

# Adverse Childhood Experiences: Breaking the Generational Cycle of Crime

## Turning Understanding into Action: Summary Report

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## Authors and Contributors

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We would like to say a special thank you to every Police Officer and staff member who allowed the research team to observe them during their duties. We are very grateful for your honesty and support in undertaking this research and would like to recognise the incredible job you do at keeping the public safe.

South Wales Police should be praised for their genuine, open and transparent approach to the project. It is unique for a Police Force to allow researchers to observe them and to work with professionals from other sectors to develop proposals for change to meet the challenges of shifting demand relating to vulnerability.

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# About this report

This summary report presents the key findings from extensive research undertaken with South Wales Police to understand vulnerability demand. The research was undertaken as part of the Police Innovation Fund project “Early Intervention and Prompt Positive Action: Breaking the Generational Cycle of Crime”. The report also presents a series of recommendations for action, which are transferable across sectors and focus on addressing vulnerability through a shared agenda for public services in Wales, namely Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).<sup>1</sup>

## Why this report is important

This report strengthens the case for how policing can be more effective in preventing problems before they escalate through a sustainable and long term approach.

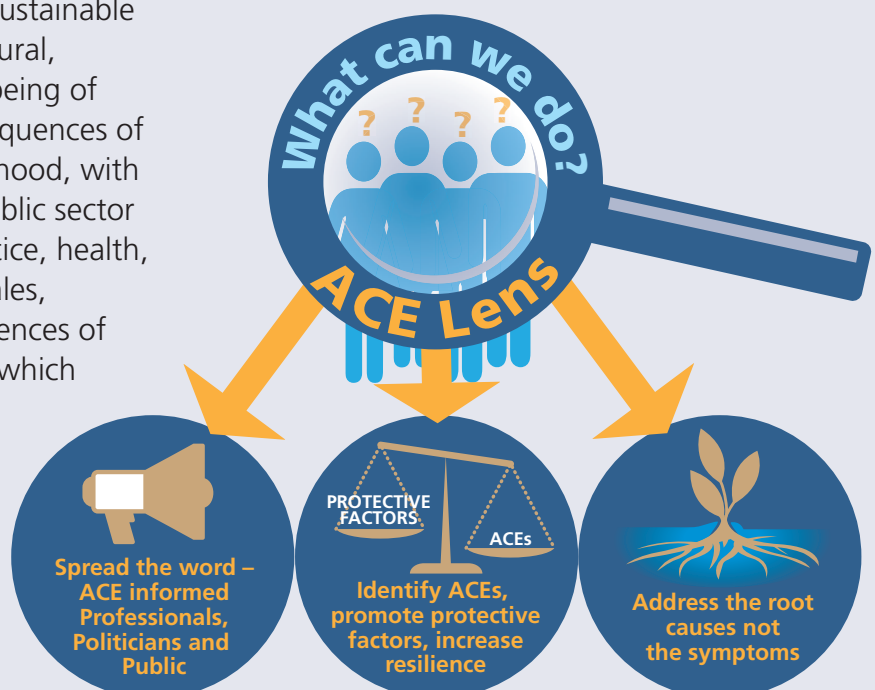
In Wales, new legislation, such as the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, demonstrates Welsh Government’s commitment to improve the well-being of people in Wales and provides the optimum environment for prioritising collaborative working and early action.

Preventing and mitigating ACEs is a clear priority as we strive for long term, sustainable solutions to improve the social, cultural, economic and environmental well-being of Wales. The health and social consequences of ACEs span from childhood to adulthood, with significant implications for many public sector organisations including criminal justice, health, social services and education. In Wales, addressing the causes and consequences of ACEs provides a shared agenda on which to focus collective action.

South Wales Police have, for some time, recognised the importance of developing their response to vulnerability and ensuring they intervene at the earliest

point. This innovative approach is reflected in the 2016-21 South Wales Police and Crime Reduction Plan which includes a commitment to early intervention combined with prompt and positive action at the heart of building healthy, happy and safe communities.

The Early Intervention and Prevention Project is a collaboration between Public Health Wales, the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales, South Wales Police, NSPCC, Barnardo’s and Bridgend County Borough Council. The project uses a public health approach and is the first of its kind to test an ‘ACE lens’ in the police response to vulnerability.



