



**NORTHUMBRIA
POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

**violence
reduction
unit**

Improving lives to prevent crime

2022

SERIOUS VIOLENCE RESPONSE STRATEGY

Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit

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FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Our region has come a long way in a short time in terms of preventing violent crime, but the strategy set out here shows we are committed to doing even more.

When my Violence Reduction Unit was first created, we knew the scale of the task before us, and we knew that a public health approach could help steer people away from criminality.

Great success has come from that approach. We are educating young people, we're working closely with high risk individuals and we are doing our bit to rebuild those neighbourhood services lost to austerity.

Nowhere is this approach more obvious, and more rewarding, than in our youth diversion efforts. What unites the football coach with the neighbourhood police officer is the common sense belief that we cannot just arrest our way out of our problem. We need somewhere to send young people where they can be inspired and motivated. Where we can offer that support, it has clear results.

But over the last year and half we have seen the task in front of us get harder. The pandemic, and the measures brought in to control it, have brought new challenges in our mission to reach young people and offer them an alternative to crime.

I'm proud of how this region has responded to those challenges. We have seen great dedication from people committed to helping improve the lives of others, and it is clear that the crime prevention goal is one shared across the Northumbria area.

Now, we need as a region to be ready for what come next, and to focus our efforts on our core mission. As the pandemic restrictions are lifted, crime, including violent crime, will rise. We will direct our resources at the families most in need of support and the individuals most at risk from a violent lifestyle.

We'll need to be focused on the long term goal, but ready with the localised interventions that produce results.

I think this response strategy shows how we can work together as a region to ensure that even in tough times, we are making the region safer.

KIM MCGUINNESS

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

OUR VISION



Northumbria is a place where individuals, families and communities thrive, making the most of the opportunities to live, learn and work free from the fear of violence.



We know that tackling serious violent crime is key to achieving our vision. The Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit will work in partnership to:

- reduce knife enabled serious violence,
- reduce hospital admissions for knife related serious violence and
- reduce homicides.

We will do this by tackling the underlying causes of serious violent crime across the three primary themes of:

- Fighting Crime
- Preventing Crime
- Improving Lives

We will provide leadership and strategic coordination of the local response to serious violence and will continue to work in partnership to invest in the development and delivery of a multi agency public health approach to violence reduction.

Our public health approach to tackling serious violence requires commitment from all partners. This is a long term process and in order to change culture we need to:

- Better understand the problem
- Identify the causes
- Determine what works (and for whom)
- Implement learning to improve policy and practice

SERIOUS VIOLENCE AND POVERTY

The links between poverty, deprivation and serious violence

To address serious violence, we need to understand the wider determinants of crime which are influenced by the social and economic factors in which we live. The Marmot Review – Ten Years On, published in 2020 found that the North East population experiences higher levels of socio-economic disadvantage than the English Average, for example:

- The take up of free school meals, an indicator of low family income found that, in 2018 in the Northeast was 18.4%. This is higher than the national comparator of 13.5%. The areas with highest rates were Newcastle (25.5%) and South Tyneside (19.2%). Both Northumberland and North Tyneside Local Authority Areas have lower rates than the national average. Whilst this data is from 2018 it is likely that these issues remain prevalent or could even get worse as the cost of living continues to rise 4.7%.
- The number of Children under 16 years, living in low-income families as a proportion of all under 16 year olds in the North East in 2016 is 22.6%. South Tyneside had the highest rate at 26.4% followed by Newcastle (24.7%), the national comparator is 17%.
- 5 of the 6 local authorities in the Northumbria Police Force Area have significantly higher rates of long-term claimants of Jobseekers Allowance than the England average (2.6%), with Newcastle, Northumberland and South Tyneside having higher rates than both the national and North East average of 5.1%.

The Strategic Needs Assessment makes links between the levels of serious violence and deprivation. Looking at the top 100 harm hotspot areas for levels of serious violence in 2021 (converting Police sector beats to LSOA areas shows there are 250 LSOA areas in the top 100) the tables by LA area shows the Income Deprivation percentage for those LSOA areas, so providing a percentage of the people living in those LSOA areas that are income deprived, with the following identified;

- In 80% of our harm hotspot areas in Northumbria, 1 in 10 people suffer from income deprivation.
- In more than half of our harm hotspot areas in Northumbria, 1 in 5 people suffer from income deprivation.
- In 22% of our harm hotspot areas in Northumbria, 1 in 3 people suffer from income deprivation.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2022-23

Our strategic priorities for 2022-23 are shaped by our understanding of the scale of serious violence across Northumbria (see Appendix i) our current needs assessment of the underlying causes of serious violence, the evaluation of our violence reduction interventions (see Appendix ii) to date, and the existing evidence base for what works.

This includes using the Youth Endowment Fund 'Serious Violence Toolkit' which summarises the best available research evidence about different approaches to preventing serious youth violence. It is based on real life data about what has happened when these approaches have been used before. It provides insight on 17 different approaches, with more being added as the evidence base grows. For each approach the toolkit provides an explanation of what it is, how effective it's likely to be, how confident you can be in the evidence of its impact, as well as indicative costs and links to related resources and programmes.

To ensure we maximise our potential to achieve our vision we will;

- Procure a provider to develop Information Sharing Protocols, data dashboards and a data hub between key stakeholders and identify appropriate datasets that contribute to the overall picture of violence in the region.
- Develop a risk matrix of to gain a better understanding of the risk associated with serious violence and youth violence.
- Procure High Impact interventions recommended by the Youth Endowment Fund within identified localities to enhance outcomes for people accessing services.
- Work in partnership with key stakeholders, schools and Local Authorities to explore risks for children in care, those who are missing, sexually exploited and trafficked (MSET) and those at risk of exploitation through County Lines.
- Develop a Focused Deterrence model in Sunderland and Newcastle to target offenders causing harm in local communities.
- Extend the role of the VRU Education Team to deliver more educational sessions to raise awareness of the issues of serious violence.
- Increase our capacity to develop the views, experiences and insights of intended beneficiaries and those with lived experience.

