



West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire

Reducing Vulnerability Strategy

Policing and Crime Team



Mayor's Foreword

As one of only two metro mayors with the responsibilities of a Police and Crime Commissioner, I see a once in a generation opportunity to bring together partners and powers to create a public health approach to policing and crime in West Yorkshire.

I'm proud that West Yorkshire Police is one of the best performing police forces in the country, but we can't be complacent. People in West Yorkshire want to be safe, feel safe, have trust in their police, and know action will be taken if ever they or their loved ones are harmed.

During my election campaign, in deciding priorities, I laid out ten manifesto commitments to the public, a number of which related to policing and crime: keeping women and girls safe; increasing police officer and police staff numbers; putting victims first; and ensuring our police force represents the community it serves.

But I also needed to know what the public thought, so with colleagues and my brilliant Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, Alison Lowe OBE, we set about one of the widest consultations ever undertaken in West Yorkshire. We met with and spoke to older people, young people, sex workers, police, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, Gypsy and Traveller people, families, community workers, and representatives from business, transport, health, and education sectors, and we heard what needs to be done.

Safeguarding vulnerable people is central to the work we, the police, and our community safety partners do. It is said that safeguarding is everyone's business, and we all have a responsibility to put those who are most at risk at the heart of the services we provide. I will continue to put all victims of crime at the centre of my work, especially those who are vulnerable.

Whilst our Police and Crime Plan goes some way to setting our direction of travel, we must be agile, flexible, and responsive to the current and changing government landscape. As a Mayoral Combined Authority, we can now benefit from devolved powers, which help give our region the freedom to decide how best to meet local needs and create new opportunities.

My office is committed to delivering for West Yorkshire, and I hope this strategy shows our plan for reducing vulnerability across our communities.

Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire





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Hosting a major **partnership event on transitional safeguarding**, and building partner collaboration throughout the year to deliver impactful safeguarding campaigns.



The **Mayor's Safer Communities Fund** goes from strength to strength and is impacting our communities with much needed support and services.



The **Safety of Women and Girls** has continued to be at the centre of the Police and Crime Plan with the publication of the Safety of Women and Girls Strategy along with other initiatives.



The **Commissioning Strategy 2022-24** was launched in Autumn 2022 and has been well received and speaks to the amazing provision for community-based services.



A domestic servitude video, created in partnership, **won the Best Animation** at the Royal Television Society Yorkshire Programme Awards in October 2022.



Supporting West Yorkshire Police's step forward in tackling abusive culture by recognising incidents of misogyny and misandry.



Why is this a priority?

- Public consultation tells us that residents want us to focus on crime that causes the most harm and impact, such as child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) and adult sex offences.
- Reflecting public concern, the Needs Assessment also tells us that CSEA/child criminal exploitation (CCE) and modern slavery/human trafficking are a threat that must be challenged.
- Public consultation has told us that residents understand that addressing poor mental health and child vulnerability can help reduce crime. We want to work with all partners to bring about a generational change in stopping people from falling into crime.
- The Needs Assessment has told us that drugs and alcohol misuse is a driver behind many types of crime. By focusing on supporting people away from offending behaviour, we will reduce the number of people who will become victims of crime.

The following links provide further detail on the consultation and engagement that has taken place to inform this strategy:

[The Voice of West Yorkshire](#)

[Summary Needs Assessment](#)

[National crime and policing outcomes and measures](#)



