National Vulnerability Action Plan (NVAP)

Action Impact Toolkit

2.1.1 Recognition and Response

Action Impact Toolkit Guidance Notes

The National Vulnerability Action Plan (NVAP) has been adopted by all forces across England and Wales and seeks to create a more coordinated, consistent and holistic policing response to vulnerability.

The aim of this toolkit is to help forces measure and track the impact of fully embedding an NVAP action within their force as well as providing suggested steps in the form of evidence-based activities and outputs that can be taken to achieve this. Long term impacts for both the organisation and externally (i.e. victims and the public) have been identified as well as suggested ways in which to measure these.

There are four parts to the toolkit:

1. Impact Statement

This is the **headline information** summarised from the logic model and supporting information. This sheet is provided for those who only require an **overview of the toolkit**.
This sheet provides the reader with the key information of:
- What do we mean? – clarifying the action objectives
- What do we need? – key activities for the force
- How do we know? – a few suggested impact measures

The sheet also sets out the long-term impacts the force could expect to see from embedding the action. There is one organisational impact, i.e. the impact on the workforce and how it operates, and one external impact i.e. the impact on victims, the public and communities.

2. Logic Model

This is the main element of the Action Impact Toolkit.
A logic model is a graphical representation of the relationships between a problem, action or intervention, and measurement of success. For more information see: https://www.college.police.uk/research/practical-evaluation-tools.

There is one logic model per objective within the NVAP action and has the following elements:
- **Situation** – this provides an on overview of the current situation in relation to the objective
- **Activities** – this column contains key activities that forces could put in place to help them achieve the objective
- **Outputs** – this column identifies main outputs from the force putting the activity in place
- **Short to Medium Term Impacts** – this column provides a number of impacts that the force could expect to see in the short to medium term from putting the activities in place. These will all link into the long-term impacts identified at the top of the sheet
- **Impact Assessment** – these are prompt questions for forces to encourage them to consider how they might best want to measure impact
- **Suggested Measures** – this column provides a number of suggested measures forces can use to help them measure impact. **These are not prescriptive.** Where relevant these have been linked to the PEEL Assessment Framework measures
- **Unintended Consequences** – this section identifies a number of consequences that may occur from embedding the action within the force which could be considered as having a negative impact on other areas of policing

It is not expected that a force would put in all activities at once. In fact, some forces may find they are already doing some of the activities or alternatively will identify key gaps they can begin to address.

3. Supporting Information

This part of the toolkit provides **additional information, evidence and key links** to the logic models as well as setting out which of the **policing perennial issues** are linked to the NVAP action.

The toolkits have been developed using a variety of evidence including a review of academic and grey literature, policies, guidance, inspection reports, PCC plans and force NVAP benchmarking reports, as well as conducting scoping chats with relevant departments and organisations. Forces have also been consulted throughout the development of the model with feedback collated and incorporated.

This sheet is intended for those who would like to find out further information on the activities suggested in the logic model.

4. Impact Realisation Plan

This part of the toolkit has been designed to help forces identify and prioritise which elements of the logic model they would like to focus on, what they will do to put the activity in place and to consider how they might want to measure the impact. **It is not expected that forces implement all the suggested activities at once**.

It may be helpful to ask a few questions to be clear about what you are trying to achieve:
· Why are we doing this?
· What do we want to achieve?
· What does success look like?
· Who will benefit and how?
· How will we track and measure the short, medium and long term impacts?

Contacts

For any queries about the toolkit please contact: VKPP@norfolk.police.uk

VKPP IMPACT STATEMENT   **Action 2.1.1 Recognition & Response**

Ensure that recognising and responding to vulnerability is everyone's business, especially at first point of contact

Objective 1: To identify vulnerable people, communities (including victims and perpetrators) and related threat, risk and harm at an early stage	*Objective 2:* To ensure officers/staff are equipped to manage risk and assess needs, as well as support and safeguard those requiring it	*Objective 3:* To embed and employ a trauma informed approach
What do we mean? Officers/staff are able to identify individuals and communities experiencing vulnerable related threat, risk and harm at an early stage *What do we need?* Co-ordinated and on-going support and training plan covering: • Vulnerability and risk • Professional curiosity and unconscious bias • Regular dissemination of information related to vulnerability • Effective support and guidance from supervisors • Systems that allow the recording and retrieval of information concerning risk	*What do we mean?* Where vulnerability-related risk is identified, officers/staff have the knowledge and tools available to assess and manage needs, supporting and/or safeguarding the individual where needed *What do we need?* Support in evaluating and assessing risk through: • Provision of and training in, vulnerability specific risk assessment tools • Provision of specialist support either through experts or on-line information • Information on identified risk being recorded accurately and easily available to contribute to decision-making	*What do we mean?* The force has a well-defined trauma informed approach embedded within their response to vulnerability *What do we need?* Clear and committed steer from leaders to: • Use a standard definition within the force and across partners • Demonstrate the importance of embedding the approach • Conduct a self-assessment of the organisation's current position and identify steps needed • Provide regular role-related training in being trauma informed

How do we know? Related PEEL Measures
1.1 The force manages incoming calls, assesses risk and prioritises its response well. 2.1 The workforce interacts with the public fairly and respectfully. 4.1 The force has effective oversight of its response to public contact and understands risk effectively at first point of contact. 4.2 The force provides an appropriate response to incidents, including those involving vulnerable people.

ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT
A force that is confident in its ability to recognise and assess vulnerability at the earliest opportunity and responds appropriately reducing the risk to the individual, community and public.

EXTERNAL IMPACT
Individuals experiencing vulnerability are confident that any related risk of harm is recognised at first point of contact and responded to empathetically using a trauma informed approach.

NVAP Action 2.1.1 Recognition & Response

NPCC National Police Chiefs' Council | Vulnerability Knowledge & Practice Programme

Action Detail

Ensure that recognising and responding to vulnerability is everyone's business, especially at first point of contact

