

# GREATER MANCHESTER

DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

## Greater Manchester Serious and Organised Crime Strategy



# Contents

	Page
<b>1. What is Programme Challenger?</b>	<b>6</b>
a. How will Challenger tackle serious and organised crime?	8
b. Measuring success	11
<b>2. Challenger’s approach</b>	<b>12</b>
a. Achievements / success / progress	16
<b>3. What is serious and organised crime?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>4. Serious and organised crime in Greater Manchester</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>5. Programme Challenger governance</b>	<b>22</b>



## Foreword by Baroness Beverley Hughes

I am pleased to introduce this strategy which sets out how Greater Manchester, through its pioneering partnership approach, Programme Challenger, will seek to enable individuals and communities to be free from the harm caused by serious and organised crime. It is ambitious and needs to be.

The strategy sets out the partnership priorities through which Greater Manchester will tackle serious and organised crime in all its forms. We know the devastation that serious and organised crime has on communities, and will build on the successes of Challenger, to go further, and to empower and build resilience within local areas.

Programme Challenger comprises of a wide range of partners from across the public private and voluntary sectors, and provides a platform for Greater Manchester to make best use of available resources, expertise and shared learning to get to the root of criminality, and safeguard individuals and communities.

A key strength of the partnership is its ability to adapt and develop to meet the changing demands placed on it. This has never been more true than during the Covid-19 global pandemic, where through the disruption caused to everyday life and work, the focus on tackling serious and organised crime never diminished. In fact, the breadth and depth of partners grew, enabling new responses to be developed to the emerging landscape of criminality in a changed world. Ensuring that this strategy is aligned to the Greater Manchester Strategy is key. We recognise the role that health and inequalities plays in driving serious and organised crime, and through this strategy Challenger will be prioritising strengthening partnerships to address these underpinning issues.

It is often said that we cannot arrest our way out of serious and organised crime. Collaboration is essential to be able to prevent the damage that this kind of criminality brings to individuals, communities

and places and support those affected by it. In particular, Challenger works with the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit and Complex Safeguarding Hub to tackle the significant harm caused to children and young people, and their families. Together, we have the mechanisms in place to identify and support those most affected whilst pursuing those responsible for exploitation and harm.

Serious and organised crime is, unfortunately, a pervasive threat to our communities. It can manifest in many ways and is not restricted to the common media tropes of drug dealing and shootings, although this is very much an aspect of serious and organised crime. Common neighbourhood crimes that occur on a daily basis, such as burglary and car theft, often have links to organised crime, because it is not defined by what criminal activity occurs, but rather how that criminal activity occurs.

To sustain the progress we are making in our fight against serious and organised crime, the involvement of the public is also vital. The renewed approach to neighbourhood policing in Greater Manchester will support our commitment to ensure that those who live, work and visit the city-region understand serious and organised crime and support the work of Challenger, feeling safe and able to report suspicions. We will work with, and for, our people and place, to ensure that the most innovative and effective approaches are deployed to eradicate serious and organised crime, and pursue relentlessly those responsible.

**Baroness Beverley Hughes, Deputy Mayor for Police and Crime**

## Statements of support



I am very proud of the work that GMP has played in leading Programme Challenger. I am pleased with the developments we have seen since the previous strategy; particularly in relation to

the dedicated Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking investigation teams. This key development has already safeguarded and supported numerous vulnerable victims, and a number of offenders have been brought to justice.

Across Greater Manchester dangerous individuals and groups continue to cause harm to individuals and their families through violent and exploitative offending. Often the victims are targeted because they are vulnerable for many different reasons. It is therefore crucial we continue to work across a wide range of partners to stop people becoming victims, whilst robustly tackling those offenders responsible.

Working with regional and national law enforcement agencies, we have seen an unprecedented number of arrests linked to Encrochat as GMP's response to the NCA Operation Venetic. With more than 200 suspects arrested; the central and local Programme Challenger teams have been instrumental in achieving this through both strong leadership and effective governance.

Whilst we want to celebrate the successes, as a partnership we recognise there is still so much to do. We are committed to continued close working with our partners and our communities, who are vital in combating those involved in organised crime. We are committed to investigating all crimes, and relentlessly disrupting organised criminals. GMP are seizing more criminal assets. We know that many of the problems we face will only be tackled by working together effectively, which is why Programme Challenger and the partnership approach has my full support.

**Stephen Watson QPM**  
Chief Constable



As lead Chief Executive for Police and Crime, I welcome this strategy which sets out a clear, collective response to serious and organised crime and the vital role that local authorities play

in this. Local authority functions cut across the 4P approach of Prepare, Prevent, Pursue and Protect applied to tackling serious and organised crime in all its forms. Across Greater Manchester we remain committed to working with the wider Challenger partnership to take the strongest possible action to rid our communities of this scourge and work with them to become empowered against such activity reoccurring.

