Written evidence submitted by Loughborough University (BYC027)

General

1. Are there any prominent trends in the statistics on a) who commits knife crime b) who are the victims of knife crime?

The main trend in statistics around knife crime is that they are frequently incomplete, misinterpreted and misrepresented to fulfil the agenda and hypothesis of the provider

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?

Clearly not as figures continue to rise

3. Does the Government's Serious Violence Strategy strike the right balance between preventative and punitive action?

No, it is too focused on punitive and reactive responses such as stop and search and explaining knife crime as an individual pathology / disease to be prevented through deterrence and punishment, not support, treatment and neighbourhood-level relationship building and community development

4. Is treating knife crime as a public health issue an effective approach?

Only if there is also balanced focus on the health of neighbourhoods and communities, which can be toxic and harmful to individuals

SEE: Case, S.P. and Haines, K.R. (2019) Knife crime: Children are not the problem, they are part of the solution. https://theconversation.com/knife-crime-children-are-not-the-problem-they-are-part-of-the-solution-106893

5. How is knife crime affecting a) public services b) health services c) schools d) emergency services?

It is placing a huge strain on their already limited time and resources

6. Is judicial sentencing effective in a) serving as a deterrent and b) preventing reoffending?

No, clearly not, because deterrence doesn't work (especially with young people) and prevention needs to address the root causes of the problem, rather than the symptoms

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?

SEE: http://thenayj.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Youth-knife-Crime-Briefing-May-191.pdf

8. What motivates young people to carry knives?

SEE Case, S.P. and Haines, K.R. (2019) Knife crime: Children are not the problem, they are part of the solution. https://theconversation.com/knife-crime-children-are-not-the-problem-they-are-part-of-the-solution-106893

9. Is fear a motivator for young people who carry knives? What causes this? What can be done to address it?

See above

SEE ALSO: http://scyj.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/FINAL-SCYJ-response-Corrosive-substances-and-offensive-weapons-consultation-2017.pdf

10. Is there any evidence that gang culture, social media and/or music impact young people's involvement in knife crime?

NO – not in the academic and empirical sense. There is much media and political rhetoric that social media and gang culture play a part, but no hard evidence

BUT IN GENERAL, SEE:

https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/sites/crimeandjustice.org.uk/files/Knife%20crime.%20November.pdf

11. Is there a correlation between young people being excluded, or not getting enough support from, education and involvement in knife crime?

Inevitably – knife crime can be linked to social isolation, disaffection, boredom, risk taking and sensation seeking, peer pressure etc – all of which are more prevalent in the lives of socially and educationally excluded children

Prevention

12. What could be done to make young people less likely to a) carry knives b) commit knife crime?

SEE: Case, S.P. (2018) Children First justice: An agenda for change.
http://www.profstevecase.com/blog/4592945329/Children-first-justice-An-agenda-for-change/11266927

SEE: http://scyj.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FINAL-SCYJ-response-Home-Affairs-Committee-Serious-Violence-Inquiry.pdf

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?

IN GENERAL, SEE:

http://theconversation.com/knife-crime-causes-and-solutions-editors-guide-to-what-our-academic-experts-say-113318

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?

SCOTLAND, SEE:

https://www.cycj.org.uk/changing-the-perception-of-knife-crime/

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?

No they are COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, SEE:

https://theconversation.com/fighting-knife-crime-if-police-worked-closely-with-academic-experts-theyd-be-less-gung-ho-about-stop-and-search-114837

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