

Festival of Practice Conference 28th March 2023

Breakout Session B2

**A Violence Reduction Unit's perspective on domestic abuse and
the Serious Violence Duty**

Julie Smith

Domestic Abuse Specialist

Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit, Office of the PCC

Aims of this session

1. **Overview of the strategic review** of responses to domestic abuse perpetrators in Northumbria
2. **Serious Violence Duty:** - VRU and local DA Partnership structures – **adding value not duplicating**
3. **Responses so far to the recommendations** coming out of the strategic review
 - Improving the range of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention
 - Strengthening the strategic response
 - Examples of good collaboration.

Strategic Review of Responses to DA Perpetrators

- Took a **public health approach** to try and illustrate what's needed to make a longer term, more sustainable impact.
- First time a **comprehensive review** on perpetrators had been carried out in Northumbria.
- Intension to **engage the 6 Domestic Abuse Boards** in discussions around existing responses and where and how they could be strengthened.
- A **core document** and a more **detailed needs assessment**
- Has **helped articulate** more clearly to partners why we need to **pivot more towards the perpetrators** without losing our focus on specialist support for adult and child victims.

Strategic Review of Responses to DA Perpetrators:

The core document includes:

- **Importance of tackling perpetrators:** build the case and the evidence base
- National and local **strategic context**
- **Nature and scale** of perpetration, typologies, motivations & tactics
- **What a good strategic response** could look like
- **Primary, secondary and tertiary responses** we should be aiming for - **what was in place locally** and **good practice** from elsewhere
- **Mapped gaps** in our response and **key challenges**;
- Identified **wider infrastructure pieces of work**; and a set of **recommendations**.

Strategic Context - National

Constantly developing national landscape - helped highlight the growing need to tackle perpetration, through:

- Domestic Abuse Act
- National VAWG Strategy and the Statement of Expectations (commissioners)
- National Tackling DA Plan (perpetrator pillar)
- Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Act 2022 (OOCs)
- Online Harms Bill (cyber stalking)
- Strategic Policing Requirement (VAWG)
- Other improvement (e.g. CJS inspections)
- National 'action on perpetrators' network
- National Oversight Group on perpetrators (DA Commissioner)

Our local landscape is also developing...

Strategic Context - Local

- **Northumbria PCC - VAWG Strategy** - pillar on tackling perpetrators
- **Northumbria PCC - Police and Crime Plan** - aligns to the 'preventing crime' priority
- **Northumbria Police VAWG Framework** - relentless pursuit of perpetrators.
- **Northumbria VRU Response Strategy**
 - stronger commitment around perpetrators
 - rise in youth violence and link to those young people exposed to DA in the home
- **6 local DA Boards** - clearer understanding of how to strengthen local responses to perpetration (VRU has added value to this knowledge base) and commitments to this

Reasons to pivot towards the perpetrator

- **VRU** - domestic abuse has to form part of our response to serious violence
- **1/3rd of all serious violence** in Northumbria was domestic related (2021)
- **Only 1% of perpetrators get an intervention**
- **High-risk DA cases** per 10,000 population – Northumbria higher than national average
- **High costs**
 - Each ‘serial’ perpetrator for a MARAC case costs £63,500 (University of Bristol Drive Evaluation)
 - Each ‘serial’ perpetrator with a new victim in MARAC costs £52,200

Reasons to pivot towards the perpetrator cont...

- Adverse childhood experience – **too many children living with an abusive parent**
- Perpetrators who are fathers (or with connections to children) are **making a parenting choice** when they abuse
- Victims often more visible to services than **perpetrators** -creates issues:
 - Professionals tend to develop actions aimed at victims at the expense of what perpetrators should do, or stop doing.
 - Feeds **victim-blaming** narratives
 - **Leaves perpetrators unaccountable and invisible**
- Addressing perpetrator behaviour **as early as possible** is a key goal
 - Often missing part of the response
 - Place the accountability and responsibility for change where it needs to be placed – with the perpetrator.

