



**VERA BAIRD**<sup>QC</sup>  
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

# **Northumbria Police & Crime Panel Report**

**January 2017**

<b>1</b>	<b>How is the PCC making commissioning decisions, and what are her future intentions?</b>
----------	---

### **1.1 Commissioning Intentions – 2017/18**

The Government continue to look at the further devolution of victim services to PCCs, the support services that are being considered for further devolution include those that are currently funded centrally by government:

- Adult victims of modern slavery;
- Families bereaved by homicide and road traffic crime;
- Victims of terrorism;
- Victims of female and male rape and sexual violence; and
- Victims and witnesses at criminal courts.

Dr. Philip Lee, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Victims, Youth and Family Justice confirmed late last month that the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) have decided to continue to fund existing nationally commissioned services for 2017-18, while MOJ will continue to work with PCCs to explore the potential for the future devolution of these services. Northumbria are taking an active part in this work and are helping to shape the national approach to devolution of services.

Our understanding is that the government will therefore continue to provide funding for victim services on an annual basis with a specified remit for PCCs to provide a core victim referral service and some specialist services. An announcement on the funding level was expected late last year. Unfortunately we are still awaiting confirmation of the final settlement for victim services. The one year funding settlement for victim services is unsatisfactory and the PCC and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners continue to lobby Ministers for this to change to a more sustainable solution for future years, bringing stability to the victim services sector and therefore victims of crime.

We have analysed crime and victim levels, demands for services and victimology to develop key themes for the grant fund to ensure the provision of suitable services to meet the demands of victims of crime in Northumbria. Findings from the Police and Crime Plan consultation and refresh of the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy have also been considered when developing the key themes and criteria. The Supporting Victims Fund 2017-18 will be launched in early January and will be mainly targeted at those victim services providers that can demonstrate how their service supports victims to cope in the aftermath of a crime and leads to long term recovery.

<b>Section 2 - How is the PCC building effective partnerships?</b>
--

### **2.1 Refreshing the Regional Violence against Women and Girls Strategy**

As you will be aware since 2013 we have been working alongside Durham and Cleveland PCCs to implement the 20 priorities set out in the first regional VAWG

strategy. Over the past 3 years we have made significant progress, and have provided updates to you as panel members on the progress made and projects linked to the implementation of the strategy. Working with the two PCCS from Durham and Cleveland we wish to refresh and prelaunch the strategy. To ensure that the priorities within the strategy reflect local needs, engagement events with partners have been held in Northumbria, Durham and Cleveland.

In Northumbria the event was attended by 65 partners and 7 workshops looked at key issues which relate to the current priorities and asked, What else can we do? Are we heading in the right direction? Have we missed anything?

Over the next few weeks we will analyse the findings alongside national issues identified in the Home Office Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2016 – 2020 published earlier this year and work with Durham and Cleveland to determine the priority areas for a new regional VAWG strategy.

## **2.2 Working with Partners, Nationally, Regionally and Locally**

Since the last panel meeting I have attended a number of national, regional and community events.

As Chair of the Association of Police & Crime Commissioners, I have met with the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd MP and the Justice Secretary, Liz Truss MP. These meetings are an ideal opportunity for me to promote some of the work that is going on in Northumbria in a national context. It is important that government Ministers know what is happening in our region, I will continue to encourage Ministers to visit the region, to see the work that police officers undertake first hand to make a difference – whether it be the Mental Health Triage scheme or showcasing the work and achievements of the new Safeguarding Team.

I was pleased to welcome Cumbria's Police & Crime Commissioner to Northumbria in December, Peter McCall. During the visit he was interested to see the work we are doing to improve Northumbria Police response to complaints, and particularly the work of the new Safeguarding team. In 2017, I will be looking at how we can work closer with Cumbria, a natural progression as we share a border and many of the issues that face rural Northumberland are experienced in Cumbria.

