

Operation Beaconport – Key Findings from Rapid Assessment of ISVA provision to support victim and survivor engagement

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Introduction and Purpose

1. Operation Beaconport, overseen by the National Crime Agency (NCA) in collaboration with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Taskforce, the Tackling Organised Exploitation (TOEX) Programme, and police forces across England and Wales, represents a significant national policing initiative focused on reviewing previously closed investigations into group-based child sexual abuse (GBCSE).
2. Operation Beaconport will review cases where police forces (across England and Wales) and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) made the decision to take no further action (NFA) against suspects in cases that were recorded between 1 January 2010 and 31 March 2025, and will run alongside the national public inquiry, announced by the Government earlier this year.
3. The operation has the following aim: - Restoring public trust and confidence in law enforcement's ability to investigate allegations of child sexual exploitation through the delivery of tailored justice, sustained improvement, and public accountability.
4. A Victim and Survivor Strategy and Operational Guidance has been developed for Operation Beaconport and will be shared with police forces for local adaption and implementation. The Victim and Survivor Strategy set out a clear, survivor-focused and trauma-informed approach for reviewing past no further action decisions in group-based child sexual abuse and exploitation investigations and supporting forces when there is a requirement to re-investigate these and to pursue newly initiated cases.
5. Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) services have become a central component of the support framework for victims and survivors of sexual violence in England and Wales, evolving considerably over the past two decades in response to shifting policy priorities, increased awareness of victim needs, and a growing emphasis on trauma-informed and victim-centred approaches within the criminal justice system.
6. Commissioning of ISVA services is currently led by Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) with funding allocations from the Ministry of Justice.
7. ISVA services are now well recognised for their key role within the wider criminal justice system, acting as a bridge between victims and survivors and statutory agencies. They facilitate communication, support victims through investigative and court processes, and advocate for their needs within multi-agency contexts. Their involvement is increasingly recognised within national and local strategies and as a result, ISVAs are widely regarded as essential to improving both victim engagement and the overall functioning of the justice process in sexual offence cases.
8. LimeCulture was commissioned by the Home Office, through the CSE Taskforce, to undertake a national rapid assessment of Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) provision for children

and young people affected by GBCSE and Technology-Assisted Child Sexual Abuse (TACSA), including those who have transitioned into adulthood. Conducted between January and March 2026, the rapid assessment aimed to develop an improved understanding of current ISVA service provision and identify implications for commissioning, workforce capacity and service delivery.

9. The rapid assessment used a mixed-methods approach, combining desk-based research, national surveys, focus groups and specialist consultation. LimeCulture utilised its existing networks of sexual violence commissioners, ISVA service managers and ISVAs to support engagement, gather evidence and identify emerging themes.
10. Focus groups with ISVAs and police practitioners further explored these themes. Specialist consultation with the Marie Collins Foundation, the Lucy Faithful Foundation, and The Reign Collective, a survivor-led organisation ensured survivor-informed perspectives and helped triangulate findings and identify system-level gaps.
11. Alongside this, the rapid assessment provided an opportunity to explore with ISVAs their perspectives on the key factors likely to influence victim engagement in Operation Beaconport. This included their awareness and the level of understanding of Operation Beaconport across ISVA services; their capacity and readiness to support victims in a trauma-informed and consent-led way, and their ability to build trust and confidence in the criminal justice system.
12. The rapid assessment also considered safeguarding risks associated with re-engagement, as well as the availability and coordination of support to meet the needs of victims and survivors.