Key Challenges from the review

- **Resources to get upstream** of abusive behaviours – context of austerity.
 - **Harder to evidence impact of primary** prevention but a key part of the public health approach
 - Sufficient resources to address the **scale of the problem** (only 1% perps get an intervention),
 - **Multiple types of perpetration, motivations; typologies; and intersections**
 - Underlying complex and unmet needs create barriers to engaging in support – these often need addressing before behaviour change
- Having a **broad enough offer**/interventions to address different needs and types of perpetrators:
 - Different typologies of intimate partner violence (IPV) e.g. intimate terrorism, situational couple violence etc.
 - Familial DA
 - Child to Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA)
 - Young people causing harm in their own intimate relationships
 - Women who harm
 - Different need e.g. Neurodiversity; language barriers; past trauma; mental ill health; substance misuse

Key Challenges cont...

- **Building profiles of those causing harm** is difficult:
 - Heavily reliant on police data giving only a partial picture
 - Data recording
 - Gaps on extent of CPVA
 - Without good data, hard to understand levels of demand and needs - impacts on getting the right pathways to support.

- Frontline professionals – missing the skills and confidence to **engage perpetrators**.
 - **Missing** early warning signs = likely escalation
 - **Past behaviour - good predictor of future behaviour**
 - **Getting upstream** – training multi-agency workforce to **supportively challenge and motivate** those who harm, to engage in support
 - Need to improve staff competencies around engaging perpetrators in a range of settings

- **Role of families, friends and communities** often **under-estimated** - first source of support

Key Challenges cont...

- **Getting sufficient non-statutory, voluntary interventions:**
 - As not all perpetrators get court-ordered interventions
 - Not all victims want to pursue a CJS pathway, or want to separate
- Using all available criminal and civil **tools/powers** – often capacity to apply and enforce
- **Recording** the full range of behaviours and **impact** on the child, the non-abusive parent and the family functioning **often missing from case files.**
- **Perpetrators risk assessments** - range of tools but not commonly used (unlike DASH-RIC for victims)
 - PPIT
 - SARA and B-SAFER
 - Safe & Together Institute's perpetrator mapping tool.
 - Improve quality of referrals into perpetrator services.

Key Challenges cont...

- **Wider society - stuck in a victim-blaming narrative** - “why doesn’t the victim just leave” instead of “why doesn’t the perpetrator stop”.
- **Perpetrator provider market:**
 - Under-developed
 - Under-resourced
 - Recruitment and retention
 - Identifying the wrong-front doors
 - Often poor quality referrals into services

What Does a Good Strategic Response Look Like?

- **Adult and child victim safety at the heart of any perpetrator intervention** – and measure this.
- **Measure more** than outputs on numbers of referrals and successful completions. Need impact on:
 - Frequency and severity
 - Victims feel safer
 - Expanded space for action
 - Perpetrator taking responsibility and accountability
 - **Respect's 'outcomes framework'** and the Project Mirabel research)
 - **Different agencies will be interested in different outcomes** e.g. reduced demand on policing
- A good strategic response should also use a **range of measurement tools** to evidence impact. E.g. Impact Toolkit; Change Star, RFGV scores; Severity of Abuse Grid (SOAG), victim outcomes data etc.

What Does a Good Strategic Response Look Like?

- **Respect standard and Respect accreditation**
- Skilled and experienced perpetrator **staff** and **integrated survivor support** is key
- Interventions that can respond to **all forms/types** of abuse and abuser **at all levels of risk/harm**
- **Joined-up referral pathways** for the **whole family**
- Broad range of:
 - **Primary** prevention interventions
 - **secondary** prevention interventions
 - **tertiary** prevention interventions
 - Supported by a good range of mainstream responses

Examples.....

