



## **Super Complaint: The Police Response to Stalking**

Response from the Association of  
Police and Crime Commissioners



19/12/2024

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## Introduction

In November 2022, the Suzy Lamplugh Trust submitted a [super-complaint](#) on behalf of the National Stalking Consortium raising concerns about the inadequate police responses to stalking cases. On 27 September, the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and the College of Policing published their [report](#) containing recommendations for policing, including recommendations for Police and Crime Commissioners, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners, and Mayoral Authorities (PCCs).

The report contained three recommendations for PCCs. Recommendation 16 and 25 are also directed to Chief Constables:

- **Recommendation 15**

*By 27 March 2025, review whether the right specialist services have been commissioned to support stalking victims in their area, including provision of trained independent stalking advocate caseworkers (ISACs).*

*PCCs and their mayor equivalents should provide the necessary services where they do not exist and should consider collaborating across force boundaries to provide services if it would be efficient and effective to do so.*

- **Recommendation 16:**

*By 27 March 2025, work together to review commissioning arrangements and make changes as soon as possible to ensure they embed collaborative working and information sharing between policing and services providing victim support to stalking victims.*

- **Recommendations 25:**

*By 27 March 2025, explore opportunities to improve how their force works with partners to contribute to a multi-agency response to stalking. This should include considering:*

- *How the force works in partnership with healthcare, the CPS, probation services and other criminal justice partners to manage stalking perpetrators and address their behaviour.*
- *Whether and how they should collaborate with other forces to effectively and efficiently contribute to multi-agency partnerships on stalking.*
- *How multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) are being used to effectively manage stalking offenders*

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On 22 November, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) wrote to the IOPC, HMICFRS and the College of Policing to fulfil recommendation 27:

- **Recommendation 27**

*By 22 November 2024 (56 days from publication), write to HMICFRS, the IOPC and the College of Policing setting out their response to the recommendations made to them. Chief constables should direct their response to the NPCC which should provide a collective response on behalf of all police forces. PCCs and their mayor equivalents should direct their response to the APCC which should provide a collective response on their behalf.*

**All 43 PCCs confirmed they had accepted each recommendation in which PCCs are named in the report:**

- Recommendation 15
- Recommendation 16
- Recommendation 25

This report will outline in further detail key themes and areas of concerns highlighted by PCCs in the evidence they provided in response to the recommendations.

## The APCC Response

This report provides a thematic response to recommendations 15, 16 and 25. The report responds thematically to all three recommendations as the analysis drew out common themes across the responses to each recommendation. This response provides a cohesive account of how PCCs are approaching the report and recommendations than would responding to each recommendation in isolation.

PCCs accepted each recommendation and provided supporting evidence as to how they are meeting or plan to meet the recommendations. PCCs responded both on behalf of themselves and in some cases the response came jointly from the PCC and the force. The examples used in this report are illustrative of wider responses and are used to illustrate the analysis and the themes. We have chosen to quote directly from submissions.





## Availability of Services

### Provisions of Stalking Victims Support Services and Independent Stalking Advocate Caseworkers (ISACs)

PCCs recognised the importance of commissioning specialist services and ISACs to support stalking victims.

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A number of PCCs noted they would be reviewing whether the right commissioned specialist services are in place to support stalking victims in their area, including provision of ISACs, by 27 March 2025.

Several PCCs reported commissioning standalone specialist support services for victims of stalking, in addition to their wider victim support services. They also confirmed the provision of ISACs many of which are integrated into their specialist services. The number of ISACs varies across areas.

- **Sussex PCC:** *In 2014, Sussex PCC Katy Bourne was one of the first PCCs to commission a service exclusively for victims of stalking. Listening to victim/survivor feedback, she recognised the importance of employing a local service and, thanks to her exclusive funding, Veritas was established as Sussex's first and hyper-local stalking advocacy service. (...) The stalking service offer includes information, support and advice to all Sussex residents affected by stalking, whether or not a crime has been reported to the police. It also encompasses trained, independent stalking advocate caseworkers (ISACs) providing direct, tailored, person-centred advocacy, with digital, 'phone and face-to-face channels available to suit the person's needs, priorities and goals.*
- **Hertfordshire PCC:** *(...) commissioned a dedicated stalking support service for victims for the last 3 years. This service is open to both DA-related and non-DA-related stalking and to all genders above the age of 16 years. The services include one Senior ISAC and two ISACs. The ISACs will support the victim, maintain regular contact and ensure that a dynamic risk assessment and safety planning process is maintained. They will work closely with the Investigating Officer managing the safety of the victim and supporting the police to secure convictions and implement protection orders. They will liaise with MAPPA and their key role will be the management of this very high-risk caseload and the assessment of risk and service allocation for all other referrals.*
- **Humberside PCC:** *(...) provide additional funding to victim support who deliver specialist interventions to support victims of non-DA related stalking. Humberside, along with South Yorkshire were one of the first areas to implement the stalking IVA.*
- **Cheshire PCC:** *[The Harm Reduction Unit] The HRU also takes primacy for the investigation of the most serious and complex stalking cases and benefits from 2 Independent Stalking Advocate Caseworkers (ISACs) who are qualified and have been in post for 7 years.*

