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**violence  
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**ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**





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# Priorities

In my Police & Crime Plan I set out 6 key priorities under 3 core pillars:



This year I reviewed my report and refreshed it to ensure it is kept up to date as crime evolves and the needs of our communities change.

In this annual report, I will update you on the progress made on each of these priorities over the year (2022/23).



# Pillar 1: Fighting Crime

## Priority 1: Reducing crime

### Giving the force the tools to do the job

- If we are to prevent and fight crime in the Northumbria Police force area it is essential our force has the resources available to support our communities. Over the last 12 months the impact of historic funding cuts and steep rises in costs have been compounded with increasing demands on our police force.
- Over the last four years, Northumbria has increased its officer headcount from 3,129 to 3,744 - not only achieving, but exceeding Government uplift targets. The Chief Constable and I chose to go above and beyond the set targets as uplift funding only allowed for a maximum of 615 additional recruits - 485 short of the number needed to replace those lost since 2010. The months ahead will also see us able to push on with plans to put an extra 134 police officers on the frontline as we go into the next period. Throughout the year I have also rolled out a 'Give us Back Our Cops' campaign in the media and through direct communication to the Home Secretary. I will continue fighting for better funding to build the workforce back up to its former levels.

### Early intervention and reducing reoffending

- Early intervention keeps crime down, and the best way to achieve this is with trusted neighbourhood police officers and staff. The Chief Constable and I have agreed that neighbourhood policing is a top priority, alongside working with other organisations such as local councils and youth organisations to help keep our streets safe.



- Now in its 4th year, my Violence Reduction Unit funded interventions are continuing to make an impact from working intensely with a vulnerable individual to supporting to the wider family to become more resilient.
- One example is the Focused Deterrence scheme which offers tailored intensive support, targeted interventions and swift enforcement for individuals causing the most serious violence in our communities. Sunderland City Centre became the first area to benefit from this new intervention. The SAIL (Sunderland Altogether Improving Lives) Team brings together dedicated violence reduction staff, officers from Northumbria Police, Sunderland City Council ASB officers, neighbourhood wardens and key specialists, to deter individuals from crime and provide some much-needed respite for the city.
- Education is a massive area of focus for the region too. To reach young people at the earliest opportunity, our dedicated education team also deliver informative, interactive, and impactful sessions. Almost 30,000 young people have received violence education themed learning from our Education Team or have taken part in our training sessions. Our student champions have also offered mentorship to 100 students who have been referred for reasons, including carrying a weapon in school, displaying anger and violence in school or the community. The scheme has received excellent feedback ranging from improved rapport with the local police to individuals now seeking mental health support.

### **The illegal drugs trade**

- In my Police and Crime Plan I committed to ensuring the force targets the illegal drugs trade and the crime that follows it. Northumbria Police continues to make significant efforts to improve strategy, implement preventative measures and disrupt dealing in our area.
- Op Venetic is a great example of this work and it continues to facilitate opportunities to fundamentally dismantle dozens of sophisticated OCGs involved in high level organised crime. This will have a significant impact in the long term upon those OCGs involved in drug supply and the identification of vulnerable individuals in the community. As of November 2022, a total of 127 suspects have been arrested, 43 of whom have been charged.
- Project Adder is another targeted project to reduce drug-related offending, drug deaths, drug supply and prevalence and of drug use. Funding for this project is currently secured until March 2025 and there continues to be good progress. The project builds on existing work and looks to expand multi- agency partnership working to drive sustained health and crime related outcomes taking a whole- system four P approach across enforcement, treatment, and diversion. Activity for the 12 months to November 2022 included 113 warrants executed, 374 arrests, £367,107 cash seized and an estimated £2,730,300 of drugs seized.

### **Rural crime**

- Tackling rural crime is a real priority for Northumbria Police. This is demonstrated in how we successfully secured £250,000 in Safer Streets funding, making Northumbria the first force in the country to be awarded this funding specifically to fight rural crime. With the money secured we were able to start 2023 with the launch of Northumberland Partnership Against Rural Crime (NPARC). This initiative brings regional partners' respective expertise together to explore ways of working to support policing efforts in our rural communities.

