

Northumbria Police				
ACC 7231 Alastair Simpson (Crime and Safeguarding)				
Chief Superintendent 7139 Nicola Walker				
	Evidence requirements of progress/completion:	Recommendation Owner:	Initial Action Plan Response:	March 2025 Update:
7.1	Processes should be put in place to make sure this system capability is effectively used by officers and staff.	Chief Constables	Context - Linked to recommendation 6 (for Home Office) which states - By 27 March 2025, to review the impact of the principal crime rule on the identification and investigation of stalking. This should include an examination of whether risks associated with stalking may be being missed and implement any changes needed. Progress - The force recognises that where stalking is not a principal crime, there is a requirement to understand the offending patterns of perpetrators. The force has worked hard to roll out messages to responders and investigators to seek out stalking behaviour and offending. Action - Northumbria Police will be migrating to a new computer system, Niche, in February 2026. Discussions since the report outline that numerous options have been proposed by Minerva (development for Niche) and feedback from forces is awaited. Northumbria is aware and fully involved in this work.	Work continues to develop the NICHE platform within Northumbria. The chosen proposed system change is awaited from Minerva.
7.2	While any necessary system changes are pending, chief constables should put alternative measures in place to make sure stalking and related offences are fully searchable. This could, for example, be the submission of intelligence reports	Chief Constables	Context - Some forces have record management systems which allow them to document other offences on the principal crime record in a way that is searchable. These are known as "included classifications". But some force systems do not currently have this capability. Progress - The force does ensure that offences of stalking are considered and reported on as part of current reporting and governance. Action - Force transformation and the force's Corporate Development Department are currently scoping options in current crime recording system.	Whilst work continues to build in a permanent solution, an interim solution has been found and is currently being implemented to include bespoke codes to better identify stalking and related offences. Messaging is being determined to educate our Force in preparation.
10.1	Meets the learning outcomes on stalking within the public protection national policing curriculum	Chief Constables	Context - The Consortium has called on the College of Policing to mandate that all specialist stalking training for all officers that deal with stalking. Progress - A stalking and harassment training product was produced by the force in 2022 which consisted of 6 modules, this was completed by 1400 staff. A Stalking Deep Dive was then undertaken in August 2024 which highlighted areas for future training consideration. In receipt of the complaint, this was reviewed to ensure it met with the learning outcomes on stalking within the public protection national policing curriculum and the reviewed College of Policing Learning package, as well as addressing local process training issues. Action - A revised force wide training package is being scoped out for 2025.	The plans for further training delivery have now been implemented. Rollout of the newly revised training package will commence from April 2025, to be rolled out Forcewide to our Response Policing Teams, Criminal Investigation Department and Neighbourhood Policing Teams.
10.2	Makes appropriate use of the stalking or harassment e-learning product developed by the College of Policing.	Chief Constables	Context - Some forces are using a College of Policing e-learning package on stalking or harassment. This helps to make sure they provide training that aligns to the national policing curriculum. However, use of this e-learning is not widespread. The College of Policing updated the content of this stalking e-learning package during the super-complaint investigation. The College of Policing and the NPCC will write to forces to make them aware of these changes, and how the e-learning supports the delivery of learning outcomes related to stalking in the public protection national policing curriculum. Progress -The force has reviewing the content of the College of Policing learn package, the national policing curriculum as well as addressing local policing issues. Action - From this a roll out of a specific and bespoke training package will commence in 2025.	The plans for further training delivery have now been implemented. Rollout of the newly revised training package will commence from April 2025, to be rolled out Forcewide to our Response Policing Teams, Criminal Investigation Department and Neighbourhood Policing Teams.
10.3	Uses the skills and knowledge of local victim advocates or others from outside policing with relevant expertise.	Chief Constables	Context - Some forces co-provide training with local or national victim services and other people with expertise. This should help officers to better understand different perspectives, including the victims. Progress - Force processes and support references are firmly in place. The referenced learning plan has scoped training delivery options with Paladin (National Stalking Advocacy Service), with the wider training product intended to address and reinforce knowledge and awareness re support services provision, including internal victim and witness stalking trained support, and a dedicated ISHA provision within Northumbria Victim and Witness Services. Action - The ongoing budget provision and commitment to the learning with support services is to be explored.	Additional to the primary training delivery being rolled out in April 2025, further workforce development is being prepared. This will focus on the identification and training of functions and departments that feature within the stalking and criminal justice journey. This is to include Contact Handling, Intelligence Analysis and Crime Quality Assurance & Performance Teams. The aim is to strengthen existing processes to ensure that Stalking or Harassment is captured and understood. This delivery will be supported using Paladin, our commissioned service provider specialising in Stalking advocacy.
10.4	Includes information on relevant local policies and practice where necessary	Chief Constables	Context - Research showed force stalking policies were also not always as comprehensive as they should be. Progress - The force stalking policy has recently been reviewed in 2024 and our force policies and internal force intranet have dedicated stalking guidance and references. Action - A further review of the stalking policy is required to include the findings in the super complaint. Whilst the force has policies and procedures and guides on the force intranet, this will need to be reviewed and aligned to the training request.	The Force Stalking Policy has been reviewed to include a review of the College of Policing stalking guidance. The policy contains a comprehensive overview on Stalking. This has been shared and made available Forcewide for reference.