A good primary prevention strategic response

Stopping people from causing harm in the first place:

- **Active bystander programmes** to tackle root causes of violence and abuse
- **Engaging men and boys as part of the solution – in conversations** around positive masculinity, harmful gendered social norms, misogyny and sexism... in range of settings.
- **Education for young people on healthy relationships and consent**
- **Marketing and communication campaigns.**
 - *#DontBeThatGuy*
 - *#IsThisOK*
 - *#Enough*
 - *#WhiteRibbonUK*
 - Campaigns can also raise **awareness of coercive control** – to give clear messages on what beliefs and behaviours aren't tolerated at a societal level

A good secondary prevention strategic response:

- **Child to Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA)** interventions e.g.
 - Respect Young People's Programme (RYPP)
 - Non-violent resistance approaches (NVR)
 - Responses to pre-adolescents with explosive and controlling impulses
- Intervening early with **young people causing harm in their own teenage relationships**
- Early responses to **standard-risk** or 'alleged' first-time perpetrators e.g. Project CARA workshops
- **Improve the competencies of the multi-agency workforce**
- **Equipping informal networks around perpetrators** (families/friends) to safely challenge/support
- **Earlier engagement phases** to group work programmes e.g. **Make a Change**
 - Wrap-around element to a 26-week group work
 - Disclosure and naming of DA would be an early intervention goal

A good tertiary prevention strategic response

- Court-mandated **statutory** structured **group work**
- Voluntary **non-statutory** accredited and structured **group work**
- **Father-specific programmes** e.g. ‘Caring Dads’
- Making best use of all existing **multi-agency panels** for robust information sharing and joint action
- **Housing pathways** with behaviour change and integrate survivor support (e.g. RESTSRT, London and Making Safe, North Yorkshire)
- **Stalking-specific** interventions e.g. Multi-Agency Stalking Intervention Programme (MASIP)
- **Behaviour change programmes in substance misuse treatment settings** e.g. ADVANCE
- **Intensive case management** with **stabilisation, support and behaviour change** for high risk, high harm, serial perpetrators (e.g. Drive and Northumbria Hub & Spoke).

Mainstream Responses

Raft of mainstream responses that should form part of the strategic response.

- **Policing** - multiple **tools and powers** - need robust enforcement. DAPOs coming (positive requirements)
- Criminal, Civil and Family **Courts responses**
- **Prison and Probation** Services responses.
- **Housing**
 - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation has guidance on responses to perpetrators
- **Health and Social Care Responses** - real opportunities to reach perpetrators earlier
 - E.g. those who've adopted a **perpetrator-pattern-based approach** (e.g. Safe & Together)

The Need for a Whole Systems Response

Review identified this all needs to be underpinned by a whole systems response that considers:

1. **Whole Person:** responses are most likely to be effective in reducing domestic abuse if they're differentiated according to type of abuse and tailored to the needs of the individual.
2. **Whole Family:** Integrated pathways of support across the whole family. Helps triangulate info. on risk and impact
3. **Whole Community:** targeting education settings, workplaces, friends, families and communities and not just agencies, as part of the co-ordinated community response
4. **Whole Society:** zero tolerance approach to abuse and calling out root causes wherever seen

Build responses to perpetrators into awareness raising, workforce development, policies, procedures, pathways, and routine and selective enquiry.....

Tertiary Prevention Gaps

1. **1:1 support, stabilisation and behaviour change** for high risk, high harm, serial or complex repeat perps
2. Improved **policing and CJS responses**
3. Partners to support the police around **tools, powers and positive requirements**
4. **Housing pathways** for perpetrators with behaviour change
5. **Stalking-specific** interventions for high risk cases
6. **Group work and 1:1 work being flexible enough** to respond to **all needs and all forms of pereepration** including familial DA; LGBT+ perpetrators.
7. **Father-specific programmes** for those whose abuse harms their children
8. **Domestic abuse behaviour change in substance misuse treatment**

