

## DRAFT NOTES - SCRUTINY MEETING (VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS) - 15 JANUARY 2025

Question	Brief Summary of Evidence	Decision of PCC
<p><b>1. What steps have been taken by the Force to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>strengthen multi-agency working to prevent VAWG and better protect women and girls;</b></li> <li>• <b>ensure VAWG offences are a priority;</b></li> <li>• <b>make sure policing has the right capacity and capability to meet demand;</b></li> <li>• <b>improve and standardise the approach to responding to VAWG offences;</b></li> <li>• <b>ensure there is scrutiny of cases where ‘no further action’ decisions are taken; and</b></li> <li>• <b>tackle, pursue and disrupt perpetrators</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Force has adopted the National Police Chiefs’ Council’s (NPCC) definition of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). VAWG crimes are therefore defined as those where the victim’s gender is recorded as female, they are over the age of 10 at the time of the offence and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a domestic abuse flag, and /or</li> <li>• have an honour based flag, and/or</li> <li>• are one of the following crime types: homicide; rape; other sexual offences; obscene publications; violence with injury, violence without injury (including forced marriage); exploitation of prostitution; stalking and harassment; modern slavery; public fear, alarm or distress.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• One of the Chief Constable’s Strategic Plan Delivery Objectives is to protect the most vulnerable from harm, this includes reducing the harm caused to victims and society by VAWG.</li> <li>• The Force’s enhanced VAWG response focuses on 6 pillars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent</li> <li>• Pursue</li> <li>• Protect</li> <li>• Prepare</li> <li>• People and Resources</li> <li>• Partnerships</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Partnership Working</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic abuse partnerships are in place for each of the four districts in Cleveland. These partnerships involve a number of agencies working together to tackle the issue of domestic abuse.</li> <li>• The Force has a multi-agency tasking and co-ordination (MATAC) Team, which aims to reduce reoffending of the most harmful and serial domestic abuse perpetrators and to safeguard victims and their families. Regular meetings are led by the Force, along with key partners, to assess and plan a bespoke set of interventions to target and disrupt serial perpetrators and/or support them to address their behaviour.</li> <li>• The Force holds multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC), which are information sharing and action planning meetings for victims of domestic abuse who are at risk of serious harm or death. The meetings involve representatives of the Force, probation, health, child protection, housing practitioners, Independent Domestic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assured (with the caveat that the PCC recognises current capacity and capability and that this meeting will act as a benchmark for future scrutiny of VAWG issues)</b></p>