There are a number of emerging priority themes based on our learning since 2019 and the cause and effect factors of the COVID-19 pandemic, these include;

A&E Navigators – originally planned for implementation in 2020-21 and reconfigured due to the restrictions and increased demand on hospitals during the pandemic we will revisit the opportunity to place violence reduction staff in hospital Accident and Emergency (A&E) Departments. We know that A&E offers a key touch point where we can engage with vulnerable individuals as they present with injuries and issues which may be a symptom of involvement in serious violence and wider organised crime and vulnerability. Throughout year four we will work with health professionals to identify what a successful A&E Navigator intervention could look like as well as look at how this could connect to the wider work of the VRU.

Workforce development – we will increase our investment in building the capacity and capability of partners and stakeholders to identify and respond appropriately to signs of serious violence, vulnerability and exploitation. This will broadly have two focuses, firstly continuing to increase the reach of our VRU Education Team to deliver training to practitioners, community members, stakeholders and partners. This will include Practitioner Knife Crime Awareness training, Malicious Communication Training, targeted training for staff working in the night time economy and Domestic Abuse Champions in the Workplace training. Secondly we will invest directly in upskilling the VRU workforce in a range of evidence based approaches. This will include cognitive behaviour therapy, motivational interviewing techniques, domestic abuse bystander training and neurodiversity awareness.

Routes to employment – we recognise that employment offers opportunities for people to change their life circumstances and prospects. We will work with the DWP to develop a pathway that will provide fast track access to benefit support as well as a range of employment and training options based on individual need. We will continue to work with local businesses to provide coaching and mentoring opportunities for young people as well as access experienced work coaches where necessary.

Focussed Deterrence - intelligence led identification of individuals who are causing the most harm. The approach seeks to balance support and intervention alongside disruption and enforcement.

OUR PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

Taking a Public Health Approach recognises that the involvement of all partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries is required to resolve a given public health problem. This includes adopting shared principles, sharing data and intelligence, and a collaborative approach to designing, commissioning, delivering and evaluating interventions.

To achieve our vision and deliver our strategic priorities we will adopt a Public Health Approach set in the context of plan, do, study act. This will include a; strategic needs assessment, strategic and operational planning, operational delivery, impact assessment and evaluation that in turn will inform the next strategic needs assessment.

We recognises that violence is preventable. By understanding the scale of the presenting risks that make individuals, families and communities vulnerable and developing a strategic response with clear operational priorities that deliver evidence-based interventions we can reduce the likelihood of serious violence.

The components of our Public Health Approach are;

Define the problem – by the collection of data and intelligence that allows a clear understanding of the scale of the problem to be developed. This includes, and is not limited to, the collection and analysis of crime figures, A&E and other health, education and social care related data including the experiences and perception of stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries.

Identify the causes – serious violence is a symptom of underlying causes. By understanding the wider determinants of serious violence, and their prevalence in a population, targeted approaches to reduce the likelihood of serious violence can be developed. At a population level this takes into account the lived environment, socio-economic factors, educational attainment, exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma in adult life. Therefore, understanding the causes of serious violence, and the risk factors they present allows for interventions that build resilience and protective factors to be developed.

Determine what works (and for whom) – taking into account the diverse nature of Northumbria and recognising that the causes of serious violence manifest themselves at different stages in the life course we will develop a range of universal and targeted interventions that comprise prevention, early intervention and diversionary approaches.

We will design and evaluate ways of working aimed at reducing the risk of serious violence by increasing individuals and communities ability to develop protective factors that will reduce the likelihood of serious violence. This will include identifying where blockages exist that undermine or prevent individuals realising their full potential or accessing the support they need.

Implement learning to improve policy and practice – we will use the evidence and learning that is developed through the delivery and evaluation of our interventions to improve local policy and practice. Further to this we will share our learning across our partnerships identifying system blockages and co-ordinating problem solving approaches to design out those barriers in future iterations of policy and practice.

We will adopt this approach as we further develop and implement early intervention, prevention and diversionary interventions across the following domains;

Primary – delivering early intervention activities aimed at the whole population offering support and education to prevent serious violence occurring in the future.

Secondary – delivering interventions targeted at specific populations to prevent an escalation in the likelihood of serious violence occurring by reducing identified vulnerabilities and build resilience.

Tertiary – delivering targeted interventions to those currently involved in serious violence to de-escalate the risk through diversion and support to tackle the underpinning causes of their behaviour.

Our Public Health Approach will be delivered in partnership with strategic oversight and guidance provided by a Strategic Violence Reduction Board.

GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIPS

A Strategic Violence Reduction Board will ensure that the VRU offers the 'core function' of system leadership and, working with all relevant agencies operating locally, provides strategic direction of the local response to serious violence in line with our strategic priorities.

We will continue to build partnerships with a focus enabling the delivery of our public health approach. In the coming year we will continue to build on our existing approaches and partnerships as we strive to improve our ability to achieve our vision. Through the VRU we have established the following partnership framework:



THEORY OF CHANGE AND MEASURING IMPACT

Our Theory of Change sets out the process we will adopt to bring about a reduction in serious violence. By setting out the resources we have and the activities that will be delivered to achieve the anticipated outputs, outcomes and desired impact we can develop a logic flow that allows us to understand to what extent our efforts are achieving the changes we have set out.

Our theory of change has three main features;

- The implementation of a Public Health Approach that defines the problem, identify the causes, determines what works and implements learning to improve policy and practice.
- The delivery of prevention, early intervention and diversion activities across primary, secondary and tertiary domains.
- Monitoring processes that provide theory of change feedback loops giving indications of the relationship between our resources and activities and the degree to which we are achieving the desired outputs, outcomes and impact.

