written submissions

The Committee would welcome submissions from a wide range of stakeholders, including young people, charities and organisation which directly support offenders and victims of knife crime as well as schools and businesses.

Written evidence is invited on, but not restricted to, the following Terms of Reference:

General

1. Are there any prominent trends in the statistics on a) who commits knife crime b) who are the victims of knife crime?
2. Is the Government strategy to combat knife crime doing enough to effectively: a) prevent b) intervene and; c) sentence those committing knife crime d) rehabilitate those cautioned or sentenced for knife crime?
3. Does the Government's Serious Violence Strategy strike the right balance between preventative and punitive action?
4. Is treating knife crime as a public health issue an effective approach?
5. How is knife crime affecting a) public services b) health services c) schools d) emergency services?
6. Is judicial sentencing effective in a) serving as a deterrent and b) preventing reoffending?

Young people

7. How do differences in young people lives (e.g. geographic location, education, mental health, household income and socioeconomic background) make them more vulnerable to being involved in knife crime?
8. What motivates young people to carry knives?
9. Is fear a motivator for young people who carry knives? What causes this? What can be done to address it?
10. Is there any evidence that gang culture, social media and/or music impact young people's involvement in knife crime?
11. Is there a correlation between young people being excluded, or not getting enough support from, education and involvement in knife crime?

Prevention

12. What could be done to make young people less likely to a) carry knives b) commit knife crime?
13. What support is available to identify and help young people at risk of getting involved in knife crime? Is it effective?
14. Are there examples of local initiatives which have worked well to prevent young people being victims or/and perpetrators of knife crime?
15. Are there particular groups of young people who are overlooked by current prevention strategies?

Intervention

16. Are there any examples of intervention schemes that have successfully rehabilitated young people who have been cautioned, reprimanded or sentenced due to knife crime, back into the community, education and/or employment?
17. What examples are there for whole community approaches to intervention?
18. Are there any examples of how police and communities have worked together to tackle knife crime?
19. How effective are positive role-models in deterring young people from gang and criminal activity?
20. Are the police's stop and search powers effective in promoting safety and/or putting young people off carrying knives?