In November, I also attended the APCC/ NPC National conference addressed by the Home Secretary where the topics included specialist services, Legitimacy and Police Reform Transformation Fund amongst many others. As Chair of the APCC, I was delighted that Rachel Lawson from my team was able to join the event to promote the excellent work of our Court Observation Panel, she did a brilliant job and impressed PCCs across England and Wales

## Section 3 - How is the PCC scrutinising the force's performance against the police and crime objectives of the plan?

### 3.1 HMIC Peel Assessments 2016

PEEL is an annual assessment of police forces in England and Wales. Forces are assessed on their effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy. They are judged as outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate on these categories (or pillars) based on inspection findings, analysis and Her Majesty's Inspectors' (HMIs) professional judgment across the year. The pillars each comprise three or four questions that focus on core areas of the work of the police. Judgments are also applied to these questions.

At the end of the PEEL year (in March 2017), HMIs will bring together all the judgments made throughout the year together with other findings and information to produce a rounded annual assessment of each force.

Since the last panel report HMIC have published two of the reports that will form the form the PEEL Assessment with a final report on Effectiveness due in the new year.

#### Efficiency

This pillar is concerned with the question: How efficient are the police at keeping people safe and reducing crime? The overall judgment for Northumbria Police is **GOOD** making them one of 33 forces assessed as GOOD overall. 8 forces are judged as requires improvement, and two as outstanding and no force was found to be inadequate.

HMIC in their report did not identify any areas of concern or make any specific recommendations, however they did identify three areas for improvements (AFIs). There were three questions asked by the inspectors and the findings are given below.

#### 1. How well does the force understand its current and likely future demand? **GOOD**

HMIC found the force has a good understanding of current demand and has taken steps to reduce front-end demand. The Force has worked with partner agencies to explore ways to make working arrangements more efficient. However, more could be done to understand the impact of reduced budgets on partner agencies and the likely implications for demand on the force.

#### 2. How well does the force use its resources to manage current demand? **GOOD**

The Force uses its resources well to manage current demand; resources are allocated appropriately (in line with priorities) to match demand and financial requirements. HMIC has concerns that the force has not fully considered enhancing its capacity and capability to meet the rising demands from cyber-crime. The force is keen to increase collaborative working and has a clear strategy. It already links with other police forces,

partner organisations and blue light agencies, and it is able to show savings and improved service provision as a result of joint working.

One AFI identified, that was also a national finding, was that the force should put in place better processes and governance to understand the benefits of projects, change programmes and collaborative work, and how they affect the force's ability to meet current and likely future demand.

### 3. How well is the force planning for demand in the future? **REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

Northumbria Police has plans in place to manage future demand. Financial plans align well with force priorities and can therefore target resources to areas of policing with the greatest risk.

The force has a comprehensive IT strategy which should help service provision and achieving efficiencies. However, HMIC has concerns that the current in-force capability to implement the strategy is limited.

Two AFIs were identified to ensure that the force has sufficient expertise to implement an effective ICT strategy to meet likely future demand for its services efficiently and that workforce planning covers all areas of policing and that there is a clear rationale, based on evidence, to re-organise staff to meet current and likely future demand. Workforce planning gaps were also identified nationally, with most forces having an unsatisfactory understanding of their workforce.

## Legitimacy

This pillar is concerned with the question: How legitimate is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime? A force is considered to have legitimacy if those working in it are seen by the public consistently to behave fairly, ethically and within the law. These are important factors in building and maintaining the trust and cooperation of the public.

The overall judgment for Northumbria Police is **GOOD** and HMIC did not identify any causes of concern and has therefore made no specific recommendations. Nationally, two forces are graded as outstanding, 36 as good and five as requires improvement. None were graded as inadequate. Seven areas for improvement (AFI) for Northumbria are identified in the final report. There were three questions asked by the inspectors and the findings are given below.

### 1. To what extent does the force treat all of the people it serves with fairness and respect? **GOOD**

HMIC judged the force as good regarding the extent to which it treats all the people it serves with fairness and respect. Staff from across the organisation showed a good understanding of both the 'proud to protect' programme and the Code of Ethics. Inspectors found the culture of the organisation fully understood the link between displaying strong values and the provision of an effective service. The force actively

seeks feedback from the community and uses perception surveys to reach a variety of groups and this has helped to shape the way in which Northumbria Police provides its service.