	<p>Violence Advisors (IDVAs), and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) is a mechanism used by the Force and its partners to ensure the successful management of high risk violent and sexual offenders.</li> <li>• There is a Force-wide VAWG event for young people and a workshop for all schools.</li> <li>• The Force engages with the Youth Independent Advisory Group (IAG) to seek feedback on policing policies and matters.</li> <li>• The Force works effectively with the CPS to improve both criminal justice outcomes and procedural justice for victims of rape.</li> <li>• Operation Beech and Operation Night Safe aim to safeguard and support vulnerable victims of sex work, help keep people safe in the night-time economy and gather intelligence.</li> <li>• Work has been undertaken with licensees to promote anti-spiking and 'Ask Angela' campaigns.</li> <li>• Operation Make Safe involves joint police and social care patrols. The Force is working with local hotels and premises to help tackle child sexual exploitation and protect vulnerable young people.</li> <li>• Joint Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) identification training has been delivered to the hospitality sector alongside Barnardo's.</li> </ul> <p><u>Governance and Oversight</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Force has an identified VAWG Lead.</li> <li>• The Force is updating its Vulnerability Strategy to ensure it aligns with national guidance. The Force is undertaking a voluntary self-assessment to assist with reviewing and refreshing the local Vulnerability Strategy, to ensure it is tailored to meet local needs.</li> <li>• The Force has a data bespoke PowerBi dashboard. This dashboard looks at the volumes of VAWG offences, arrests and outcomes of these crimes. Although VAWG data it collected, monitored and analysed locally, this data is not collected nationally and there is no national dashboard reporting these figures.</li> <li>• The Force follows the NPCC's VAWG national framework for delivery to improve, co-ordinate and standardise the policing of VAWG.</li> <li>• There is regular monitoring of performance via the Force IMPACT Board, the Safeguarding and Vulnerability Governance Group and the Tactical Vulnerability Performance Group.</li> <li>• The Force has a Rape Scrutiny Panel, (currently Chaired by the Head of Standards, Scrutiny and Accountability for the OPCC) which meets on a quarterly basis. The</li> </ul>	
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	<p>panel provides independent oversight to the investigation and handling of rape cases reported to Cleveland Police.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Force's VAWG Lead has oversight of all victims' right to review.</li> <li>• Detective Inspector (DI) approval is required for any Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) outcomes.</li> <li>• The Force has received positive feedback on the work it has undertaken to transform its approach to rape investigations.</li> <li>• A new No Further Action (NFA) Scrutiny Panel is being established and is due to be launched in February 2025. The multi-agency NFA Scrutiny Panel will meet on a quarterly basis and will examine cases that have been deemed 'no further action'. Cases for consideration will be randomly selected, with input from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The NFA Scrutiny Panel will aim to improve the quality of decision-making, and in turn, public confidence.</li> <li>• The Force has a monthly thematic review programme, where VAWG and Outcome 16 (victim does not support further action) are a feature.</li> <li>• Benchmarking exercises have undertaken in respect of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and the Police Perpetrated Domestic Abuse (PPDA) - Handling Review recommendations and promising practice.</li> <li>• The Force regularly monitors performance and undertakes audits and reviews to determine patterns, trends and insights. In light of the findings of these audits and reviews, when required, training and development opportunities are provided to upskill officers in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• investigating reports with knowledge and expertise; and</li> <li>• supporting victims.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Capacity and Capability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Force has conducted a detailed demand analysis of investigative functions across the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Domestic Abuse and CAVA.</li> <li>• The Force will be introducing a new Operation Unified delivery model for managing vulnerability and local investigations. The new approach to vulnerability ensures the highest level of service provision to vulnerable victims, while making the best use of the Force's investigative resources to support this.</li> <li>• The Force is upskilling the local CID to enable officers to effectively deal with incidents of domestic abuse (DA).</li> <li>• All high-risk DA offences will receive a specialist response.</li> <li>• The Force is upskilling staff and officers to increase capability and standardise its approach to VAWG by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing specialist rape investigator, child abuse investigator and child death investigation courses;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
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- delivering a rolling programme of DA matters training for all operational staff;
- developing an online VAWG offending training package;
- providing VAWG inputs on Response and Force Control Room (FCR) training days;
- providing stalking and harassment enhanced e-learning package from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust;
- delivering an internal VAWG conference; and
- providing VAWG related modules on initial learning and the Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme (ICIDP).
- The Force has invested in digital capability, which has resulted in a significant reduction in device examination turnaround times. In addition, a new appointment system will improve the service to victims, enabling device content to be downloaded in a more timely manner.