The learning from the logic flow and our understanding of the extent to which our activities are achieving the intended impact will drive the agenda and the way we work collaboratively with partners, stakeholders and intended beneficiaries allowing us to facilitate a range of activities that includes:

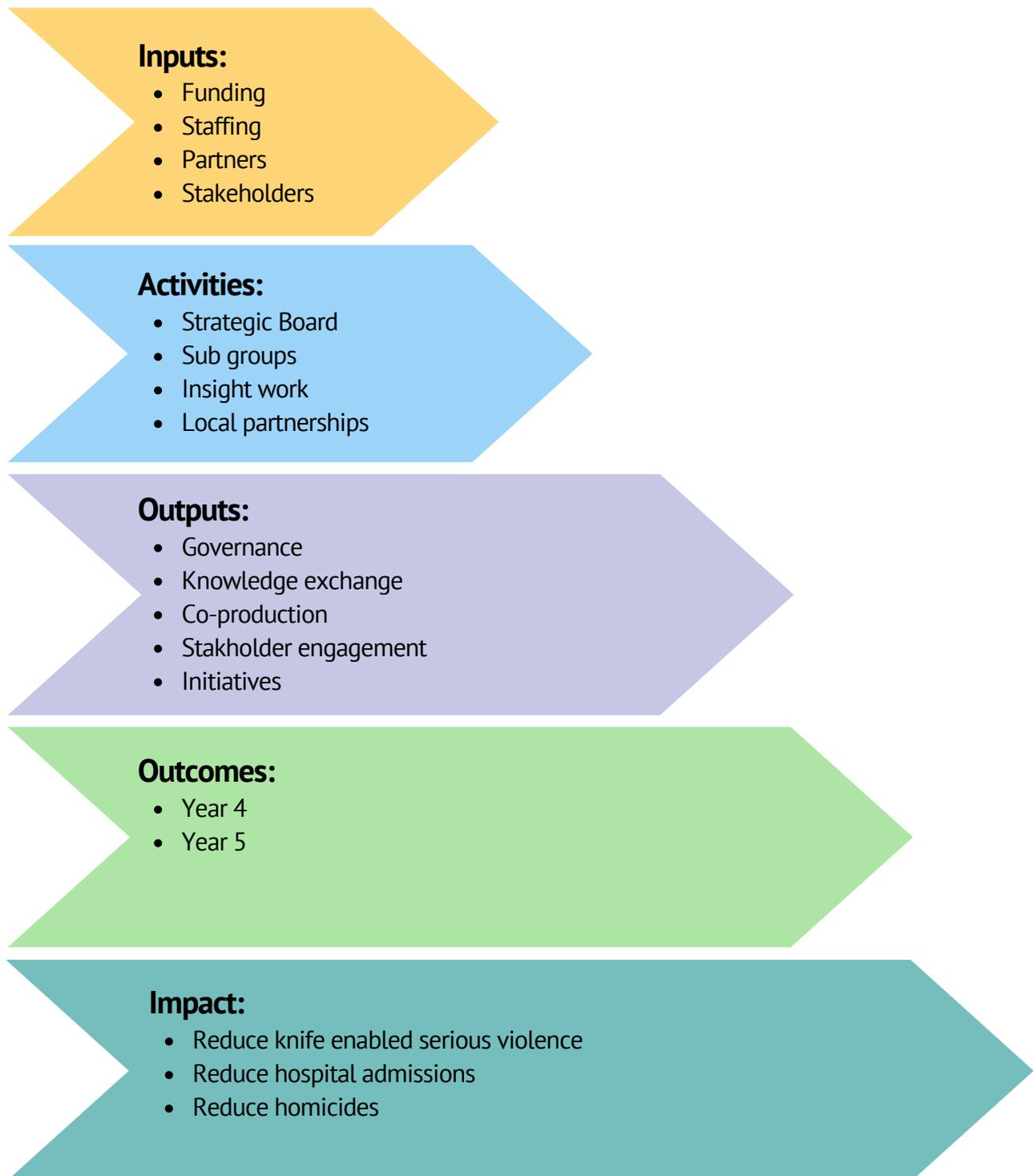
- Strategic Management of the violence reduction agenda via the Northumbria Violence Reduction Strategic Board.
- Engagement and consultation with partners, stakeholders, communities and beneficiaries.
- Governance arrangements that support and enable our Insight work, Impact Assessment, Co-Production and the delivery of our violence reduction interventions.
- Evaluation and impact assessment that demonstrates the effectiveness of our work and overall contribution to reducing serious violence and the contribution to the Northumbria Police and Crime Plan.

We will measure the impact of our commissioned interventions during the year using measures linked to the reduction of risk and increase in protective factors for each intervention. These measures will be monitored quarterly and will contribute to our understanding of what works and is able to demonstrate impact in the reduction of;

- Knife enabled serious violence
- Hospital admissions for knife related serious violence
- Homicides
- Anti-social behaviour in intervention cohorts
- First time entrants into the criminal justice system
- Repeat offending within harm hotspot/intervention areas

Tracking these measures ensures our focus on reducing serious violence is maintained across all VRU activity. In turn the ongoing monitoring of our measures of success through the implementation of our Theory of Change will help identify any gaps or barriers in our processes which will then inform the activity of the Serious Violence Strategic Board, our engagement and consultation with partners, stakeholders and intended beneficiaries and the development of any new approaches required.

As we develop our interventions for 2022-23 we will refresh our current theory of change, see below, to take into account the any emerging needs and learning from the previous year.



DELIVERY PLAN 2022-23

Over the coming year we will commission interventions, based around the delivery models we have seen previous success with, and seek to develop additional interventions based on the identified gaps linked to increasing need. We will commission our range of evidence based needs led interventions in 2022-23 across the fighting crime, preventing crime and improving lives themes with further interventions being developed as we progress through the year.

As a priority will first procure and mobilise the following commissioned interventions:

- Education Engagement
- Custody Diversion
- Youth Mentoring (YOLO)
- Community Engagement (Young People and Whole Family Approach)
- Out of Court Disposals
- Focussed Deterrence
- Short Sentence Diversion (CASPS)
- Findaway
- Local Youth Fund

We will then look to develop the following additional capacity:

- A&E Diversion
- Education Transitions (Primary to Secondary education)
- Safer routes to and from school for our young people
- Bystander approaches that tackle the root causes of violence and abuse
- Responses to high risk, high harm perpetrators
- Workforce Development – Domestic Abuse Perpetrators

The distribution of VRU interventions across the primary, secondary and tertiary domains will be aligned with the level of risk of serious violence that exists within the intended beneficiary cohort. This utilises the Northumbria Police tiered approach to threat, harm and risk using a numerical scale of 0-4.

Each intervention will have a range of intended outputs and outcomes to achieve a given impact which will contribute to the understanding of the overall impact of the interventions. The intended outputs and outcomes will be derived for the overall aim of each intervention and the contribution it will make to a reduction in serious violence across Northumbria.

