



Meeting	SPA Policing Performance Committee
Date	12 March 2024
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	HMICS Assurance Review of Domestic Abuse - Progress
Presented By	Assistant Chief Constable, Major Crime, Public Protection & Local Crime, Bex Smith
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	Yes Appendix A: Improvement Plan - Summary of Progress all recommendations

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Policing Performance Committee with an update of current recommendations from the HMICS Domestic Abuse Thematic Inspection published 12 January 2023.

Members are invited to discuss the progress detailed within the report.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This is the first update on progress since the Improvement Plan was presented to Committee on 12 September 2023. The Tracker is provided at **Appendix A** showing a breakdown of all recommendations and their individual progress.
- 1.2 The inspection provided 14 Recommendations and 13 Areas for Development. At this time all remain open and are in the main on track for completion. There is a minor delay in some areas where training is taking longer to complete, where there are dependencies with other work streams or where the evidence to show change may take longer to gather. Discussions have been held with all tactical leads highlighting the importance of progression. Some recommendations are at an advanced stage and will be submitted for closure shortly.

2 PROGRESS WITHIN REPORTING PERIOD

- 2.1 All 14 Recommendations remain in progress with no closures to report. There are a number at an advanced stage of completion and a meeting is planned for 6 March 2024 with HMICS to review the evidence for these closures prior to formal submission.
- 2.2 A summary of progress follows, covering our three main objectives – People, Process, Information and Technology.

People	Process	Information and Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•We are equipping our officers and staff with knowledge and skills to perform and deliver improved services to victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse.•We are considering the needs of our officers and staff subjected to trauma and improving our approach to wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•We are reviewing our guidance and toolkits to ensure they remain fit for purpose and services are delivered consistently to a high standard.•We are capturing feedback from service users to improve our approaches.•We have introduced and strengthened our governance processes to ensure consistency of practice across Domestic Abuse and drive standards where they fall short.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•We are using technology to support the delivery of better services to victims and survivors.•We are building in safeguards around our key processes to ensure consistency of practice.•We are creating opportunities to understand demands to enable effective decision-making.

People

- We have a number of training programmes in development covering the entire organisation that will improve the service to victims and survivors as well as improving consistency of process when fully rolled out. All training programmes feature lived experience provided by third sector organisations.
 - A complete review and refresh of Probationer Training is underway with a focus on applying practical elements with examples of lived experience of domestic abuse being incorporated.
 - Continuous Professional Development programme for all officers and staff. This involved the creation of six modules covering *Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 (DASA) – Understanding and Applying the Legislation, Multi-Agency Tools for Keeping People Safe, The Use of Technology and Social Media in Domestic Abuse, South Asian Women - Diverse Experiences of Domestic Abuse, Domestic Abuse and Children, Domestic Abuse And The Effects of Trauma*.
To date the DASA module is live and available for officers and staff online. Technical issues have caused delay with the release of the five remaining modules. This issue is expected to be resolved imminently where all remaining modules will be launched and communicated to officers and staff.
 - We have renewed our license for Domestic Abuse Matters training with the College of Policing and are in discussion with Learning, Training and Development to explore how this can be rolled out more widely in the organisation.
- C3 training is well advanced with added Public Protection input which will help improve the victim/survivor experience at first contact. The focus on improvement here is around competently undertaking THRIVE risk assessments and ensuring that we get the response right first time. Once complete this training will be subject to evaluation.
- We are trauma informed but require specialist training to support our journey in order to achieve our commitment to trauma-informed principles, values and leadership. To capture a wider audience and permeate this behavioural training throughout the organisation, ensuring consistency of language, the approach will be woven into annual operational safety training, tutor constable training, operational command training

and specialist training such as Sexual Offences Liaison Officer (SOLO), Family Liaison Officer (FLO), Senior Investigating Officer (SIO), Firearms and Taser. We have reviewed Probationer Training through a specialist lens resulting in improved content. The new probationer training content will be delivered from May 2024 onwards. This new training content will provide probationers with the tools to adopt an empathetic approach in their interactions with the public. The creation and launch of the aforementioned CPD online modules will benefit all officers and staff within the organisation.

