NCVPP

National Centre for
Violence Against
Women & Girls and
Public Protection

Using the Experience of Victim/Survivors to Improve Police Practice

Stage 6 – Creating Change

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College of Policing

NPCC
National Police Chiefs' Council

Contents

Executive Summary

- Strong governance is essential for agreeing and prioritising actions based on learning, with clear ownership. While competing demands can hinder sustainable change, establishing structured processes can help focus efforts on the most impactful areas for transformation.

- Effective recording and monitoring of actions, supported by project management practices and dedicated personnel, can help ensure the voices of victim/survivors are being incorporated into policing.

- To maintain trust and manage expectations, it's important to clearly and transparently communicate the actions taken as a result of voice of the victim/survivor practices. This can be achieved by establishing strong feedback loops that show victim/survivors voices are being heard and acted upon.

- Gaining force-wide support and buy-in is essential for driving effective service developments. This requires change management supported by communication that addresses resistance, manages shifting priorities and highlights the benefits of change.
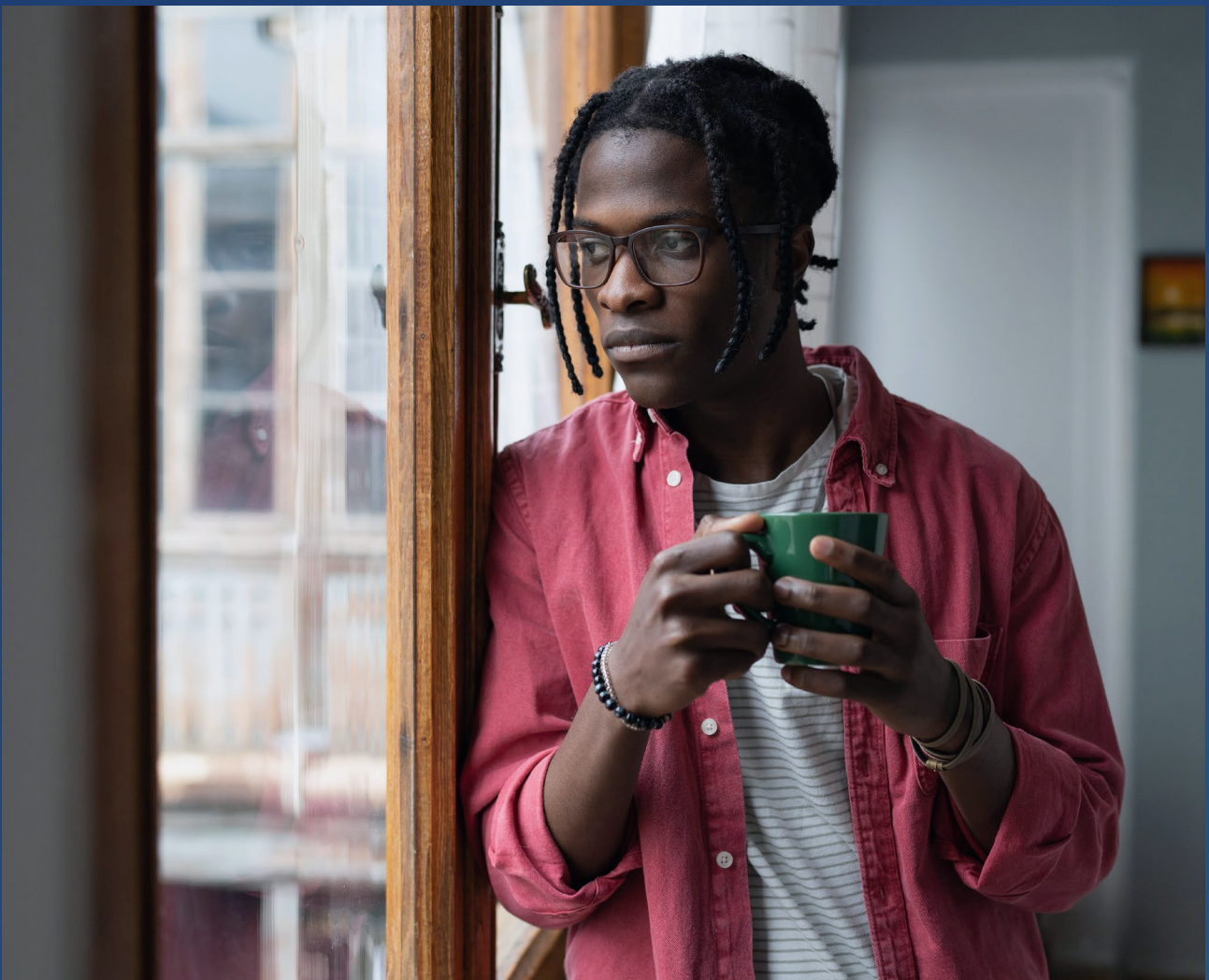
6.1. Responding to Victim/ survivor Voice

6.1.1. Agreeing and prioritising actions

It is important to have strong governance in place to agree strategic priorities and actions to embed learning from voice of the victim/survivor (VoV/S) practices. Within this structure, it is important to identify who is best placed to agree the actions and take ownership. This could be a board, the force lead for the relevant thematic area or a dedicated working group. Reviewing feedback at the appropriate level can help inform strategic plans, ensuring they are informed by victim/survivor voice.