These interventions will be distributed across the prevention and risk domains with the overall aims as follows;

Public Health Domain	Risk Domain	Intervention	Desired Impact
Primary	Tier 0	Education Engagement	The stated difference made to participants thinking and behaviours.
Secondary	Tier 1 & 2	Custody Diversion	Reduction in offending and increase in cohort resilience, feelings of safety and ability to cope.
		Youth Mentoring (YOLO)	Increase in cohort resilience, feelings of safety and ability to cope.
		Community Engagement (Young People and Whole Family Approach)	Reduction in risk to violence and Anti Social Behaviour.
		Out of Court Disposals	Reduction in re-entry into the criminal justice system.
		Findaway	Development of peer support group with numbers engaged in peer support.
Tertiary	Tier 3 & 4	Focused Deterrence	Reduce Serious Violence affecting Young People
		Community Alternative to Short Prison Sentence (CASPS)	Reduction in frequency and gravity of offending by cohort

A summary of the interventions and how they align to the fighting crime, preventing crime and improving lives themes can be found at Appendix iii

SUMMARY OF INTERVENTIONS AND IMPACT MEASURES TABLE

Monitoring of activity across our VRU interventions will focus on understanding the impact that has been achieved based on the following measures of success. The measures listed represent the primary impact measures and form part of a wider set of impact indicators that are unique to each intervention and are reported on monthly by our intervention delivery partners.

P&C Plan Theme / VRU Intervention	Primary Measures of Success
Fighting Crime	
CASPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduction in frequency and gravity of offending by cohort 2. Reduction in number of short sentences of cohort 3. Increase in compliance with associated orders/programmes 4. Increase in access and compliance with treatment services 5. Continuation of stable accommodation 6. Increase access to employment, training and education opportunities
Out of Court Disposals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduction in re-offending rates (% of those accepting an OOCd) 2. Number known to be accessing needs specific support post OOCd (% of those accepting an OOCd) 3. Number who enter volunteering/training/employment 4. Increased level of victim satisfaction
Focused Deterrence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce Serious Violence affecting Young People 2. Reduce fear of crime and increased feelings of safety for all who frequent the City Centre for Work or Leisure 3. Young people identified through Focused Deterrence will be provided with support based on their individual needs 4. Cost benefit saving for statutory agencies 5. Improved life outcome for Individuals within the cohort

Preventing Crime

Custody Diversion	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Number of young people who have developed an action/support plan2. Number of young people reporting increased resilience, feelings of safety and ability to cope3. Number of young people demonstrating reduced risk-taking behaviour4. Number of young people with reduced involvement in the criminal justice system
YOLO	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reduction in re-offending rates (% of all those accessing YOLO)2. Number with improved school attendance3. Number of YP with reduced risk of committing serious and violent offending4. Number with no further Police involvement/intelligence
Education Engagement Team	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Number of education sessions delivered in harm hotspots.2. Number of participants reporting increased awareness of risk taking behaviour and harm3. Number of participants reporting increased awareness of knife crime4. Number of participants reporting increased awareness of child criminal exploitation
Safer Routes to School	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reduced levels of violence and wider disorder within the immediate vicinity of school2. Increased school attendance of young people3. Increased sharing of local intelligence to reduce the impact of serious organised crime4. Increased community confidence and overall feelings of safety
Primary/Secondary Transition	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Reduced number of fixed term and permanent exclusions within the identified school2. Increased and improved school attendance3. Increased communication and contact with wider family4. Reduced risk of young people being involved in associated ASB

Improving Lives

Link Workers /
Hubs

1. Number of people engaged
2. No. of young people with an action plan
3. No. of young people demonstrating reduced risk to violence and ASB
4. No. of community activities and services adapting / improving their local offer for the benefit of young people

Local Youth
Fund

1. Number of young people involved in the Youth Safety Ambassador forum who develop new skills; promotion of funding, evaluation and planning.
2. Number of youth enterprise organisations that supported the development of a bid.
3. Number of individual young people who participate in developing a Violence Reduction Youth Fund bid.

Domestic Abuse
'Findaway'

1. Number of contacts (Year 1 to act as a baseline) with demographic data agreed once target groups are established
2. Numbers engaged in 'Supportive Persons' training
3. Development of peer support group with numbers engaged in peer support

Workforce
development/
perpetrators

1. Number of staff with increased confidence in engaging with domestic abuse perpetrators
2. Number of staff with improved competencies in responding to domestic abuse by giving them the tools, skills, knowledge and strategies to hold perpetrators to account about their behaviour
3. Number of staff with the skills to work with high risk, high harm perpetrators

Response to
high risk
perpetrators

1. Reductions in the use of abuse and intake and exit points around:
 - a. Physical abuse, sexual abuse, harassment and stalking behaviours, jealous and controlling behaviours.
2. Reduction of risk and changes in domestic abuse behaviours reported by victims-survivors (as reported via their IDVAs / DA workers)
3. Reductions in risk and attitudinal change in perpetrators (as reported by Perpetrator workers)
4. Reported domestic abuse (and other offending) to the police pre and post intervention.

OUR NEXT STEPS

Year 5:

Established joint delivery model across Northumbria to tackle violence:

By year 5 our public health approach will be well established, and we will have an effective delivery model across Northumbria with buy in from all key partners. This model will operate at a neighbourhood level targeting resources at communities who need it most. As we move towards the next stages of our public health approach it will be crucial to sustain this model for future years as well as refine it to meet the emerging needs of our communities

An increase in the take up of early help services:

Through working more with communities and promoting access to services at the earliest opportunity. We will be able to see an increase in families accessing services and opportunities within their communities at the earliest point. By bringing services closer to communities and promoting the importance of community and peer support this should lead to a reduction in demand for frontline services, allowing organisations to invest more in community-based services.

Reduction in violence:

At this point we will have better informed communities and partnerships and we will have a clear process in place for how we tackle violence in Northumbria. Our vision is that all the work to this point will lead to a meaningful reduction in violence and we will need to ensure that we have the processes in place for this to continue beyond year 5.

APPENDICES

i) Our Data

In the 12 months to 31st December 2021 the Northumbria Police Force Area recorded **49,969** offences of violence against the person – **137 per day**, including:

16% rise in levels of serious violence with **4%** of offences involving a knife.