Secondary Prevention Gaps

1. **Workforce development** to give multi-agency staff confidence, skills and tools to engage perps
2. **Diversionary cautions** for domestic abuse for low risk perpetrators (2-tier framework for OOCs)
3. **Wrap around element to group work** where acceptance of abuse is a goal not a pre-requisite for group work
4. Equipping **friends and families of perpetrators** with the tools to support perpetrators to interrupt abuse
5. Increasing provision to respond to **CPVA** including development on **non-violent resistance interventions**

Primary Prevention Gaps

1. **Active bystander interventions** specifically to challenge misogyny, sexism and social norms around VAWG e.g. in community, sports and workplace settings
2. **Conversations with men and boys** about masculinity and harmful norms e.g. in education and sports settings
3. **Awareness raising campaigns around coercive control** and signs of dangerousness

Recommendation Themes from the Review

Review findings and key challenges resulted in 8 recommendation themes.

1. Recommendation 1: **Active Bystander** Interventions (Primary)
2. Recommendation 2: Engaging **men and boys** as part of the solution (Primary)
3. Recommendation 3: **Workforce Development and Building Capacity** to Deliver (Secondary)
4. Recommendation 4: Commission a **Broader Range of Perpetrator Interventions** that Meet All Needs, and Meet Accreditation and Quality Assurance Standards
5. Recommendation 5: Long-term Sustainable **Funding, Joint Commissioning and Pooled** Budgets
6. Recommendation 6: **Housing Pathways** for Perpetrators (Tertiary)
 1. Recommendation 7: **Criminal Justice Specific** Recommendations
 2. Recommendation 8: **Building Up Strategic Responses** to Perpetrators

Progress being made – wider system response

Developments contributing to recommendations 5 & 8

VRO and wider OPCC

- **Outcomes framework** across primary, secondary and tertiary prevention
- **Mapping pathways**
- Mapped direct **support for child victims** as part of whole family response (& filing gaps)
- Had an **evidence base** for 2 bids to HO Perp Fund
- **VAWG Commissioning Forum** (OPCC/health/LA) - agreed commissioning principles

The 6 local Domestic Abuse Boards:

- Using review findings to **build on local responses** / action plans
- **All committed to strengthening their responses** to those causing harm.
- Two Boards benchmarked themselves against review recommendations
- One Board is updating its DA strategy to include a perpetrator priority

Local authorities

- Either externally commissioning a wider perpetrator service offer OR delivering an in-house
- All have **integrated survivors support**
- Seeking **accreditation**

Progress being made – primary prevention

Developments contributing to recommendations 1 & 2

Active bystander training and engaging men and boys

- Funding direct delivery and **Active Bystander train-the-trainer** in Northumbria
- Includes **masterclass** on engaging men and boys and dealing with resistance
- Founded in **social norms theory** - to drive behaviour change in bystanders.
- Will **help disrupt normalisation** of violence and abuse
- Context is **gender-based violence** - men's violence towards women and girls
- Other genders often experience male violence and abuse
- **Focus on root causes** – and **need for cultural shifts**
- **Will help challenge** harmful gender norms, language, attitude, beliefs towards women & girls at individual and peer group level

White Ribbon accreditation

- 5 of our local authorities accredited
- OPCC - supporter status
- Will **help push forward more engagement with men and boys.**

Progress being made – secondary prevention

Developments contributing to recommendations 3 & 4

VRU / OPCC / Police

- Preparing for **OOCDs** for DA (CARA)
- VRU piloting **multi-agency workforce training**
- VRU part-funding new Northumbria service called '**Findaway**' supporting **informal networks** around victims and perpetrator
- Two **funding bids** to the HO Perpetrator Fund for early intervention (one for CPVA)
- Police **workforce training** (stalking; CPVA and DA Matters)

Councils

- **Widening their perpetrator intervention offer**
- More ability to tailor interventions to level of harm and needs.
- Two councils have rolled out '**Change Star**' training and Motivational Interviewing