- We have reviewed the SOLO cadre and taken action to identify further training courses to meet current and future demand. We have central co-ordination of this resource to monitor workload. We have measures in place to identify issues with deployments through the DI / SIO Rape and Sexual Crime Forum and this also provides an opportunity to share learning. SOLOs have participated in workshops in respect of wellbeing and have access to ongoing support.

Process

- In order to ensure we are meeting our obligation to offer gender preference of interviewing officer we have introduced a method via interim Vulnerable Person Database to record compliance. Demand and Productivity Unit have provided a baseline figure of year-to-date compliance and these levels will be captured annually. This will be built into Core Operational Solutions (COS) at a future date to improve governance and accountability.
- We have made interim improvements to victim safety planning by reviewing the available guidance and updating the Domestic Abuse Toolkit. Our CPD module on multi-agency tools provides further focus on victim safety planning. This is supported by improved governance via the Domestic Abuse Working Group and examined as part of the Divisional Reviews.
- Divisional Reviews are planned which aim to check that the policies and practices are implemented consistently across local policing areas. We use feedback to improve services and share learning.

Information and Technology

- We are routinely asking victims for their gender preference in relation to interviews. Our data shows high levels of confidence that this is being asked and complied with.
- We have improved mechanisms in place to gather and monitor victim / survivor feedback on a quarterly basis. This is providing us with a baseline in which to deliver sustained improvement and as our training programmes mature we will expect this to be reflected in the feedback.
- With the full roll out of COS, we are now able to consistently capture and record victim / survivor contact preferences. A further development is planned in relation to the tasking module which will allow supervisors to task and track updating victims across all crimes but especially in relation to domestic abuse.
- We have a number of technological enhancements in the pipeline which will deliver real benefit to both victim / survivors but also assist our officers. The Digital Evidence Sharing Capability (DESC) approved for wider roll out across Scotland in the next 12-18 months will speed up the criminal justice process for victims and survivors. The pilot has reported benefits in terms of victim experience and officer attendance at court. Supplementary benefits have also been reported as the evidence is being shared at an earlier stage resulting in swifter justice.
- Development of the COS enquiry module is ongoing with a business case being prepared. If approved this can be used to store domestic abuse 'to trace' packages and victim safety plans.

3. DEPENDENCIES AND ACHIEVABILITY

- 3.1 There are areas within the Improvement Plan that are more complex and / or protracted to deliver. In particular there are a number of significant interdependencies and cross-overs with other portfolios, business areas and programmes of work. These include:
- Significant IT related work regarding COS and the enquiry module (Gender Preference and Victim Safety Plans), domestic abuse 'to trace' packages, as well as action management and investigation more generally.

- Crossover with Domestic Abuse Protection (Scotland) Act 2021 (DAPS) work – also links to victim safety plans.
- Training – for C3, for Probationers and DAMS related.
- Trauma Informed Training along with partners.
- Local Policing – diary car crewing policy – gender preference.
- C3 – despatch policy and time limits for domestic abuse related incidents.
- Public Protection Development Programme.
- Modernising Contact and Engagement Programme
- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy and Implementation Plan

A significant effort is required to co-ordinate all available training across multiple teams to ensure that the spirit of the recommendations can be met.

4. CHALLENGES AND KEY RISKS

- 4.1 In relation to third party reporting, the HMICS ask for roll out of traditional Third Party Reporting is not considered safe or viable for victims / survivors of domestic abuse and therefore will not be progressed as recommended. Our preferred approach to addressing this recommendation, centres around promoting online reporting in a safe and accessible way as well as continuing and growing our partnerships with already established groups – Women’s Aid, Social Work etc. The Modernising Contact and Engagement Programme is looking at enhancing public accessibility through development of multiple channels of communication and engagement and will also look at enhancing the early identification of vulnerability and ensuring effective and sustainable Policing response and resolution.
- 4.2 In relation to Recommendation 11 – Communication with Victims, there are challenges to the completion of this recommendation. Technological improvements have been delivered with the roll out of COS which does provide a means for capturing and recording victim preferences but at this time no standards are set. This is an area that we will discuss with HMICS to find a workable solution.
- 4.3 In relation to the 13 Areas for Development, we have linked these to each of the recommendations within our Improvement Plan and will address them alongside the wider activity.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no legal implications in this report.

8. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no reputational implications in this report.

9. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no social implications in this report.

10. COMMUNITY IMPACT

10.1 There are no community implications in this report.

11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no equality implications in this report.

12. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no environmental implications in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the progress detailed within the report.

APPENDIX A - HMICS Inspection - Domestic Abuse Status Report



Recommendation Number + Summary	Recommendation and Risk	Target Date	Revised Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R1 Standards of Service - Gender of Interviewing Officers...	<p>R1 Standards of Service - Gender of Interviewing Officers</p> <p>Police Scotland should take action to ensure it is meeting its standard of service statutory obligations in offering the gender of interviewing officers to victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	30 Sep 2024	30 Sep 2024	On-Track	<p>Police Scotland has developed processes to review and monitor compliance with Gender Preference. This has been subject to communication and will be further communicated when our CPD materials launch. This will be included in our annual reporting of Standards of Service.</p> <p>This is on track for completion ahead of time.</p>
R2 Expand Third Party Sites...	<p>R2 Expand Third Party Reporting Sites</p> <p>Police Scotland should expand the availability and use of third party sites within community settings and work collaboratively with them to ensure they are properly equipped to support and assist victims to report.</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Mar 2024	31 Mar 2024	On-Track	<p>A review of TPR sites specific to DA has been undertaken. It proved difficult to identify specific locations. There is evidence that TPR for DA has challenges particularly for the victims but also relating to the training overhead that this will create for Police Scotland. On this basis we are not progressing with publishing TPR locations on the Intranet.</p> <p>Our preferred approach to addressing this recommendation centres around promoting online reporting in a safe and accessible way as well as continuing and growing our partnerships with already established groups – Women’s Aid, Social Work etc.</p> <p>The Modernising Contact and Engagement Programme will work to supporting this recommendation in the longer term.</p>
R3 Enhance First Point of Contact...	<p>R3 Enhance First Point of Contact</p> <p>Police Scotland should implement changes to enhance the response at the first point of contact for more complex areas of work such as public protection.</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Mar 2024	31 Mar 2024	On-Track	<p>There is now improved collaboration between C3 and Public Protection evidenced through contributions to training inputs and establishment of specialist PP training inputs. C3 now have a cadre of Domestic Abuse Champions and the Division are committed to expanding this.</p> <p>Quality Assurance processes are in place to confirm service standards are met.</p> <p>Once C3 training is complete and evidence of evaluation is provided then we will consider this for closure.</p>

Recommendation Number + Summary	Recommendation and Risk	Target Date	Revised Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R4 Support and Training Programme for C3 Staff re Domestic Abuse...	<p>R4 Support and Training Programme for C3 Staff re Domestic Abuse</p> <p>Police Scotland should implement an ongoing support and training programme for all C3 staff incorporating input from specialists within public protection, to ensure C3 staff are properly equipped to conduct and record thorough THRIVE assessments for domestic abuse incidents that include all six components. Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Mar 2024	31 Mar 2024	On-Track	<p>A training programme is being delivered and expected to conclude March 2024 - there may be slight slippage with collating evidence and stats on completing. This will assist in improving first contact in relation to DA and more specialist PP incidents such as Spiking. Supporting evidence is being collated in relation to training plans and along with plans for refresher training. Quality Assurance processes are in place within C3 to check quality and wider feedback is collated from service users in respect of Domestic Abuse as part of a quarterly commitment.</p>
R5 Diary Appointments Process Review...	<p>R5 Diary Appointments Process Review</p> <p>Police Scotland should streamline the policing response to diary appointments through promoting and embedding a “getting it right first time approach” and defining parameters of acceptable performance. It should also put systems in place to obtain data and management information on the use and compliance of diary appointments.</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Mar 2024	30 Jun 2024	Delayed	<p>This is dependent on the completion of R1 from the CAM Inspection which has been slightly delayed. Supporting evidence is being collated to show how Public Protection considerations are built into the Diary Appointments process. Once this evidence is available we will be able to submit for closure.</p>
R6 Victim Safety Plans - Urgent Review...	<p>R6 Victim Safety Plans - Urgent Review</p> <p>Police Scotland should urgently take steps to ensure there is a clear and consistent process for recording victim safety plans, supported by additional training in risk assessment and safety planning for all relevant officers, staff and supervisors. This should be accompanied by guidance and pro-forma documentation to ensure all aspects are considered and to achieve consistency across the organisation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What safety provisions are available to officers ■ What information should be contained with a safety plan ■ Where safety plans should be recorded so they are accessible to those who may need to review/access them. <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Mar 2024	31 Mar 2024	On-Track	<p>There has been a review of the guidance and templates available in relation to VSP and they are deemed to be effective. User application is the issue to be addressed. The Domestic Abuse Toolkit is being updated and additionally online module based training for all officers has been developed via SafeLives. Launch of the 5 outstanding modules is expected imminently.</p> <p>Additional training has been provided to C3 for first point of contact and updated content has been included in the Operational Command Course for newly appointed first line managers.</p> <p>Electronic proforma/templates have been explored and will be implemented via iVPD but a new date will need to be considered for this as it might not be possible to evidence that change by 31 March 2024.</p> <p>There is a dependency with COS Enquiry Module for storing Victim Safety Plans which may delay the overall completion of this recommendation.</p>