This follows particularly low levels witnessed in 2020 as a result of Covid-19 and the local restrictions placed on our communities.

Higher levels of incidents of violence and disorder resultant from the **reopening of the Night Time Economy**.

Increase in **Youth ASB and disorder** in town and city centres, causing unease with visitors, residents and the business community.

Almost a **third** of offences were **domestic related**.

75% of assault offences committed against females

Homicides reduced by **11%** (2 homicides in 2021)

In 2021, **37%** of serious violence offenders and **33%** of victims were aged **under 25 years old**, further evidencing the need for Primary and Secondary prevention.

Alcohol and drugs were again identified as a risk factor in Northumbria with **27% of offenders** and **22% of victims** under the influence.

A total of **159** knives and weapons were seized as a result of **1,068** stop and searches.

A&E data during 2021 shows the following admissions:

A reduction in admissions as a result of an assault. There were **891** admissions in 2021.

An 8% reduction in admissions as a result of an assault with a sharp object in 2021, following a 25% increase in 2020.

A quarter of all offenders of serious violence in 2021 were under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

Alcohol consumption and intoxication is also exploited by offenders committing sexual violence in Northumbria.

Across Northumbria, **9.3%** of young people were drinking regularly, with one area recording highest in admissions for substance misuse in 5-24 year olds.

Across Northumbria, there were **14,888** adults recorded as having a serious mental illness in 2020/21.

We are still understanding the impact of COVID-19 in relation to our data. The above figures show that there is still a great deal of work to do. Tackling serious violence will not happen overnight, this is a long term process that requires commitment from all partners across Northumbria.

ii) Our Achievements in 2021-22

Throughout 2021-22 we delivered a range of interventions:

The Education Team deliver sessions to schools, colleges and community organisations.

21,207

Individuals have accessed training and education via the VRU

68%

of young people who engaged with the YOLO programme have not offended since exiting the intervention.

62%

of those who complied with the Employment and Women's Pathways have not re-offended since accessing the interventions.

75%

of those engaging in the custody diversion project have reduced involvement with the Criminal Justice System and an action plan for the future.

38%

of offenders now have improved understanding of their abusive behaviour following access to the Drive Programme.

94%

of individuals who were referred to our Link Workers have engaged in the intervention.

The evaluation of our work in 2021-22 highlighted the following:

Area of saving	Key Assumption	Annual Saving (£)
Homicides	1 fewer per annum (arbitrary assumption)	820,000
Violence with injury	10.5% reduction (applying a 15% discount to the actual reduction between 2019/20-2020/21)	253,756
Youth offending	6.0% reduction (the actual reduction between 2019/20-2020/21, considered to be so conservative as not to require any additional discounting)	34,083
Other criminal justice costs	The actual changes in numbers of each of the offences cited between 2019/20-2020/21 (positive and negative) discounted by 15%	1,649,592
Prison costs	The actual changes in relevant crimes committed between 2019/20-2020/21 discounted by 15%	1,280,160
Wider fiscal, economic and social costs	The actual changes in relevant crimes between 2019/20-2020/21 discounted by 15%, plus 1 less homicide	3,487,700
TOTAL		£7,525,291



FIGHTING CRIME



What will we do:

We will fight crime through intensive intervention and diversion for those involved in serious violence and vulnerable to wider criminality.

We will bring key agencies together to provide an operational and problem-solving response in areas of most need, identifying and working with those who are at risk of causing the most harm to communities.

We will commission the following interventions as a priority:

Focused Deterrence

Focused Deterrence seeks to prompt a fundamental re-design to our multi-agency response to tackle most serious violence with a targeted cohort of young people. It will involve tailored response for each individual that will include intensive Support, Deterrence and Enforcement. We will pilot and implement phase one in Sunderland and then replicate our learning across the Northumbria Police Force Area.

The principles that underpin this approach is the identification and intensive case management of a targeted cohort of young people under the age of 18 years up to 25 years (in line with children's Services). The cohort will include those both at risk of committing serious harm to themselves, and others in relation to their involvement of serious violence within Sunderland City Centre.

It will be managed through a collaborative multi-agency approach, with use of intelligence to inform the most appropriate response formulating an intervention plan that will reduce risk and increase protective factors for the individual with use of innovation and problem-solving responses. It will not only assess and profile each individual but will have a heavy focus on identification of and implementation of individual needs led support that puts the child at the centre of all response.

The Intervention plan will include enforcement sanctions that can swiftly be acted upon on any breach of terms or continuation of violence. This approach can be viewed as a final opportunity to fully embrace and get the support they need most that will be designed to have lasting change in their actions from their involved in this approach now and in the future.

The cohort have been identified as those who are willing to change and can be attributed to the rise in violence within the City Centre that is negatively impacting on residents, businesses and communities.

Benefits:

This multi-agency approach consists of an individualised approach which can include of disruption and enforcement tactics, increased access to existing interventions, tailored support for the individual and their family to deal with the causes of their offending behaviour. The Youth Endowment Fund describe it as "A strategy that combines communicating the consequences of violence with support from developing routes away from it".

Measures of success:

The implementation of this approach will contribute towards the following outcomes:

- Reduce Serious Violence affecting Young People.
- Reduce fear of crime and increased feelings of safety for all who frequent the City Centre for Work or Leisure.
- Cost benefit saving for statutory agencies.
- Improved life outcome for Individuals within the cohort.
- Young people will have support tailored to their needs.
- Young people identified through Focused Deterrence will have improved engagement with protective factors (employment / education / training / positive activities).

Community alternative to short prison sentences (CASPS)

In 2021-22 the partnership between the VRU and the Probation service develop further on this project. Throughout 2022-23 we will continue to build on this and in partnership with the Ministry of Justice we will continue to support a cohort of individuals into community-based sentence is as an alternative to prison. As part of this process individuals will be connected to community-based support as well as have the opportunity to both address their offending behaviour as well as the contributory needs that led to them offending in the first place. This could include support with an undiagnosed need such as substance misuse all mental health as well as addressing some immediate issues such as stable accommodation training and employment.

Benefits:

This approach provides opportunities for individuals to seek stable and sustainable solutions to reduce their risk of re-offending and to assist with reconnecting with communities and their families.