10.5	Provide to the officers and staff who will most benefit from the learning.	Chief Constables	Context - Prioritising stalking cases appropriately or allocating these to investigators with the right skills and experience to ensure effective investigations. Progress - The force stalking deep dive undertaken in August 2024 indicated a training requirement force wide. The forces response and investigative avenues sit within our response and CID functions. Response policing attend all calls for service and neighbourhoods consider long term problem solving approaches to protect victims following initial safeguarding. Currently Stalking is everyone's business and training therefore needs to be widespread and far reaching across a number of functions and departments across the force. Action - The scope of the learning plan submitted intends to address those departments identified.	The plans outlined at recommendations 10.2 and 10.3 indicate the level of training that is planned for 2025 and refers to the workforce that delivery will be provided.
11.1	Problem profiles using police data and intelligence and other sources of information to ensure that the full extent of stalking is well understood. This could include information sharing with local victims' services and other public services, and national and local statistics.	Chief Constables	Context - Forces do not sufficiently understand the scale and types of stalking in their area and have not always embedded effective strategies to support their response to stalking. Forces should have a problem profile or other form of product to help them understand the nature of stalking in their area. For those forces with a product, it was not as comprehensive as it should have been, with gaps in analysis around victim or offender profiles. Progress - Northumbria Police benefit from existing information sharing agreements with partner agencies and support services. Northumbria's current VAWG problem profile considers those offence types within the initial STRA focusing on Domestic Abuse, Rape and Serious Sexual Offences and Online Harm and Child sexual abuse. Action - Further work is required to incorporate stalking, informing activity as the nationally recognised fifth strategic area of risk. A domestic abuse problem profile has been commissioned to enhance our understanding of stalking within this area, this currently representing 88% of the forces stalking crimes. Further work is required to better understand the remaining non domestic related stalking offences.	Further work has been undertaken to better understand Stalking. A domestic abuse problem profile is in development and this contains a focus on Stalking that develops from a domestic setting. To better understand non domestic related stalking a Strategic Risk Assessment is in development.
11.2	Regular assurance work such as audits to better understand the force response and make improvements where appropriate, including monitoring the use of SPOs, investigation outcomes and the quality of investigations.	Chief Constables	Context - Some forces were not able to provide performance data, like victim service referral rates. Progress - Current activity includes - periodic review of Stalking Protection Order applications, review of stalking crimes (pilot) for Northumbria Stalking Intervention Programme (NSIP) and Stalking Protection Order opportunities. Current systems enable us to determine how many stalking crimes have had support referrals. Crime closure code audits are undertaken periodically on Domestic Abuse cases with regards investigative standards, oversight and crime quality, this currently incorporates domestic stalking. A Stalking Deep Dive was undertaken in August 2024 to determine force position. A CPS Domestic Abuse/Stalking 'No Further Action' scrutiny panel is being implemented and a monthly stalking meeting takes place with CPS to consider convictions and any learning rationale surrounding unsuccessful cases. Performance with regards stalking cases can be obtained from various internal performance tools such as 'Qlik' and is reported on within force Governance Boards. Action - Thematic reviews and business assurance is an area of future focus which covers investigative standards and outcomes including the use of orders.	Thematic reviews are undertaken, this includes a recent Stalking scrutiny panel including CPS. Regional scrutiny with CPS and Police continue and Stalking features as a thematic within the VAWG External Advisory Panels which includes stakeholders. An audit is underway and Stalking regularly features at Governance Boards.
11.3	Ways to regularly receive feedback from victims, such as victim surveys.	Chief Constables	Context - Fieldwork forces did not always measure victim satisfaction or engage with victims or advocates to hear the victims officer. Progress - A VAWG External Advisory Panel has recently been undertaken with a Stalking focus and learning fed back that has advised the learning plan. Operational Stalking meetings with CPS monitor convictions and a review of unsuccessful cases is undertaken to determine any learning with the aim to seek improvements. Regular stalking and harassment satisfaction surveys are undertaken and results reviewed for any themes of good work/improvement. Furthermore, Northumbria Police regularly undertake business assurance, this supports the performance scrutiny, and specifically individual feedback is given to departments, officers and staff as part of ongoing best practice around learning and development. Action - Northumbria Police will continue business assurance and scrutiny within stalking, seeking to make continuous improvement.	We continue with business assurance and the scrutiny of stalking. This includes 'Voice of the Victim' within thematic VAWG External Advisory Panels and the newly created CPS scrutiny panel with a focus on Stalking or Harassment.