- **Dyfed-Powys PCC:** *Since the 1st September 2024, the PCC has commissioned Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service to provide a bespoke stalking advocacy service across the Dyfed-Powys Police area. (...) The [one-year] pilot provides both the offer of advocacy to high-risk victims of stalking and the offer of short-term support/one off advice to professionals supporting low and medium risk victims. A full time ISAC position has been developed solely for the Dyfed-Powys area. Alongside this, Paladin will deliver multi-agency training for professionals to ensure that existing services such as IDVAs, ISVAs and Victim Advocates are appropriately skilled to support victims who experience stalking alongside domestic abuse and sexual violence.*

In areas without specialist stalking victim support, PCCs reported that their wider commissioned victims' support services provide assistance to survivors of both DA-related and non-DA stalking. PCCs noted that other measures are in place to support stalking victims, such as training provided to domestic abuse victims' support services or the appointment of dedicated staff serving as key points of contact for stalking victims.

- **Suffolk PCC:** *(...) support for victims of stalking is available in Suffolk – we do not commission a singular “specialist service” for all stalking victims. Our observation currently is this would likely be prohibitive in a small, low funded, force area. The PCC commissions Leeway Domestic Violence and Abuse services to support high risk victims of domestic abuse including victims of DA related stalking. 293 stalking victims were supported in 2023/24. All IDVAs have undertaken stalking training and two IDVAs are accredited.*
- **North Wales PCC:** *I have recently commissioned for additional stalking and harassment training to be given to our commissioned domestic abuse support provider. This will ensure that victims experiencing harassment or stalking offences which include domestic abuse will receive specialist support as part of their IDVA service. For non-domestic related harassment or stalking offences there is a stalking and harassment champion within our Victims Help Centre who can provide support.*
- **Dorset PCC:** *(...) I would also like to detail that our Victim Service contract also supports victims of both DA related and non-DA related stalking and harassment, providing them with practical and emotional support.*
- **Lincolnshire PCC:** *(...) provided funding to the existing multi crime Outreach Support service (Victim Support) and DA/IDVA service (LDASS) for caseworkers to receive training become accredited ISACs. This has ensured support is available for victims of DA and non-DA related stalking. There are agreed referral pathways in place for professionals to make referrals and for victims to self-refer.*

A small number of PCCs highlighted the challenge of ensuring adequate provisions and equal access to services across their rural force areas. They explained that facilitating specialist training for staff within existing commissioned services, rather than commissioning a standalone service, enables the development of multi-disciplinary teams informed by local population demographics and geographical characteristics of the area.

- York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority:** *One of the key challenges in ensuring adequate provision and parity of services across is the size of our force area. (...) This means we must consider the accessibility and location of support services to ensure a victim-led approach, including the required infrastructure to offer remote (telephone or online) support options in order to effectively support all victims from across North Yorkshire. Facilitating specialist training for staff within existing commissioned services as opposed to commissioning a standalone service allows for the development of multi-disciplinary teams informed by local understanding of population demographics and geographical nuances, working from locations in both rural and urban areas, to increase our reach and accessibility. We also believe this approach promotes more collaborative, joined up working, allowing us to draw on a range of skills and expertise to better support victims with multiple unmet needs to help achieve the best outcomes for victims.*

A number of PCCs confirmed that they commission training to upskill Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates (IDVAs) and victim support staff to become accredited ISACs. These ISACs are integrated into either dedicated stalking victim support services or broader victim support services. Several PCCs reported commissioning Paladin or the Suzy Lamplugh Trust to deliver training.

Some PCCs also reported commissioning ISACs directly from external providers.

Several PCCs emphasised that staff who are not accredited ISACs still have access to training and learning opportunities to enhance their awareness and understanding of stalking and its associated risks.

- Cambridgeshire PCC:** *(...) was one of the first areas in the country to recruit a dedicated post to support victims of stalking in 2018. This postholder, who is a qualified IDVA, received training from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust and has spent time at their helpline. This post holder has worked as part of a multi-agency stalking team for the past three years but will be reintegrated into the countywide IDVA service from April 1, 2025. This will ensure that victims of stalking can access specialist support (support covers all risk levels; DA and Non-DA related stalking) whilst also enabling the skills and experience around stalking to be shared throughout the IDVA service helping to build resilience.*
- Essex PFCC:** *Many of the IDVA and DA practitioner resources within commissioned support agencies will be dual trained as ISACs. Those that are not ISACs will still have access to training and learning opportunities to improve their awareness and understanding of stalking and its associated risks.*

- **Devon and Cornwall PCC:** *In Devon and Cornwall the OPCC [Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner] funds a non-DA independent stalking advocate caseworker (ISAC) through the contracted Victim Support Adult multi-crime service.*

### Perpetrator Intervention Programmes

A number of PCCs reported commissioning stalking perpetrator intervention programmes to tackle the abuse and obsessive behaviour of stalking perpetrators. PCCs commission various perpetrator intervention programmes designed to challenge the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours of individuals, who commit domestic abuse and stalking. Specific interventions have been developed to address stalking perpetrators. For example, the Cognitive Behavioural Intervention (COBI) is a treatment tailored for individuals exhibiting obsessive thoughts and behaviours that could lead to stalking.