- More than £1 million worth of stolen farming and agricultural equipment has been successfully recovered since Northumbria's rural policing team was formed in 2020 and with the formation of NPARC, the Safer Streets funding and the continued support of Operation Checkpoint volunteers there is a real commitment to building on this success.

### **Responding to the needs of the public**

- If we are to prevent and fight crime in the Northumbria Police force area it is essential our force has the resources available to support our communities. The public need to have the confidence that the force will respond when they are called upon. It is also important to note that demand is increasing, while resources remain rationed by the Government and our control rooms are working hard under incredible pressure.
- Overall call handling performance continues to improve. 99.9% of 999 calls were answered in December 2022, with 94.2% answered within the Service Level Agreement (SLA) of 10 seconds. The average answer time was 5 seconds. This improvement is above the rates that were previously projected. 101 non-emergency call handling performance has also improved; however, current performance remains below the SLA and previous levels of performance and will continue to be closely monitored with improvement plans.

### **Online crime**

- Cybercrime, including online fraud, is a growing threat both regionally, nationally, and internationally. The type, frequency and sophistication of cyber-enabled crimes are continually increasing, ranging from organised crime groups to individuals targeting victims via social media. Many cyber-enabled crimes lead to complex investigations, and we must recognise that online crime ignores all borders, that's why Northumbria Police has a Complex Fraud Team which works closely with the three north east forces and NEROCU well as enhanced links with the National Lead force, City of London Police. The NEROCU has received additional funding to increase their Fraud Investigation Teams and new opportunities to effectively work together are being explored.
- While the volume of cyber dependant crimes has remained broadly consistent over the previous 12 months, the volume of cyber enabled crime has steadily increased since last year. Many of the latter offences include the use of social media by overseas offenders. In the six months to August 2022, reports to Action Fraud within the Northumbria area stabilised at approximately 430 reports each month.

### **Serious and organised crime**

- As mentioned, organised crime often operates at an international level, but its impact can be seen on our streets. Every part of the force plays a part in tackling this, especially neighbourhood policing with their close links to the communities being served.
- Our North East Regional Organised Crime Unit (NEROCU) also exists to protect our communities from serious and organised crime.



## Priority 2: Anti-social behaviour

### Commitment to anti-social behaviour

#### Strategic ASB Board:

- The beginning of 2023 marked a full year of the region wide Strategic ASB Board which brings together Local Authorities Fire Services, Transport providers and other key agencies. The Board has agreed to run projects based on all 3 Board priorities:
1. Reporting ASB and the experience of Victims throughout ASB process, this includes looking at how young people experience and report ASB.
  2. The way we record and report on ASB and ensuring that there is consistency throughout our region.
  3. Early prevention and Intervention strategies to reduce ASB.
- In addition, Board reps have agreed to fund cross border working on our transport networks and have overseen the relaunch of the new ASB Case Review procedure.
  - The first Registered Social Landlord ASB Forum took place in April 2023 and was made up of 9 of the main RSLs in our region. RSLs play a huge role in keeping communities safe and therefore are key partners in helping us tackle ASB and this forum will allow the RSLs to directly feed into and influence the work of the Northumbria Strategic ASB Board. Looking ahead, the Forum will be an opportunity to share some of the innovative and successful projects and practices across the region with other RSLs and the Strategic Board.

#### ASB Case Review:

- The ASB Case Review, is an important safety net for victims and communities experiencing ASB to request a review of their ASB case and to bring agencies together to find a solution for the victim(s).
- The revised process was relaunched in July 2022 and the OPCC now oversees and coordinates all activations in the region and works closely with Community Safety Partnerships throughout the Community Trigger process.