**2. How well does the force ensure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully?**  
**REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

The force was judged as requiring improvement in the way it ensures that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully. The force's vetting procedures comply with national guidance and all new recruits, volunteers and contractors are vetted to current national guidelines. There are however concerns over the capacity of the vetting unit to ensure that the backlog of vetting applications and reviews are completed in a more timely manner.

Northumbria Police understands corruptive influences and has a counter-corruption control strategy to mitigate any threat posed. The counter-corruption unit has a dedicated team that monitors police systems and investigates allegations of corruption. Northumbria Police is able to assess all intelligence relating to possible corruptive practices, and to review it in a timely manner. However, the force's assessment of strategic threat is outdated and this would limit the value of the action plan that is used to mitigate the threat posed by corruptive influences.

Northumbria complies with the requirement to inform both the public and the workforce about the outcomes of misconduct hearings. However, further work needs to be done to make this more effective.

Six AFIs are identified in the final report state that the force should:

- i. Ensure it complies with all aspects of the current national guidelines for vetting.
- ii. Produce an annual local counter-corruption strategic assessment and control strategy, to identify risks to integrity.
- iii. Ensure that it has the capability and/or capacity to monitor all its computer systems to identify risks to the force's integrity.
- iv. Improve how it communicates with its workforce about lessons learned.
- v. Improve how its workforce understands the issues identified from lessons learned.
- vi. Establish and operate effective processes for identifying and managing individuals at risk of corruption.

**3. To what extent does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect? GOOD**

Northumbria Police has been graded as good in relation to the extent that it treats its workforce with fairness and respect. Following its staff survey in 2015 the command team has gone to great lengths to work with its workforce and create a culture of positivity, innovation and belief that all staff have the opportunity to develop their skills and experience.

Staff wellbeing is now central to force policy and the force has put considerable investment into awareness raising and the training of managers to identify mental health-related issues. It has signed up to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter and

developed a health and wellbeing action plan. It has adopted a proactive approach to addressing problems related to psychological and musculoskeletal issues, and this has had a further positive impact on the workforce.

The Performance Development Review (PDR) process has been re-energised. However, it is too early to say whether the new process will be appropriately adopted by all and used effectively to enhance career development.

One AFI has been identified, that the force should improve how it manages individual performance.

Leadership
------------

Leadership was also inspected and HMIC looked at how well forces understand, develop and display leadership; and assessed how well led they are. Although a grading was not given HMIC provide each force with a report outlining their findings as outlined below.

#### 1. Overview

HMIC found a good understanding of leadership expectations across the majority of the workforce (across all ranks and grades). Chief Officers from Northumbria Police are developing their leadership expectations with the workforce as part of its 'Proud to Protect' programme, launched during 2016. There is a well-considered and coherent approach to leadership development. While the force has several methods to identify and address gaps in leadership capability, these are yet to be evaluated.

Future leadership requirements are clear. The force is using recruitment to support the development of leadership and meet future requirements. Effective methods are in place to support potential senior leaders to develop a range of professional and leadership skills.

The force demonstrates an active search for new ideas and working practices from other police forces and organisations. The force is working to develop a culture of continuous improvement, and innovation is becoming part of the force ethos.

The understanding of diversity extends beyond protected characteristics and considers how diversity of background, experience and skills can strengthen teams.

Staff are encouraged to submit suggestions by using accessible and straightforward systems, and are given credit for their suggestions. The 'change in a day' programme is seen as an opportunity for all officers and staff to play a significant part in developing an efficient and effective police service.

#### 2. How well does the force understand leadership?

HMIC was satisfied that staff from across the organisation understood the principles of creating a strong leadership culture, and that the values were widely displayed across

leadership teams. Nationally, considerable variations in workforce understanding are apparent.

HMIC found an overwhelming acceptance that the new leadership values had been adopted across the force and were recognised as having had a positive impact on the force's culture.

The force recognises that it does not yet fully understand the leadership capability across the force. A number of methods are being used to improve this and details are included within the People Strategy.

