

VAWG Strategy and Victims' Centre Update

This report follows the publication of the Violence Against Women and Girls ("VAWG") Strategy to provide an update to Members about development of the Delivery Plan and progress made to date against the strategic objectives. This report also provides an update on the development of the new Victims' Centre.

Violence Against Women and Girls ("VAWG") Strategy

The VAWG Strategy was launched in June 2022 and can be found at Appendix A. The Strategy and supporting appendices are available on the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner website at [Addressing violence against women and girls in North Yorkshire & City of York \(northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk). Paper copies were previously made available to Members following the July Panel meeting but further printed copies can be redistributed if required.

The Strategy was informed by local and national strategies and reports as well as consultation with local women and girls who had been subject to VAWG offences in order to ensure the Strategy was informed by their lived experience and focussed on the right strategic objectives. The feedback from victims and survivors can be found in Appendix B.

The six strategic objectives are:

1. Ensure all women and girls are listened to, including those from under-represented communities
2. Tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls with prevention and early intervention
3. Increase public confidence and trust in North Yorkshire Police
4. Strengthen partnerships so we work together, across agencies, to address the challenges
5. Enhance the support available for victims and survivors
6. Invest in early intervention to identify and stop potential offenders and change behaviour of those who have already offended to prevent re-offending.

The local vision for the VAWG Strategy aligns with the Home Office's ambitious national strategic vision as outlined in their 'National Statement of Expectations', which recognises 'that with effective earlier intervention, joint working, and a drive to challenge the culture and attitudes that give rise to all forms of abuse, the number of these crimes can be substantially reduced'.

Delivery Plan

The VAWG Strategic Delivery Plan will outline how we intend to achieve the six strategic objectives. It has been co-developed with our partners by assessing existing local strategies and plans to map what work is already underway and identify where there are gaps that could be addressed together through this Strategy. The OPFCC also considered any upcoming workstreams such as the work planned for Hate Crime Awareness Week which will include a range of videos and social media communications around tackling misogyny. Likewise, through Home Office Safer Streets 4 funding the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (“OPFCC”) is working with the Suzy Lamplugh Trust and North Yorkshire Police (“NYP”) to review how NYP respond to stalking cases and understand any learning or improvements that may be implemented.

The Delivery Plan has been produced by the Joint VAWG Development Group which comprises strategic leads from partner agencies including NYP, North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, Yorkshire and the Humber Probation Services, North Yorkshire County Council and City of York Council. The Delivery Plan will be underpinned by a detailed action tracker which will include which partners will be responsible for leading different workstreams, timescales for delivery as well as where this may support other strategies or action plans that were considered in the initial development stage of this Delivery Plan.

The Delivery Plan will provide an overview of what we have achieved so far, under each objective and what we plan to do next. A RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rating will be used to monitor the overall progress and the Delivery Plan will be updated regularly to provide a bi-annual update to the VAWG Strategic Governance Board which will be chaired by the Commissioner and will also include lay members (survivors). The Board will help monitor the progress of the Delivery Plan as well as agreeing next steps and any key messages that we want to be highlighted to the public. The Delivery Plan will also be published on the OPFCC’s website to provide updates to the public and reassure them of the work that is ongoing to tackle VAWG in North Yorkshire and City of York.

Delivery Plan - Overview

Objective 1: Listening to All Women and Girls, including those from rural and under-represented communities, and proactively seeking feedback to inform continuous service improvements

There are two outcomes we aim to achieve under objective 1:

- Proactive engagement with under-represented communities and seldom heard women; and
- Ensuring parity of services across both urban and rural areas, and other isolated communities.

To achieve these aims, we need to regularly consult and engage with women and girls to ensure the voices of victims and survivors are heard and inform practice development. To date we have held six Focus Groups with approximately 30 victims and survivors of VAWG offences in February this year followed by an online victim survey in March to inform the Strategy and Delivery Plan. Both the focus groups and survey responses highlighted breaches of protective orders as a key issue for many victims and survivors and we have included this as a specific theme as a result of this feedback.

We also need to explore opportunities to expand gender specific support services in different areas throughout North Yorkshire and City of York, including rural and isolated areas. A multi-agency group has been formed to consider options to expand delivery of support for women and girls with a new 'Delivery Spoke' of York Women's Centre established in Scarborough and the Sexual Exploitation (of Adults) Information Sharing pilot now rolled out County-wide to identify women aged 16yrs+ at risk of sexual exploitation.

Objective 2: Tackling the root causes of VAWG through Prevention and Early Intervention

The two outcomes we aim to achieve under objective 2 are:

- Increased awareness to promote zero tolerance of all forms of gender inequality and VAWG; and
- Increased availability of Early Help and Community-led Interventions.

One of the consistent themes from the focus groups and survey responses was the need to educate children and young people to help them learn and develop appropriate behaviours and attitudes towards healthy relationships from an early age. To achieve this we are working with our partners to develop age-appropriate materials to challenge misogyny and raise awareness about stalking and street harassment.

A multi-agency group is coordinating activity for Hate Crime Awareness Week (8th-15th October) with Misogyny as a focus for the campaign this year #LetsEndMisogyny. The Halo Project has been commissioned to deliver specialist Illegal Cultural Harms Support Services including education and awareness raising programmes to highlight the impact on victims with the aim of enabling women to abandon harmful cultural practices and beliefs. This includes delivery of a workshop at the conference for School Designated Safeguarding Leads during Hate Crime Awareness Week.

IDAS have delivered Vulnerability Training to workers in Scarborough and York night-time economy settings. Humankind have also delivered 'spiking' awareness training to help these workers have a better understanding of the risks posed within the context of sexual violence, domestic abuse, and other gender-based violence.

We are establishing a VAWG Professionals Group comprised of local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations who work with women and girls to consider suitable options link in with existing Champions Schemes to develop a network of VAWG Champions in local communities and workplaces to help raise awareness of VAWG and ensure victims can more easily access help and advice at the earliest opportunity. The group will also develop training content and supporting materials based on their specialisms across different locations and settings including faith-based and educational settings.

Objective 3: Increasing Public Confidence and Trust in the Police

The two outcomes we aim to achieve under objective 3 are:

- Increased confidence to report VAWG offences; and
- Identify learning opportunities and ensure continuous service improvements and responses to VAWG.

NYP have launched the 'Pathways' App which provides a comprehensive database of various local and national support services available to ensure police officers are able to immediately offer the right support when victims report VAWG offences.

We are working with NYP to identify suitable training packages to upskill police officers and other frontline practitioners to better identify and respond to VAWG offences such as stalking and illegal cultural harm including delivery of specialist accredited training to enhance safeguarding and protection of victims from Black and Minority Ethnic (“BME”) communities. We are also formalising joint arrangements in respect of specialist support and measures to protect both police and non-police victims of Police Perpetrated Domestic Abuse in line with the recommendations from the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (“HMICFRS”), the College of Policing, and the Independent Office for Police Conduct review on the super complaint submitted by the Centre for Women’s Justice. This includes reciprocal training delivered by NYP’s Safeguarding and Professional Standards departments and IDAS to ensure support workers are fully aware of police complaints and disciplinary processes, and NYP Professionals Standards are aware of the support available to victims and facilitate positive working relationships.

A Rape Investigations Improvement Group has been established and includes the local Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (“ISVA”) Service Manager to identify ways that NYP can improve their response and the support offered to victims of rape, particularly where no further action is to be taken following initial investigation. This is in addition to the Rape and Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Panels who review cases which have not attained the required evidential level for prosecution or otherwise resulted in a failed prosecution to identify wider organisational learning to continuously drive improvement in the standards of investigation for rape and domestic abuse cases.

Objective 4: Strengthening the Multi-Agency Approach to Address VAWG

There are three outcomes we aim to achieve under objective 4:

- Improve Safeguarding and Risk Management Approaches;
- Improve the experiences of those going through Criminal Justice Processes; and
- Improve the experiences of those going through Civil and Family Court Proceedings.

To achieve these outcomes a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (“MARAC”) and Multi-Agency Tasking And Coordination (“MATAC”) Steering Group has been established, which reports to the two local Domestic Abuse Partnership Boards and subsequently the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership and Safer York Partnerships to ensure we are identifying and safeguarding victims, and the most harmful and serial perpetrators of domestic abuse are being managed. We have also established a multi-agency partnership group to specifically safeguard those involved in sex work, survival sex or at risk of sexual exploitation.

A dedicated Domestic Abuse & Family Court Working group disseminates accurate information about the family court process and improve information sharing between family courts and police. More recently we have secured additional funding to employ a Domestic Abuse Practitioner (IDVA) who will support victims/survivors going through Family Court processes and child contact arrangements.

Objective 5: Enhancing Support Services for Victims

Under objective 5, we aim to ensure high quality services are available to everyone at their time of need.

To achieve this, we need to explore options to jointly commission wherever possible a range of services to offer trauma-aware support for victims of all forms of VAWG. We have already secured additional £905k funding to increase capacity of local specialist support services including the new Halo ‘By & For’ BME ISVA service and New Beginnings Peer Support for domestic abuse.

We have also secured funding to employ a 'net reach' worker to identify women who advertise sexual services online to help understand local and national trends and reach out to offer support to women involved with sex working, survival sex and at risk of or a victim of sexual exploitation throughout North Yorkshire.

The Commissioner has purchased a property in May 2022 and the team have facilitated stakeholder input into architectural and engineering plans to create a new Victims' Centre including dedicated, modern Sexual Assault Referral Centre and Child Sexual Assault Assessment Service facilities, and Video Recorded Interview suites to provide an improved service for all victims of sexual violence or abuse. More information on the Victims' Centre is detailed towards the end of this paper.

Objective 6: Facilitating Behaviour Change by Perpetrators

There are two outcomes we aim to achieve under objective 6:

- Increase availability of interventions for perpetrators of VAWG offences that focus on both enforcement and rehabilitation; and
- Increase availability of interventions for those women and girls with Dual Status and those with Multiple Unmet Need.

To achieve this we need to develop a range of services and interventions for perpetrators of stalking and domestic abuse for those who don't meet the criteria for a statutory programme including options for suitable interventions to be delivered as part of a Positive Requirement attached to Stalking Prevention Orders and as an Out of Court Disposal route for perpetrators of domestic abuse.

We have secured Home Office Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Interventions Funding and committed match funding to employ a Stalking Interventions Project Worker from 2022 to offer the +Choices Perpetrator Programme to low risk perpetrators who are willing to voluntarily address their stalking behaviours. The worker is co-located with the NYP Specialist Stalking Team who review reported stalking incidents, offer safeguarding and support to victims, and support other police officers investigating stalking cases.

We will seek to divert women that offend or are at risk of offending from the criminal justice system (where appropriate), particularly where their offending is linked to any VAWG they have been subjected to, through our gender specific diversion scheme – Crossroads. Crossroads uses a gender specific needs assessment to identify common intersectional needs for women who offend to improve the local evidence base of underlying and contributory factors to offending and multiple unmet need.

Creation of a Victims' Centre

The Commissioner is establishing a new Victims' Centre to house North Yorkshire's Sexual Assault Referral Centre ("SARC") and Child Sexual Assault Assessment Services ("CSAAS") alongside a dedicated Video-Recorded Interview ("VRI") suite for these victims, and second separate VRI suite for other vulnerable victims and witnesses.

Creating a dedicated Victims' Centre for North Yorkshire will:

- ensure our SARC/CSAAS will be able to achieve UKAS Accreditation and ensure continued delivery of these services in North Yorkshire for victims of rape and sexual assault to support them to recover, heal and rebuild their lives;
- improve availability of fully accessible facilities for those with mobility needs;

- improve the overall experience of all victims using these facilities;
- support officers in achieving best evidence when interviewing victims and witnesses by helping them feel more assured and comfortable;
- assist NYP in effectively meeting the requirements of Sections 27 and 28 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999; and
- afford a modest degree of fallow capacity within the building with potential to accommodate additional complementary services for victims in line with the Commissioner's overall mandate for amplification of such services.

Background

The purpose of a SARC is to co-ordinate and simplify the pathway for victims of rape and sexual assault to access wider healthcare, social care, and criminal justice processes to improve individual health and well-being, as well as criminal justice outcomes. SARC (for adults) and the CSAAS (for children) typically provide three main elements following disclosure of an offence:

- immediate healthcare;
- forensic examinations and collection of evidence; and
- visually recorded interviews, supporting Achieving Best Evidence ("ABE") guidelines.

The Forensic Science Regulator ("FSR") ensures that the provision of forensic science services across the criminal justice system (including SARC and CSAAS) is subject to an appropriate regime of scientific quality standards. In 2020 a new requirement was introduced by the FSR for all SARC/CSAAS to be accredited by the UK Accreditation Service ("UKAS") under ISO 15189:2012 by October 2023. Failure to meet the accreditation standards must be disclosed in any subsequent criminal justice proceedings. Such non-compliance would result in increased risk of unsuccessful prosecution of sexual offences, decreased public confidence in the justice process and in turn the possibility of fewer disclosures by victims of rape and sexual assault.

The SARC/CSAAS are currently delivered in North Yorkshire from a converted 2-storey detached house in a residential street in the York District. The forensic examination suite is located on the 1st floor and accessible only by stairs, so it is not suitable for wheelchair users or those with mobility difficulties; anyone with mobility restrictions is offered an appointment at one of the other more accessible sites within the Yorkshire and the Humber region. The current premises also accommodates a single VRI suite on the ground floor that is used exclusively by NYP. The premises are not soundproof and to avoid disruption to recordings when the VRI suite is in use, a shared calendar is in place for each service to have sole access to the premises without disturbance, but this is becoming more difficult to manage as demand for both services has increased considerably.

Progress to Date

A commercial property was purchased in May 2022 which meets the operational requirements of both SARC/CSAAS as well as VRI facilities for vulnerable victims and witnesses. The new premises are located in a small private business park on the outskirts of York, close to key transport links. The building has a private car park, with a designated, accessible parking bay and will be DDA compliant with a lift and accessible toilets.

Consultation workshops were held in June with key stakeholders including NYP, Regional Scientific Support, NHS England, ISVA Service Manager, current SARC/CSAAS provider and Registered Intermediary Services to ensure the new facilities will both meet the UKAS Accreditation

requirements and provide comfortable, pleasant, and modern facilities to better needs the victims and vulnerable witnesses.

There will be two separate dedicated forensic examination suites for the (Adult) SARC Service and CSAAS providing age-appropriate environments consisting of a forensically clean waiting room, examination room and shower room with toilet facilities along with separate family/visitor waiting rooms with 'kitchenette' and toilet facilities. There will also be office space and storage for use by the SARC/CSAAS provider, including secure storage and freezer facilities for forensic samples collected for self-referral clients. There will be two VRI suites with dedicated office space and storage for use by NYP with separate family/visitor waiting rooms with 'kitchenette' and toilet facilities.

There will also be a meeting room, hot desk facilities and a 1-to-1 room which can be utilised by other support service providers such as ISVAs or Counselling services to meet with victims. There will also be staff changing and shower facilities, kitchen facilities and break-out areas that can be used by all staff.

Mechanical and electrical engineers' reports have recently been completed based on the initial concept drawings to finalise the full architectural plans with updated (estimate) costs and timescales for completion due to be submitted for approval in early October. Procurement work has also commenced with Regional Procurement to request initial quotes from approved contractors through the regional procurement frameworks to recover slippage on the project timescales to date and ensure building work can commence in November/December.

Appendices:

Appendix A- VAWG Strategy

Appendix B - VAWG Strategy Supporting Appendices, including victim and survivor feedback

Strategy to Address
Violence Against
Women & Girls in
North Yorkshire & City
of York
2022-24



**North Yorkshire
Police, Fire & Crime
Commissioner**

Working to keep your community safe



**North Yorkshire
Community Safety Partnership**



North Yorkshire
Safeguarding Children Partnership

City of York
Safeguarding Children Partnership



North Yorkshire
Safeguarding Adults Board



Foreword

North Yorkshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner Zoë Metcalfe

Everyone across North Yorkshire and City of York should feel they are safe wherever they are, whatever they are doing and whenever that is. But, in too many cases, women and girls do not. I need to change that.

This new Strategy aims to identify the challenges and crucially, how police, fire and our community partners, alongside my office, work together to address them. Keeping women and girls safe – and ensuring they feel safe – is not something that one organisation, group or emergency service can deliver on their own. It is only by coming together, being honest about the problems and creative in finding solutions that will create the real change needed.

For me, this is personal. Like many women and girls I have been out at night and worried what was around that dark corner, I have felt the rising panic of not knowing who the footsteps behind me on the street belong to, and I have felt anger at being told that this is not really a problem by those who will never experience it. There are too many women facing violence in their homes, on our streets and in their communities and these issues are not the responsibility of women and girls to solve. That never has been the case, and it never will be. Together, everyone must drive societal change.

North Yorkshire and City of York is, statistically speaking, a safe place. But we should never forget that numbers in a spreadsheet do not tell the full story. There are still too many victims - women and girls who need to have their voices heard, who need to be confident there is a justice system that will believe them, and a network of help that supports them, builds their confidence, and helps them rebuild their lives.

Words are easy, actions are not. We have already made progress but there is much more to do, and I hope this Strategy can be the catalyst for that. I have identified six strategic objectives which aim to create tangible change and make women and girls feel safe and be safe.

