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Critically evaluate police strategies for dealing with public protection incidents considering the impact of abuse on victims, the impact personal attitudes and values on the investigative process and the association between Serious and Organised Crime groups and public protection issues. (40)

This dialogue will firstly consider what a public protection incident is. This piece of writing will then critically evaluate policing strategies whilst dealing with public protection incidents. It will consider the impact of abuse on victims, personal attitudes and values on the investigative process. This piece of writing will mainly focus on different forms of child abuse. Cases will be explored whilst looking at the impact of abuse on victims, including how the police have failed victims of crime due to personal attitudes. It will also consider the association between Serious and Organised Crime groups and Public Protection Issues. It will then look at the importance of improving the strategies.

The Criminal Justice Systems main priority is to protect the public and keep them safe. A public protection incident is an incident whereby a vulnerable person has been a victim of a crime. According to Gurnsey Police Force, The Public Protection Unit is a specialist department which is responsible for the management and investigation process of serious crimes which include the following; child or adult abuse, domestic abuse, vulnerable and intimidated witnesses, and dangerous offenders. The Public Protection Unit deal with the most vulnerable people in society such as children who have been sexually exploited. Each police force has a Public Protection Unit with specially trained officers.

Under S.11 of the Children's Act 2001, the police have a duty to safeguard children. In Gwent police force, since 2019 a Safeguarding Social worker role has been positioned within the force to offer advice, guidance and information to police officers dealing with children in order to ensure they are safeguarded. According to Gwent Police Outturn Report (2020), between November 2019 and March 2020, this social worker position was used in a total of incident logs reported to police.

The police also have a power under S.46 of the Children's Act 1989 to remove a child from the family home which is not deemed to be safe for them. This is in place to safeguard and protect the child, this is a power used in emergency situations. This policing strategy is a useful tool to use in order to prevent further harm to the child, however over the years it has been known that police forces have failed to identify when this should have been used.

Cases such as Baby P (2007) of the death of a 17-month-old young boy due to the torture he received from his mother and her boyfriend, highlight that police have failed to safeguard children over the years. In this case the police had failed to safeguard the child, they had failed to fully investigate his bruises, and did not carry out thorough background checks of the male residing at the address.

There are several different police strategies in place when dealing with public protection incidents which police forces must use. It is vital that police officers deal with public

protection issues in a way that vulnerable people are safeguarded and that the investigation process is dealt with appropriately. Many public protection incidents meet the criteria for the Achieve Best Evidence interviews in order to get as much information as possible, this is often known as 'ABE'. An ABE interview is considered when a person who is either a victim of crime or a witness is vulnerable, and is unable to provide a statement, therefore they would go through the ABE process. The main purpose of an interview is to obtain an accurate, detailed and truthful account of what has happened during the incident of which they have reported to the police. When dealing with someone who is vulnerable, the attending police officer would firstly complete a Witness Interview Planning Booklet with the vulnerable person, this includes five questions of a simple nature in order to get some basic information. This booklet is often referred to as a WIB. A WIB will also identify the vulnerability and needs of the individual. Once the WIB booklet is complete, it will be handed over to a specially trained officer who will assess the individual and will then complete the interview, the interview will consist of two police officers.

There are several positives to using the ABE process. This evidence acts as the prosecution and defence statement, meaning that it is less likely that the individual will be asked any questions in court, or if they do then there won't be as many. This takes a lot of pressure off the individual as often many people do not like the pressure of appearing in a court room.

This process allows the police officer to make a rapport with the individual, as well as building trust and confidence in the police force. The questions asked are tailored to the individual, for example the interviewee will ask simple questions and use words that the person will understand. The interviewee will also ask open ended questions, meaning that the individual is more likely to provide more information about the incident. Koenhken, Milne, Memom & Bull (1999) found that cognitive interviews gathered up to 40% more information than the standard interviewing procedure.

Another positive of using the ABE method is that it isn't as long of a procedure for the victim compared to a written statement, as time is reduced due to the information being recorded. When a written statement is completed with a victim, there is no record of what questions were asked to the victim, whereas a positive of using the ABE method is that there is a record of what questions were asked in order to obtain the answers. A transcript of the interview is subsequently produced at the end. This also allows the victim to feel like they are being acknowledged more because the interviewee is not writing notes, meaning they feel like they are getting the officers full attention. This will also allow the officer to guide the victim back to the incident in order to gather more information.