The force assesses individual officers using 360 feedback and neuro-linguistic personal development. Whilst it is too early to judge the success of the enhanced Performance Development Reviews (PDR) process, HMIC is satisfied that its introduction and importance are widely understood.

Nationally, HMIC found that in most forces, individual performance review processes are weak or still developing. HMIC expects that, given the amount of work being done in this area by a number of forces, the situation will improve.

### 3. How well does the force develop leadership?

Northumbria Police has the capability to solve leadership problems when they arise with the inspectors seeing a number of examples of swift and decisive interventions, which reinforced the message that standards of leadership must not drop.

The force has a well-considered and coherent approach to leadership development. All new Inspectors and Sergeants are trained in a variety of subject areas including safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, leadership expectations and wellbeing and assessor training.

Northumbria Police uses a range of recruitment methods to address skill gaps and is introducing a system of secondments which allow officers and staff to gain a wider range of experience. The force recognises that Police Now presents a good opportunity to attract members of minority communities and broaden its skill base.

The force has transparent and well-publicised systems which identify talent. Officers and staff that HMIC spoke to said that they believed that opportunities to enter the Lead, Excel and Develop (LEAD) Scheme were fair, transparent and open to all. This has been used as an example of good practice within the national report. Very few forces were able to demonstrate this or provide a robust assessment of the potential barriers to any member of the workforce seeking access to such schemes.

Northumbria Police has effective methods of supporting potential senior leaders and helping them to develop a range of professional and leadership skills. This includes arranging renewed access to the national senior leadership programme for newly-promoted Chief Inspectors, Superintendents and police staff equivalents.



#### 4. How well does the force display leadership?

HMIC found that all ranks and grades felt they had an opportunity to influence and create a more efficient and effective police force; with officers and staff generally knowing about the various suggestion schemes. The importance of having balanced and diverse leadership is recognised and the Force is making concerted efforts to enhance leadership opportunities for female officers and staff. Northumbria Police is willing to look at other forces and organisations to identify best practice.

HMIC, in their national overview report have identified a number of areas which require improvement which Northumbria will have regard to in future planning.

- Forces are identifying and developing talented leaders drawn from high-performing officers and staff, but leadership development for the wider workforce (especially police staff) remains inconsistent.
- Force's expectations from its leaders are rarely included as part of an individual's performance review.
- Few forces are able to demonstrate a sufficiently broad understanding of the skills, background and experience of their leadership teams. This does not allow them to develop teams with a variety of leadership styles and approaches.
- Although almost every force has, or is developing, an individual performance review process, they are still weak in many forces.
- While some forces were able to demonstrate that they can identify and resolve leadership problems in parts of the force, very few have a process to identify/address poor leadership.
- HMIC found limited evidence that forces are developing sufficiently diverse leadership teams and need to work closely with the workforce to develop future leaders (e.g. future capability requirements for digital skills).

### 3.2 Scrutiny of HMIC Inspections

In response to these reports I have met with the Chief Constable to talk through the inspection reports and also written specifically congratulating him on the efforts made by him and his senior team over the last year in respect of leadership reflecting its importance in enabling force to be effective efficient and legitimate.

With regard to the legitimacy report I have congratulated the Chief Constable on the grading of GOOD, whilst also stressing that it is imperative that the last question, how well does the force ensure its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully is addressed. I have asked for an initial report of how he intends to tackle the issues identified and then a quarterly update.

In addition in respect of the AFI in the efficiency report on workforce planning I have asked the Chief Constable to present a report on Workforce Planning in January.

## **Section 4 - How is the PCC improving communication/consultation with the public?**

### **4.1 PCC Advisory Groups 2017**

The PCC Advisory Groups were first established by the PCC in autumn 2012 drawn from the communities which are protected by the Equality Act 2010. They consist of age, gender, religion and belief, disability, black minority ethnic (BME) and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT). A victims groups was also established. All groups have met with the PCC regularly over the last four years and continue to do so.

The groups have helped to shape policy and practice for both my office and Northumbria Police including the Northumbria Police Hate Crime Action Plan, domestic abuse media campaigns, stop and search programme and the Police and Crime Plan 2017-22.

