

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Report of	OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER (OPCC)
Subject	DOMESTIC ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS UPDATE
Date	9 OCTOBER 2023
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Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the panel with an update on the data, activities and outcomes relating to Domestic abuse (DA) and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Recommendation

2. The panel is invited to note the contents of this report.

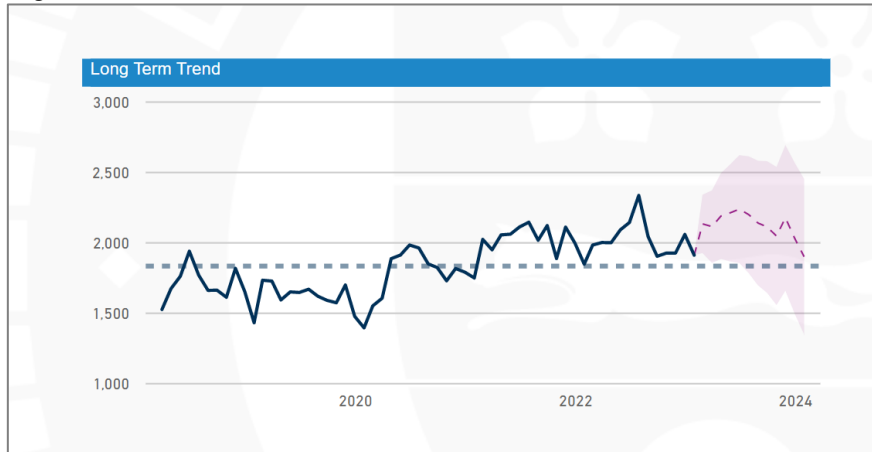
Domestic Abuse

3. Domestic Abuse (including Stalking and Harassment) is a Strategic Priority as part of the Force's 2022/23 Control Strategy. Crimes are identified as being 'Domestic Abuse related' by the Police if the offence meets the cross-governmental definition of domestic violence and abuse. This includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 years or over, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Leicestershire DA Trend (Source: Leicestershire Police Data)

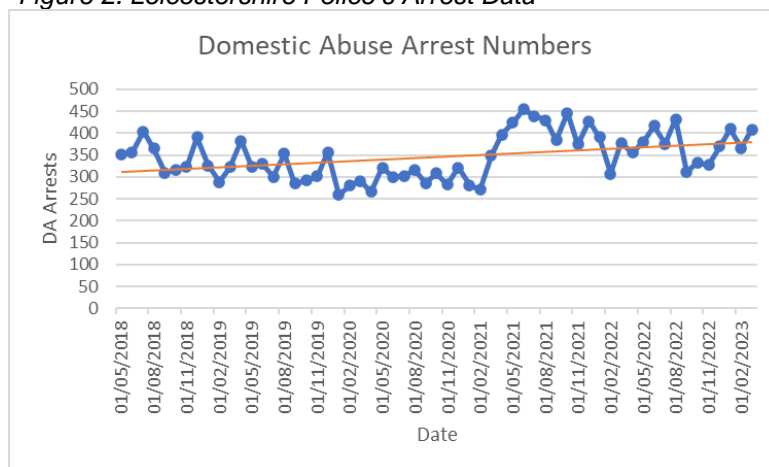
4. Data below includes all occurrences, (i.e., both crime and incident data) for the rolling 12-month period and shows a very slight increase compared with the previous year, an increase of 0.3%. After peaking in August 2022, the figures have returned to expected levels. Further analysis indicated that there was no specific reason for this spike in occurrences. It was consistent with the expected higher levels of DA in the Summer and also with an increase across multiple crime types in August.
5. Forecasted data suggests that DA will continue to rise after February, peaking in the Summer months and then decreasing in the latter months of the year but no significant changes to the data are currently predicted. Note that forecasting can only give an indication or steer as to what could happen in the future based on previous historical data. It cannot account for any future changes to process or department operations, external factors etc.