Victim Engagement Considerations

A Unique Context for Victim Engagement

14. Operation Beaconport represents a fundamentally different model of engagement compared to other national review mechanisms or initiatives, such as Child Sexual Abuse Review Panel (CSARP). Unlike processes that are initiated by victims or triggered by specific case outcomes, Operation Beaconport is police-instigated, proactive, and intelligence-led. It may involve the identification and re-engagement of victims who may not have requested any form of review or further contact. It may also identify new victims who were not involved in the previous investigations.
15. As reviews under Operation Beaconport emanate from previously reported cases that were closed, it is likely that contact will be police-initiated rather than victim initiated or requested. Therefore, a distinct set of risks arise.
16. For example, unexpected contact may prompt heightened emotional responses, particularly where individuals have previously disengaged from services or have worked to rebuild stability following abuse. The absence of prior warning or preparation increases the risk of re-traumatisation and introduces complexity around consent, as individuals may be required to make decisions about engagement in circumstances that feel sudden, unclear, or overwhelming. In this context, there is a heightened risk of early disengagement if the purpose, scope, and implications of contact are not clearly communicated and sensitively managed.
17. The Victim and Survivor Strategy developed for Operation Beaconport is underpinned by the following non-negotiable principles:
 - Opt-in engagement – Police should not cold-contact victims and survivors except in rare, clearly justified safeguarding or investigative circumstances, following careful preparation and a context-led assessment of potential risk and harm.
 - Choice and control – survivors decide if, when, and how they engage.
 - Trauma-informed practice – communication is empathetic, predictable, and non-intrusive.
 - Tailored justice – justice may include prosecution, but also explanation, validation, safeguarding, and support.
 - Transparency – plain-English explanations are provided, including when no further action is possible.
 - Accessibility and equity – information and support offered in multiple formats with reasonable adjustments.
 - Support first – every interaction includes signposting to independent support services.

- Consistency – one national narrative, locally adapted only for clarity and access.
18. These non-negotiable principles are intended to mitigate the risks to victims/survivors and to support their engagement. However, the absence of prior anticipation remains a significant factor influencing how victims/survivors might choose to engage with Operation Beaconport. This highlights the importance of carefully planned, sensitive, and trauma-informed engagement with every victim and survivor.

Enabling Trust & Confidence in Operation Beaconport Investigations

19. The rapid assessment identified significant issues of trust and confidence in policing and the wider criminal justice system as significant barriers to GBCSE victim engagement. These challenges may be further exacerbated for victim and survivors who have previously experienced NFA decisions by the police in their original investigation.
20. Participants in the rapid review queried whether cases that are re-opened as part of Operation Beaconport would meaningfully acknowledge prior experiences, past failings and demonstrate commitment to sustained change, with concerns that without this, engagement with victims would remain limited.
21. For example, when discussing the aims of Operation Beaconport with participants with lived experience as part of the rapid assessment, one survivor - reflecting on the enduring impact of her prior experiences of GBCSE and the criminal justice outcome - questioned: ***“why on earth would I agree to go through all that again?”***
22. Public awareness of ongoing delays in the criminal justice process and low conviction rates were also cited as likely to undermine victim and survivor confidence to engage with Operation Beaconport, with some participants expressing the view that ***“they need to fix the system first”*** before expecting victim and survivors to re-engage with an investigation.
23. In addition, concerns were raised about ongoing perceptions of credibility and being believed. One participant with lived experience reflected ***“many of us have not lived perfect lives – it is down to the abuse but that won’t be considered”*** and where alleged perpetrators may be perceived as ***“respectable ...he’s a family man now”***. One participant noted: ***“they didn’t think I was credible then, so what are the chances of them thinking I am credible now?”***.
24. Given that Operation Beaconport will consider whether to re-investigate cases that previously resulted in a No Further Action (NFA) decision, participants emphasised the need for transparency, consistency, and honesty in all communication with victims. This includes clear information about the purpose of Operation Beaconport, the options available to victims, and the range of potential outcomes.
25. One ISVA reflected ***“if a case is re-opened and investigated again through Operation Beaconport, there is still a high possibility that the perp will found not guilty – or even a chance***

that it could be NFA'ed again before even getting that far. This has got to be explained to the victim- right at the beginning. We shouldn't be raising the expectations of victims".