We are refreshing membership of the groups to best reflect the current landscape of communities and stakeholders and have put together a programme of work for the coming year which includes consultation on a wide range of issues including victim services, police recruitment and training.

Victims First Northumbria will host the PCC Victims Advisory Group where the voice of the victim and victim service providers will come together to shape future understanding of victim need, demands for services and views on the whole criminal justice system.

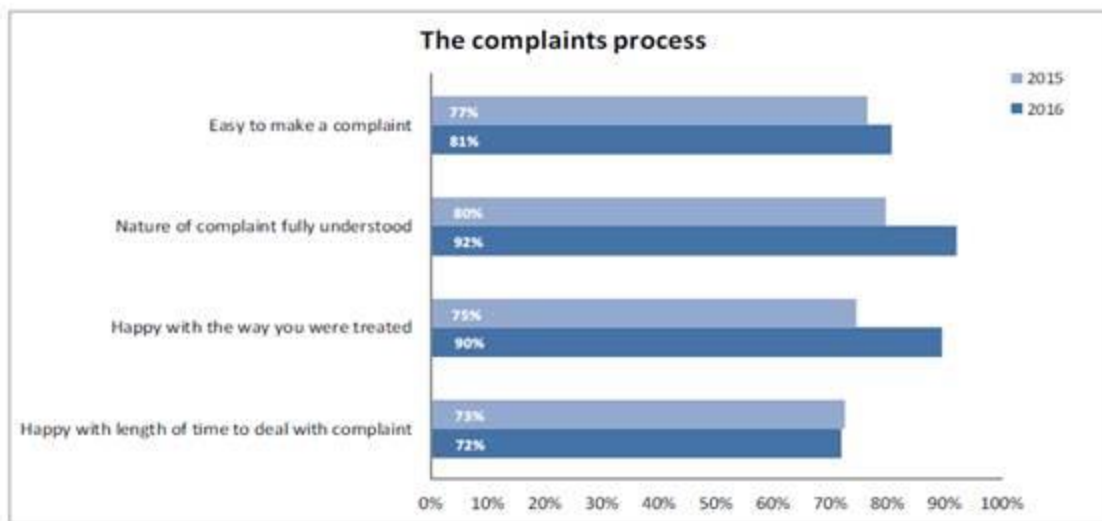
Streetwise North East will host a PCC Young Peoples Advisory Group which will consist of young people from each local authority area in Northumbria. The group will meet regularly and act as a sounding board for PCC and local police issues. The group will also carry out peer research on my behalf to canvass the views of young people on a wider scale when considering issues such as Northumbria Police's approach to stop and search and young victims of crime.

### **4.2 Complaints Triage Evaluation**

You already know about the changes that have occurred since we introduced the complaints triage team in 2013. In November 2016, we received our latest customer feedback results which provide us with some updated research on the benefits and impact of this innovative approach to dealing with complaints.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Complaints Triage Team in dealing with complaints telephone surveys were carried out with complainants. Whilst percentages are used for ease of comparison, this report is to be taken as qualitative in nature.

As you can see from the table below the triage team continue to provide an excellent complaints resolution service, with complainants continuing to be far more positive about the experience when complaints are resolved by the Triage Team.



Qualitative findings also show service users perceptions of the service showing satisfaction with the way that the Triage Team listened to and understood the complainant, kept in touch and provided a prompt response illustrated by a selection of comments:

*“He showed empathy towards my situation and he gave a good explanation”*

*“She communicated... understood and listened. I was stressed about making the complaint ... It took me three weeks to pluck up the courage.”*