#### July 2022 – March 2023 data:

1. We processed 85 applications to activate the Community Trigger
  2. 66 cases met the threshold to activate the ASB Case Review
  3. From the ASB case reviews held, recommendations have been made in 98% of cases.
  4. 92% victims have attended the ASB Case Review panels or provided written impact statements, this shows us that victims of ASB want to have their voices heard and want to be part of the solution.
  5. We have received 3 1st stage appeal requests to local CSP Boards and 1 2nd stage (final stage) appeal to Strategic ASB Board.
- In March 2023, our region's ASB Case Review process received national recognition when it was shortlisted for a Resolve ASB best Project Award. We have also commissioned an external agency to undertake a full review of the ASB Case Review Procedure.

One victim who has been through process said:

*“After years of having to endure ASB with very little action, the community trigger allowed me to be heard and taken seriously. I finally have received action and I know for a fact that this is only due to the community trigger. There was excellent communication throughout the process, I was offered a sympathetic shoulder and I felt really supported. The trigger made such a big impact in a short amount of time and massively helped me and my family.”*

#### Funding:

**Safer Streets Round 4:** In 2022 my Office secured £2m from the Home Office Safer Streets Fund Round 4, to work on detailed initiatives to make people feel safer. One of these projects focuses on ASB across our transport networks and how we can improve reporting mechanisms, prevent incidents occurring and respond to incidents swiftly and efficiently using our strong multi-agency partnerships. Since its launch in September 2022 there has been:

1. The deployment of the Multi Agency Transport Team (MATT), Youth provision and Street Pastors across the Transport Networks
2. Ongoing work to promote the Northumbria Safer Transport App

**ASB Victims Funding:** I continue to contribute £30,000 per year to support ASB victim support services across the region and through the work of the Strategic ASB Board will continue to work towards understanding how access to support differs across our region and how this can be improved.

**Mental health work in ASB Cases:** This year I provided £19,000 to support a newly designed ASB service Project in Gateshead. The research for this project found that mental ill-health was prevalent in 100% ASB cases audited, and the project aims to incorporate access to mental health advice into daily case management for earlier identification and access to help, support, and signposting.

**Operation Payback:** In Summer 2022 my Operation Payback fund awarded over £200,000 to improve local communities. The fund focussed specifically on reducing ASB. The Operation Payback fund is taken directly from money seized from drug dealers, human traffickers and thieves is used to improve lives and benefit grassroot causes. In February 2023 I awarded a further £177,000 worth of funding to grassroots charities to further prevent and deter ASB in our local communities. Funding has been used towards local sporting activities, mental wellbeing services and projects for young people.

**Local Youth Fund (Violence Reduction Unit):** This fund empowers young people to bid for projects and activities that they believe will reduce serious violence and vulnerability in their local areas. In the latest round, young people were encouraged to develop projects themed around preventing knife crime. This resulted in them coming up with ideas including wearing white at community sessions as a conversation starter and holding sports activities such as a ‘knives down’ football league. This unique fund also provides an opportunity to engage and better understand young people’s experiences of vulnerability and violence to help shape our interventions.

**Seasonal Violence Fund (VRU):** The VRU has been working with CSPs to use this fund to develop projects aimed at reducing serious violence within communities across Northumbria. The fund is committed to identifying individuals causing significant harm in communities and diverting them from crime. Last winter’s projects helped drive crime down 14% in December. In Sunderland City Centre, crime dropped by 37% compared to the previous year, due to the increase in police presence, neighbourhood wardens and more youth and health provision. This follows the success seen during the summer where levels of violence dropped by 12.2% across the region.



# Pillar 2: Preventing Crime



## Priority 3: Preventing violent crime

### Prevention, utilising a public health approach

- I am committed to using a public health approach to reducing violence. I want us to treat violence the same way we would a disease, recognising the symptoms, understanding the causes, and then stopping its transmission, helping people to avoid it, and giving people the tools, they need to tackle it.
- My violence reduction unit is 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 takes the form of direct intervention with young people, working with those who could become the biggest risk to others, alongside key services and organisations who can help address the wider needs of other family members such as siblings too.