Interventions vary in their approach and target different levels of risk, including high-risk, medium-risk, and standard-risk perpetrators. Some programmes focus specifically on stalking cases linked to domestic abuse, while others address stalking unrelated to domestic violence.

PCCs work closely with their partners to ensure a coordinated, multi-agency response to stalking perpetrators. In some cases, this approach includes integrated victim support, providing assistance to victims of stalking, whose perpetrators are participating in intervention programmes.

- **Cumbria PFCC:** *The OPFCC has commissioned Turning the Spotlight (TTS) a respect accredited domestic abuse perpetrator programme for low to medium risk domestic abuse perpetrators. We also commission 'They Matter' which is a high harm/ high risk perpetrator programme with a specific area to address stalking behaviours which is called 'Letting Go.'*
- **South Yorkshire PCC:** *SY currently has a Stalking perpetrator programme - funded until 31/01/2025 (includes DA related stalking). Within this programme there is support for all victims.*
- **West Mercia PCC:** *We have diverse range of Perpetrator options to prevent and target stalking behaviours including C-DAIR a psychosocial education standard-medium risk OOC option.*

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## Co-Commissioning

PCCs identified opportunities to co-commission stalking victim support services and perpetrator intervention programmes in collaboration with their statutory partners, including local authorities, Councils, and other police force areas and PCCs. The aim is to explore ways to deliver consistent services across areas, improve the quality of provisions, and reduce costs by leveraging shared resources and streamlining service delivery.

PCCs noted that the Duty to Collaborate, set out in the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024, will develop collaborative relationships in this area and they are looking to the implementation of this duty.

- **West Yorkshire Combined Authority:** *West Yorkshire Commissioning leads in Mayoral Combined Authorities and OPCC across Yorkshire and the Humber work collaboratively to review, explore and action co-commissioning opportunities. An example of this is a joint Request for Information undertaken collaboratively in relation to Perpetrators of Stalking provision. (...) Co-commissioning arrangements of the provision will also form part of the work under the Duty to Collaborate.*
- **Wiltshire PCC:** *We collaborate with all strategic partners and stakeholders more widely in the provision of our victim support services, joined up commissioning will be further strengthened with the implementation of the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024.*
- **Norfolk PCC:** *As Norfolk Constabulary has a shared service with Suffolk Constabulary, Norfolk's PCC will engage with Suffolk's PCC to explore if and how provision may be provided consistently across the two areas, to improve provisions and potentially minimise costs.*
- **Suffolk PCC:** *Norfolk and Suffolk Victim Care (co-commissioned with Norfolk PCC and provided by Victim Support) received 170 valid stalking referrals (for Suffolk) in 2023/24. This could be standard risk DA related stalking or non DA related stalking.*

PCC emphasised the critical role local authorities have in commissioning specialist services for DA-related stalking victims, noting that this responsibility falls within their statutory duties. PCCs reaffirmed their commitment to working collaboratively with local authorities to ensure adequate provisions for victims of DA related stalking.

- **Avon and Somerset PCC:** *(...) it is the OPCC's view that this recommendation needs to consider the role that local authorities play in the commissioning of local specialist domestic abuse services, given that a significant proportion of need for support around stalking will take place in a domestic context.*

- **Humberside PCC:** *Funding for DA stalking sits outside of the OPCC statutory obligations, reliant on investment from unitary authorities. However, we are keen to work with partners to share funding and coordination of a DA stalking service if the MoJ Victim grant permits us the flexibility.*

## Funding

The majority of PCCs raised the issue of funding for stalking and victims support services, and the uncertainty around future commissioning due to future funding announcements from the government. Many noted that decisions on the future commissioning of victims' services were contingent on decisions from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) on the allocation of funding for 2025/26 and a future multi-year settlement.<sup>1</sup> This made it difficult for some PCCs to commit to future funding or a revised plan for commissioning at this stage.

- **Thames Valley PCC:** *Currently the grant funding for the Thames Valley Stalking Service and COBI is due to come to an end at the end of March 2025. In December 2024, the MoJ plan to inform OPCCs of funding decisions for victims funding. Once this funding decision has been received from the MoJ, the OPCC Thames Valley will be able to confirm the future of the Thames Valley Stalking Service. Support for victims of stalking continues to be a priority area for victims funding though and if possible the intention would to continue funding the service should sufficient funding be provided.*
- **West Yorkshire Combined Authority:** *Funding allocations for the provision are dependent on the MoJ victims funding allocation to West Yorkshire and any limiting ring-fencing requirements placed on the allocation by the MoJ.*
- **Lancashire PCC:** *We anticipate requiring further government grant funding/the continuation of current grant funding streams in order for us to provide optimum levels of support.*

PCCs emphasised the challenges of the funding 'cliff edge', including loss of skilled workforce and specialist services.

- **Hertfordshire PCC:** *All three current staff are accredited ISAC trained but also qualified IDVAs and ISVAs. This is a qualified and experienced workforce and an important and indeed rare resource for victims in Herts. The funding for this service has been provided by the OPCC using the Ministry of Justice's Victim Commissioning Grant which was extended to a three-year budget from 2022 – 2025, plus some support from the OPCC's Community Safety Fund. However, the MOJ funding ends on 31 March 2025 and we do not know if there will be a fund for 2025-26 and, if so, how much. As a*

<sup>1</sup> PCCs were required to respond to the recommendations set out by HMICFRS, the IOPC and the College of Policing before the Ministry of Justice shared details of the grant allocations for 2025/26. The decision on grant allocation for 2025/26 was shared on 2 December.