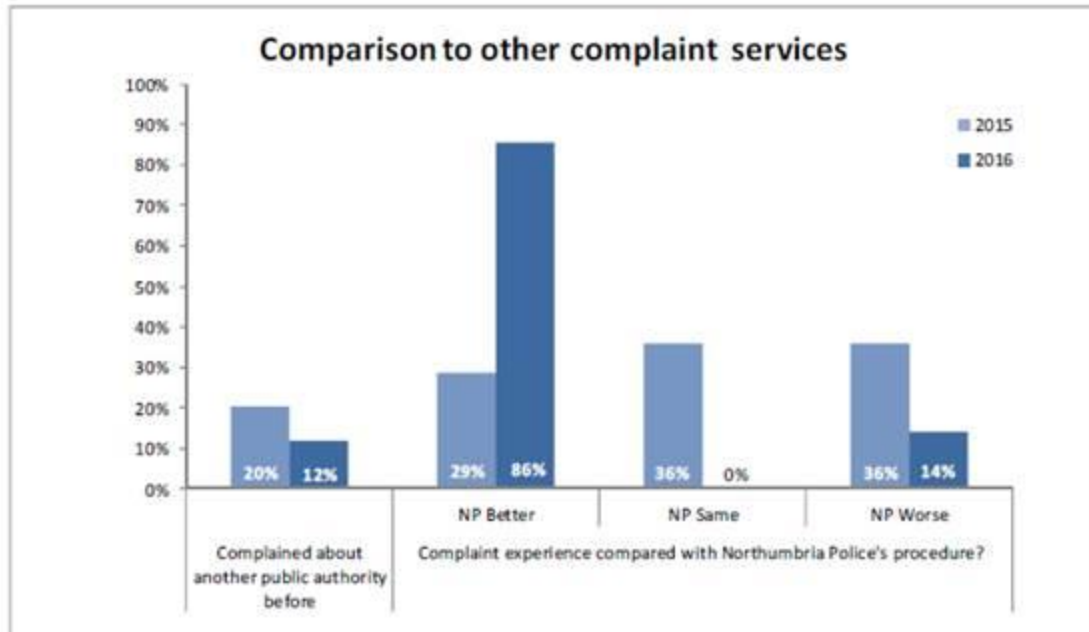
*“She kept in touch with me and updated me....she kept me in the loop the whole way”.*

*“they kept in contact via email and I was happy with that”*

*As soon as I wrote the letter I received a quick response”*

*“It was really good I was impressed with how quickly it was dealt with”.*

The survey also looked at how the response compared to that of other public authorities. Only 12% of participants had made a complaint to another public authority, compared to 20% in 2015, but they were more positive about their experience with Northumbria Police.



Complainants were also surveyed about the overall experience. Compared to 2015, more participants were satisfied with the whole experience and thought their complaint was taken seriously. There was a marginal reduction in those who think Northumbria Police link closely with the public, resolve issues and learn lessons.

Survey results showed that:

- 42% thought Northumbria Police genuinely resolve issues, compared to 44% in 2015.
- 77% thought their complaint was taken seriously, compared to 70% in 2015.
- 83% were satisfied with the overall experience, compared to 71% in 2015.

## Section 5 - How is the PCC improving confidence in the Police across the area?

### 5.1 Anti-Social Behaviour Volunteer Networks

In 2014-15 I supported North Tyneside Council to launch their 'volunteer victim support group' to support victims of anti-social behaviour to cope and recover following an incident or sustained attacks. The project proved successful with ASB Volunteers trained to support those in need. Council-led tenant and victim satisfaction surveys showed a marked increase in the level of people who think that the council deal with ASB in the right way.

With agreement from Community Safety Partnership chairs, in April 2015 my office worked to establish similar projects across Northumbria, to strengthen and complement the overall support available for victims of ASB. Grants of £20,000 were awarded to

each of the council areas to establish the networks and £5,000 has been awarded to each area this year to further develop the networks.

All areas have different neighbourhood working arrangements in place with differing levels of support already in place for victims of ASB; these differences are reflected in the local arrangements that have been set up as part of this project. It is important that my grant strengthens and complements local arrangements already in place rather than supersede them.

An update from each area can be found below:

**Gateshead** - Five volunteers were successfully recruited and trained in the ASB volunteer role from July 2016 and have been supporting a number of victims who were referred from The Gateshead Housing Company. Evaluations of the involvement with these victims are currently being prepared which will include information on the support offered to victims and feedback from the volunteers on their experiences.