### Reducing offending

- There was a total of 22,889 violent crimes reported to Northumbria Police during 2022. Although this number has risen, the VRU Strategic Needs Assessment 2023 found that there has been a 9% reduction in hospital admissions for assault with a knife or sharp object for Under 25s since 2021 – a much welcome improvement for the region and an endorsement for the intervention and education programmes that have been rolled out across the region.
- One such programme is the Student Support Champions available to offer support on local youth violence issues in eight secondary schools in Newcastle. They are the first to benefit from the scheme, and I am eager to roll this out further across the region. Our champions work with young people to build trusted relationships and encourage them to seek support. They work

closely with schools, police, local authorities, and community services to improve school attendance, behaviour, reduce suspensions and exclusions, strengthen community links, and prevent serious youth violence.

- Another example of how we are working to reduce offending is our partnership with the regions two football foundations - Newcastle and Sunderland. Through the clubs, our YOLO programme provides mentoring support for young people aged 10 to 16 years identified as being at risk of knife crime. When they start the programme, young people are allocated mentors to work with them on a one- one-one basis to establish positive relationships and ensure full support is right for them and their needs.

### **Roads policing**

- Whether you're a driver, cyclist, motorcyclist, or pedestrian, we all must share the responsibility and do our bit to make our roads safer. To do this, Northumbria Police works in partnership with others to help reduce the of harm to all road users and prevent criminality on the roads network. This includes continued support for national road safety operations which encourage everyone to help improve the safety for riders of bicycles and motorcycles too.
- The impact of road traffic collisions (RTCs) can be devastating to those involved and their families. In the Northumbria Police area there were 2,178 reported road casualties (includes fatalities and serious / minor injuries) in 2021 and 2,129 in 2020, the lowest total since 2005. The force is committed to improving road safety and targeting offenders who use vehicles to carry out criminal activities or drive dangerously. Those caught putting the safety of others at risk in our region will face action. More than 900 motorists received driving bans or penalty points after being caught using a mobile phone behind the wheel in 2022 alone, which illustrates the determined efforts of our force to make the roads safer.
- Roads policing isn't just a matter for our urban areas and the motorways and busy roads that connect them, we also have officers responsible for keeping the region's most rural communities safe and this year, these officers have undergone specialist roads policing training.

### **Priority 4: Neighbourhood Policing**

- In the 12 months to February 2023, 70 percentage of people surveyed said they thought Northumbria Police did a good or excellent job in their neighbourhood. Although high, this figure does mean an 8 per cent fall when compared to the previous year. Much of the feedback expressed the sentiment that the 'police do what they can' despite of stretched resources, and I fully agree. Residents often perceived that an increase in funding and police visibility would help to further improve the service and I will continue fighting for this.
- Our neighbourhood policing teams have been working on delivering many new projects and initiatives that have been having a positive impacts n the communities they serve and are being recognised as best practice. A few examples of good work from this year are noted below.



## Problem Oriented Policing

- Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) continue to focus on Problem Orientated Policing (POP). There are two force-wide POP plans in place, with coordinated force-wide activity to address issues relating to off-road motorcycle nuisance and ASB on the transport network. Oversight is through the ASB Subgroup and ASB Coordination Group.
- A third Force wide POP plan is currently being developed to address fly tipping which is led by Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service. The Force's problem-solving process has recently received favourable comment from the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.

## Multi-agency policing operations:

- Northumbria Police continues to develop and carry out successful multi-agency policing operations to prevent and reduce victims of crime in identified neighbourhoods. SARA (Southwick Altogether Raising Aspirations) is an example of this and is a multi-agency place-based approach has been applied force wide to tackle high harm areas for crime and ASB.
- Similarly, the HALO project, based in Hetton, provides sustainable interventions for local neighbourhoods and last December the SAIL (Sunderland Altogether Improving Lives) hub based in the city centre was established. This focuses on a cohort of youth and adult offenders in terms of intervention and disruption initiatives.





# Pillar 3: Improving Lives



## Priority 5: Support for victims

### Supporting people through the justice system

#### Victims' services

- As PCC I am responsible for commissioning the majority of victim services in our areas. This year my team oversaw the distribution of nearly £3.6 million in grant funding across numerous funding streams. In the 2022-23 financial year, my Supporting Victims, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Community, Children Affected by Domestic Abuse (CADA), IDVA/ISVA and Male Rape Support Funds enabled 33,404 victims of various crimes to be supported.