Figure 1: Trend: Total DA occurrences



6. Leicestershire Police data shows a current arrest rate of 25.1% [rolling year to 02/04/2023: 17,889 crimes and 4,483 arrests]. In 2021 there was a change in the arrest rate which has been maintained since as shown by the increasing trend line below. Further analysis is being conducted to understand this change in the arrest rate.
7. The Force also measures the DA arrest level by DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour based violence) Risk Assessment. In 88% of cases an arrest was made for a High Risk DA Subject. This increased to 90% in the period from 1st October 2022 – 2nd April 2023.

Figure 2: Leicestershire Police's Arrest Data



8. Force data indicates that 7.2% of all DA offences finalised since 1st April 2022 (irrespective of when the offence occurred), had an outcome of Charge/Summonsed.

DART (Domestic Abuse Resolution Team)

9. DART offers victims of DA the chance to speak to an Officer virtually from a device in their own home or elsewhere, with regards to lower risk DA incidents. Since commencing in September 2022, the Team has taken over 1800 reports away from the front-line, assisting front-line Neighbourhood Patrol Officers (NPO) and ensuring victims are safeguarded where necessary. DART has a target to resolve over 80% of incidents at first point of contact for the first year and is

currently on track to achieve this with a current resolved rate, since September 2022, of 80.8%. This is an efficiency saving of around £136,500 which equates to 4 PCs.

10. DART has also achieved:

- a. Over 1000 incidents have a book appointment, which is on track for 3500 per year, equalling 20% of the force DA.
- b. 770 incidents completely resolved.
- c. Period of unknown risk reduced by 91% (8.9 days).
- d. 26% reduction in daily outstanding DA (average 12 per day).
- e. Force 25% reduction in DA under investigation.
- f. 188 Storm markers added
The attendance time is halved when DA is present.
- g. 312 Niche markers added
- h. Positive outcome rate for DAIU for medium and standard risk cases managed in the department increased from 42.6% to 44.4%.
- i. Positive outcome rate for high risk cases in the DAIU increased from 47.6% to 53.8%.

11. DART have also set up a Threat Assessment Unit which seeks to identify those cases daily which are repeat and cause concern. A new methodology is being developed to identify these cases using the factors known to increase risk of homicide. The cases are flagged on police systems to assist in prioritising these high harm cases and capacity has been increased in the Domestic Abuse Investigation Unit to provide specialist investigation to an increased number of cases identified as escalating risk. The Threat Assessment Unit also identify high harm cases for longer-term problem-solving management by NPA's. Initial analysis of the impact of the plans indicates a reduction in repeat victimisation and demand.

Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO)

12. Where the Police have reasonable grounds for believing a perpetrator has used or threatened violence towards the victim who is at risk of future violent behaviour, they can issue a DVPO on the spot, providing they have the authorisation of an Officer at Superintendent rank. The Magistrates' Court must then hear the case for the Protection Order itself – which is the second step – within 48 hours of the Notice being made.
13. Leicestershire Police have good compliance between a notice being issued and that being changed to an order [please see Figure 5]

Figure 5: DVPN/DVPO

Date	DVPN Issued	DVPO Granted	Victim in Support	Notices to Orders
April 21	27	27	14	100%
May 21	30	30	17	100%
June 21	23	23	17	100%
July 21	22	20	12	91%
Aug 21	27	25	13	93%
Sept 21	18	16	12	89%
Oct 21	23	23	9	100%
Nov 21	19	18	9	95%
Dec 21	26	26	12	100%
Jan 22	19	18	10	95%
Feb 22	10	8	5	80%
March 22	23	23	12	100%
April 22	20	19	13	95%
May 22	14	14	8	100%
June 22	18	17	9	94%
July 22	19	18	8	95%
Aug 22	17	17	8	100%
Sept 22	13	11	9	85%
Oct 22	25	21	12	84%
Nov 22	16	16	6	100%
Dec 22	17	16	10	94%
Jan 23	20	20	11	100%
Feb 23	18	16	6	89%
March 23	25	16	6	64%