Objective

1. To identify vulnerable people, communities (including victims and perpetrators) and related threat, risk and harm at an early stage
2. To ensure officers/staff are equipped to manage risk and assess needs, as well as support and safeguard those requiring it
3. To embed and employ a trauma informed approach
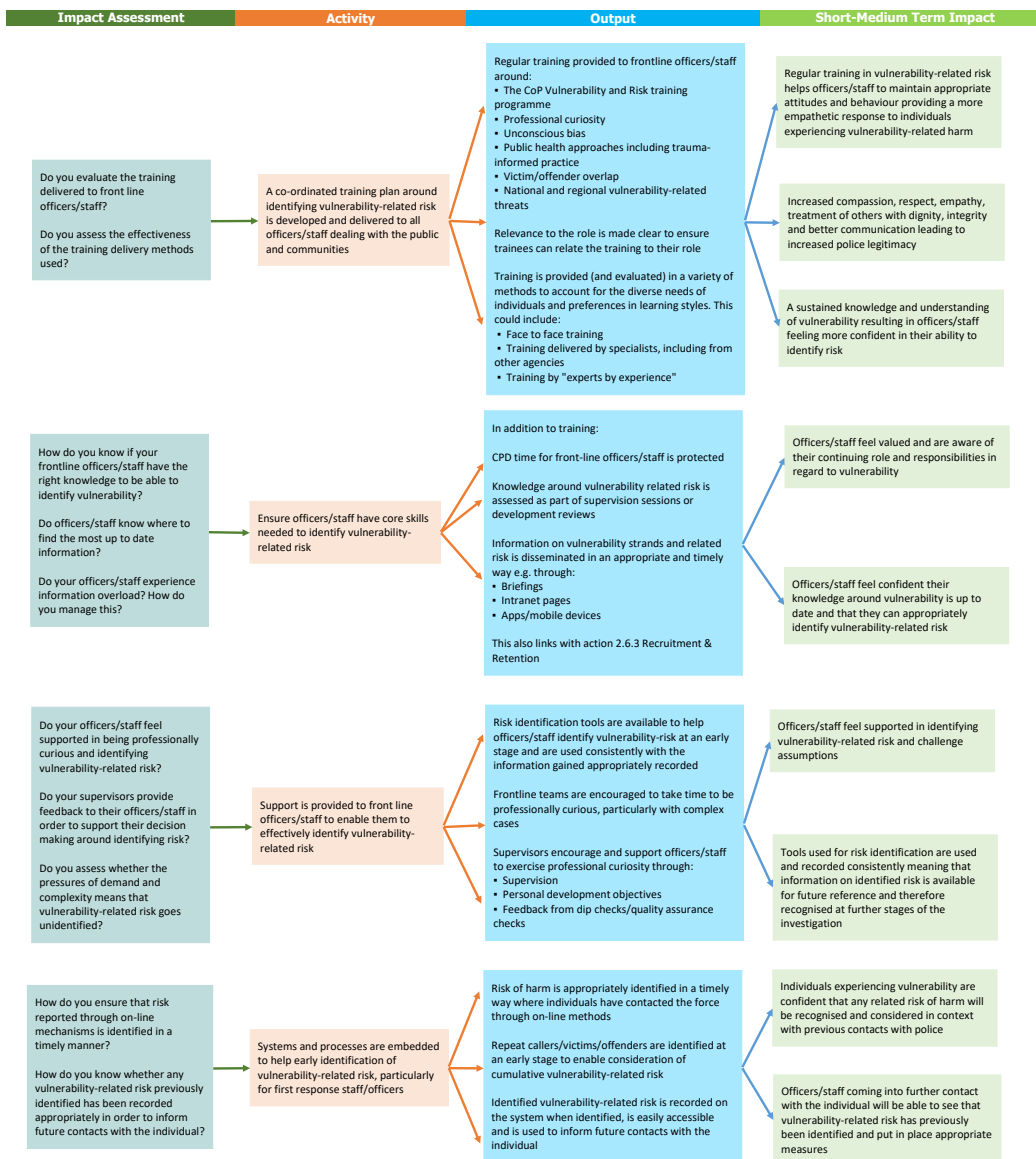
Long Term Impacts

Organisational: A force that is confident in its ability to recognise and assess vulnerability at the earliest opportunity and responds appropriately reducing the risk to the individual, community and public.

External: Individuals experiencing vulnerability are confident that any related risk of harm is recognised at first point of contact and responded to empathetically using a trauma informed approach.

Objective 1 - Identify risk and harm at an early stage

Situation

Identification of vulnerability at first point of contact is essential as this is often when individuals are in crisis, in need of help and are vulnerable (HMICFRS, 2019). Demand is becoming more complex, and a greater proportion of contacts involve those who are experiencing vulnerability. Reviews have shown that the assessment of risk and subsequent response is inconsistent, meaning that forces may not always be keeping those experiencing vulnerability-related harm safe (HMICFRS, 2019).

Impact Assessment	Activity	Output	Short-Medium Term Impact
Do you evaluate the training delivered to front line officers/staff? Do you assess the effectiveness of the training delivery methods used?	A co-ordinated training plan around identifying vulnerability-related risk is developed and delivered to all officers/staff dealing with the public and communities	Regular training provided to frontline officers/staff around: • The CoP Vulnerability and Risk training programme • Professional curiosity • Unconscious bias • Public health approaches including trauma-informed practice • Victim/offender overlap • National and regional vulnerability-related threats Relevance to the role is made clear to ensure trainees can relate the training to their role Training is provided (and evaluated) in a variety of methods to account for the diverse needs of individuals and preferences in learning styles. This could include: • Face to face training • Training delivered by specialists, including from other agencies • Training by "experts by experience"	Regular training in vulnerability-related risk helps officers/staff to maintain appropriate attitudes and behaviour providing a more empathetic response to individuals experiencing vulnerability-related harm Increased compassion, respect, empathy, treatment of others with dignity, integrity and better communication leading to increased police legitimacy A sustained knowledge and understanding of vulnerability resulting in officers/staff feeling more confident in their ability to identify risk
How do you know if your frontline officers/staff have the right knowledge to be able to identify vulnerability? Do officers/staff know where to find the most up to date information? Do your officers/staff experience information overload? How do you manage this?	Ensure officers/staff have core skills needed to identify vulnerability-related risk	In addition to training: CPD time for front-line officers/staff is protected Knowledge around vulnerability related risk is assessed as part of supervision sessions or development reviews Information on vulnerability strands and related risk is disseminated in an appropriate and timely way e.g. through: • Briefings • Intranet pages • Apps/mobile devices This also links with action 2.6.3 Recruitment & Retention	Officers/staff feel valued and are aware of their continuing role and responsibilities in regard to vulnerability Officers/staff feel confident their knowledge around vulnerability is up to date and that they can appropriately identify vulnerability-related risk
Do your officers/staff feel supported in being professionally curious and identifying vulnerability-related risk? Do your supervisors provide feedback to their officers/staff in order to support their decision making around identifying risk? Do you assess whether the pressures of demand and complexity means that vulnerability-related risk goes unidentified?	Support is provided to front line officers/staff to enable them to effectively identify vulnerability-related risk	Risk identification tools are available to help officers/staff identify vulnerability-risk at an early stage and are used consistently with the information gained appropriately recorded Frontline teams are encouraged to take time to be professionally curious, particularly with complex cases Supervisors encourage and support officers/staff to exercise professional curiosity through: • Supervision • Personal development objectives • Feedback from dip checks/quality assurance checks	Officers/staff feel supported in identifying vulnerability-related risk and challenge assumptions Tools used for risk identification are used and recorded consistently meaning that information on identified risk is available for future reference and therefore recognised at further stages of the investigation
How do you ensure that risk reported through on-line mechanisms is identified in a timely manner? How do you know whether any vulnerability-related risk previously identified has been recorded appropriately in order to inform future contacts with the individual?	Systems and processes are embedded to help early identification of vulnerability-related risk, particularly for first response staff/officers	Risk of harm is appropriately identified in a timely way where individuals have contacted the force through on-line methods Repeat callers/victims/offenders are identified at an early stage to enable consideration of cumulative vulnerability-related risk Identified vulnerability-related risk is recorded on the system when identified, is easily accessible and is used to inform future contacts with the individual	Individuals experiencing vulnerability are confident that any related risk of harm will be recognised and considered in context with previous contacts with police Officers/staff coming into further contact with the individual will be able to see that vulnerability-related risk has previously been identified and put in place appropriate measures

Suggested Measures

PEEL Measures:
1.1 The force manages incoming calls, assesses risk and prioritises its response well.
• 1.1.2 The call handler correctly records the details of the call and identifies vulnerability, including repeat callers and others in the household. They use and correctly record a structured initial triage and complete a risk assessment to inform the prioritisation to give the call and provide the most appropriate response to the caller.
• 1.1.3 Call handlers act politely, appropriately, and ethically and use clear, unambiguous language. They give appropriate advice on safeguarding and evidence preservation.