*result, this specialised service is at risk. If a decision is not announced soon there might not be a service in existence to extend as the staff will understandably be looking for more employment security.*

- **Kent PCC:** *Whilst there are significant positives in Kent, one of the biggest challenges is the uncertainty of the additional funding streams from the MoJ. The Kent Stalking Advocacy Service has been able to expand to meet demand based on this additional funding, but it is due to cease on 31 March 2025. If this funding is not renewed there will be a negative impact on the service provided to stalking victims, further exacerbated by the reduction in IDVA and ISVA posts which will also be impacted by reduced funding. Case numbers are high, especially regarding those associated with DA, and a loss of provision will lead to lengthy waiting times for effective support. There will also be an impact on the retention and recruitment of qualified and trained staff placing greater demands on the capacity of the remaining services.*
- **Greater Manchester Combined Authority:** *An ISAC service with the support of GMCA, currently sits within the Pankhurst Centre in Greater Manchester who are part of the new MASIP. Continuance and expansion of ISAC provision is subject to MoJ funding announcements.*

PCCs emphasised the challenges of allocating funding effectively across different victim cohorts, highlighting the tension between limited resources and the need to balance competing demands.

- **Derbyshire PCC:** *(...) We wish to grow this offer to increase the number of advocates and enable a more comprehensive offer throughout the whole county. This is limited by our current funding situation and is dependent on MOJ uplift grants. We wish this to be part of our core offer but it is also amongst competing demands for other victim cohorts.*
- **Merseyside PCC:** *The services that I am able to commission are limited by the funding that I receive from the Ministry of Justice. (...) The grant has not remained in line with inflation; therefore, it is difficult to consider how a new service could be commissioned at this stage.*
- **Gwent PCC:** *The key issue relates to funding of ISACs in a landscape of increasing numbers of specialist advocates (IDVAs, ISVAs, IPVAs and potentially IRVAs). Without additional funding, the introduction of ISACs would have likely be at the expense of funding other advocate services or other services relating to crime prevention, which equally provide crucial support to victims of other crimes.*

PCCs also noted the importance of the Home Office Grant to deliver perpetrator interventions and the uncertainty around funding post March 2025. PCCs agreed the grant had been instrumental in driving approaches, but many would not be able to continue the support at the same level without continued funding. Force areas also noted the importance of Home Office funding for supporting multi-agency approaches to stalking and the need for continued funding.

- **West Yorkshire Combined Authority:** *It is essential that funding is provided by the Home Office across all force areas to support the approach [Multi-Agency Stalking Intervention Programme] and the ability to invest in perpetrator programmes rather than ad-hock competitive bidding for short term grants.*
- **West Midlands PCC:** *The WMP stalking team is currently funded through the Home Office DA Perpetrator Intervention Fund, alongside the Early Awareness Stalking Intervention, which comes to an end in March 2025. Sufficient and sustainable funding is required to enable us to continue this important work and meet the recommendations set out by HMIC.*
- **Surrey PCC:** *The OPCC is considering this recommendation [rec 16] as part of wider efforts to increase referrals into the specialist perpetrator intervention. This is however somewhat reliant on the continuation of sustainable Home Office funding, which is as yet unconfirmed.*

PCCs may be looking at alternative options to ensure service continuity beyond the end of 2025 should funding be discontinued or reduced.

- **Cambridgeshire PCC:** *The funding for this model [multi-agency Stalking Intervention Programme] is scheduled to end in March 2025 and the OPCC, as Grant SRO, is exploring with each agency their aspirations to mainstream practices into business as usual while retaining multi-agency communication and collaboration as key principles.*
- **South Wales PCC:** *South Wales OPCC has recently supported South Wales Victim Focus with their application to the 'Big Lottery' fund for an expansion of their provision of stalking advocacy specialists, which was successful. This service which will specialize in supporting stalking victims will complement existing services that work with victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence and will address the gap for victims of stalking outside of a domestic abuse setting.*
- **Gloucestershire PCC:** *Opportunities in the future will include how we seek to obtain further investment in the service and explore co commissioning opportunities with other statutory partners.*

- **Derbyshire PCC:** *The force are also conducting scoping of what is available in other areas and how that is funded for example the Cheshire Harm reduction model and similar other types of provision.*

## Multi-Agency Working

PCCs reported that they and forces are engaging in effective multi-agency working with healthcare, the CPS, probation services and other criminal justice partners to manage stalking perpetrators and address their behaviour.

They are engaging collaborative cross force and sharing practice. They are exploring new approaches to partnership working and utilising multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA), and reviewing processes where necessary.

## Risk Management

PCCs reported that a number of forces have developed their own targeted stalking intervention programmes/panels which are multi-agency and may feed into MAPPA. They offer specialist support and bespoke interventions to reduce risk and reoffending by identifying and addressing patterns behaviour at the earliest possible stage. PCCs may be involved in the development of such programmes. These programmes may involve a number of different partners in combination including, PCCs, the force, probations, local authority and health. They often involve other partners who represent victims such as support services and independent stalking advocacy case workers. They may be facilitated by a range of meetings, forums or panels that meet regularly, and they may be integrated with wider support/intervention structures to streamline referrals. A number of other forces were considering implementing similar approaches.