11.4	Force management statements which reflect current and future demand from stalking.	Chief Constables	Context - Some of the fieldwork forces had combined stalking offences with harassment offences in force management statements. They set out current and predicted future demand without reflecting on the potential differences in the demand generated from these different offences. Progress - Northumbria Police's Force Management Statement contains the Forces current and future understanding around capability and capacity in relation to stalking. The Force Management Statement includes cyclical business planning and an understanding of force risk. Action - The Force's Force Management Statement 2025 will review in light of this recommendation.	The Force Management Statement for 2025 is in draft and contains Stalking and Harassment as independent crime types, although it is also important to highlight the correlation between them and the distinguishing features. Both sections contain current and predicted demand.

12.1	Considering implementing the stalking screening tool to support the identification of stalking and the risks associated with stalking.	Chief Constables	Context - The SST is a risk identification tool and NOT a risk assessment tool. In Domestic Abuse cases there are embedded processes for ongoing assessment and management of risk, including well-established tools which support record keeping and information sharing. The research found this is not always the situation for other stalking cases. There is confusion in forces about which tools to use to assess and manage risk in non-Domestic Abuse stalking cases. Progress - Northumbria Police currently use S-DASH for domestic stalking cases and complete the same stalking question set for non Domestic Abuse cases. The force is currently migrating to new computer system, Niche and considering options. Action - A training need is acknowledged across Stalking and the stages of the SST are intended to be readdressed. Risk assessment in Niche will require officers to apply professional judgement which presents some further training needs and reinforcement of the stages of the SST (Stalking Screening Tool).	As outlined in Recommendations 10.2 and 10.3. The Stalking Screening Tool and Stalking Risk Assessment options are being explored for build into the new NICHE platform that will be rolled out in 2026. Additionally, officers will be provided with further training relative to the future adoption of any new risk assessment tool.
12.2	Having clear policies and procedures in place for assessing and managing risk in all cases. And where appropriate, embedding recognised risk assessment tools in force systems so that it is easy for officers to access, use and document their consideration of risk and safeguarding.	Chief Constables	Context - Research identified risk of serious harm or homicide to a victim in many of the relevant cases that were part of the fieldwork case file review. The review of case files also identified many cases where officers did not seem to be taking a proactive approach to managing risk by making risk management plans. They also found evidence of officers and staff not recognising the risks associated with breaches of orders or other protective measures in a stalking context. This included not recognising the breaches as further instances of stalking and not having robust processes to identify breaches as important indicators of escalating risk and respond to them accordingly. Progress - The Orders working group have recently provided training inputs to front office staff with regards order recording and have implemented centralised recording to monitor notification breaches and ensure escalation. Action - The proposed training request considers input with regards breaches and pursuing substantive offences, escalation in behaviour and associated risk as well as local system recording. As referenced above, the force intranet will be streamlined to reflect this message.	The policy relating to Stalking has been reviewed and shared forcewide and is readily available to support our workforce. There is an orders management process in place that includes the management of any breaches and the required escalation. The training plan as outlined in Recommendation 10.2 includes delivery on breaches of orders together with risk considerations and risk management. This will be rolled out in April 2025. Options are being explored for the future recording of risk assessment and management within the new Niche system platform
12.3	Recognising (in policies, guidance and training) the heightened risk associated with breaches of protective orders and measures.	Chief Constables	Context - The report advises Forces should consider additional checks or screening around risk, for stalking and breaches of orders crimes, given the risks associated with these types of crime. Progress - The additional measures re high risk Domestic Abuse Stalking (automatic referral) and non Domestic Abuse (ISHA screening) have been outlined above (12.1 & 12.2). Both will consider a SASH risk assessment review amongst other risk factors. Force daily management meetings (DMMs) in each area command consider incidents and arrests of note from the previous 24 hours to consider action. Action - The proposed training request seeks to address wider knowledge of risk associated with this crime type and places an emphasis upon supervisory oversight.	The policy relating to Stalking has been reviewed and addresses risk and escalation. This reviewed policy has been shared forcewide and is readily available to support our workforce. The management of orders has been revised and a process in place to ensure orders are allocated and managed appropriately. This includes the management of any breaches and the associated risk, likewise the training plan as outlined in Recommendation 10.2 includes risk considerations and risk management, including the requirement for Supervisory oversight. This will be rolled out in April 2025. Options are being explored for the future recording of risk assessment and management within the new Niche system platform
12.4	Implementing screening and checking processes to support the early identification, assessment and management of high-risk cases. This may require stalking and breach of order cases to be considered at daily management meetings.	Chief Constables	Context - The report advises Forces should consider additional checks or screening around risk, for stalking and breaches of orders crimes, given the risks associated with these types of crime. Progress - The additional measures re high risk Domestic Abuse Stalking (automatic referral) and non Domestic Abuse (ISHA screening) have been outlined above (12.1 & 12.2). Both will consider a SASH risk assessment review amongst other risk factors. Daily management meetings (DMMs) in each area command consider incidents and arrests of note from the previous 24 hours to consider action, however this relies on recognition of the risk by officers and supervisors to consider this for attention. Action - The proposed training request seeks to address wider knowledge of risk associated with this crime type and places an emphasis upon supervisory oversight.	To support the existing screening and checking processes, as outlined at Recommendation 10.2 and in previous reporting, a training plan and package has been prepared and includes delivery around orders, management of any breaches and risk considerations and risk management. This will be rolled out from April 2025.
