

PCC ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING

(Purpose: To hold the Chief Constable to account and to enable issues to be discussed and decisions made in public)

Date: Wednesday 16 April 2025

Time: 10:00am

**Venue: Conference Room, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner,
Building 7, Jubilee House, Falconers Chase, Wymondham**

A G E N D A

Item	Time	Agenda Item	Page Number
1.	10:00am	Attendance and Apologies for Absence	
2.		Declarations of Personal and/or Prejudicial Interests	
3.		To confirm the minutes and actions of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 29 January 2025	Page 3
4.	10:15am	Public Questions	Verbal Update
5.	10:45am	Police & Crime Plan 2025-29: Priority 1 - 'Preventing Crime'	Verbal Update
6.	11:00am	Police & Crime Plan 2025-29: Priority 2 - 'Cohesive Communities'	Verbal Update
	11:15am	Refreshment break (if required)	
7.	11:30am	Police & Crime Plan 2025-29: Priority 3 - 'Reducing Harm'	Verbal Update
8.	11:45am	HMICFRS Update – Joint Targeted Area Inspection of Norfolk	Page 21
9.	12:00pm	Neighbourhood Policing Update	Page 39
10.	12:15pm	Emerging Operational/Organisational Risks	Verbal Update
11.	12:20pm	A.O.B.	Verbal Update

12.	<p><u>Date of Next Scrutiny Meetings</u></p> <p>Strategic Deep Dive on Data Infrastructure: Wednesday 21 May 2024 from 10:00am – 12:00pm</p> <p>PCC Accountability Meeting: Tuesday 8 July 2025 from 10:00am – 1:00pm</p> <p>Police and Crime Panel: Thursday 31 July 2025 from 10:00am – 1:00pm</p>
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Enquiries to:

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إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على نسخة من هذا المستند باللغة العربية، يرجى الاتصال بمكتب مفوض الشرطة والجريمة على 01953424455 أو عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني opccn@norfolk.police.uk

Summary of the PCC Accountability Meeting

Date: Wednesday 29 January 2025

Venue: Hybrid meeting held on Microsoft Teams and in the Conference Room, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN), Wymondham

1. In attendance:

- Police and Crime Commissioner – Sarah Taylor, OPCCN
- Chief Constable – Paul Sanford, Norfolk Constabulary
- Chief Executive – Mark Stokes, OPCCN
- Chief Finance Officer – Simon George, OPCCN
- Deputy Chief Constable – Simon Megicks, Norfolk Constabulary
- Temporary Assistant Chief Constable – Chris Balmer, Norfolk Constabulary
- Assistant Chief Officer – Peter Jasper, Norfolk Constabulary
- Director of Performance and Scrutiny – Sharon Lister, OPCCN
- Head of Performance and Scrutiny – James Stone, OPCCN
- Inspector – Lucy King, Norfolk Constabulary
- Corporate News Manager – Laura Bagshaw, Norfolk Constabulary
- Media and Communications Manager – Sue Starling, OPCCN
- Communications Officer – Joshua Brown, OPCCN
- Business Support Officer – Jordan Mann, OPCCN

1.1 Apologies for absence:

- Assistant Chief Constable – Julie Dean, Norfolk Constabulary
- Director of Policy, Commissioning and Communications – Dr Gavin Thompson, OPCCN
- Director of the Local Policing Delivery Unit – Ralph Jackman, Norfolk Constabulary
- Performance and Scrutiny Manager – Kirt Wilkinson, OPCCN

2. Declarations of Personal and/or Prejudicial Interests

- There were none declared.

3. Confirm the Minutes of the Previous Meeting Held on Tuesday 8 October 2024

- The minutes from the PCC Accountability Meeting held on Tuesday 8 October 2024 were agreed to be a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.
- Action updates can be found on page 16.

4. Public Questions

Public Question	Constabulary Answer
<p>"During the PCC meeting on the 8th of October, my question was read out and raised concern that a violent incident was inevitable due to the ongoing issues with drug dealing in the area. On the evening of the 8th of October 2024 (the evening of the last quarterly meeting), there was an aggravated incident in St. Stephen's Square that led to two arrests, this was within a few metres of my front door.</p> <p>Following the SNAP meeting on the 9th of October, which was attended by a significant number of residents and business owners, one further arrest was made. Additionally, on the 6th of December 2024, it was reported that 15 arrests had been made in Norfolk as part of a County Lines national campaign.</p> <p>Firstly, I would like to thank the police for their work in arresting the individuals involved in the St. Stephen's Square incident and for the increased police presence that has significantly curbed drug dealing on this specific street. The efforts have been greatly appreciated by residents and businesses. However, I acknowledge that drug-related activity remains a major concern in the surrounding areas, impacting the broader community.</p> <p>What further work will be undertaken by the police to address drug dealing and related criminal activity across our city? How</p>	<p>The Chief Constable (CC) was in agreement with the member of the public that the job is not done, and this will continue to be a challenge for the Constabulary. The CC confirmed that they will continue to carry out visible patrols and plain clothed patrols, which the public may not always see, however persons who are stop and searched will certainly know that these patrols are taking place. The area was for a period of time the Neighbourhood Priority Area for the Safer Norwich Board. As a consequence of that, operations were carried out in the area resulting in a number of positive outcomes and positive arrests. The CC confirmed that Norfolk Constabulary continue to take part in coordinated county lines operations in and around Norwich which include intensification weeks, where the force really dive into an area in strength and there is also sustained work being done to address the highest harm organised crime groups, particularly those that are likely to exploit children and cause significant community concern. The CC confirmed that the force is increasing their use of technology to support their efforts around this crime type, particularly the mobile phone element which is bringing a lot of success to the Constabulary. The CC stated that they are getting a high number of guilty pleas at court which means swifter justice because of the evidence being put forward by Norfolk Constabulary. The CC confirmed that the force is working with the Norfolk Drug and Alcohol Partnership as prevention is a key part of the force's efforts. Alongside this, the Op ADDER (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption Enforcement and Recovery) team in Norwich is working with the highest risk offenders and those involved in drug supply, to put together a whole system response.</p>

<p>will the successes from campaigns such as the County Lines initiative be sustained and built upon to ensure lasting change in our communities?"</p>	<p>The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was grateful to the correspondent to hear that difference has been noted.</p>
<p>"It has come to my attention that even minor disciplinary matters within the police service require a lengthy, bureaucratic process, which often results in front row officers being consigned to desk work for months. Taking even one person off frontline work puts huge pressure on the remaining team, creates unwarranted personal stress and gives criminals increased opportunities. Maybe allow a panel of senior officers to "triage" cases, so that the full process is used only where absolutely necessary, and officers can return to normal duties quickly? Justice delayed is justice denied."</p>	<p>The CC stated that there is rightly some concern, and it is the CC's view that existing processes on too many occasions result in misconduct investigations taking too long to resolve, which is of no benefit to anyone involved. The Constabulary are looking to take opportunities to expedite where they can, however the CC is aware of the damage that has been done to confidence in policing, so adhering to the robust and thorough process which ensures independence is also of critical importance. The CC stated that he has seen in other institutions the consequences when these processes are not followed, and it does nothing to help improve public trust and confidence. The CC stated that nationally there has been a significant increase in the number of complaints. The CC suggests that in Norfolk, this is because the workforce and the public are more likely to speak up about issues. However, this increase does put greater demand on the Professional Standards Department. Part of this problem could be resolved by putting more investigators into the team and the force has done that within the confines of the resources available to them. The CC confirmed that there have been some recent updates to conduct regulations, one of the most significant being a change in the construction of the misconduct panel as they used to be overseen by an independent Legally Qualified Chair, but now they are overseen by a Chief Officer with two Independent Panel Members. The CC stated that Norfolk Constabulary have gone into partnership with Suffolk Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary to trial a dedicated Assistant Chief Constable to oversee those misconduct hearings to reduce delays in waiting for a panel chair. This process is working well so far, however, there is a national shortage of lawyers who are suitably trained for these hearings and nationally there is work to be done to increase the pool of panel members. The CC commented that there may be a</p>