There were some issues identified with the original training being too time intensive and a number of volunteers dropped out before the training started or part of the way through due to the length of the course. In preparation for the next intake of volunteers, the training is being reviewed with a view to changing this to a shorter e-learning course which the volunteers can complete at home within a set time period before having an induction which will include introductions to key partners including Northumbria Police, The Gateshead Housing Company and Community Safety as well as meeting volunteers from the previous intake. There are twelve volunteers who are in place to complete this training once it has been developed.

All newly trained volunteers will be given a test case to work with before becoming fully accredited and able to support victims of ASB.

**Newcastle** - In Newcastle there have been 39 referrals into the ASB Volunteer Service and 38 have taken up the offer of support. The referrals into the service have mainly been made by Victims First Northumbria and from the Newcastle City Councils ASB Team. Emotional support provided can include a home visit, office appointment, phone contact and follow up support. Support can be on a daily basis for victims with intensive needs, once a week for vulnerable clients or a regular check up every couple of weeks to monitor the situation. Advocacy support is also offered and represents any work undertaken by the worker on behalf of the victim. This can include speaking to the ASB Team for updates, liaising with Your Homes Newcastle/landlords and speaking with the Police. Specialist support and referrals can also be made when a client has specialist needs who may be able to offer more targeted support (e.g. Tyneside Women's Health, Someone Cares). Information and advice is also provided on housing and ASB and give the victim realistic expectations of the procedures that may follow.

Many of the cases they are supporting in Newcastle are victims who have been exposed to prolonged ASB and feel targeted. 85% of victims supported report an increased feeling of safety and well-being following the ASB volunteer support intervention with 15% reporting they felt the same level of well-being.

**North Tyneside** - Supporting victims of crime and anti-social behaviour is a priority for North Tyneside Council. The volunteer victim and witness support scheme helps to ensure the most vulnerable victims are identified and provided with an enhanced level of personal support.

Sixteen trained volunteers complement the work of the councils housing neighbourhood and community protection teams, along with the neighbourhood policing teams. They listen and truly understand what people affected by anti-social behaviour are going through.

For those requiring further support the victim support officer within the council's community protection team finds a suitable volunteer who can help. This could be through offering practical advice, providing emotional support over the phone or in person, helping to complete incident diary sheets or referring to a specialist agency.

As a result of the volunteer project, victims are receiving a service that meets their needs and more people are coming forward to report anti-social behaviour. That in turn means that more robust action can be taken against perpetrators.

Since February 2015 around 130 victims have been provided with an enhanced level of personal support. ASB case closure satisfaction scores (where a volunteer has provided enhance support) have attracted 100% satisfaction in relation question that asks victims "how satisfied were you with the support given to you during the case".

**Northumberland** - After a very difficult start to the scheme in the first year Northumberland now have a more settled structure building on the initial investment to create a scheme. Seven volunteers signed up for the ASB volunteer's network with a range of backgrounds and ages. Northumberland have been working closely with North Tyneside and they are sharing training in January.

Victims First are delivering two sessions in January in relation to boundaries, lone working and safeguarding followed by two further sessions which will involve Northumbria Police and the North Tyneside volunteers for scenarios and Q&A sessions.

Northumberland do not currently have any young volunteers and are commissioning 18-25 year old volunteers from Children North East and Youth Link, discussions are progressing about level of provision and referral pathway.

Homes for Northumberland ASB team and Northumberland County Council ASB team provide the main referrals to the service and will help to strengthen referral pathways. The team are re-launching the scheme in early 2017 with a more embedded and settled structure.

**South Tyneside** - South Tyneside work with Victim Support to provide an Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Project Worker and the role and hours of this worker have been able to be extended by this grant to cover ASB volunteer co-ordination.

Victim Support recruited and trained 6 volunteers who now help provide emotional and practical support to victims of ASB across South Tyneside. Victim Support delivered a bespoke training package to volunteers (covering Listening & Support Skills and Anti-Social Behaviour) and the Project Worker provided further one to one coaching and mentoring. The volunteers also have access to Victim Support's ELearning programme and some have completed a range of other online training – and all have done the Victim Support Data Protection ELearning course. The Project Worker also monitors the casework of volunteers, allocating cases and providing ongoing supervision and training as necessary.

