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.

Prevent

February 2025

This aim of this document is to support forces to develop their understanding of capacity, capability, competence across Vulnerability and Public Protection. 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.

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 is provided to help forces and staff to understand the effectiveness of their partnership arrangements, their role and to reinforce the benefits of those relationships. It supports the NPCC Policing Vision 2030[1] that has 5 key objectives to prevent crime and criminality through increased collaboration and partnership.

Taking a 'whole systems' or public health approach applies systems thinking, methods and practice to better understand the challenges and identify collective actions by;

1.   Defining the problem.

2.   Identifying the causes.

3.   Designing, implementing and evaluating interventions to find out what works.

4.   Implementing effective interventions on a wider scale.

This document provides areas of focus for forces to consider in evaluating and implement effective partnerships for vulnerability.

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[1] policing-vision-2030.pdf (npcc.police.uk)

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
Work collaboratively with statutory and non-statutory partners at operational and strategic levels.	Staff are clear of the processes and support that is available across other agencies.	Supervisors ensure that a whole system approach is taken with partners and staff have defined the problem, understand the cause, designing the interventions and implementing solutions.	The Force understands its partners and has mapped its strategic and non-strategic partnerships.
	Staff are proactive and facilitate the timely and effective sharing of information to identify, inform and tackle problems.		Strategic leads set the force's individual contributions to shared priorities, ensuring strong governance, accountability, and reporting mechanisms to hold their delegates to account for the delivery of multi-agency agency commitments to vulnerability, risk and harm.
			Partnerships work collaboratively with commissioning leads to provide support services and interventions to disrupt offenders now and in the years ahead.

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Information Sharing Agreements across partnerships are in place.	Staff understand the effectiveness of Information Sharing and base decisions on wider risk and not based on single issues.	Supervisors support staff, so they are clear on their roles and responsibilities for sharing and seeking information.	The force has in place arrangements that set out clearly the processes and the principles for information sharing, and such arrangements cover how information will be shared within their own force and with others involved in supporting vulnerable persons.
		Supervisors review and test information sharing activity.	Information Sharing Agreements are in line with College of Policing APP 'Information Management'
A multi-agency referral and decision-making process is in place with clear escalation processes.	Referrals are made to initiate safeguarding or welfare needs activity.	Supervisors ensure that referrals are of a good quality and timely.	There are effective multi-agency processes for referrals in place within the force area, that enables quality and timely referrals, with clear ownership and accountability.
		Supervisors effective use an escalation process where issues are identified both internally and externally.	Escalation processes are in place with staff confident when to engage these.
			Partnerships reassure themselves of the effectiveness of their processes and the performance of organisations involved.

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
Referrals are made to ensure vulnerable people are safeguarded and/or supported.	Persons at risk are identified and this includes suspects who may be vulnerable.	Supervisors ensure staff are clear on their role in respect of referral processes. This is understood and used effectively.	The force utilises the expertise of internal and external stakeholders for relevant crimes to support vulnerable people.
	Risk assessments are completed with a high level of detail and accuracy.	Risk assessments are regularly reviewed.	
Seek a jointly accountable whole systems approach to prevent harm.		Robust Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA's) are used effectively share information about vulnerable persons, the risk of harm is correctly identified and vulnerable persons are directed to targeted services that meet their needs.	There is a whole system governance approach to strategic partnerships.
			There are local agreements in place with clear governance of multi-agency working processes (eg MARAC, MATAC, MAPPA), with clarity across relevant agencies.
			Partnerships work with local universities and academics to support evaluation across problem-solving and cost benefit analysis.

Principle	Front Line	Supervisors	Strategic Leaders
Steps taken to safeguard vulnerable people using effective problem-solving approaches.	Staff understand the range of the support organisations and services available, and advice is confidently given.	There is active collaboration with partners to solve the causes of repeat victimisation.	Partnerships work to action recommendations from learning opportunities such as critical incidents, Statutory Reviews, and promising practice.
	Actions are focused on tackling long term problem solving rather than solely the immediate issues.	Staff have knowledge of crime prevention activity involving vulnerability such as CSE, Modern Slavery, Stalking and harassment.	Partnerships understand where there are systemic issues impacting improvements and to change so that the multi-agency system remains dynamic and self-improving.
		The use of preventative activity is owned at a Partnership level and a range of activity takes place to 'design out crime'.	Partnerships work together to reduce the impact of online and tech enabled crime. There is encouragement to report crime and prioritise action to address offending and create safe spaces online.