	<p>need to look at other means of legal representation for some of the more straightforward cases.</p> <p>The PCC added that officer welfare needs to be safeguarded as many of these cases are very lengthy and complex.</p>
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5. Pillar 1 – Sustain Norfolk Constabulary

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
Can you clarify the small overspend on transport? Is this a one-off or will there be recurring overspend in this area?	Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Jasper confirmed that this overspend is in relation to more car allowances now than what was previously required.
In relation to the personal wellbeing assessment survey, please could you clarify whether this is used across all teams, what the process is in identifying areas for improvement, and what interventions can be accessed as a result?	<p>Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) Megicks confirmed that the personal wellbeing survey is a key enabler for the force to ensure that the workforce is provided with the right support. Specifically in relation to high risk and high exposure areas, to help make that wellbeing assessment the force use Oscar Kilo supervisory wellbeing training which is comprehensively evidence based using psychological screening services. DCC Megicks confirmed that the force also survey officers that join the service to see how they are and what their thoughts on policing are and that provides key insight. Furthermore, the Constabulary undertakes the People Opinion Survey and adheres to the National Health and Wellbeing Strategy to ensure the forces' interventions are well planned. Generally, the force looks to ensure that individuals are getting the appropriate support in which they need. Within the Health and Wellbeing Department, the force has services that provide both at the acute end and the more chronic end to support people. DCC Megicks confirmed that Norfolk Constabulary have a range of support interventions and processes.</p>

<p>There seems to be a national issue regarding the delay in individuals being able to access occupational health services. Please could you provide some clarity on this at a local level?</p>	<p>DCC Megicks confirmed that the force keeps a close eye on this and what the backlogs look like. DCC Megicks confirmed that Norfolk Constabulary have significantly less backlogs, in terms of time and numbers, than the national average to access that type of support. DCC Megicks stated that the force is only able to deliver a relatively small provision and will often identify, assess, and signpost towards more specialist National Health Service provision. The force then falls into the general queue that the NHS provides. DCC Megicks stated that there is a need for that correct support and intervention so that individuals can come back into the workplace, so it makes no sense for the Constabulary to delay and not provide services that are needed.</p> <p>The CC identified two cases where officers have suffered significant injuries on duty and have experienced significant delays for specialist treatment which was required and could not be provided internally, such as dental reconstruction and surgery.</p>
<p>In relation to ICT Digital Updates, it is noted that the Constabulary are moving towards the Target Operating Model (TOM) process, could you clarify what this means for the Constabulary operationally?</p>	<p>ACO Jasper confirmed that there are a number of areas driving the new ICT structure, such as advancements in technology. There is a move to cloud-based services, however there are limitations regarding security. ACO Jasper stated that there has been a 120% increase in ICT demand through the increase of officers which has meant that the force has moved to a new operational model. Through increasing the capacity and structure of the ICT team, this should help the team meet the increased demand pressures as this covers both Norfolk and Suffolk. ACO Jasper confirmed that they are looking at ways to better exploit technologies in which they have made and want to make, such as with Artificial Intelligence (AI). ACO Jasper stated that the force wants to improve the business engagement function through bringing together some ICT business partners. Furthermore, the Constabulary wants to improve capacity around security management. Within ICT itself, the force wants to ensure that there</p>

	are more opportunities for progression by revisiting structures around pay and staff retention.
In relation to the National Digital Strategy, what might Norfolk Constabulary get out of that input?	<p>ACO Jasper confirmed that the new National Digital Strategy is due to be published in April 2025. The Police Digital Service has been consulting over the last few months and Norfolk has participated in that consultation process. It is difficult to see what will come out of it however, there appears to be a need to join ICT solutions nationally across all forces, so hopefully it will push productivity and efficiency. ACO Jasper confirmed that once the National Digital Strategy is out, Norfolk Constabulary will refresh their digital strategy.</p> <p>The CC added that the National Digital Strategy sits with the National Police Chiefs' Council but will be delivered through Police Digital Services. The CC commented on how this will push police to be more ready for the future and will link to national police reform moving towards common operating platforms. The CC stated that it is important that forces do not become impatient and launch into different operating platforms, so the difficulty for some forces will be to remain patient and stay within the current guidelines set. The CC thinks that this work will overlap with the Home Office led Commercial Efficiency Programme. There will be a long-term benefit to all of this, however in the short-term there is potential for some turbulence.</p> <p>The PCC stated she is keen to see this once published.</p>
Where is the Constabulary now in relation to 'Right Care, Right Person' (RCRP)?	The CC confirmed that RCRP is not a project that will ever end and as the force change their processes, partners do too so there is a need to ensure that there is no gap in service provision. The CC commented that the force is happy with the progress, however within recent weeks the force has identified the need to

	<p>talk with some partners to get clarity on certain points and processes to ensure no one falls through any potential gaps.</p> <p>Temporary Assistant Chief Constable (T/ACC) Balmer added that work does continue, and when RCRP was first launched there were very frequent meetings, however there was a balancing point to be made with the frequency of these, so they have become less frequent but do still take place. T/ACC Balmer commented that the risk around RCRP is that it can be a 'catch all' term which is quite generic, so it is important to keep having these meetings with partners so that appropriate challenges can be made so that RCRP can continue to move forward. T/ACC Balmer confirmed that in relation to the scrutiny element of RCRP, he has been asked to present to the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p>
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6. Pillar 2 – Visible and Trusted Policing

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
Have Norfolk Constabulary found opportunities to learn lessons from Operation Focus that can be brought into neighbourhood policing?	<p>T/ACC Balmer stated that the governance of Operation Focus is through the Neighbourhood Policing Board, so there is an opportunity to learn lessons. Targeting hotspots can have an effect on crime, however comparatively Norfolk's hotspots are not that 'hot', they are more like 'warm' spots. T/ACC Balmer confirmed that another piece of work to come out of this was that the Constabulary, using tracking software, was able to identify how much work was being done in those hotspot areas and it was clear that officers actually tend to under-report time spent in hotspot areas.</p>

	<p>The CC added that Norfolk do not have many hotspot areas, however it remains clear that the public want to see officers in their communities regardless of the impact it has on crime. The funding for Operation Focus runs out at the end of March, however in time the CC is hopeful this will be replaced with officers coming through the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.</p> <p>The T/ACC also acknowledged the change in recording process which is behind the increase noted in Table 7.</p> <p>The CC also noted the change in demand with the Contact and Control Room using automation processes with more online contact.</p>
<p>In relation to Police Appeals Tribunals, please could you clarify the way in which the data is recorded, is there a threshold which is used if they only go to a full hearing, and how confident can we be in these numbers?</p>	<p>DCC Megicks stated that this is highly regulated and there are structures and processes into which the force has to operate. In relation to Police Appeals Tribunals, from October 2023 to September 2024 there have only been three Police Appeals Tribunals, none of which went to a full hearing. All three appeals were reviewed and dismissed under Rule 15. DCC Megicks stated that because the process is so highly regulated the force engage with legal professionals who hold the Constabulary to account, but this also builds in cost and delays.</p> <p>The CC added that there will be some amendments to the current regulations, which came in around May, which will enable the Constabulary to move more cases to Accelerated Misconduct Hearings which will be in everyone's interests.</p> <p>The PCC acknowledged that the force offers substantial reassurance in this area.</p>