#### ISVA and IDVA commissioning

- Through funding from the Ministry of Justice, I have been able to enhance the provision of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs). ISVAs and IDVAs provide specialist practical and emotional support for victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse – they can help a victim with everything they need to become safe and rebuild their life, as well as helping a victim navigate the criminal justice system and working with the different statutory agencies to provide wrap-around support. This funding has been awarded from the Ministry of Justice and spans over three years (2022-25). As well as enhancing overall provision, I have ensured Northumbria's ISVA and IDVA provision has specialist ISVAs and/or IDVAs to support children, ethnic minority women, victims with disabilities and LGBTQ+ victims.

#### NVWS end to end service

- I commissioned Northumbria Police to deliver my new core victims' service in Northumbria, Northumbria Victim and Witness Service (NVWS), which has joined-up and enhanced delivery

of the service. NVWS deliver genuine end-to-end support for all victims (whether the victim has reported the crime or not), helping victims to cope and recover from their experiences and providing integrated and co-ordinated support to the victim throughout their experience with the Criminal Justice System.

### **Victim and Witness Improvement Board**

- My Victim and Witness Service Improvement Board, that I established in 2021, continues to assist me in making ongoing improvements to our victim support services to ensure we achieve better outcomes for victims of crime. Membership of this board include service providers and direct victim and witness representatives, who have all offered invaluable insights into my understanding of how we 'get it right' for victims throughout the Criminal Justice System.

### **Victims' Champion**

- I have appointed a Victims' Champion to listen and amplify the voices of victims in our region. By understanding victims' experiences, and engaging with our key partners, our Victims' Champion will be able to use this information to positively influence change across the Criminal Justice System (CJS) and improve victims' journeys through the CJS in Northumbria.

### **Stalking and harassment**

- In responding to the increase in stalking and harassment across our region, I am pleased to be commissioning a specialist national stalking service, Paladin, for the next 3 years, ensuring victims of stalking and harassment have access to emotional, practical and advocacy support. Additionally, our local specialist services (including our domestic abuse and IDVA services) will benefit from training delivered by Paladin in recognising and supporting victims of stalking and harassment. In complimenting this work, my office is also part of a regional working group (alongside our police and probation partners) in establishing a Northumbria Stalking Intervention Programme which will focus on the stalking perpetration and the effective management of the risks associated with this crime type.

### **Hate Crime**

- In line with the national picture, unfortunately we have seen hate crime rise in recent years. As a result, our fight against hate continues and we are determined to bring about positive change. The PCC scrutinises Northumbria Police's performance data on satisfaction levels of victims of hate crime and the work undertaken by the police to support victims.
- In 2022, Northumbria Police recorded 3,655 hate crimes and 1,794 hate incidents, in both sets of data, racially motivated hate crimes and racially motivated incidents are in the majority although there has also been an increase in homophobic and transphobic hate crime. 74% of hate crime victims surveyed by the Public Insight team at Northumbria Police were satisfied with their whole experience of the service.
- The OPCC engages with a range of partners who play a crucial role in supporting individuals who experience hate crime. Connected Voice which has received national awards for outstanding service, has been commissioned by the OPCC to deliver a specialist advocacy service focused on providing individual support to victims of hate crime and those at risk of hate crime. Targeted promotion of the service with seldom heard communities has improved access by 70% to help people cope and recover from their experiences.

- Northumbria Police's Community Engagement Teams have excellent links and relationships right across our communities and they work closely with community groups, educational services, and businesses to encourage reporting of hate crime and engagement with the police. The OPCC works with Northumbria Police, third sector partners and communities to promote the Hate Crime Champions Scheme, to challenge intolerance and hate, and promote diversity and inclusion. Over 600 champions have been recruited since the introduction of the scheme in 2019, with 72 recruited this year.