- **Durham PCC:** *The Durham Stalking Intervention Project (D-SIP) is a multi-agency project involving collaboration between partners from the Probation Service, Durham Police, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, and the Office of the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner, all of whom have been consulted and support this proposal. Effective multi-agency whole system approach also involves additional partners, including multi-agency victim support services including the Victim Care and Advice Service (VCAS), in addition to the National Stalking Consortium, such as the Alice Ruggles Trust and Paladin, who will be consulted.*
- **Hampshire and Isle of Wight PCC:** *In 2023 the HLOW PCC received [funding] from the Home Office to develop a MASP (Multi-Agency Stalking Partnership). (...) The MASP developed a multi-agency ISA to enable RAP and the monthly stalking clinic for high risk cases to include specialist partners. We have also worked with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary to develop victim referral pathways outside of MASP... In addition to the Stalking Advocacy and Support Service, DA Providers*

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are also part of the MASP and all co-locate in the Victim Care Hub which is based at the Police Investigation Centres across the force area.

- **Northumbria PCC:** Northumbria has set up a pilot multi-agency response to high-risk cases of stalking (based on the MASIP model) called the Northumbria Stalking Interventions Programme (NSIP). This is a multi-agency project involving collaboration between partners from the Probation Service, Northumbria Police, our mental health trust (CNTW), Northumbria VRU, Northumbria OPCC, Paladin and the Alice Ruggles Trust. It is being piloted in North Tyneside and Northumberland and OPCC and Police are working co-operatively to review their current position with regard to existing piloted partnership arrangements.
- **Greater Manchester Combined Authority:** Supported and funded by GMCA as part of our drive to tackle gender-based violence, we are developing a Multi-Agency Stalking Intervention Partnership (MASIP) including a Stalking Triage Centre to further improve service to victims of stalking and harassment.
- **Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC):** Collaborative working and information sharing between the Metropolitan Police Service, the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, the London Probation Service, and Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust are foundational elements of the Stalking Theatre Assessment Centre multi-agency model. This collaboration is facilitated through daily multi-agency management meetings and the co-location of practitioners. We will continue to partner closely with all stakeholders to ensure the model's ongoing effectiveness.

A number of PCCs and forces have developed and implemented stalking clinics alongside other measures. These clinics target specific cases of concern. Other areas have approached the issue through the implementation of coordinator roles, partnerships panels and working groups.

- **Gloucestershire PCC:** Locally we have a well-established Stalking Clinic which is represented by probation, CPS and MATAAC. The Stalking Clinic meetings are also attended by ISVA's and ISAC's and there is regular information sharing and discussions on responding to new information and managing risk.
- **Dyfed Powys PCC:** The Domestic Abuse Stalking Co-ordinator has established a monthly Stalking Clinic where high harm/risk perpetrators of stalking are discussed, along with high concern and/or repeat victims. Nominations are submitted by Local Policing Areas, the Vulnerability Hub, the Domestic Abuse Stalking Co-ordinator and the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) team. External partner nominations are also considered.

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- **West Midlands PCC:** *This year I have commissioned a Stalking Problem Profile, with the explicit aim of supporting multi-agency partners in the region improve their strategic and tactical response to stalking. The Stalking Working Group will utilise this to help continuous improvement in their partnership approach to stalking...*

*In direct response to the super complaint, West Midlands Police established the Stalking Working Group which consists of internal and external partners coming together at a strategic level to address every recommendation that was set out. In October 2022, our bi-weekly Stalking Triage Clinic went live. The clinic aims to prevent escalation in stalking behaviours/risk, share knowledge and improve confidence in working with Stalking cases, whilst continuing to improve safeguarding and support for victims. It creates a robust referral route into the Early Awareness Stalking Intervention, which I have commissioned since 2021, as well as increasing the number of SPO applications.*

Forces are also reportedly well engaged and utilising MAPPA to manage stalking perpetrators. Others are utilising their stalking multi-agency arrangements to support MAPPA.

- **Cheshire PCC:** *A revised approach to MAPPA is being introduced within Cheshire which will include a monthly meeting to discuss potential MAPPA cases for DA and Stalking initially. This meeting will include Probation and will encourage greater use of MAPPA including at Level 1 for Cat 2 cases following the expansion of Sch. 15 cases. MAPPA is the recommended approach to managing DA and stalking perpetrators and this process will remove initial barriers to consideration as there is a reduced form which is used to assess cases prior to completion the full MAPPA documentation.*
- **Cambridgeshire PCC:** *Cambridgeshire Constabulary works in partnership with a wide range of agencies to manage the risk posed by stalking perpetrators through a number of multi-agency meetings. The nature and scale of the offending will dictate where such cases will be discussed and the level of information sharing. This will include the county's Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Panel, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and Multi Agency Public Protection Meetings (MAPPA). The latter is a new element of the force's action plan on stalking.*
- **Warwickshire PCC:** *MAPPA arrangements are conducted in accordance with legislation and guidance.*

A number of PCCs also noted the used of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) to manage and assess risk in relation to stalking related to domestic abuse.