2.1 The workforce interacts with the public fairly and respectfully.
• 2.1.1 Officers are effective at communicating and interacting with the public without bias. They consider the needs of their communities.

4.1 The force has effective oversight of its response to public contact and understands risk effectively at first point of contact.
• 4.1.4 The force understands and promptly identifies vulnerability at first point of contact. This includes repeat callers and others in the household.
• 4.1.5 The call handler uses and correctly records a structured initial triage and completes a risk assessment to inform the prioritisation to give to the call and provide the most appropriate response to the caller.

Other potential measures:
• Quality assurance check/review of cases to assess if the decisions and actions taken were appropriate, lacked bias and considered the wider risk
• Staff survey looking at effectiveness of training
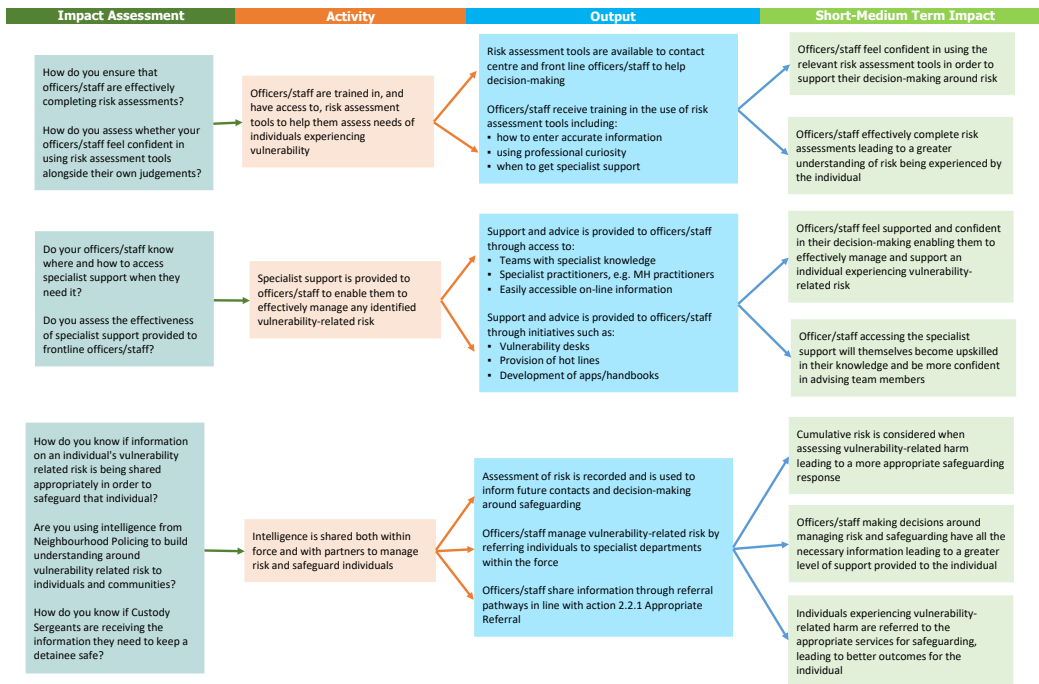• Review of supervision sessions

Unintended Consequences

• Providing training and protected CPD days may have a negative impact on officer/staff time and therefore capacity to deal with demand, but should result in better responses and decreased repeat victims
• Taking more time on calls to be professionally curious and trauma informed may initially negatively impact demand but should decrease the rates of repeat victims
• Frontline officers may take more time attending incidents which, along with associated administration tasks, may initially negatively impact on capacity
• Officers may identify more individuals who require safeguarding than previously, adding to the demand on policing and partners
• Greater awareness of vulnerability could lead to the over-identification of risk

Consequences of not embedding this action are described in the College of Policing's Perennial Issues listed in the Supporting Information
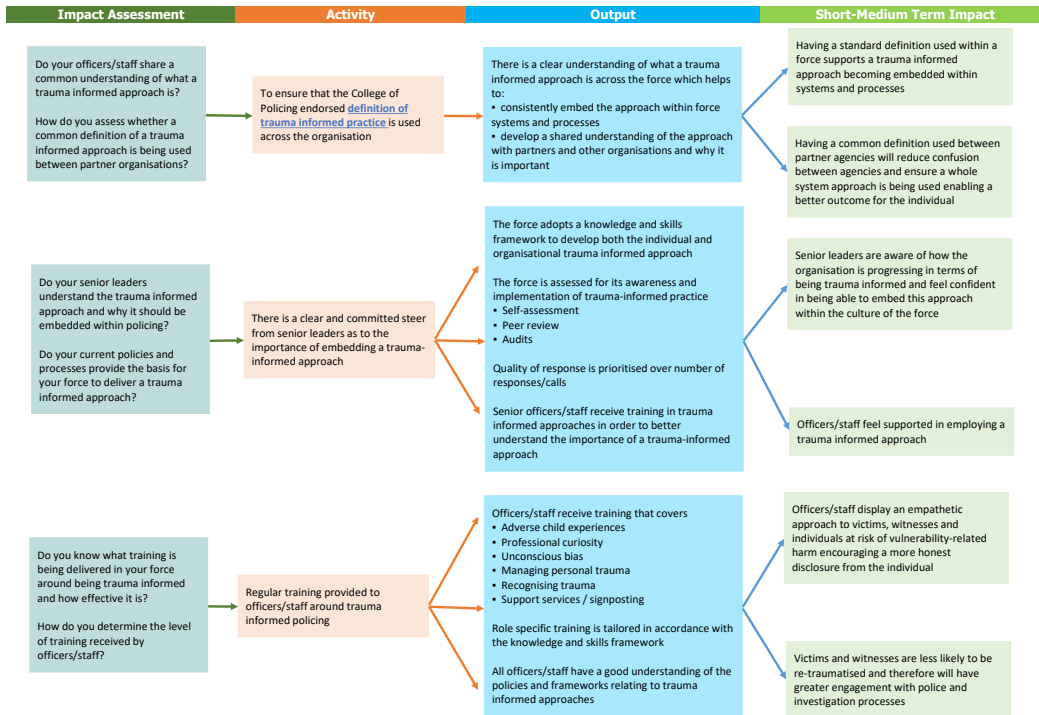
Objective 2 - Manage and assess needs & safeguarding

Situation

Once a vulnerability-related risk has been identified officers/staff should then assess the level of risk. There are a number of risk assessment tools which have been developed for specialist areas, with a number of advantages and disadvantages to using them. On one hand, it can provide a framework to structure decision-making around risk. On the other, it can close down critical thinking of more inexperienced officers, and may provide only a limited understanding of lived experience of risk. Therefore training on how to use the tools in conjunction with professional judgement is needed. This should also be supplemented by access to specialist advice, especially in complex cases, to accurately asses risk as well as ensuring that information on identified risk is passed to the appropriate people/services to enable appropriate safeguarding measures are put in place to support the individual.