Another positive is that the interview process will only be conducted by police officers which have undergone the appropriate training over a three-week period.

Another benefit of this strategy is that it visually captures emotions of the individual involved, allowing the court room to see the full victim impact this has had upon the person.

During the interview process, a trained communication aid can be used in order to facilitate communication, for example a very young child with learning disability can use a toy or visual aid to assist them to communicate with the interviewee.

There are also several negatives of using this policing strategy, one of which is the expense of the training of police officers. The training is conducted over a three-week period, due to the expense and the time which is taken from the officer to their shift which means that not

many officers undergo the training due to money and lack of resources available. There is also a lack of continued training given to the police officers, meaning that some officers may not stay on top of case law. Clarke and Milne (2001) found that the interviews with witnesses and victims were of a poor standard even though the police officers had training to conduct them.

Due to the lack of police officers which have been trained to conduct ABE interviews, there is also a risk of delay during the investigation to get the interview completed. This could then impact on the case, for example if there is a period of a three-month waiting list for the interview then this could affect the individual's memory, meaning that the information they provide may not be as reliable and truthful.

The police officers involved will also be abstracted for considerable time periods, a typical ABE interview can take an officer several hours to complete, including the interview write up. This then means that the police officers involved may have to put their case workload to one side in order to assist their colleague with their investigation. This means it is difficult for the involved officers to manage their own workload.

Another negative of the ABE process is that some people are not confident on camera so do not like speaking to police officers if they know they are being recorded as they feel they are under too much pressure.

Another policing strategy used when dealing with public protection incidents is ensuring that dangerous offenders are managed in order to protect the public and keep them safe. Every dangerous offender is managed by MAPPA which stands for The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements which is set in place to supervise them. According to the HM Prison & Probation Service (2019), The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) which has been set out in the Criminal Justice Act 2003, is designed to protect the public from serious harm by violent or sexual offenders. This agency was designed to manage violent or sexual offenders, this is done by assessing each offender in order to identify the level of risk of which they pose to members of the public. A risk assessment plan is then set out for each offender in order to manage them and reduce the level of risk. According to statistics from Home Office (2006), approximately 13.000 high risk offenders are managed by MAPPA, 1500 of which are deemed as very high risk.

There are three levels of MAPPA; Level 1 is the Ordinary Management, which is the supervision from the agency which is in charge of managing them. Level 2; is the Active Multi Agency Management, which is the management risk plan set in place from the agencies which takes place during the regular MAPP meetings. Level 3; is the Active Multi Agency Management which is similar to level 2 but includes involvement of a senior officer to authorise special resources to the individual to oversee them.

Offenders are managed through MAPPA from three categories, Category one is for Registered Sex offenders, Category 2 is for Violent offenders which have been sentenced to imprisonment for 12 months or more or detained under hospital orders. Category 3 is for other dangerous offenders who do not qualify under the categories 1 or 2 but pose a risk of series harm and require multi agency management. Management of Sexual or Violent Offenders team within Gwent Police Force are responsible for the management of these individuals.

There are several benefits of having these dangerous individuals managed and risk assessed

regularly by MAPPA. A positive of using MAPPA is that the individual is constantly being monitored and risk assessed. According to Criminal Justice Joint Inspection (2011), it highlighted that 83% the threat to victims had been managed effectively.

Another positive of using the MAPPA policing strategy, is that it gives police officers a power of arrest for those who fail to stick to their conditions or requirements.

This strategy also allows police officers to inform neighbours or new partners of the high-risk offender when it is deemed appropriate to do so, therefore this prevents the level of risk that the individual poses at.

Another benefit of MAPPA is that victims are provided with information regarding the offender's circumstances, which allows them to be better safeguarded, this will include their licence conditions. This communication is done by the Victim Liaison Officer within MAPPA. A victim can also request for an up to date photo of the offender.

Although there are many benefits to using this policing strategy, there are also negatives. One of which is that the risk of harm can never be fully eliminated, whether this be to the offender themselves or a member of the public. There will come a time when some offenders commit a Serious Further Offence (SFO) as not everybody can be effectively managed. According to Ministry of Justice (2019), the number of offenders committing further offences since 2010/2011 has increased, highlighting that not all of them are affectively managed. This report has stated that they believe this is due to the population of offenders managed under MAPPA is increasing, this also highlights the lack of resourcing officers available to manage these individuals. This report also highlighted that 179 people were charged with committing an SFO in 2018/2019 in England and Wales.

