

Executive Summary

The IOPC independent investigations of complaints and conduct matters in relation to South Yorkshire Police's handling of reports into non-recent child sexual abuse and exploitation in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, between 1997 and 2013

This report has been published following complaints and allegations made largely by child sexual abuse and exploitation survivors

June 2022

Independent Office for Police Conduct

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) oversees the police complaints system in England and Wales. It investigates the most serious matters, including deaths following police contact, and sets the standards for how the police should handle complaints. The IOPC uses learning from its work to influence changes in policing.

The IOPC is independent and makes its decisions entirely independently of the police and government.

Contents

Introduction	5
The systemic issues we found during our investigations	7
What survivors told us	13
About our investigations	17
The outcomes of our investigations	19
Annex A: Outcomes – key statistics and details about Operation Linden	21
Annex B: A summary of complaint allegations we upheld	23
Annex C: Outcomes where there was a case to answer	27

Introduction

This *Executive Summary*¹ and accompanying report are primarily about our independent investigations for Operation Linden, but they also consider the impact child sexual abuse/exploitation (CSA/E) has on survivors.

Many survivors told us that our investigations into their complaint(s) made them feel they have been listened to, that their experiences have been believed, and have left them feeling more should have been done in the past to safeguard them. We would like to acknowledge and thank survivors for their bravery in feeling able to tell us about what happened to them.

In total, we investigated 265 complaint allegations, the majority made by survivors.

Of the complaint allegations we could make a decision about (164) we upheld 43 and we did not uphold 121.

The remaining 101 complaint allegations followed a different decision-making process because they related to named individuals from SYP whose conduct was under investigation. Of these:

- There were eight cases to answer against officers for misconduct.
- There were six cases to answer against officers for gross misconduct.
- There were 14 officers identified who demonstrated unsatisfactory performance, or who received management words of advice.

When a complaint results in an investigation into an individual's conduct we give an opinion on whether there is a case to answer for breaches of the [Police Professional Standards of Behaviour](#). We decided² that, in the main, officers had not carried out and fulfilled their duties and responsibilities, although there were breaches relating to the standard of honesty and integrity not being met and, in one case, we found a confidentiality breach.

Our focus on survivors in our reports gives insight into the trauma and pain CSA/E-related offences can inflict on a child, or young person, when justice is not done or seen to be done.

The issues we uncovered during our investigations make for uncomfortable reading. They included officers accepting, at face value, what they saw, instead of employing

¹ The *Executive Summary* has been published following the conclusion of a misconduct hearing and reflects the time taken to carry out, and report on, investigations on the scale of Operation Linden.

² Regulations covering our investigations meant that findings against former officers were not heard by an independent panel to reach a final outcome.

professional curiosity to safeguard vulnerable, young victims. We found a culture that did not always recognise survivors as victims or understand that neither did the children and young people on the receiving end of perpetrators' grooming and abuse.

'I was told repeatedly by the police that I was responsible for my own actions for allowing myself to be a victim.' – **a survivor**

During one investigation, a former Detective Sergeant told us they would treat survivors as victims but that 'some of them were worldly-wise and not meek and mild victims'.

Better multi-agency working would have presented opportunities to help tackle CSA/E in Rotherham. However, this does not appear to have happened. A children's social worker on an operational multi-agency team (with SYP) explained to us that agencies pursued their different priorities to achieve their own objectives.

Our independent investigations, and what changes SYP told us it had made to policing practice since 2013, informed our learning recommendations (what we did and did not recommend³).

As a result we made [12 separate learning recommendations in November 2021](#), and a further one in April 2022. [You can read the 13 recommendations on our website, along with the full responses from SYP and the other agencies](#)⁴.

Full details of the systemic issues we found during our investigations are explored in detail in our full report but are also summarised below. A summary of key statistics and facts, about Operation Linden are at **Annex A**.

³ Under paragraph 28A, Schedule 3 of the *Police Reform Act* we can make a recommendation in relation to any matter dealt with in an investigation report, appeal, or review. These recommendations can be made to police forces (one or a number), or police and crime commissioners. We can also, in certain circumstances, make recommendations for other organisations that are relevant to the investigation, appeal or review. The force or organisation we make a recommendation to must provide us with their response within 56 days unless there are valid reasons not to. They can also request that we extend the time they have to respond. Both the recommendation and the response must be published. Section 10 of the *Police Reform Act* allows us to make recommendations more broadly about police practice that appear, from the carrying out of our functions, to be necessary or desirable. These recommendations do not carry the same legal requirement for the recipient of the recommendation to respond, or for the recommendation or any response to be published.

⁴ Responses to our recommendations from other agencies are from the Law Commission, Police Digital Service, College of Policing and National Police Chiefs' Council.

The systemic issues we found during our investigations

Operation Linden discovered systemic problems in practice by SYP between 1997/2013 and the shortcomings we identified are summarised below and are set out in detail in our full report.

Leadership

- CSA/E was not prioritised by SYP's leadership and there was no sponsorship given to CSA/E-related offences at a senior level.
- SYP failed to recognise the scale of CSA/E and effectively tackle it.
- CSA/E work was part of the wider Public Protection Unit (PPU) that covered several areas ranging from Domestic Abuse to Missing Persons. In our view, it needed a dedicated team with specific leads and appropriate skills and training.
- There were inadequate resources to tackle CSA/E and the small team involved in this work was sometimes overwhelmed. The leadership of the force should have known that.
- Accountability for CSA/E was unclear within the force.
- At the time, funding and performance targets prioritised acquisitive crimes, such as burglary and vehicle crime, at the expense of other types of crime, including CSA/E-related offences.