### **Community cohesion and extremism**

- It is crucial that people get on well together, respect differences and work towards achieving shared goals. Working with communities is at the heart of what Northumbria Police does. In the Police and Crime Plan, I have committed to supporting all efforts to work with partners to strengthen relations, understand issues and improve cohesion. As well as actively tackling extremism, I am also committed to ensuring our force continues to build on collective efforts to prevent vulnerable people from being drawn into extremist activity.
- In meeting our requirement around the 'age' protected characteristic we funded Digital Voice, which delivers digital inclusion projects, to work with young people in Chopwell to produce a series of videos to dispel the myths that all young people are troublesome and get involved in ASB, with the aim to help improve community cohesion.
- Northern Cultural Project received Operation Payback funding to deliver music- workshops to young people from diverse backgrounds, enabling them to understand each other's cultures, breaking down barriers and helping them to have a sense of belonging and to feel valued.
- Northumbria Police works with partners through Hate Crime Tension Monitoring groups, where local issues are identified and partners work together, intervene to prevent, and reduce further incidents and prevent and tackle extremism. The Office of the Police Commissioner (OPCC) is also a member of these groups to make sure that we are up to date with any emerging trends and issues.

### **Mental Health**

- Mental health support for victims of crime is crucial in their cope and recovery process. This is why I have committed to funding Tyneside and Northumberland Mind for the next 3 years; to ensure victims with an identified mental health need can continue to access specialist emotional, practical, and therapeutic support. My office is also working with our NHS partners in establishing mental health provisions and pathways for those victims caught up in a major crime incident, such as terrorist attacks; as well as exploring introducing mental health link workers within our forces' control room to provide immediate mental health support and interventions.

### **Use of force stop and search**

- To assist the PCC in scrutinising the use of stop and search the OPCC has also established a Police Powers Community Advisory Panel which provides constructive oversight, discussion, and challenge on the use of police powers, namely stop and search and use of force. The OPCC has ensured the panel members are representative of the diverse communities across the force area, including geography. There has been a focus on community groups that work



with young black men as this group is disproportionately impacted by stop and search and use of force police powers. The panel also has experts working in the field of mental health and neurodiversity to provide an EDI lens on how police officers effectively engage with people with poor mental health and those who are neurodiverse.

- The group provides advice to the PCC to assist her to scrutinise the force; they also provide feedback to the force to help them understand how the use of these police powers can be improved and how disparity can be mitigated. An example of how the panel have done this is when members highlighted the need for effective recording and robust data on stop and search and use of force to get greater understanding in terms of policing powers, work which is being progressed by the police. The panel has also highlighted the good practice regarding the speed with which the force reviews Use of Force, addresses areas of improvement, takes proactive action to share that learning through officer safety training, but still shares footage to allow further independent scrutiny.
- Northumbria Police are exploring opportunities for the community representatives to work with the force in helping to deliver training on cultural competency and neurodiversity to enhance police officer's awareness and understanding of these issues.

## **Complaints**

- At times, the service from Northumbria Police may not be to the normal high standard. When Northumbria Police get it wrong, I want them to learn from the experience and ensure all is done to restore the confidence of the complainant in Northumbria Police. To achieve this, since February 2020, my office has been responsible for certain reviews following a complaint that has been dealt with by Northumbria Police Professional Standards Department (PSD).
- The review system is firmly embedded, and my office takes a robust stance in ensuring the service from Northumbria Police remains focused on local residents and our communities. We take review requests very seriously; it allow me to see where improvements can be made and how local residents are feeling. In the spirit of openness and transparency my office publishes all reviews outcomes on the OPCC website. We will continue to maintain good relationships with the IOPC to ensure positive learning from partners and to share good practice from Northumbria.