13.1	Local training and guidance on SPOs, including training and guidance for supervisors.	Chief Constables	Context - The complaint concludes that robust implementation and management of protective orders is an important way in which policing can manage perpetrators and challenge their behaviours and it is concerning that the use of Stalking Protection Orders in stalking cases appears to be low. The number of Stalking Protection Orders applications made per recorded stalking crime varies between forces suggesting variable approaches to how the orders are implemented. Police leaders must do more to make sure officers and staff have sufficient knowledge and support to identify cases and apply for Stalking Protection Orders when appropriate. Progress - There has been considerable communication internally within force with regards Stalking Protection Orders with inputs delivered from the Legal Dept across Protected Learning Days. Feedback from Raising Investigation Standards inputs outlines this needs to be reinforced and communicated within the context of the wider Stalking picture and again, is scheduled into the stalking learning plan. The Force has an orders reference page to offer guidance on all order types and the Legal Dept have recently updated their application process to assist. This is in addition to the proactive work outlined in 12.4 above in an attempt to drive activity. Action - Work is currently underway reviewing those applications to the legal department and understanding the barriers to obtaining the orders.	An aide memoire relating to orders has been circulated. Orders training is being delivered to departments by Legal Department following the review of the SPO and other order type applications. This is supported by the circulation of the recently revised policy and guidance. Supporting presentations have been shared forcewide and promoted with Senior Leaders for educating our Force. Additionally, a training package has been prepared as outlined in detail at Recommendation 10.2, this is to be rolled out from April 2025 which will include delivery to supervisors.
13.2	Mechanisms for supporting investigating officers to identify cases where SPOs would be appropriate and assisting them with SPO applications. This could be through dedicated teams or roles and/or through daily management meetings considering risk and safeguarding.	Chief Constables	Context - In some forces officers and staff in roles dedicated to responding to stalking support the application and management of SPOs. Other dedicated teams, like those that specifically work on the application and management of lots of different orders and protections, can also play this role. Progress - There is an ongoing orders working group in force currently scoping this area. The aim of the learning plan will seek to highlight and reinforce the value and process for Stalking Protection Order applications which currently sits with investigating officers. Action - Whilst evaluation is ongoing, the force has consideration of the wider use of ISHA and ISACs and their retention to ensure support to victims and links with officers, identifying opportunities for Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs).	All training provision with a focus on Stalking or Harassment features the requirement to consider SPOs. Processes have been shared and also feature in the future training plans. Advocacy services and Legal Department also support our officers to identify and consider the application of SPOs. Area Commands utilise the Daily Management Meeting process to identify risk and consider use of orders also.

14.1	Victim needs assessments are always completed	Chief Constables	Context - Research on case file reviews found that police were failing to consistently meet aspects of the Code of Practice. This included not conducting and recording victim needs assessments, or not doing so early enough, and not always communicating well with victims. We also found many cases where the police had not referred stalking victims to any victim support services. We found poor levels of awareness within policing that stalking victims are entitled to enhanced rights under the victims code. This means stalking victims are not always told about the specialist victim support services that exist or are not referred to them when appropriate. Poor compliance with the victims code is a known issue across the CJ system. Progress - Northumbria Police have invested in a bespoke approach to respond effectively to our victims through the Northumbria Victim Witness Scheme (NVWS). This mechanism supports all crime types with dedicated support officers who specialise in supporting victims of stalking and the officers investigating. Victim needs assessments are embedded in our process and procedures with victims being informed of their rights under the Victims Code of Practice. Action - To look for future opportunities within Niche to ensure ongoing compliance.	To support the existing process, Stalking advocacy continues to be available to further capture victims needs and work has been undertaken with the NICHE development Team to implement system process to ensure this is captured and compliance is met.
14.2	Their force has appropriate processes to make sure all stalking victims are told about their rights and under the victims' code.	Chief Constables	Progress -The attending officer is expected to explain the victim's code and ensure rights are explained to victims. Appropriate contact is then made and victims can be supported in a bespoke manner. Action - Moving forward, the force's analysts are increasing the sample size for each satisfaction measure to ensure compliance. For those cases referred, the Force has appropriate referral mechanisms in place to support victims upon which direct contact is made.	The new Niche computing system is under development. Improved processes are included in that development to improve VCOP referrals and VCOP compliance. The reinforcing of requirements has been built into the forthcoming training package.
14.3	Information about the national and specialist stalking support services available in their force area is easily available to police officers and staff, victims and the general public.	Chief Constables	Our officers have access to the Nutshell/SOS app providing immediate support information to victims. This includes the National Stalking Helpline and Paladin as well as wider local services. The force intranet supports links to further support agencies, the external web site and link to the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner web site providing further information on commissioned services.	We are exploring ways to replace the Nutshell/SOS App for which a replacement is yet to be found. Officers continue to have access to immediate support information for victims as previously outlined.