**Caroline Simpson,**  
Chief Executive, Stockport Council  
Lead Chief Executive for Police and Crime



In support of the Greater Manchester Serious and Organised Crime Strategy, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care commits to exploring, and securing, contributions

to the aims of that strategy. We will ensure appropriate representation in the governance and associated complex safeguarding partnerships, and ensure we participate fully.

### Specifically, we will:

- Ensure we maintain our active engagement on the GM wide operational groups of Designated Safeguarding Leads with lead roles across the GM network for Modern Slavery and Complex Safeguarding
- Continue to support local working relationships with psychologists and clinical psychologists through the Trusted Relationships Programme, provided by the GM Resilience Hub
- Support the broader implementation of the refreshed strategy to address the risks identified and agree an approach to preventing serious and organised crime, managing related health problems, and improving wellbeing/resilience of the community
- Explore appropriate service strategies and service development within the local health system to prevent, treat and manage serious and organised crime as set out in the strategy (for example, mental healthcare services, commitments on maternity and neonatal care, and children's and young people's mental health)
- Explore the development of support services for those at risk of or involved in serious and organised crime (including from the voluntary and community sector)

**Sir Richard Leese, Chair Designate, Greater Manchester Integrated Care System**



## 1. What is Programme Challenger?

Programme Challenger is Greater Manchester's partnership response to serious and organised crime. It draws on the expertise and insight of public, private and voluntary and community sector organisations operating in Greater Manchester and beyond. Responding to the problem of serious and organised crime is not solely the responsibility of the police and the criminal justice system; it requires collaboration with organisations from all sectors as well as the communities with whom they work. Programme Challenger provides this system-wide collaboration across Greater Manchester, regionally and nationally to effectively tackle the threat of serious and organised crime.

The strength of Challenger's approach is that it provides an understanding of the threat that enables a shared response. This is not an issue for enforcement alone, but requires people, places and services to work together in every part of Greater Manchester.

Serious and organised crime is a vital lens through which each of these programmes of work are viewed and understood.

Violence and exploitation are symptoms of serious and organised crime, and ones that disproportionately affect young people. This will most often happen where exploitation is a feature of an organised crime group, or there is significant conflict between organised crime groups for domination in a geographical or market area. Collaboration with the Violence Reduction Unit and Complex Safeguarding is vital to tackling this. The strategic and operational connection between the Violence Reduction Unit, Complex Safeguarding and Challenger functions enable targeting of potential offenders and victims in a joined-up way to reduce harm, and safeguard individuals and communities.

The success of Programme Challenger is reliant on buy-in from key organisations and agencies. The nature of the Challenger Partnership enables a dynamic response to issues as they arise, and the establishment of new partnerships to identify and address emerging threats, taking advantage of new opportunities to tackle and disrupt serious and organised crime.

### **Programme Challenger works in conjunction with and is aligned to other Greater Manchester strategies and programmes of work, including:**

- The Greater Manchester Strategy
- Standing Together Plan (Police and Crime Plan)
- Building our Future (GMP Strategic Plan)
- Greater Manchester Serious Violence Plan
- Gender Based Violence Strategy
- Greater Manchester Children and Young People's plan, in particular the work to tackle child exploitation through the Complex Safeguarding Hub



## How will Programme Challenger tackle serious and organised crime?

### Vision:

To enable individuals and communities to be free from the harm caused by serious and organised crime.

### Aims:

- To pursue relentlessly disruption and targeted action against the highest harm serious and organised criminals, stopping the problem at source, and capitalising on opportunities to seize assets from criminals at every opportunity.
- To support, through our partnership, opportunities to build resilience to serious and organised crime within communities, with a focus on preventing people becoming victims and perpetrators.
- To work collaboratively to develop innovative, evidence based, preventative approaches, which focus on identifying and supporting those at risk of engaging or re-engaging in serious and organised crime.
- To improve our understanding of current and emerging threats (through effective horizon scanning), and enable opportunities and demand to be proactively mapped and predicted.
- To support an enhanced partnership response through effective information sharing and intelligence development.



**These aims will be delivered through four key partnership objectives, which mirror the national 4P structure to tackle serious and organised crime.**

**Programme Challenger will PREPARE the Greater Manchester partnership to tackle and mitigate the impacts of serious and organised crime by:**

- Ensuring that the Challenger response is aligned to the Greater Manchester Strategy and our ambition for a greener, fairer, and more prosperous city-region.
- Supporting information and intelligence about organised criminal activity to be collected and shared quickly and effectively between all relevant organisations.
- Providing access to capacity, capability and resources across the partnership.
- Providing a shared understanding of all aspects of serious and organised crime across all local delivery partners, including broadening our understanding of poly-criminality that creates multiple opportunities for disruption.
- Focusing on developing our understanding of and response to significant Greater Manchester-wide threats such as organised immigration crime and county lines activity.
- Providing opportunities to share good practice and effective approaches to tackling serious and organised crime at all levels.
- Improving our understanding of how serious and organised crime manifests in communities and the impact it has on them.
- Developing academic and other research partnerships to provide insight and critically evaluate our projects to build our evidence base of what works, including the application of a public health approach to all forms of serious and organised crime.
- Work with the new Greater Manchester Integrated Care System to ensure the health and care system is engaged in tackling serious and organised crime at all levels, considering the role health and inequalities plays in driving serious and organised crime.
- Developing and strengthening relationships with specialist regional and national agencies, such as Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority and the Environment Agency's Joint Waste Crime Unit to tackle the range of serious and organised crime in Greater Manchester.