We will, alongside our police, fire and community partners:

1. Ensure all women and girls are listened to, including those from under-represented communities
2. Tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls with prevention and early intervention
3. Increase public confidence and trust in North Yorkshire Police
4. Strengthen partnerships so we work together, across agencies, to address the challenges
5. Enhance the support available for victims and survivors
6. Invest in early intervention to identify and stop potential offenders and change behaviour of those who have already offended to prevent re-offending

Please judge us against these objectives. I want to ensure we reach a place where there is no need for a distinct strategy to tackle violence against women and girls but unfortunately, currently there is. We must change that, and we will – together.

This overarching Strategy for North Yorkshire and City of York encompasses North Yorkshire Police's operational strategy on Violence Against Women and Girls, which was released in March 2022. You can read this on the [North Yorkshire Police website](#). I will continue to hold the force to account against this operational strategy and hope to see more being done to help women and girls to feel safe and be safe in our county.

Introduction

This Strategy sets out our collective commitment to address violence against women and girls across different settings, communities and locations throughout North Yorkshire and City of York.

Violence Against Women and Girls (“VAWG”) refers to any act of violence or abuse that disproportionately affects women or girls and is usually perpetrated by men; however we recognise that men and boys can also be victims of these crimes and women can be perpetrators. Although we will use the term ‘VAWG’ throughout this Strategy, unless otherwise stated, support and services are available for all victims of these crimes regardless of gender, age, sexuality or background.

Please see Appendix A (available on the Commissioner’s website) for a full list and definitions of the VAWG types and abusive behaviours included within the scope of this Strategy - in brief these include:

- Misogyny and Street Harassment
- Domestic Abuse
- Rape and Sexual Offences
- Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation
- Adult Sexual Exploitation
- Online Sexual Offending
- Illegal Cultural Harms
- Stalking and Harassment
- Breaches of Protective Orders

This Strategy has been informed by several national strategies, statutory guidance and academic research, including the National Violence Against Women and Girls’ strategy¹ and HMICFRS’ Final Inspection on the Police Response to Violence Against Women and Girls².

Consultation has taken place with local organisations representing women and girls and crucially with experts by experience by speaking directly to women and girls throughout North Yorkshire and City of York through focus groups and an on-line survey to ensure their voices remain central to the development and delivery of this Strategy. Please see Appendix B for a summary of the feedback and findings from this consultation.

Throughout this Strategy we will use the term ‘victim’ to describe those directly harmed by VAWG; language and terminology was something we specifically asked women and girls their views on and many agreed that this was the most recognisable and easily understood term. However, it is clear that individual experiences of VAWG are varied and often ‘fluid’. There is no one term which accurately reflects the experience of all those directly harmed by VAWG. Therefore for the purposes of this Strategy, the term ‘victim’ also includes survivors, those with lived experience and/or those who have been subjected to VAWG at any point during their lifetime.

Our Vision

By putting all women and girls at the centre of this Strategy, especially those that are under-represented and seldom heard, we aim to significantly enhance the services we already offer. We are creating an innovative and ambitious programme of work to address all forms of VAWG,

¹ Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (2021), [Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy \(Home Office\)](#)

² Police response to violence against women and girls, Final Inspection Report (2021), [Police response to violence against women and girls Final inspection report, recommendations \(HMICFRS\)](#)

ultimately making North Yorkshire and City of York one of the safest places in the country, particularly for women and girls.

Our Approach

We will continue to speak to women and girls about their individual experiences, and local organisations working with them, to measure progress against our Strategic Objectives and drive forward continuous service improvements. Please see Appendix D (available on the Commissioner's website) for a comprehensive list of all existing commissioned support services and interventions for victims and perpetrators of VAWG in North Yorkshire and City of York.

Whilst building on what we have already achieved to date, this Strategy will focus on identified gaps where work will be targeted to achieve meaningful and sustainable change at a local level to make a real difference to the lives of women and girls in North Yorkshire and City of York.

To realise our vision, VAWG needs to become everyone's business including but not limited to:

- Education settings, including schools, colleges and universities
- Healthcare providers, including GP practices
- Social Care providers
- Housing providers, including private landlords
- Local Authorities
- Police and other emergency services
- Courts, including civil and family courts and legal professionals
- Prison and Probation services, including Parole Boards
- Voluntary and Community Organisations, including faith-based organisations and sports groups
- Banks and building societies
- Workplaces and local employers
- The Armed Services

Turning Strategy into Practice

This Strategy complements, and is complemented by, wider ongoing work and existing partnership arrangements. There are numerous examples of innovative partnership working and good practice already adopted within North Yorkshire and City of York to address specific types of VAWG (see Appendix C available on the Commissioner's website for further details).

We intend to continue to develop these successful approaches and utilise existing governance arrangements to extend best practice into other areas of VAWG wherever appropriate, working together to develop local delivery plans that will underpin this Strategy.

To facilitate this and monitor overall progress against our Strategic Objectives the VAWG Strategic Leadership Board will meet at least twice a year to conduct biannual reviews of progress against our local delivery plans.

This Board will include lay members and local organisations representing women and girls. The Board will publish the findings of these biannual progress reviews to provide greater transparency and accountability to increase public confidence in how we are improving the overall safety of women and girls.

The VAWG Strategic Leadership Board does not seek to duplicate or replace existing governance arrangements but aims to support partners in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities in respect of VAWG. Therefore, it is anticipated that existing partnerships including but not limited to the

Community Safety Partnerships, Safeguarding Children's Partnerships, Safeguarding Adults Boards and Local Criminal Justice Partnership will be represented on the Board to share details of relevant activity and escalate any issues or concerns so they can be resolved in a timely and consistent manner.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the victims and survivors who imparted their expertise by experience with us in the focus groups, and everyone who took the time to respond to the online survey. The experiences that you all shared have informed this Strategy and will continue to shape and drive our local delivery plans.

Thank you to all the local organisations representing women and girls who took part in consultation workshops and provided valuable insight into local need to inform this Strategy and also helped us ensure we used a person-centred and trauma-informed approach wherever possible to seek feedback from with those that are at risk of and/or been subjected to VAWG: Changing Lives; Chessnuts; Humankind; IDAS; Kyra Women's Project; Mountain Healthcare Ltd; New Beginnings; North Yorkshire Horizons; North Yorkshire Youth; PACE; Survive; The Children's Society; The Halo Project; and York Women's Counselling Service.

Thanks also to the strategic leads who have contributed to the development of this Strategy, representing our partners North Yorkshire Police; North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service; North Yorkshire County Council; City of York Council; Yorkshire and the Humber Probation Service; NHS North Yorkshire CCG; NHS Vale of York CCG; and TEWV NHS Foundation Trust.

Our Strategic Objectives

Objective 1: Listening to All Women and Girls, including those from rural and under-represented communities, and proactively seeking feedback to inform continuous service improvements

We will proactively engage with under-represented communities and seldom heard women, particularly:

- Ethnic Minority communities
- Girls in Care and Care Leavers
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- LGBTQ+ community
- Armed Services communities
- Rural communities
- Sex Workers
- Students
- Those with Disabilities, including hidden disabilities and neurodiversity

We will also ensure parity of services across both urban and rural areas, to reflect unmet needs in these communities, with consideration of the unique vulnerabilities of those living in rural areas and other isolated communities.

Objective 2: Tackling the root causes of VAWG through Prevention and Early Intervention

Campaigns and Awareness Raising

Challenging everyday sexism and misogyny is key to tackling the root causes of VAWG, therefore we will develop a series of campaigns aimed at increasing awareness and promoting zero tolerance of all forms of gender inequality and VAWG. These will be developed and delivered across a number of settings but initially we will focus on:

- challenging misogyny from a young age, highlighting healthy vs unhealthy relationships and behaviours
- inappropriate language and behaviour, particularly street harassment
- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, also known as 'Clare's law'
- spiking incidents, particularly within pubs and clubs
- sexual exploitation of adults, particularly increasing understanding of 'survival sex'
- illegal cultural harms, clarifying that much of the conduct which sustains them is unlawful and/or criminal
- stalking in all its forms, including online harassment and 'revenge porn'

Early Help and Community-led Interventions

We will develop and support a network of VAWG Champions in local communities and workplaces to help raise awareness of VAWG and ensure victims can more easily access help and advice at the earliest opportunity.

We will explore the development of 'Safe Spaces' and support other initiatives to keep women and girls safe in our city and town centres such as 'Ask for Angela' and vulnerability awareness training for workers in the night-time economy settings.

We will work with our local education partners to co-develop and co-produce age-appropriate materials to challenge misogyny from an early age.

Objective 3: Increasing Public Confidence and Trust in the Police

We will enable increased confidence in reporting VAWG crimes by enabling police officers to adopt a trauma aware response to ensure the right support is offered when victims do report.

This will be reinforced by ensuring the police take swift action when dealing with perpetrators by establishing early intervention opportunities and training the workforce to identify gateway VAWG offences.

We will continue to strengthen Rape and Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Panels to review cases which have not attained the required evidential level for prosecution or otherwise resulted in a failed prosecution, in order to identify learning opportunities and ensure continuous service improvements.

Objective 4: Strengthening the Multi-Agency Approach to Address VAWG

Safeguarding and Risk Management

We will support the expansion of multi-agency work focussed on identifying and supporting victims of all forms of VAWG and continue to develop the multi-agency partnership model to safeguard those involved in sex work, survival sex or at risk of sexual exploitation.

We will continue to support and develop the Multi-Agency Tasking And Coordination (“MATAAC”) process to more effectively identify and target the most harmful and serial perpetrators of domestic abuse.

We will develop and enhance multi-agency responses to all forms of stalking and illegal cultural harms. We will also specifically target the perpetrators of trafficking and sexual exploitation offences through the national anti-trafficking and anti-slavery network.

Criminal Justice Processes

We will promote the use of special measures in court, which are a series of provisions that help vulnerable and intimidated witnesses to give their best evidence and help to relieve any stress associated with this experience. We will raise awareness of this provision amongst police officers and actively encourage the police to offer and explain their benefits in VAWG cases at the earliest opportunity.

We will support work on evidence led prosecutions, where appropriate, working with the Crown Prosecution Service in an effort to improve prosecution rates of VAWG related cases.

We will explore options for establishing Court Observers Panels, with the support of local criminal justice agencies, to observe rape and sexual abuse trials and/or domestic abuse cases with a view to highlighting best practice and providing constructive feedback.

Civil and Family Courts

We will continue to develop actions based on the recommendations from our report on domestic abuse and the family courts³, including disseminating accurate information about the family court process, improving information sharing between family courts and police, and continuing to work with the legal professionals, court staff and judges to prevent further victimisation within the family court process.

³ Domestic Abuse & the Family Courts (2020) [Domestic-Abuse-The-Family-Court.pdf \(northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk\)](#)

Objective 5: Enhancing Support Services for Victims

We will explore options to jointly commission where possible a range of services to offer trauma-aware support for victims of all forms of VAWG, ensuring that high quality services are available to everyone at their time of need.

We will ensure all services can better identify and respond to potential victims of modern slavery and human trafficking.

Objective 6: Facilitating Behaviour Change by Perpetrators

We will develop a full range of services and interventions that focus on both enforcement and rehabilitation of perpetrators of all forms of VAWG, including illegal cultural harms, stalking and harmful sexual behaviours.

We will explore options to increase availability of mandatory programmes linked to court orders for sex offenders.

Dual Status and those with Multiple Unmet Needs

We will seek to divert women that offend or are at risk of offending from the criminal justice system (where appropriate), particularly where their offending is linked to any VAWG they have been subjected to.

We will explore options for expansion of the York Women's Centre services through a hub and spoke model or 'pop-up' services and events in different areas throughout North Yorkshire and City of York.

Appendix B

What do we mean by Violence Against Women and Girls?

Misogyny and Street Harassment	<p>Misogyny is a form of sexism which involves a hatred or dislike of women and girls and/or the belief that men are much better than women</p> <p>Street Harassment does not just occur in the street, and can occur in a number of different settings such as public transport, pubs, clubs and other entertainment venues, workplaces and educational settings - it includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• leering or unwanted staring• sitting or standing uncomfortably close to someone• making sexually explicit comments or gestures, including 'wolf whistling'• asking unwanted questions about someone's sex life• unwanted sexual attention or asking for sex, including repeated pressure to go on a date and/or have sex• 'up-skirting' or 'down-blousing' is taking pictures or filming up someone's skirt or down their top without them knowing• flashing or exposing your genitals in public• groping is unwanted sexual touching anywhere on the body, which could be sexual assault
Domestic Abuse	<p>Domestic Abuse can be perpetrated by an intimate partner or spouse or separated/ex-partners</p> <p>Domestic Abuse can also be perpetrated by children, including adult children, towards their parents or other family members</p> <p>Domestic Abuse includes but is not limited to one or more of the following types of abusive behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• physical violence or abuse including threatening behaviour, hitting, kicking, biting, punching and non-fatal strangulation• sexual violence or abuse including sexual assault, coerced or forced sex• emotional or psychological abuse including 'putting someone down', playing 'mind games', making someone feel they're to blame for everything or that they're crazy – also known as 'gaslighting'• controlling or coercive behaviour including telling someone who they can see, what they can wear, etc.• economic or financial abuse including coerced or forced debt, controlling spending, access to bank accounts or benefit payments• 'cuckooing' where a perpetrator takes over a victim's home to facilitate abuse

<p>Rape and Sexual Offences</p>	<p>Rape involves penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth with a penis without consent</p> <p>Assault by penetration of the vagina or anus using anything other than a penis without consent</p> <p>‘Stealthing’ is removing a condom during sex without the other person knowing</p> <p>Choking, slapping or spitting on someone during sex without their consent</p> <p>Getting someone to engage in sexual activity without their explicit or informed consent</p> <p>Sexual assault is touching someone in a sexual way without consent such as kissing, ‘rubbing against’ or grabbing them</p> <p>Voyeurism is secretly watching other people in sexual or other private acts to gain sexual pleasure, including ‘Up-skirting’ or ‘down-blousing’</p>
<p>Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation</p>	<p>Child Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening – it includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rape or assault by penetration • non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and sexual touching outside of clothing • non-contact acts such as grooming a child or young person or involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities or otherwise encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways – this can take place online or in person or a combination of both <p>Child Sexual Exploitation is a specific form of Child Sexual Abuse which occurs where the perpetrator holds some kind of power or control over the victim to coerce, manipulate or deceive them into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial or status gain of the perpetrator - even if the sexual activity appears consensual</p>
<p>Adult Sexual Exploitation</p>	<p>‘Survival Sex’ or ‘Sex for Rent’ is performing sexual activities in exchange for basic necessities, accommodation, food, drugs or alcohol</p> <p>Forcing or coercing people into Sex Work - performing sexual activities in exchange for money</p> <p>Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking involves the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving people through the use of force, coercion, abuse, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation</p> <p>‘Cuckooing’ where a perpetrator takes over a victim’s home to facilitate exploitation</p>
<p>Online Sexual Offending</p>	<p>Making unwanted sexually explicit comments on social media</p> <p>Sending unwanted sexual messages to someone</p> <p>‘Cyber-flashing’ involves sending someone a sexually explicit picture that they haven’t asked for</p> <p>Putting pressure on someone to send sexually explicit or nude pictures of themselves</p>

	<p>‘Revenge porn’ involves posting or threatening to post sexually explicit images or videos of another person on the internet without their consent, typically by a former sexual partner</p>
<p>Illegal Cultural Harms</p>	<p>So-called ‘honour’-based violence or abuse is a diverse range of actions or practices used to control behaviour of individuals within families or communities to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs or ‘honour’ – it includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Abuse, including that perpetrated by other family members • Rape and Sexual Assault • Kidnap • Violence or threats of violence, including murder • Forced Marriage • Female Genital Mutilation <p>Forced marriage where one or more parties do not consent, are unable to consent or consent is obtained using duress, physical violence or threats of violence, or emotional blackmail – forced marriages are <u>not</u> the same as arranged marriages where the couple have the choice whether to accept the arrangement or not</p> <p>Female Genital Mutilation (“FGM”) involves the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons - also known as ‘Female Circumcision’</p> <p>Breast Ironing or Flattening involves ironing, massaging, flattening and/or pounding down young pubescent girls’ breasts over a period of time (sometimes years) in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely</p>
<p>Stalking and Harassment</p>	<p>Stalking and Harassment in any form can be perpetrated by an ex-intimate partner, a stranger or anyone known to the victim</p> <p>Stalking is a pattern of obsessive and unwanted behaviour which in isolation could appear trivial but cause their victim severe fear or anxiety – it includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • watching or ‘spying’ on someone without their consent, including monitoring their online activity • following someone without their consent • turning up uninvited or loitering or hanging around someone’s home, education or workplace, etc • sending unwanted or malicious messages or other contact

- sending or leaving **unwanted presents or 'gifts'**
- **damaging or interfering with someone's property**
- physical or sexual **assault**

'Cyber-stalking' uses the internet and other technologies to harass or stalk another person online

Harassment is any unwanted behaviour or contact which makes the victim feel distressed, humiliated or threatened

What did you tell us is important?