<sup>1</sup> ACEs are stressful experiences occurring before the age of 18 and include abuse (physical, sexual, verbal) or affect the environment in which they live (see page 3 for information about ACEs in Wales)

This research report is the first milestone of the project and was conducted to meet the following objectives:

- To identify what procedures and protocols are currently in place for the identification and management of vulnerability and risk by South Wales Police and associated statutory partners;
- To understand the perceptions of Police Officers on their ability to respond to vulnerability and how they can be supported in this; and,
- To explore the views of the public on their knowledge of ACEs and public expectations around the police response to vulnerability.

## What has informed this report

Very few research studies have had such extensive access to police practice, making this research unique and the findings highly valuable for informing change across sectors. The research team conducted almost 400 hours of observations of operational policing, covering different roles and shift patterns. 27 interviews and seven focus groups were undertaken with frontline police, Public Service Centre and Public Protection staff.

Seven interviews with staff from partner agencies who receive police safeguarding referrals were conducted to examine their perceptions on multi-agency working and the referral process. Three focus groups were also held with the public to explore expectations

of the response to vulnerability by the police and other agencies. A detailed analysis of safeguarding referral (Public Protection Notification [PPN]) data held by South Wales Police and associated statutory partners for a 12-month period was also completed to fully ascertain the level of demand within the system.

The research findings, which are presented in a full technical report<sup>2</sup> demonstrate the scale of demand relating to vulnerability which the police have to respond to. Traditional policing methods, training and systems are not designed to meet this level and type of demand and have been explored as part of the research. These findings have been used, along with what we know about ACE- and trauma-informed responses to develop recommendations for action in order to respond to vulnerability demand in a more effective and efficient way.

*"I don't think there can no longer [be] any excuses now, regarding the role of a Police Officer. Yes, historically, we're there to reduce crime, but I think a lot more of our role incorporates people who don't always report crime to us... and they are the vulnerable members of society"*

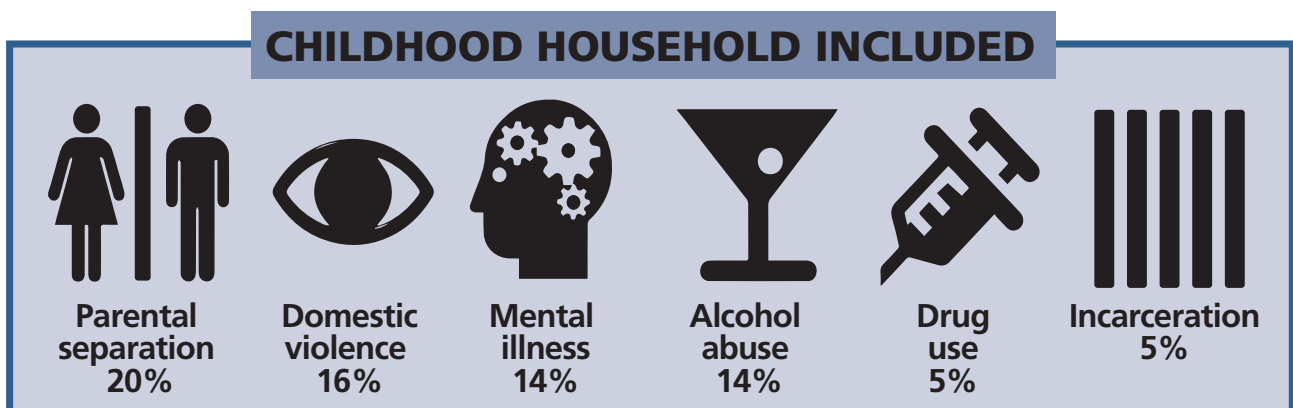


<sup>2</sup> Public Health Wales. 2017. Report 2. Adverse Childhood Experiences: Breaking the Generational Cycle of Crime. Understanding the response to vulnerability by South Wales Police and other agencies.

# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in Wales

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful experiences occurring during childhood that directly hurt a child (e.g. maltreatment) or affect them through the environment in which they live (e.g. growing up in a house with domestic violence).

