Vulnerability Knowledge
& Practice Programme

College of
Policing

NPCC
National Police Chiefs' Council

National Vulnerability and Public Protection Strategy

A common framework approach to vulnerability including public protection.

Prepare

February 2025

This aim of this document is to support forces to develop their understanding of capacity, capability, competence across Pillars. This document takes its learning from the work of Operation Soteria, Violence Against Women and Girls and other areas of vulnerability and seeks to draw together positive indicators that should be seen. The combination of the pillars helps towards forces taking a Suspect Focus – Victim Centred – Context led approach.

This section delas with 'Prepare' and how a force ensures that officers and staff have the right learning, development, wellbeing and process to support investigations and victims.

These indicators have been shown through the College of Policing Perennial issues document to be areas of consistent challenge. Through good governance we should seek deep rooted behavioural change by understanding Capability / Opportunity / Motivators and how together these deliver sustainable improvements.

How to use this document

This document has been produced to help forces to establish positive indicators in respect of 'Prepare' to support governance and oversight in the management of Vulnerability. It provides areas of positive activity that forces can identify within their own organisation.

There is no one size approach and forces will operate various models so the document can be adapted to fit the policing approach used, current and future data gathering to provide governance and oversight with information as to effectiveness.

The indicators below where possible should include reference to other areas and have been drawn from a range of sources including perennial issues of policing.

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
Build a workforce with the core knowledge, skills & attitude to be professionally curious, confident & effective in responding to vulnerability related harm.	Staff take an active role in their personal development.	Supervisors hold 1-2-1's with staff to understand their core knowledge and support ongoing development.	The force understands its training needs analysis for vulnerability related harm.
	Staff are professionally curious and spot the signs of vulnerability related harm and the threat posed by suspects.	Debriefing is regularly undertaken and seen as normal business.	The force has assurance processes to understand the capability and competency of its workforce.
	Staff use risk assessment tools effectively.		Force embraces 'learning the lessons' from a variety of areas including debriefing, audit processes, complaints and misconduct. This information is used to change practice through communication and training.
Have the well-being of our workforce at the heart of service delivery	Staff engage with wellbeing services without fear of stigma.	Workload is managed fairly across teams.	Demand and workload are understood along with the impact that has upon service delivery.
	Staff are confident to identify others who may need support.	Supervisors spot the signs of negative impacts on wellbeing and are empowered to make decisions to support staff.	Workforce planning uses evidence, data and feedback to inform decisions about deployment.
		Wellbeing of staff is a core element of 1-2-1's and are undertaken regularly.	Force Wellbeing framework addresses the needs of staff to provide them with support.
		Supervisors promote the support that is available.	The internal vulnerability of staff is recognised, and the appropriate support provided.

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
Prepare supervisors with the capacity & capability they need to be able to manage risk, demand & be effective in their role.	Staff are confident to raise issues without fear of reprisals.	Supervisors are prepared for their role around staff and investigation management such as attending PiP1 supervisor's course.	Strategic leaders embed a culture where poor performance and inappropriate behaviour and attitudes including racism and misogyny, are challenged by all without the fear of reprisals for speaking out.
		Supervisors use 1-2-1 sessions with staff to understand, support and direct individual development plans.	Strategic leaders are role models and use the code of ethics effectively to demonstrate the use of risk-based decisions.
		Supervisors are confident in raising areas for development in respect of individual or organisational issues.	
Develop leaders who are able to maintain an open and supportive culture which promotes diversity, equity and inclusion and the code of ethics. Leaders challenge inappropiate behaviour, language and ineffective decision making.	Staff are supported to use the code of ethics in decision making.	Supervisors intervene early to deal with inappropriate behaviour and are supported to make decisions to address this.	Workforce planning in respect of promotion, retention and development is fair, trusted and embraces diversity.
	Staff treat people with respect and dignity, in all encounters.		Decision making is consistently based upon code of ethics and used to inform all areas of policing.
			Embed and role model the code of ethics / professional standards of behaviour for others to follow.

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
Identify and recognise the risks of digital harm to vulnerable people.	Staff consider the digital opportunities, in relation to vulnerability related harm.	Ensure staff are considering the digital opportunities across all vulnerability related harm.	Ensure staff have the knowledge, skills and understanding to investigate and prevent digital harm to those who are vulnerable.
	Staff feel confident to use every opportunity to provide advice to prevent digital harm.		Staff understand how perpetrators use digital technology to exploit vulnerability and are confident to offer prevention advice based on this.
			Digital tools to support crime prevention and safety are used to allow inclusivity around language and disability.
Develop the technical knowledge base of our workforce so they can confidently respond and protect those at risk of harm.	Staff understand how perpetrators use digital technology to exploit vulnerability and harm others.	Ensure the knowledge and skills of staff is current in relation to the use of digital technology by perpetrators.	Training is appropriate and meets the needs of staff.
			Training is undertaken and evidence of its consistent use can be seen.
Equip our workforce with tools, strategies and resources to gather necessary and proportionate evidence from victims and from suspects.	Staff have the tools to effectively gather evidence of online harm.	Supervisors ensure that their teams have the knowledge and use it effectively.	The force has a digital strategy and approach in line with the NPCC digital strategy and provides the workforce with effective tools to gather and use evidence efficiently.