Impact Assessment	Activity	Output	Short-Medium Term Impact
How do you ensure that officers/staff are effectively completing risk assessments? How do you assess whether your officers/staff feel confident in using risk assessment tools alongside their own judgements?	Officers/staff are trained in, and have access to, risk assessment tools to help them assess needs of individuals experiencing vulnerability	Risk assessment tools are available to contact centre and front line officers/staff to help decision-making Officers/staff receive training in the use of risk assessment tools including: ▪ how to enter accurate information ▪ using professional curiosity ▪ when to get specialist support	Officers/staff feel confident in using the relevant risk assessment tools in order to support their decision-making around risk Officers/staff effectively complete risk assessments leading to a greater understanding of risk being experienced by the individual
Do your officers/staff know where and how to access specialist support when they need it? Do you assess the effectiveness of specialist support provided to frontline officers/staff?	Specialist support is provided to officers/staff to enable them to effectively manage any identified vulnerability-related risk	Support and advice is provided to officers/staff through access to: ▪ Teams with specialist knowledge ▪ Specialist practitioners, e.g. MH practitioners ▪ Easily accessible on-line information Support and advice is provided to officers/staff through initiatives such as: ▪ Vulnerability desks ▪ Provision of hot lines ▪ Development of apps/handbooks	Officers/staff feel supported and confident in their decision-making enabling them to effectively manage and support an individual experiencing vulnerability-related risk Officer/staff accessing the specialist support will themselves become upskilled in their knowledge and be more confident in advising team members
How do you know if information on an individual's vulnerability related risk is being shared appropriately in order to safeguard that individual? Are you using intelligence from Neighbourhood Policing to build understanding around vulnerability related risk to individuals and communities? How do you know if Custody Sergeants are receiving the information they need to keep a detainee safe?	Intelligence is shared both within force and with partners to manage risk and safeguard individuals	Assessment of risk is recorded and is used to inform future contacts and decision-making around safeguarding Officers/staff manage vulnerability-related risk by referring individuals to specialist departments within the force Officers/staff share information through referral pathways in line with action 2.2.1 Appropriate Referral	Cumulative risk is considered when assessing vulnerability-related harm leading to a more appropriate safeguarding response Officers/staff making decisions around managing risk and safeguarding have all the necessary information leading to a greater level of support provided to the individual Individuals experiencing vulnerability-related harm are referred to the appropriate services for safeguarding, leading to better outcomes for the individual

Suggested Measures

PEEL Measures:
4.2 The force provides an appropriate response to incidents, including those involving vulnerable people.
▪ 4.2.1 The force seeks advice from internal and external experts to inform better decision-making and risk assessments.

▪ 4.2.2 The force attends incidents quickly enough to secure scenes. Responding officers receive appropriate information and intelligence to understand the risk and vulnerability posed to themselves and others.
▪ 4.2.3 The force thoroughly assesses a victim's vulnerability at initial response and makes sure it completes appropriate risk assessments.

Other potential measures:
▪ Quality assurance checks to assess use of specialised risk assessment tools
▪ Local evaluation of specialist support mechanisms

Unintended Consequences

▪ Providing training and protected CPD days may have a negative impact on officer/staff time and therefore capacity to deal with demand, but should result in better responses and decreased repeat victims
▪ Taking more time on calls to be professionally curious and trauma informed may initially negatively impact demand but should decrease the rates of repeat victims
▪ Frontline officers may take more time attending incidents which, along with associated administration tasks, may initially negatively impact on capacity
▪ Officers may identify more individuals who require safeguarding than previously, adding to the demand on policing and partners
▪ Greater awareness of vulnerability could lead to the over-identification of risk

Consequences of not embedding this action are described in the College of Policing's Perennial Issues listed in the Supporting Information

Objective 3 - Trauma Informed Approach

Situation

Up until early 2023, there has been a lack of a consistent definition of a trauma informed approach means within policing. This has lead to a wide variation in the understanding of what a trauma informed approach is, which can affect how well it is being embedded within the force. However, forces with Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) in their area tend to have a clearer understanding as VRUs already use public health approaches, which incorporates a trauma informed approach.

There is an overwhelming amount of evidence for the impacts of trauma on all aspects of a persons life and it is essential to be aware of this in order to understand the possible causes of the behaviours and issues that encountered in policing. By becoming trauma informed, and considering the impact of trauma on peoples lives, officers/staff can create the best possible circumstances for people to interact and engage with them.

There is evidence of the a substantial impact of taking a trauma informed approach from other sectors, like primary care, and work is ongoing to establish the evidence base in policing.

Impact Assessment	Activity	Output	Short-Medium Term Impact
Do your officers/staff share a common understanding of what a trauma informed approach is? How do you assess whether a common definition of a trauma informed approach is being used between partner organisations?	To ensure that the College of Policing endorsed definition of trauma informed practice is used across the organisation	There is a clear understanding of what a trauma informed approach is across the force which helps to: • consistently embed the approach within force systems and processes • develop a shared understanding of the approach with partners and other organisations and why it is important	Having a standard definition used within a force supports a trauma informed approach becoming embedded within systems and processes
			Having a common definition used between partner agencies will reduce confusion between agencies and ensure a whole system approach is being used enabling a better outcome for the individual
Do your senior leaders understand the trauma informed approach and why it should be embedded within policing? Do your current policies and processes provide the basis for your force to deliver a trauma informed approach?	There is a clear and committed steer from senior leaders as to the importance of embedding a trauma-informed approach	The force adopts a knowledge and skills framework to develop both the individual and organisational trauma informed approach	Senior leaders are aware of how the organisation is progressing in terms of being trauma informed and feel confident in being able to embed this approach within the culture of the force
		The force is assessed for its awareness and implementation of trauma-informed practice • Self-assessment • Peer review • Audits	
		Quality of response is prioritised over number of responses/calls	
		Senior officers/staff receive training in trauma informed approaches in order to better understand the importance of a trauma-informed approach	Officers/staff feel supported in employing a trauma informed approach
Do you know what training is being delivered in your force around being trauma informed and how effective it is? How do you determine the level of training received by officers/staff?	Regular training provided to officers/staff around trauma informed policing	Officers/staff receive training that covers • Adverse child experiences • Professional curiosity • Unconscious bias • Managing personal trauma • Recognising trauma • Support services / signposting	Officers/staff display an empathetic approach to victims, witnesses and individuals at risk of vulnerability-related harm encouraging a more honest disclosure from the individual
		Role specific training is tailored in accordance with the knowledge and skills framework	
		All officers/staff have a good understanding of the policies and frameworks relating to trauma informed approaches	Victims and witnesses are less likely to be re-traumatised and therefore will have greater engagement with police and investigation processes

Suggested Measures

PEEL Measures:
1.1 The force manages incoming calls, assesses risk and prioritises its response well.
▪ 1.1.3 Call handlers act politely, appropriately, and ethically and use clear, unambiguous language. They give appropriate advice on safeguarding and evidence preservation.