**Programme Challenger will seek to PREVENT serious and organised criminal activity from taking place by:**

- Working across our partnerships and teams working in neighbourhoods to support early intervention and prevention activity to tackle serious and organised crime at the earliest point possible, particularly where it affects children and young people.
- Developing and supporting awareness raising across all forms of serious and organised crime to generate information from local communities, local services and businesses.
- Increasing our awareness and use of criminal and civil orders to restrict continued offending behaviour.
- Working closely with the National Probation Service and Youth Justice providers to support access to appropriate interventions for those engaged in serious and organised crime, to reduce reoffending.
- Continuing the Advenus partnership work with Immigration Enforcement and Border Force to disrupt and manage the harm caused by the most serious foreign national offenders.
- Developing early intervention offers to support children and young people involved on the periphery of serious and organised crime, their siblings and peers, to prevent criminality and minimise risk of exploitation.

**Programme Challenger will use all of its powers to PURSUE people involved in serious and organised crime by:**

- Effectively operating within the regional and national serious and organised crime system, working in partnership with the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit and the National Crime Agency.
- Prioritising resources towards those organised crime investigations which cause the most harm and threat to our communities.
- Innovate and trial new investigative methods to develop intelligence and secure evidence to dismantle and prosecute organised crime groups.
- Tracking financial activity to identify the source of criminality and seize the proceeds of serious and organised crime.
- Harnessing the regulatory and compliance powers of all partners, using their skills and legal powers to maximise opportunities to disrupt organised crime through criminal and civil legislation.
- Champion victim-less prosecutions where children and vulnerable adults are exploited.
- Build our capacity to identify and disrupt county lines, organised immigration crime and modern slavery.



**Programme Challenger will PROTECT our communities from the harm caused by serious and organised crime by:**

- Developing closer links with partners engaged in local neighbourhoods and communities to develop an understanding of the range of serious and organised crime that affects them, identify emerging issues and work together to implement solutions.
- Developing closer links and working relationships with adult social services and related providers to better safeguard adult victims and survivors and support young people in their transition to adult services.
- Work with emerging place-based hubs to support and safeguard individuals and communities.

- Providing support to survivors of trafficking and exploitation from point of identification through the Justice and Care Victim Navigator, modern slavery place of safety, and strong partnerships with the voluntary and community sector in Greater Manchester.
- Improving the response to technology-enabled child safeguarding issues.
- Programme Challenger will prioritise and target activity through an annual action plan, set by the Challenger Executive Board and delivered through active partnerships across Greater Manchester and localities.

**Measuring success**

<b>PREPARE</b>	Partners are aware of the serious and organised crime threat in Greater Manchester, with all threats fully mapped and risk assessed and effective partnership 4P plans in place to tackle them.
<b>PREVENT</b>	Ancillary and offender management orders are used effectively to prevent continued criminality and enable better sentence planning from court to prisons and community.  Individuals and support agencies are aware of what serious and organised crime is and how to identify it early.
<b>PURSUE</b>	Serious and organised crime threats, including organised crime groups, priority individuals and vulnerabilities, are disrupted and dismantled.
<b>PROTECT</b>	Communities are provided with access to funding and opportunities to build resilience against serious and organised crime, enabled by financial assets recouped from proceeds of crime in relation to organised crime groups

## 2. Challenger's approach

Programme Challenger supports the relentless pursuit of disrupting serious and organised crime, as well as reducing risk to vulnerable people and stopping people becoming victims in the first place. It brings together expertise from across a variety of public, private and voluntary sector organisations to share information and insight and appropriately target resources and activity.

To enable the wider partnership, there are dedicated resources that provide centralised, multi-agency coordination and support to the whole system in Greater Manchester to tackle serious and organised crime. It provides capacity and capabilities not held locally to enhance provision and enables the strategic aims and objectives of Challenger to be delivered.

### Key central teams:

#### OCCU: Organised Crime Coordination Unit

The team provide a critical response to divisions and local partnerships suffering the impacts of serious and organised crime. They assess threat, risk and harm of organised crime groups and individuals who are operating in localities, engaging directly with local resources to ensure the most up to date information is shared and resources are made available as and when needed to tackle threats. Members of the unit have thematic responsibility for the highest harm threats across Greater Manchester, including county lines, organised immigration crime and counterfeit goods, including counterfeit pharmaceutical products.