	<p>DCC Megicks stated that he has daily conversations with the Professional Standards Department about individual matters and gives significant attention towards all things discipline. Regulations demand that DCC Megicks goes through the quality of all investigations and the speed of these investigations.</p> <p>The PCC acknowledged the delays court cases have on internal investigations.</p>
<p>Have the force been able to explain to officers the importance of accurate engagement reporting so that the appropriate operational decisions can be made, for example with deployment?</p>	<p>T/ACC Balmer confirmed that engagement performance data is used within meetings with officers, and the message provided is that the ability to be visible in order to deliver trust and confidence to members of the public is very important. Specialist Beat Managers and those in the Community Policing Team understand this importance, the bigger challenge is with response officers who are trying to deliver across a plethora of important areas such as investigating crime whilst trying to remain visible. T/ACC Balmer confirmed that Norfolk Constabulary is exploring other ways to automate engagement data recording.</p> <p>The CC added that they know the effect in which they would like to achieve, however they would like to do it in a way where it does not add additional work to the officers but enables the force to ensure communities are getting the coverage in which they need. The CC confirmed that the number of engagement options on the data recording app has reduced to try and ensure there is no double-counting, however the CC is positive that the amount of engagement activity has increased.</p> <p>The PCC acknowledged the work and commitment of the neighbourhood teams.</p>

<p>In relation to 999 calls, it is noted that Norfolk Constabulary was answering 92.1% of 999 calls in under ten seconds for the reporting period ending September 2024. How sustainable is this level of service?</p>	<p>The CC stated that he is happy with the progress being made in relation to 999 call performance in Norfolk, however he is cautious the summer months are approaching, and this is where the force sees the greatest strain as there will be a high level of officer abstraction due to mandated training and operational commitments. The CC stated that the force is getting to a point where they are in marginal gain territory and technology might be the way to move this forward. The CC added that one of the biggest challenges that the force has faced in recent years is the investment made in relation to increasing officer numbers. The CC stated that there is a need to invest in other areas such as technology to ensure there is no lag when it comes to dealing with online contact and 999 and 101 calls. The CC wants to find a mechanism to create further advancements in the Contact and Control Room (CCR) particularly around 101 calls and online reporting. The CC stated that the service level of 999 calls in Norfolk is strong with an average answer rate of 7 seconds, he would like to maintain that level of service whilst using technology to improve online reporting and 101 call performance. The CC commented that this is consistent with one of the Home Offices key priorities of contactability and getting to the right person for the right response, and advancements in technology could assist in achieving this. The CC stated that the team in the CCR do a fantastic job, however the force needs better technology to further assist.</p>
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7. Pillar 3 – Tackling Crime

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
<p>In relation to the changes in the counting rules which has affected the Domestic Abuse (DA) and Rape and Serious</p>	<p>T/ACC Balmer confirmed that the force will not have that level of precision to ascertain if these decreases are entirely due to changes in the counting rules.</p>

<p>Sexual Offences (RaSSO) volumes, has the force got a sense of whether the decrease in the number of these crimes is due entirely to these changes in the counting rules?</p>	<p>The CC added that at the macro-national level the force can do the comparator between police recorded crime and the British Crime Survey, however the survey at a local level is limited in usefulness. With that being said the British Crime Survey is showing a steadying pattern of violent crime nationally. The CC stated that there are so many factors at play such as confidence in reporting, it is difficult to ascertain whether the decreases are purely due to changes in the counting rules. As frameworks are developed around monitoring responses to Violence Against Women and Girls, there needs to be an emphasis of how the victim feels rather than the numbers in terms of volumes of crime. The CC added that looking at demographics such as age ranges may be more beneficial rather than looking at total number figures.</p>
<p>The Norfolk Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (NIDAS) also offer help to men to ensure they have access to victim service support, feedback on quality of service can differ so what is Norfolk Constabulary doing to obtain this feedback?</p>	<p>T/ACC Balmer confirmed that the force does survey DA victims but not very many as they do not want to risk re-traumatising or re-victimising individuals. T/ACC Balmer added that there is national development on best practice surrounding this.</p>
<p>Positionally, where are Norfolk Constabulary on their roll-out of the DA Matters training?</p>	<p>T/ACC Balmer confirmed that the first session to frontline officers started in October 2024 and will be completed by the end of March 2025. T/ACC Balmer stated that the force does not want to be in a position where some officers are using previous methods whereas others are using the new methods.</p> <p>The CC stated that he attended the training last week, and he thought it was brilliant. Officers were really engaged with the training, and it was representative of the significant workload response officers face concerning DA, so it is vital they have the right skills. With the rate of recruitment in the years to come, the training will be something the force needs to review whilst ensuring the good parts of delivery of the training are incorporated into student officer training and the CC will pick this up with the Learning and Development Department. The CC commented that the force wanted to roll the DA Matters</p>

	training out before the summer demand, so all response officers are equipped before such time.
Could you comment on what the engagements with the Crown Prosecution Service and regional forces for a DA Joint Justice Plan could mean locally?	T/ACC Balmer stated that this follows up from the positive work of Operation Soteria. The new Joint Justice Plan was launched in November 2024, Norfolk Constabulary then took time to review this as it is very much trying to get that Crown Prosecution Team approach into DA. T/ACC Balmer stated that the force is exploring what a Joint Operational Improvement Meeting will look like between Norfolk Constabulary, Suffolk Constabulary and the Crown Prosecution Service as that group will be the ones to deliver the Plan for the two counties. T/ACC Balmer confirmed that Norfolk Constabulary have previously had a DA Delivery Group, so they are not starting from zero. The force is looking at what they can do internally to improve, they are looking at best practice and benchmarking this.
In relation to fraud, could you clarify what the analytical support looks like and how it is used to help victims?	<p>T/ACC Balmer stated that the City of London Police lead on fraud nationally and they produce data for Norfolk Constabulary which shows victimisation. There is a danger of double counting as Norfolk also produce their own data, however it is important to look at both data sources to see the totality of fraud. This data will feature on a Power BI dashboard produced by the force, it will highlight the frequency of offending and the severity of it. Conversations are then had with local Beat Managers to ensure victims are receiving service to help to prevent them being victims again. T/ACC Balmer stated that there is a very strong community safety element to the work being done on fraud.</p> <p>The PCC added she has received correspondence around fraud and the impact, so will discuss this further as part of her Police and Crime Plan.</p> <p>The CC acknowledged the impact this crime type has on victims.</p>

8. Pillar 4 – Prevent Offending

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
Has the force got a sense of the positive outcome rates particular around reoffending?	T/ACC Balmer confirmed that he would take this away as an action to look at these outcome rates in terms of reoffending.
In relation to the new 'Offender Paid' model for conditional cautions, please could you clarify what would happen if the offender cannot pay?	DCC Megicks confirmed that the force needs to ensure the courses are right for the offenders so they will only be offered courses if they have the means to pay for the course. Needs assessments are conducted which helps to understand whether an offender will be able to pay for a course or not. DCC Megicks stated that there are still some in-house courses that will be available, such as impact awareness courses, which are suitable for all. DCC Megicks commented that if the offender is able to pay for an appropriate course, it may actually make that course more meaningful as they have had to pay for it.