Scrutiny and Oversight

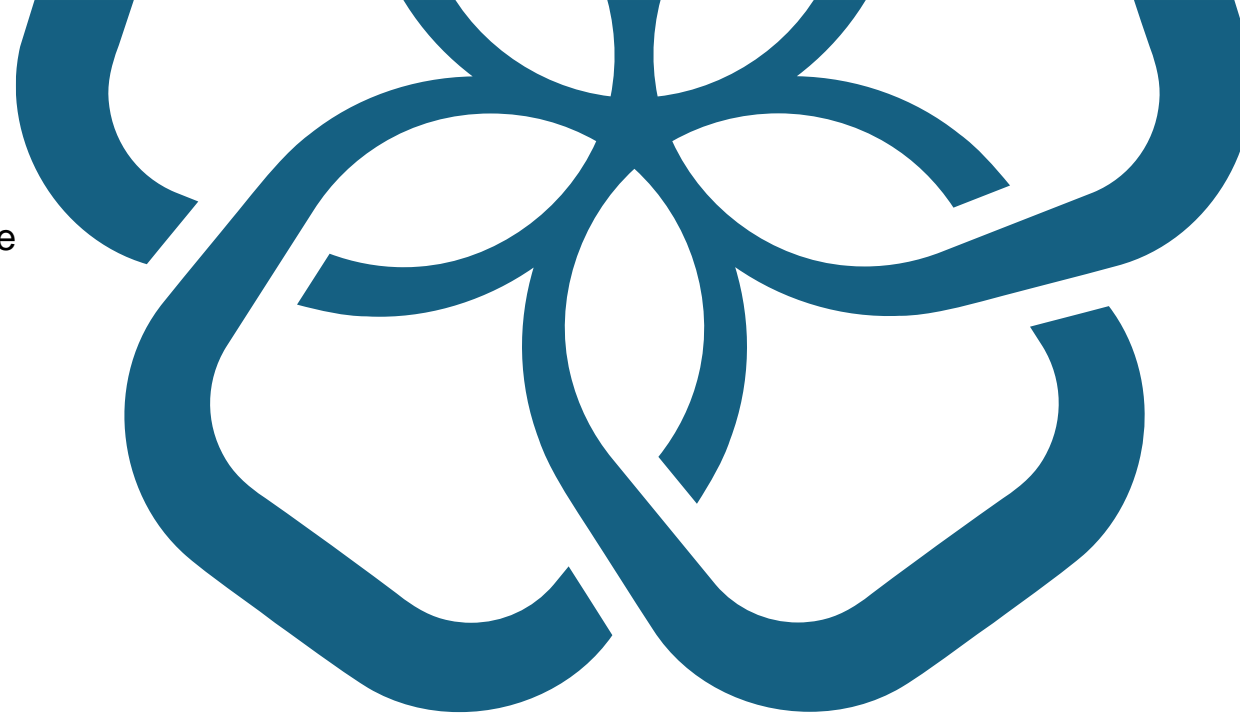
The Mayor receives reports and statistical information from the police on their performance against the metrics contained within the Police and Crime Plan and holds the police to account for delivery of her pledges and her vision for West Yorkshire to be a safe, just and inclusive place to be for all.

The delivery and impact of this strategy will be monitored through the relevant metrics of the [Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024](#) performance framework (pages 40-43), [Community Outcomes Meetings](#), and the [Police and Crime Panel](#). In addition, the existing structures of West Yorkshire's community safety governance and partner coordination will be utilised.

The Mayoral Combined Authority maintains strategic oversight through boards and groups such as the Criminal Justice and Mental Health Forum, the West Yorkshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board and the West Yorkshire Combatting Drugs Partnership.

We work with the police, partner agencies, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations, and victims and survivors to ensure we deliver for those who are most vulnerable, putting them at the heart of our response. We will continue to lobby government for change, ensuring the Mayor's voice is heard at a national level.

This strategy outlines how we work in partnership with stakeholders in West Yorkshire, as well as at a regional, national, and international level. We deliver change with voluntary, community and social enterprises, the private sector, and local communities to improve the lives of all people across our region.



Working in partnership

Our work is not limited to this strategy. We will continue to build and deliver with partners and colleagues across the Mayoral Combined Authority to ensure we are able to reduce vulnerability in our communities.

When we say communities, we mean groups of people with shared interests. This might be due to a shared location, a shared faith, a shared ethnicity or cultural heritage, a shared characteristic (such as LGBTQIA+ communities), or a shared disability. It may also include people across the region who are united by an interest in the same activity. We also recognise that these communities contain a diverse range of views, which cannot be represented by a single spokesperson.

Our Mayor, with Police and Crime Commissioner powers, is in a privileged position to influence not just the police service, but other services and businesses that can help to keep West Yorkshire safe, just and inclusive. This includes her responsibilities in transport, adult skills, housing, and culture, and working closely with the business community to ensure change happens. We know that we can only achieve success working together. Our success is dependent on all parts of the region thriving, contributing, and being championed and celebrated.

One of the responsibilities of the Mayor is to commission quality, inclusive services that meet the needs of our diverse communities. This will be done using the Commissioning Strategy:

[Policing and Crime Commissioning Strategy 2022-2024 \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk)



A diagram of the relationships between stakeholders involved in the Police and Crime Plan.