Stakeholder Consultation

Initial consultation was completed in November and December 2021 with local community sector organisations representing women and girls which provided valuable insight into whether national priorities and recommendations are aligned to local need. The key issues raised by these organisations for consideration to help inform our local Strategic Priority Objectives were:

- **Support for Victims** needs to be longer-term and trauma-informed, including support for historic abuse; there should always be an 'open-door' policy, including repeat or re-referrals
- **Trauma-informed approaches should extend across the system**, beginning at Primary school age
- **Impact of initial response** from police is key, and certain terminology used by the police such as 'alleged' victim can be alienating
- **Challenges navigating the whole criminal justice system** and the need for dedicated / specialist officers or SPOCs throughout criminal justice process to assist victims to overcome these
- **Professional Complicity** and perpetrators manipulating workers/systems; undermining victim confidence to disclose; need to shift responsibility from victims to reduce their risk / seek help
- **Unique vulnerabilities of those living in rural and other isolated communities**
- **Need for wider cultural change in attitudes** to challenge behaviours from a young age
- **VAWG does not just happen at night-time** and not just in public places.

These organisations also helped us ensure we used a person-centred and trauma-informed approach wherever possible to seek feedback from with those that are at risk of and/or been subjected to VAWG through supported focus groups and online survey questions.

Regular meetings were held throughout February and March with strategic leads within North Yorkshire County Council and the City of York Council, alongside North Yorkshire Police, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Yorkshire and the Humber Probation Service, and NHS North Yorkshire and Vale of York CCGs culminating in a co-production workshop to further develop the proposed scope and strategic priority objectives. This also highlighted the need to ensure consistent language and terminology is adopted, the importance of joining-up this Strategy with other relevant multi-agency strategies and the need for additional targeted consultation from other under-represented women and girls such as those in care and Care Leavers.

Victim and Survivor Focus Groups

Six Victim and Survivor focus groups were held in February 2022 with approximately 30 individuals who were willing to share their expertise by experience. Participants provided specific feedback on our proposed Strategic Priority Objectives and key areas of work across a number of themes which are outlined below.

Language and Terminology

The focus groups were specifically asked whether they had a preferred descriptive term such 'Victim' or 'Survivor', and if there were any terms or words we should never use. Some women felt they needed to use the term 'victim' to be heard by services, and even family and friends to recognise they need help or support, whereas 'survivor' might imply that the abuse is in the past and no longer has an impact. However, some women felt empowered by being a 'survivor' compared to a 'victim' which might connote vulnerability. Ultimately, all focus groups agreed that individual experiences of VAWG are varied and often 'fluid' and the appropriate term will depend on where each person is on their own individual journey to recovery.

The focus groups highlighted the importance of using non-judgemental language and questions; examples provided of judgemental language included when victims were asked “why did/didn’t you...” as this infers blame on their part, as well as demonstrating a lack of understanding of abuse and trauma responses. Similarly, we were told that asking someone to tell their “story” suggests that the experience they are recounting could be made-up. As a result, we have drafted this Strategy and all accompanying documentation using non-judgemental language wherever possible and will ensure this is adopted within any training packages and awareness raising campaigns.

Proposed Scope of the Strategy

As a result of feedback from the focus groups, ‘Breaches of Protective Orders’ was added as a separate VAWG type included within the scope of this Strategy as it was raised that whether these can be evidenced and therefore any breaches enforced effectively disproportionately affects women. This was an issue raised by several participants across all the focus groups that protective orders did not always fulfil their purpose to protect them from further harm, primarily as the burden of proof that a court order had even been issued remained with the woman to provide evidence of both the order being granted and effectively served on the perpetrator. It was felt that some breaches of a protective order were not always taken seriously, as the actions in question may appear to be relatively minor if taken in isolation. ‘Project Shield’ (detailed at Appendix C) is a pilot that has taken place to record all Non-Molestation Orders issued by the courts for victims in North Yorkshire and the City of York on the Police National Database, to allow North Yorkshire Police officers to confirm if an order had been issued and served to the perpetrator to help them more effectively enforce any breaches and ultimately better safeguard victims from further abuse.

Additional key partners and settings were also adopted into this Strategy following on from suggestions from the focus group including legal professionals such as Solicitors, Magistrates, Judges and Court Staff; Workplaces and employers; Nurseries; and Sports clubs and Communities.

It was noted that all the focus groups felt more training on VAWG is needed across a wider range of professions to be able to spot the signs and to know how to respond better, particularly in shifting the onus from the women to the perpetrator to make changes in their lives. This is particularly important as women can often feel retraumatised by an inappropriate response. Several of the women highlighted the importance of women and girls who have been subject to violence being directly involved in the delivery of training, and how powerful this could be in providing an authentic voice.

Proposed Strategic Priority Objectives

All Strategic Priority Objectives carry equal weighting, however following feedback from the focus groups ‘Listening to All Women and Girls’ was made **Objectives 1**. The consultation that has taken place so far has been vital in shaping this Strategy and pro-active consultation will continue throughout the lifetime of the Strategy to ensure that the voices of women and girls remain central. The focus groups also reiterated the importance of consulting with women and girls with disabilities including neurodiversity’s and Trans women.

Prevention and Early Intervention to tackle the root causes of VAWG

The consensus was that this is fundamental to breaking generational cycles of abuse and that a Public Health approach should be adopted, focusing on challenging sexism and misogyny from an early age.

The women in the focus groups felt that Clare’s Law should be used promoted more widely to increase awareness of this as a preventative tool.

Increasing Public Confidence and Strengthening the Multi-Agency Approach to Address VAWG

A number of women participating in the focus groups questioned how trust and confidence can actually be improved based on their personal experiences and it was suggested that the only tangible way to improve confidence across the system would be to increase the number of successful prosecutions in VAWG cases. Initially ‘Increasing Public Confidence and Trust in the Police’ and ‘Strengthening the Multi-Agency

Approach' was a joint priority, however, as a result of the feedback received, these have been split and become priorities in their own right. Increasing Public Confidence and Trust in the police will allow focus on improving the initial response and ensuring the right support is offered by police officers and staff to victims. Strengthening the Multi-Agency Approach will allow exploration of opportunities to improve the experiences of those who have reported VAWG offences at various points of their journey through criminal justice process.

Experiences of reporting to the police were varied and although some women praised the responses and support offered by some individual officers there appears to be an inconsistency of knowledge and/or attitudes towards victims, particularly those reporting non-violent incidents. There were mixed views on the gender of officers, but a number of women did feel that male officers responding to a call is not always appropriate depending on an individual's circumstances or experiences.

Some women reported that the police would be 'the last people they would turn to for help' as based on previous experiences reporting incidents to the police, they didn't feel like their concerns were being taken seriously and officers made them feel "blamed" or "gaslighted" that it was their fault, and that they were often treated as "a statistic" rather than an individual. A number of women agreed that it feels like the burden of proof often lands with the victim to prove their account is true and felt officers don't fully understand the impact of and responses to trauma, particularly around trauma-bonding between a victim and a perpetrator. Some women suggested they should be able to request a 2nd opinion from a different police officer if they do not feel believed or feel blamed or judged for their action or 'inaction'.

Some women reported that it was not clearly explained to them what would happen and when, particularly in the early stages after initial reporting when there was 'such a whirlwind of actions' but they did not know about next steps or potential timescales involved. Examples of this included not being prepared for the level and detail of personal, sensitive questions they were asked, often having to repeat these details to multiple officers involved in their case, and a case where a victim's mobile phone was taken in as evidence and was not returned for a significantly long time, which was in itself quite 'triggering' and disempowering.

Others reported that they felt the police did not respond to requests for updates or contacts in a timely manner, and that information is not shared effectively across the organisation. Some women also reported that they felt the onus was on them to be responsive to requests for further information or follow up contacts by the police, and there appears to be no consideration of when they are available to talk. Some women reported being called by the police whilst at work or other inappropriate situations to be able have a private conversation. One woman also reported feeling panicked when she was asked to come back into the police station to make a further statement as she did not have anyone to look after her children.

The majority of women agreed that having to repeat their experience/statement/account over and over was exhausting and re-traumatising, and some women suggested that a way to improve on this would be a dedicated or central team who know or able to access the details of all cases to be able to provide regular updates and spare victims from having to repeat their experience multiple times to different individual officers. A further view shared by the majority of women was that they are expected to take action to protect themselves and their children such as changing their behaviours, social media activities and even moving house in extreme cases. It was also raised that the police should be more aware of disabilities and provide information in Easy-to-Read formats.

Some of the women who reported that their experience with the police was positive, then felt let down by the CPS and court processes if it progressed to trial. The most common issues reported with the wider criminal justice processes was in respect of delays in cases being brought to court which can result in cases being 'No Further Actioned' and protective orders not being issued immediately, meaning breaches are not enforced effectively.

Again, a number of women reported that they were not given clear information about what would happen and when throughout the process. Notably it was highlighted by some women that the whole criminal

justice process feels driven by the defendant i.e., hearings are postponed if the defendant does not appear which some women felt was a tactic used by perpetrators to re-victimise them further by drawing out the who process and increasing the likelihood of them retracting their statement.

The court process and environment overall were also described as being traumatising not only due to the fear of seeing the perpetrator in person, but also a number of women felt they were further victimised through 'character assassination' and if a woman becomes upset or emotional when testifying, it was felt that this was held against them with one women reporting she "*felt chewed up and spat out by the system*". Some women also highlighted that jury members do not have a good understanding of non-violent crimes and are not always provided with appropriate information to help them understand more complex issues such as coercive controlling behaviours and modern slavery.

Specific mobility and accessibility issues were also raised by some women, both in terms of the physical accessibility of court premises and facilities and the lack of information being consistently available in different formats or languages. An example was provided where a hearing-impaired victim was offered special measures to have screens when giving evidence, but this meant they would be unable to lip read which is their primary means of understanding others.

Another common issue raised at the focus groups was that the criminal justice system as a whole feels disconnected and information-sharing between agencies is not effective which left victims having to repeat their account on multiple occasions. The process of going through the criminal justice system was described as "*a full-time job*" by one woman as she felt had to link-up the range of agencies herself to ensure they all had the correct information, with another agreeing that "*it was hard to compartmentalise all the different agencies that are involved in the system*" and their different roles and responsibilities. The consensus was that if different agencies were better linked up with improved information sharing and consistent approaches to updating victims, this would make for a more trauma informed system and reduce the risk of victims withdrawing from the process.

Enhanced Support Services for Victims

Overall, the focus groups shared significant positive experiences of support provided by IDAS. It was felt however that support should be offered at multiple and different stages, recognising that victims may change their mind and want to take up support after initially refusing, but may feel they 'have missed their chance'. Furthermore, it was felt there was a lack of awareness of the different support services available and what each service offers. A centralised victim-focused single-point of information and access is available, so further promotion of this is required, as is the need to ensure that victims are offered or sign-posted to these services in all cases.

A sense of unfairness was conveyed by some women in respect to victims' rights to legal help and advice compared to the rights of perpetrators, for example it was highlighted that a perpetrator is offered a solicitor as soon as they are arrested, but the same does not apply to a victim. Some women also asked why North Yorkshire Police no longer use the National Centre for Domestic Violence ("NCDV"); a number of women reported they found NCDV to be helpful in obtaining a Non-Molestation or other protective order, and that women should be equipped with the relevant information to be able to make a choice of who to use and felt it didn't matter if solicitors were local or not; some women shared they felt let down by local solicitors.

Post-court support was highlighted as lacking, and a number of women felt that more support should be offered immediately after the court hearing "*even if it is just a safe space to have a cup of tea and a cry*". The need for more availability of longer-term post court trauma support/therapy was also highlighted, alongside the lack of support for family members/new partners to help them better understand the impact on the victim and their behaviour as a result.

Supporting Behaviour Change for Perpetrators

The focus groups on the whole did not agree that perpetrators should be 'supported' as they felt there was already unfair focus on perpetrator needs. Some women did agree that more work is required to challenge perpetrators and make them change their attitudes and behaviour, and that the responsibility should be shifted to perpetrators to stop their behaviour rather than expecting women to change to protect themselves from perpetrators.

However, the women involved in the focus groups also expressed some cynicism around the ability of perpetrators to genuinely change their abusive behaviour and felt that perpetrators were often skilled in the manipulation of systems and creating professional complicity.

Awareness Raising

The consensus from the focus groups was that flyers and posters in isolation aren't effective in engaging people, we should utilise as many forms of communication as possible to catch everyone both online and in public places such as buses, bus stops and cinemas.

The focus groups agreed we should be aiming high for wider societal change such as challenging stereotypical attitudes in public organisations such as the police and fire service and military which will have a ripple effect into wider society. Another suggestion was to secure a 'Brand Ambassador' - well-known local community leader or celebrity who have personal experience e.g., Mel B recently spoke out about her experiences of domestic abuse.

It was suggested we consider how to better engage with local and even national journalists and media outlets who often 'victim blame' and perpetuate sexist stereotypes and attitudes.

Many women felt having women and girls who have experienced VAWG directly involved in raising awareness and training packages provides a more credible voice, and as a minimum we should include case studies of real people and real experiences. 'The Voice' training package by Rachel Williams was recommended as a trauma informed engagement approach.

A social media campaign that focuses on positive behaviours and attitudes rather than highlighting negatives was suggested to support wider engagement such as 'Be Proud to Respect Women' as VAWG needs to be deemed unacceptable by men as well as women. It was suggested that online dating sites could play their part in raising awareness by having information available for all to be aware what abuse looks like and signpost to links for help and support. However, it is important to remember that perpetrators can and often do monitor online and social media activity.

Raising awareness of VAWG in schools and colleges was seen as integral to challenging inappropriate behaviours and attitudes from an early age, and it was felt work could be done with staff in settings such as nurseries and to be aware of the signs and how to link parents into support if appropriate.

Copies of this VAWG Strategy should be available to read in public places such as GP surgeries and libraries and be available in different formats including Easy-to-Read.

Telling Someone

There were many and varied individual reasons why women didn't tell anyone about the abuse they had been subjected to, but the most common themes were not recognising themselves as a 'victim' particularly when the abuse wasn't physical; the prospect that they would not be believed; and fear of repercussions from the perpetrator, particularly where they shared children.

Girls and Younger Victims

The North Yorkshire Youth Commission contributed to the consultation. The Youth Commission are a group of young people aged between 10-25 who inform, support, and challenge the work of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue service. The Youth Commission members were most interested in seeing tangible and practical solutions that offer immediate improvements.

Examples included stronger policing of the Night-Time Economy, working in partnership with bars and clubs, providing 'spiking' test kits: *There's an extraordinary amount of spiking that goes unnoticed because people are too embarrassed, so crimes go unpunished.* more street-lighting, and an overall higher police presence. Men and boys' mental health support was also highlighted as a vital part in ending the cycle: *"Girls and women's safety should always be a priority, not just when someone has died at the hands of a man."*

We also consulted with The Children's Society to consider the findings of national consultation and reviews they had conducted to ensure we were still considering the views and experiences of girls and younger victims of VAWG in developing our local responses and support services.

[Missing the Mark \(2020\)](#) research of young people experiencing teenage relationship abuse found that:

- The impact and scale of domestic abuse that children and young people experience within their own intimate relationships is **often overlooked**
- Many under 16s are both likely to have experienced domestic abuse and **struggled to access services**
- Terms such as 'domestic abuse' and '**intimate relationships**' lead to certain preconceptions about what situations of domestic abuse may look like and correspondingly impacts on how victims of domestic abuse are identified and what responses they are offered. These preconceptions do not always fit with the situations of violence and abuse in relationships experienced by young people. For example, abuse in teenage relationships do not always involve the victim and the perpetrator regularly sharing the same 'domestic' setting
- **Professionals' biases** about what a typical intimate relationship may look like, can result in missed opportunities to identify abuse in teenage relationships and the correct response is therefore not given
- Due to the **lack of clear national guidance on the issue, abuse in teenage relationships** is often not addressed through early intervention, allowing situations to escalate
- Young people are often **coerced and controlled through the introduction to or the use of substances**. Alcohol or drugs can desensitise the 'problem' for the victim and the capacity of the victim will fluctuate as a result of the substance misuse, which may be forced by the perpetrator
- **Teaching children about healthy relationships, whilst important, on its own is not enough**. Young people might feel confident recognising they are in an unhealthy relationship, however exiting the relationship is a different matter. Young people must be provided with robust and long-lasting education about domestic abuse including recognising that it can occur online and be given practical tools to aid with conflict resolution. They **should feel empowered to ask and know where to ask for help** if they recognise that a relationship, they are in is not healthy

[The Children's Society response to a VAWG Call for Evidence \(2021-2024\)](#) was informed by national practice and research as well as a consultation exercise with practitioners across their projects which surmised that:

- VAWG can happen to anyone irrespective of their age, race, culture, sexuality, or class. However, some factors in a child's life, such as **previous experiences of abuse or domestic violence at home, poverty, and inequality of opportunities** in their communities can make some young people more likely to become victims of gender-based violence. Systemic issues, such as insufficient support for children in the care system and immigration system can also make girls and young women more likely to experience VAWG
- VAWG is often perpetrated by people girls know, family members or someone within their social circle. In recent years peer on peer violence both in relationships and in group/gang contexts are

reported to have increased. Increase in female-on-female violence has also been reported. **Online facilitated VAWG has also increased**, particularly during Covid-19, with the age of children affected getting younger