Another strategy implemented by police officers when dealing with public protection incidents is to submit a Public Protection Notification Referral, often referred to as a ''PPN''. A PPN allows police officers to make referrals for vulnerable people to partner agencies in order to safeguard them and put in place the appropriate level of support. This tool is a force policy when dealing with Children or Adult at risk or any Domestic related incident. A PPN must also be submitted if a young person goes missing.

There are several benefits of Public Protection Notification Referrals. The police have a duty to inform the appropriate local authorities of children of whom they come into contact with. This is beneficial as it allows information to be shared between local authorities, allowing everyone to be kept in the loop of the welfare of the child. This process allows referrals to be put in place, so support is offered. It also allows other agencies to be made aware of those that police come into contact with and have concerns for, for example informing a child's school or GP.

Gwent Police force have ensured that all police officers have undergone training in order to be able to submit a PPN, including what is important. Gwent Police have ensured that training is a priority in order to improve the quality of the referrals made, meaning that all new students have had this embedded into their training period. According to Gwent Police Outturn Report (2020), there has been a 50% reduction in PPN's submitted with an outcome of No further action, meaning that families have received support that would not have done so before the improved quality of training given to police officers.

It has also been identified that Public Protection Notification Referrals are not that beneficial. According to Knowsley JSNA Report 2015, 8% of children involved in serious

organised crime groups and county lines have had a referral to social care which was subjected to no further action. This highlights the importance of follow up requirements as this could have been prevented if the young person being a member of a gang had been identified at an early stage from the referral made from the attending police officers. This also allows us to identify that these types of referrals are not always beneficial if there is a no further action outcome available, as this clearly did not benefit the young individual.

Another negative of a PPN strategy is that if a police officer attends a domestic related incident whereby the child isn't present, they may not consider them as at risk, therefore the appropriate agencies and social services may not be made aware of the incident. These referrals are often time consuming when the officers submit the referrals for children who they do not deem as at risk. The questions asked on the referrals are also generic and basic and rely on the officer's observations to provide the most information.

Another strategy which is used by the police force to deal with vulnerable people is by having a Strategy meeting. A Strategy Discussion or Strategy Meeting takes place when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer from some form of significant harm. The Strategy meeting will identify the level of risk and the appropriate method of safeguarding which needs to be put in place in order to protect that young person from coming to harm. In order to do this, a multi-agency meeting will take place in order to discuss what form of safeguarding and support is available for the young person. The agencies included are; Police, Health, Social Care and any other appropriate agencies. Any information gathered during this meeting should be recorded by the chair of the strategy meeting/discussion.

The main focus of this meeting is that it is child centred. A positive of using a Strategy meeting is that the meeting takes place when the parent/guardian is not present, therefore this allows the child to be more honest and talk more freely. A strategy meeting can take place without the parent/guardian knowing if it poses a risk to the child.

Another benefit of a strategy meeting is that it allows information to be shared between different agencies. This meeting also allows the agencies to establish the level of risk the child is at, in order to safeguard them and prevent further harm.

Although there are several benefits to strategy meetings, it is clear that over the years this has not always been the case. Due to lack of resources there is often a delay until this meeting takes place. The case of Baby P (2007) highlights that there was a delay of a strategy meeting to discuss the young child's safety and if he should be taken into care, this resulted in his death as due to the delay he was kept in his mother's care and was then murdered by her and her partner. If this meeting had taken place sooner, then his death could have been prevented. It has been clearly highlighted that there needs to be an improvement on policing strategies when dealing with Public Protection issues.

The United Nations Human Rights (2021) defines a victim as someone who has suffered physical or emotional harm, property damage or economic loss as a result of a crime.

Everyone can be affected by crime and abuse, whether they are the direct victim, or if it has happened to someone close to them such as a friend or family member. There are also several different ways that abuse can affect victims. According to GOV.UK (2021), in the year ending of March 2020, 13% of people aged 16 years or overstated they had been a victim of crime at least once in the past year.

National Institute of Mental Health (2006) states that ''a victim's ability to cope with the

impact of crime depends on a variety of factors''. It is important that the police manage victims and put in place the appropriate level of support and safeguarding.

Victims of crime/abuse can be impacted physically, mentally and emotionally. The impacts of abuse can affect victims physically and emotionally by making them feel angry, helpless, shameful/guilty, depressed and can often make them feel anxious. Abuse can also affect a person financially as this may result in a person having to give up their job so they are then suffering from a loss of wages, as well as any medical bills that may be required after the incident.