2.1 The workforce interacts with the public fairly and respectfully.
▪ 2.1.1 Officers are effective at communicating and interacting with the public without bias. They consider the needs of their communities.

Other potential measures:
▪ Staff knowledge surveys
▪ Victim surveys
▪ Quality assurance checks of contacts with individuals
▪ External evaluation
▪ Audit against knowledge and skills frameworks

Unintended Consequences

▪ Training all officers and staff may add additional cost to the training budget and time
▪ Providing training and protected CPD days may have a negative impact on officer/staff time and therefore capacity to deal with demand
▪ As work is still ongoing to establish the evidence base of trauma informed approaches in policing, there may be potential consequences that have not yet been identified

Consequences of not embedding this action are described in the College of Policing's Perennial Issues listed in the Supporting Information

Action 2.1.1 Recognition & Response

Ensure that recognising and responding to vulnerability is everyone's business, especially at first point of contact

Organisational Impact (Long term):

A force that is confident in its ability to recognise and assess vulnerability at the earliest opportunity and responds appropriately reducing the risk to the individual, community and public.

External Impact (Long Term):

Individuals experiencing vulnerability are confident that any related risk of harm is recognised at first point of contact and responded to empathetically using a trauma informed approach.

Perennial Challenges

The College of Policing have identified ten recurring perennial challenges within policing (College of Policing, 2020). Action 2.1.1 Recognition & Response is linked to the perennial challenges of **Identifying and Managing Risk** and **Developing the Workforce**

Issues identified within the perennial challenge of **Identifying and Managing Risk** that link to the NVAP Recognition & Response action include:

• Staff workload results in time pressure to get on and reduces 'professional curiosity'
• Completion and accuracy of risk assessments considered to be poor
• Longer term prevention work takes back seat in face of pressures to respond
• Wide variation in identification, recording & response to vulnerability
• Lack of/poor supervision in grading/assessment accuracy of call takers/initial responders
• Wide variation in staffs understanding of emerging crime (HBV, FGM etc.)
• Risk assessment perceived as box ticking and/ or demand reduction exercise rather than tool to understand and support vulnerability

Issues identified within the perennial challenge of **Developing the Workforce** that link to the NVAP Recognition & Response action include:

• Staff skills are not up to date with requirements of job e.g. digital investigation; challenging conversations
• Perceived lack of time available for training and development
• Inadequate routine supervision (e.g. investigation plans, risk assessment and management plans, file prep, use of powers)
• Supervisors can lack knowledge, skills, confidence to provide support (e.g. disclosure, wellbeing)
• Online training perceived as poor – more practical, immersive, experiential development required
• Lack of meaningful skills/capabilities audits – failure to understand workforce development needs
• Mandatory training perceived as 'knee jerk' rather than pre-emptive

Useful Links

CoP Vulnerability Related Risks

CoP Vulnerability and Risk Learning Programme

Working Definition of Trauma Informed Practice

Public Health Approaches in Policing

Identify risk and harm at an early stage

Activities	Evidence	Short-Medium Term Impact	Impact Assessment	Suggested Measures for Objective 1
A co-ordinated training plan around identifying vulnerability-related risk is developed and delivered to all officers/staff dealing with the public and communities	For officers and staff to be able to identify vulnerability-related risk they need the knowledge to enable them to do so which can be gained through experience and training. The College of Policing have recently developed a Vulnerability and Risk training programme specifically aimed at frontline personnel such as response teams, contact centre staff and front desk officers/staff to provide them with the core skills needed to identify vulnerability-related risk. This approach provides a general knowledge around the cross-cutting indicators of vulnerability-related risk, threat and harm rather than requiring frontline staff to have an in-depth knowledge of all vulnerability stands, which the College of Policing suggest may be more effective (Holton, 2021). To further support the identification of risk, officers/staff should also receive training in being professionally curious, unconscious bias including around the victim/offender overlap, and the impact of trauma and other public health approaches. In general, HMICFRS have found that frontline personnel have a good understanding of vulnerability-related risk and that all forces have given training in recognising vulnerability and hidden harm (HMICFRS, 2019). However, peer reviews conducted by the VKPP have identified that refresher courses, even mandatory ones, were not being delivered due to a lack of resources. The co-ordination, content and delivery of training is important. Ideally, training should be co-ordinated by the force's Learning and Development (L&D) team as this prevents duplication of work and training time. The training should be tailored to the role as understanding the relevance of the training to the role can affect the learning appetite of those being trained, particularly for those in more operational roles (Barton et al., 2019). A report by Public Health Wales found that the overarching preference for the delivery of training is by specialists in the area, either from other agencies or within force, as well as those who were 'experts by experience'. In contrast, online training systems were seen as poor delivery methods (Barton et al., 2019). In addition, the delivery method can affect the efficacy of the training, with HMICFRS suggesting that web-based packages should be supported by face to face training, particularly where discussion around complex issues is needed (HMICFRS, 2018).	Regular training in vulnerability-related risk helps officers/staff to maintain appropriate attitudes and behaviour providing a more empathetic response to individuals experiencing vulnerability-related harm Increased compassion, respect, empathy, treatment of others with dignity, integrity and better communication leading to increased police legitimacy A sustained knowledge and understanding of vulnerability resulting in officers/staff feeling more confident in their ability to identify risk	Do you evaluate the training delivered to front line officers/staff? Do you assess the effectiveness of the training delivery methods used?	**PEEL Measures:** 1.1 The force manages incoming calls, assesses risk and prioritises its response well. ▪ 1.1.2 The call handler correctly records the details of the call and identifies vulnerability, including repeat callers and others in the household. They use and correctly record a structured initial triage and complete a risk assessment to inform the prioritisation to give the call and provide the most appropriate response to the caller. ▪ 1.1.3 Call handlers act politely, appropriately, and ethically and use clear, unambiguous language. They give appropriate advice on safeguarding and evidence preservation. 2.1 The workforce interacts with the public fairly and respectfully. ▪ 2.1.1 Officers are effective at communicating and interacting with the public without bias. They consider the needs of their communities. 4.1 The force has effective oversight of its response to public contact and understands risk effectively at first point of contact. ▪ 4.1.4 The force understands and promptly identifies vulnerability at first point of contact. This includes repeat callers and others in the household.
Ensure officers/staff have core skills needed to identify vulnerability-related risk	Time given to officers and staff for continuous professional development (CPD) can vary between both forces and departments. For example, some forces give call handlers protected time to complete CPD activities e.g., one training day every 10 weeks whereas some ask staff to voluntarily attend training days on their rest days. Supervision is an important aspect of any role. Key elements of effective supervision include supporting the delivery of good service and supporting professional discretion in decision making (College of Policing, 2022). For example, key responsibilities of the control room supervisor include supporting staff to identify and manage risk, identifying training and development needs, monitoring staff welfare and reviewing on-going incidents (College of Policing, n.d.). There should be "objective and consistent" supervision within contact centres to manage and re-assess risk (HMICFRS, 2020, p. 13) However, as with all elements of policing, the standard of supervision varies. Another way to help ensure that knowledge around vulnerability is kept up to date is to deliver key messages through the force intranet, apps on mobile devices etc. This has further use as policing knowledge can move quickly and the development and evaluation of training packages can be slow in comparison. However, forces need to ensure there is a co-ordinated dissemination of the information/messages as too many messages may lead to information overload, especially if officers/staff have limited time to read the messages.	Officers/staff feel valued and are aware of their continuing role and responsibilities in regard to vulnerability Officers/staff feel confident their knowledge around vulnerability is up to date and that they can appropriately identify vulnerability-related risk	How do you know if your frontline officers/staff have the right knowledge to be able to identify vulnerability? Do officers/staff know where to find the most up to date information? Do your officers/staff experience information overload? How do you manage this?	▪ 4.1.5 The call handler uses and correctly records a structured initial triage and completes a risk assessment to inform the prioritisation to give to the call and provide the most appropriate response to the caller. **Other potential measures:** ▪ Quality assurance check/review of cases to assess if the decisions and actions taken were appropriate, lacked bias and considered the wider risk