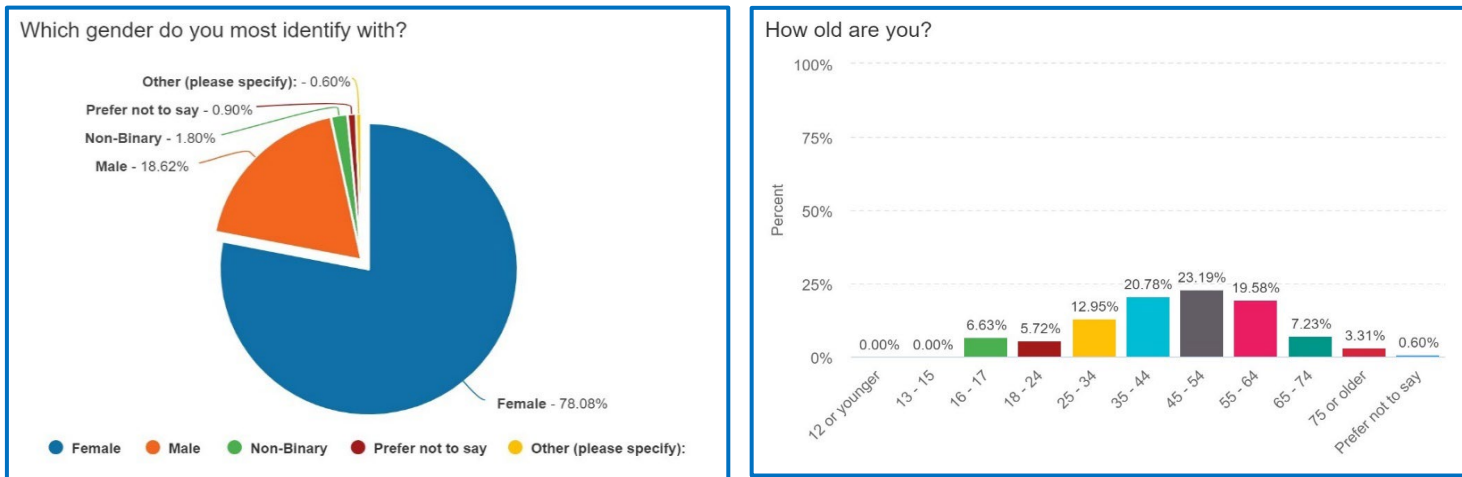
- Whilst practitioners highlighted many ways that social, cultural, and structural factors make girls more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, they also reflected on **violence experienced by young males, LGBTQI young people** suggesting that the national strategy needs to address a wider set of issues.
- The existence and experience of violence and abuse for the young people across genders **has become normalised for many young people**, particularly where it is linked to earlier or current experiences of growing up with violence and domestic abuse at home. As a result, young people are often not able to identify their experiences as violence, exploitation or abuse or their behaviour as violent or abusive
- Many **young people don't have any good reference points for healthy and consensual relationships** and girls almost seem to accept violence as part of normal relationship or interaction with a male
- **Time-limited interventions** that often stop when the young person is starting to develop their trust in professionals are not seen as helpful or even ethical. 'Firefighting' was a term often used to describe current commissioning of support services for girls
- There is an overreliance on girls and young women disclosing crime. **More emphasis should be put on agencies proactively identifying girls and young women at risk of VAWG** and disrupting VAWG as early on as possible. There is a need for a greater awareness among all safeguarding agencies about the impact of VAWG on girls and young women and the signs that professionals should be aware of to identify girls at risk. Legislative changes such as introduction of a new offence focused on coercion and control of children can help with ensuring that professionals share the same understanding of coercive control and have tools to disrupt it
- The **scale and level of sexual offending against children and young people** makes it paramount that children and young feel confident in disclosing crimes and seeking help and that perpetrators of these horrific crimes are left in no doubt that the criminal justice system is on the side of the victim
- **Young people's experience of police is not always related to their experiences of reporting an offence against them.** Many young people come into contact with police in a variety of situations – from day-to-day contact on high streets and public transport to being found after the missing episode. Research highlights that children's overall impression of the criminal justice system could **be largely influenced by their experience with the individual police officer** that they saw. If those day-to-day contacts and experiences are not positive, it may be more difficult for young person to trust police when they become a victim of a sexual offence

Online Survey

In order to ensure everyone was given the opportunity to have their views represented, an anonymous online survey was available and open to everyone – of every gender, every age and every situation - for approximately 4 weeks in March 2022. The survey was promoted using social media to direct respondents to the OPFCC website and survey link with nearly 30,000 people reached overall through the social media campaign.

Over 800 people came to the survey, with 332 completing the survey. 80% of the data collected was from females. 12% of respondents were under 24yrs old and 31% were over 55yrs old (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Age and gender profiles



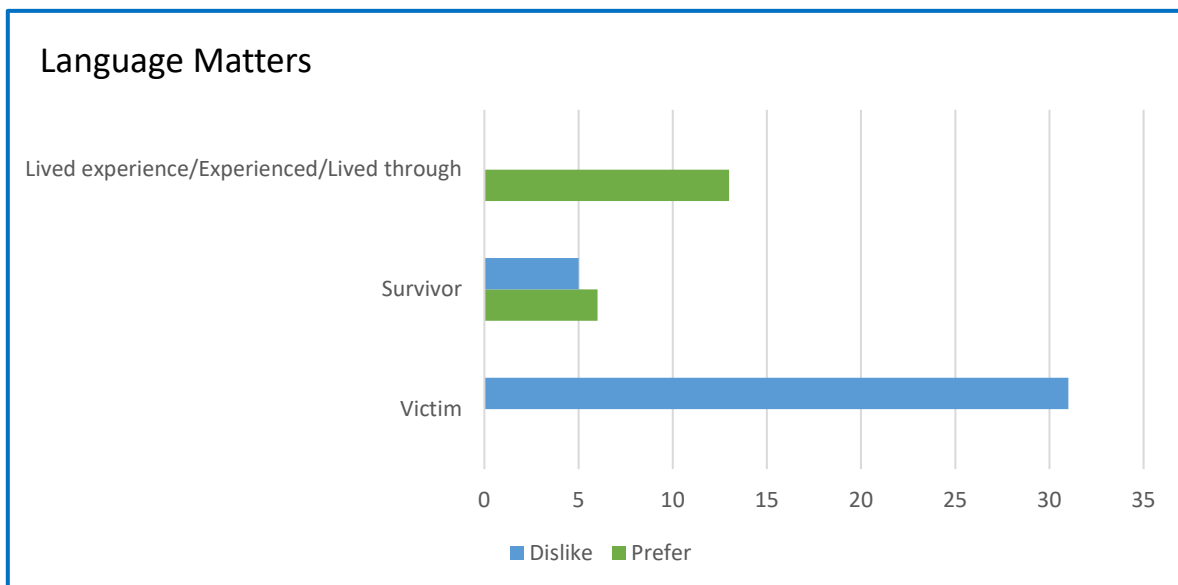
Base: All respondents; n=332

The data further identified that 14% of all respondents were from the LGBTQ+ community. This is above the national average of 6% of the population that identify as LGBTQ+ and the local average of 6% according to ONS¹ from 2019 (*most recent data available*).

Language and Terminology

The terms 'victim', 'survivor' and 'lived experience' (figure 2) were the most commonly identified terms. Over 50% of respondents did not like the term 'victim', but there were limited alternatives for other terms suggested.

Figure 2. Use of language



Base: Those who responded, n=55 of 64

Question: Are there any particular words/phrases/use of language that you are not comfortable with, and we should never use?

Although the term 'victim' is not preferred by all, the majority of respondents understood that the term was the most recognisable. Respondents also stated that they understood most terms do not aim to do harm, and as quoted below, when engaging with and supporting anyone who have experienced any kind of abuse, it is essential to empower that person by asking them what they would prefer.

“I recognise that those who have been a victim of male violence may not appreciate being labelled with those terms. I think it's really important to listen to those individuals and use terms which empower women and put the responsibility back onto the perpetrators.”

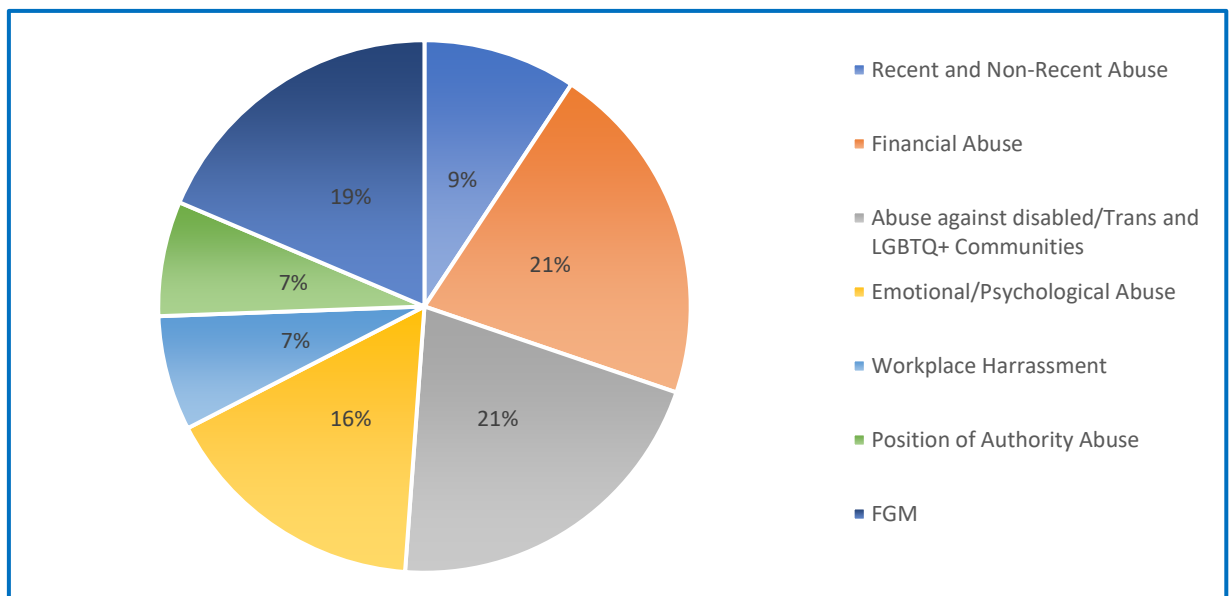
“Personally, as a survivor of sexual abuse I find the word 'victim', less empowering, however I am acutely aware this is a personal and other individuals I have met who have been sexual abused relate more to

Therefore, this Strategy will use the term ‘victim’ as the most universally recognised term, however, it will be recommended that services that interact with victims ask their preference of terminology when establishing initial contact.

Proposed Scope and VAWG Types

To identify any possible gaps within the proposed scope of this Strategy and strategic priorities, the survey asked about what respondents thought we might be missing (figure 3).

Figure 3. Areas missing from local strategies



Base:

Those who responded: n=43 of 74

Question: Do you think anything is missing from this list? (Yes/No) If yes, what have we missed?

22% of respondents identified the areas they felt were missing from the proposed scope, in figure 3, however they are in fact included and can be found in the more detailed list at Appendix A. Moreover, with 78% of respondents confirming we had missed nothing, this confirms the work we have done so far has been an accurate reflection of what is needed locally to help address VAWG in North Yorkshire and City of York.

When asked the question **Please tell us about anything that you think should NOT be in our strategy?** 8% of respondents suggested areas such as: **misogyny**, as it is not a crime; the term ‘**violence**’, as respondents felt it suggested only physical violence; and work that ‘**victimises**’ **sex workers** and could essentially put them in more danger.

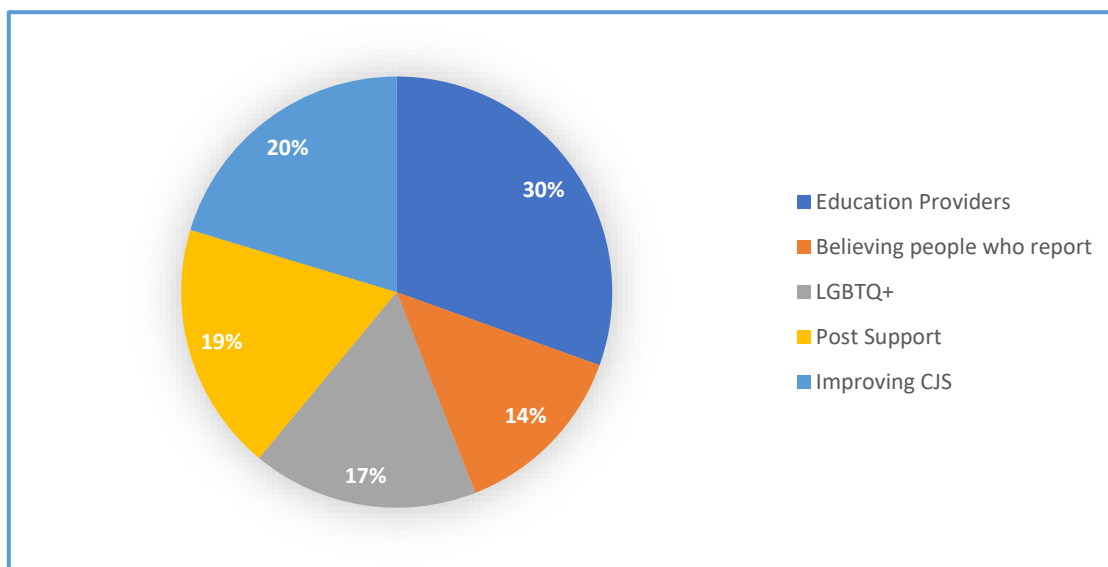
Misogyny: the UK government has recently (Feb 2022) decided to reject calls to make misogyny a hate crime, based on a [Law Commission report](#) which warned that extending hate crimes to cover misogyny would prove “more harmful than helpful” to victims of VAWG. However, North Yorkshire Police, along with only 3 other forces in the UK, include misogyny as part of our hate crime recording and have done so since 2017.

Violence: although the word here for some respondents indicates some form of ‘physical’ violence, this is not a true reflection of the word, and all the areas included can be found in the more detailed list at Appendix A.

Victimising Sex Workers: in 2019, North Yorkshire Police adopted sex workers into official policy for tackling and dealing with hate crime and use this for recording and monitoring as a means of protecting vulnerable individuals and encouraging reporting of crimes against them.

When looking at identifying missing areas from the national strategies the areas in figure 4 were identified and these should be considered locally.

Figure 4. Areas missing from national strategies



Base: Those who responded: n=94 of 332

Question: Do you think anything is missing from this list? (Yes/No) If yes, what have we missed?

72% of respondents said there was nothing missing however of the 28% that suggested areas of concern around improving post support services and being inclusive and listening to voices from all communities, which we do already include in local work and is one of the proposed priorities of our strategy.

“Please ensure that “Improving support for women and girls, particularly those from under-represented communities” is inclusive of trans women and girls.”

“The specialist support for women and girls from minoritized backgrounds is key. By and for support is crucial. Also, possibly something to do with support being prioritised - reporting is often re-traumatising and usually the outcome is an NFA - women and girls need to know that they do not have to report to...”

Delivery Approach

In the next section we asked for thoughts on agencies to be included in partnership working and had suggestions from 35% of people to include:

- Nurseries/Child minders
- Male dominated hobby places/clubs (e.g., football, sports, pubs/clubs)
- Youth-related agencies
- Citizens Advice
- Housing
- Immigration

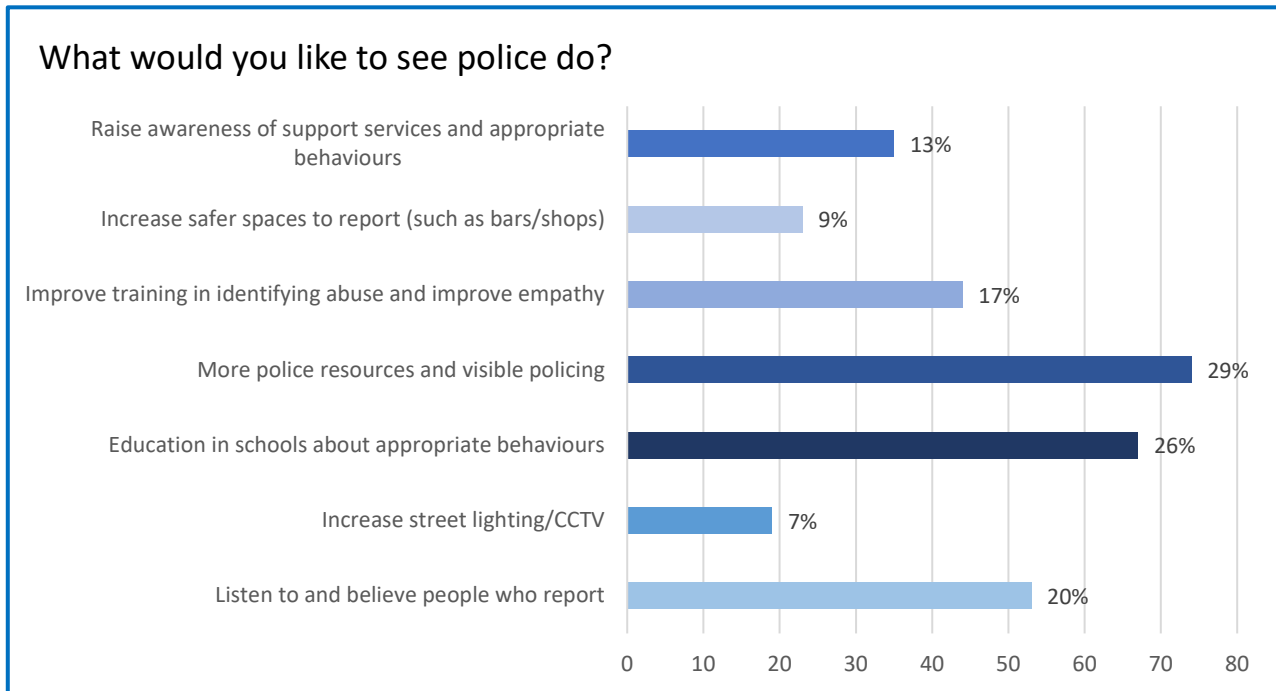
We will aim to include representatives from these areas of work moving forward to develop our local delivery plans.