Introduction

Safeguarding and protecting those who are most vulnerable is a key theme running throughout the Police and Crime Plan.

A person is vulnerable if, as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care or protect themselves, or others, from harm, exploitation, or other adverse impacts on their quality of life.

A person's vulnerability can take many forms, and can be linked to their mental health, substance misuse, age, or disability. This means that each individual must be supported in a way which recognises their personal circumstances.

Safeguarding vulnerable people is central to the work of the police and local community safety partners and it is because vulnerability can take many forms that the response requires different agencies to work closely together to protect people from harm.

Our focus remains keeping people safe from (and preventing) harmful behaviour, exploitation, and abuse, and through this strategy we call on all agencies to continue their work to safeguard people through enhanced coordination and communication.

Themes

**Child Sexual
Exploitation and
Abuse and
Neglect**

**Transitional
Safeguarding
and Child Criminal
Exploitation**

Adults at Risk

Cross-Cutting Themes

**Amplifying the
voices that should
be heard**

**Making
safeguarding
everyone's
responsibility**

**Adversity, trauma,
and resilience**



Plan on a Page

Themes

**Child Sexual
Exploitation,
Abuse, and
Neglect**

**Transitional
Safeguarding and
Child Criminal
Exploitation**

Adults at Risk

Outcomes

We will work to empower people to access support services and build resilience in communities so individuals can protect themselves and others. We will help people to understand the signs of abuse or neglect to protect victims from harm.

We will continue to promote early intervention strategies to identify and support individuals at risk, and help to increase their resilience, and that of their families and the wider community.

We will work with policing and community safety partners to increase awareness of safeguarding, and support a collaborative approach to reduce vulnerability, exploitation, and harm.

Cross-Cutting Themes

**Amplifying the
Voices that
Should be Heard**

**Making
Safeguarding
Everyone's
Responsibility**

**Adversity,
Trauma and
Resilience**

Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse (CSEA) and Neglect

- CSEA was recorded as a priority by 79% of respondents to the Police and Crime Plan consultation, making it the main priority for West Yorkshire residents.
- Roughly half of our respondents felt that addressing childhood vulnerability should be a key areas of focus.
- Reflecting public concern, the Needs Assessment also tells us that CSEA/CCE is threat that must be challenged.
- Work on CSEA will be informed by the findings of recent important national inquiries, for example the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.
- Public Protection Notices (PPNs) recording safeguarding concerns are shared with partners to inform a multi-agency response.

Delivery Actions:

- Improve awareness of safeguarding, and the importance of early intervention with individuals at risk, across the system, e.g. exploitation through CSEA.
- Ensure victims of these crimes are accessing support services.
- Encourage partners to work holistically across organisational boundaries to support vulnerable people.
- Develop innovative approaches to working across community safety and wider partners to protect the most vulnerable in our society.

Key links:

- [Community Outcomes Meetings - West Yorkshire Combined Authority](#)
- [Mayor's Safer Communities Fund - West Yorkshire Combined Authority](#)
- [West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan FAQs - West Yorkshire Combined Authority](#)

Transitional Safeguarding and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- Safeguarding and supporting young adults who are at risk of sexual or criminal abuse or exploitation as they transition into adulthood (transitional safeguarding).
- Focus in this area will allow us to better understand the challenges faced by young people who may have experienced trauma or abuse, and design services appropriate to their needs.
- In 2020, government guidance noted that the criminal exploitation of children is a harm about which relatively little is known. By focusing on this topic, we will bring a spotlight to the abuse of vulnerable persons, and its potential links to serious violence and organised crime in our neighbourhoods.

Delivery Actions:

- Work holistically across organisation boundaries to support vulnerable people.
- Empower people at risk of harm to reach their full potential.
- Deliver innovative approaches to supporting vulnerable people across all age groups and communities through providing access to support and opportunities.
- Reduce trauma and build resilience for communities across West Yorkshire.
- Reduce exploitation of vulnerable people by disrupting drugs supply and County Lines activity.