## **Priority 6: Tackling domestic abuse and sexual violence**

### **Active Bystander Training**

- National figures show 71 per cent of women have experienced harassment in public spaces. We're at a place now in society where most people know when they see something harmful unfolding – but many people say they don't have the confidence and skillset to intervene in ways that are effective. My office has funded active bystander training as part of determined efforts to equip people with the skills and confidence needed to speak up when they notice behaviours that aren't right such as harassment, sexual harassment, or problematic and threatening behaviour. Active bystander interventions are viewed by experts as a way that can be effective in preventing harmful behaviours from escalating. This new training is a powerful tool that takes people through the steps from noticing a problem, having the confidence to act, and determining the best course of safe action to intervene in a harmful situation that

can make a positive difference. focusing on the bystander is an effective strategy because it places responsibility for changing the environment on the whole community as well as offering individuals the skills and understanding to do so.

### **Findaway**

- We know that people who are in controlling, and potentially dangerous relationships usually tell their families and friends before they ask for help from specialist services. Findaway is a support service for anyone who is worried about someone they think is being controlled, scared, or hurt by their partner, ex-partner, or a family member. Findaway recognise that those people who are worried often need support, information, and other tools to effectively help the people they care about. My VRU is part- funding the service which is delivered by Wearside Women in Need. We believe that families, friends, and community members, are best placed to offer support and have an important role to play in helping people subjected to abuse. 80% of people receiving advocacy support reported feeling more confident in supporting the person they are worried about. Findaway has also begun delivery of their introductory domestic abuse workshop for communities (Be the Difference), which aims to increase knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse, some of the signs that people (third parties) might recognise, and how they can respond helpfully.

### **Control Room Pilot**

- Since May 2022, my office has been funding specialist domestic abuse workers from Harbour and Wearside Women in Need to work side by side with police staff in the control room during busy periods. These specialists are on hand to speak to victims/survivors who call the police and can offer the best support and guidance to those suffering from domestic abuse. Between May 2022-March 2023, 354 victims have engaged with the domestic abuse specialist workers in the control room, and for 40% of them, it was the first time they'd spoken to a specialist domestic abuse worker and many these victims consented to being referred into their local domestic abuse service. This is a really great example of how early interventions can work, and how we can look to improve lives of victims and their children.

### **Perpetrator interventions**

- My VRU has successfully bid for funding to increase the range of support available to those who are harming their partners/ex-partners/family members or worried that they might be. The range of interventions cover early intervention, behaviour change and intensive case management. We will be monitoring these interventions, as they develop, to ensure they result in a sustained reduction, frequency, and severity of abuse; reductions in risk posed by the perpetrator; and improved safety, and feelings of safety, for adult and child victim/survivors.

### **Northumbria VAWG Commissioning Forum**

- My office has brought together Strategic Commissioning leads and Domestic Abuse leads from local authorities and ICBs across Northumbria to help improve effective co-ordination and collaboration. It is a network to support development of innovation, improvement, and efficiency in VAWG practice and commissioning. The group has agreed joint commissioning principles and agreed a set of common principles for engaging survivor voices. It is a place where we can collectively consider VAWG funding opportunities and how these might align with and strengthen responses to VAWG.

## Strategic Review of Responses to Domestic Abuse Perpetrators

- My Violence Reduction Unit took a public health approach to reviewing and identifying where existing responses to domestic abuse perpetration in Northumbria could be enhanced and where gaps need to be filled. Recommendations from this review are being taken forward by partners including the VRU, Northumbria Police and the 6 Domestic Abuse Partnerships. This will help drive forward improved primary, secondary and tertiary prevention and strengthen our whole systems responses.

## Tackling violence against women and girls

- This continues to be a priority within the office, that is why we continue to fund sexual violence services across Northumbria for both adults and children for the next three years, we identified that there was a gap in support provision for children under the age of 11 who have experienced childhood sexual abuse, so through the NHS England Sexual Assault and abuse strategy (SAAS) we were able to secure funding for a therapeutic service for Children North East to extend their existing service to cover victims aged 11 and under.
- We also have now appointed our ISVA champion, who will ensure that sexual violence services across Northumbria are coordinated and provide victim-survivors with high quality care and support. She will be looking to build and strengthen relationships with sexual violence services and develop clear pathways and communication across the different services available to victim-survivors in the region.
- Renovation work is also still ongoing with the new purpose built SARC, the new site will be known as the Angel Centre and will provide a safe environment for people who have experienced acute serious sexual violence when they require a forensic examination. We will be working in partnership with the Newcastle United Foundation and the Prince's Trust programme to develop the grounds of the site, ensuring the highest of standards, to give victims a supportive, private, and secure outside space during their experience within the SARC.