9. Pillar 5 – Support Victims

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
Referrals into the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) are showing steady increases in respect to honour-based abuse, what is the team finding in relation to this, and are resources in the MASH equipped to deal with these increases in demand?	DCC Megicks comments that honour-based abuse is a crime type that is not very visible, so it is a difficult and demanding area for police investigations. Norfolk Constabulary have matured their approach and have some really skilled individuals who understand the crime type and make referrals. DCC Megicks confirmed that the force has a dedicated response team that sit within the MASH who are ring-fenced to deal with honour-based abuse as they are subject matter experts who are highly trained and skilled. There has been an uplift in terms of supervision for the team due to increases in demand. DCC Megicks commented that the workloads within the team remain manageable which

	means the support that is given to victims is very high. The force also has Honour-Based Champions across the organisation who are contactable to provide advice.
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10. Pillar 6 – Safer and Stronger Communities

PCC Question	Constabulary Answer
What is the response in the Constabulary in relation to the psychological risk in trauma exposure and recovery?	The CC commented that the Constabulary do not just limit this to Killed and Seriously Injured trauma exposure as across policing there is heightened trauma exposure, however there are certain departments where this is much more frequent.
In relation to Operation Octane, does the Constabulary have a sense of whether any activity is being displaced?	DCC Megicks stated that when making plans such as Operation Octane the displacement effect is considered. The plan is also about engaging with those groups that do congregate to share information whilst describing the impact it is having to try and facilitate where they can meet up. The issue is about the anti-social behaviour that is created and the impact it has on the surrounding communities. The Constabulary enforce where they have to, in order to make it uncomfortable for those causing problems.
Is there a timeline on the roll-out of Lawful Disclosures?	DCC Megicks stated that there is no specific timeline as of yet, however once the force knows something is working really well it is rolled out force-wide very quickly.
On retail crime, specifically the work being developed with the Norwich Riverside Retail Park in relation to digitisation of reporting, is this pilot scheme close to commencing?	DCC Megicks confirmed he would look into this and get back to the PCC confirming the timeline of the pilot scheme.

In relation to the Cadets Programme, there was a plan to bring together North Norfolk and Broadland and Norwich and South Norfolk unit as a temporary measure, has this happened or close to happening?	The CC confirmed that it is currently planned to maintain cadets in current shape and form, however the CC commented that the force needs to learn lessons from other parts of country to ensure cadet leadership is appropriately trained and vetted. To ensure these safeguarding protocols are in place does cause some disruption, however the Constabulary is looking to maintain as is.
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11. Emerging Operational/Organisational Risks

- The CC mentioned local government reform and devolution as one for the organisations to track going forward.
- The CC also mentioned funding and the upcoming Police and Crime Panel being held on 4 February 2025 and how the force is still waiting on baselines from the government on the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee and confirmation as to what the allocation will be in Norfolk. That detail is needed very soon to allow the Constabulary to start recruiting soon.
- The CC raised Child Sexual Exploitation as an operational risk due to some of the recent media coverage on this topic. The government has announced a number of measures in this area including full compliance with recommendations from recent His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reports. The CC clarified that the greatest risk in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation in Norfolk is that which happens within their own home perpetrated by family members and abuse which occurs online. The CC stated that the increases in online abuse referrals will put strain on the force due to greater demand pressures as this is a huge undertaking. More victims will be identified which will put greater strain on victim services who offer support.

Actions

Description of Action	Action Update/Decision
Action 4 (22 July 2024): The CC is to establish specific costs which could demonstrate the financial impact the court backlog is having on the Constabulary and to share such with the PCC.	<p>8 October 2024 – A recent Outcome Based Budgeting submission has profiled the requirement to extend the eleven temporary Victim and Witness Service (VAWS) Team posts that are required to maintain service delivery to victims and witnesses as a result of the significant and sustained court backlogs. The submission accounts for a need to budget for £349,340 to extend the uplift of posts across both forces for another twelve months (for the 2025/26 financial year). The uplift cost for Norfolk is £197,202.</p> <p>ACC Dean is to provide the PCC with some examples of significant court delays to aid the PCC with drafting a letter to the Ministry of Justice.</p> <p>29 January 2025 – ACC Dean provide the OPCCN with examples of court delays, which was sent onto the PCC for review. Action closed.</p>
Action 6 (8 October 2024): The PCC is to speak with the OPCCN Independent Custody Visitor (ICV) Scheme Manager regarding how policies are being implemented for detainees in relation to searches.	29 January 2025 – The PCC continues to speak with the OPCCN ICV Scheme Manager about how policies are being implemented for detainees in relation to searches. Action closed.
Action 7 (8 October 2024): The DCC is to send the PCC a review of the asymmetry of complaints.	29 January 2025 – DCC Megicks sent this review to the PCC for consideration. Action closed.
Action 8 (8 October 2024): The PCC is to meet with the Director of the Local Policing Delivery Unit to discuss the Power BI dashboard for case management.	29 January 2025 – A meeting was arranged by the OPCCN between the PCC and the Director of the Local Policing Delivery Unit to discuss the Power BI dashboard for case management, along with discussing hate crime and incidents datapoints and training uptake across Norfolk. The PCC confirmed that these conversations have taken place. Action closed.

<p>Action 9 (8 October 2024): ACC Davison is to produce a summary report for the PCC on the quantum of repeat victimisation for Domestic Abuse and Rape and Serious Sexual Offences. The report is to include the percentage of those cases which meet the definition of 'non-recent'.</p>	<p>29 January 2025 – On 11 October 2024, Dr Gavin Thompson sent the PCC a copy of the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Group dashboard which includes repeat Domestic Abuse and Serious Violence data. Action closed.</p>
<p>Action 10 (8 October 2024): ACC Davison to provide information to the PCC on Naloxone availability for police officers to carry on duty.</p>	<p>29 January 2025 – Norfolk police officers were first trained and equipped to carry Naloxone in 2021 as part of a pilot under Project ADDER. Following the conclusion of this pilot a proposal was made to Chief Officers earlier this year for the use of Naloxone by Norfolk police officers to become a business-as-usual approach. This was agreed and supplies were renewed. ACC Davison provided the PCC with a document for consideration which confirmed that a refreshed and improved training package was produced and endorsed by clinical partners. Since the Project ADDER pilot commenced in 2021, approximately 250 officers have been trained and equipped with a supply of intra-nasal Naloxone. Since the new approach was adopted earlier in 2024, there has been three incidents of Naloxone being administered by Norfolk officers. Action closed.</p>
<p>Action 11 (8 October 2024): The PCC and the Director of the Local Policing Delivery Unit are to meet to discuss district Hate Crime and Incidents datapoints and training uptake.</p>	<p>29 January 2025 – A meeting was arranged by the OPCCN between the PCC and the Director of the Local Policing Delivery Unit to discuss the Power BI dashboard for case management, along with discussing hate crime and incidents datapoints and training uptake across Norfolk. The PCC confirmed that these conversations have taken place. Action closed.</p>
<p>Action 12 (29 January 2025): The PCC is to visit Norfolk Constabulary's Contact and Control Room (CCR) to discuss the work they do to safeguard vulnerable individuals.</p>	<p>New Action.</p>

Action 13 (29 January 2025): T/ACC Balmer is to look at DAPPA positive outcome rates in terms of recidivism and forward the findings over to the PCC.	New Action.
Action 14 (29 January 2025): The CC is to look at the process for making lawful disclosures to insurance companies in relation to driving offences committed at or associated with car meets and provide the PCC with a timeline for a force-wide roll-out.	New Action.
Action 15 (29 January 2025): The DCC is to look into the toolkit pilot scheme in relation to retail crime and provide the PCC with an update as to the trial's development.	New Action.

Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 16 April 2025

Signatures



.....
Sarah Taylor
Police and Crime Commissioner



.....
Paul Sanford
Chief Constable



ORIGINATOR:

Deputy Chief Constable Megicks

REASON FOR SUBMISSION:

For Information

SUBMITTED TO:

PCC's Accountability Meeting – April 2025

SUBJECT:

HMICFRS update – Joint Targeted Area Inspection of Norfolk.

SUMMARY:

This report provides an overview of the Joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse in Norfolk which took place between 9th and 13th December 2024.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Police and Crime Commissioner is asked to note the report.

HMICFRS update

Joint Targeted Area Inspection of Norfolk

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) carry out joint inspections with Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) to assess how local authorities, the police, health, and Probation are working together in an area to identify, support, and protect vulnerable children and young people.

These short notice 'deep dive' inspections target specific areas of interest and concern, identifying areas for improvement and highlighting good practice from which others can learn.

On 25th November 2024 the inspectorates announced that they were commencing a Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse in Norfolk.