Progress being made – tertiary prevention

Developments contributing to recommendations 3 & 4

VRU and 6 Local Authorities - Piloted Drive Project and developing Hub & Spoke

- Independent evaluation
- Learning led to locally-tailored model (**Northumbria Hub & Spoke**)
- Stronger integrated support for victims.
- Joint funding (VRU, HO and LA)
- **Increasing capacity and skills** of our perpetrator workforce to work with this cohort e.g. intensive case management training and ISS training
- Perpetrator Fund bid

Police, Probation and Mental Health Trust

- Developed an intervention for high risk stalker (MASIP-type model) for 2023-24
- Obsessive and compulsive behaviours.
- Will build pathways between stalking intervention and perpetrator services

Summary of VRU embedding DA into the SV Duty

- **Perpetrator Needs Assessment** (via strategic review)
- **Helping move us in the right direction.** BUT, still early days and challenges
- **Helped** VRU/OPCC articulate to the Boards our **added value contribution to tackling DA** as part of the Serious Violence Duty
- **More collaboration,** avoiding duplication of structures/responses
- VRU/OPCC now **key member of DA Boards**
- **Helping multi-agency partners better understand breadth** of what's needed to have a good strategic response to perpetrators

Summary of VRU/OPCC embedding DA into the SV Duty

VRU/OPCC contributing towards a number of the recommendations that span primary, secondary and tertiary prevention

- **Active bystander**
- **Hub & Spoke**
- **Bidding for resources** to widen range interventions (CARA, Make a Change, CPVA)
- Part-funding **Findaway service**

VRU/OPCC leading on, or funding, some key infrastructure pieces of work

- Perpetrator **Outcomes Framework**
 - **Mapping referral pathways**
 - **Wider workforce development**
 - **Helping improve skills** of existing perpetrator and ISS workforce
- **Northumbria VAWG Commissioning Forum** across Councils, NHS, OPCC.

Summary of VRU/OPCC embedding DA into the SV Duty

Plus range of other DA/SV/VAWG work led or funded by OPCC/VRU such as:

- **DHR Clinic** to share learning across boundaries
- **Improving provision for adult and child victims**
- **Closer working** with council e.g. **consensus panels**
- **Police control room early intervention project** – IDVAs in control room at key times
- **Migrant survivors guidance and a toolkit**
- **Sexual Assault Referral Centre**
- **Victim & Witness Service Improvement Board**
- **OPCC Victims Champion and ISVA Champion**
- **Domestic Abuse Practitioner Standards training (3- levels, accredited)**
- **Northumbria DA Workplace Champions Network**
- **VRU Education Team**
- **Women's Safety in Public Spaces Project (Safer Streets)** and Safer Transport App

Key Take-Aways and Questions/Discussion

The three key take-aways for us, as a VRU

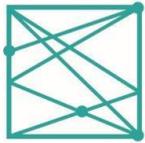
1. Helped us embed DA into our Serious Violence Duty response & gave us the evidence
 - Feel a more valued partner within our local DA Partnership; and avoiding duplication
 - Can more clearly articulate to partners our contribution to tackling DA
 - Helping embed the public health approach. Building actions into the VRU response strategy, Police and Crime Plan and the PCC's new VAWG Strategy
2. Further strengthened partnership working and collaboration in Northumbria
3. Helped broaden understanding of the breadth & types of responses needed to tackle DA perpetration in Northumbria – partners are more engaged in this.

Key Take-Aways and Questions/Discussion

What are the three key take-aways for you?

1. How, if at all, has this break-out session helped increase your understanding of what a good strategic response to DA perpetrators could look like? What do you know now that you didn't know before?
2. What can you pledge to take away from this session and feed into your own organisation or partnerships?
3. Do you have any examples of good practice you want to share here? What are you or your partner agencies doing to help strengthen existing approaches to tackling perpetrators?

Any other questions?



NORTHUMBRIA
**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

northumbria
VRU

violence
reduction
unit

Improving lives to prevent crime

Thank You!

Contact details:

Julie Smith

Domestic Abuse Specialist

Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria

Email: Julie.smith@northumbria-pcc.gov.uk