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- **Sussex PCC:** *The Sussex MATAAC has been in place since October 2023 and targets the most harmful domestic abuse perpetrators. There are now three monthly MATAAC meetings in place across each of the three divisions, each chaired by a Chief Inspector.*

*At each divisional MATAAC meeting the four highest harm perpetrators are identified by the CDASU for targeting and multi-agency problem solving and intervention. Membership of the meeting comprises decision makers or managers from Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, Housing, Mental Health and our substance misuse partner Change Grow Live. Tactics including education, prevention, diversion, disruption, and enforcement tactics are used to reduce the harm.*

- **Cleveland PCC:** *Cleveland Police already work closely with partners in relation to DA related stalking and harassment through MARAC, MATAAC and Tees Safeguarding Adults Board.*

Some areas were reviewing their approaches to risk management, including MAPPA, as a result of the super complaint to ensure stalking perpetrators are effectively being managed in the appropriate forums and with the right partners.

- **Leicestershire PCC:** *By March 2025 we will have reviewed the way we collaborate and work across our partnerships with regard to stalking. The mechanisms for review will be through the Strategic Commissioning Group; the OPCC and the police force and the Strategic Partnership Board Executive which is the force-wide area partnership board, comprising the OPCC, police, probation, fire service, local authorities, health, education and community representatives.*
- **Sussex PCC:** *By March 2025 The results of an independent evaluation (funded by the PCC) into the MATAAC process will be completed, and we will use the findings of that evaluation to inform best practice in relation to the management of stalking offenders.*
- **Wiltshire PCC:** *We will review multi-agency approaches for address perpetrator behaviours through the Reducing Reoffending Board which is Co-Chaired by the OPCC and Probation.*
- **City of London:** *The City Police and City and Hackney Probation Service have recently reviewed local MAPPA processes to streamline these and provide further assurance around joint management of cases.*



### Engagement with Victims' Advocates/Services

PCCs were very clear about the importance of engaging partners who support and represent victims in their multi-agency response. They emphasised the positive impact of such engagement. Victims' representatives were engaged in a number of ways from directly imputing into risk management forums and approaches, to providing advice on police response, and developing referral pathways.

- **Hampshire and the Isle of Wight PCC:** *There is also a weekly Resource Allocation Panel where new and ongoing stalking investigations are discussed, with a focus on how to ensure the victim is safeguarded. Our commissioned service provider for the Stalking Advocacy and Support Service attends these panels to ensure victims have already been referred into service and to contribute to the risk management planning, alongside colleagues from Probation, Policing, CPS and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Trust (formally Southern Health) who deliver the perpetrator intervention PLSI (psychologist led stalking intervention).*
- **Northumbria PCC:** *Northumbria OPCC have helped facilitate partnership working between our commissioned service Paladin and our police force to help embed collaborative working when responding to cases of stalking and harassment. This collaborative working is further reflected in the Northumbria Stalking Intervention Programme (NSIP) and consists of representation from Northumbria Police, Paladin, Probation and CNTW. (...) Paladin's membership at NSIP, alongside our funded ISHA, has been instrumental in not only ensuring the victims voice is represented, but that the information sharing between these services and our police force has improved. This has resulted in effectively coordinating the correct support pathways for stalking victims.*
- **Bedfordshire PCC:** *There are two ongoing projects that support with this recommendation [Recommendation 16]. The first is to work with partner agencies in the voluntary and charitable sector to pull together a directory of services for Bedfordshire. The initial ambition for this directory is to share with statutory partners and agencies to improve collaboration, system understanding and encourage joint/co-commissioning. The second piece of work is to carry out the mapping exercise with a focus on drawing together an understanding of current service provision in the county, enabling referral pathways, client journeys and gaps to be identified and managed more efficiently.*

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## Wider Governance

PCCs and forces reported implementing wider governance arrangements to consider stalking and harassment, and violence against women and girls (VAWG), at a strategic level in their local areas. Some areas have a VAWG, Sexual Violence and/or Domestic Abuse Board/forum where stalking may also be discussed. Others have set up strategic groups. Stalking may also be tackled via Reducing Re-offending Groups or through Violence Reduction Forums.

- **Nottinghamshire PCC:** *MAPPA arrangements are primarily overseen by the Nottinghamshire Police Public Protection Team. Officers responsible for stalking will join on an ad hoc basis depending on the cases being discussed in addition to members from Public Protection. At an OPCC level, this work is scrutinised and overseen via the Nottinghamshire Reducing Reoffending Board.*
- **Norfolk PCC:** *A Working Group for ‘Stalking and Harassment’ has been set up and their role will be to initially work through the report/recommendations and then to serve as a continuous improvement group. Within the group sits the MAPPA Manager to ensure there is a true multi agency approach. The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Group (DASVG) is the county Board where matters pertaining to DA and SV are discussed and agreed. (...) The board is made up of statutory providers, specifically County/District/City Councils, Police, NHS England, CPS, Probation, Children’s Services, Adult Social Services as well as two members from the County’s Provider forum which is made up of third/charity sector organisations. (one from a specialist DA Agency/one from a specialist SV agency).*
- **Lincolnshire PCC:** *The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner chairs a quarterly Service Provider Network which brings together key individuals from organisations who support victims of crime in Lincolnshire (regardless of commissioning arrangements). The force VAWG lead, and victims lead are members of the Network which encourages collaborative working between organisations, sharing of best practice and raises awareness of support services.*

## Policing Working Together

PCCs reported that forces are collaborating across forces to manage the response to stalking both operationally and strategically. They are engaged through the NPCC’s National Stalking Board, regional groups, and cross-border support.

