



SUSAN DUNGWORTH
NORTHUMBRIA
**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

Delivery of The Police & Crime Plan:

Priority 6: Victims and Justice

September 2026

Police and Crime Plan commitment: Explore opportunities to increase the use of out of court resolutions to divert offenders away from the criminal justice system and prevent re-offending.

Question

Have Northumbria Police made any assessment of the impact of their use of Out of Court Resolutions to divert offenders from the criminal justice system and prevent reoffending?

Northumbria Police conduct regular assessments of their TREAD pathways to ensure that they provide both value for money and a suitable outcome. They monitor and analyse outcomes of all Out of Court Resolutions (OOCR) to ensure accurate understanding of effectiveness of all pathways in terms of both compliance and subsequent reoffending.

They use national benchmarking and identification of good practice to ensure the pathway options are current and pertinent. As such, they have increased the number of pathways available (14). The suite of pathways ensures they have flexibility to achieve their goal of rehabilitation, education and prevent re-offending bespoke to the circumstances of the offender and the offence type. Reoffending data is analysed at the six- and twelve-month point to analyse and evidence the effectiveness. Overall, compliance is high (78%), with far fewer compliant individuals reoffending compared to those who do not complete their intervention (7% vs 20%).

Targeted analysis of the CARA programme shows particularly strong outcomes, with high compliance and very low reoffending rates among those who engage, supported by an internal evaluation confirming its effectiveness. The force complements performance data with national benchmarking, independent evaluations, and robust governance arrangements, including OPCC led scrutiny panels and third sector challenge, ensuring accountability, and a strong focus on victim outcomes and reducing reoffending.

Police and Crime Plan commitment: Ensure the voice of the victim is at the centre of service design and improvement.

Question

Does the force routinely offer victims the opportunity to re-visit their Victim Personal Statement (VPS) prior to any judicial process?
Could Northumbria Police be doing anything further with their compliance with the Victims Code of Practice (VCOP) in this area?

Northumbria Police, through the Northumbria Victim and Witness Service (NVWS), routinely offer victims the opportunity to review and update their VPS ahead of judicial proceedings, with structured engagement taking place at key stages such as charge, trial preparation and changes in case progression. A Victim and Witness Support Officer is allocated to the case at the point of charge by Crown Prosecution (CPS). Where a matter is listed for trial, the CPS will request NVWS to undertake witness warning and engagement activity

This process is embedded within the Court Engagement Plan and supported by close liaison between Victim and Witness Support Officers, the CPS and Officers in the case, ensuring victims understand the purpose and use of a VPS and can amend it where appropriate.

In addition, there are various touch points where victims are reminded of the VPS process and are given the opportunity to add to or provide a VPS. This includes after an initial trial hearing, when the defendant pleads guilty or when a case is escalated to crown court.

In relation to assurance and performing monitoring, NVWS information is not currently collated in away that enables routine reporting on VPS review/ offering rates, this is a national issue with the dataset available from the approved system. Within NVWS as part of the quality assurance process, Court Engagement plans are dip-sampled, which provides some assurance of completion and overall compliance; however, this is a manual process which is time consuming.

Although VPS completion data forms part of the wider VCOP metrics, it is acknowledged that there are currently gaps in this data which affect the completeness of data analysis. With the implementation of Niche, CJU will continue to work with CDD to ensure the most complete data set possible is available to monitor and drive performance, ultimately improving the quality of service provided to victims of crime.

Police and Crime Plan commitment: Explore opportunities to increase the use of Out of Court Resolutions

Question

Can you please provide an overview on Northumbria Police's plans around child-centred custody arrangements and any opportunities or challenges this brings?

Northumbria Police conduct regular assessments of their TREAD pathways to ensure that they provide both value for money and a suitable outcome. They monitor and analyse outcomes of all Out of Court Resolutions (OOCR) to ensure accurate understanding of effectiveness of all pathways in terms of both compliance and subsequent reoffending.

The child-centred custody plans will focus on the following objectives:

- Consider whether police custody is the most appropriate mechanism for investigating offences involving child suspects and reduce unnecessary detention in custody.
- Effectively manage investigations to ensure that children detained in police custody for the minimum amount of time.
- Ensure that all children in police custody are appropriately supported, represented, and understand what is happening to them.
- Ensure that the custody environment is made less intimidating and children are adequately stimulated to reduce feelings of fear, mistrust and anxiety in child detainees.

This facility would enable targeted deployment of staff, enhanced training and closer partnership working, helping develop specialist expertise in child detention. Following analysis of demand and capacity, the preferred approach was to designate a wing of cells within an existing suite. A dedicated child custody wing will be established at Middle Engine Lane, incorporating child friendly design, safe spaces, enhanced staff training on adverse childhood experiences, and improved access to distraction and support tools.

Northumbria Police recognise that Youth Justice Services are critical to the success of these plans and custody senior leadership team are currently working with Local Authority Youth Justice Service leads to agree a suitable model for provision of Local Authority appropriate adult services.



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