Recommendation Number + Summary	Recommendation and Risk	Target Date	Revised Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R7 Risk Assessment and Safety Planning Role - Achieve Consistency...	<p>R7 Risk Assessment and Safety Planning Role - Achieve Consistency</p> <p>Police Scotland should review the role of officers involved in risk assessment and safety planning for domestic abuse incidents to provide national consistency, based on the optimum model, and ensure that they are given the appropriate training and support.</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Dec 2024	31 Dec 2024	On-Track	<p>We are not supportive of amending the structures of local policing in order to address this recommendation. There are dependencies with the Public Protection Development Programme where deployment models will be a consideration.</p> <p>There is continuous improvement, learning and sharing opportunities via the Domestic Abuse Working Group attended by DIs/SIOs. Further learning opportunities can be evidenced from Divisional Reviews/Homicide Reviews and is being act upon.</p> <p>Following the training pause as a result of Covid and other operational events, we are restarting specialist Domestic Abuse training and a number of courses have been conducted/are planned to address any backlog.</p> <p>Divisional reviews take place to ensure consistency and promote improvement to working practices/compliance with standards.</p>
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R8 Training - Domestic Abuse...	<p>R8 Training - Domestic Abuse</p> <p>Police Scotland should:</p> <p>(i) Ensure that all domestic abuse training incorporates an element of lived experience of victims.</p> <p>(ii) As a matter of priority, introduce a programme of mandatory CPD on key topics for all operational officers, supervisors and managers. Key topics for the first year should include: DASA offences, to improve officers' understanding and use of the legislation; trauma informed practices, to improve engagement with victims; and lived experience of victims, to address problematic attitudes and behaviours.</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Dec 2024	31 Dec 2024	On-Track	<p>A comprehensive training programme is planned covering Domestic Abuse. Six self-service modules have been developed by SafeLives. At present only one module has launched on the intranet: The Domestic Abuse Scotland Act 2018 (DASA). The DASA module is available for officers and staff and is being promoted via Divisional management. All six modules have elements of lived experience via the use of case studies.</p> <p>Training for Probationers, C3, First Line Managers and SIOs is also being reviewed.</p>
R9 Digital Evidence Investigative Opportunities Improved...	<p>R9 Digital Evidence Investigative Opportunities Improved</p> <p>Police Scotland and the SPA need to ensure that investigative opportunities for digital evidence capture are improved and maximised for domestic abuse offences.</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	30 Jun 2024	30 Jun 2024	On-Track	<p>Detailed guidance (First Responder Guide) on maximising opportunities for digital evidence has been produced and shared with the workforce. More detailed training is planned via the PDWP but not yet rolled out.</p> <p>A prioritisation matrix is used based on threat, risk and harm.</p> <p>Other programmes of work that support improvement in this area in Body Worn Video, Cyberkiosks and DESC.</p>

