



# VAWG, the North East & CEDAW

**Dame Vera Baird QC**

Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria

Women's Resource Centre CEDAW Shadow Report Event, 28 February 2018



# The role of Police and Crime Commissioner

## Police

- Democratically elected for a 4 year term
- People's representative in policing
- Consult the public: draw up a 5 year Police and Crime Plan and scrutinise its delivery
- Hold the police budget and appoint/dismiss the Chief Constable

## Crime

- Work with Community Safety Partnerships on criminal prevention
- Work with criminal justice agencies for an efficient and effective criminal justice system
- Commission most, but not all victims services



# North East VAWG Strategy

- Across 3 OPCCs/police forces: Northumbria, Durham & Cleveland.
- Currently 20 priorities in 5 categories (2013-2018 strategy)
- New strategy is currently being developed, building on existing priorities and focussing on new areas.





# North East VAWG Strategy & CEDAW

- North East Women's Network were consulted.
- Strategy written at the time of the last UK CEDAW examination
- Of particular relevance for public bodies were CEDAW recommendations relating to the following areas:

Train police officers in dealing with victims	Ratify Istanbul Convention
Protect <u>all</u> women from VAWG	Criminalise forced marriage
Commission specialist services	FGM legislation
Raise public awareness of all VAWG	Identify and support trafficking victims
Extend the Destitution Domestic Violence Concession	Shift the burden of proof in trafficking/prostitution cases



*“Increase efforts to protect women, including BME, against all forms of violence, including SV and DV and so-called ‘honour’ killings”*

(CEDAW recommendation 28)

- Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions
- Safeguarding training for night time economy workers
- ‘Safe Haven’ established in the city centre
- Domestic Violence Support Advocate cars responding to incidents across the region
- Ensured Northumbria Police are one of only three forces (out of 43 nationwide) that are prepared to investigate and prosecute FGM and other honour-based violence.



*“Continue public awareness-raising campaigns on all forms of VAWG, including BME women”*

(CEDAW recommendation 29)

- Operation Encompass implemented in all schools
- Pressure on government to ensure education on healthy relationships for all school pupils – legislation passed 2017.
- Various campaigns to raise awareness of VAWG and encourage victims to speak out...



*Happily  
never after*

**FORCED MARRIAGE IS A CRIME**

If you or someone you know is being forced into marriage,  
contact the Forced Marriage Helpline on 020 7008 0151  
or the Angelou Centre on 0191 2260394

Forced Marriage Helpline available 24 hours. Angelou Centre open Tue - Sun



**AROUND  
120,000  
WOMEN ARE  
STALKED  
EACH YEAR**

STOP VIOLENCE  
against women  
and girls

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE  
SPEAK OUT  
ABOUT STALKING**

For help or advice call 101  
In an emergency call 999



**VERA BAIRD**  
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER



STOP VIOLENCE  
against women  
and girls

**OVER  
85,000  
WOMEN  
ARE RAPED  
IN THE  
UK EVERY  
YEAR**

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE  
SPEAK OUT  
ABOUT RAPE**

For help or advice visit [www.northumbria.police.uk/rape](http://www.northumbria.police.uk/rape)  
In an emergency call 999



# COERCIVE CONTROL IS NOW AN OFFENCE

How does it work? Day 1

## ISOLATION

He wants to spend every minute of every day with her...  
so he stops her going to work, seeing her friends, visiting family, talking to neighbours, answering the phone...

**#BeneathTheSurface**

0800 066 5555 for independent and confidential advice







# Broader Recommendations Under CEDAW

*Recommendation 60: Continue developing alternative sentencing and custodial strategies including community intervention and services for women convicted of minor offences*

## **Diversion Support Workers:**

- Working with vulnerable women who fail to get the support they need and find themselves in the criminal justice system.
- New conditional cautioning scheme – ‘women specific condition’
- For low level women offenders who are victims of current/historical abuse



# Broader Recommendations Under CEDAW

*Recommendation 13: Ensure effective access for women to courts and tribunals, especially women victims of violence.*

## **Sexual Violence Complainant's Advocates:**

- Supporting complainants through the CJS at 4 key stages:
  1. Prior to reporting
  2. Achieving best evidence
  3. Investigation/disclosure
  4. Pre-trial/during trial (previous sexual history evidence)
- Advocacy, advice and link between complainant and prosecution.
- Promoting complainant's rights in the legal system and under Article 8 ECHR (right to privacy).



# North East VAWG Strategy 2018

- In progress
- Extending on the previous strategy and focussing in on emerging issues
- E.G.:
  - Tackling teenage domestic abuse
  - Work in the higher education sector to tackle VAWG incidents on campus/in student communities
  - Support the maintenance of vital specialist services for victims of DA.
- The new strategy will again be line with CEDAW and the Committee's recommendations



# Looking Forward

- Crucial that all public bodies continue striving for substantive equality, as per CEDAW.
- Use CEDAW as a tool to lobby government/public bodies
- Continue to make your voices heard on issues that affect women disproportionately