Confidence and User Satisfaction

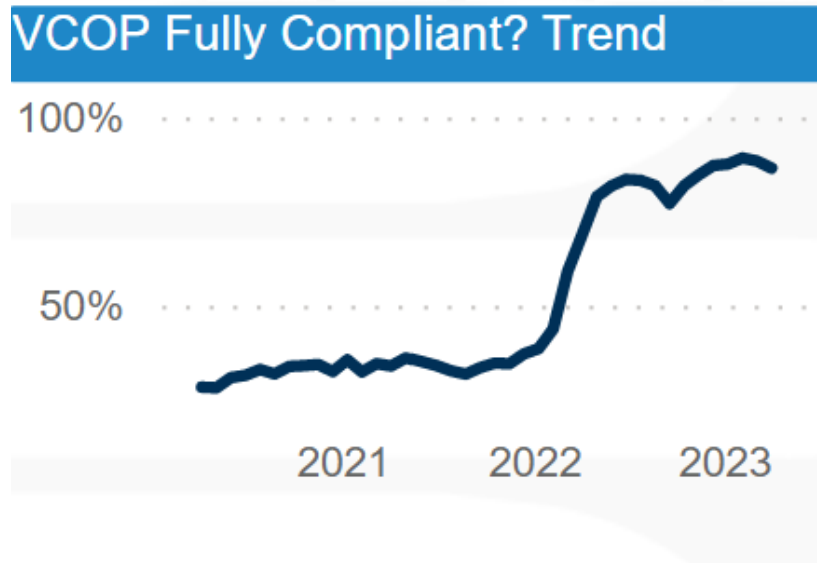
14. The overall satisfaction rate for Victims of DA reported in February 2023 saw a small decrease, falling to 82.1%. This is the lowest level since September 2021. It should be noted that the Victim Satisfaction surveys are a small sample size in comparison to the total number of DA victims. Therefore, this data is difficult to extrapolate to all victims.
15. Throughout 2022 the overall monthly satisfaction rate remained consistent, ranging between 83% and 86%. The lowest satisfaction rate within the questionnaire is the 'Follow Up' question. Victims said they were either not updated in the way they requested or within the 28 day timescale. At the start of 2021 the satisfaction rate for treatment stood at 79.4%. Over the past year there has been a steady decline in this rate falling to 70.8% in February 2023.
16. The satisfaction rate for initial contact continues to be consistently high with a 95% rate reported for the last 3 months. This is an increase compared with a year ago where the rate was 91%, indicative that improvements have occurred particularly with the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Resolution Team (DART). DART have changed the way the Force responds to DA incidents, to ensure greater efficiency alongside a quality service.

Victim Compliance

17. Victim Compliance (VCOP) has been improving over 2022. At the time of writing, 95% of victims have an up to date (within 28 days) Victim Needs Assessment and

90% have been updated recently with their preferred contact method. Please see below for the trend line.

Figure 6: VCOP Compliance



18. Leicestershire Police is working with the region to implement a new victim update template which includes time, method of contact, nature of contact and any change in the way a victim wishes to be contacted from the initial selected method.