**The Force County Lines single point of contact (SPOC), part of the OCCU, holds a bank of data and has access to several national databases specifically related to county lines and drug supply. In July 2021 the SPOC was tasked to assist a division to locate a medium risk missing person, "JB", who had previous intelligence for county lines and exploitation. The SPOC reviewed phone data related to JB and helped to attribute key contacts to them who were known to be drug users, drug dealers and some individuals with previous intelligence for exploitation. This resulted in JB being changed from a medium-risk missing to a high-risk missing, which in turn meant further action had to be taken to establish their location. The use of available intelligence, data and systems is integral when investigating missing children and young people, particularly where it is suspected they are missing outside of Greater Manchester. The telephone numbers they are in contact with may be known in other police forces which GMP would not be aware of otherwise without this effective information sharing between police force areas and the ability to access this quickly to safeguard the young person.**



#### Advenus

Advenus is a joint programme between Greater Manchester Police, Immigration Enforcement and Border Force to tackle the most serious foreign national offenders. Programme Challenger is committed to identifying any such offenders that live or spend time in Greater Manchester and take appropriate action against these individuals, including seizing financial assets gained from criminality, and deportation.

#### Modern Slavery Coordination Unit

The Modern Slavery Coordination Unit supports the force and partners to identify, investigate, charge and convict the highest harm offenders whilst providing safeguarding to victims and survivors. The unit has a specialist investigative team which supports divisions in complex modern slavery cases, in addition to an embedded Justice and Care Victim Navigator who works with partners to provide the highest level of care and support to survivors.

**The unit received reports of males being threatened and intimidated, forced into work and made to live in caravans with no electricity. The unit provided initial and immediate tactical advice support and commenced critical enquiries such as obtaining CCTV evidence and speaking to witnesses. The Justice and Care Victim Navigator provided initial assistance to potential victims. Further reports were received, which led to the unit supporting local officers to make arrests, undertake searches and commence further enquiries as a result, increasing local capacity and ensuring the right capabilities were in place. The unit has now commenced with assessing the suspected offenders as an organised crime group.**

**In 2015, a Romanian National was deported from the UK due to his criminality overseas. He had served a 21-year prison sentence for murder, as well as amassing six other convictions including robbery. It was deemed that he posed a risk to the UK public.**

**Several years later an officer from Greater Manchester Police's Road Traffic Unit stopped the driver of a vehicle in Crumpsall, as it had no insurance policy. The officer took a snapshot of the driver's national ID card and provided it to the Advenus team. Advenus conducted checks with the Romanian authorities and discovered that he was in fact the Romanian national who had previously been deported from the UK. He had returned to Romania following his deportation and changed his name legitimately with the Romanian authorities. He was given a new ID card in his new name and re-entered the UK under that new identity. Advenus alerted neighbourhood teams that the individual was in breach of a Deportation Order and posed a risk. He was recognised by an officer who had seen the Advenus bulletins and subsequently deported again.**

### Economic Crime Unit

Programme Challenger works closely with the Greater Manchester Police Economic Crime Unit (ECU) to develop responses to economic crime. Economic crime significantly affects the public, communities and businesses. Specialist investigators tackle serious and organised crime by hitting offenders where it hurts most, taking away money and assets obtained through significant criminality.

They also provide key prevention activity and advice to victims, making it more difficult for criminals to gain financially from this criminality.

**During 2021, over £7m was seized from individuals involved in serious and organised crime across Greater Manchester.**



### SOCG syndicates, including Firearms

There are a number of central teams that can be utilised in tackling the highest harm organised crime groups, including those who are firearms enabled. These teams have enhanced capacity and capability and are tasked through internal GMP processes to support district teams or to take on investigations in their entirety.

**Following a series of disputes in the Cheetham Hill and North Manchester area SOCG Syndicate 1 were tasked to look at a North Manchester group. Research was undertaken into this crime group and surveillance work undertaken. Officers identified an address that it was believed the group were using to store criminal items. A warrant was executed at the premises and officers recovered an Uzi machine gun and large amounts of Class A drugs. A warrant at a second premises led to the recovery of £20,000 cash and significant amounts of Class A drugs. As a result, five members of the group were arrested and subsequently pleaded guilty. They were sentenced to a combined total of over 50 years imprisonment.**