The inspection, which took place between 9th and 13th December 2024, examined local area arrangements and how leaders, managers, and professionals work together to identify and respond to children who are victims of domestic abuse in accordance with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and in line with guidance for local safeguarding partners.

The inspection framework can be viewed on the GOV.UK website, which includes the criteria against which the inspection teams evaluated evidence about the experiences and progress of children in Norfolk, including unborn children:

[Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse](#)

The inspection reviewed Norfolk's multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse at the point of identification; the quality of assessment, planning and decision-making in response to notifications and referrals; and the leadership, management, and effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in relation to this.

Inspection activity included a review of policies, guidance documents, training material, performance management information and minutes from strategic governance and partnership meetings. The Inspectorate received a strategic briefing from senior Executives from Norfolk County Council, the Constabulary, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Health and Probation before undertaking a series of interviews with strategic leads across each organisation. Other inspection activity included focus groups with officers and staff, multi-agency meetings observations, a visit to the Norfolk Constabulary Contact and Control Room, and time spent in the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) speaking with officers and staff and observing working practices. The inspection was also informed by a comprehensive audit of children's case records and other evidence that was gathered about their experiences.

The lead inspectors provided feedback to the partnership throughout the inspection period.

On 27th February the joint inspectorate published a letter of their findings. A copy of the letter is included below.

As detailed within the letter, by 11th June 2025 the Norfolk partnership will provide a joint written statement of the actions that are to be taken in response to the inspection findings, both by the partnership and by individual agencies. Activity in response to the findings has already commenced.

A partnership action plan is being developed. Implementation of this action plan will be overseen by local safeguarding partners through Norfolk's existing multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

END.

27 February 2025

Tom McCabe, Chief Executive Officer, Norfolk County Council
Sara Tough OBE, Executive Director Children's Services, Norfolk County Council
Tracey Bleakley, Chief Executive Officer, Norfolk and Waverley Integrated Care Board
Paul Sanford, Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary
Sarah Taylor, Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner
Alex Osler, Regional Probation Director, East of England
Chris Robson, Independent Scrutineer, Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board

Dear Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership

Joint targeted area inspection of Norfolk

This letter summarises the findings of the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse in Norfolk.

This inspection took place from 9 to 13 December 2024. It was carried out by inspectors from Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP).

Context

This inspection focused on the multi-agency response to unborn children and children aged 0 to 7 years who are victims of domestic abuse. Our evaluation of strategic arrangements in the local area took a broader look and considered the multi-agency response to children of all ages.

The inspectorates recognise the complexities in providing a multi-agency response to children and families when there is more than one victim and where there may be risks in addition to domestic abuse. Consequently, risk assessment and decision-making have several challenges for partners, not least of which is that the impact on the child is sometimes not immediately apparent.

A joint inspection of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse will highlight the significant challenges to partnerships in improving practice. We anticipate that these JTAIs will identify learning for all agencies and will contribute to the debate about what 'good practice' looks like.

Headline findings

Strong strategic leadership and collaborative partnership arrangements in Norfolk are helping to ensure that most unborn children and children aged 0 to 7, who are victims of domestic abuse, receive an effective response that safeguards them and meets their needs.

Domestic abuse is seen as a 'priority for everyone' in Norfolk. Overseen by the Norfolk Community Safety Partnership (NCSP), the Domestic Abuse and Serious Violence Group (DASVG) leads on the delivery of the Norfolk domestic abuse strategy, which focuses on tackling the causes of domestic abuse and supporting all victims of domestic abuse. There is an evident synergy between partners and coherent governance arrangements that provide and oversee the multi-agency response to domestic abuse at all levels. This is helping to ensure that preventing, responding to and supporting children who are victims of domestic abuse are suitably prioritised by all partner agencies.

Relationships between agencies and strategic leaders are mature and allow for constructive mutual challenge and problem-solving. There is good crossover between connected boards, including the NCSP, the Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board and the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DALB), to ensure that a whole-systems approach to tackling domestic abuse is provided. The NCSP appropriately maintains a high level of oversight of the impact of domestic abuse for children, and domestic abuse is integrated into all aspects of the NCSP work in safeguarding children.

The voices and experiences of children and families are central to needs analysis and service development. Strategic leadership and prioritisation have led to the development of a wide range of services to meet the needs of victims of domestic abuse and seek to prevent future harm. The needs of unborn children and children aged 0 to 7 at risk from domestic abuse are generally identified early and mostly responded to well. Support is well coordinated and sensitively delivered at the right level.

There remains, however, more work to do. The partnership itself has recognised the need for greater emphasis on evaluating service impact and measuring the effectiveness of domestic abuse training across the partnership to ensure that learning is leading to improved practice. There are some weaknesses in multi-agency information-sharing, and not all practitioners are sufficiently focused on obtaining the voice of the child or understanding children as victims in their own right. Multi Agency Risk Assessment Co-ordination (MARAC) processes are not always well utilised or understood. For a small number of children at risk of cumulative harm, the risks to them of repeated incidents of domestic abuse are not grasped soon enough.

What needs to improve?

- Partners' understanding and engagement in MARAC and the Partnership's oversight of its operation.
- The consistent consideration of the cumulative harm to children aged 0 to 7 from repeated experience of domestic violence.
- How well the voices and experiences of individual children who are victims of domestic abuse are listened to, understood and captured by practitioners, across the partnership, and are used to inform children's plans.
- The timeliness and consistency of information-sharing, in a small number of practice areas, related to risk management. This includes digital information-sharing of health records.
- The accessibility of domestic abuse training to practitioners, its take-up by those practitioners, and how well they apply learning to practice.

Strengths

- Strong strategic leadership and collaborative partnership working.
- The co-design and co-production of services with children.
- The commitment to father-inclusive practice.
- Multi-agency evaluation of referrals to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- The implementation and monitoring of Operation Encompass and its extension to services supporting children not in school.
- Multi-agency practice to support and protect unborn children.
- The development of domestic abuse champions across education and health settings and the deployment of specialist domestic abuse workers in children's social care teams.
- The operation of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law).
- Support by partners for the strategic and operational work of a specialist commissioned domestic abuse service.
- The quality and range of support provided by Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs).
- The provision and quality assurance of safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse.

Main findings

The partnership's strong strategic intent and commitment to supporting Norfolk children to 'flourish' as a strategic ambition is helping to safeguard children, including unborn children, who are victims of domestic abuse. Leaders have created a strong ethos and culture of openness and shared learning across the partnership. They know themselves and their services well and are committed to a journey of self-improvement and continuous development.

The NCSP is accountable for delivering the statutory duty placed on the local authority to support victims of domestic abuse, including children. The commitment to following a public health approach is firmly established in its strategic ambitions and priorities. The NCSP is well attended and meets regularly. Partner relationships are mature, which enables constructive discussion and challenge and effective joint working. The NCSP exercises strategic oversight of the DASVG, which is accountable for the delivery of strategic priorities and actions around domestic abuse. The impact of domestic abuse for children is integrated into every strand of work being undertaken by the DASVG subgroups. The DASVG is focused on developing the work around children being understood as victims in their own right, and on measuring the impact of domestic abuse training across the partnership to ensure that learning is impacting on practice. Collectively, these arrangements have ensured that service development in Norfolk is well coordinated, suitably prioritised and responsive to the needs of children.

The work of the DALB, which holds accountability for the delivery of safe accommodation, is diligent and robust. There is a clear multi-agency approach to the provision of accommodation and to the support needs of victims of domestic abuse, including children. This work is informed by robust performance management information and a range of comprehensive needs assessments. It has led to a good range of quality-assured, suitable accommodation being in place to meet need, including sanctuary support to help parents and their children to live safely in their own homes. Children and parents living in safe accommodation are well supported by a range of skilled and experienced support workers and volunteers. Families are helped to achieve their next steps, with careful thought given to their move-on plan.