14.4	Victims who would like to receive support are referred to an appropriate service in a timely manner.	Chief Constables	The referral process is undertaken as part of the immediate actions associated with that incident ensuring timely service. The provision of the Nutshell App providing immediate access to information further enhances this, emailing details to victims and witnesses immediately.	We are exploring ways to replace the Nutshell/SOS App for which a replacement is yet to be found. Officers continue to have access to immediate support information for victims as previously outlined. This includes referrals through the Northumbria Victim and Witness Service, utilisation of ISHA and ISAC provision which continues, including referrals into Paladin advocacy service.
14.5	They monitor the number of stalking victims who are referred to specialist support services and take action when referral numbers are low.	Chief Constables	The force has the capability to identify the crime type and determine the gaps in referrals, hence the current proactive work around non Domestic Abuse stalking cases (ISHA support). Again all these factors are considered within the learning plan as part of a cradle to grave investigation outlining and reinforcing national and local policy and procedures.	The continued ISAC and Paladin advocacy provision supports this ongoing activity. The creation of Force SPoCs to improve connectivity between investigators and advocacy supports closing this gap and increases awareness of the support available. The future training delivery commencing April 2025 will seek to improve education of and referring to such support. The future development of NICHE will also support such referrals.
16.1		CCs, PCCs and their mayor equivalents	Context - Evidence shows that victim advocates and support services improve investigations, safeguarding and victim support. They make sure the victims voice is heard throughout the investigation and act as critical friends to policing. When investigators, victim advocates and support services do not work closely together, this can negatively influence the response to victims. For example, police safeguarding plans cannot account for all available information without access to additional risk assessments carried out by victim advocates. Closer working relationships between the police, support services and advocates can be encouraged through open information sharing policies and/or co-location of services. Progress - Process and procedures are in place. Officer and supervisory understanding of risk assessment, referral and collaboration with the advocate is an intended reinforcement area within the learning plan which will look to embed and reinforce current processes. Action - Conversations have taken place with Office of Police and Crime Commissioner around future commissioning work to maintain current service levels or increase where possible the service provision/delivery (as referenced previously).	Joint working around commissioning arrangements continue with funding of interventions in place. This includes advocacy support provision amongst other support types and intervention workstreams. Work is ongoing to strengthen those relationships and improve collaboration for an effective response. This includes work to deliver training and workforce development to the Force.

17.1	Force policies should support the allocation of stalking cases to officers with the right skills and experience, taking into account the potential risk and complexity involved in stalking and breach of order cases.	Chief Constables	Context - The nature of some stalking crimes means they should be investigated by officers and staff trained to provide investigations into complex and serious crimes. Crime allocation policies for stalking offences vary between forces. Some allocation policies were unclear or only focussed on whether there was a domestic abuse context, or whether the case was treated as a section 2A or section 4A stalking offence. Some of the fieldwork forces did not have clear policies on which teams should investigate breaches of protective orders. We also found that in some forces crime allocation policies were frequently not adhered to. This meant that frontline officers were investigating more serious and complex stalking cases when this may not be appropriate. There was sometimes disagreement in forces about who should investigate stalking cases. Some of the victims, officers and staff spoken to described stalking cases that were moved between officers and teams. They felt this had caused delays and had an adverse influence on communication with the victim. Force crime allocation policies should now reflect new content on case allocation within APP on investigations published by the College of Policing. This says impact, seriousness and complexity should guide case allocation decisions. The new APP content also says risk of harm, repeat victimisation, and unreported or historical incidents should be considered when the police make allocation decisions for crimes like stalking. Progress - Northumbria Police use clear screening and allocation policies with regard to investigation and the breaching of protective orders. The existing policies are being reviewed with the College of Policing APP. This training will include revised local policies, procedures and products. Currently any high risk Domestic Abuse related stalking is allocated to CID as would any serious or complex investigations that are discussed in the Daily Management Meetings (DMMs) including non domestic abuse stalking cases for allocation. This faces the same challenges as previously highlighted in that officers and supervisors need to identify the risk and raise for consideration. Action - The learning plan considers this and is intended to further upskill staff and officers.	The training delivery previously mentioned is scheduled to be rolled out across the Force from April 2025.
18.1	Their workforce has the capacity and capability to undertake effective stalking investigations and can apply new and innovative investigation techniques to pursue digital lines of enquiry.	Chief Constables	Context - We heard of some promising digital investigative techniques. These include an approach to digital evidence analysis in stalking cases trialled in the Metropolitan Police Service. The College of Policing has now included this approach, known as Operation Atlas, on its practice bank. We think other forces should explore how to implement similar techniques to make the best use of digital evidence in stalking investigations. Progress - Northumbria have two trials, one currently running and one imminent. The current project 'Guardian Tool' is being trialled in two of our 6 sectors and is a device whereby victims devices (with consent) can be scanned to detect any malware, the output is a traffic light report, indicating green (nothing detected), amber (possibility) and red (malware detected). The findings from amber and red advise seeking advice with regard submission of the device to our digital forensic unit for further investigation. This service is two fold in that it indicates further investigative opportunities but also provides reassurance to victims. Action - The second rollout is 'Cyber Volunteers' whereby open source research will be undertaken on victims social media/open profiles to determine how open and accessible they are with advice provided re ongoing protection and considerations re cyber safety (mindful of stalking advice to victims). The force also utilise Tecsafe apps for victim safety.	Guardian Tool has been piloted in Force and further consideration is being given regarding its future use. The Cyber volunteers also require future consideration and whether they can support such investigations. Operation Atlas has been subject to initial review and further consultation is planned to scope its potential future use. The Force is currently training frontline staff to ensure officers are equipped to identify and gather digital evidence at scene. There is a digital evidence improvement plan to upskill a cohort of officers to examine mobile devices forcewide. Operation Modify a College of Policing training package is to be mandated. The Force will continue to invest in technology.