It may be appropriate to appoint external stakeholders or change transformation teams that could help identify innovative actions resulting from the findings. In some cases, it may be beneficial to invite victim/survivors from practices to contribute their views and lived experience on how actions and changes could be implemented within force.

Challenges:

- **Competing demands and priorities:** Changes to service design can be limited due to competing demands across multiple strands of vulnerability. Service changes are sometimes reactive to immediate issues rather than proactive and in response to feedback. This can make it more challenging to fully address key priorities and embed sustainable change.

Considerations for Practice:

- Establishing governance processes around VoV/S practices can help streamline competing demands by establishing clear priorities, focusing on the most impactful areas. These may be identified through analysis of VoV/S practice data as well as policing priorities.

6.1.2. Recording and monitoring actions

It is essential to have effective and accurate recording and monitoring of actions to evidence how victim/survivor voice is being incorporated. Forces should put processes in place with dedicated personnel to avoid proposed actions becoming lost or not being completed. It is also important to monitor and review actions regularly with agreed timescales and assigned responsibility for each action. Where any gaps are identified, actions should be agreed and documented to address them.

Challenges:

- **Changes in senior personnel:** A change in personnel can often lead to a shift in priorities which can potentially halt or stall the initiation or implementation of actions.

- **Stakeholder management:** While involving external stakeholders can be crucial for implementing change, discussions regarding actions can often escalate beyond the agreed scope of the work.

Considerations for Practice:

- **Use project management techniques:** Embedding recording processes through project management techniques, such as action and decision logs, can help manage shifting priorities and/or prevent losing track of agreed actions during personnel changes.

- **Consider original aims:** Referring to the original aims and purpose of the engagement practice when managing discussions regarding actions with external stakeholders can help set expectations early on and aid discussions to remain within scope of the practice.

Consider conducting impact evaluations to assess or identify the effectiveness of changes put into place following a practice. These can be used to identify whether changes made following a VoV/S practice have had an impact for the force or for victim/survivors (see Stage 7).

6.1.3. Communicating actions

It is crucial to have mechanisms in place to communicate actions resulting from VoV/S practices. Victim/survivors should be provided with tangible feedback about the changes as part of the ongoing communication throughout the engagement practice. Promoting a transparent 'you said, we did' approach by implementing or improving feedback loops can build trust and confidence by demonstrating how their input has led to meaningful changes. Clearly communicating outcomes can empower victim/survivors and encourage future engagement.

Managing Expectations

It is important to remain transparent and manage expectations about what actions resulting from the engagement practice are achievable. This is important for both victim/survivors providing their voice and for personnel responsible for decision making.

Challenges:

- Some proposed actions may be considered outside the scope of policing, such as changes to court processes or education curriculums.
- Limitations in wider police resources can mean that some recommendations may be unachievable and may have to be adapted so that changes can be made within the capabilities of the force.

Considerations for Practice:

- Liaising with partner agencies about recommendations that are more relevant for their service can be beneficial. This ensures actions deemed unsuitable for police forces to implement can instead be handed over to more appropriate agencies to action, thus minimising the risk of them being disregarded.

- It's crucial to be clear and transparent with victim/survivors about what can and cannot be achieved by establishing clear feedback loops. Adapting recommendations to fit within the force's current capabilities—such as adjusting the scope or scale of initiatives—may assure victim/survivors that their voices are being heard while also acknowledging any limitations of available resources.

Conflicting Perspectives

Challenges:

- Victim/survivors may have differing perspectives on actions that should result from engagement practices. This poses challenges when taking contrasting views into account, and in developing policy to meet the needs of different groups.

Considerations for Practice:

- Listen actively and acknowledge that victim/survivor's experiences might differ. It is important to be transparent that no single solution will satisfy every group, but a focus on shared goals or common interests may help unite those with contrasting perspectives. Being flexible and offering multiple solutions if feasible can help accommodate varying needs or expectations.

6.1.4. Effective change management

It is essential to gain force wide buy-in to implement actions and create change effectively.

Challenges:

- **Increased demand:** Actions following engagement practices can include introducing additional training or responsibilities. This can lead to resistance from officers/staff due to perceived increases in workload.

- **Resistance to change:** Officers/staff may have concerns about change if they perceive it as reflecting negatively on their prior practice or see it as increasing the demand in their role.