Victims of crime can be affected both short term and long term. Often victims of crime are not impacted straight away after the incident has taken place, studies show that it is more common for people to be affected in the long term. Kilpatrick (2000) states that short term affects of abuse will occur during or immediately after the incident and can last for three months. Some affects of crime upon a victim can be lack of sleep, anger, depression, guilt and trauma.

When looking at theories such as the Trauma Bonding theory by Dutton & Painter (1981), it highlights the connection between the victim and the abuser. This often occurs due to the attachment that the victim has created with the abuser. This highlights the impact abuse can have upon a victim and that it can be a lasting affect upon their life.

According to Gwent Police Outturn Report 2020, 76% of victims were satisfied with the action taken by police.

The main focus of a police officer is to protect the public. It is vital that police officers maintain professional at all times and do not let their opinions have a negative impact upon an individual or the investigation. It is also important that victims feel satisfied with the service they have received. Over the years it has been highlighted that police officer's personal attitudes and values have had an impact upon the investigation process. The Stephen Lawrence case 1993 highlighted institutional racism and that the police officers involved failed to identify him as a victim, it was clear that their attitudes and values affected the outcome of Stephen's life and the investigation.

The Code of Ethics sets out the ten policing principles to ensure that police officers act with integrity and are professional at all times.

When looking at impacts that abuse can affect victims, it is important to consider famous cases of whereby the police have failed to help victims and that the strategies police have in place to safeguard vulnerable people just aren't enough. Cases such as the Fiona Pilkington (2007) highlights the importance of safeguarding and dealing with victims affectively. Fiona Pilkington killed both herself and her disabled daughter Francecca Hardwick in 2007 after they were both tormented for ten years by local people within the community. This famous case resulted in an investigation being carried out by Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) in 2011, this highlighted the failure by the police officers dealing with Fiona Pilkington as they failed to identify the vulnerable family and the pain they were suffering due to the youths in the community of which they resided in. The publication also identified that the police failed to put in place any form of support to the family. The ten years of trauma and failure from police not taking their complaints seriously, resulted in Fiona ending her life and her daughters due to the significant impact this was having upon them. This highlights the importance of identifying and safeguarding vulnerable people and

ensuring that there is a level of support put in place for them to prevent anything like this happening again in the future. Myhill and Bradford (2012) identified that the victim's satisfaction is more important than the criminal justice outcomes. This highlights the importance of how victims are treated by police officers, and the importance of how they interact with them and the positive impact it can have upon a victim of crime.

David Askew (2010) is another famous case of where an IPCC investigation was took place after his death and involvement with the police force. David Askew who had learning difficulties, had collapsed and died after an incident whereby he had been repeatedly reporting that a group of youths were causing a nuisance at his home. The review showed that Greater Manchester Police force had been in contact with David Askew and his family members for several years before his death in relation to complaints he had made of Anti-Social Behaviour. Although the investigation showed that the police officers that had dealt with David Askew had not breached the standards of Professional Behaviour, it did come up with recommendations, one of which was the failure to recognise and respond to hate crime incidents and identifying vulnerability factors. As a result of this recommendation, Greater Manchester Police made hate crime as their priority and ensured their officers were trained to deal with any hate crime incidents. It also identified that there was a lack of communication between the response officers and the neighbourhood policing officers, meaning that when the response officers dealt with some of the calls made from David, they did not have a good understanding of the background of what was going on. This highlights that when cases are not dealt with properly, there is going to be a lack of confidence in the police force and their ability to deal with vulnerable people.

There is a very close link between Serious and Organised Crime Groups and Public Protection issues, many vulnerable young people often find themselves involved in gangs and violent crime, this is because the gang members exploit them and take advantage of their vulnerabilities. These young vulnerable children are put at significant risk due to their vulnerabilities. According to Knowsley JSNA Report 2015, 26% of children involved in serious organised crime groups have been on a child protection plan, and 36% have been considered to be a child in need of support and safeguarding.

Gwent Police Outturn Report (2020) has stated that in April 2020, there were 31 Organised crime groups in Gwent, with 252 nominal offenders. Gwent Police have come up with a four-point strategy in dealing with Serious and Organised Crime groups in order to protect the public. The strategy is to; Pursue, Prevent, Protect, and Prepare.