Violence Against Women and Girls

19. VAWG is a Strategic Priority for Leicestershire Police. In September 2022, the Force appointed a dedicated VAWG lead at Detective Superintendent level, who is responsible for driving the force's response to VAWG, in collaboration with the NPCC VAWG Taskforce and partners both in LLR and across the region. Improvements in performance, police culture, training, policies and procedures are driven by the Force's VAWG Action plan, which in turn is informed by specific plans, aligned to the 3 pillars of the National Framework: Building Trust & Confidence, Relentless Pursuit of Perpetrators and Safer Places. A Statement of Intent, which will underpin the action plan and will be both inward and outward plan, has been agreed by the Chief Officer Team.
20. There are different methodologies to measure VAWG. For example, the VAWG Taskforce requires only female victims over 10 on certain crime types, whereas the CPS also recognise that men can also be victims of domestic abuse and sexual offences. The Home Office measure VAWG Offences by measuring Rape, Other Sexual Offences and Stalking and Harassment – both male and female victims for all offences.
21. Please note that when viewing the below trends and percentage changes it has to be taken into consideration that in 2021 Leicestershire received an outstanding CDI compliance of 98%. This was due to the increase in the DDMs in 2020 after in 2017 Leicestershire received inadequate CDI compliance. Therefore, the

number of crimes might be considered high in some cases, but this is partly due to the accurate recording.

Leicestershire VAWG Source: Leicestershire Data

22. The methodology that the Home Office use will be selected within force Power BI Dashboards to establish a difference between years [Crimes of: Rape, Other Sexual and Stalking and Harassment]. There has been a 5% decrease in the above offence types between 21/22 and 22/23. Compared to the COVID year of 20/21 there was a 12% increase, and Pre-Covid there has been a 64% increase (19/20).

Figure 7: Force VAWG Data changes

Dates	Volume	% Change
March 19 - March 20	11,811	-
March 20 - March 21	17,280	46%
March 21 - March 22	20,382	18%
March 22 - March 23	19,348	-5%

Figure 8: Force VAWG Data



23. The increase in reported crimes for VAWG offences can be taken as a positive. The Public have the confidence in Leicestershire Police to report these crimes. When looking at the satisfaction for Domestic Abuse the current rate is 84% and 83% for confidence. Both percentage figures have remained stable around the mid 80-90%.

24. Even though there is high satisfaction and confidence, the positive outcome rate has dropped from 9.3% in March 2022 to 7.6% in March 2023 [Stalking and Harassment, Rape and Other Sexual Offences]. The positive outcome rate decreased in 2022, but in recent months there has been a change, and if this current position continues then the positive outcome rate will increase for 2023. The highest outcome is evidential difficulties, primarily that the victim does not support further action with a suspect identified. Due to the complex nature of VAWG offences, as the victim/suspect relationship is often Partners or ex-partners, the victims may feel the pressure to not take the offence any further.

Figure 9: Outcomes

Year	Positive Outcome
2019 - (Pre Covid Lockdowns)	8.7%
2020 – Covid Lockdowns	8.1%
2021 – Part Covid Lockdowns	8.9%
2022 – Post Covid Lockdowns	7.6%
01/01/2023-05/03/2023	10.2%

25. The median length of a VAWG investigation has remained static around 30-40 days for 2022 and has recently decreased from 40 in January to 35 in March 2023. There has been a decrease in the number of crimes under investigation of which aligns with the decrease in offences.
26. The Force has developed a new finalisation template on Niche to capture why and when victims disengage from police action or prosecution. This is a new development and compliance with its use will be monitored through PowerBi. This has also been reviewed at the Ethics and Transparency Panel.