Support is provided to front line officers/staff to enable them to effectively identify vulnerability-related risk	Forces use a number of tools to help identify people experiencing vulnerability or at risk of vulnerability related harm. Within the contact centre, THRIVE (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability, and Engagement) is widely used by forces. There is also an opportunity to identify vulnerability when conducting the Victim's needs assessment, and in custody detainees undergo a risk assessment when they are booked in which identifies vulnerability related-risk due to mental health needs or alcohol and/or substance use. However, use of tools such as THRIVE needs to be consistent and documented, which is not always the case (HMICFRS, 2020). Vulnerability related demand is growing and becoming more complex. As a result, demand has become a key barrier to consistently assessing vulnerability-related risk. For example, within the contact centre there is a tension between answering calls within the national standards and taking the time to appropriately identify risk (HMICFRS, 2020). Within response policing there is a feeling of being "bounced from call to call" (Barton et al., 2019, p. 28) and that their ability to identify and support individuals experiencing vulnerable was negatively impacted by the lack of resources. High demand, lack of resources and lack of time are all barriers to the use of professional curiosity. Therefore, adequately resourcing these areas of policing will help provide the time and space needed to identify vulnerability-related risk, particularly for complex cases. The role of the supervisor is also key in providing support to officers/staff in the identification of risk. Supervisors can ensure that officers/staff have the training and knowledge required to identify risk, can raise awareness of issues, encourage officers/staff to use professional curiosity and can provide feedback on decision making through conducting audits of calls/responses to incidents.	Officers/staff feel supported in identifying vulnerability-related risk and challenge assumptions Tools used for risk identification are used and recorded consistently meaning that information on identified risk is available for future reference and therefore recognised at further stages of the investigation	Do your officers/staff feel supported in being professionally curious and identifying vulnerability-related risk? Do your supervisors provide feedback to their officers/staff in order to support their decision making around identifying risk? Do you assess whether the pressures of demand and complexity means that vulnerability-related risk goes unidentified?	▪ Staff survey looking at effectiveness of training ▪ Review of supervision sessions
Systems and processes are embedded to help early identification of vulnerability-related risk, particularly for first response staff/officers	Ways in which the public can contact the police are expanding constantly. Most forces use the Single Online Home facility (SOH), a national approach to reporting crimes and accessing non-emergency services online. In addition, forces are using live chats on their websites for reporting crimes as well as using intelligent digital telephony which aim to manage calls for service more effectively and efficiently (HMICFRS, 2020). Forces are also increasing their use of social media to engage with the public, although service delivery varies between force with some allowing reporting through this platform whilst others do not and some using a range of platforms whilst others just have one dedicated platform (Todd, 2019). However, it is essential that these types of contacts are also assessed for risk of vulnerability-related harm using the same regulatory standards as for contact centres (Todd, 2019). Consideration is also needed around accessibility and inclusion as not everyone is able to use the technology or has the means to do so, particularly in deprived areas (Todd, 2019). Therefore, "contact channels must remain sufficiently diverse to meet the needs of all our communities, particularly our minority communities" (Todd, 2019, p. 8). For example, considerations should include those who do not speak English or those with disabilities and other sections of the community who tend to be more at risk to vulnerability-related harm. In addition, systems should be in place to identify risk and demand from repeat callers. Although in most cases identification of repeat callers can be done through placing a flag on the call-handling system, HMICFRS (2020) have found that not all forces do this. This means that staff have to search different systems in order to identify potential risk, increasing the chance of missing the information and placing the individual at greater risk. In addition, it is important that any identified risk of harm or vulnerability is recorded in the system to inform future contacts with the individual. This not only reduces the likelihood of vulnerability-related risk not being identified but will also help to build a picture of cumulative risk related to that repeat victim/perpetrator.	Individuals experiencing vulnerability are confident that any related risk of harm will be recognised and considered in context with previous contacts with police Officers/staff coming into further contact with the individual will be able to see that vulnerability-related risk has previously been identified and put in place appropriate measures	How do you ensure that risk reported through on-line mechanisms is identified in a timely manner? How do you know whether any vulnerability-related risk previously identified has been recorded appropriately in order to inform future contacts with the individual?	

Manage and assess needs & safeguarding

Activities	Evidence	Short-Medium Term Impact	Impact Assessment	Suggested Measures for Objective 2
Officers/staff are trained in, and have access to, risk assessment tools to help them assess needs of individuals experiencing vulnerability	Once a vulnerability-related risk has been identified officers/staff should then assess the level of risk. There are a number of risk assessment tools which have been developed for specialist areas. Tools include those for domestic abuse (DASH and DARA), stalking or harassment (SASH, S-DASH, stalking risk profile), honour-based abuse (Karma Nirvana, H-DASH), sexual exploitation (SERAF), missing people (MIRAF), and many more. The use of risk assessment tools has both advantages and disadvantages. On one hand it can provide a framework to structure decision-making around risk and on the other it can close down critical thinking of more inexperienced officers, and may provide only a limited understanding of lived experience of risk (Barlow et al., 2021).

Therefore, training in the risk assessment tools and professional curiosity is needed to ensure officers/staff have the knowledge needed to assess the level of risk and appropriate levels of support required. However, in some areas, training around the risk assessment tools is lacking. For example, Robinson et al. (2016) found that when using DASH, risk assessment training was lacking amongst most respondents, including those from more specialist roles, resulting in informal 'on-the-job learning' instead. Additionally, supervision and feedback that could reinforce any training was largely absent. Timely and robust reviews of initial risk assessments by specialists that have greater knowledge and experience can support the management of risk (Robinson et al, 2016). | Officers/staff feel confident in using the relevant risk assessment tools in order to support their decision-making around risk

Officers/staff effectively complete risk assessments leading to a greater understanding of risk being experienced by the individual | How do you ensure that officers/staff are effectively completing risk assessments?