Measures of success:

- Reduction in frequency and gravity of offending by cohort.
- Reduction in number of short sentences of cohort.
- Increase in compliance with associated orders/programmes.
- Improved life outcome for individuals within the cohort.
- The cohort will have support tailored to their needs.
- Young people identified through Focused Deterrence will have improved engagement with protective factors (employment / education / training / positive activities).

Continuation of the Out of Court Disposal pathways

Out of Court Disposals (OCD) provides the opportunity to engage people at the earliest opportunity as they enter the criminal justice system with a view to diverting them away from the criminal justice system via a structured intervention designed to reduce the likelihood of re-offending via a Conditional Caution. We will commission the following OCD;

- Men's 18-25 Pathways
- Women's Pathway
- V-Aware Pathway

Benefits:

This approach seeks to increase opportunities to address offending behaviour, diverting individuals to other avenues of support and reducing the risk of re-offending.

Measures of success:

- Number of restorative justice/community resolution interventions.
- Increased level of victim satisfaction.
- Increased referrals and compliance with V-awareness Programme.
- Increased use of Conditional Cautions for both male and females.
- The cohort will have support tailored to their needs.
- Reduction in repeat offending.

Impact in Year 3:

- 98% compliance across all pathways

PREVENTING CRIME



What will we do:

We will prevent crime by taking a direct approach to intervening with those who are showing signs of vulnerability or are on the fringes of criminal/anti-social activity.

This will take the form of direct intervention with young people as well as working with other services and organisations to address wider needs of other family members such as siblings.

The overall aim is to reduce crime and instances of violence as well as reduce the risk of vulnerable individuals being exploited by others.

We will commission the following interventions as a priority:

Custody Diversion

The Custody Diversion intervention aims to proactively engage 10-17 year olds, who are being brought into Police custody, to determine the degree in which serious violence, exploitation and vulnerability feature in their lives. In addition, a more targeted approach will be made to 18-24-year olds who are known to be involved in serious organised crime and violent offending. This intervention will be based in all three custody suites across Northumbria. Young people will be supported into interventions within their community and there will be opportunities to engage with the wider family to address underlying causes.

Benefits:

Custody Diversion provides young people with an opportunity to stop and reflect on what has brought them into Police custody and provides an opportunity to address the issue and look to make a positive choice to reduce their risk of further offending.

Measures of Success:

- The cohort will have improved engagement with protective factors (employment / education / training / positive activities).
- Number of young people reporting improved confidence and making positive choices.
- Number of young people with improved feelings of safety.
- Number of young people demonstrating reduced risk-taking behaviour
- Number of young people with reduced involvement in the criminal justice system

Impact in Year 3:

66 young people supported through our custody diversion intervention

- 75% of young people have reduced involvement with the Criminal Justice System and an action plan for the future.

Youth Mentoring (YOLO)

YOLO has continued to have a positive impact on some of our most vulnerable young people, and there is a commitment to continue and develop this provision to ensure that it is accessible to the most vulnerable young people within the areas of most need. Continuation funding for Year 4 will ensure that this provision continues to be offered and develops further. Work is ongoing to expand the referral process to offer up the provision to more young people and this will be reviewed throughout the year. Tailor made interventions will be developed with each young person and this will include some agreed outcomes and measures of success. There will be a closer link to all other VRU interventions to ensure that young people and their families have access to the correct level of support.

Measures of success:

There will be a range of individual measures of success agreed with each young person as part of their involvement with the intervention. There will also be a number of individual case studies shared throughout the year to support evidence of impact. However, in terms of high-level measures of success it is envisaged that the following will be used:

- Reduction in young people involved in serious violence.
- Reduction in reported ASB in areas where interventions are taking place.
- Reduction in offending behaviour of young people involved in the project.
- Number of young people engaged with the project.
- The cohort will have improved engagement with protective factors (employment / education / training / positive activities).
- Number of young people with improved feelings of safety.
- Number of young people demonstrating reduced risk-taking behaviour.

Impact in Year 3:

- 163 young people received mentorship, support and interventions through the YOLO project.
 - 48% of the young people's families accessed YOLO support.
 - 34% of young people with reduced risk of committing serious and violent offences.
 - 23% of young people with improved school attendance.

Education Engagement Team - Working with schools, communities and practitioners

Our Education Engagement team continues to evolve and build a varied range of resources and opportunities for young people. This commitment will continue during Year 4 with a more focused approach within our harm hotspots, targeting schools in areas with peaks in serious violence and wider disorder. We are still committed to the roll out of Adversity Awareness Training to community settings and local partners as well as a commitment to the delivery of a practitioner-based knife crime awareness sessions to support teachers, health professionals and community leaders. Our project-based learning approach developed significantly during year 3 and we will continue to develop our approach working with a wide range of schools and providing young people with the opportunity to tailor projects to best meet their needs.

Benefits:

An effective Education Engagement Team is key to the continued success of the VRU. The range of interventions on offer to schools and community settings has expanded and will continue to develop. The team will continue to enhance the community offer as well as continue to expand interventions into Colleges and Universities.

Measures of success:

- Number of sessions delivered, per subject
- Number of participants (young people and adults)
- Number of PRUs/SEND engaged
- Number of PBL activity
- Number of times resources downloaded from the website
- The number of people who reported an increase in understanding in [the subject]
- Number of young people surveyed following an intervention
- Number of young people involved in shaping delivery model
- Impact – on the young people, what difference has the session made to their thinking and behaviours

Impact in Year 3:

- The Education Team have delivered 806 education sessions in 260 hotspots:
 - 21,207 students and other young people.
 - 224 schools, non-school groups and community organisations engaged.
 - 71 Project Based Learning sessions delivered.
 - 44 Knife Crime Practitioner sessions delivered.
 - 1 National Education Network developed.

We will seek to add capacity to our preventing crime activity by developing the following interventions throughout the year:

Education Transitions (Primary to Secondary education)

We know that moving from primary to secondary school is a difficult time for young people, particularly for those who are facing a number of different challenges within the home or in their immediate community. This can often lead to young people finding it increasingly difficult to adapt and engage in a new school environment. Often this difficulty can manifest itself in problematic behaviour leading to an increased risk of short term and long-term exclusion. We know that young people who have reduced attendance at school also have an increased risk of being exploited by others and being drawn into other forms of vulnerability. As our education engagement approach has developed, we are committed to working with schools in hotspot areas to explore how we can provide additional support to young people with identified needs to make their transition to secondary school easier.