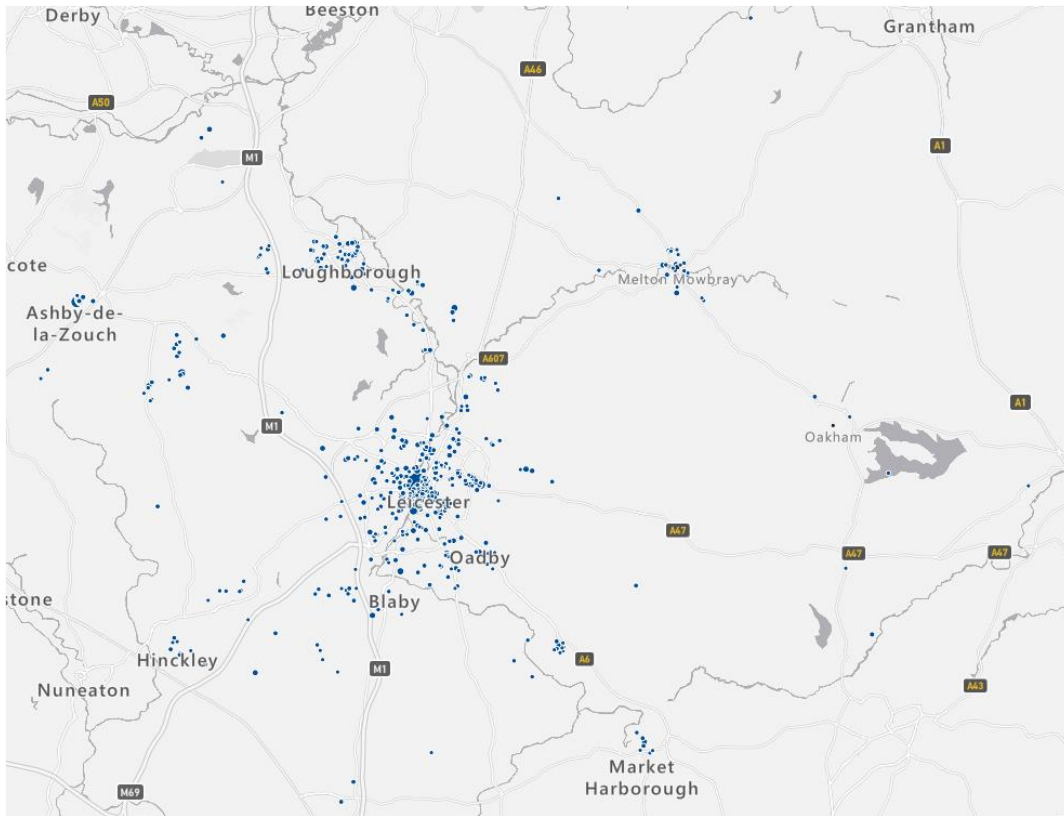
Op Lakers

27. At the end of 2021 there was a national concern around needle spiking in Nightclubs. Leicestershire were victim to this, and any spiking incidents are still being monitored. Between April 2022-Feb 2023 there have been 223 Op Lakers reports. It has been difficult to show whether there have been any positive spiking incidents. One of the main problems is that in most cases alcohol has been consumed, which masks any alcoholic spiking. Also, recreational drugs may have been taken, which has the same issue.
28. The force has become one of the first nationally to pilot reporting of spiking via the Single Online Home.

Street Safe

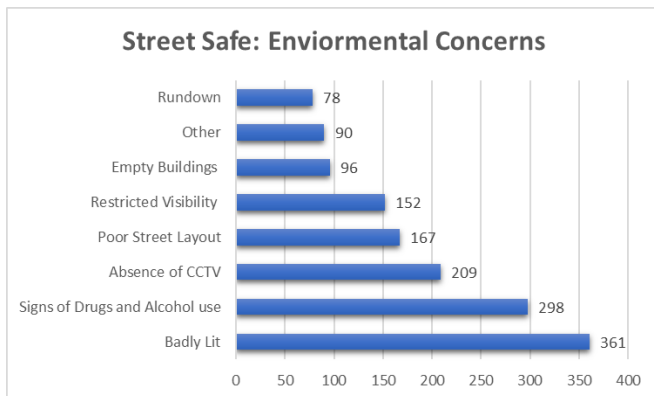
29. Since September 2021 Street Safe has been a collation tool to view environmental and behavioural concerns from the public. There have been 643 reports with 1,869 concerns reported in Leicestershire to date. The below map shows these reports, there are clear hot spots within the City, Loughborough, Melton Mowbray, Ashby de la Zouch and Hinckley.