Police Response to VAWG

North Yorkshire Police's response to people who report VAWG crimes is key to ensuring public confidence and trust in their ability to effectively tackle VAWG. Similar to national reporting trends, reporting of VAWG related crimes are low.

We asked what police can do locally to tackle VAWG, and specifically what they should start or stop doing to increase reporting of VAWG crimes.

Figure 5. Ways police can tackle VAWG locally



Base: Respondents: n=260 of 332

Question: Is there anything that the police can do locally to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls? Yes/No Please tell us about what you would like to see being done locally?

As can be seen from figure 5, 78% of responders contributed to this area and the biggest proportion of those identified that having more police resources; education in schools; and ensuring people who report VAWG crimes are listened to and believed are the most important things the police can do locally. These accounted for 75% of responses. However, there was also a large number of respondents who understood that many of the issues identified were complicated.

"Better understanding across the force of how to be supportive of domestic abuse victims. The pursuit of getting statements is at times relentless and does not seem victim led. We know it's important from a police perspective to gather evidence but listening to the victim's voice is vital."

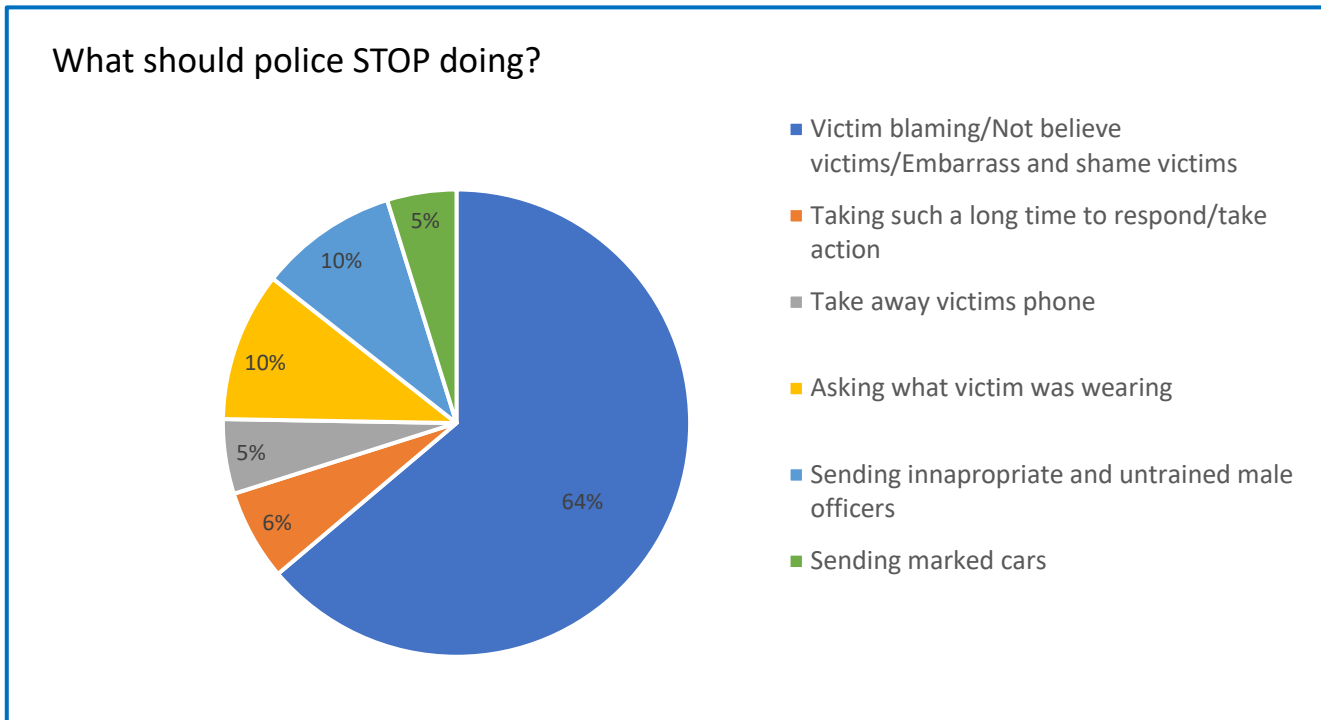
"Training needs to continue throughout all departments. Training around consent, healthy boundaries, emotions, and trauma responses. There is more of a demand for these subjects to be understood and more informed."

"Ensure they are thoroughly explaining processes to victims of crime, speak to them as human beings and be compassionate that their life has been affected by the crime... if not going to be investigated or taken further, explain thoroughly why not but also highlight they have been recorded correctly."

"It's tough for the police, they have become first contact practitioners. Probably not the role they

As can be seen in figure 6, the data identified the common barriers to reporting aligned to the national findings, with a substantial 64% of respondents stating that the police victim blame, do not believe them and/or embarrass or shame those reporting. All themes pulled out from the data can be addressed through appropriate training, disciplinary actions and overall cultural change within the force which this Strategy will prioritise.

Figure 6. Things police can stop doing to improve reporting



Base: Respondents: n=299 of 332

Question: Thinking about what would make you reluctant to report an incident, what should the police STOP doing when women and girls report violence they have experienced or witnessed?

When asked what police need to start doing, these were in the main the opposite of those things they should stop doing in figure 6 above. In addition, there was one suggestion about finding easier ways to report, such as an online form; North Yorkshire Police do currently have several ways of reporting, including online forms through the Single Online Home so awareness and promotion of these reporting routes needs to increase. For other areas of improvement identified by respondents that we can influence, this Strategy will consider these recommendations as we implement our local delivery plans to support the police and strategic partners to increase public trust and confidence to report VAWG offences.

“There are so many barriers that come up when reporting and being believed is a massive one.”

“I would be reluctant to report incidents if I felt I was going to be judged, not listened too, feel like my character is being questioned and not believed.”

“Treating the victim as a suspect... Let's be more proactive in getting that first account right... It's the most important part of the initial investigation and helps build trust between victim and the police.”

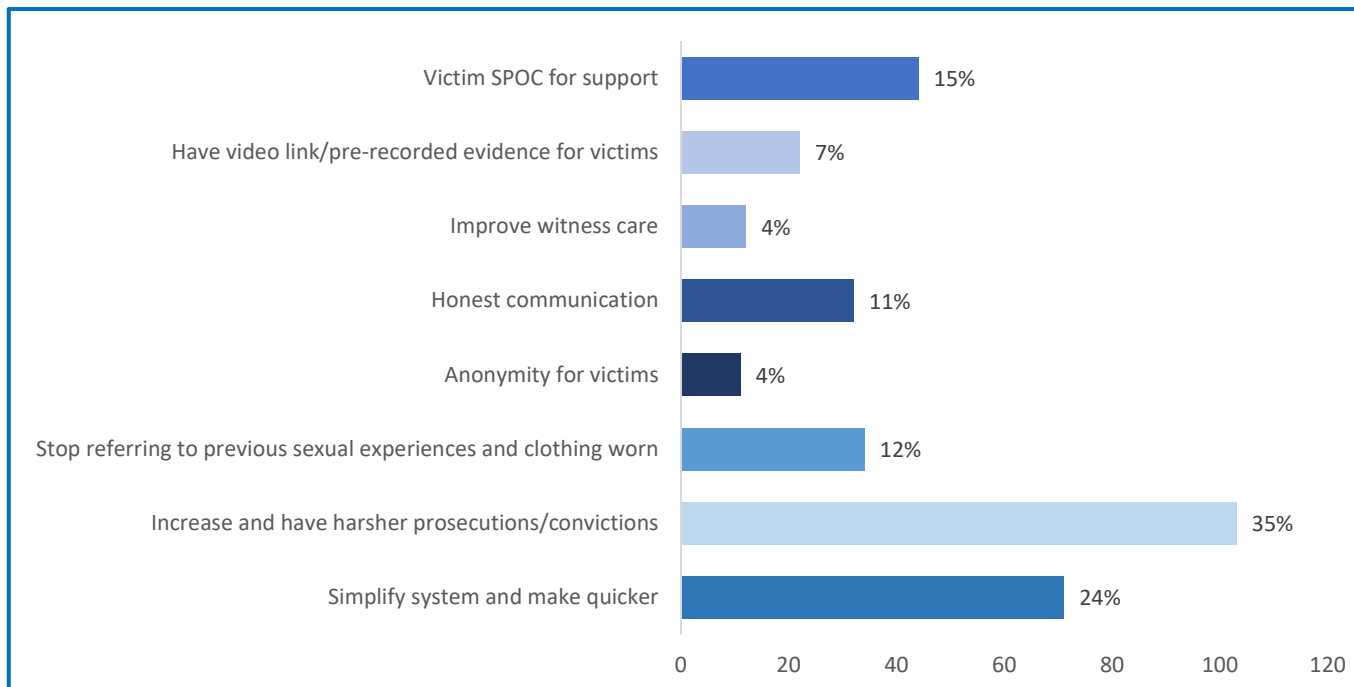
“Asking them if something "really happened." Constant and continual requests for information/ evidence Telling women they may get into trouble if they report something "false" or "waste police time"...”

“Questioning their feelings, views, and accounts so that victim's feel they are at fault or being

The Wider Criminal Justice Response to VAWG

The wider Criminal Justice System (“CJS”) including the Crown Prosecution Service and courts are another area which directly influences the public confidence around reporting VAWG crimes. Within this Strategy we wanted to identify what could be done by the wider CJS agencies to better support police in increasing confidence for victims, figure 7.

Figure 7. Ways CJS can support police



Base: Respondents: n=294 of 332

Question: How can the wider Criminal Justice System support the police and help women and girls to feel more confidence in the system?

89% of respondents contributed to this question with 59% stating that the CJS need to simplify the system; increase prosecutions; and give out harsher sentences.

Other identified gaps and recommendations include honest communication about timelines and what to expect to happen when: a dedicated case-building division; and dedicated court-based victim SPOC.

“A case building unit that can assist police officers in file preparation - going to CPS for charging decisions etc. These case building colleagues are very well skilled in file preparation who can complete this work quickly. This would ensure this work is done much quicker and to a higher standard, especially first time around. This would mean that potentially we would be able to get charging decisions much quicker allowing perpetrators to be put before the courts quicker therefore protecting victims, improving their level of safety and developing/improving confidence in NYP and our partners as we strive to deliver on this service priority.”

“By supporting and promoting women's wellbeing and removing the culture of shame by empowering

“Perhaps juries need to be given a course in understanding the way that woman deal and process certain crimes. Woman should not be blamed for a male's behaviour simply because they are wearing certain clothes or drinking alcohol. Perhaps courts should look at the balance of probabilities, rather than beyond reasonable doubt.”

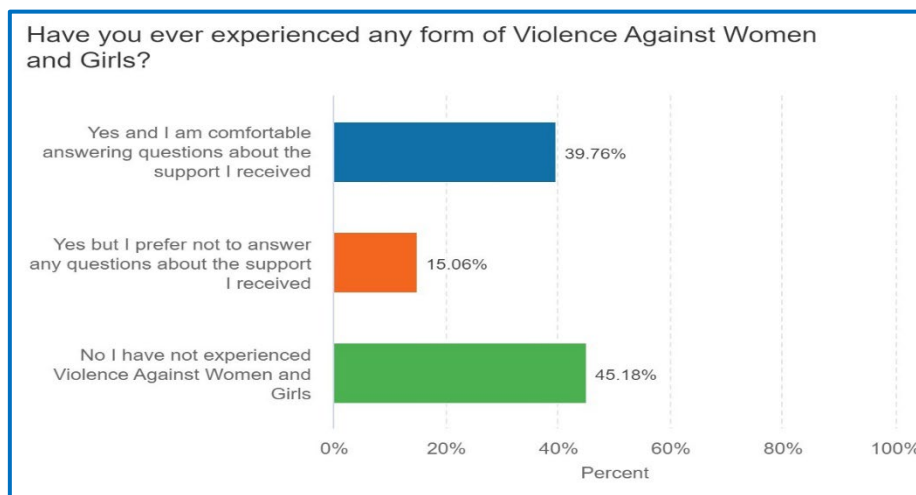
“I believe the issue is wider than specifically the Police, it is down to the criminal justice system and CPS/courts who are failing victims by not hearing cases in a reasonable time frame, requiring unreasonable amounts of work/evidence from Police, and failing the victims to provide adequate sentencing and protection when it does get to court. Officers and Police staff are not the issue in my opinion, it is the failure of the courts that makes victims reluctant to report as it seems pointless.”

“Being more realistic in the timelines it sets for receiving/ dealing with evidence Setting expectations for how long a court case can take Robust system of updating victims about their court case Robust

Personal Experiences of VAWG

55% of people who completed the survey confirmed they have experienced some form of VAWG as seen in figure 8.

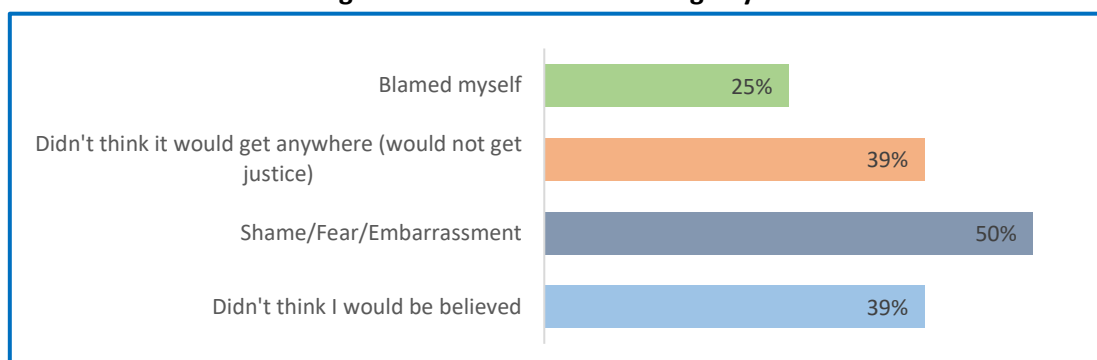
Figure 8. Experience of VAWG



Base: All respondents; n=332

From those that had experienced some form of VAWG, 25% have not told anyone. Reasons for this are identified in figure 9 and are aligned to the barriers to reporting to the police as identified in figure 6 above.

Figure 9. Reasons for not telling anyone



Base: Those who responded: n=36 of 137
Question: Why didn't you tell anyone?

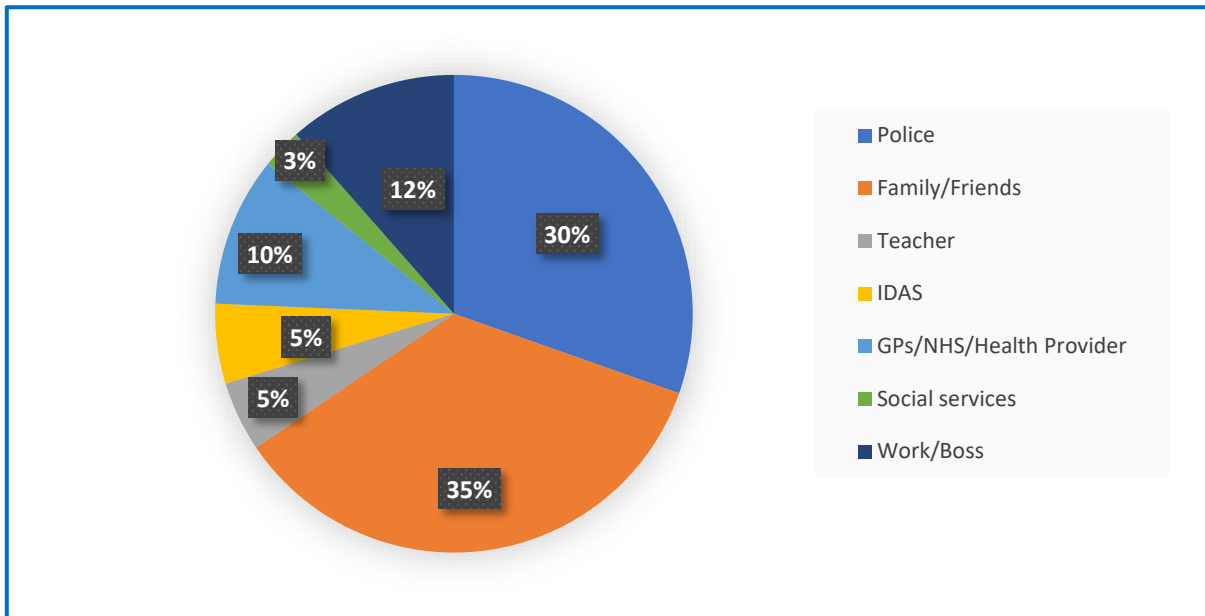
"I felt it was my fault somehow. The person was a colleague of my father and was a married man so I thought it would cause trouble and embarrassment. I was only 14 years and didn't really know what to do."

"I felt ashamed that my partner was being violent and coercive towards me. It was very subtle in the beginning, so I wasn't aware it was happening until it escalated. My stepfather was also violent towards my mother and as a child I thought it was the norm."