18.2	All reasonable lines of enquiry are pursued, supported by good supervision.	Chief Constables	Context - National figures show stalking cases are often closed without further action due to evidential difficulties or because the victim did not support further action. The consortium raised concerns regarding the low charge rate. Case file review found evidence of police sometimes failing to complete reasonable lines of enquiry, including not securing evidence from digital devices. Some of the investigations in our case file review were poorly supervised. Good supervision improves the quality of investigations and is particularly important when investigations are led by new or inexperienced officers. The College of Policing published guidelines for supervisors on supporting the delivery of effective investigations in August 2023. It is also scoping a new educational programme for front-line supervisors to make sure they have the skills and knowledge to support their officers and staff to undertake quality investigations of public protection crimes like stalking. The NPCC and College of Policing 2024 national policing statement for violence against women and girls (VAWG) committed to making sure investigations into VAWG offences, including stalking investigations, are victim centred, suspect focused and context led. This approach has already proved effective in securing justice in cases involving rape and serious sexual offences. Progress - Response officers and supervisors have recently received an input with regards raising investigative standards. There is also a monthly CPS Stalking meeting reviewing force performance vs regional and national as well as a review of number of cases, convictions and those unsuccessful cases checking for future learning and seeking improvements. Action - As previously referenced Northumbria are seeking to introduce CPS NFA Scrutiny panels for stalking to determine any missed investigative opportunities. Outstanding action remains to review the College of Policing published guidelines for supervisors on supporting the delivery of effective investigations in August 2023 and determine awareness in force.	An interim Stalking & Harassment training product was circulated Force wide whilst work was undertaken to develop a comprehensive training package. That package is due to be rolled out as part of a training delivery plan from April 2025. Joint Police and CPS scrutiny panels have commenced in relation to Stalking or Harassment for which any key themes are shared for learning purposes of for any remedial action required. Audits for these crime types are underway and along with the scrutiny panels will support identification of any key learning themes or gaps or indeed good practice. Crime Performance Teams exist to provide quality assurance and the future rollout of the training package will improve our investigations.
18.3	Arrest and search powers are used to gather evidence from and about suspects.	Chief Constables	Context - Research also found evidence of officers failing to use their powers of arrest and failing to use their powers to search for and seize evidence belonging to suspects. Progress - Whether a suspect has been arrested and associated rationale is currently reviewed within the force crime audits as referenced above. Action - Expectations surrounding investigations will be clarified within proposed learning plan and indication of improvements will be seen through ongoing audit evaluations.	The development of the training package is due to be rolled out as part of a training delivery plan from April 2025. Audits of crime investigations and standards together with the introduction of CPS scrutiny panels and performance management processes, all support the expectations around utilising arrest and search powers.
18.4	The impact on victims is evidenced in witness statements, so it can be used to inform charging decisions and improve the likelihood of successful investigation outcomes.	Chief Constables	Context - Case files were missing evidence of the psychological impact on victims. In many cases, officers had not recognised this impact at all. This is concerning as providing evidence of victims fear of violence or serious alarm or distress are ways of proving the section 4A stalking offence. Progress & Action - Previously identified issue and forms part of the learning plan and plan for the force.	The development of the training package is due to be rolled out as part of a training delivery plan from April 2025. Audits of crime investigations and standards together with the introduction of CPS scrutiny panels and performance management processes, aims to support the evidential inclusion of victim impact.

20.1	The scale and nature of online stalking behaviours informs their strategic understanding of, and the response to, stalking.	Chief Constables	Context - The police could do more to keep stalking victims safe online and to better understand online elements of stalking offending. Victims reported online stalking behaviours which were not recognised by the police as stalking. This contributed to victims feeling that their report was dismissed by officers and staff. Research found evidence of cases where the police gave victims unhelpful and potentially dangerous online safeguarding advice. They also saw evidence that some forces lacked the necessary hardware and software to protect victims online. Nationally there is a recognition that online stalking behaviours are harmful and that policing needs to do more to understand and disrupt online offending. The NPCC and College of Policing VAWG national police statement 2024 identifies online and tech-enabled VAWG, including online stalking behaviours, as a significant area of risk. Under the national delivery framework for VAWG, policing should develop its understanding of dangerous online spaces to inform its response, including preventative work. Online communications like social media networks have become commonplace in most people daily life. Yet the police infrequently apply the online flag to stalking cases that include online offending. This means police forces cannot rely on this flag to understand how many stalking cases they have that involve online stalking behaviours and plan their resources accordingly. Progress - Online stalking is a significant growing concern and further understanding and analysis is welcomed by the force. Dedicated Specialist departments within Northumbria Police are constantly exploring ways in which to invest in resources and technology to consistently identify online harm and to respond to tech enabled crime. Operation Modify is a resource to help develop understanding of digital opportunities for intelligence and investigation. Action - Further work is required on Operation Modify to increase understanding and training opportunities.	Online stalking is expected to increase significantly and remains a concern. Analytical work is being undertaken to better understand what this demand may look like to better prepare the Force in its future response, both in terms of capability and capacity. We continue to rollout Operation Modify; this has been mandated and will support officers to better understand, respond to and improve investigative opportunities for this crime type.