## How many adults in Wales have been exposed to each ACE?



### Compared with people with no ACEs, those with 4+ ACEs are:


- 4 times more likely** to be a high-risk drinker
- 6 times more likely** to have had or caused unintended teenage pregnancy
- 6 times more likely** to smoke e-cigarettes or tobacco
- 6 times more likely** to have had sex under the age of 16 years
- 11 times more likely** to have smoked cannabis
- 14 times more likely** to have been a victim of violence over the last 12 months
- 15 times more likely** to have committed violence against another person in the last 12 months
- 16 times more likely** to have used crack cocaine or heroin
- 20 times more likely** to have been incarcerated at any point in their lifetime

Source: Welsh Adverse Childhood Experience study <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/88504>

# What did we find?

The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from the police and partners presents a powerful and comprehensive understanding of the increasing vulnerability-related demand and the implications for the response from public services. This understanding also provides insight into how current systems, process and practice could better meet the needs of individuals and families.

There are **varied levels of understanding** amongst the South Wales Police workforce of **vulnerability, trauma and ACEs**



There is **varied capacity** and **opportunity** across the South Wales Police workforce to effectively **assess** and **respond to vulnerability**

There are **challenges** for police **working across different departments** within the force



Challenges with cross-organisational working



There is an impact of vulnerability demand on police **well-being**



Police desire more **interactive training**



There is a need for a **shared understanding of vulnerability** across services



The public think the **role of the police** is primarily to **respond to crime**



Partners receive a **large number of "inappropriate"** Public Protection Notifications



# What did we find?

## Public Protection Notification (PPN)

The Public Protection Notification (PPN) is an information sharing document used to record safeguarding concerns. These are completed and then risk assessed by the Public Protection Unit (PPU) before being shared with services where appropriate.

### An analysis of PPNs submitted in 2016 indicated ...

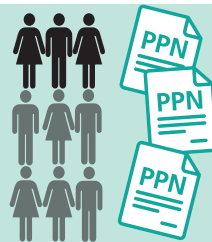


#### Monthly PPN volume increased



**31%** of individuals had more than one PPN submitted in the year

The number of PPNs for an individual ranged from **1–84**



on average the amount of time between repeat PPNs decreased with each incident

#### Nature of concern



**13%** of PPNs had more than one nature of concern recorded

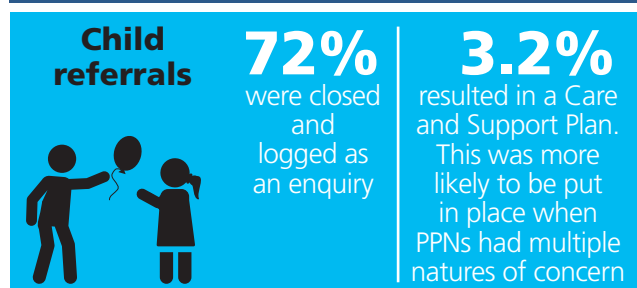
#### Partner referrals<sup>a</sup>



**63%** were referred to a partner agency.  
Repeat PPNs were more likely to be shared



#### Outcome of PPN referrals to a statutory partner agency<sup>b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> A sample of 15,928 PPNs for 9,064 subjects.

<sup>b</sup> A sample of 1,394 PPN referrals to Children's Services and 600 referrals to Adult Social Services.



# What did we find?

## Qualitative research

### Varied levels of understanding amongst the South Wales Police workforce of vulnerability, trauma and ACEs

South Wales Police had a good understanding of vulnerability and were aware that responding to vulnerability is a force priority. Many recognised inter-generational cycles of crime and adversity amongst the individuals with whom they had regular contact. Staff and officers highlighted the importance of early intervention and the need for the police to work alongside other agencies such as education, prisons, and probation services. There was a more limited understanding of the impact of trauma on behaviour and life outcomes, with few having knowledge of ACEs.



*"it's important we deal with them [subjects]... 'cause by dealing with them properly first time... I know this can't always be the case... but by dealing with them properly the first time, you could save another hundred calls that year... they won't be needing to phone us all the time"*



*The Sergeant says to me 'I'm seeing the children of the twenty year olds that I used to deal with and they are going down the same cycle; alcohol, violence, drugs, welfare' and that's something you certainly pick up on (observation notes).*

### Varied capacity and opportunity across the South Wales Police workforce to effectively assess and respond to vulnerability

South Wales Police recognised the importance of working in a prompt and positive way when responding to vulnerability and felt that doing so could reduce repeat incidents. Staff and officers viewed the assessment of risk as a continuous process and indicated the importance of professional judgement, 'gut feeling' and experience when responding to vulnerability.

Staff and officers indicated the ability to assess and respond to vulnerability varied across roles within the force, with response officers having less time to assess and support vulnerable people in comparison to Neighbourhood Policing Teams. As such, Neighbourhood Policing Teams may be better placed to work with vulnerable people.