The NSCP is well established and supported by a range of effective subgroups. Education services are well engaged and there are clear plans to further strengthen representation across the partnership board and subgroups. Domestic abuse is not named as a priority for the partnership as it is clearly integrated throughout all the work being undertaken. Independent scrutiny of the work of the NSCP is well established and provides critical challenge and insight, which supports service improvement. Leaders are open to learning and embrace opportunities to improve practice and the responses provided to children affected by domestic abuse. A recent

audit of practice to address domestic abuse undertaken by the NSCP has accurately identified practice strengths alongside key areas where practice needs to improve. Leaders acknowledge the need for enhanced workforce development, improved information-sharing and to achieve better consistency of practice with children as victims of domestic abuse. This learning is being responded to in a timely way within a comprehensive action plan, which is being tracked and reviewed by both the NSCP and NCSP strategic boards.

Co-design and co-production with children are a strength for the partnership. Children are involved in strategic planning and are helped to produce strategic plans that are specifically written by children, for children to understand. Children have been instrumental in designing specific services to support them as victims of domestic abuse, and leaders regularly hear from children to learn from their experiences to help improve domestic abuse support and services even further. For example, leaders have advocated powerfully about the need for self-help resources and contributed to the production of a mindfulness guide and anxiety handbook. In addition, the partnership commitment to achieving father-inclusive practice is demonstrated throughout frontline practice with a range of innovative programmes designed especially for fathers by fathers.

The intelligent use of partnership data, combined with audit and the voices of children and families, provides an in-depth understanding of the needs of children and families at risk from domestic abuse in Norfolk and the impact of services to support them. The partnership has correctly recognised the need to put even more emphasis on measuring the impact and outcomes of its interventions linked to domestic abuse.

A specialist commissioned service, as a response to domestic abuse, is highly valued across the partnership, both strategically and operationally. Its impact is tangible and far-reaching in providing domestic abuse services and in bringing the voices and experiences of victims and survivors to help shape these. The commissioned service of IDVAs, is available across the county and provides invaluable support to victims, including specialist support for children. Across Norfolk, IDVAs are also based in acute hospitals. They enable prompt support to be given to those experiencing domestic abuse, as well as improving understanding of domestic abuse for practitioners. The strategic placement of these roles, in key settings, have promoted access to the right support and help for children and their families impacted by domestic abuse.

Effective partnership working has also led to a wide range of commissioned, community, voluntary and social enterprise domestic abuse services being in place to support children, adult victims and perpetrators. These services are available across the continuum of need, ranging from universal to specialist programmes. Inspectors

met with a group of victims and survivors, who spoke positively about how completing a specialist domestic abuse programme had helped them to understand the powerful impact of domestic abuse on themselves and their children. While commissioned services are well integrated into the governance arrangements across the partnership, some smaller voluntary services feel less integrated and involved.

Services in Norfolk work well together to identify children who may be at risk from domestic abuse. The investment in creating domestic abuse champions within education and most health services is making a positive difference in raising awareness of domestic abuse, which supports the early identification of risk for children and adult victims.

Primary care has effective processes to ensure that children with safeguarding risks are monitored. Practitioners review all emergency department notifications, safeguarding meeting minutes and police notifications, and they update alerts on the patient record.

Midwives and public health practitioners make every contact count for routine enquiries into domestic abuse. The identification of the impact of domestic abuse on unborn children leads to early and effective support. Ambulance practitioners are professionally curious when attending incidents, with either adults or children as the patient, where domestic abuse could be a factor. They proactively seek the voice of the child and make careful observations of the family dynamics and home environment. If there are safeguarding concerns, they quickly refer children to the children's statutory services via the Children's Advice and Duty Service. This 'Think Family' approach has children in the forefront and helps keep them safe.

Early years providers and schools build open and trusting relationships with young children and their families and engage well in multi-agency planning for vulnerable children. Regular safeguarding audits in early years settings are helping to raise awareness and practice responses to domestic abuse. There are plans to roll out specific training on understanding and responding to domestic abuse to early years settings in 2025.

When unborn children and children aged 0 to 7 affected by domestic abuse are referred to children's statutory services, most receive a timely and appropriate response. This includes children who require help out of hours. Referrals are taken over the phone by consultant social workers, who work to the principle of 'never do nothing'. These rich and detailed conversations quickly help to identify the level of need and risk for children and what interventions and support are needed to help safeguard and support children as early as possible. This ethos of collaborative conversations together with early help support is providing an effective response to children experiencing domestic abuse and is helping to improve their lives. While

parental consent for referrals is considered at an early stage, consent is not always fully understood by some partners. This can lead to delays for a small number of children receiving help.

When there are immediate safeguarding concerns for unborn children and children aged 0 to 7, referrals are swiftly passed to the MASH for an interagency response. Partner agencies, including probation and the commissioned domestic abuse service, are well represented and engaged in the MASH. Referrals are effectively triaged and responded to by multi-agency practitioners. Social workers research the family's history and gather pertinent information, which helps them to swiftly build up a picture of the child's experiences. Next steps are proportionate and based on the careful consideration of strengths and risks. When immediate action is required to keep children safe, this takes place without delay. Referrals about domestic abuse incidents from the police vary in quality and do not consistently include important information about the child and family, for example information about their ethnicity, religion and beliefs. Practitioners understanding of the child's needs, experiences and the risks to them is missing this important information, at the earliest point in time, so that workers can provide a suitably informed response.

Following domestic abuse incidents, police use Operation Encompass effectively, to quickly share information with schools. Regular dip sampling of notifications provides assurance that appropriate information is being shared and acted on. Nearly all children receive additional support in school following information received via Operation Encompass. This information-sharing also helpfully extends to services supporting children not in education and children being home educated. There are firm plans to extend this to early years settings in 2025. This development is very welcomed and long-awaited by early years providers.

There are good examples where information-sharing between partners is supporting effectively the partnership identification of risk and response to children who are victims of domestic abuse, but this is not sufficiently consistent. There are barriers across health providers' ability to share digital records, and to identify and flag concerns. The police do not always respond to requests for information in a timely way so as to assist with probation risk management and the assessment of children and families by children's services.

Most social work assessments are informed by multi-agency information, which includes extended family members. This helps to identify the needs of and risk to children affected by domestic abuse within the context of their family, including any adult vulnerabilities. While assessments include resident and non-resident fathers whenever possible, not all children of separated parents or blended families are identified and fully considered within practice.

The voice of the child is not consistently being sought or well recorded by health, probation and police practitioners. While there are some strong examples of practitioners speaking to children and taking the time to listen to and understand their experiences, this is not the case for all children. Children's voices are captured consistently well within children's services records.

Pre-birth practice across the partnership is a strength, with timely referrals and responses ensuring that workers have an opportunity to work alongside families and provide support or address risks before the baby arrives.

When children need help, support and protection, meetings are timely and involve most key practitioners from across the partnership.

Practitioners develop multi-agency safety plans with children and their families at an early stage, which help to mitigate risk. Often, these safety plans draw on the family's natural network to support children and to sustain the progress made. Social workers sensitively undertake purposeful direct work with children to help them develop and understand their own age-appropriate safety plan. However, these important plans are held on children's services electronic records and are not consistently shared with all practitioners. When safety plans are shared, there is greater multi-agency oversight and monitoring, which helps to safeguard children.

Once the need for family help is identified, most children and their families receive the level of support that they need and move seamlessly between levels of support, often maintaining relationships with practitioners who know them well. When adult family members are supported by adult services, some of these professionals are not involved in key meetings around the risks for children and are, therefore, unable to contribute to safety planning and support. Similarly, representatives from housing services often do not attend key meetings where their input would be helpful. When practitioners from adult-focused services are included, they can sometimes underestimate the risks posed to children.