**SOCG were able to establish that the drugs were being supplied to this OCG by a group living in the Bury area who had a beauty business as a front for their criminality. Again, surveillance was deployed onto this group and other sensitive policing tactics were utilised to target this OCG which was headed by two females. Officers evidenced the group supplied Class A drugs to gangs in the Sheffield and Doncaster areas and recovered a loaded handgun and large amounts of Class A drugs from the partner of one of the females. Officers identified an address in Salford where the OCG had forced a vulnerable male to allow them to use his premises to store Class A drugs. Subsequently officers recovered over £500,000 drugs from this location and enabled the individual to be safeguarded. Further surveillance showed the group handing over £175,000 in cash to a money launderer from Sothern England who was subsequently arrested in possession of the cash, that would have been converted into Bitcoin. In total 14 members of the OCG and associates were arrested and sentenced to a combined total of over 100 years imprisonment.**

### Public Protection Governance Unit and Complex Safeguarding

These teams support the provision of appropriate multi-agency responses to those at risk of harm from criminality, particularly children and young people. They are skilled in identifying and assessing risk and working with individuals and partners to ensure appropriate safeguards and interventions are put in place.

### Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB)

FIB supports generating and making sense of intelligence received into Greater Manchester Police. There are dedicated teams looking at firearms and protecting vulnerable people, which cut across the work of Challenger. They work with the wider Challenger partnership to understand gaps in intelligence, help fill those gaps, and develop processes with partners to ensure intelligence is shared effectively with GMP to better understand the problems Challenger is working to tackle.



## Achievements

### 2013

- Launch of Programme Challenger

### 2014

- Operational Challenger teams set up in all 10 districts of Greater Manchester
- Every organised crime group in Greater Manchester mapped, risk assessed and assigned a disruption plan

### 2015

- Set up of the Modern Slavery Coordination Unit
- The first Greater Manchester modern slavery summit

### 2016

- Piloting of the Engage prevention programme with the Home Office
- Commissioned Stop the Traffik to work with Programme Challenger in relation to modern slavery
- Launch of the NGO forum
- Launch of the multi-faith forum

### 2017

- Commissioned post-NRM support from City Hearts to support victims of modern slavery and human trafficking
- Piloting of the Home Office Independent Child Trafficking Advocacy project
- Opened a pre-NRM place of safety

### 2017

- Launch of the Modern Slavery Business Network
- Launch of the Trapped campaign
- Launch of project Advenus tackling Foreign National offending

### 2018

- Complex Safeguarding Hub and ten Greater Manchester teams established

### 2019

- Trusted Relationships commenced
- Justice and Care Victim Navigator commenced in Greater Manchester
- Commencement of data and information pilot with Stop the Traffik
- Launch of of Violence Reduction Unit

### 2021

- Commencement of modern slavery and human trafficking data and research partnership with Trilateral and UoM
- Modern Slavery Investigative Team launched
- Investment Hub launched
- Greater Manchester pioneered Modern Slavery Tactical Advisor and Victim Liaison Officer training rolled out nationally by College of Policing

## 3. What is serious and organised crime?

What Programme Challenger does in Greater Manchester does not happen in a vacuum. The UK applies a 'whole system approach' to tackling serious and organised crime nationally, which is replicated at a local level.

The National SOC strategy 2018 defines serious and organised crime (SOC) as "individuals planning, coordinating and committing serious offences, whether individually, in groups and/or as part of transnational networks".

Because SOC is defined more by how it is done than what is done, it can be difficult to recognise it. SOC will look and feel different depending on who is experiencing or witnessing it. It might look like a hacking attack to extort money from a business; or drug dealing on a street corner to a member of a local community; or being transported across countries and forced into sex work by a victim

of modern slavery and human trafficking. It can also be a burglary or a car theft, with expensive goods and high-powered vehicles often stolen to order through organised local, national and even international networks of criminals. Nationally, the SOC priorities, which will be reflected in thematic priorities for Greater Manchester, are:

- Tackling county lines activity
- Tracking financial activity and linked offences
- Understanding poly-criminality and disrupting markets





## 4. Serious and organised crime in Greater Manchester

Serious and organised crime across Greater Manchester has traditionally centred on drugs and firearms, and criminality associated with this such as money laundering and violent crime.

A large proportion of this is perpetrated by Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) or individuals operating within Greater Manchester and increasingly crossing borders between local boroughs, police force areas and regions. There is an increasing diversity in the types of crimes committed by those involved in SOC and many OCGs will be involved in multiple criminal activities at any one time (poly-criminality).

The improved understanding of how organised crime groups operate emphasises the hidden ways serious and organised crime affects our communities. Serious and organised crime is not confined to certain communities, or certain people, and there is a vital role that can be played by all who live, work and socialise in the city region to understand and report it.