How do you assess whether your officers/staff feel confident in using risk assessment tools alongside their own judgements? | **PEEL Measures:**
4.2 The force provides an appropriate response to incidents, including those involving vulnerable people.
▪ 4.2.1 The force seeks advice from internal and external experts to inform better decision-making and risk assessments.
▪ 4.2.2 The force attends incidents quickly enough to secure scenes. Responding officers receive appropriate information and intelligence to understand the risk and vulnerability posed to themselves and others.
▪ 4.2.3 The force thoroughly assesses a victim's vulnerability at initial response and makes sure it completes appropriate risk assessments. |
| **Specialist support is provided to officers/staff to enable them to effectively manage any identified vulnerability-related risk** | Having access to specialist knowledge in specific vulnerability strands will provide support to officers/staff in their decision-making around level of risk and subsequent safeguarding decisions. This specialist knowledge can be provided through several mechanisms. Some forces have implemented Vulnerability or Safeguarding desks to provide specialist advice to frontline officers/staff. In other areas, specialist practitioners from other agencies work alongside police to provide that knowledge. For example, most forces have some form of mental health (MH) triage involving a MH practitioner being stationed within the control room or going out to live calls with officers.

Some vulnerability strands have dedicated investigative teams, such as for domestic abuse or child sexual exploitation. Having access to advice from that team through a hot line or other means will support frontline officers. In addition, information and guidance can be added to a force's intranet or shared through mobile apps to provide accessible information and deliver key vulnerability messages, with the NVAP Benchmarking returns showing some forces already conducting these practices. Having access to these types of specialist support will increase knowledge and promote the upskilling of officers/staff.

Different methods of support and advice were also identified by HMICFRS in their review of policing and mental health. For example, they found that some forces used specifically developed handbooks, checklists or cards which also include contact details for other organisations or charities, or used apps which provide instant access to help and advice (HMICFRS, 2018). | Officers/staff feel supported and confident in their decision-making enabling them to effectively manage and support an individual experiencing vulnerability-related risk

Officer/staff accessing the specialist support will themselves become upskilled in their knowledge and be more confident in advising team members | Do your officers/staff know where and how to access specialist support when they need it?

Do you assess the effectiveness of specialist support provided to frontline officers/staff? | **Other potential measures:**
▪ Quality assurance checks to assess use of specialised risk assessment tools

▪ Local evaluation of specialist support mechanisms |
| **Intelligence is shared both within force and with partners to manage risk and safeguard individuals** | Sharing of intelligence is essential when trying to assess the level of risk, particularly where the individual is a repeat victim and/or suspect, as there may be a need to consider the cumulative risk, and not just the risk evident from that one incident.

Therefore, it is imperative that call handlers pass all related information to responding officers in order to assess risk of harm appropriately. Similarly, arresting officers should pass on any information/intelligence from their dynamic risk assessment of the suspect to the Custody Sergeant in order they can keep the detainee safe whilst in custody and put in place any appropriate safeguarding measures.

Neighbourhood Policing teams can also be key in understanding risk within communities. PCSOs and NHPTs can be a source of information from the community about concerns for children or adults at risk as well as information that can be used to identify perpetrators that present a current and significant risk to others (College of Policing, 2019). This information can help the risk identification process and risk management processes within policing.

This activity also feeds into action 2.2.1 Appropriate Referral and ensuring that where risk is identified and assessed that safeguarding referrals are made through the relevant pathways. Therefore activities under Appropriate Referral should also be undertaken. | Cumulative risk is considered when assessing vulnerability-related harm leading to a more appropriate safeguarding response

Officers/staff making decisions around managing risk and safeguarding have all the necessary information leading to a greater level of support provided to the individual

Individuals experiencing vulnerability-related harm are referred to the appropriate services for safeguarding, leading to better outcomes for the individual | How do you know if information on an individual's vulnerability related risk is being shared appropriately in order to safeguard that individual?

Are you using intelligence from NHPTs to build understanding around vulnerability related risk to individuals and communities?

How do you know if Custody Sergeants are receiving the information they need to keep a detainee safe? | |