26. Participants advised that ISVAs are well placed to provide a critical role in addressing these challenges by acting as independent advisers who bridge the gap between the victim and survivors and police and other statutory agencies. Their independence supports trust-building, particularly where confidence in policing or criminal justice agencies has been eroded.
27. Through consistent, relationship-based support, ISVAs can help victims understand processes, expectations, and make informed choices about engagement, while ensuring that victims' voices, concerns and experiences are clearly communicated and represented. ISVAs are also well placed to challenge poor practice, promote transparency, and support individuals where concerns about credibility or fear of not being believed may otherwise inhibit engagement.
28. Significantly, ISVAs may also play an important role in facilitating safe and sustained victim engagement with Operation Beaconport, particularly at the initial point of contact and throughout ongoing participation in an investigation. As a trusted and independent point of contact, ISVAs can support victim and survivors to navigate complex and potentially distressing processes, understand the implications of involvement in Operation Beaconport, and maintain a sense of control and informed choice. This function will be particularly important in sustaining engagement over time and ensuring that participation remains grounded in the individual's needs, circumstances, and readiness.
29. More broadly for Operation Beaconport, these findings reinforce the importance that local police forces adopt the non-negotiable principles of the Victim and Survivor Strategy and ensure their approach to victim engagement is coherent, and sensitive to the reputational and emotional significance that victim and survivors attach to the criminal justice system. This includes ensuring consistency in messaging across agencies, at both NCA and police force level, careful management of expectations regarding potential outcomes, and clear articulation of how victim and survivor engagement will be valued, even where evidential thresholds or investigative outcomes remain uncertain.
30. It also highlights the importance of establishing clear and effective referral pathways into ISVA services, enabling individuals to access independent support at the earliest possible stage of engagement.

Understanding Trauma, Complexity & Risk in Victim Engagement

31. The rapid assessment also found individual victim and survivor engagement with support and criminal justice processes within GBCSE contexts is inherently complex, non-linear, often shaped by ongoing relational risk, fear, and dependency on perpetrator or peer networks. Disclosure is frequently partial, fragmented due to self-censorship processes and influenced by concerns about safety, retaliation, and uncertainty about the wider network of individuals

involved which can also include fears about the potential involvement of those supporting them, investigating or others within statutory services.

32. Concerns were identified about safety with participants highlighting safeguarding risks particularly where victims and survivors may still live in proximity to perpetrators or remain within the same social or community environments. Concerns about retaliation were reported to directly influence what victims and survivors feel able to disclose. Engagement must therefore be carefully managed to avoid alerting perpetrators, increasing risk or disrupting existing safety strategies.
33. Participants with lived experience raised concerns about the emotional safety of victims re-engaged as part of Operation Beaconport i.e. the impact of being asked to revisit past experiences, particularly where individuals have moved on or deliberately distanced themselves from abuse. As one participant noted, ***“being asked to go over it again, without knowing what might happen, is really a lot to think about”*** reflecting uncertainty and a perceived lack of control.
34. Re-engagement in this context was described as potentially destabilising, especially where those around them might not be aware of previous abuse or where victims and survivors had worked hard to change their lives and rebuild stability. One survivor reflected ***“Everything about my life has move on since then- I’ve got a new name, and I live in a new area where none of that stuff is around me anymore. I don’t want to go back to that. I’m not even sure it would be safe to go back into any of that stuff...”*** These dynamics highlight the need for carefully paced sensitive engagement that recognises the potential for re-traumatisation and the importance of maintaining a sense of safety and control for the individual throughout any contact.
35. In this context, any re-engagement activities with victims for the purposes of Operation Beaconport must be underpinned by a clearly defined, trauma-informed and consent-led framework. This is essential to ensure that victims/survivors fully understand the purpose, scope and implications of engagement, including how information may be used and what risks or consequences may arise.
36. Given the potential for fear, self-censorship and mistrust of criminal justice processes, consent must not be assumed or treated as static, but must be informed, revisited, and supported over time. Without such an approach, there is a risk that engagement processes may inadvertently increase distress, undermine trust, or fail to capture the full complexity of victims’ experiences.
37. For Operation Beaconport, a trauma-informed, risk-informed and consent-led approach is therefore not only a safeguarding requirement but also fundamental to enabling meaningful, ethical, and effective participation in the re-opening of an investigation.
38. A further critical consideration is that re-opened investigations under Operation Beaconport may also create opportunities to identify previously unknown victim and survivors. Careful consideration to newly identified victims and survivors and how best to engage with them will

therefore be essential. This should reflect the same trauma-informed and consent-led principles, recognising that these individuals may have had no prior contact with services, may not self-identify as victims and survivors, or may be at different stages of awareness and readiness to engage. Initial contact must be handled with particular care to avoid causing harm, triggering distress, or increasing risk, and should prioritise clear communication, voluntary participation, and access to appropriate support pathways from the outset.