# Funding your force

For 2022/23 the force received £339.332 million to fund crime fighting and public safety.

The Commissioner agreed a budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy that continued to deliver and build upon the investment in policing for Northumbria residents approved by the Commissioner in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

To support delivery of the Strategy the Commissioner allocated £4.000 million of new funding raised through the Council Tax Precept in 2022/23 to provide investment in:

- Additional call handlers to improve performance for 999 and 101 services.
- Extra resources to tackle cyber-crime and serious and organised crime.
- More civilian investigators to support investigations and free up officers.
- Workforce investment – supporting our officers to keep them on the beat and tackling crime.

In addition, the budget set by the Commissioner for 2022/23 ensured that Northumbria Police were able to successfully deliver, and exceed, the much-needed increase in police officer numbers against the national Uplift target set by government.

The table below sets out spending based on the 2022/23 budget:

<b>POLICING SERVICES ALLOCATION</b>	<b>RESOURCE</b>
<b>Local Policing</b>	<b>43.8%</b>
<b>Public Protection</b>	<b>7.8%</b>
<b>Investigations</b>	<b>17.3%</b>
<b>Dealing with the Public</b>	<b>10.0%</b>
<b>Criminal Justice Arrangements</b>	<b>6.4%</b>
<b>Intelligence</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
<b>Operational Support</b>	<b>4.6%</b>
<b>Roads Policing</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
<b>Investigative Support</b>	<b>2.4%</b>
<b>Police and Crime Commissioner (includes public insurances etc)</b>	<b>0.5%</b>

## How your money will be spent in the coming years

The latest force budget and the Commissioner's Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 to 2026/27 will ensure that the Force continues to review and transform policing services; maintain the much-needed increase in police officer numbers delivered through the national police officer Uplift programme; and allow Northumbria Police to invest in the right resources to protect the vulnerable, tackle crime and keep our communities safe.

The Strategy is set against a financial backdrop of significant economic uncertainty, government austerity, rising pay bills, worldwide supply chain shortages and extraordinary levels of inflation across fuel, energy, goods and services, digital policing, and most major contracts. The financial climate is more challenging than ever and with no additional support from government the force is planning to use reserves and targeted efficiencies alongside the vital increase in Council Tax income from local residents to balance the books each year.

### Strategic Policing Requirement

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) sets out those threats which, in the Home Secretary's view, are the biggest threat to public safety and must be given due regard by PCCs when issuing or varying Police and Crime Plans. It supports PCCs as well as Chief Constables to plan, prepare and respond to these threats by clearly linking the local response to the national, highlighting the capabilities and partnerships that policing needs to ensure it can fulfil its national responsibilities. A revised version of the SPR was published in February 2023 which provided strengthened detail around the action required from policing at the local and regional level to the critical national threats. The 2023 SPR sets out seven identified national threats.

These are as follows: Serious and Organised Crime (SOC); Terrorism; Cyber; Child Sexual Abuse; Public Disorder and Civil Emergencies. These remain from the 2015 version with the addition in 2023 of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), reflecting the threat it presents to public safety and confidence.

As Police and Crime Commissioner I am confident I have given due regard to the six threat areas identified in the previous SPR in my Police and Crime Plan and in my role holding my Chief Constable to account. VAWG, while not previously contained in the SPR, nonetheless is a key and pressing issue on which I update in this report and be prioritised in future iterations.

In Northumbria, I receive a regular report through my scrutiny process that outlines the current position in respect of Northumbria Police's position in respect of these national threats.

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## **#Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit**

I now have a dedicated Facebook page on the work of my Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit – you can like it here - [@NorthumbriaVRU](https://www.facebook.com/NorthumbriaVRU)