Trauma informed approach

Activities	Evidence	Short-Medium Term Impact	Impact Assessment	Suggested Measures for Objective 3
To ensure that the College of Policing endorsed definition of trauma informed practice is used across the organisation	Findings from both the NVAP Benchmarking exercise and a recent College of Policing survey show that although forces are committed to using a trauma informed approach, the meaning is not always understood and there can be a wide variety in the level of understanding. Therefore, the NPCC portfolio lead has agreed a standard definition of a trauma informed approach that is to be used across this policing and is also being used across government departments. Having this standard definition will not only ensure forces have a shared understanding of the term and are working towards the same aim, but will also provide a consistent basis for trauma informed practice to be embedded into services and systems, both internally and with partners improving the outcome for the individual. The definition being adopted is: **Trauma:** "*Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional or spiritual well-being .*" **Trauma informed practice**: "*Trauma-informed practice is an approach which is grounded in the understanding that trauma exposure can impact an individual's neurological, biological, psychological and social development, thus shaping a person's world view and relationship development . Trauma-informed practice acknowledges the need to understand a patient's life experiences to deliver effective care which supports a person's ability to feel safe within or develop trusting relationships with services and their staff.* *Trauma-informed practice is not designed to treat trauma related difficulties. It seeks to address the barriers that those affected by trauma can experience when accessing care and services .*"	Having a standard definition used within a force supports a trauma informed approach becoming embedded within systems and processes. Having a common definition used between partner agencies will reduce confusion between agencies and ensure a whole system approach is being used enabling a better outcome for the individual	Do your officers/staff share a common understanding of what a trauma informed approach is? How do you assess whether a common definition of a trauma informed approach is being used between partner organisations?	**PEEL Measures:** 1.1 The force manages incoming calls, assesses risk and prioritises its response well. ▪ 1.1.3. Call handlers act politely, appropriately, and ethically and use clear, unambiguous language. They give appropriate advice on safeguarding and evidence preservation. 2.1 The workforce interacts with the public fairly and respectfully. ▪ 2.1.1. Officers are effective at communicating and interacting with the public without bias. They consider the needs of their communities. **Other potential measures:** ▪ Staff knowledge surveys ▪ Victim surveys ▪ Quality assurance checks of contacts with individuals ▪ External evaluation ▪ Audit against knowledge and skills frameworks
There is a clear and committed steer from senior leaders as to the importance of embedding a trauma informed approach	Having the support of leaders is essential to ensure processes and policies around having a trauma informed approach are fully implemented, eventually becoming 'business as usual'. These systems need to be in place to support the learning and the practice delivered to officers/staff. However, it is essential that senior officers/staff also receive this training in order that they fully understand the approach and can therefore support officers/staff in the delivery of it, particularly in prioritising the quality of the response and not the quantity of responses. To help enable forces to do this, an organisational framework could be used to assess the organisational understanding of being trauma informed and identify further steps the force needs to take. An example of this is the framework developed by Lancashire Violence Reduction Network (2020) which identifies four phases: trauma aware (there is awareness and recognition of how it can impact on people), trauma sensitive (the organisation has processes in place to explore trauma informed principles in daily work), trauma responsive (the organisation is responding to trauma and changing the culture to align with the trauma informed principles), and trauma informed (where trauma informed practice is embedded within the organisation and is the norm, with policies and practices aligned and outcomes evaluated). Responses to the NVAP Benchmarking process showed that supervisory boards and working groups have been set up in several forces to help embed the approach. These commonly help share learning, identify best practice, and commonly are integrated with partner agencies to help with the delivery of services across the area.	Senior leaders are aware of how the organisation is progressing in terms of being trauma informed and feel confident in being able to embed this approach within the culture of the force Officers/staff feel supported in employing a trauma informed approach	Do your senior leaders understand the trauma informed approach and why it should be embedded within policing? Do your current policies and processes provide the basis for your force to deliver a trauma informed approach?	
Regular training provided to officers/staff around trauma informed policing	Both the NVAP Benchmarking exercise and the College of Policing survey identified that most forces were committed to delivering trauma informed training. However, due to the lack of understanding around the definition and the lack of a central training programme, training packages varied. The College of Policing survey also identified that training was more likely to be offered to officers/staff at constable and sergeant level than to those at higher ranks. Results from a survey run by the College of Policing around force's awareness of and training in public health approaches including trauma informed practice found that the greatest gap in training appears to be around understanding the "causes of the causes" and understanding of trauma informed practice. Training should include topics such as adverse child experiences, professional curiosity, unconscious bias, managing personal trauma, recognising trauma, and knowledge of and signposting to support services. This will help officers/staff be aware of their own biases and help avoid re-traumatising victims and witnesses. Additionally, officers/staff should be aware of how the force's policies and frameworks relate to trauma informed practice. Training should be delivered to a level required for the role. There are several knowledge and skills frameworks that forces could adopt to help with this. For example, NHS Education for Scotland have developed a framework which suggests that all officers/staff should be at least trauma informed and have the foundation knowledge and skills to understand the impact of trauma (NHS Education for Scotland, 2022). For the criminal justice sector, it is suggested that officers/staff in direct contact with victims/witnesses should be trauma skilled and be able to respond in a trauma informed way and that officers/staff in roles where evidence or information is gathered directly from victims/witnesses should be trauma enhanced (NHS Education for Scotland, 2022).	Officers/staff display an empathetic approach to victims, witnesses and individuals at risk of vulnerability-related harm encouraging a more honest disclosure from the individual Victims and witnesses are less likely to be re-traumatised and therefore will have greater engagement with police and investigation processes	Do you know what training is being delivered in your force around being trauma informed and how effective it is? How do you determine the level of training received by officers/staff?	

NVAP Action 2.1.1 Recognition & Response - Supporting Information

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Vulnerability Knowledge & Practice Programme

VKPP NVAP Impact

Impact Realisation for NVAP Impact – knowing what you are trying to achieve

Action 2.1.1 Recognition & Response

Impact Realisation Plan			
Reporting Period:		**Project Lead:**	
Prepared By:		**Date Prepared:**	
Objective 1:	To identify vulnerable people, communities (including victims and perpetrators) and related threat, risk and harm at an early stage		
Impact Owner:			
Impact Description:	*Organisational Impact: A force that is confident in its ability to recognise and assess vulnerability at the earliest opportunity and responds appropriately reducing the risk to the individual, community and public.*		*External Impact: Individuals experiencing vulnerability are confident that any related risk of harm is recognised at first point of contact and responded to empathetically using a trauma informed approach.*
Activity:	*What action do you plan to take? (See logic model for suggestions)*		*What action do you plan to take? (See logic model for suggestions)*
Output:	*What is the anticipated product of that activity? (See logic model for suggestions)*		*What is the anticipated product of that activity? (See logic model for suggestions)*
Impact Measurement:	*How will you measure the impact? How will you know it has been achieved? (See Supporting Information for suggestions)*		*How will you measure the impact? How will you know it has been achieved? (See Supporting Information for suggestions)*
Progress:	*Example: Training rolled out*		*Example: Quality assurance checks*
Next steps:			
Risks:	*Enter the risk/unintended consequence associated with the impact*		*Enter the risk/unintended consequence associated with the impact*
Risk Mitigation Strategy:			
Additional Comments			

Objective 2:	To ensure officers/staff are equipped to manage risk and assess needs, as well as support and safeguard those requiring it	
Impact Owner:		
Impact Description:	*Organisational Impact: A force that is confident in its ability to recognise and assess vulnerability at the earliest opportunity and responds appropriately reducing the risk to the individual, community and public.*	*External Impact: Individuals experiencing vulnerability are confident that any related risk of harm is recognised at first point of contact and responded to empathetically using a trauma informed approach.*
Activity:	*What action do you plan to take? (See logic model for suggestions)*	*What action do you plan to take? (See logic model for suggestions)*
Output:	*What is the anticipated product of that activity? (See logic model for suggestions)*	*What is the anticipated product of that activity? (See logic model for suggestions)*
Impact Measurement:	*How will you measure the impact? How will you know it has been achieved? (See Supporting Information for suggestions)*	*How will you measure the impact? How will you know it has been achieved? (See Supporting Information for suggestions)*
Progress:	*Example: Specialist support provided*	*Example: Quality assurance check of cases audited*
Next steps:		
Risks:	*Enter the risk/unintended consequence associated with the impact*	*Enter the risk/unintended consequence associated with the impact*
Risk Mitigation Strategy:		
Additional Comments		

Objective 3:	To embed and employ a trauma informed approach	
Impact Owner:		
Impact Description:	*Organisational Impact: A force that is confident in its ability to recognise and assess vulnerability at the earliest opportunity and responds appropriately reducing the risk to the individual, community and public.*	*External Impact: Individuals experiencing vulnerability are confident that any related risk of harm is recognised at first point of contact and responded to empathetically using a trauma informed approach.*
Activity:	*What action do you plan to take? (See logic model for suggestions)*	*What action do you plan to take? (See logic model for suggestions)*
Output:	*What is the anticipated product of that activity? (See logic model for suggestions)*	*What is the anticipated product of that activity? (See logic model for suggestions)*
Impact Measurement:	*How will you measure the impact? How will you know it has been achieved? (See Supporting Information for suggestions)*	*How will you measure the impact? How will you know it has been achieved? (See Supporting Information for suggestions)*
Progress:	*Example: Self-assessment of the organisation has been carried out*	*Example: Survey of victims undertaken*
Next steps:		
Risks:	*Enter the risk/unintended consequence associated with the impact*	*Enter the risk/unintended consequence associated with the impact*
Risk Mitigation Strategy:		
Additional Comments		