Referral and Support

Effective Referral and Support Pathways

39. GBCSE investigations are often complex, cross-jurisdictional and intelligence-led, involving multiple perpetrators and victims and survivors across different geographical boundaries and timeframes. With victim and survivors, perpetrators, and investigations frequently spanning multiple police force areas, there remains no clear or consistent mechanism for determining responsibility for ISVA referral and ongoing support. This lack of ownership can result in delays, inconsistent decision-making, and, in some cases, victims and survivors not being referred at all to ISVA services.
40. The rapid assessment found the need for coordinated, multi-agency support is particularly critical in cases of GBCSE, where victims and survivors often require sustained involvement from multiple services due to the complexity of investigations, the number of victims and survivors involved, and ongoing risks within peer, family and community contexts.
41. Where ISVAs are involved, they can play a critical coordinating role in multi-agency support; however, feedback from ISVAs was this can be constrained or delayed by variability in referral quality, inconsistent thresholds for intervention, and limited integration between police, safeguarding and specialist CSE support.
42. Collectively, these issues undermine the consistency, timeliness and effectiveness of support provision, and highlight the need for more coherent multi-agency structures, improved specialist training, and clearer referral and coordination pathways to ensure victims and survivors receive appropriate, joined up and sustained ISVA support throughout the lifecycle of complex investigations.
43. Significantly, the challenges above will be further compounded where victim and survivors are simultaneously eligible for, or engaged in, multiple national review or Inquiry processes. Navigating different mechanisms, each with distinct purposes, processes and potential outcomes, could be confusing and burdensome, both emotionally and practically.
44. This also presents a communications risk for Operation Beaconport where victim and survivors may not distinguish between the different national initiatives such as VRR, CSARP. This provides a risk of confusion, repeated contact, inconsistent messaging or unrealistic expectations and will require careful consideration to the messages for each initiative and how they communicated.
45. This also adds complexity for ISVA services, where they are required to support victims and survivors in understanding their options while maintaining clear professional boundaries and ensuring that engagement remains fully informed and voluntary. Crucially, ISVAs must not become aware of the evidential detail of a case in order to prevent any perception of ‘coaching’ or inadvertently undermining proceedings. As a result, ISVA services must carefully consider the

capacity needed to support multiple victims and survivors involved in the same case, as well as to provide sustained support to a single victim and survivor engaged across multiple police or national initiatives, such as the Inquiry into CSE, Operation Beaconport or CSARP.

46. Without structured support coordinated across these different initiatives, there is a significant risk of fragmentation in the victim and survivor experience. This may include inconsistent messaging, repeated or overlapping contact, and a lack of clarity about how different processes relate to one another. Over time, this has the potential to undermine trust in both policing and support services, ultimately affecting victim and survivor engagement and the effectiveness of investigative activity.
47. The Victim and Survivor Strategy set out information about the development of a national online digital portal / gateway that victims and survivors can connect with for Operation Beaconport. It will provide in one place information about Operation Beaconport (and possibly other initiatives) and provides the ability for a victim/survivor to enquire whether their case is being reviewed and to outline contact preferences and engagement methods. The online portal supports the principle that victims and survivors should have choice in decisions that affect them where appropriate and wherever possible make choices about their own cases.
48. This important initiative could be strengthened further by incorporating a national ISVA support, coordination and referral function, within – or as part of - the online portal. This would ensure the provision of information and independent support is made available to victims and survivors at the earliest possible stage of engagement.