There are over 100 organisations, government departments, law enforcement bodies and other agencies involved in identifying, preventing and tackling SOC. Operationally, the National Crime Agency leads the UK response to serious and organised crime and develop annual assessments of the threat from SOC. Police forces also fund specialist capabilities and capacity to tackle serious and organised through Regional Organised Crime Units to tackle the main threats. Threats are grouped under three main headings:

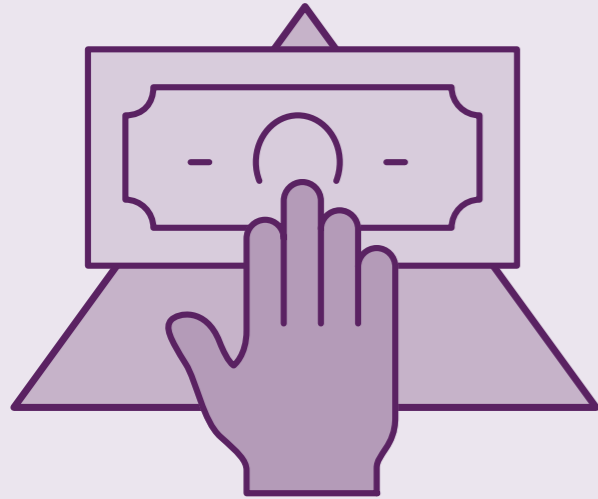
- Commodities – things, including people, drugs and firearms, that are moved or traded locally, regionally and nationally.
- Prosperity – the ways in which money is made and used, including bribery, fraud and money laundering.

- Vulnerabilities – considering what is known about the people who are victims of serious and organised crime, including victims of modern slavery and human trafficking or child sexual abuse and exploitation.

The Covid-19 pandemic has created a number of opportunities for those involved in serious and organised crime to further expand their criminality, and there has been an increase in poly-criminality; that is, organised crime groups being involved in multiple crime types. The economic and social impact of the pandemic is likely to have an impact on those becoming involved in serious and organised crime at the lower level, as financial challenges may lead people to engage in activity to survive. However, this also provides a greater range of opportunities to identify, disrupt and dismantle organised crime, from the neighbourhood to national level.

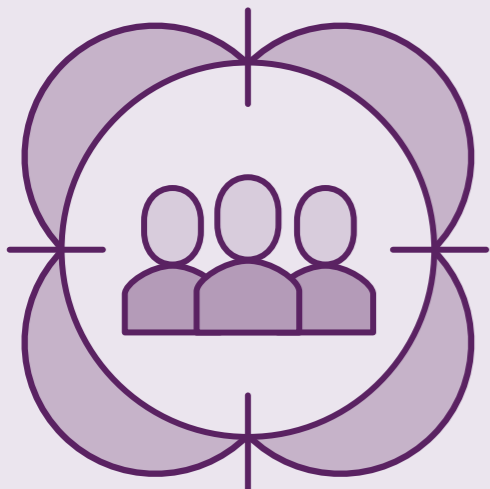


The picture of SOC in Greater Manchester is always changing. As organised crime groups and individuals are better understood and tackled, new threats emerge. The following facts and figures relate to a snapshot of the serious and organised crime picture in Greater Manchester to illustrate the nature and scale of the threat in the city-region:



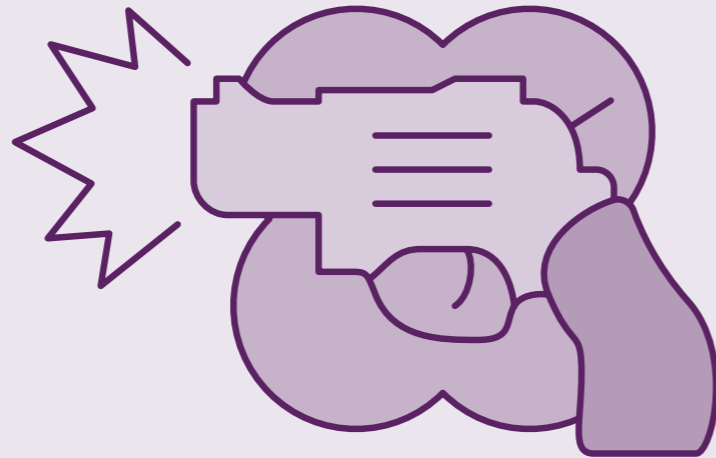
### 176 active organised crime groups in Greater Manchester

This is lower than the 187 mapped when Challenger started in 2014, but higher than the 128 identified at the time the last strategy was developed. A large-scale international operation conducted in 2020/21 led to increased intelligence around OCGs in Greater Manchester. This coincided with the national lockdown as a result of the global coronavirus pandemic, which enabled increased capacity to develop this intelligence and identify more OCGs operating in the city-region.



### Drugs remain the primary crime type for 144 of these organised crime groups (82%)

including the production, transportation and supply of illegal drugs. Challenger is increasing our knowledge of secondary and tertiary crime types these groups are engaged with, including UK and international generated money laundering, criminal exploitation and the use and supply of firearms. At least 23% of identified OCGs in Greater Manchester have access to firearms, but it is likely that many more will have the ability to access firearms quickly.