20.2	Examples of online stalking are included in locally produced training and guidance material about stalking.	Chief Constables	Online stalking and reference to currently available supportive materials is again referenced within the learning plan, incorporating local policies, procedures and products. This work is also supported and driven through the Violence Against Women and Girls strategy. The force have tools within the force as outlined within 18.1 as well as cyber stalking support references to support the Stalking policy and procedures and wider online stalking reference tools within the force intranet.	The earlier references to online stalking training and guidance remain available with Operation Modify becoming a mandated training requirement. The additional wider Stalking or harassment training delivery is scheduled for rollout across the Force from April 2025. Guidance and materials relative to this crime type have been refreshed and remain readily available on the Force intranet.
20.3	Clear online safety advice is available to officers and staff, drawing on the College of Policing APP on stalking or harassment when it is developed.	Chief Constables	Complete on the force intranet. There is also additional support documentation for those utilising the Guardian Tool with news articles and linked guides.	This remains complete on the Force Intranet. Guardian is currently subject to review following its trial.
20.4	Appropriate tools, technologies and support services to digitally safeguard victims are procured and officers and staff use these resources when appropriate.	Chief Constables	As referenced, Guardian Tool is currently live and Cyber Volunteer service will follow. Supporting documentation is available on the force intranet.	As previously referenced supporting documentation and guidance has been reviewed and remains readily available to support officers and staff. The Guardian tool is subject to review following trial. Operation Atlas has been subject to initial review and further consultation is planned to scope its potential future use. The Force is currently training frontline staff to ensure officers are equipped to identify and gather digital evidence at scene through the mandated Operation Modify training package. There is a digital evidence improvement plan to upskill a cohort of officers to examine mobile devices forcewide. We continue to explore and consider future technical opportunities and toolkits that will improve how we effectively recognise and respond to online stalking.
22.1		Chief Constables	Context - Northumbria Police are aligned and connected with the National Police Chiefs Council lead on Stalking or Harassment and these recommendations, for which we await their response. Progress - Within Northumbria, current dedicated stalking resources are an ISHA referenced above and Paladin ISACs. As referenced our existing ISHA/ISAC capability is funded by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner and we aim that this to continue with an extension of current funding.	The Force approach to stalking is continuously reviewed to improve our response. Further consideration will be afforded following the NPCC Leads response to Recommendation 21. Funding has been extended allowing us to continue with our existing ISHA and ISAC capability.
23.1	Forces should consider screening crimes similar to stalking or where stalking behaviours may be present as part of a course of conduct, like harassment, malicious communications and breaches of orders.	Chief Constables	Context - Early screening of crime reports can help to identify stalking cases misidentified at first response. There will always be a risk of misidentification of stalking at first response as stalking overlaps with other criminal and non-criminal behaviours. Research found several forces recognised this and used screening processes to help find cases that had been misidentified. Some forces have invested in dedicated stalking officers and staff to facilitate this type of screening. For example, the early awareness stalking intervention (EASI) unit in West Midlands. Police carry out screening of reported stalking and harassment crimes and some types of order breaches. This screening can also help to make sure the police allocation of cases, investigative actions, safeguarding decisions and referrals for victims are appropriate. Progress - The forces crime quality team (CASQT) would be the first point of screening, however the review is based on the level of detail within the crime at that point in time. Some crime type reviews undergo a deeper historic review but this is not the case for volume crime. Should a stalking crime be initially misidentified and crimed as such then this may not be identified. If this was a domestic related incident, domestic crimes do undergo a wider review and any mis recording should be identified. Supervisors should be placing a second review upon the crime type once further information is known from the OIC. As referenced previous under Northumbria Stalking Intervention Programme (11.2 & 12.4), proactive work as part of a trial has been undertaken and identified some areas for development, for example wrong HOC, no urgency around breaches and lack of proactive consideration around orders etc. Action - The learning plan includes training of communications staff and supervisors increasing awareness and investigative oversight considerations.	The training product detailed in Recommendation 10.2 includes stalking screening considerations and will support that early identification, recording and management of stalking cases. This training is scheduled to be delivered to Response Policing Teams, Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Criminal Investigation Departments from April 2025. Additionally, further workforce development around stalking and screening considerations is to be undertaken with the support of our commissioned service provider Paladin. A cohort of staff are being identified across a number of roles and functions that feature within the journey of a stalking or harassment incident or investigation. This includes touchpoints such as from the point of Call for Service, the crime recording and allocation process and the investigation and performance management journey. An Orders Working Group is in place to improve the management of orders including Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs). A centralised Sergeant is now dedicated to facilitate the allocation of such order types ensuring appropriate management and response to any breaches. The commissioning of Independent Stalking or Harassment Advisors (ISHAs) and an Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworker (ISAC) further support responding to any misidentified crimes, providing that additional support to both victims and officers relating to safeguarding opportunities and referrals for victims. Additionally, as referenced at Recommendations 7.1 and 7.2, system changes are being made to improve crime recording enabling better identification of Stalking or harassment crime types.