## Impact of increasing vulnerability demand on the Public Protection Notification process and implications for the South Wales Police workforce and statutory partners

There were variations in the levels of understanding on the purpose, process and potential outcomes of the Public Protection Notification process, with some gaps in knowledge around the role of the Public Protection Units and considerations around consent to share information. Officers involved in the research reported that the Public Protection Notification form was too lengthy, took too long to complete and included some questions which were inappropriate for certain incidents. This at times led to a “bit of a lack of confidence” in asking certain questions, leaving some officers “a bit daunted”.

Analysis of Public Protection Notification data showed that 61,590 Public Protection Notifications were submitted by South Wales Police staff and officers in relation to 57,364 separate occurrences during 2016. The number of PPNs submitted per month increased by 13% from 4,639 in January to 5,249 in December. Officers recognised that a high volume of Public Protection Notifications were being submitted, and were concerned over the back-log waiting to be risk assessed in the Public Protection Unit and the implications of this for risk to individuals. Despite this awareness, many officers said they had submitted Public Protection Notifications that they felt were unnecessary. Officers felt that pressure from supervisors to submit Public Protection Notifications removed their discretion and undermined their professional judgement. Many participants indicated that at times the decision to submit a Public Protection Notification was guided by the fear of criticism, disciplinary action or even losing their job.

Statutory partners from social services teams interviewed had a positive view of the Public Protection Notification process, but indicated that large numbers of Public Protection Notifications received were “inappropriate” for safeguarding or early help. Analysis of the Public Protection Notification and social services data showed that fewer than one in twenty Public Protection Notifications referred to social services resulted in further action. Officers indicated that feedback on Public Protection Notifications would be welcomed to help guide their practice, and statutory partners agreed that providing feedback on action taken as a result of the Public Protection Notification referral may be useful for the police and assist them in their response to vulnerable people.

*“Regardless of how busy response are, that officer will not go home until that PPN is done for the fear of something happening and then coming in the next day and having to answer to why they didn’t put the PPN in.”*



Statutory partners highlighted that Public Protection Notifications are not always received in a timely way and that it was not uncommon for information to be shared with the agency by others, including the individuals concerned, before the Public Protection Notification had been received. Analysis of a sample of Public Protection Notifications shared with a range of partner agencies showed that nearly two-thirds of Public Protection Notifications were not shared within 24 hours of the occurrence being reported. Partners expressed the need for a streamlined system to enable quicker and more direct referrals, including flagging Public Protection Notifications which are high risk.

## Challenges with cross-organisational working

South Wales Police recognised that the role of police has changed in recent years due to the increase in vulnerability demand and understood their statutory duties to respond to vulnerable people. Staff and officers recognised that other agencies are also responsible for responding to vulnerable people and highlighted a number of challenges of working across organisations. Different risk thresholds and limited knowledge of partner agency processes and protocols were identified, and led to staff and officers at times not understanding or agreeing with some of the decisions taken by partner agencies responding to vulnerability. Frustrations around the differences in working hours between the police and other agencies was also indicated. Officers noted that they frequently receive calls from social services on Friday afternoons, and felt that other agencies needed to take responsibility for dealing with risk 24/7.

Information sharing was also highlighted as a challenge, particularly with partners in the health service. Furthermore, Police Officers felt frustration with the increasing pressure to attend incidents that they were not sufficiently trained to deal with. Officers felt that clearer protocols and lines of responsibility around responding to vulnerability needed to be communication between the police and partner agencies.

Staff changes, both within South Wales Police and other agencies, was noted as problematic and detrimental to partnership working.

## Challenges with working across police departments

South Wales Police highlighted frustrations around actions taken by other staff or departments, and there were particular issues between Police Officers and staff at the Public Service Centre in relation to call grading, criming, and agreeing police attendance at incidents. Staff and officers welcomed opportunities to work in other departments as a way of building relationships and developing an understanding of different roles.

Staff and officers reported that new policies and procedures are not effectively disseminated across the force and that an over-reliance on the South Wales Police intranet site to communicate resulted in inconsistent or poor levels of knowledge amongst staff. The figure on Page 9 illustrates the volume and interrelatedness of policies and procedures in place within South Wales Police in relation to vulnerability.