#### Tackling Offenders

- The Force is committed to arrest, pursue and take action, where possible, for VAWG offences.
- The Force undertakes work to scrutinise missed opportunities in finalising outcomes.
- The DA arrest rates are monitored, analysed and scrutinised by the IMPACT Board and local performance management arrangements.
- Rape arrests are monitored and managed by the Force's RASSO Lead, who holds Detective Chief Inspectors (DCIs) to account.
- The Operation Artemis VAWG day of action resulted in 17 arrests.
- The Force is proactive in putting in place protective measures for vulnerable victims by issuing Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) and Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs).
- The Force is taking part in a pilot of Domestic Abuse Protective Orders (DAPOs) and Domestic Abuse Protection Notices (DAPNs). DAPOs and DAPNs will offer a quick and effective way for police to intervene in situations where there is a risk of harm. They will also help to prevent further incidents, even when there is not enough evidence for a criminal charge.
- The Force actively manages breaches of protective orders.
- The Force has a managing of sexual offenders and violent offenders (MOSOVO) process in place. The Force also has a process in place to monitor serial un-convicted sexual offenders.
- MATAC management aims to disrupt the most harmful and serial domestic abuse perpetrators.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the Metropolitan Police V100 process, the Force is working to identify the most predatory offenders in the Cleveland area. The V100 process uses data analytics to identify and target the top men and women who pose the most risk.</li> <li>The Force is working towards inclusion of controlling and coercive behaviour offenders in MAPPA.</li> <li>The Force works with the Youth Justice Service (YJS) and Brooke Advisory to support children, prevent offending and reoffending and rehabilitate young offenders.</li> </ul>	
<b>2. How is the Force performing in respect of VAWG offences?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the 12 months ending December 2024, the Force was performing well - VAWG crimes had reduced by 16%, the arrest rate had increased by 1.7% and the solved crime rate had increased by 1.3%. However, Outcome 16 rates had increased.</li> <li>Unfortunately, due to the unavailability of national VAWG data, the Force is unable to measure and compare its performance against that of other Forces in England and Wales.</li> <li>During the 12 months ending November 2024, there had been a 30% increase in Clare's Law right to ask applications and an increase of 14% in Clare's Law right to know applications.</li> <li>A national positive media piece had been published in 2024 on Clare's Law. The article stated that Cleveland Police force area has the highest number of applications per 100,000 people in England and Wales. In addition, the article provided an example of how Clare's Law can be a useful tool for managing the risk posed by perpetrators.</li> </ul>	
<b>3. How is the Force ensuring that victims can have the confidence to engage and report offences?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Force regularly promotes use of enforcement activity and successful prosecutions.</li> <li>In November 2024, the Force had an Operation Artemis VAWG day of action, whereby officers demonstrated their commitment to preventing VAWG and further safeguarding people in Cleveland from harm. The day of action resulted in 17 men and one woman being arrested for a variety of offences such as rape, sexual assault, stalking, domestic fraud, breach of a restraining order and domestic abuse common assault.</li> <li>The Force regularly posts information on Facebook relating to offender sentencing.</li> <li>The Force regularly uses social media to encourage reporting and signpost victims to support services. Useful information has previously been shared on domestic abuse and Clare's Law, stalking and harassment and spiking.</li> <li>New initiatives and examples of good work have been promoted by the Force. For example, the Force has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>launched a new stalking and harassment reporting page; and</li> <li>received NPCC VAWG award recognition.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Force participates in national campaigns, such as National Stalking Awareness Week, Anti-Spiking Intensification Week and White Ribbon Day.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees of the Force are able to access ARCH 'tell me' service, which offers confidential emotional support for victims of sexual harassment or sexually harmful behaviours within the workplace.</li> </ul>	
<b>4. What support would the Force like to see from the OPCC, which would assist in helping the Force with the relentless pursuit and disruption of adult perpetrators?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Force requires assistance from the PCC to influence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>partners across the 4 districts to take joint ownership of MARAC; and</li> <li>Community Safety Partnerships across the 4 districts to include VAWG as a priority when formulating plans and strategies to tackle crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour in communities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>5. Since the publication of the Angiolini Inquiry, what action has been undertaken by the Force to implement the proposed recommendations and how can the PCC be assured that the Force is doing all it can to prevent those entrusted with the power of constable from abusing that power?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Of the 16 recommendations proposed, five are applicable to external bodies and 11 are applicable to local forces.</li> <li>In terms of local progress, three recommendations have been actioned and those remaining are on track to be implemented by April 2025.</li> <li>The Force is undertaking an extensive amount of work to ensure robust policies, procedures, guidance, training, reviews, processes and practices are in place to effectively implement the recommendations.</li> <li>The Force recognises the importance of taking swift action to remedy the issues identified by the inquiry, to ensure that everything possible is being done to prevent those entrusted with the power of the office of constable from abusing that power.</li> </ul>	

### Actions

1	That a mapping exercise be undertaken by the OPCC as part of their commissioning work to identify the range of VAWG-related educational programmes being delivered within Cleveland's schools.
2	That the outcomes of the NFA Scrutiny Panel be reported to the OPCC/PCC.
3	That the topic of VAWG be re-visited at a future Scrutiny Meeting, to ensure continuous oversight of the Force's work in this area.