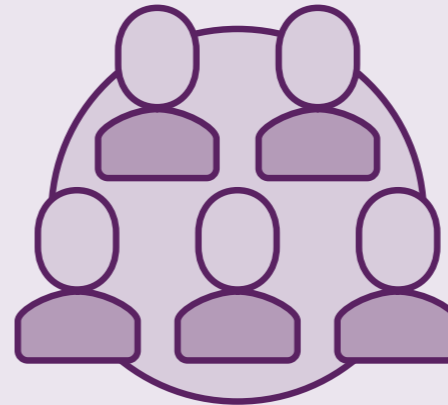
### Focused on organised criminal activity

in Greater Manchester is focused on firearms, money laundering, modern slavery and human trafficking, child sexual abuse and organised acquisitive crime

We have seen an increase in OCGs involved in organised acquisitive crime, with seven per cent of all known OCGs in being involved in organised robbery, burglary or vehicle theft.

### 31% of known Organised Crime Groups in Manchester

There are 55 active organised crime groups impacting the city of Manchester, which accounts for 31% of all known groups in Greater Manchester. Oldham and Salford have the second highest number of organised crime groups impacting the area with 19 and 18 respectively.



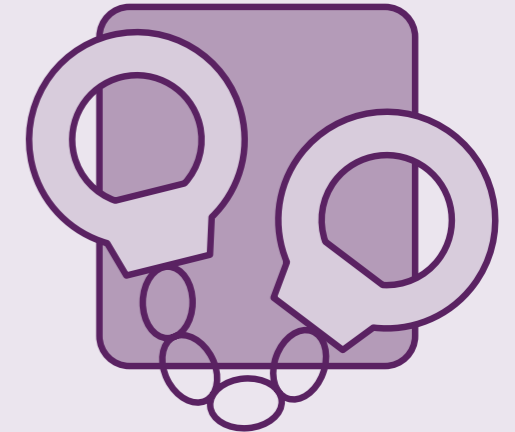
### Steep increase in modern slavery

There has been a steep increase in the number of UK born victims of modern slavery, which has correlated with the growing recognition of child exploitation as a form of modern slavery and human trafficking. Criminal exploitation now accounts for the largest number of potential victims in Greater Manchester, followed by sexual exploitation.



### 69% increase in modern slavery

Since 2016, recorded modern slavery crimes in Greater Manchester have increased by 69%, from 137 to 554 in 2021.



### 550 children and young people at risk

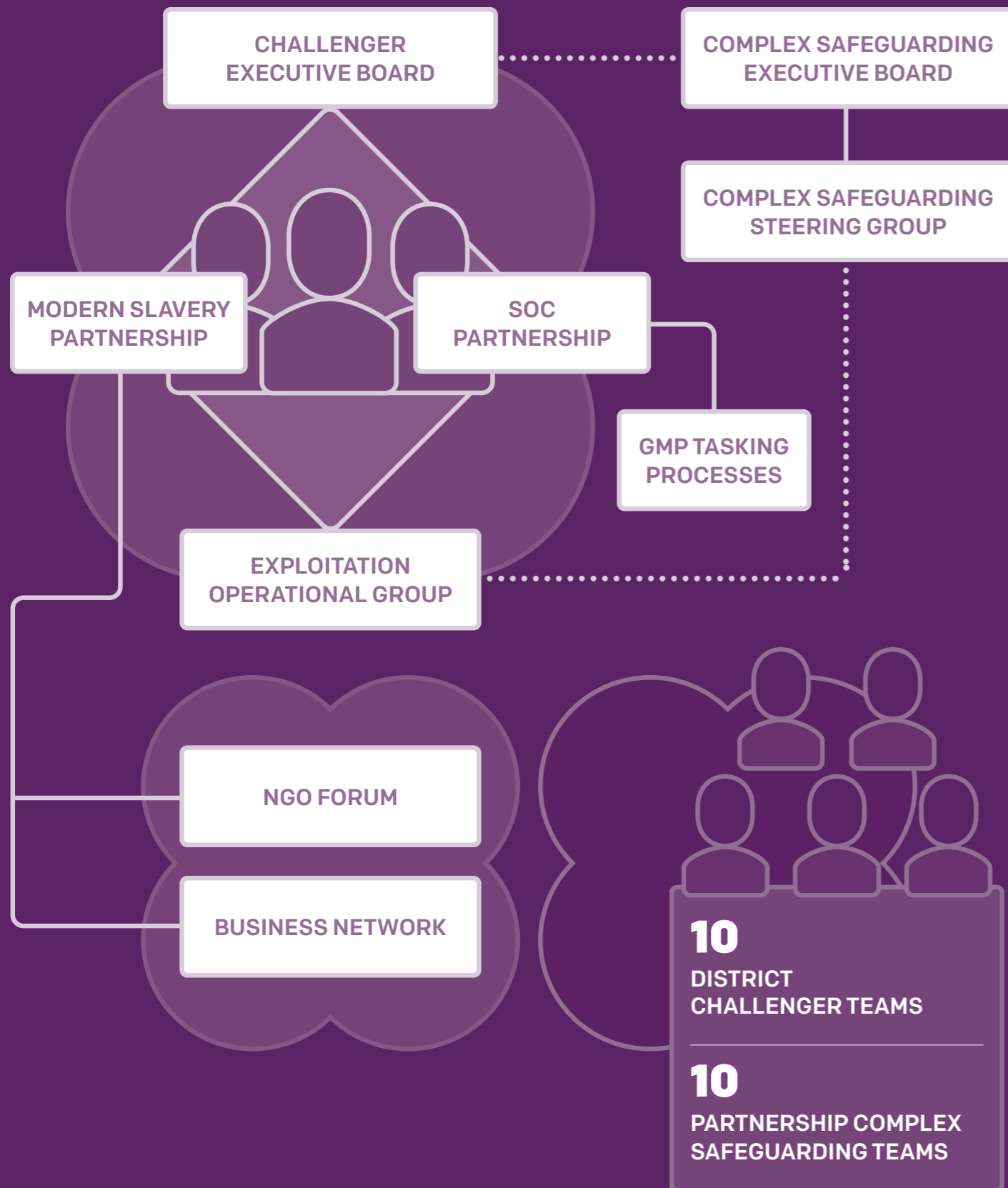
Complex safeguarding teams across Greater Manchester are working with up to 550 children and young people at risk of exploitation at any one time.