*“For however many number of PPNs that get recorded, there are probably twice as many numbers that don’t get recorded. But the woman next door knows about them or the shop keeper knows about them, somebody knows about them, but they don’t get reported”*





## Desire for more interactive training

Training was highly valued by South Wales Police but many felt that the current programme of training was not appropriate to their role, access to training was not equitable across the force and computer-based training programmes were inadequate. There was a strong desire for more interactive training, dedicated training time, and the ability to influence the training programme. Staff and officers valued expert speakers, both internal and external to South Wales Police.

Many also highlighted the importance of 'on the job' experience in responding to vulnerable people, and value the knowledge of their peers and colleagues.

*"Police Officers are increasingly being pushed into situations dealing with frontline mental health which would be far better dealt with, in the interest of the person in crisis, by people who are appropriately trained, not police officers who have done an NCALT package"*



## Impact of vulnerability demand on South Wales Police well-being

A number of issues in relation to the mental and physical well-being of South Wales Police were identified during the course of the research, despite not being a key objective of the study.

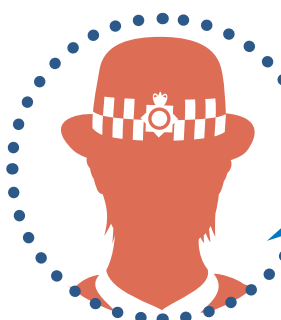
The nature and severity of incidents can have an adverse impact on well-being, often causing significant distress. Additionally, high workloads and lack of resources adversely affected job satisfaction and work-life balance. Some officers reported being concerned about the move towards working single-crewed and felt this increased the risk to their own safety and left them vulnerable to allegations from the public.

Although formal support is available, there was limited knowledge of support services provided by South Wales Police, and in some cases a reluctance to access such services.

*"See under resources affecting people, affecting their family lives ... We are seen as the dog's body job. People get punished by sending them back to response. I can't wait to get out of this job I'm really, really feeling it. The way the jobs gone"*  
*(observation notes).*



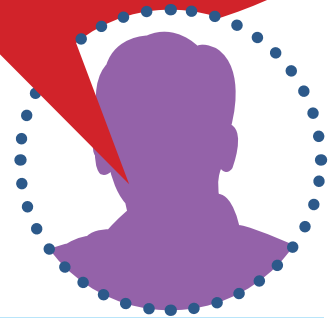
*"Bosses want us to be single-crewed as much as possible and I can see the benefits in this, but that it means that you open yourself up to a lot of complications"*



## The public thought the role of the police was to respond to crime

Focus groups with members of public highlighted that the public feel the role of the police in working with vulnerability was restricted to the investigation of crimes, providing reassurance to victims, and making referrals to other agencies. The public raised concerns about whether the police had the right skills to respond to vulnerability given their traditional role of crime prevention, and identified a number of different agencies who are responsible for vulnerable people. The public also recognised the role of the community in identifying and supporting vulnerable people, but felt that cultural and societal changes made this more difficult.

*"They're [police] involved because they respond to crisis, so they're not necessarily dealing with the root causes as such they are just responding not preventing which is quite difficult for them to shift and change which is required involving from other agencies to make that happen"*



## Need for shared understanding of vulnerability across services

Partners recognised that everyone has a role in responding to vulnerability, including the wider community. Partners identified schools as being particularly well-placed to identify and assess vulnerability early, and highlighted that some professionals who are well placed to identify vulnerability currently do not make referrals. As such, a need for a shared understanding of vulnerability across services was identified. Some participants acknowledged that risk thresholds for intervention did not align across organisations, and that some agencies are more risk averse than others, which can cause tensions between agencies.

Partners did, however, report good relationships with the police and felt they worked well together.

Partners felt that the police generally have a good understanding of vulnerability and provide a high quality response to vulnerable people, despite a more limited understanding of the impact of trauma on individuals.

Police Community Support Officers and staff in the Public Protection Unit were identified as particularly good at identifying vulnerability and efficient at sharing information.

*"You'd be surprised how many officers out there have got no idea what happens to a PPN once they task it to the relevant inbox and what could be achieved, what is the purpose of it"*





# What can we do about it?

Based on the research findings the following five recommendations have been developed in partnership with operational police colleagues, social care and safeguarding professionals. These recommendations have been accepted for trial and test in South Wales Police and will see the project transition to a programme of work across the organisation.