Benefits:

By focusing on a number of young people who require additional support we will increase the chances of them integrating it to a secondary environment as well as provide additional support to address identified needs at the earliest opportunity. The aim here is to create an A positive experience on a positive relationship for both young people their families and schools.

Proposed Measures of success:

- Reduced number of fixed term and permanent exclusions within the identified school
- Increased and improved school attendance
- Increased communication and contact with wider family
- Reduced risk of young people being involved in associated ASB

Student Support Champions

Our needs assessment shows us that there are areas where young people are involved in, or have an increased risk of becoming involved in, serious violence. Schools have told us that issues linked to these concerns are now presenting in the school environment. A partnership of local schools will work together with the VRU, police, local authority and youth organisations to identify bespoke support for young people at risk. We will embed Student Liaison Officers into secondary schools in Newcastle on a pilot basis throughout year 4. The Liaison Officers will offer 1-2-1 support for young people, providing a listening ear and different approach to problem solving. The Liaison Officers will be advocates for young people at various meetings to ensure their voice is heard and their circumstances explained. The Liaison Officers will also develop a pilot to offer interventions for weapon/knife carrying as opposed to exclusion and be able to deliver education packages around key violence reduction themes.

Benefits:

It is anticipated that this approach will improve the day to day relationship between schools and services as well as enhance intelligence and information sharing, allowing increased opportunities to identify issues at the earliest point. Young people should feel more supported in their school environment, knowing they have a trusted adult they can go to for guidance and support. It is anticipated that this project will increase opportunities for young people to report concerns as well as reduce the risk to young people.

Proposed Measures of success:

This project is in the early stages of development, however initial measures could include the following:

- Number of young people engaged with the School Liaison Officer.
- Increased feelings of safety.
- Increased sharing of local intelligence to reduce the impact of serious organised crime.
- Reduced exclusions for possession of a bladed article.

IMPROVING LIVES



What will we do:

We will seek to improve lives through the provision of family and youth support within areas of most need.

This will include improvement of access and the promotion of services that support individuals and families within their local area.

The key emphasis is on early intervention with a focus on utilising the expertise of local practitioners as well as ensuring that services are shaped by individuals with 'lived experience'.

This approach has two elements; the promotion of universal services to all and the targeting of specific services to those who need them at the earliest opportunity.

We will commission the following interventions as a priority:

Community Engagement (Young People and Whole Family Approach)

This intervention seeks to engage with vulnerable individuals in communities. Typically, the focus is on those individuals who are not accessing or being offered support. The result of which being the risk of increasing vulnerability to exploitation and serious violence either as a victim or perpetrator. The primary focus will be individuals aged 10-17 years old with the potential for wider family support should the need be identified. This whole family approach recognises the need to address familial influences, norms and behaviours that may impact on a young persons ability to change their behaviours if they are not addressed. This will include offering bespoke interventions within the community adopting a social prescribing approach delivered by staff with lived experience.

Benefits:

Peer to peer interventions offer an opportunity to work in a way that demonstrate not only empathy but a genuine understanding of the circumstances and push and pull factors that influence individuals lives, this support rapport building leading to increased trust and confidence in the support being offered.

Measures of success:

- No. of young people demonstrating reduced risk to violence and ASB.
- No, of community activities and services adapting / improving their local offer for the benefit of young people.
- Number of young people with improved feelings of safety.
- The cohort will have improved engagement with protective factors (employment / education / training / positive activities).

This case study demonstrates the level of impact in year 3:

The young person is an 18-year-old male, referred to the service by his college tutor, had been absent from some lessons and had been identified as a student who would benefit from student support and wellbeing services.

During the sessions with the Link Worker it became clear that the young person had varying issues going on at home. His parents were beginning divorce proceedings. The new relationship the young person's father was involved in was having a negative impact on the young person, namely because he did not get on with his father's new partner; this in turn caused arguments between the young person and his father.

It was identified that these arguments were having a negative impact on his mood and behaviour in college. The young person was actively seeking opportunities to entertain himself, due to his low mood, but this was disrupting his fellow peers.

By having the space to open up, the Link Worker was able to communicate with the young person's teaching staff to share relevant information on his personal circumstances.

It allowed his tutors greater insight into his current support needs, and have been more supportive in their approach with him. This gave the young person the confidence and motivation to re-engage and complete his college work. It gave him the belief that there were people there to support him, reigniting his own self-compassion.

Although things are still on-going at home, the young person has since acquired a part time job, has begun volunteering within the college, and is now planning his future career prospects.

The Local Youth Fund

We will implement an opportunity for young people to directly bid for VRU funds to allow them to participate in activities that will have a benefit for them or their local community. This could include youth engagement, increased sport and recreation opportunities, intergenerational projects and community action. We will work with NE Youth to administer the fund and this will include working with young people to promote the opportunity and evaluate the submitted bids.

In addition to providing young people with an opportunity to bid for funds the local youth fund helps the VRU link directly with groups of young people with a view to conversations about how they can help shape and support the development of VRU policy, strategy and interventions.

Benefits:

Providing young people with the opportunity to develop their own project will help to build confidence, experience and skills that young people can apply to other aspects of their lives.

Measures of success:

- As part of successful grant allocations there will be a varied range of measures agreed depending on the project. However, in terms of general measure of success for the Fund, the following have been identified:
- Number of young people involved in the Youth Safety Ambassador forum who develop new skills; promotion of funding, evaluation and planning.
- Number of youth enterprise organisations that supported the development of a bid.
- Number of individual young people who participate in developing a Violence Reduction Youth Fund bid.

This case study demonstrates the level of impact in year 3:

The young person is a 16 year old female who lives with her dad and two younger siblings, having been removed from her mother's care due to traumatic, violent incidents.

The young person has had three permanent school exclusions and was completely disengaged from education and training. She was drinking heavily, taking drugs and believed to be at risk of child sexual exploitation. The young person was also on the verge of having a criminal record and family, social workers and Youth Offending were struggling to engage her in any support services.

The young person started sporadically accessing services but had no wish to change her behaviour. In November 2021, she initially engaged with New Beginnings North through another organisation and since engaging directly with them in January 2022, she has had 100% attendance and fully participates in all of the programme activities.