### 21 victims cared for

The Justice and Care Victim Navigator in Greater Manchester has triaged over 3,500 potential cases of modern slavery between December 2019 and December 2021, with 21 victims cared for with an individual support plan and 21 arrests directly resulting from Victim Navigator support.

## 5. Programme Challenger governance



### Challenger Executive Board

The strategic direction is set through the Challenger Executive Board, which supports the delivery of the serious and organised crime strategy across Greater Manchester. Senior leaders from the Challenger partnership monitor performance, progress and activity across the city-region. It provides direct links into GMP's command team and the Greater Manchester Deputy Mayor's Office, responsible for Police and Crime.

### SOC Partnership Governance Board

This has broad partnership representation and provides operational oversight for teams and organisations tackling SOC in Greater Manchester. It monitors the key threats and ensures risk emanating from SOC is managed. It supports in providing a consistent approach to tackling SOC and enables shared learning and good practice. It promotes training and development and acts as a governance link to local partnership governance structures.

### Modern Slavery Theme Meeting

The provides oversight for the partnership response to modern slavery and human trafficking in Greater Manchester. It monitors and shares trends and patterns, bringing together representatives from across sectors to develop joint activity.

### Supporting city-region groups

The day-to-day management and response to serious and organised crime is supported through a number of group meetings that focus on practical responses to SOC and enable access to capacity and capability to support local activity:

- Exploitation Operational Group
- SOC Level 1 Tasking

### Local Partnership structures

Partnership structures are in place in each local authority to support a joined-up approach to tackling serious and organised crime. These will vary in their nature in each area, but all are expected to be able to provide the necessary strategic, operational and tactical direction to deliver partnership plans to tackle identified local serious and organised crime issues and support community empowerment.

The comprehensive, multi-layered approach to serious and organised crime taken in Greater Manchester provides a consistent framework for targeted and collaborative activity to tackle and disrupt criminality, and safeguard communities and potential victims.



**Thank you to our partners who work together to tackle serious and organised crime in all its forms in Greater Manchester.**

---

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

---

Greater Manchester Police

---

Justice and Care

---

Home Office  
- Immigration Enforcement

---

Greater Manchester Complex  
Safeguarding Hub

---

Security Industry Authority

---

Home Office - Border Force

---

Greater Manchester Local Authorities  
(including, but not limited to, departments  
responsible for delivery of Children's Social  
Services, Adult Social Services, Trading  
Standards, Community Safety)

---

Crown Prosecution Service

---

National Probation Service Greater  
Manchester Division

---

NHS England

---

Integrated Care Service/Board  
(formerly Clinical Commissioning Groups)

---

Greater Manchester Integrated Care System

---

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service

---

Greater Manchester Housing Providers

---

City Hearts

---

The Children's Society

---

Barnardo's (Independent Child Trafficking  
Guardians and Regional Practice  
Coordinators)

---

Voluntary, Community & Faith Groups

---

The Salvation Army

---

Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority

---

HM Revenue and Customs  
(Minimum Wage Team)

---

The Co-op

---

Department for Work and Pensions

---

Illegal Money Lending Team

---

Environment Agency  
- Joint Unit for Waste Crime

---

Food Standards Agency

---

Government Agency Intelligence Network

---

Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority

---

Intellectual Property Office

---

MHRA

---

Private sector providers