Recommendation Number + Summary	Recommendation and Risk	Target Date	Revised Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R10 Robust Process Domestic Abuse Investigation Packages...	<p>R10 Robust Process Domestic Abuse Investigation Packages</p> <p>Police Scotland must, as a priority, introduce a robust system for allocation and monitoring progression of domestic abuse investigation packages at local, regional and national level to ensure there are clear channels of ownership and to improve service to victims. With the introduction of the new national crime recording system, Police Scotland should introduce a consistent national standard for domestic abuse packages, to include storage in an accessible and auditable format.</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	30 Sep 2024	30 Sep 2024	On-Track	<p>A system for allocating and monitoring DA investigation 'to trace' packages relies almost entirely on future development of COS to provide a practical solution. This has been accepted for Phase 3 but the business case is yet to be approved.</p> <p>As an interim measure, improved guidance and monitoring arrangements have been established. A Force memo was issued to remind officers and supervisors of their responsibilities. At the same time it took the opportunity to remind Local Policing Command Teams of the importance of having effective scrutiny arrangements in place. This is reinforced by creating a standing item on the agenda for the Domestic Abuse Working Group.</p> <p>Additional independent scrutiny is incorporated within the DACU Divisional Reviews.</p> <p>As this relates to the developments within COS there is a risk that completion of this recommendation may be delayed.</p>
R11 Implement Process to Communicate with Victims...	<p>R11 Implement Process to Communicate with Victims</p> <p>Police Scotland should develop and implement effective processes for communication with victims of domestic abuse that are victim focused and include acceptable timeframes for providing updated information. Such processes should include clear recording of preferred methods of contact, which can be accessed by relevant personnel.</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Dec 2023	31 Dec 2023	Delayed	<p>The COS system has created a means of capturing and recording preferred methods and frequency of contact. Further enhancements of COS through the tasking element will provide an opportunity for supervisors to task and follow up on contact and feedback.</p> <p>At this time there are no standards set as each case is assessed individually. This is an area where we will discuss further with HMICS in relation to their expectations for closure as it is not considered practical at this time.</p>
R12 Cadre of Trained SOLOs...	<p>R12 Cadre of Trained SOLOs</p> <p>Police Scotland should ensure that the cadre of trained SOLOs across the organisation is sufficient to meet demand and to ensure the wellbeing of these officers</p> <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Dec 2024	31 Dec 2024	On-Track	<p>Work has been undertaken to review the capacity of SOLOs and increase where necessary. Additional training courses have been put in place and are planned to meet this increase. Further refresher training is also being progressed.</p> <p>The options paper in relation to the deployment model has been approved.</p> <p>We have taken steps more generally within SCD to support officer wellbeing.</p>

Recommendation Number + Summary	Recommendation and Risk	Target Date	Revised Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R13 Public Protection Development Programme...	<p>R13 Public Protection Development Programme</p> <p>Police Scotland should incorporate the findings and recommendations from our Strategic Workforce Planning Assurance Review in its approach to the Public Protection Development Programme. It should review its structures holistically and for its response to domestic abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish an in-depth and accurate picture of current and forecasted demand levels ■ Set out clearly defined service level standards to meet victims' needs ■ Establish the resource level needed to meet demand ■ Implement the best model nationally and locally to effect the change needed to support the concept of investigative ownership and continuity of contact/engagement with victims ■ Ensure the resources within that model are empowered and have the requisite skills and training to equip them in the complex area of domestic abuse. <p>Risk Rating (AMT): Medium</p>	31 Dec 2024	31 Dec 2024	On-Track	We have taken a Service Design approach consistent with the findings from the Strategic Workforce Planning Assurance Review in progressing with this work. The Public Protection Development Programme is still in the discovery phase but will consider the elements highlighted by HMICS.
R14 Areas for Development Domestic Abuse...	<p>R14 Areas for Development Domestic Abuse</p> <p>Our review identified a number of areas for development across some key processes. These are intended to improve the overall effectiveness of Police Scotland in its delivery of services relating to domestic abuse. We expect these will be included in the improvement plan for domestic abuse.</p>	31 Dec 2023	31 Dec 2023	Preparing for closure	We have linked all AFD to a Recommendation and where this has not been possible we have provided a reason why. We will provide our updated Improvement Plan to HMICS showing these linkages at our review in early March.