ISVA Awareness of Operation Beaconport

49. As part of the rapid review, ISVA service managers were surveyed on the perceived impact of national police operations, audits and reviews—including Operation Beaconport, CSARP, the forthcoming Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation following Baroness Casey’s National Audit on Group-Based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, as well as any local inquiries or investigations.
50. Of the 43 respondents, 39.5% (n=17) reported that they were unsure whether there had been any impact, a further 39.5% (n=17) indicated that there had been no impact, and only 9.3% (n=4) reported that there had been an impact. Among those identifying an impact, this was primarily reflected in increased duration of support and greater complexity of victims and survivor needs.
51. The high proportion of respondents who reported either no impact or were unsure (79% combined) highlights limited visibility and understanding within ISVA services of how national operations and reviews are translating – or likely to translate - into demand on their services.
52. It also underscores the importance of effective communication and coordination between national and local partners, particularly where localised reviews or operations are taking place,

to ensure ISVA services are appropriately informed, prepared, and able to respond to increased demand.

53. This finding is significant in the context of Operation Beaconport, as it suggests that ISVA services may not currently have sufficient awareness, information or system alignment to anticipate and respond to potential increases in referrals or complexity arising from such initiatives.
54. Critically, if ISVAs are not fully aware of national initiatives, they will not be in a good position to provide impartial advice or information to victims and survivors who may be considering their options.

ISVA Service Capacity and Readiness

55. Critically, most ISVA services surveyed as part of the rapid assessment reported '**operating at or near capacity**', with waiting lists and constrained service access and flow. This must be a key consideration of Operation Beaconport's Victim and Survivor Strategy at both a national and local police force level.
56. Furthermore, as the identification and referral pathways for victims and survivors of GBCSE are often complex, inconsistent and reliant on partial or evolving information, means that ISVA services frequently receive referrals without full context or only recognise the scale and interconnected nature of harm over time. This can delay appropriate triage and increase the intensity and duration of support required as cases develop. Improving referrals to ISVA services will also need to be a key consideration of Operation Beaconport at both a national and local police force level.
57. GBCSE cases are inherently complex, often involving multiple perpetrators, prolonged investigations, and fluctuating victims and survivor engagement, all of which place sustained demands on ISVA service capacity.
58. These pressures are further compounded by the fact that, in many areas, support for GBCSE is not formally embedded within ISVA service specifications or commissioning frameworks, but instead delivered through locally determined and often informal arrangements.
59. As a result, ISVA services are already frequently responding to highly complex cases within structures that were not designed or resourced for this level of demand. Variability in data collection, definitional clarity, and multi-agency coordination also limits the ability to anticipate need and plan capacity effectively. This fragmented approach effectively creates a 'postcode lottery', where some victims/survivors are able to access timely and appropriate support, while others experience delays or are unable to access support at all.
60. Taken together, these factors suggest that, without, consistent system-wide recognition of the importance of independent support for victims and survivors, clear referral pathways to ISVA

services, and more strategic commissioning and resourcing, ISVA services face significant challenges in scaling provision to meet increased demand for GBCSE cases.

61. This has direct relevance for Operation Beaconport, where the identification and re-engagement of victims and survivors—and the potential identification of new victims and survivors—is highly likely to generate additional demand for sustained, specialist, and trauma-informed support. This demand will fall on ISVA services that are already struggling to meet existing capacity pressures, creating a heightened risk of delays in access to support and reduced service resilience.

Specialist knowledge to support victims and survivors of GBCSE

62. The rapid assessment highlights a clear need for enhanced and more consistent training provision for ISVAs in relation to GBCSE. Many ISVAs reported that they do not feel sufficiently equipped to support victims and survivors confidently and consistently in this area. While informal mechanisms such as self-directed learning, peer support, and managerial guidance currently play an important role, reliance on these approaches alone can result in variability in knowledge, confidence, and practice.
63. Operation Beaconport presents an opportunity to address these gaps by supporting the development and delivery of additional structured training for all ISVAs, who make up a relatively small workforce of approx. 500-600 ISVAs across England and Wales. There is also an opportunity to create and facilitate a professional network for ISVAs to enable peer learning, knowledge exchange, and develop communities of practice.

