



Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Independent Advisory Group

Tuesday 16 September 2025 between 6:30pm and 8:30pm

Chair: Alison Ashton and Sarah Hicks

Humberside Police: Chief Inspector Nathan Rueben, Sgt Hollie Harris, PC Carl Osler attended
Public/Partner Organisations. 28 in attendance

Minutes

- Welcome, Introductions and check-in – Chair/Everyone

Relevant Points Recorded

- Co-chair Alison Ashton has recently written a paper which has been published in the British Medical Journal
- CARA (Cautioning and Relationship Abuse) – Guest Speaker Marie Morgan – Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Relevant Points Recorded

- Explanation around PHADA (Public Health Approach to preventing Domestic Abuse)
- Background provided on CARA where it is explained that it is an early intervention for domestic abuse offenders who have received a conditional caution
- It has been developed by the Hampton Trust, evaluated by Cambridge University and it is currently operation in nine other forces.
- CARA has been designed to increase awareness of domestic abuse and engage offenders' motivation to address harmful behaviours and make changes
- It supports offenders in understanding what domestic abuse is
- CARA is an out of court resolution for "alleged" first time standard risk offenders of domestic abuse
- It is a police-only pathway for offenders who meet the CARA criteria.

- Offenders must be male, 18+ and have no previous convictions/cautions for DA in previous 2 years.
- Offenders are required to attend a pair of domestic abuse workshops which uses motivational interviewing to engage offenders to reflect on what led to their arrest
- Referral only via police
- NOT suitable for cases where there is coercive and controlling behaviour
- Police contact with partner/ex-partner to seek agreement to workshops
- Victims are contacted by safety workers, by phone in between workshops to offer support
- Victim responses are reviewed immediately and where appropriate can inform a targeted approach to specific exercises and conversations
- In the event of further offending behaviour, there should be a consideration by the criminal justice system that the offender was offered an opportunity with CARA.

Observations:

- Victims may have dual contact points with services (e.g., local support and CARA) depending on the nature of the incident.
- Initial response to domestic abuse incidents remains unchanged; CARA involvement is considered later.
- Officers assess whether CARA is appropriate during case progression.
- CARA is not suitable for individuals exhibiting coercive and controlling behaviours.
- Alternative programmes include:

Strength to Change

Crossroads

- No current programme specifically tailored for coercive control perpetrators.
- Individuals with relevant pre-convictions are not eligible for CARA.
- Eligibility requires admission of the offence and consent to participate.
- CARA workshops are group-based; face-to-face interaction is considered most effective.
- Exceptions for non-group participation are allowed only under extenuating circumstances.
- Group participation requires agreement and engagement from the perpetrator.
- Home Office is allocating £53 million nationally for Drive partnership approach to DA prevention.

Actions

- None
- Buffet/Networking
- **VAWAG scrutiny panel updates** - Guest Speaker Marie Morgan – Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (on behalf of Vince Leyenda – OPCC Assurance & Volunteer Supervisor).

Relevant Points Recorded:

- The Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Scrutiny Panel has been re-established post-COVID.
- It reviews redacted domestic abuse cases (male and female victims) and VAWG cases.
- Cases are randomly selected and shared with panel members in advance for review.
- The panel currently has 11 members with diverse lived and learned experiences
- Police representatives join to reflect on findings and respond to concerns
- Scrutiny panels are a mechanism for organisational learning, identifying areas for improvement
- Learning from individual cases can inform systemic and process-driven changes
- The panel aims to prevent repeat issues by cascading learning across the organisation
- Police officers have capacity to conduct follow-up audits based on scrutiny findings
- If recurring issues are identified (e.g., support for vulnerable victims), deeper audits can be initiated
- Cases reviewed are kept within the past year to ensure relevance

Observations:

- The Domestic Abuse and VAWG Scrutiny Panel has been re-established post-COVID and is now actively reviewing cases to support organisational learning
- A recent panel review led to the reopening of a case involving a vulnerable victim, highlighting gaps in support and prompting corrective action.
- Cases selected for scrutiny are kept within the past year to ensure relevance and timely learning
- The scrutiny process has the potential to trigger internal audits within the police, especially when recurring issues are identified
- There is a recognised need to revisit the panel's impact after a year to assess whether learning has led to improved practice and reduced repeat issues
- Scrutiny panels are viewed as a mechanism for identifying systemic and process-driven changes, not just individual case improvements

Actions:

- None
- AOB – Chairs

Relevant Points Recorded:

- AOB to remain a standardised item. Requests for AOB to be emailed in prior to meeting
- Discussion around what attendees are doing for White Ribbon Day
- Discussion around raising awareness of Claires Law
- Distribution of VAWG promotional posters/A5 leaflets

Check-out and Next Meeting Date – Chair/Everyone

- Close