According to GOV.UK (2020), white British children are targeted due to the gangs perceiving that police officers are less likely to detect/stop search them whilst they had drugs on their person compared to a person of any ethnicity or nationality.

Operation Quartz has been implemented force wide in order to tackle protecting people who are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation. This operation was created in April 2015. Children who are at risk of Criminal Exploitation are referred to the Operation Quartz team. According to Gwent Police Outturn Report (2020), majority of the victims of child sexual exploitation are between the ages of twelve and seventeen and are mostly female.

This operation allows the police forces to actively target Organised Crime groups which are using vulnerable children to participate in criminal or sexual exploitation, this allows them to

intervene, prevent and disrupt the exploitation. This will also allow the police officers to identify what vulnerabilities are being take advantage of upon. All of these children are managed, and they are regularly reviewed under a multi-agency meeting. A positive of the children being managed is that the level of risk can always be monitored and if the level of risk increases then the appropriate people are made aware of it.

Another benefit of Operation Quartz is that police officers are able to refer any children that they come into contact with who are deemed of at risk of Child Sexual or Criminal Exploitation. The force will then work closely with other partner agencies such as the school, the family and the GP in order to protect the young person.

Although there are many benefits to this operation, it doesn't always work. Not every young individual who finds themselves involved in serious organised crime gangs are willing to engage with the police officers due to being to be frightened due to the dangerous group members and their capability. Without engagement it is difficult for police officers to safeguard them from risk. It is often the case that it is sometimes to late to help the young person if they have found themselves being too deep into the gang and that intervention just isn't going to work with them, they almost become brainwashed. This operation also costs money to the police forces and there is also a lack of resources available. It is often the case that many young people will not report crime if they are part of the SOC group, therefore many young vulnerable people are not often given the support they require if the force is not aware of them. It is clear that this does not protect everyone.

It is clear that there needs to be improvement made when dealing with Serious Organised Crime Groups, as if the work that the police forces did was always effective then everyone would be protected. Gwent Police force has tried to improve on preventing young people from coming into contact with Serious Organised Crime gang members. They have done this by training and improving the use of intelligence throughout the force and how it is disseminated to police officers.

According to Gwent Police Outturn Report (2020), A Serious and Organised Crime Co-ordinator was appointed to Gwent Police force in July 2019, with its main aim focuses on the Newport area of Gwent. This focused on educating children in the schools of Newport area in relation to violence and gangs. This was implemented by Gwent police force in order to prevent and intervene young children from becoming a part of such violent gangs. This scheme was introduced to highlight to young children of the dangers of involving themselves in gangs. This scheme was delivered to all schools in the Newport area of key stages three and four. Through this scheme, Gwent Police have been able to identify young children who seek to become a member of a gang, this then allows them to intervene at an early stage in order to prevent this from happening and them becoming a drugs runner in what is known as County Lines.

Gwent Police Outturn Report (2020) has identified that they need to improve on focusing on Serious and Organised Crime (SOC). In order to improve how the police officers in Gwent Police deal with SOC, they came up with Operation Jigsaw in 2018 in order to focus on the level of threat, risk and harm. This operation came up with three focus areas which are; Illegal Drugs and County Lines; Cybercrime and Financial Crime; and Modern-Day Slavery and Human Trafficking.

Another thing that Gwent Police have implemented in order to improve the protection to

vulnerable people is that members of the Organised Crime groups are put under a management plan in order to disrupt their crime gangs.

In order to improve police officer's knowledge on Public Protection, in April 2019, Gwent Police invested in the mobile phone app called Vulnerability, this is available to police officers, analysts and researchers who work in the sector. This will alert officers of any repeat victims or crime patterns.

The Policing Vision 2025 sets out a policing plan for the next ten years, within this plan includes the elements of dealing with vulnerable victims.

In conclusion, it has been highlighted throughout the importance of dealing with public protection incidents efficiently in order to safeguard and protect vulnerable people from harm. The policing strategies used to deal with these particular incidents have been proven throughout this reading to be beneficial, although there is also room for improvement. It has been identified that the main issue with dealing with public protection issues is lack of resourcing and funding. Gwent Police have made significant improvements for dealing with public protection issues and are still trying to focus on improving how they deal with these particular types of incidents. It is clear that there is room for improvement as if the strategies worked then everyone would be protected, and these particular crimes would not take place. There is a clear link between public protection incidents and Serious Organised Crime, as many of the young people involved are vulnerable and get taken advantage of.

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