- **Nottinghamshire PCC:** *Nottinghamshire Police liaise with other forces to share information, transfer cases, cross border MAPPA cases etc.*

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- **Gwent PCC:** *The Force already collaborates with other forces tactically and to share learning/best practice, such as through the regional police lead for stalking and harassment, protecting vulnerable people group chaired by the ACC, and monthly stalking coordinator meetings.*
- **Avon and Somerset PCC:** *The Constabulary form part of the South West Region and attend regular Regional Stalking meetings with the four other forces.*
- **Staffordshire PFCC:** *There is a regional DA and Stalking forum that feeds into the national NPCC led Board.*

PCCs and forces are also engaging in peer support and sharing best practice across regions to improve practice.

- **Merseyside PCC:** *Merseyside Police has undertaken extensive best-practice liaison with neighbouring Forces, including Cheshire and planned visits to Lancashire.*
- **Kent PCC:** *Kent Police has well established multi-agency processes and collaborates with other forces across England and Wales in relation to stalking. Kent often invites other forces to MASIP [Multi-agency Stalking Intervention Programme], and there are ongoing meetings through regional groups and they attend the national stalking and harassment working groups which has led to a vast network of expertise with other forces in relation to stalking practices.*
- **North Wales PCC:** *In partnership with Cheshire Constabulary, a Detective Sergeant (DS) has been seconded to the Cheshire Harm Reduction Unit to develop North Wales's understanding of stalking behaviours and the value of a multi-agency approach.*
- **Mayor's Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC) S-TAC [Stalking Theatre Assessment Centre]** *partners have recently visited Cheshire to gain insight into another MASIP and they have hosted many other forces to showcase the benefits of multi-agency working.*

PCCs reported challenges in streamlining the reporting of stalking cases across police forces. Issues arose with perpetrators residing in different areas, complicating coordination and case management and which may result in inconsistent responses for victims. PCCs and forces have explored collaboration opportunities with neighbouring forces.

- **York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority:** *(...) Some of the victims interviewed had experienced multiple and varying responses due to a perpetrator living in a different force area; this*

*is an issue we have raised and discussed with Commissioning leads from neighbouring forces across the Yorkshire and the Humber Region.*

- **City of London:** *[volumes of recorded stalking offences is low] The above means that there is an inherent impetus to collaborate with other forces on stalking, given the vast majority of these involve perpetrators resident in other force areas.*

## Data and Information Sharing

The majority of PCCs discussed the importance of data and information sharing to facilitate the response to stalking and support collaboration. Many PCCs have in place or will be implementing information sharing agreements across forces and partners, including providers of victim support services which support a streamlined approach to both identification of perpetrators, and support and referrals for victims. Data availability and quality is important and PCCs acknowledge that it is important to ensure this is a priority.

- **Northamptonshire PFCC:** *Voices are joint data controllers with Northamptonshire Police which enables us to proactively respond to all victims of crime.*
- **West Mercia PCC:** *Information Sharing Agreements are being reviewed to ensure collaborative working between the police and our appointed service.*
- **South Yorkshire PCC:** *(...) There are information sharing arrangements with the provider - staff police vetted, and a number of posts have access to police systems.*




PCCs noted the importance of having effective working relationships to complement access to data and other information, and to facilitate better joined-up working.

- **South Wales PCC:** *Our Force Stalking Coordinator sits within the Strategic Public Protection Department within force and has well established links with the ISACs and IDVAs in the region and ISACs within national organisations such as the Suzy Lamplugh Trust and Paladin. By having these good lines of communication and with the Coordinator sitting in force, they can access all police systems, which allows for enhanced information sharing and safeguarding opportunities, follow-up with officers in charge, exploring opportunities for an SPO and ensuring evidence is gathered to assist with this.*

Data and information sharing was agreed to be a driving factor in improved collaborative working locally and in allowing PCCs and partners to engage on the issues driving an offender's behaviour and the right approach to managing them, and to identifying the right support for victims.

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## Scrutiny and Accountability

PCCs provided evidence on how they are monitoring performance on stalking through a variety of approaches, including their 1:1 meetings with Chief Constables and scheduled meetings with the force. Stalking may also be a priority within Police and Crime Plans and where stalking isn't specified PCCs will include broader priorities focused on violence against women and girls, and supporting victims. PCCs have specific forums for holding their chief constables to account, and many undertake dip-sampling to ensure the response to stalking is effective.

PCCs are engaging partners to support scrutiny and accountability conversations, including commissioned services, and drawing on data to support discussion.