As a result of the recruitment of volunteers, the Anti-Social Behaviour project in South Tyneside now has the capacity to deal with a much larger number of cases and referrals into the service have increased significantly. In addition it is now possible to allocate more resources to each case meaning that victims are now receiving more face to face and outreach contact.

Between 1st April 2016 and 30th September 2016 the project dealt with a total of 99 referrals, an increase of 80% for the same period in 2015. South Tyneside were only able to cope with this number of increased referrals because of the input and commitment of their volunteer team. At the point of case closure during the above period, 95% of victims reported an increased feeling of safety and/or well-being.

**Sunderland** - To date Sunderland Council have recruited and trained 3 Anti-Social Behaviour Victim Volunteers from Sunderland & Northumbria University as part of a new pilot scheme within the council. They are all full-time students studying Criminology, Social Care (MA) and Psychology.

The volunteers have received intensive training provided by an external training provider and continue to receive internal training as well as a comprehensive induction programme consisting of shadowing ASB officers, police and meeting several key partners who work in this field. In training the volunteers have covered topics such as values and beliefs, equality and diversity, stereotyping, safeguarding, ethics, listening skills and confidentiality.

From December 2016 the volunteers have been supporting low and medium level ASB victims who contact the council to report issues. To date the volunteers have supported victims relating to low and medium level noise complaints and have shadowed council and police officers on visits to victims and perpetrators of ASB.

In June 2017 the council will carry out a small review of the scheme to measure its effectiveness in Sunderland. If proved successful we will commence a further recruitment drive and look to expand the project and build on its early success.

## **5.2 'Words Leave Scars Too'**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> December we launched our 'Words Leave Scars Too' Campaign in association with Victims First Northumbria The awareness raising campaign ran from the beginning of December until New Year's Eve and aimed to dispel the notion that

domestic abuse is about bruises and scars and highlighted how emotional abuse can be just as damaging to victims, and in the eyes of the law is a serious, punishable offence.

It also aimed to educate victims who are unaware the abuse they are being subjected to is domestic abuse, and that this realisation will give them the confidence they need to seek help. At the same time, it was hoped that those committing emotional and psychological abuse, which is described as 'coercive and controlling' behaviour, will realise their behaviour is unacceptable and can lead to a custodial sentence of up to five years.

This emotional abuse is still the lesser-known side of domestic abuse - it's vital that everyone is made aware that domestic abuse doesn't just come in the form of scars and bruises - far from it. If he or she is telling you, time after time, that you're ugly, stupid, no one else will love you – they are guilty of committing a crime - domestic abuse.

The campaign was also supported by a victim of domestic abuse, who spoke about her experience, where she has been controlled emotionally and financially for over more than ten years. She contacted Victims First and is receiving support.

I was delighted that we were able to gain the support of North East actress and former Emmerdale star, Charlie Hardwick for the campaign as she is passionate about raising awareness of domestic violence.

The campaign posters were different to our normal designs, we tried to move away from police style posters. The creative team designed posters that are really impactful and tell a strong message.

Just before the launch of the Words Leave Scar Too campaign, I was pleased to support Northumberland Domestic Abuse Services (NDAS) to launch the "K(NO)W MORE" campaign to encourage gay, bi and trans men to find out more about violence and abuse. Responding to the need to provide accurate and appropriately tailored information, the campaign aims to help gay, bi-sexual and trans men understand how things can go wrong in relationships, and where they can turn to for help. NDAS supports all men and women, including lesbian, bi- and trans-women, but this campaign is particularly aimed at gay, bi and trans-men.

I was pleased to support this excellent new initiative, it is exactly the kind of specialist provision there should be, within the umbrella of support for all victims of domestic abuse which is now available in Northumbria. This campaign sends out a clear message that all victims of domestic abuse can reach out for help and it will be given to them. NDAS and the police work closely together, where it is in the interests of victims that they do so and this excellent relationship will continue to the benefit to all residents. The awareness campaign will run until March 2017, and more information can be found at the Facebook site KNOWMORENDAS or on the NDAS website, [www.nda.services](http://www.nda.services).