Key links:

- [Community Outcomes Meetings - West Yorkshire Combined Authority](#)
- [Mayor's Safer Communities Fund - West Yorkshire Combined Authority](#)
- [West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan FAQs - West Yorkshire Combined Authority](#)

Adults at Risk

Adults considered 'vulnerable' or 'at risk' are those who are at an increased risk of abuse or neglect if they are unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation. Partnership priorities include:

- Supporting services which help the victims of domestic or sexual abuse, or which help rehabilitate perpetrators.
- Providing the right care and support to people with mental health needs who are in contact with criminal justice services.
- Protecting those most vulnerable to cyber-crime; including fraud, online abuse, and exploitation.
- Addressing the vulnerabilities of people who go missing – working to understand, and help reduce, repeat missing person incidents.
- This priority links with other Police and Crime Plan priorities on domestic abuse and sexual offences, and particularly our Safety of Women and Girls Strategy, which also considers the needs of men and boys.

Delivery Actions:

- Fund specialist victim support services, such as a Stalking Advocacy Service and Independent Domestic Violence Advisers.
- Support the WY Criminal Justice and Mental Health Forum, where policing and health partners ensure that the *Right Care Right Person* initiative provides improved outcomes.
- Ensure that referral pathways exist to deal with individuals' unidentified or complex needs.
- Work with partners in the development of support for the victims of modern slavery.
- Work with partners to apply the 'Harm to Hope' strategy, which brings a holistic approach to the criminal, social, and personal impacts of substance misuse.

Key links:

- [Policing Strategy 2020 - 2025 | West Yorkshire Police](#)
- [Safety of Women and Girls Strategy - West Yorkshire Combined Authority \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Safety of Men and Boys Scoping Report](#)



Cross-Cutting Themes

Cross-Cutting Themes



Overview

Because of their situation and personal circumstances, some people can find themselves more vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, or neglect. We must ensure the voices of all victims (or those vulnerable to harm) are heard clearly – both in seeking support, but also in the design of appropriate and effective support services.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion is evaluated and embedded within all workstreams across the Mayoral Combined Authority, as well in the themes we set out to deliver within this strategy.

All agencies, partners, and individuals, have a role to play in ensuring that everyone in our communities can live their lives free from harm or abuse, and be able to make decisions about their lives without limits.

We are vigilant to recognise the signs of abuses which can naturally be hidden 'behind closed doors', or in online or virtual spaces. Furthermore, we must continue to raise general awareness of safeguarding issues to help get support to those in need at the earliest opportunity.

Personal experience of adversity or trauma can have a devastating impact on individuals, and those effects can create vulnerability which can go on to undermine a person's wellbeing, or even limit their life chances.

We recognise the long-term impacts that exploitation, abuse, and neglect can cause. Our challenge is to help support people to build their personal (and their community's) resilience to vulnerability and empower people to achieve their full potential.

Help and Support

We understand that the issues raised in this strategy may be sensitive or upsetting. If you, or someone you know, have been affected by any of the issues raised in this strategy, you may wish to contact the following organisations for advice and support.

Organisation	Advice or support available	Contact details	Website
Rape Crisis	Rape Crisis Centres provide independent and confidential services for women and girls of all ages who have experienced any form of sexual violence, at any time in their lives. You can find your nearest branch and use their live chat helpline at their website.	Call: 0808 802 9999	rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help
Victim Support (National)	Victim Support provides advice and guidance to people who have experienced a crime or traumatic incident.	Call: 08 08 16 89 111 or live chat at their website victimsupport.org.uk	victimsupport.org.uk
Victim Support (West Yorkshire)	Victim Support provides advice and guidance to people who have experienced a crime or traumatic incident.	Call: 0300 303 1971	victimsupport.org.uk/west-yorkshire
Childline	Childline provides support for anyone aged 18 or under offering a free, private and confidential service where children and young people can talk about anything. You can call them 24/7 or contact them online.	Call: 0800 111	childline.org.uk/get-support
Samaritans	Support and guidance for anyone experiencing emotional distress.	Call: 116 123 24 hours a day, every day. Email jo@samaritans.org	samaritans.org
Mind	For information, advice, and support for anyone experiencing a mental health problem.	Call: 0300 123 3393	mind.org.uk
Crimestoppers	An independent charity allowing you to give information about crime anonymously over the phone or online.	Call: 0800 555 111	crimestoppers-uk.org



In an emergency, always dial 999

If you have any reason to believe that a child or adult is at immediate risk of harm, **always** contact the police on **999**.

You can also report things like Anti-Social Behaviour and Criminal Damage online to the police at westyorkshire.police.uk/report-it

For a **non-emergency** incident dial **101**.



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Thank you

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