**1 Pilot a structured multi-agency, early intervention approach to vulnerability with Neighbourhood Policing Teams**

**Why?**

- To address the lack of action for most Public Protection Notifications
- To ensure vulnerable people get the help they need when they need it
- To test a new enhanced role for Neighbourhood Policing Teams to work in a collaborative way with the Local Authority and other partners at the earliest point



**2 Pilot a training programme with 'fast' and 'slow time' policing using an 'ACE-Informed Approach to Policing Vulnerability'**

**Why?**

- To ensure police have the right skills to respond to vulnerable people at the earliest point
- To support '999' response and community officers to understand the impact of ACEs and trauma and how they can best assist vulnerable people in times of crisis and need



**3 Work with the police Public Protection Department to develop an ACE informed approach to the existing Public Protection Notification process**

**Why?**

- To address the current situation of too few vulnerable people getting the right help they need after contact with the police (72% of child and 80% of adult referrals logged and closed by Social Services)
- To develop the Public Protection Notification process using an ACE lens
- To enable police to effectively assess vulnerable people and collaborate with partners at the earliest point



**4 To develop with partners a 24/7 ACE-informed approach to responding to vulnerability**

**Why?**

- To address the issue identified in the research of police feeling alone when trying to respond to the needs of vulnerable people 'out of hours'
- To continue to encourage collaborative working with a particular emphasis on 'out of hours' provision
- To provide a consistent service for vulnerable people whatever time of day



**5 Work with Human Resources to assist with the development of the well-being agenda within South Wales Police, specifically focusing on how staff are mentored and supported to deal with vulnerability**

**Why?**

- To explore how best to support South Wales Police employees in their respective roles which involve working with distressed and distressing people, 'intractable' situations and at times very real danger
- To consider the research findings which suggest work demands can have a detrimental effect on a Police Officer's sense of well-being and work/life balance
- To ensure the research findings inform the ongoing work of the police as they consider the well-being of their workforce



# Recommendations for action in South Wales

## 1 Pilot a structured multi-agency, early intervention approach to vulnerability with Neighbourhood Policing Teams



Recommendation One will ensure vulnerable people get the help they need, when they need it. The project team will work alongside operational colleagues to develop and test an enhanced role for Neighbourhood Policing Teams to work in a collaborative way with the Local Authority and other partners at the earliest point. This approach has been developed by understanding the police 'system' for responding to vulnerability and connecting with partners. This has involved South Wales Police and partners working together to see how the 'system' could improve, with them coming together to oversee and develop the pilot.

The initial phase will be piloted in the Maesteg area of Bridgend County Borough Council and will focus on identifying opportunities for early intervention with vulnerable people following a police contact, starting first with children, young people and their carers/parents. The Neighbourhood Policing Teams will look at Public Protection Notifications in their area concerning a child, young person or their parent or carer in need of early intervention. Once identified the team will then liaise with the Local Authority Early Intervention Hub for their area to decide; 'Is this for the police to respond to?', 'Is this for police and partners to respond to together?', or 'Is this for a partner to respond to?' Where it appears that the issues are not being addressed despite agencies being involved, the police and partners will meet to look at how they might work differently.

There are many potential benefits to come out of this pilot such as developing professional judgement when working with vulnerable people, developing closer mutual understanding and working relationships with partner agencies, developing different approaches to working collaboratively with vulnerable people, giving the police a wider skill set to meet the growing demand placed on them to respond to vulnerability. This recommendation will be evaluated by Public Health Wales and learning will be shared nationally.



## 2 Pilot a training programme with 'fast' and 'slow time' policing on 'ACE-Informed Approach to Policing Vulnerability'



The research findings have highlighted the importance for the police to have the right skills to respond to vulnerable people at the earliest point, recognising that just awareness of vulnerability is not enough to generate an effective response. The content of the training is in response to the police saying they needed to have a better understanding of vulnerability and why people sometimes behave in particular ways and how they can respond. The other important message from the police was that they wanted this training delivered by professionals with experience and knowledge of vulnerability.

The 'ACE-Informed Approach to Policing Vulnerability' training programme has been developed and will be delivered by 'ACE co-ordinators' who are social care professionals in consultation with an emotional trauma recovery expert. It will be targeted at '999' response and community neighbourhood officers, with a greater focus on community engagement. This will equip them with a better understanding of the impact of ACEs and trauma on the behaviour of vulnerable people and the basic skills for responding to emotional trauma behaviour.

Follow up support and advice will be provided by the ACE co-ordinators to ensure officers are supported in early action and collaboration with partners.