"Fear of not being believed Fear that I should have told when it happened This person was a known sex offender in my area - abused another young girl who reported it, and nothing happened. I saw this in the local news. and it increased my belief that nothing would happen even if I did tell."

For the 75% who did tell someone, we wanted to understand who that was and how helpful their response was.

Figure 10. People who victims told

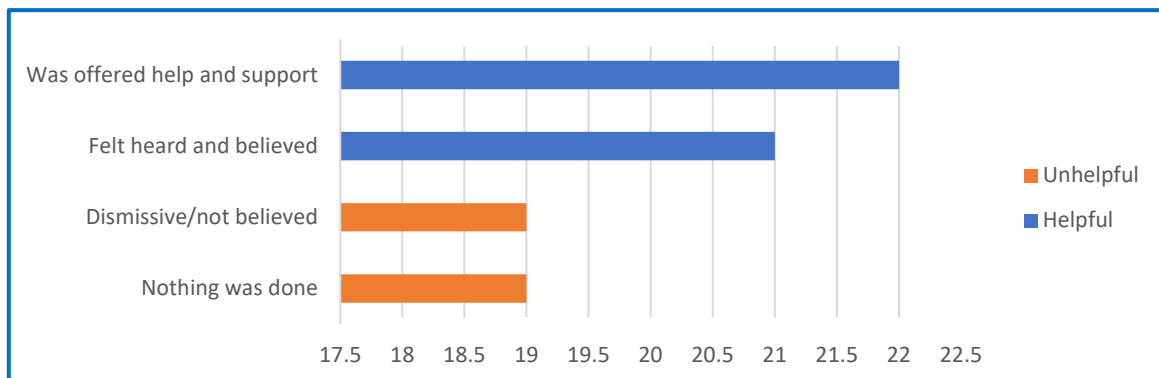


Base: Those who responded: n=99 of 137

Question: Who did you tell?

There were a number of victims that told someone at work or their boss (12%), feeling that was the easiest and most trusted person to tell. As a result, 'employers' have been included as key delivery partners within this Strategy.

Figure 11. Response helpfulness

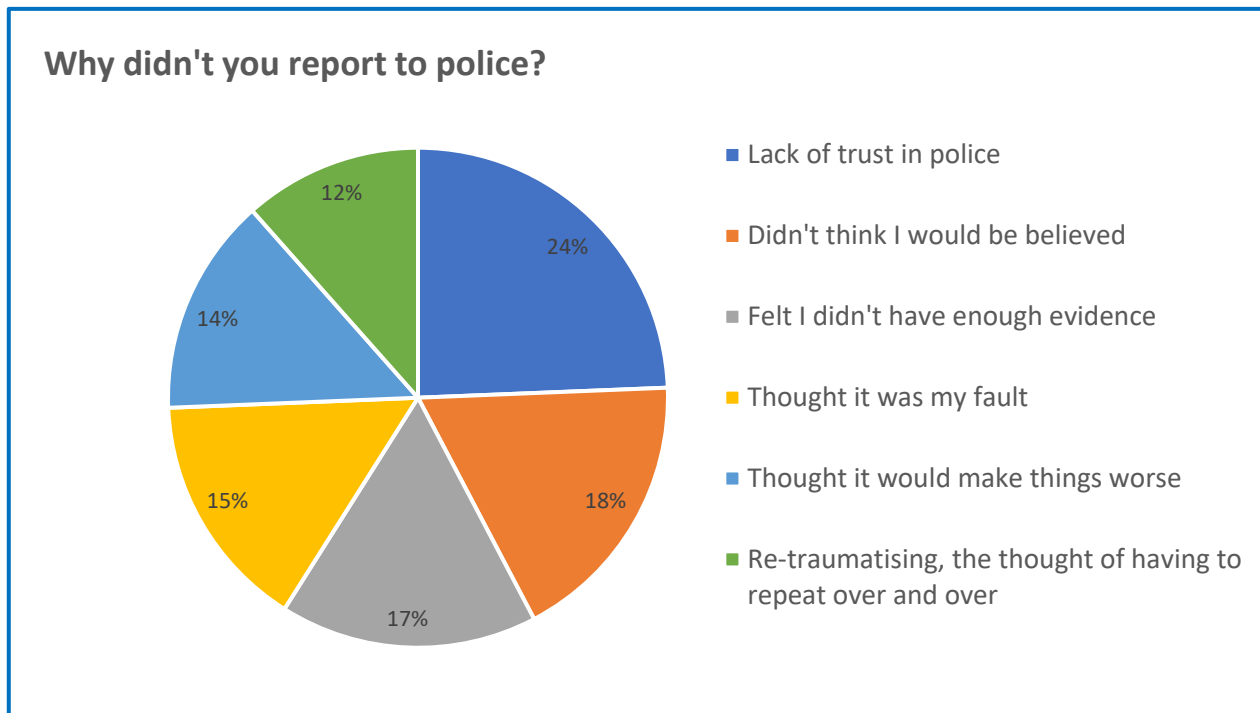


Base: Those who responded: n=97 of 137

Question: Was there anything particularly helpful or unhelpful about their response?

30% of victims told the police about their incident and there were a number of reasons detailed below in figure 12 which correspond to figure 9 above. This lack of trust in policing, reported by 24% of victims, is one of the specific priorities within our Strategy.

Figure 12. Reasons for not reporting to police



Base: Those who responded: n=68 of 70

Question: Why didn't you report what happened to the police?

“Scared, felt I wouldn't be believed, still feel I won't be believed, afraid of the repercussions”

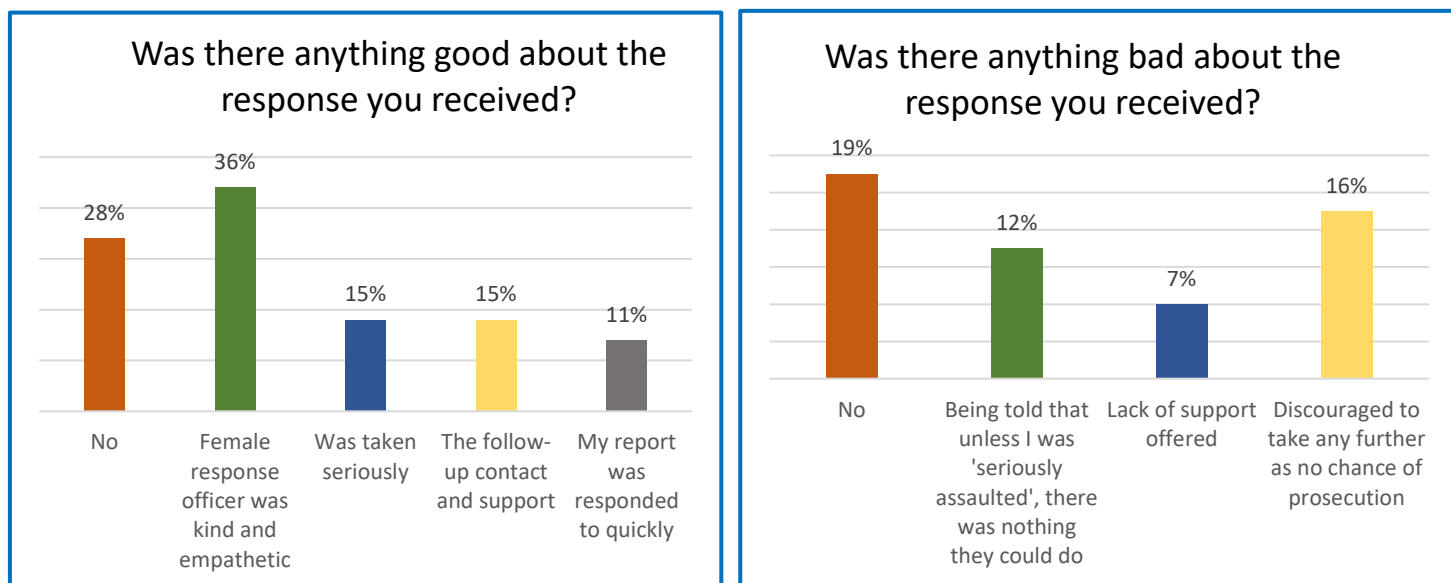
“I was young at the time and felt stupid that I had somehow 'allowed' it to happen.”

“Didn't think they would take it seriously as a crime despite that fact that I was touched without my consent and cut without giving informed consent.”

“I think I felt to some degree it was my fault. I would not be believed, and nothing would have happened about it. I didn't want anything to happen and dealt with it myself anyway. Also, I didn't want to be treated in the same way I had experienced in the past - abrasive attitudes and poor

From these responses, we wanted to identify areas of improvement that we could focus on throughout the Strategy to improve overall responses identified in figure 13.

Figure 13. Good and bad responses



Base: Those who responded: n=61 of 63

Question: Was there anything particularly good about the response you received? Please say what worked well and why you found it helpful

Question: Was there anything particularly bad about the response you received? Please say what did not work well and why you found it unhelpful

The positive responses were predominantly from female officers, however 28% did not find anything helpful. 16% of respondents stated they were discouraged from taking any further action by the police, reinforcing the impact of low prosecution rates for VAWG offences.

“The officer was kind and understanding but had little in way of power to action anything to help as my word against his.”

“It was 34 years after the incident that I reported to the police. The individual call handler in NYP Control room was exceptional in her response. I couldn't have asked for a more compassionate, patient, non-judgemental, supportive, and kind individual.”

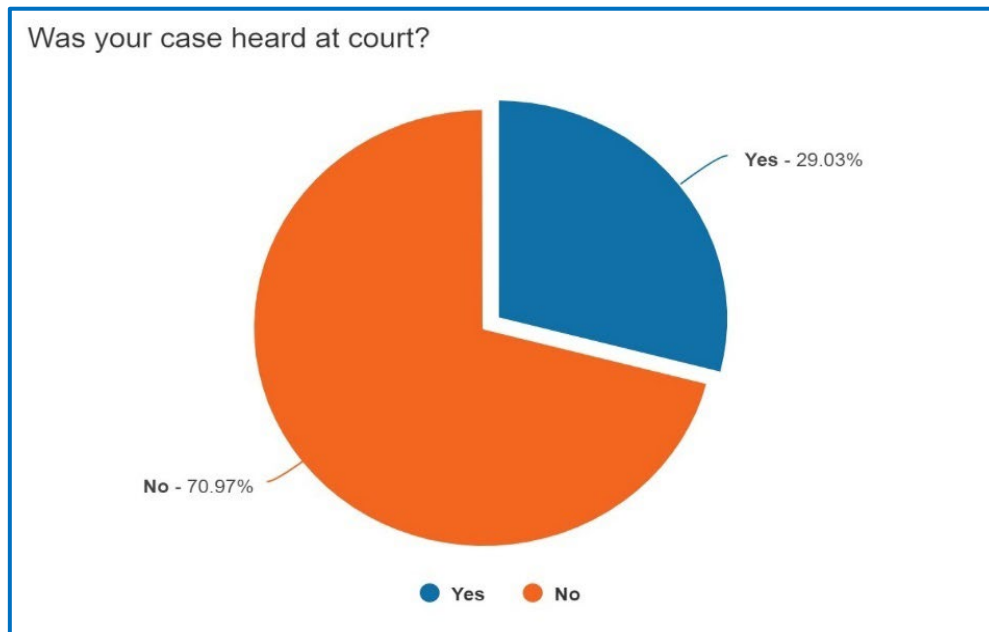
“Very quick response, empathic and compassionate, understanding of the balance between mental health and safeguarding for the victim.”

“I had to report it into a phone at the police station as the station was unmanned. I felt scared as it was dark, and I was outside it was embarrassing as there was no privacy when I was making the call.”

The Criminal Justice Journey

From the respondents who had reported to the police and wanted to take things further, we wanted to understand their experiences when going through the wider criminal justice processes. Figure 14 shows that 29% of those went to court.

Figure 14. Cases heard at court



Base: Those who responded: n= 63
Question: Was your case heard at court?

The reasons identified for cases not progressing to court included insufficient evidence; pressure from police to withdraw because they felt it would not have a successful conclusion, with 15% not given any reasons at all.

The predominant response from victims and their interactions with the criminal justice system identified that lengthy waiting times were the largest issue, with other issues experienced around lack of communication; insufficient witness care support; not knowing what their rights were; and having to wait in the same spaces as the accused.

“We had no support from the witness care service and the perpetrator pleaded guilty which meant we had no voice in court leaving the perpetrator to manipulate the system via his solicitor.”

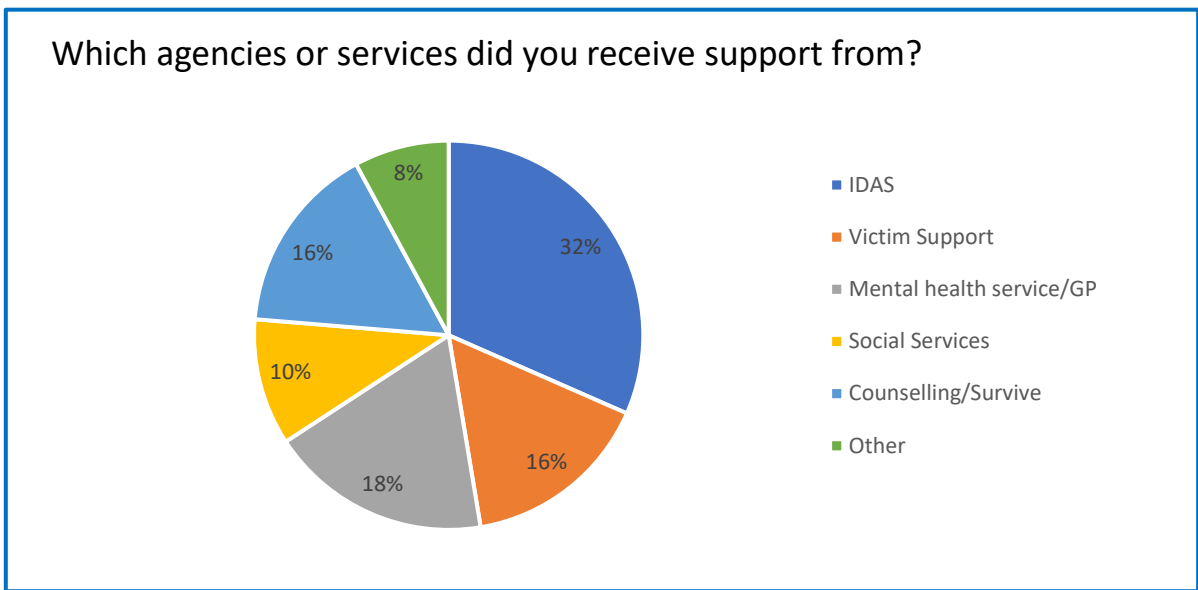
“It took over a year, and £30,000 to sort out my settlement. The family court overlooked all of the abuse that had taken place. I am left struggling financially with 100% care of the children.”

“The fact that I had to go to court, there was evidence etc and he pleaded not guilty. It was only due to me being prepared to give evidence that he submitted a guilty plea upon my arrival. It felt like a further

Support Services

Collectively we commission a range of support services for victims. Identifying which services were used and were most beneficial for victims is essential for informing future commissioning of VAWG support services. Of the 40% of respondents who identified as a victim, 21% received or sought further support.

Figure 15. Support agencies accessed



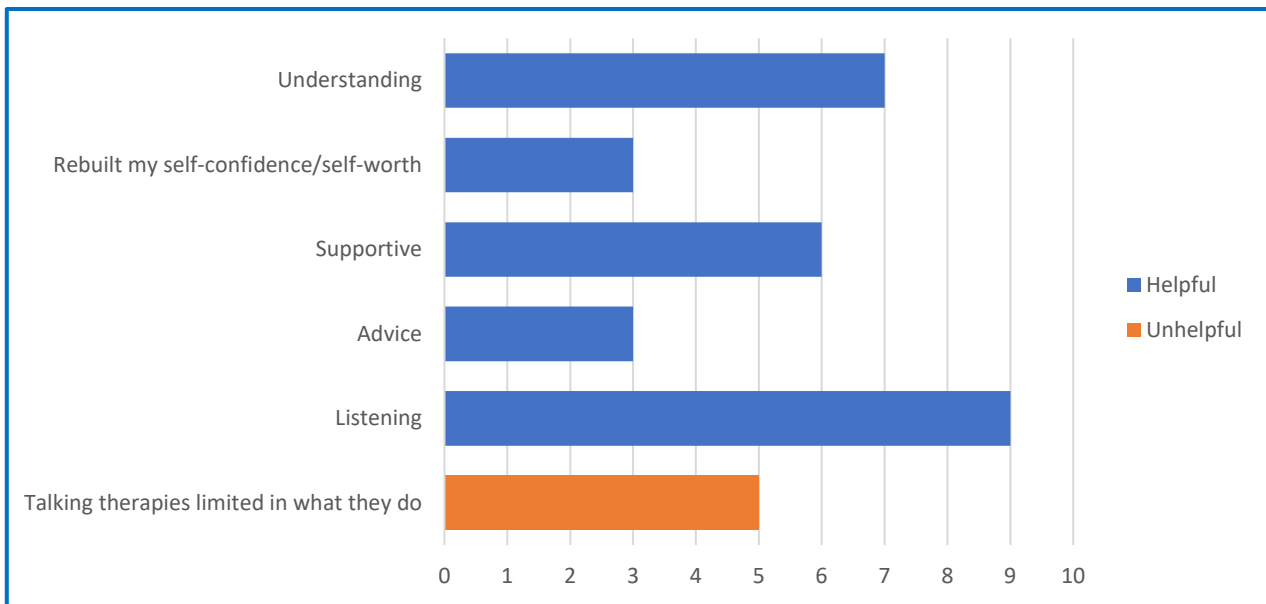
Base: Those who responded: n= 28

Question: Which agencies or services did you receive support from and what did they support you with?