25.1	How the force works in partnership with healthcare, the CPS, probation services and other criminal justice partners to manage stalking perpetrators and address their behaviour.	CCs, PCCs and their mayor equivalents	Context - Multi-agency approaches offer a promising model for tackling stalking – more could be done to make sure partners work more effectively together. Research found several forces had implemented multi-agency approaches to tackle stalking. The forces have taken different approaches, but these usually involve dedicated police stalking teams working alongside victim advocates, healthcare, probation and other professionals to tackle stalking offending. An evaluation of three multi-agency stalking intervention programme (MASIP) sites published in 2020 indicated that they had a positive impact on outcomes in stalking investigations. One of the three evaluated sites is the harm reduction unit in Cheshire. Police and stalking advocates discussed the value multi-agency teams provide as hubs of expertise that support the management of risk to victims and interventions with perpetrators to disrupt offending. Research also heard that fully integrated multi-agency teams can be expensive to establish and resource. However, there may be opportunities for forces to collaborate to implement multi-agency approaches in a more cost-effective way. Some forces had also developed other ways to work with partners, such as running regular multi-agency stalking meetings to discuss high-risk cases. The research concluded concern that forces may be missing other opportunities to work with partners. Recent changes to statutory guidance on multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) require agencies to consider managing more stalking offenders under MAPPA. Officers and staff spoken to in the fieldwork forces were not aware of these changes and most fieldwork forces did not refer to MAPPA in their local stalking policies. Progress - Northumbria Police are currently trialling a NSIP (Northumbria Stalking Intervention Programme) referenced in 11.2, 12.4 and 23.1. This has been a two year funded project led by Probation with one representative from police, one from probation and one from CNTW. Evaluation seeks to consider the future of this project and whether benefits can be obtained via the MAPPA process with our without some additional stalking dedicated support. Action - The Force will be required to make a decision with regards Northumbria Stalking Intervention Programme in its current capability by March 2025 when funding ends.	Funding has been extended for a further year to support the NSIP trial. Not only will this allow extended support to victims and interventions for perpetrators but it will provide the opportunity to improve the evaluation of its delivery, the benefits and outcomes. As previously outlined, workforce development is to be undertaken with the support of our commissioned service provider Paladin. A cohort of staff are being identified across a number of roles and functions that feature within the journey of a stalking or harassment incident or investigation, one of the aims and benefits will be to strengthen and better use the MAPPA process by increasing the referrals made. As previously referenced, funding has also been extended for an additional year allowing the continued collaboration with Paladin advocacy services and our existing ISHAs and ISACs.
25.2	Whether and how they should collaborate with other forces to effectively and efficiently contribute to multi-agency partnerships on stalking.	CCs, PCCs and their mayor equivalents	Further to the above, Northumbria Police is aware of other forces who have attempted to scope other MASIP type projects but been unable to support due to capacity, capability and budgetary restraints.	As previously referenced, whilst budget constraints continue, the future intention will be to further discuss any potential for future collaborative opportunities through existing structures such as the Regional VAWG Taskforce.
25.3	How multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) are being used to effectively manage stalking offenders.	CCs, PCCs and their mayor equivalents	There may be future opportunities for dedicated stalking officers to attend MAPPA Level 2 or MAPPA Level 3 meetings for cases involving Stalking perpetrators. The current benefits of the Northumbria Stalking Intervention Programme pilot have been felt by probation in their formulation of risk assessments, predominantly for perpetrators due for release. The role could work closely with Probation and other agencies when implementing Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) for those out in the community and their offending or risk to the victim is of a significant concern. Future considerations will be guided by the findings of recommendation 22, and evaluation of the Northumbria Stalking Intervention Programme pilot.	The findings of Recommendation 22 are awaited and the extension of funding the NSIP Programme affords additional opportunity to effectively manage stalking offenders. As previously outlined, workforce development is to be undertaken with the support of our commissioned service provider Paladin. A cohort of staff are being identified across a number of roles and functions that feature within the journey of a stalking or harassment incident or investigation, one of the aims and benefits will be to strengthen and better use the MAPPA process by increasing the referrals made to manage stalking perpetrators.
27.1		All bodies subject to recommendations	This is in hand by the national policing lead	This was progressed and response was directed to the NPCC, for National Policing Lead.
28.1		Chief Constables	Action Plan published, next update required 27/3/25.	Action Plan published.