## 3 Work with the police Public Protection Department to develop an ACE-informed approach to the existing Public Protection Notification process



The evidence that first supported the bid to the Home Office's Police Innovation Fund involved a small-scale analysis of the Public Protection Notification process and indicated that 89% of notifications were logged and closed by Social Services. This research study has broadened and deepened our understanding of this evidence with only 3.2% of Public Protection Notifications concerning a child or young person receiving a care plan and 4.2% adult referrals receiving some kind of input from social services. There is potentially a large group of vulnerable people that are in need of early intervention and support but for whom the outcome is that they are not getting support, or are in repeat police contact (31% had more than one Public Protection Notice submitted in the year).

As well as notifying partners the Public Protection Notification process was designed to help the police to assess and make a decision about threat, risk and harm. The research findings provide evidence to support the development of the Public Protection Notification process to incorporate an ACE-informed assessment. This will better aid decision making for vulnerable people, at an earlier point for both the police and partners. This recommendation will be evaluated by Public Health Wales together with Recommendation One.

#### 4 To develop with partners a 24/7 ACE-informed approach to responding to vulnerability



This recommendation pulls together a range of findings from the research. They are about the police's capacity to respond to vulnerability 'out of hours' and the need to call upon the expertise of partners, as well as working collaboratively with other partners to respond appropriately at a time of need and crisis. The recommendation is also forward thinking in its ambition to build a single consistent point of contact, triage and response for vulnerable people. Therefore this recommendation is a starting point for a number of development activities that will continue beyond the lifetime of the project. One of these activities will be using the research findings to inform the development of the South Wales Police Public Service Centre, where calls from the public are assessed and responded to. Another is to work with partners to build upon the operation of current joint information and decision making arrangements such as Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs) to develop joint response arrangements. The third activity will be for the police to work with partners to develop how early intervention can be achieved 'out of hours' so as to ensure that need and crisis are responded to in a timely and consistent way. This latter activity will form part of Recommendation One pilot through operational development discussions between the police and Bridgend Council, it will also form part of the Public Health Wales evaluation.

#### 5 Work with Human Resources to assist with the development of the well-being agenda within South Wales Police, specifically focusing on how staff are mentored and supported to deal with vulnerability



It is often commented that police, like many other public servants working in challenging situations walk toward the risk whilst most of us would prefer to walk away. So as well as using the research findings to develop how the workforce can be supported in a demanding role, the police also recognise that part of equipping and skilling its workforce to work with vulnerable people, often in uncertain situations, is to develop professional judgement and mentorship. Part of this recommendation will be to look at how supervisors can develop as mentors in using professional judgement when working with vulnerable people. This part of the recommendation will also influence the Recommendation One pilot and will inform further development of the 'ACE-Informed Approach to Policing Vulnerability' training.

# What more could we do?

**In addition to the above recommendations there were a number of areas which fall outside the scope of the project but will provide benefits and ensure further success in addressing vulnerability. They are included here to prompt further thought and discussion and can form part of a broader program of work to transform policing in responding to vulnerability through an ACE lens.**

A whole organisation approach is taken to responding to vulnerability, bringing together the various work streams into one coordinated and corporate approach under the direction of senior leadership.

The research findings echo at a deeper level much of what was identified in the findings of 'Operation Liberty'<sup>3</sup>. The findings also connect with the Protecting Vulnerable People agenda. The evidence from these areas of work all point to a small number of critical but highly significant 'hot topics', for example, responding to individuals in mental health crisis, missing persons and domestic violence and abuse. These areas have a large impact on the demand and resources of South Wales Police and identifies the need for a more proactive strategic approach to working with partner agencies.

Bringing all these elements together under a whole organisation approach would bring significant benefits for integration of activities and interdependencies, avoiding gaps and duplication of resources and energy.

Further work is undertaken to enhance policing vulnerability tactical capacity through bringing in other related (non-police) professional skills, knowledge and experience through recruitment, direct entry and secondment.

This project is evidence of an organisation that recognises changing demand and is pushing the need for change. The challenge for the modern police service is to be able to respond to those who present a danger to others, those who may pose a danger to themselves, those who render others vulnerable and those who have experienced a lifetime of vulnerability. It's a big ask to carry such a wide skill set within a uniformed and disciplined service. Such skill, knowledge and experience require different skill sets that may not readily reside within the 'Police Family', from which South Wales Police has traditionally looked to for recruitment.