- **Bedfordshire PCC:** *As PCC, I will be closely monitoring any developments through performance and governance meetings with the Chief Constable to hold Bedfordshire Police to account. I have requested regular spotlight reports on VAWG which will provide me with data and analysis of the current response to stalking.*

*This will also be closely monitored by the dedicated mission board that I am setting up to advise the Deputy PCC and I on the protection of women and children. This board, comprised of members from the police service, local authorities and victims' groups, will be able to ensure that these recommendations, and the key objectives within the Police and Crime Plan, are implemented effectively.*

- **Essex PFCC:** *"Tackling violence against women and girls & domestic abuse", and "ensuring vulnerable people are protected" are priorities in my 2024-8 Police and Crime Plan and I will continue to maintain close scrutiny of the work of Essex Police in this regard, and to hold the Chief Constable to account. Over the last 12 months I undertook deep dives into domestic abuse and vulnerability with representatives of the Force.*
- **Cumbria PFCC:** *The OPFCC hold a monthly Commissioning Group with the Constabulary senior officers to review performance of commissioned services and to discuss areas of need.*
- **Sussex PCC:** *The stalking service contract is monitored through quarterly data collection points in line with templated data monitoring requirements set by the Ministry of Justice. This data, which includes numbers of referrals, feedback from survivors and service quality, is monitored through PCC-led quarterly monitoring meetings that are attended by Sussex Police's Stalking Portfolio Lead and the Director of Veritas, the commissioned provider of the stalking service. This meeting also allows for the opportunity to ensure that referral processes between Sussex Police and Veritas are functioning correctly, along with any other operational aspects that require additional scrutiny and*

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*where necessary action should be taken, such as specific cases that require an intervention to ensure compliance with the Victims Code of Practice.*

## Raising Awareness and Training Opportunities

A number of PCCs reported activity to raise awareness through campaigns and training for their staff, partners and services. This has included refreshing internal intranet pages to support staff in identifying stalking and understanding their roles and responsibilities. Training is also used to improve and facilitate better information sharing and up-skill staff.

- **West Midlands PCC:** *[Black Country Women’s Aid] supported the Force with the development of their Stalking intranet page that provides officers with comprehensive information on how to respond to stalking and support victims. Alongside this was the co-design and development of an internal campaign ‘SERIOUS’ which stands for Seeing Each Report Individually Only Undermines Stalking, to help address one of the key issues identified in the Super complaint.*
- **Lancashire PCC:** *The county will host an annual stalking awareness day to offer training to up to 60 professionals, identified jointly by the provider and the OPCC, to raise awareness of the signs of stalking and appropriate responses at a multi-agency level.*
- **Durham PCC:** *(...) commissioned Paladin to develop Stalking Champion training model for the force in recognition that officers and staff needed more training. (...) The force identified 20 officers across multiple departments to receive an ensure level of training.*

A number of PCCs have commissioned approaches and external communications to improve understanding in communities of the issue of stalking and highlight support options.

- **York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority:** *The OPFCC secured Home Office Safer Streets 4 Funding to create the ‘Just a Kiss’ short film series to raise awareness of how stalking and harassment can manifest in rural communities as well as more urban environments, aimed at young people aged 16 to 25yrs. ‘Just a Kiss’ was publicly launched on 12th October 2023, and there had been over 6,000 YouTube views of the episodes... The film is now being used to raise awareness amongst the next generation of police officers at a local, regional and even international level.*
- **Northumbria PCC:** *The OPCC has also funded Alice Ruggles Trust to pilot their stalking awareness sessions into assemblies in 20 schools across Northumbria by March 2025. This is part of our primary prevention response to stalking and will complement the wider work the OPCC and partners are doing to respond to stalking.*

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A number of PCCs and Forces have already invited the Suzy Lamplugh Trust to review their approach and worked with the Trust to develop recommendations, while others are in the process of engaging them to develop recommendations.

- **Thames Valley PCC:** *In January 2023, Thames Valley Police commissioned the Suzy Lamplugh Trust to appraise the approach to stalking from the perspective of victims, identify areas of positive practice and areas for improvement as well as our readiness for engagement with a multi-agency approach to stalking intervention with perpetrators. The Suzy Lamplugh Trust delivered their report in April 2023 which led to the development and delivery of a bespoke Thames Valley action plan*
- **South Wales PCC:** *South Wales OPCC recently commissioned the Suzy Lamplugh Trust to conduct a Victim Focused Stalking Review. This review looked at the both the Police and HMPPS' approach to stalking victims in South Wales, with a holistic view of the response to stalking from a victim centred perspective, while incorporating an enhanced focus on the perpetrators' journey through the criminal justice system. This review identified some strengths, as well as identifying recommendations as to how we can improve the response to stalking, to better safeguard victims and address perpetration. We are currently in the process of aligning the recommendations within the Super Complaint, this subsequent investigation and our own South Wales stalking review with force colleagues and devising an action plan and delivery group to monitor progress moving forward.*

## Closing Statement

**All 43 PCC in England and Wales accepted recommendations 15, 16, and 25.** PCCs recognise the devastating impact stalking has on victims, and alongside other politicians many PCCs have themselves been the victims of stalking and harassment. PCCs remain committed to delivering the best possible support for victims of this crime, however, as the evidence submitted demonstrates, funding uncertainty makes funding decisions challenging, further amplified by the context of a stretched criminal justice system which is seeing continued delays to cases reaching courts.

The APCC is grateful to all PCCs and their offices for submitting their responses to the recommendations set out in the report.

The APCC will continue to work with the IOPC, HMICFRS, the College of Policing, the Home Office, National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) and our partners in the sector on the national strategic response to stalking.

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