Conclusion

64. Operation Beaconport represents a fundamentally different model of engagement compared to other national review mechanisms or initiatives, such as Child Sexual Abuse Review Panel (CSARP).
65. As reviews under Operation Beaconport emanate from previously reported cases that were closed, it is likely that contact will be police-initiated rather than victim initiated or requested. Therefore, a distinct set of risks arise.
66. The Victim and Survivor Strategy include non-negotiable principles are intended to mitigate the risks to victims/survivors and to support their engagement. However, the absence of prior anticipation remains a significant factor influencing how victims/survivors might choose to engage with Operation Beaconport. This further underscore the importance of carefully planned, sensitive, and trauma-informed engagement.
67. Victim and survivor engagement in this context is shaped by trauma, safeguarding risk, prior experiences of the criminal justice system, and the relational and networked nature of GBCSE. These factors make engagement inherently non-linear and will require approaches that are trauma-informed, consent-led, and responsive over time. Without this, there is a heightened risk of re-traumatisation, disengagement, and missed opportunities to support victims and survivors safely and effectively.
68. ISVAs are well placed to enable safe engagement, build trust, and support victims and survivors to navigate complex processes. Critically however, most ISVA services surveyed as part of the rapid assessment reported '**operating at or near capacity**', with waiting lists and constrained service access and flow. This must be a key consideration of Operation Beaconport's Victim and Survivor Strategy at both a national and local police force level.
69. Furthermore, the effectiveness of ISVA services is influenced by wider system challenges, including limited awareness of national operations, inconsistent referral pathways into their services, gaps in specialist training, and ongoing capacity pressures.
70. Taken together, the success of Operation Beaconport will depend not only on investigative activity, but on the strength, coordination, and readiness of the wider system. Stronger alignment between policing, safeguarding partners, and ISVA services will be essential to ensure victims and survivors receive consistent, trauma-informed, and effective support throughout their engagement.

Key Recommendations & Rationale

71. The following recommendations have been developed in response to the findings of the rapid assessment carried out by LimeCulture between January and March 2026 and are intended to support the effective, ethical, and consistent delivery of Operation Beaconport's Victim and Survivor Strategy.
72. Each recommendation is accompanied by a clear rationale, drawing on evidence from the rapid assessment and stakeholder engagement, and reflecting the identified risks, system pressures, and opportunities for improvement.
73. Collectively, the recommendations are designed to strengthen victims and survivor engagement, enhance referral coordination, and ensure that ISVA services and wider partners are appropriately supported to respond to the complexity of GBCSE cases and the distinct operating model of Operation Beaconport.

Recommendation 1

Government should establish a national ISVA support, coordination and referral function that sits within the Online Portal for Operation Beaconport (and other initiatives)

Consideration should be given to the creation of a national ISVA support, coordination and referral function, that sits within - or as part of - the online portal, through which victims and survivors can access initial advice, information, and guidance about Operation Beaconport (and potentially other related national initiatives, e.g., CSARP, Victims Right to Review, Inquiry into CSE).

This function would provide a consistent national access point for individuals seeking support in relation to Operation Beaconport (or other related national initiatives), regardless of geographical location. It could also be used to provide support to police in ensuring referrals to ISVA services are made, where they are unsure or unaware of local ISVA services.

A key purpose of this national function would be to provide a clear and accessible route into specialist support, and to ensure timely and appropriate referral into local commissioned ISVA services. This would help address current variability in access pathways, where referral is often dependent on individual police knowledge of local ISVA provision and can therefore be inconsistent or delayed or not provided at all (particularly relevant in cross-force investigations).

By providing a centralised triage and referral function, the model would strengthen equity of access, reduce fragmentation in pathways to support, and ensure that victims and survivors are connected more quickly to appropriately to local ISVA services. It would also improve consistency in initial information-giving, support early identification of risk and need, and reduce the burden on frontline policing to navigate complex local service landscapes.

Importantly, this national function would act as an entry point rather than a replacement for local ISVA provision, ensuring that specialist, trauma-informed support remains delivered at a local level while access is standardised nationally. This would enhance system coherence, improve

responsiveness, and support more timely engagement with victims and survivors at the earliest possible stage.

Recommendation 2

Government should develop and provide role-focused training for the ISVA workforce

The report findings from the rapid assessment of ISVA support for victims and survivors of GBCSE identified a clear need to upskill the entire ISVA workforce to enable them to respond effectively, confidently, and consistently to the complexity of GBCSE cases.