The areas of assistance provided varied from emotional support; practical help; support with finances, housing, health/medication; and counselling that assisted with trauma management and anxiety recovery.

What was found to be most useful from that support is identified in figure 16.

Figure 16. Support helpfulness



Base: Those who responded: n=24 of 28

Question: Was there anything particularly good about the support you received? Please tell us what worked well and why you found it helpful

“The day that we woke up to blood on our doorstep and suicide notes. This was treated as a breach of bail rather than a separate incident of stalking. Despite us telling the police that he was on police bail they arrested him for breach of court bail and then didn't get him to court within 24 hrs of arrest. The court then refused to hear the case”

“IDAS helped me rebuild my self-worth so that I have been able to move forward and build a better life for myself and my daughter. They listened to me and did not make me feel as if any of the abuse was my fault.”

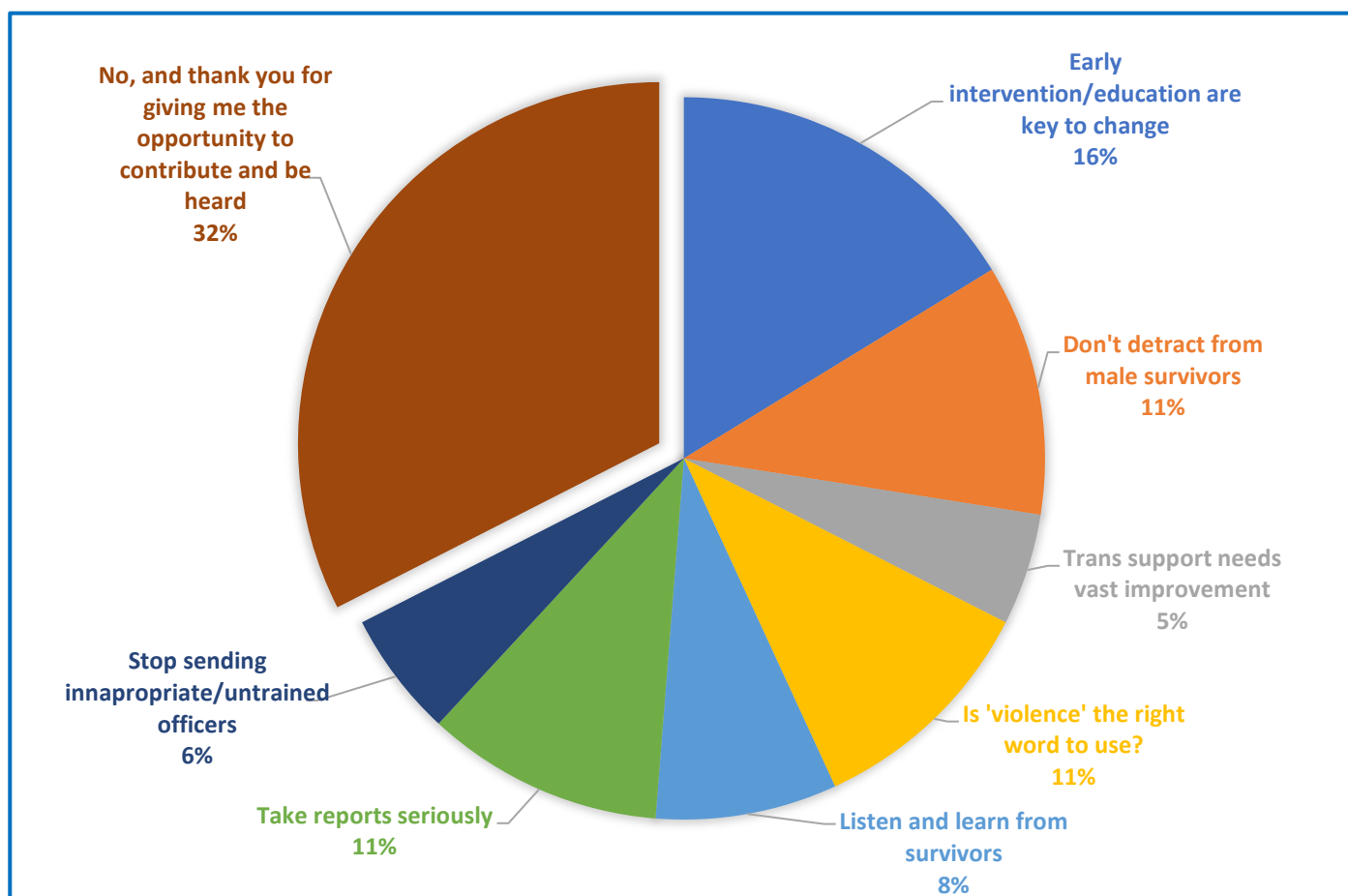
“Finding someone that actually listen to what I was saying and understood.”

Anything Else to be Considered?

To ensure the voices of women and girls remain central to the development of this Strategy, direct quotes from respondents have been threaded throughout this Strategy.

Extra space was left to add anything that those respondents wanted to tell us and are shown in figure 17, with 32% just wanting to thank us for allowing them to be heard.

Figure 17. Further points



Base: Respondents: n= 189 of 332

Question: Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about Violence Against Women and Girls?

"I think people are misled by the word 'Violence'. They think if they don't hit then any behaviour is acceptable"

"I feel that domestic abuse and violence is being given high profile to the outside world but is not afforded the same priority or importance within the CPS. This greatly impacts on victim's reporting abuse and, therefore, reduces the chances of it being reduced in society."

"Women and Girls need to be believed and be given the chance to tell their story."

"We just need to get in there really early so that children grow up knowing what is acceptable and what isn't and somehow putting interventions in with families if girls are not respected so patterns of behaviour just don't keep repeating from generation to generation."

"This is a whole society issue that starts with schools, education, and society as a whole calling it out. It won't be tackled by enforcement alone and needs to be a truly multi agency approach including the private sector and tech companies challenging online issues."

"I believe that young education is the main starting place for educating about violence against women. It should not be a taboo subject or something people are afraid of discussing as to 'not offend' anyone. Likewise, violence against men should also be made part of the education system from a young age"

"I have had personal experience of domestic violence and I truly believe more needs to be done to educate men (who abuse women) that this is criminal, unacceptable, and extremely damaging. I believe this education needs happen in the final years of primary school."

"Education in schools about relationships, unacceptable/acceptable behaviours, challenging stereotypes (they start young) should be part of the curriculum."

"Education- people are often manipulated into believing they deserved or invited abuse upon them. I feel teenagers should be educated on sexual consent and abuse so that they can recognise when they are being mistreated and be empowered to report it earlier."

Conclusion

There are 4 main themes that have been consistent throughout the focus groups and survey responses, no matter what question was asked, and these will be incorporated as overarching outcomes within our local delivery plans:

1. Victims need to be heard
2. Victims need to be believed
3. Trauma aware responses should begin with the police and extend across the whole Criminal Justice System
4. Education of young people needs to be a priority to learn appropriate behaviours from an early age

Appendix C – What do we do well?

Collaborative Approaches to Tackling Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Joint Commissioning Group (“DAJCG”) was established in 2016 to explore options to co-commission all victims and perpetrator services (using existing budgets and funding streams) moving away from year-on-year funding of smaller individual contracts to create a more sustainable, multi-agency approach with shared outcomes. The DAJCG is chaired by a Commissioning and Partnerships Manager for the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and includes representatives from North Yorkshire Police Safeguarding Unit, and Community Safety, Public Health and Health and Adults Services within North Yorkshire County Council and City of York Council.

This innovative approach has enabled local commissioners to develop service specifications and key performance indicators aligned to a shared core set of outcomes with a focus on quality. The new jointly commissioned services have been rolled out through a phased approach from March 2019 to provide a complete enhanced package of support for everyone affected by domestic abuse, including:

- support for young people aged 10 to 16 years beginning to display abusive behaviour, including Child or Adolescent to Parent Violence or Abuse (“CAPVA”) or within intimate relationships with other young people;
- support for perpetrators aged 16 years and over to acknowledge and change their abusive behaviour, including the provision of emergency alternative accommodation where necessary to provide their victim/s respite;
- safe Accommodation and a Safe Haven Scheme for victims fleeing domestic abuse, including specialist support for their dependent children; and
- intensive person-centred support packages delivered by specialist workers both within safe accommodation and community-based teams to help all victims and survivors cope with the effects of domestic abuse whether they have reported to the police or not.

More recently, we have co-commissioned the development of a ‘Whole Family Approach’ pilot from July 2021 providing specialist support services for children and young people aged 10 to 16 years affected by domestic abuse occurring in their home. In addition to providing tailored support, IDAS is working in collaboration with academics and other key stakeholders to significantly improve the overall local evidence base of children and young people living in households where domestic abuse occurs, to identify the most effective interventions to meet their needs and inform future service development and strategic planning.

In comparison to total caseloads supported collectively through the previous separately commissioned services, the new co-commissioned services have been able to offer support to:

- twice as many victims and survivors in the first year, and 257% (approximately 5,400) more victims and survivors in 2020/21; and
- 150% (approximately 150) more families experiencing CAPVA in 2019/20 and 2020/21, as well as specialist support for young people using abusive behaviours towards their (intimate) partners which was not previously available.

It is also anticipated that greater value for money will be achieved overall by ensuring the total local investment by commissioners collectively prioritises the most effective interventions and services for these victims, perpetrators and their children thereby reducing demand on policing and criminal justice services, and other related statutory services such as health, housing, children, young people and family prevention services.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a partnership between North Yorkshire Police and schools, academies and colleges which aims to safeguard and support children affected by domestic abuse occurring in their home. The

partnership commenced in January 2017 and has been adopted by almost every school in North Yorkshire and the City of York.

North Yorkshire Police share details of domestic abuse incidents occurring the previous day/night with Designated Safeguarding Leads within schools, academies and colleges where a child aged 4 to 18 years was directly involved or witnessed the incident. Schools, academies and colleges use the information that has been shared, in confidence, to support these children with any difficulties they may experience in school as a result of domestic abuse occurring within their home.

Domestic Abuse and Family Court Report

In 2019 the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner commissioned IDAS to conduct a review into the experiences of survivors of domestic abuse and their children in respect of family court proceedings, which included:

- a comprehensive review of the landscape of the family courts, the relevant stakeholders and strategic boards;
- survey of over 150 people to gain the views of a range of stakeholders including professionals, survivors, voluntary organisations and the judiciary; and
- consultation event attended by over 50 stakeholders.

The resulting [report](#) included a series of ambitious recommendations both on a national and a local level, and as a result the following has since been implemented in North Yorkshire and the City of York:

- establishment of a Domestic Abuse and Family Court Working Group which meets quarterly to drive forward continuous service improvements
- a new dedicated [website](#) aimed at survivors which provides information about the family court;
- development of a range of resources and information packs to assist stakeholders in better understanding the Family Courts and the impact of domestic abuse on civil proceedings, including three short videos and three training events on coercive and controlling behaviour attended by over 150 people
- bespoke postcards for North Yorkshire Police to hand out where appropriate when officers attend an incident of domestic abuse, which list the warning signs of domestic abuse and direct people to the website
- a documented pathway for the service of Non-Molestation Orders to the police to ensure breaches can be enforced more quickly and effectively
- facilitation of volunteer-led programmes to support survivors of domestic abuse, including survivor peer mentors
- a community legal companion scheme supporting those without legal representation with family separation and child contact arrangements through the Community Legal Outreach Collaboration Keele (“CLOCK”) project provided by students reading law at York St John University and the University of York
- development of a 5-week support group programme for survivors of domestic abuse going through family court proceedings; and
- closer working with the local family courts to develop an appropriate response to requests for special measures and to make more people aware of them, including an online video.

Project Shield

Project Shield is a ground-breaking pilot project developed as a result of the recommendations from the Domestic Abuse and Family Court Report (see above) which aims to improve the response to breaches of

Non-Molestation Orders. Non-Molestation Orders (“NMOs”) are civil orders granted by the courts to protect victims of domestic abuse from further harm and breach of a NMO is a criminal offence.

The project is delivered by North Yorkshire Police in partnership with IDAS, Her Majesty’s Courts and Tribunal Service, Edge Hill University and CGI, the global IT and business consulting company. During the pilot all NMOs issued by the courts for victims in North Yorkshire and the City of York were recorded on the Police National Database and this is now standard practice in North Yorkshire. This allows police officers to more easily see if an order had been issued and served to the perpetrator to help them more effectively enforce any breaches and ultimately better safeguard victims from further abuse.

Whilst this pilot is the first of its kind there is still further work to do and North Yorkshire Police supported by the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner will continue to push for national rollout of this ground-breaking pilot so that all orders no matter where they are issued are recorded on Police National Database.

Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (“MATAC”)

MATAC is a proactive multi-agency approach to identifying and tackling serial or harmful perpetrators of domestic abuse. The MATAC process was first piloted by Northumbria Police and was adopted in North Yorkshire in December 2018.

MATAC uses existing police data to identify serial perpetrators of domestic abuse, who are then targeted in an attempt break the cycle of abuse. The process is designed to identify perpetrators who would not be identified through the usual risk or harm assessment processes. This is because they are generally assessed as standard or medium risk rather than high risk perpetrators but may be abusing multiple victims, moving from one vulnerable person to another. As a result, the risk level to any one individual victim may not escalate, however the amount of collective harm that individual perpetrator causes to multiple families can be substantial.

A multi-agency action plan for each individual perpetrator is agreed at MATAC meetings, where consideration is given to the most effective interventions to address that individual’s behaviour. The overall aim is to change their behaviour, reduce re-offending and prevent further harm to victims. Part of the action plan includes the offer of support across a range of criminogenic pathways such as access to substance misuse support services to influence wider behaviour change. If this approach does not work, then a range of disruption and enforcement tactics will also be used.

From its commencement in December 2018 to February 2022, over 200 Perpetrators have been adopted onto the scheme and been under closer scrutiny and police review. Of these, 82% were assessed as posing a lower risk 12 months after initial adoption onto the scheme, with 10% not offending in the last 2 years.

MATAC Prison Project

A joint initiative between North Yorkshire Police and prisons aims to better protect victims of domestic abuse by preventing prisoners contacting them, either directly or indirectly.

North Yorkshire Police can request prisons block all contact between a prisoner and their victim, including putting in measures to prevent another prisoner contacting the victim on their behalf. If prisoners try to communicate through a third party in the community outside of prison, the prisoner will also be placed on 100% mail monitoring by the prison.

Community-based services supporting victims or victims themselves can report any subsequent contact from the prisoner to North Yorkshire Police, who will share this with the relevant prison for appropriate action to be taken. If a victim reports phone contact from the prisoner, this would indicate they have access to an illicit mobile phone so targeted searches by the prison’s Dedicated Search Team will take place to seize any such devices.

Prisons also use the information provided by North Yorkshire Police to deliver focused Offender Management in Custody work and signpost prisoners to appropriate community-based interventions on release. A pilot is due to commence shortly whereby prisons will inform North Yorkshire Police of relevant prisoner's release dates in advance so victims can be informed and appropriate safeguarding measures put in place.

North Yorkshire Police also provide information for consideration by Home Detention Custody Review Boards as part of their overarching risk assessment process in determining whether a prisoner should be released early from prison subject to an electronically monitored curfew - also known as 'tagging'.

The prisons currently engaged in this project have created a manual process whereby all warning flags and contact blocks 'travel' with the prisoner if they are transferred to another prison.

The project is now receiving national attention due to its success locally, with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service currently considering how this approach could be adopted nationally.

Scrutiny Panels for Domestic Abuse and Rape

The Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Panel was established in 2018 to:

- Review and improve the investigation of domestic abuse in North Yorkshire and the City of York
- Review and improve the support offered and safeguarding of victims and their children
- Provide greater transparency and accountability to increase confidence in how North Yorkshire Police investigate domestic abuse
- Work with partners to better support victims and address the abusive behaviour of perpetrators
- Identify and promote strengths and good practice

The Panel is independently chaired, and its members are drawn from a range of local services that are independent of North Yorkshire Police and the OPFCC but are known to have expertise in the field of domestic abuse. The Panel also has lay members including a survivor of domestic abuse.

As part of the North Yorkshire Police Rape And Serious Sexual Offences ("RASSO") improvement plan the Rape Scrutiny Panel was established in 2020 to review a sample of RASSO cases which have not been submitted to the Crown Prosecution Service ("CPS") for charge decision.