New Beginnings North identified that the young person has a real talent as a make-up artist and when the VRU's Local Youth Fund opened, they supported her in an application for funding to re-engage with education and training of which she was successful.

The young person is doing well in her training and has already been offered full-time employment. With the funding she has been able to transform her life and now has aspirations for the future in having her own beauty business.

Findaway

Findaway is a ground-breaking friends, families and communities led intervention that seeks to address the missing link between victims and services. Friends, families and communities (‘protective others’) act as the first line of defence for those experiencing domestic abuse. We will work with delivery partners to build and refine this approach across Northumbria, developing a replicable model that can be used in other areas, and by other services. This will progress the development of a set of high level outcomes that; reduced domestic homicides through earlier intervention; ensures increased safety for adult and child survivors through a wider support network, builds domestic abuse informed communities who challenge the cultural acceptance of abuse; and increases the co-production of responses to domestic abuse.

Findaway will also support existing domestic abuse ‘Ask Me Ambassadors’ many of whom have lived experience of domestic abuse to ensure the ‘community’ element of the project is developed alongside the ‘friends and family’ element.

Benefits

The Findaway intervention will bring together domestic abuse service delivery partners, and their existing community based Ask Me Ambassadors, with the wider VRU partnership to improve the quality and availability of primary and secondary prevention interventions to tackle domestic abuse.

Measures of success:

- Number of contacts (Year 1 to act as a baseline) with demographic data agreed once target groups are established
- Case Studies to highlight issues raised and outcomes
- Numbers engaged in ‘Supportive Persons’ training
- Number of website views/resource downloads
- Development of peer support group with numbers engaged in peer support
- Case Studies to demonstrate impact of training and resources

We will seek to add capacity to our preventing crime activity by developing the following interventions throughout the year:

Bystander approaches that tackle the root causes of violence and abuse

Tackling the root causes of domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG) requires a primary prevention and long-term approach. There is an identified need for a preventative approach to engage men and boys (as a key part of the solution) around issues connected to masculinity, gendered social norms, misogyny and sexism. Primary prevention work in this field will also not only impact on men's violence towards women and girls, but towards other men and boys. Active bystander interventions can help equip people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to challenge harmful social norms and call-out sexism and misogyny wherever it is seen. It will help give men and boys the chance to develop identities and behaviours that are healthier for themselves and others - to generate a shift in norms and attitudes not just in themselves but importantly in their peers.

Benefits

Bystander training in targeted communities/sectors (in particular with men and boys) will enable them to become active prosocial bystanders who can:

- Notice and be aware of harmful behaviour or a situation
- See the situation or behaviour as a problem
- Feel responsible and motivated to act
- Have the necessary skills to be able to act/intervene safely and effectively
- Disrupt the normalisation of violence and abuse

Measures of success:

- Communities, especially men and boys in a range of settings (e.g. schools, sports, workplaces) will have the knowledge, skills and tools to challenge harmful social norms and generate behaviour change at an individual and peer group level.
- Increase in level of confidence after the receipt of training to recognise and have the intention to make an intervention.
- Change in community culture with less tolerance and social acceptance of harmful gender norms, violence and abuse within our communities.
- Bystanders feel an increased responsibility, confidence and intention to make an intervention

Responses to high risk, high harm perpetrators

The completion of a pilot of the Drive model in 2021-22 in Northumbria, alongside the well established Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) perpetrator panels has identified the need for longer term stabilisation, support and behaviour change work with high risk, high harm, serial perpetrators of domestic abuse. A localised model is required for Northumbria that builds on the work of the MATAC and also takes the learning from the Drive pilot. Currently, there is some behaviour change work commissioned by the local authorities for standard/ medium risk perpetrators. However, this leaves a gap around the high-risk high harm cohort. An options appraisal will identify the best localised model to address this gap.

Benefits

- Reduced harm caused to adult and child victims
- Reduced serial perpetration of domestic abuse
- Reduced repeat victimisation and reduced risk of new victims
- Support, stabilisation and behaviour change helps safeguard families living with high harm domestic abuse

Measures of success:

- Reductions in the use of abuse and intake and exit points around:
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Harassment and stalking behaviours
 - Jealous and controlling behaviours
- Reduction of risk and changes in domestic abuse behaviours reported by victims-survivors (as reported via their IDVAs / DA workers)
- Reductions in risk and attitudinal change in perpetrators (as reported by Perpetrator workers)
- Reported domestic abuse (and other offending) to the police pre and post intervention.

Workforce Development – Domestic Abuse Perpetrators

Workforce development is key to early responses to domestic abuse perpetration and should be viewed as a secondary prevention intervention in its own right. In a national survey of multi-agency professionals by SafeLives (2018), 89% stated that they felt they should be working more with perpetrators of domestic abuse. In the same survey 89% of respondents also stated that they lacked the confidence to do so. There is an identified need to focus on earlier identification of those perpetrators not known to the criminal justice system by equipping staff with the confidence and tools to have conversations with perpetrators about their behaviour; to hold them to account; and to help them get to a stage where if a referral to a behaviour change is appropriate, then they are more likely to engage. Given the increased likely demand for interventions with perpetrators, there is also a need to enhance the training and skills of those already delivering support to perpetrators.

Benefits

- A more skilled, confident and competent multi-agency workforce who are able to engage in exploratory conversations about domestic abuse with their own service users. This will help to move away from a risk avoidance culture.
- Improved identification and referral into support for perpetrators at an earlier stage in their abuse
- A more skilled and competent specialist workforce who are able to work more intensely with a high-risk high harm cohort of perpetrators in order to facilitate support, stabilisation and behaviour change.
- More perpetrators are held accountable for their behaviour

Measures of success:

- Number of staff with increased confidence in engaging with domestic abuse perpetrators
- Number of staff with improved competencies in responding to domestic abuse by giving them the tools, skills, knowledge and strategies to hold perpetrators to account about their behaviour
- Number of staff with the skills to work with high risk, high harm perpetrators



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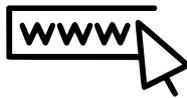
**violence
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Improving lives to prevent crime

NORTHUMBRIA VRU RESPONSE STRATEGY 2022



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