- **Increased reporting:** Changes to practice could result in increased reports from victim/survivors which, without an understanding of the reasons, could reflect negatively in force performance statistics.

- **Shifting priorities:** Frequent changes in priorities may lead to scepticism and change fatigue amongst officers/staff. They may feel that the change will not be sustained and will be replaced by another competing priority.

Considerations for Practice:

- Clearly communicate the benefits of additional training or responsibilities, such as improvements in victim satisfaction. This can build understanding and engagement among officers/staff to help mediate any resistance.

- Ongoing communication and transparency with those involved can enhance how changes are received, rather than only sharing the final conclusions and changes to service design and delivery.

- Take care to understand the reasons for potential increased reports. For example, by asking victim/survivors in a VOV/S practice, or by using other sources of information e.g. triangulating data (see Stage 5.4). This can help identify if increased reports are due to negative changes, such as an increase in crime, or positive changes, such as greater trust and confidence in the police or reduced barriers to reporting.

- Communicating actions force-wide can help ensure all personnel are informed about the proposed changes and their intended outcomes. By clearly articulating why an initiative is being introduced, and emphasising its purpose and benefits, it can demonstrate how it aligns with organisational goals. However, it's crucial to avoid information overload and account for individual preferences by providing different communication options.

Listening to the feedback from engagement practices is necessary to ensure victim/survivors' experiences lead to real changes in how policing works and gives survivors the dignity of being heard, believed and acknowledged.

Glossary

Term	Description
Coproduction	Co-production refers to a way of working where service providers and users work together to reach a collective outcome. The approach is value-driven and built on the principle that those who are affected by a service are best placed to help design it. (Involve, n.d.)
Cultural Competence	The knowledge, attitudes and skills required to demonstrate sensitivity and empathy when working with others from different backgrounds, and the ability of individuals and systems to work or respond effectively across cultures, in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the person being served. (IOPC, 2024)
Good Practice	Practice referred to as 'good practice' reflects positive processes, approaches and useful resources. This is intended to provide examples that could be considered by forces but may not have been evaluated.
Minoritised communities / groups	The term minoritised communities usually refers to racial and ethnic groups that are in a minority within the population. It emphasises that these communities are minoritised by societal structures and systems, rather than inherently being minorities. (Durham University, n.d.)
Stakeholders	An individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organisation.
Transformation teams	Transformation teams are a group of experts operating within or commissioned by a police force to form innovative solutions to problems identified with service delivery, for example enhancing cultural competency.
Trauma-informed	Trama-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. The approach aims to increase awareness of how trauma can negatively impact on individuals and communities. It also aims to improve the accessibility and quality of services by creating culturally sensitive, safe services that people trust and want to use. It seeks to prepare professionals to work in collaboration and partnership with those people. (GOV.UK, 2022)
Triangulation	Triangulation in research is the use of multiple methods, data sources, or perspectives to increase the credibility and validity of findings.
Victim/Survivor	Those who have been subject to, or have witnessed, a vulnerability related crime. The term represents a continuum upon which people may find themselves, in recognition of the fact that people with lived experience of victimisation may prefer one term or the other, and each journey from 'victim' to 'survivor' is unique.

Term	Description
Voice	The term 'voice' covers both the verbal articulation of wishes, experiences, and needs, alongside non-verbal indicators and features of the individuals' context, environment, and relationships. Voice not only means capturing and recording wishes, experiences, and needs, but also listening to and considering voices to influence and inform decision making.
Voice of the Victim/ Survivor (VoV/S)	'Voice of the victim/survivor' refers to the perspective of individuals (adults and children) who have been impacted by crime or harm: either through lived experience, as a witness, family member, friend or colleague. The perspectives, opinions, rights and non-verbal cues of victim/survivors and their advocates must be heard, respected, prioritised and actively sought during investigations, enquiries and interactions. They must also be embedded within policy, practice, and support provision. In turn, this will aid in strengthening investigations, shaping and developing current and future policy, practice, response and support of policing and wider agencies to victim/survivors, for those who need support.
VoV/S Practice	A Voice of the Victim/survivor Practice refers to any engagement process through which agencies collect feedback from or collaborate with victim/survivors to gain insights into their perspectives, experiences, and rights. The information gathered should be used to inform future discussions, enhance responses, and strengthen practices moving forward.
Vulnerability	A person is vulnerable if, as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care or protect themselves or others from harm or exploitation. (VKPP, 2025)

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About the National Centre for Violence Against Women and Girls and Public Protection

We're a collaboration between the College of Policing and the National Police Chiefs' Council.

We work across law enforcement, the third sector and government to professionalise public protection and strive for a whole systems approach to prevent harm, give confidence to victims, survivors and witnesses to come forward and bring more offenders to justice.

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Vulnerability Knowledge & Practice Programme

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