The purpose of the Panel is to:

- monitor the quality of No Further Action ("NFA") decisions in RASSO cases
- assess the quality of NFA decision making and whether the case should have been submitted
- assess the timeliness of investigative actions
- consider whether all reasonable lines of inquiry had been undertaken and whether broader charging considerations (i.e. for non-RASSO charges) had been undertaken
- provide supportive feedback regarding those cases to both the investigating officers (OICs) and decision makers (Supervisor/Managers)
- identify and communicate any themes, learning and development requirements or other opportunities to improve the investigation, charging and prosecution processes for all future RASSO cases

The Panel meets quarterly and includes representation from North Yorkshire Police, CPS, Office of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and ISVA Service. Each Panel meeting will focus on a particular theme which will cover a range of RASSO cases including but not limited to:

- cases involving a Victims Right to Review a decision not to refer to the CPS for charge authority
- rape within abusive relationships/domestic abuse cases
- rape by an acquaintance
- non-recent incidents
- cases involving children and young persons

- cases involving those with mental health impairments

Joint Strategic Sexual Abuse Steering Group

In 2018, the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner commissioned Lime Culture to conduct an independent review of a 'victim's journey' through local sexual abuse services; one of the findings of this review recommended that a multi-agency forum was established to ensure a more consistent response to all forms of sexual violence and abuse to improve the overall experiences of victims and survivors accessing local services. Consultation and stakeholder workshops hosted by Mountain Healthcare Ltd in 2019 to consider the 'Strategic Direction for Sexual Assault and Abuse Services' published by NHS England in 2018 also recommended more work was required in 'Driving Collaboration and Reducing Fragmentation'.

As a result, the Strategic Sexual Assault and Abuse Steering Group was initially established in late 2019 to provide a strategic overview and ensure consistency of approach to support existing partnerships and local services to better meet the needs of victims and survivors. Unfortunately, this work was put on hold from April 2020 due to significant operational pressures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but has recently re-commenced work to agree joint strategic priorities and development of a shared core set of outcomes and explore opportunities to jointly commission support services.

Sex Work, Survival Sex and Sexual Exploitation Group

In 2021, a multi-agency group was established to discuss individuals who may be involved in sex work, survival sex or at risk of or victims of sexual exploitation. The group was formed following concerns raised by North Yorkshire Police that they had intelligence on individuals who would fall into the above cohort and had other known vulnerabilities such as mental health issues, domestic abuse and substance misuse but there were no established pathways to share this information to better protect and safeguard these individuals. The COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated these concerns as it was felt that there was a growing hidden cohort of individuals at risk of further harm due to financial hardship and social isolation due national lockdown measures.

The group meets bi-monthly to discuss individuals of concern, who are identified through police intelligence and partner information. The group jointly agree an action plan to put appropriate safeguarding measures in place to limit exploitative situations and to offer suitable support.

Two specialist outreach workers have been funded by the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to support this work and deliver satellite sessions to women in locations in the community that have been identified as vulnerable to exploitation via police intelligence, as well as in women-only supported accommodation and women's prisons. The outreach workers also identify, reach out and respond to adults at risk online. They offer trauma-informed support, providing safety advice and information and invite women to local drop-ins and services where they can access further support. The support is tailored to each individual; this could be practical, emotional or personal safety support/advice. A host of interventions can be delivered including support with substance misuse, mental health, trauma recovery programs, improving relationships, emotion management, building and maintaining a pro-social identity as well as building social capital and achieving goals.

York Women's Centre

In January 2019, the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner was awarded capital grant funding through the Ministry of Justice's Female Offender Community Investment Fund to create a specialist Women's Centre, with the intended purpose of supporting women who may face barriers to addressing issues that could lead to offending behaviour.

The capital funding was used to refurbish a property in York which has been renovated to a high standard and transformed to create a homely, safe, woman-only environment. The Centre has a shower, kitchen and laundry facilities, a one-to-one room and group room and a crèche area for children.

Ongoing revenue funding has been committed by the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to ensure specialist, gender specific and trauma-informed service provision can be delivered from the Centre.

The overall aim of the Women's Centre service is to engage and offer support to women:

- that may have multiple, acute and unmet needs
- that may be chronically excluded
- that are or are at risk of being involved with the criminal justice system

Advice and support to other professionals is also provided by the Centre in order to build the capacity of partners to respond and support women in a gender-informed way. Partners are also able to use the Centre to see women, to encourage them to use the facilities and to hot desk.

The Women's Centre has achieved a number of meaningful outcomes since its inception. These include supporting women to secure permanent housing, attending court with women, ensuring women are adequately safeguarded by supporting requests for non-molestation orders and a successful digital inclusion project during lockdown to limit isolation.

Stalking Clinic Pilot

The Scarborough multi-agency stalking clinic was launched initially in May 2020 as a six-month pilot scheme to support victims, reduce risk and bridge the gap of interventions with perpetrators to prevent stalking behaviours.

The clinic focuses on high-risk cases and are attended by representatives from North Yorkshire County Council Children and Family Services, Scarborough Borough Council and Ryedale District Council Housing and Homeless Support, North Yorkshire Police, IDAS, Foundation UK, North Yorkshire Horizons, and probation officers who are involved with each individual case. To date, the clinics have discussed over 25 different perpetrators.

Specialist Stalking Team

In 2021 North Yorkshire Police established a new dedicated Stalking Team to better identify and address all forms of stalking at the earliest opportunity. The Team is comprised of a Detective Constable with extensive experience of investigating stalking offences and two Stalking Victim Support Officers who offer bespoke personal safety planning and implement specialist safeguarding measures as necessary to reduce further risk of harm.

In addition to reviewing all related incidents to ensure stalking concerns are more effectively identified and managed, the Team offer 'Stalking Clinics' for officers leading on current stalking and harassment investigations can discuss any concerns. The Team ensure any lessons learnt are acted upon in a timely manner and an effective problem-solving approach is embedded across the force in respect of stalking.

The Team are also responsible for the supervision and monitoring of perpetrators who are subject of Stalking Prevention Orders, conducting intelligence checks as required to ensure positive action and effective responses within the wider criminal justice system are delivered.

In January 2022, the Team was strengthened by a specialist Stalking Perpetrator Support Worker employed by Foundation UK as part of the commissioned +Choices: Support Services for Adult Perpetrators to specifically engage with perpetrators of stalking and support them to complete a bespoke behavioural change programme.

What Services are already available if I need help?

Victim and Survivor services

Domestic Abuse Victims Community-based Support services

Delivered by Independent Domestic Abuse Services (“IDAS”), support is available for anyone aged 16 years and over who is a direct victim or survivor of domestic abuse. Support is available for all genders and regardless of sexual orientation. The services offer:

- Community engagement and Champion’s training to raise awareness of all forms of domestic abuse
- Early intervention and prevention advice and support
- Immediate advice, support and safety planning
- 1 to 1 emotional and practical support, including support through any police investigation and/or court proceedings
- Target Hardening where necessary to help victims remain safely within their own homes
- Supported group work and peer support networks
- Onward referrals and/or liaison with other agencies and support services as appropriate.

Referrals can be made by police officers and other professionals working with victims or survivors as well as self-referrals, and support is available whether individuals want to make a formal report to the police or not:

- Online: idas.org.uk/contact/make-a-referral/
- Email: info@idas.org.uk
- Phone: 03000 110 110
- Live Chat web chat facility via the [IDAS website](#)

A ‘Whole Family Approach’ to Domestic Abuse - Support Services for Children and Young People Affected by Domestic Abuse

IDAS have been commissioned to develop a ‘Whole Family Approach’ to domestic abuse and provide support services for children and young people affected by domestic abuse. Support is available for all families with dependent children and young people living in households where domestic abuse occurs. Support is available for all genders and regardless of sexual orientation. The services offer:

- 1 to 1 emotional and practical support for children and young people aged 10 years and over
- Supported group work and peer support networks for parents/guardians
- Referrals for parents/guardians and ongoing liaison with victim services to ensure that support plans are co-ordinated and support the family’s common goals
- Onward referrals and/or liaison with other agencies and support services as appropriate.

Referrals can be made by police officers and other professionals working with families as well as self-referrals, and support is available whether individuals want to make a formal report to the police or not:

- Online: idas.org.uk/contact/make-a-referral/
- Email: info@idas.org.uk
- Phone: 03000 110 110
- Live Chat web chat facility via the [IDAS website](#)

Sexual Assault Referral Centre (“SARC”) services

The SARC services are delivered by Mountain Healthcare Ltd who provide crisis support and forensic medical services to collect any evidence for all victims of rape or sexual assault aged 16 years and over. Support is available for all genders and regardless of sexual orientation. The services offer:

- Immediate triage, advice and support
- Specialist 1 to 1 Crisis Support
- Forensic Medical Examination if appropriate to collect any forensic evidence
- Onward referrals and/or liaison with other agencies and support services as appropriate.

The services are available 24/7 including Bank Holidays, however examinations are usually booked for daytime weekday hours (9-5) wherever possible. Referrals can be made by police officers and other professionals working with victims as well as self-referrals, and support is available whether individuals want to make a formal report to the police or not:

- Online: bridgehousesarc.org/contact-us
- Phone: 0330 223 0362

Child Sexual Assault Assessment Service (“CSAAS”)

The CSAAS is delivered by Mountain Healthcare Ltd and provides crisis support and forensic medical services to collect any evidence for all children and young people aged 0 to 16 years who have disclosed sexual abuse or assault, or where it is suspected that it has happened. Older young people up to their 19th birthday may also be seen by the CSAAS if they have additional needs or it is deemed to be clinically appropriate. The service offers:

- Immediate professional advice and support
- Specialist 1 to 1 Crisis Support
- Forensic Medical Examination if appropriate to collect any forensic evidence
- Non-forensic Medical Examination if appropriate
- Onward referrals and/or liaison with other agencies and support services as appropriate.

Referrals can only be made by police officers, social workers or health professionals; it is not a self-referral service.

Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (“ISVA”) service

IDAS deliver a holistic ISVA service for all victims and survivors of all forms of sexual violence or abuse, including historic child sexual abuse. Support is available for all ages and genders, regardless of sexual orientation. The service offers:

- Immediate advice, support and safety planning if required
- 1 to 1 emotional and practical support, including support through any police investigation and/or court proceedings
- Support for (non-abusing) parents/guardians of young victims aged 12 years or under
- Supported group work and peer support networks
- Onward referrals and/or liaison with other agencies and support services as appropriate.

Referrals can be made by police officers, SARC or CSAAS and other professionals working with victims and survivors as well as self-referrals, and support is available whether individuals want to make a formal report to the police or not:

- Online: idas.org.uk/contact/make-a-referral/
- Email: info@idas.org.uk
- Phone: 03000 110 110
- Live Chat web chat facility via the [IDAS website](https://idas.org.uk)

Hand in Hand: Child Sexual / Criminal Exploitation and Missing service

The Hand in Hand service is provided by The Children's Society. The service works with children and young people affected by or at risk of child sexual and/or criminal exploitation. The support offered includes:

- Targeted awareness raising in schools
- 1 to 1 emotional and practical support
- Supported group work
- Onward referrals and/or liaison with other agencies and support services as appropriate.

The service accepts self-referrals and agency referrals. For further information or to self-refer contact Zoe Stephenson-Jones: Zoe.Stephenson-Jones@childrenssociety.org.uk

Parents of Child Sexual / Criminal Exploitation Liaison Officer ("PLO") service

The PLO service is provided by Parents Against Child Exploitation ("PACE"). The service works with parents and carers of children who are or at risk of being exploited by individuals from outside of the family. The support offered includes 1 to 1 and groupwork in addition to targeted awareness raising in schools. Parents can also access a secure online forum and befriending scheme which connects and support affected parents who can often feel isolated, judged and blamed. The aims of the service are to:

- Safeguard exploited children
- Support the successful prosecution and disruption of perpetrators by providing specialist witness care
- Recognise the impact Child Exploitation has on the whole family
- Build co-productive relationships with services and statutory agencies
- Empower parents to increase their resilience to provide long-term support for their child.

The PLO service accepts self-referrals and agency referrals. For further information or to self-refer contact Leah Entwistle: leah.entwistle@paceuk.info

Counselling and Talking Therapy Services for victims of crime

Community Counselling (North Yorkshire) Ltd deliver adult counselling and talking therapy services in Scarborough and Ryedale, as well as a countywide service for young people (aged 17 years and under).

Survive deliver adult counselling and talking therapy services in Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Richmondshire, York and Selby.

For more information contact Supporting Victims (details below).

Supporting Victims in North Yorkshire

Supporting Victims is a telephone-based service providing advice and support for anyone affected by crime in North Yorkshire, whether reported to the police or not. This includes victims, bereaved relatives, those aged under 18 years with consent, parents or guardians of victims aged under 18 years, and members of staff where a business has been a victim of crime.

Supporting Victims staff are trained and experienced in helping victims understand what has happened and supporting them to cope with the immediate impact and recover from the harm experienced. Individuals can self-refer to Supporting Victims and agencies can make direct referrals. This includes immediate practical and emotional support over the phone, onward referrals into specialist services and signposting to other support organisations as appropriate. Supporting Victims is also the Independent Reporting route for victims of hate crime (whether reported to the police or not):

- Online: supportingvictims.org
- Email: help@supportingvictims.org
- To report a hate crime: <https://www.supportingvictims.org/advice/i-or-someone-i-know-is-experiencing-personal-abuse/>

Perpetrator and Offender Services

Crossroads: Adults Diversion scheme

Provided by Humankind, the Crossroads Diversion scheme diverts people from the criminal justice system by offering support to address the underlying causes of their offending behaviour. The scheme works with women and men aged 18 years and over to offer trauma-informed support to address criminogenic needs. Each individual will receive a tailored support package, the intensiveness of which will be responsive to their assessed needs. A dedicated keyworker will be allocated who will provide direct interventions, advocate and signpost into specialist agencies where necessary.

The scheme has two elements. Firstly, a community-based support scheme for individuals who may be at risk of entering the criminal justice system or are known to North Yorkshire Police. The scheme engages with the individuals, at an early stage before criminal behaviour becomes habitual and engagement is on a voluntarily basis. The community-based scheme is open to those who are not yet offending or have been involved in antisocial behaviour or have previously committed low-level offences. Referrals can be made via a referral form and Humankind welcome self-referrals. To self-refer, request a referral form or for further information:

- Email Jessica.Tile@nyhorizons.org.uk
- Or: Humankind.diversionary.services@nhs.net
- Phone: 07939 209 087

Secondly, a formal out of court disposal at point of arrest or voluntary attendance at police custody. This is an alternative to prosecution, and if the individual accepts the referral to the scheme, then engagement is mandatory, otherwise the individual may be referred back to North Yorkshire police to face prosecution. Only North Yorkshire Police can refer to this element of the scheme.

+Choices: Support Services for Adult Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

Delivered by Foundation UK, support is available for anyone aged 16 years and over, who is a low-medium risk perpetrator of domestic abuse and wishes to voluntarily address their abusive behaviour. Support is available for all genders and regardless of sexual orientation. The service offers:

- Triage and emergency, temporary (up to 7 nights) accommodation, with support to secure longer term accommodation where required
- 1 to 1 motivational interventions to support perpetrators to recognise and acknowledge their abuse behaviour
- Tailored Perpetrator Behaviour Change Programmes, including both 1 to 1 and group delivery options
- Support to address wider needs such as housing, finance, substance misuse and mental health through onward referrals and/or liaison with other agencies and support services as appropriate.

Referrals can be made by police officers and other professionals working with perpetrators, their families or victims (with consent) as well as self-referrals:

- Online: [+Choices Referral - Foundation \(foundationuk.org\)](http://foundationuk.org)

Respect: Support Services for Young People Displaying Abusive Behaviours

Delivered by IDAS, support is available for young people aged 10 to 16 years who are demonstrating abusive behaviour towards their family members and/or within intimate relationships with other young people. Support will also be offered to their parent/guardians where required. Support is available for all genders and regardless of sexual orientation. The services offer:

- Short-term telephone support for parent/guardians and Parent Information Packs providing advice on safety planning, boundary setting and behaviour management
- Respect Young People's Programme which uses a 'whole family approach' to address adolescent to parent violence and abuse
- Specialist Young Perpetrators Programme which uses a tailored 1 to 1 approach with older young people using abusive behaviours within intimate relationships with other young people
- Onward referrals and/or liaison with other support services as appropriate.

Referrals can be made by police officers and other professionals working with young people and their families (with consent) as well as self/parent-referrals:

- Online: idas.org.uk/contact/make-a-referral/
- Email: project@idas.cjsm.net
- Phone: 03000 110 110
- Live Chat web chat facility via the [IDAS website](#)

Dual and Multiple Needs Services

Women's Centre, York

Provided by Changing Lives, any woman can access services, particularly those who may:

- be involved with, or at risk of entering the criminal justice system
- have multiple or unmet needs
- be chronically excluded
- be sex working
- be at risk of or a victim of sexual exploitation

The service offers gender-specific, trauma informed support via brief intervention, 1 to1 key work or group work. Women can also drop into the centre simply to have a warm drink and to make use of the facilities which include a kitchen, shower and laundry.

The Women's Centre provides a safe, homely, woman-only environment where a whole system of support can be offered across a range of needs to improve outcomes for women. The service accepts self-referrals and agency referrals. To refer or to find out further information contact Stephanie McCusker: Stephanie.McCusker@changing-lives.org.uk

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice brings those harmed by crime and those responsible for that harm into communication with each other. This enables everyone affected by the incident to play a part in repairing the damage and finding a positive way forward. Research shows that Restorative Justice reduces reoffending and helps to reduce harm in our communities.

The service is focused on the delivery of victim-led, face to face victim offender conferencing and indirect restorative justice where appropriate, giving any victim of crime in North Yorkshire the opportunity to meet with their offender, with the support of a Restorative Justice professional to enable cope and recovery after crime.

For more information contact Supporting Victims (details above) or Restorative Solutions by email: RJNorthYorkshire@restorativesolutions.org.uk or by phone: 01423 546175.

Other

Further details of all the specialist support services commissioned by the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire, including interventions for offenders, can be found on our website: [OPFCC Commissioned Services](#)