To support the existing workforce with meeting modern day demands it is suggested that policing look more widely to those who already have many of the skills to work with vulnerable people via secondment or recruitment, either as practitioners or managers. It may be opportune, given initiatives by the College of Policing to widen both access to, and the skill

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<sup>3</sup> Operation Liberty was launched by South Wales Police on 19th July 2016 to reinforce the message that vulnerability is a priority for South Wales Police and to gain an understanding of the current level of staff awareness regarding this priority area.

base of the police service, to consider where and how these individuals could bring value to South Wales Police. Conversely supporting police staff and officers to experience working in allied sectors through secondment or through shadowing could also bring significant skill and experience to the organisation.

South Wales Police is engaged with many partner organisations often working with a common vulnerable population that makes a disproportionately high demand on services and budgets. The research findings strongly demonstrate the need for a proactive and clear agenda for strategic engagement with partner agencies.

It also found a need to communicate with the public the demands placed on a modern police service and the types of issues they now respond to.

## Seizing opportunities for transformational change

The unique policy and legislative context in Wales means new ideas and approaches are being generated to address issues which, historically, have seemed intractable. The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014 both set down a transformative vision to prevent and intervene early with vulnerability and have created the legislative levers to make this possible.

The ACE evidence quantifies and provides a strong narrative for a shared agenda which can support the ambition of an improved, multi-agency response to vulnerability at the earliest point, therefore breaking generational cycles of ACEs and vulnerability.

This project begins to demonstrate how the ambition of Wales-wide, ACE-informed organisations and society can be translated into actions.

There are also opportunities for the project to influence the direction of ACE-informed policing practice across the UK as South Wales Police will lead on an All-Wales bid to the Police Transformation Fund for Wales to be a pathfinder for a new model of an ACE-informed approach to policing vulnerability and an emphasis on the importance of community policing.



# Glossary

**Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)** ACEs are stressful experiences occurring during childhood that directly hurt a child (e.g. maltreatment) or affect them through the environment in which they live (e.g. growing up in a house with domestic violence).

**Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC)** A governing body of Bridgend County Borough responsible for providing local services such as education, social care and transport.

**Basic Command Unit (BCU)** The structure of a police force area is broken up geographically into smaller operational areas. South Wales Police has four BCUs: Central, Eastern, Northern and Western.

**Child Abuse Investigation Units (CAIU)** Child abuse investigation teams based in Public Protection Units

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** Sexual exploitation of children and young people under the age of 18 years. This can include exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person receives something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts or money) as a result of them performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual acts.

**Domestic Abuse Stalking Honour-Based Violence (DASH)** A tool used by practitioners working with adult victims of domestic abuse to identify those at high risk of harm.

**Domestic violence/abuse (DVA)** A category of nature of concern used on PPNs. This is defined by the Home Office (2013) as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 years or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** Procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

**Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)** Locally held meeting attended by local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, independent domestic violence advisors, probation, and other statutory and voluntary specialists, to share relevant information regarding high risk domestic abuse cases. The conference facilitates a co-ordinated action plan with the primary focus of safeguarding.

**Missing Person (MISPER)** A missing person. An individual is considered missing until their location is identified and their well-being is confirmed.

**National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT)** Established to assist the 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales and the wider policing community in adopting alternative learning methodologies.

**Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT)** A local approach to policing consisting of Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), Special Constables, police staff and volunteers.

**Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)** Uniformed staff that support Police Officers and work to reassure the public, provide crime prevention advice and assist with enquiries.

**Public Health Wales (PHW)** An NHS trust that aims to protect and improve the health and well-being of people in Wales. They provide expertise to the Welsh Government, Health Boards, local authorities and other agencies.

**Public Protection Notification (PPN)** An information sharing document in which Police Officers and staff record safeguarding concerns.

**Public Protection Department/Unit (PPD/PPU)** A police unit which provides governance and oversees safeguarding issues. Its duties include strategic development of child protection (including child sexual exploitation), domestic abuse, vulnerable adults, missing persons, rape and serious sexual offenses. All PPNs submitted by Police Officers and staff are risk-assessed in a PPU.

**Public Service Centre (PSC)** A policing department which answer and respond to all 999 emergency and 101 non-emergency calls.

**South Wales Police (SWP)** The largest of four territorial police forces in Wales.

**Vulnerable Adult 1 (VA1)** Standardised inter-agency adult protection referral form.







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