Map 1: Street Safe Locations



30. The concerns that have reported in Leicestershire are shown below.

Figures 10 & 11 Street Safe Concerns

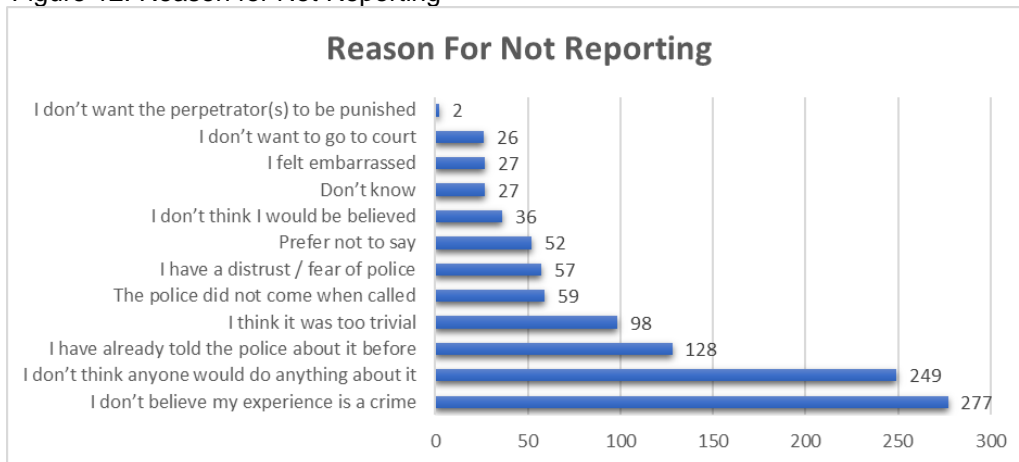


31. The behavioural concerns are often consequences of the environmental concerns that breed crime. If these environmental concerns were dealt with then naturally these consequences would dissipate.

32. The City Parks such as Victoria Park and Abbey Park are hot spots for reports. Leicestershire Police also noted the increase in sexual offences being committed in Victoria Park and as such Victoria Park was a Force Priority in Feb 2022.

33. A new live data app has been made available in recent months by the College of Policing Knowledge Hub and is promoted by the Force VAWG Lead. Monthly updates from Street Safe are presented in Force Meetings. This allows proactive patrols and/or reassurance to the public that the Police are taking their concerns seriously.
34. The local authorities (Borough Councils) have been contacted about Street Safe. The councils needed to be aware of these reported problems so they can be fundamental in helping fix these environmental concerns. This is a gateway into understanding the areas of concern from the public for the Local Authorities.
35. The demographics of the reporters is limited. The majority prefer not to say anything further than their sex, therefore to draw any conclusions would be invalid. Female reporters are the majority at 69.6%.
36. The reasons for people not reporting their concern to the police is varied. The largest reason is that they 'didn't believe their experience is a crime'. The other reasons highlight doubt around the Police themselves [see Figure 7]. The fear of a lack of support or trust is a present factor. Due to the lack of demographic data is it unfortunate that further analysis cannot be completed which could highlight the demographics of whom felt this way.

Figure 12: Reason for Not Reporting



Police Complaints Data

37. Professional Standards Data has been obtained to increase the knowledge of VAWG offences with internal staff.
38. Within the period January – December 2022 Leicestershire Police received 44 allegations (37 Cases) of Police Perpetrated VAWG. Allegations. *Complaint or misconduct investigations can have multiple allegations attached to it, which is why the cases and allegation numbers are different.*
39. The 44 allegations are broken down to 18 Complaint Allegations and 26 Conduct Allegations.

40. The 37 cases are broken down in 16 Complaint Cases and 21 Conduct Cases.

41. Summary of how the matters were finalised

- 10 Case to Answer (Conduct investigations)
- 5 No Case to Answer (Conduct investigations)
- 5 NFA
- 10 Service Acceptable (Complaints)
- 1 Service Not Acceptable (Complaints)
- 13 Live

42. Of the 27 Cases finalised the average time to complete was 60 days with the longest being 204 days and the shortest being 4 days.