Specialist domestic abuse roles in children's social care teams are highly valued by social workers and contribute to effective and creative plans to help keep children safe and improve their situations. Workers patiently build relationships and use a range of tools (and their own creativity) to access children's voices and understand their experiences. Disabled children also benefit from sensitive work to identify and reduce the impact of domestic abuse.

The multi-agency scaling of risks for children within key child protection and child-in-need meetings is not consistently understood by all practitioners, and their non-attendance at meetings can have a negative impact on the consistency of their understanding because previous scaling is being used that does not reflect the most recent information about risks or concerns for the child. This can distort the level of

risk, as it is not wholly based on the current risks or the seriousness of the situation for the child. Positively, the use of multi-agency chronologies for child protection conferences helps to ensure that there is a shared understanding of all the risks and significant events known to each of the agencies involved. Families have shared with practitioners that they benefit from seeing a visual representation of the concerns.

For a small number of children aged 0 to 7, adults' needs can sometimes overshadow children being seen as victims of domestic abuse in their own right. The cumulative risks of emotional harm and the impact of repeated domestic abuse are not always understood soon enough, and these children do not get the help they need quickly enough. Additionally, while practitioners can articulate the family's cultural identity and the impact of domestic abuse on their lives, this is not always captured well. Consequently, it is unclear how well partners understand the role culture has to play in the adult's experiences of being victim and perpetrator.

Children benefit from accessing special domestic abuse support and services across the continuum of need. This includes support from the children's services domestic abuse workers, bespoke domestic abuse intervention from the commissioned service, and an extensive range of other commissioned and community and social enterprise domestic abuse services. These services are positively supporting children with their emotional well-being and provide them with strategies to manage their feelings.

Most multi-agency practitioners understand the needs and risks to children. There has been positive joint working between practitioners across the partnership to support the progression of child protection plans, with appropriate licence restrictions put in place and effective oversight by Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). This includes some effective pre-release planning and use of approved premises to bolster the risk management of domestic abuse perpetrators. However, while MAPPA are working well to manage the risk posed by highest harm domestic perpetrators, there is often an insufficient focus on the voice of the child as a victim of domestic abuse.

The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) model has been adapted in Norfolk into a process known as Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Co-ordination. This aims to bring agencies together more quickly to coordinate planning for victims. However, these arrangements are not consistently understood by practitioners across the partnership. Some practitioners are not confident that they understand how to make a referral into MARAC or what value MARAC brings. Outcomes of the MARAC are not consistently being shared with relevant practitioners. Leaders accepted the findings of the inspection and planned to undertake prompt action to review the current delivery of the MARAC.

There is a clear process for the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law), and partners are working well together. All applications are considered by a weekly

multi-agency panel using information from all agencies. The police receive referrals from most partner agencies. There is an online portal on the police website (single online home) for victims to raise the 'Right to ask' request. This is helping parents to proactively protect their children and make choices that will help to keep them safe.

Children's social care has introduced a model of multi-agency case supervision known as Team Around the Child Supervision (TACS) meetings. While these provide a space for professionals to share information and explore what might be happening for children, not all multi-agency practitioners feel confident in sharing or escalating concerns about practice, and there isn't always attendance from non-children's services professionals. Leaders know that TACS meetings are not always providing the necessary direction to drive positive change for children, and they are working on plans to improve this. Not all practitioners across probation and health are receiving good-quality and regular supervision that supports their practice with children.

There is a comprehensive workforce development and training offer in place, which addresses both multi-agency and individual agency needs. The offer is regularly reviewed and updated by the partnership. However, across agencies, not enough practitioners are currently accessing this training.

Schools and early years providers rightly feel that they make a constructive contribution to strategic direction in Norfolk. They value multi-agency training and how this has increased their understanding of the complexity of domestic abuse and its interconnectedness with neglect. They report positively on the difference this has made to their practice and in turn, the support to children. Most school and early providers are positive about their role in partnership working in supporting children who are victims of domestic abuse.

Practice study: areas of highly effective practice

For some children, there are areas of highly effective practice across the partnership that help to safeguard children and prevent and reduce the risk of domestic abuse.

Practice with unborn children at risk of domestic abuse is a strength. Practitioners across the partnership engage parents with sensitivity and persistence and offer bespoke interventions to parents when needed. The safety of pregnant women is given high priority, and there is sensitive work undertaken with brothers and sisters to understand the plans for their new family member. Safety plans are formed early, and appropriate services and support are made available. Extended families are well engaged in safety planning to help keep children safe once they are born. Partner agencies are involved at all stages of the work, with effective and creative joint working that safeguards the unborn child and supports families. Plans made are well constructed, are relevant to need, and they help families to make progress.

For one young child, risk from domestic abuse and neglect has been very well managed. Relevant health practitioners were involved at every opportunity during the mother's pregnancy. There was swift assessment and planning to safeguard the child following birth. A comprehensive and evidence-based social work assessment demonstrated good insight into the impact of domestic abuse on the unborn child and identified the risks for the child post birth. The understanding of the family history and thorough analysis of risk led to timely protective action being taken for the child. Safety planning for the child included the family network. This early use of family networking ensured that the parents were well supported to understand the assessment process, child protection plans and court processes. The use of a multi-agency chronology for the child protection conference provided a purposeful and shared understanding of all the risks identified for the child by practitioners across the partnership. This helped the parents to understand the nature and seriousness of the situation for their child.

Practice study: areas for improvement

For a small number of children, the cumulative risk of domestic abuse has not always been well understood by practitioners and plans have not been progressed as quickly as they could have.

The experiences and practice for one pre-school-aged child reflect the complexities of providing a multi-agency response to children and families where there may be risks in addition to domestic abuse. For example, the child has been known to the partnership since birth and has witnessed repeat domestic abuse incidents within the home. While practitioners across early years, health, children's services, probation and police identified the risk of domestic abuse and have worked together to progress plans to reduce risk, the risk assessment and actions did not sufficiently reflect the impact of cumulative harm. There was minimal engagement by the extended family network, and practitioners have not consistently utilised domestic abuse tools in order to assist their interventions with the family. The child's behaviours and presentation were not fully considered in the context of the impact of domestic abuse. The accuracy of multi-agency scaling of risk was also impaired by the absence of some practitioners at key meetings and previous scaling being used that did not reflect the most recent information about risks or concerns for the child. Further complicating factors included how well practitioners were able to engage the adults in meaningful work to achieve positive change. The adults' own health needs and the status of the adults' relationship had a negative impact on how well practitioners could engage them in the safety plan and interventions to reduce risk.

Positively, progress is now being made for the child. Partners have recognised the strengths and risks for the child and have advocated for escalation of the continuum of needs.

Leaders have acknowledged the learning for this child and are taking appropriate action.

Next steps

We have determined that Norfolk local authority is the principal authority and should prepare a written statement of proposed action responding to the findings outlined in this letter. This should be a multi-agency response involving the individuals and agencies that this report is addressed to. The response should set out the actions for the partnership and, when appropriate, individual agencies. The local safeguarding partners should oversee implementation of the action plan through their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Norfolk local authority should send the written statement of action to ProtectionOfChildren@ofsted.gov.uk by 11 June 2025. This statement will inform the lines of enquiry at any future joint or single-agency activity by the inspectorates.

Yours sincerely

Yvette Stanley

Yvette Stanley
National Director Regulation and Social Care, Ofsted

Dr Sean O'Kelly

Dr Sean O'Kelly BSc MB ChB MSc DCH FRCA
Chief Inspector of Health Care, CQC

Michelle Skeer

Michelle Skeer OBE QPM
His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary
His Majesty's Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services

Martin Jones

Martin Jones CBE
His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Probation

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	N/A
Have financial implications been considered?	N/A
Have human resource implications been considered?	N/A
Have accommodation, ICT, transport, other equipment and resources, and environment and sustainability implications been considered?	N/A
Have value-for-money and risk management implications been considered?	N/A
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	N/A
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	N/A
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	N/A



NORFOLK
CONSTABULARY

ORIGINATOR:

Deputy Chief Constable Megicks

REASON FOR SUBMISSION:

For Information

SUBMITTED TO:

PCC's Accountability Meeting – April 2025

SUBJECT:

Neighbourhood Policing update

SUMMARY:

This report sets out a short neighbourhood policing update in relation to anti-social behaviour hotspot funding (Operation Focus) and the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Police and Crime Commissioner is asked to note the report.

NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UPDATE

Anti-social behaviour hotspot funding – Operation Focus

Hotspot policing is a tactic whereby officers are frequently deployed to an area for short periods of time to increase visibility and deter criminality.

As part of the Conservative Government's [Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan](#) which was launched in 2023, a hotspot policing approach to tackling antisocial behaviour was initially piloted in ten areas across England and Wales. In February 2024, the Home Office announced the national roll-out of the anti-social behaviour hotspot policing model, giving a one-year funding boost to all police forces. £66 million of funding was made available in total. Norfolk Constabulary was allocated grant funding of £1 million.

Since April 2024, the Constabulary has used this funding to deliver a hotspot policing approach to tackling anti-social behaviour in twenty-one areas of the county that were identified through analysis as experiencing the highest volumes of serious violence and anti-social behaviour. Eleven of these hotspots being in Great Yarmouth, and ten within Norwich. The approach continues to be delivered under the project name 'Operation Focus'.

By 31st December 2024, officers had recorded 13,654 hours of foot patrol in the hotspot areas, being proactive in engaging with members of the public, businesses, and partners whilst undertaking these patrols. In addition, 231 arrests had been made, 115 stop searches conducted, anti-social behaviour powers had been used on 109 occasions, and 12 weapons seized. Data for the period 1st January 2025 to 31st March 2025 will be available by the Police and Crime Commissioner's Accountability Meeting on 16th April.

Patrols are targeted to achieve maximum visibility and engagement. The patrols are being delivered by a number of roles within the Constabulary's frontline policing structure, including Beat Managers, Community Policing Team officers, Response Officers, Student Officers, and members of the Special Constabulary. This team approach has helped to ensure that the importance of anti-social behaviour hotspot work is widely understood and is at the forefront of our policing response.

The contribution of the Special Constabulary has been invaluable, with 526 recorded patrol hours by Special Constables at 1st March 2025.

Police Cadets have also supported the Operation Focus activity, delivering Neighbourhood Watch leaflets in the hotspot areas and liaising with local communities about the scheme.

The impact of the Operation Focus approach has been further amplified through the delivery of 'intensification weeks' which have been supported by partner agencies, including British Transport Police, local council, and third sector organisations, who have patrolled alongside officers.

Within the Norwich hotspot areas that encompass parts of the night-time economy, the Project Vigilant tactic, which aims to prevent sexual violence by targeting predatory behaviour using police officers who are trained in behavioural observation, has been employed. This is a proactive tactic that uses intelligence-led working practices to support the Constabulary's Violence Against Women and Girls strategy.

In addition to these highly visible activities, specialist Problem Solving Advisors and Designing Out Crime Officers are working to address the drivers of anti-social behaviour and serious violence in the hotspot areas, in collaboration with partner agencies.

The funding has also been used to secure analytical support, project management resources, ICT provision, and a Briefing Officer who has been crucial for ensuring that officers understand and are well sighted on crime and anti-social behaviour issues prior to undertaking their patrols.

A hotspot dashboard has been developed which enables the Constabulary to actively monitor progress in achieving the desired outcomes of Operation Focus. The dashboard includes details around temporal analysis, the patrol dosage, links to all reported incidents inside the relevant hotspot area, and detailed reporting around the patrol carried out.

Recorded incidents compared to expected data from the baseline is actively monitored but at this stage of the project delivery it is too early to identify the full benefits and any cost savings. There will be an internal evaluation carried out post 31st March 2025 which will include a cost benefit product based on what is perceived to be a lowering in the Cambridge Crime Harm Index (CCHI) in some of the hotspots. It is anticipated that the report will be available by May 2025.

Regular internal briefings have been provided via the Constabulary's intranet, helping to raise the profile of the work being undertaken.

Throughout the project delivery phase, the Local Communications Officers for Norwich and Great Yarmouth have used social media channels to great effect to highlight the regularity of proactive patrols and community engagement, enhancing the reassurance and visibility impact of the hotspot policing approach. Public response and feedback have been extremely positive, with many taking to social media to thank the Constabulary for conducting the patrols and keeping people safe.

Additional funding for 2025/26 for the continuation of hotspot policing has recently been announced by the government, which will see Norfolk receive a similar amount of grant funding as for this financial year. It has been confirmed that there will be an additional emphasis on knife crime alongside the existing parameters of serious violence and anti-social behaviour for hotspot selection. Whilst our potential new hotspot areas are identified, and our grant application is agreed, operational delivery of hotspot patrols in the existing areas will continue.

Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee

At the National Police Chiefs' Council and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' annual conference on 19th November 2024 the Home Secretary set out her plans to deliver policing reforms, which included the introduction of a Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

The Guarantee will have five key principles:

1. **Police back on the beat.** A Neighbourhood Policing Team in every local area, with intelligence-led and visible patrols, including in town centres and on high streets. It will ensure these officers are protected from being deployed elsewhere.
2. **Community led.** A named, contactable officer for every neighbourhood, responsive to local problems, and residents and businesses having a say on the policing priorities for their area.
3. **Professional excellence.** A new career pathway for neighbourhood policing, delivered by the College of Policing, with new standards for professional excellence to ensure neighbourhood policing teams are trained to be proactive problem-solvers.
4. **A crackdown on anti-social behaviour.** Neighbourhood policing teams equipped with tougher tools, and supported by other agencies, to tackle persistent anti-social behaviour (ASB). This includes the new Respect Order to enable swift enforcement against prolific ASB offenders, and a dedicated lead officer in every force working with communities to develop a bespoke ASB action plan.
5. **Safer town centres.** A crackdown on shop theft, street theft and assaults against retail workers, so local people can take back their streets from thugs and thieves.

The Home Office, College of Policing, National Police Chief's Council, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners are developing a new performance framework which the Home Office will use to monitor and evaluate the delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee. This will form part of a wider Police Performance Framework, which will be housed within a new Home Office-led Police Performance Unit.

The Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee includes the delivery of 13,000 additional neighbourhood Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers, and Special Constables across England and Wales.

The police funding settlement, which was announced on 17th December, included £200 million of ringfenced funding for the 2025/26 financial year for the recruitment of these additional neighbourhood policing resources. Norfolk's allocation is just over £2 million.

The recruitment of these officers will be the key headline measure for the inputs of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee. The Crime Survey of England and Wales Public Perceptions Survey is expected to be the data source for many of the other measures for the five pillars of the Guarantee.

The Constabulary has submitted a bid to the Home Office for our funding for additional neighbourhood policing officers. We anticipate that by the end of the 2025/26 financial year this will result in around 30 additional officers working in neighbourhood roles across Norfolk.

The Constabulary also plans to increase the establishment of the Special Constabulary in the year ahead and would value the support of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for our recruitment activities.

END.

ORIGINATOR CHECKLIST (MUST BE COMPLETED)	STATE 'YES' OR 'NO'
Has legal advice been sought on this submission?	N/A
Have financial implications been considered?	N/A
Have human resource implications been considered?	N/A
Have accommodation, ICT, transport, other equipment and resources, and environment and sustainability implications been considered?	N/A
Have value-for-money and risk management implications been considered?	N/A
Have equality, diversity and human rights implications been considered including equality analysis, as appropriate?	N/A
Is the recommendation consistent with the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan?	N/A
Has consultation been undertaken with people or agencies likely to be affected by the recommendation?	N/A