Through the delivery of targeted, role-focused training, sustainable capacity can be developed across ISVA Services to respond more effectively to complex, multi-victim cases and the specific dynamics of GBCSE.

The ISVA workforce is relatively small, with estimates from LimeCulture indicating there are approximately 500–600 ISVAs in post across England and Wales. This comparatively small workforce means that providing structured, role-specific training represents a cost-effective and proportionate opportunity to rapidly and consistently upskill the entire national cohort, rather than relying on variable local provision or informal learning mechanisms.

In addition to improving ISVA confidence and capability, a structured national training offer would deliver a range of wider system benefits. These include greater consistency of practice across regions and improved early identification of risk and complex safeguarding needs. It would also strengthen multi-agency coordination by improving shared understanding and communication between ISVAs, policing, and safeguarding partners.

Furthermore, enhanced training for the ISVA workforce would support improved continuity and quality of victim and survivor engagement, enabling more trauma-informed, sustained support for victims and survivors over time. It would also contribute to greater workforce resilience by reducing professional uncertainty, improving confidence in managing complex and emotionally demanding cases, and mitigating the risks of vicarious trauma and burnout.

Collectively, these benefits would not only improve the quality and consistency of victim and survivor support but also strengthen victim and survivor outcomes and trust in ISVA services and the wider criminal justice response.

Recommendation 3

Operation Beaconport should establish a network of specialist ISVA posts (for supporting adults) and CHISVA posts (for supporting children and young people) within commissioned services in each police force area.

A dedicated network of specialist “Beaconport” ISVA posts (for supporting adult victims and survivors) and CHISVA posts (for supporting children and young people) should be established within commissioned ISVA services in each police force area to provide additional capacity to ISVA services to support the initial and ongoing engagement with victims and survivors identified or re-engaged through Operation Beaconport investigations.

Given the number of commissioned ISVA services across England and Wales is relatively small – typically outside of London, there is one ‘all age’ ISVA service per police force and in some two (usually 1 adult or 1 child ISVA service) - this represents a proportionate and cost-effective enhancement to existing ISVA service provision. Targeted investment in a small number of additional specialist posts would provide a meaningful uplift in capacity within a system that is already under significant pressure, while avoiding the need for large-scale structural change.

These specialist ISVA and CHISVAs could act as a designated point of expertise and coordination for Operation Beaconport-related cases, ensuring a consistent and trauma-informed approach to first contact, risk assessment, and support planning.

The establishment of this network of specialist ISVA/CHISVAs would also help to maintain continuity and quality of engagement while reducing regional variation in practice. It would also provide a mechanism for structured communication between Operation Beaconport and local ISVA service provision, supporting timely referral into ongoing support services and enabling more effective management of demand and capacity.

Over time, the network could facilitate shared learning, peer support, and the development of consistent practice standards across areas, further strengthening the overall system to ensure proactive, responsive and timely support to victims and survivors of GBCSE.

Recommendation 4

Operation Beaconport should ensure structured engagement between local police forces and ISVA services in operational planning

As outlined in the Victim and Survivor Strategy, Operation Beaconport (at the national level) should ensure that local police forces include structured engagement with their local ISVA services within operational planning for any local re-investigation activity.

Early and ongoing involvement of ISVA services in the planning and delivery of operational police activity is essential to ensure a coordinated, consistent, and effective victim engagement strategy. This should be embedded as a core component of operational re-investigation planning, rather than treated as a parallel or reactive function.

Recommendation 5

NPCC should develop a communication mechanism for sharing updates on national initiatives and operational activity with ISVA service

A formalised approach for communicating national initiatives—including Operation Beaconport, CSARP, VRR-related activity, and national inquiry or local inquiries—to ISVA services is required to improve sector-wide awareness, alignment, and preparedness.

This should include advance notice of operational activity to enable ISVA services to anticipate demand, plan resource allocation, and prepare for victim and survivor engagement.

In parallel, consistent and coordinated messaging across national and local policing teams is essential to promote understanding of ISVA support as a fundamental component of effective and trauma-informed victim and survivor engagement.