43. Recently, Leicestershire Police published data to the BBC on their Police Perpetrated VAWG. This was a different time period of October 2021-March 2022 but provides further insight.

Figure 13: PSD Police Perpetrated (PP) VAWG

Complaint	Number
Total number of unique VAWG complaint cases	19
Total number of unique VAWG conduct cases	5
Total number of unique VAWG cases	24
Total number of unique VAWG complaint allegations	24
Total number of unique VAWG conduct allegations	5
Total number of unique VAWG allegations (complaint and conduct)	29
Total number of unique subjects of PP VAWG complaint allegations	49
Total number of unique subjects of PP VAWG conduct allegations	5
Total number of unique subjects of allegations (complaint and conduct)	54

44. Between the reported time period, Leicestershire Police investigated five PP VAWG misconduct cases.

- In one case, it was deemed as gross misconduct. A criminal investigation remains ongoing.
- In one case, gross misconduct was proven and the staff member was dismissed
- In one case, a gross misconduct hearing is due to be heard. The officer concerned has resigned.
- In one case, it was found there was a case to answer for misconduct. The staff member resigned preventing any further action
- In one case, it was found there was no case to answer.

45. Between the reported time period, Leicestershire Police investigated 19 PP VAWG complaints

- In nine cases, it was found that service was acceptable – in two of these cases there was an action for the individual concerned to learn from reflection
- In two cases, it was found service was not acceptable - in one case there was an action for learning from reflection, in one case it was referred to the formal Reflective Practice Review Process

- In three cases, the case is sub judice – the case is awaiting the outcome of ongoing court proceedings
 - In five cases, no further action was required – this outcome was determined for a number of reasons including due to no consent being provided by the complainant for the case to progress and due to the case being referred to another force
46. Detective Superintendent Rich Ward, from the force's Professional Standards Department, said: "The public and the force rightly expect the very highest professional standards of behaviour from all of our officers and staff and that they can trust and have confidence to report to us. I know that the overwhelming majority of employees in our force adhere to these high standards and act professionally.
47. "When a formal complaint is made against an officer or staff member, these are always taken very seriously and recorded and handled in line with national statutory guidance and investigated by the force's Professional Standards Department in order to establish the full circumstances of the allegations.
48. "If standards have been breached, the appropriate action will be taken by the Force, as evidenced by the robust action taken in respect of the five misconduct allegations we recorded in this period."

Conclusion

49. The implementation of DART demonstrates the Force has been proactive in trying to support and improve the service to victims of DA, evidenced by the recent improvement in the Satisfaction rate for initial contact. The increased capacity in the DAIU has resulted in a greater number of cases being investigated by specialist resources and higher outcome rates being achieved in the department. This has increased capacity for NPO resources to focus on attending and investigating domestic abuse cases.
50. A programme of continual professional development for all NPOs relating to domestic abuse and stalking is being delivered through the NPO Training schedule to improve investigation standards and address cultural and language issues identified. Inputs have also been delivered on the use of Stalking Protection Orders and the current input focuses on how to undertake an evidence led investigation in DA.
51. As per the Police and Crime Plan and under PEEL it is important that the Force continues to identify and support the most vulnerable in our communities and to hold those to account, who cause most harm.
52. In summary, VAWG has been a Strategic Priority for Leicestershire Police and now it is a part of the Strategic Policing Requirement. As previously mentioned, the increase in offences will be affected by the increase in confidence in victims to report, which is driven by better partnership working and initiatives across the Force Area.

Implications

Financial: None

Legal: None

Equality Impact Assessment: N/A

Risks and Impact: Domestic Abuse is a strategic priority and under intense national focus as part of the wider focus on Violence Against Women and Girls.

Link to Police and Crime Plan: Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls.

Communications: None

List of Attachments / Appendices

None

Persons to Contact

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