Professional curiosity

- There was a lack of professional curiosity⁵ and readiness to learn about specific CSA/E issues. This led to many missed opportunities to safeguard children and young people. For example, taking little or no action⁶ when finding an underage girl in a car with an older male(s).

⁵ Barnardo's began lobbying for greater protection from CSA/E for young people under 18 in 1998, (Barnardo's report *Whose daughter Next*), and offences relating to grooming, coercion and control were introduced under the *Sexual Offences Act 2003* and should have been reflected in force strategies and frontline policing.

⁶ Under the *Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984* (PACE) officers have the power to stop and search someone if they have a reasonable cause to believe that person has been involved in a crime, or in possession of a prohibited item (such as drugs or an unlicensed firearm). There is no obligation on the person who has been stopped to provide their details.

A survivor, who was sexually exploited during the 1990s, from the age of 11, and regularly went missing from home, was a passenger in a perpetrator's car when it was stopped by police. They knew the perpetrator had picked up some drugs that were in the boot, and the perpetrator warned the survivor to say nothing to the officer apart from giving their details. The officer asked if the survivor was happy to be in the car, and they volunteered their age and date of birth, that they were living in a children's home and that the perpetrator was their 'boyfriend'. After police spoke briefly to the perpetrator they were allowed to drive away.

We could find no police record of the above, or other incidents the survivor described but believed they did occur and upheld the survivor's allegations.

Skills and Training

- We found gaps in police knowledge and a lack of clear training and policy in how to deal with CSA/E⁷ situations.

One survivor made several allegations about the attitude and actions of three officers who dealt with several rape reports they made in 2003, (at age 14), by the same man. One of the officers, a Police Constable, had completed a ten-week attachment to the Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit four years earlier, but said they had little experience of rape allegations and it was their first involvement with this type of case.

In one case, we were told that at a 2001 child protection conference, a Detective Constable, who had investigated offences against a 12-year-old survivor, commented the survivor had provided consent in different sexual encounters, despite legislation being very clear that it is not possible for a child of this age to give consent.

A police constable working as a child abuse investigator told us: 'The term CSA/E was not something that I became aware of until much later'.

⁷ We found no evidence of policy or guidance on what officers should do if they found an underage girl in a car with older, unrelated, male suspect(s), including in relation to legislation already giving officers the power to stop and search.

A Detective Inspector who had been in charge of the Rotherham Public Protection Unit, prior to 2013, felt that, across the force, there was no concept of children being groomed and manipulated into abuse.

- The interviewing techniques used by some officers, including videoing⁸ children and young people, did not always follow best practice, and we found a general failure amongst officers to follow guidance in their search for missing from home survivors, leading to 'missing from home reports' not being taken seriously or being responded to quickly enough.

A police constable, who interviewed a survivor in 2000, acknowledged to us that they lacked experience, especially in child protection work. There was no observer in the interview they conducted.

One survivor, who was sexually exploited from the age of 14, told us they frequently went missing from home, generally to be with their older 'boyfriend'. They came into contact with officers three or four times a week and said 'When I look back now, I can't believe how many times I came into contact with the police and how many chances they had to question me...but didn't'.

- Opportunities were missed to tackle CSA/E, by not checking taxi drivers' licences, speaking to takeaway owners, and working with the Department for Work and Pensions to do 'lifestyle' and financial checks on perpetrators.
- We found a lack of 'disruption' policing, for example, not serving abduction notices against suspected perpetrators, and implementing ineffective public protection orders.
- While officers in Sheffield were using protective orders it appeared those in Rotherham were not, despite both policing areas being part of SYP.
- We found there was a lack of supervision, so that it was unclear who was responsible for the different aspects of a police investigation.

⁸ The *Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999* sets out a range of special measures to assist children under 18 years of age, at the time of trial, to give their best evidence in criminal proceedings. Visual recorded interviews are one of the measures available and must be considered whether the child is as a witness for the prosecution or defence. These interviews can be played to the court so that the child does not have to attend the hearing, in person, to give their evidence.

Crime recording

- We found many instances where crimes were not recorded when they should have been, including reports of sexual assault and sexual activity with a child.
- We also found crimes, investigative decisions, and related information⁹ that was recorded but not in an effective and consistent way. There was sometimes confusion about how to 'count' a crime if an officer(s) could not engage with a survivor for a statement,¹⁰ and an 'unwritten policy' existed to not record crimes unless there was a strong possibility a crime would be marked as 'detected'.¹¹
- ICT was inadequate. The ICT systems officers were expected to regularly check/update with intelligence were not effective or 'fit for purpose'.

Multi-agency working

- Intelligence-gathering opportunities were missed, and data was not always linked leading to an incomplete picture of the issue(s).
- There was ineffective working with other agencies because of conflicting priorities and expectations. Nobody owned and drove forward issues and there was a lack of accountability.
- There was inappropriate, or missing representation at multi-agency meetings.
- SYP did not take action when the same perpetrators' names were regularly mentioned at 'key player' multi-agency meetings and CSA/E disruption tactics were therefore not deployed leading to a missed opportunity to target multiple perpetrators.

Culture

- Many vulnerable individuals were seen as problems not victims. Especially children in care. They were labelled as responsible for their own actions in many cases.

A SYP Child Exploitation Officer told us that it was proving difficult to change officers' opinions that criminally exploited children caught carrying drugs or weapons in the course of CSA/E were victims not offenders.

⁹ Police officers we spoke to generally felt that information sharing between agencies needed to be prompted by an initial referral.

¹⁰ This often happened because a survivor was too scared to give a statement.

¹¹ We also came across examples of decisions, such as closing investigations, being made by more junior ranking officers instead of by more senior officers. Sometimes these decisions were not properly signed off.

Working with victims and survivors

We found there was an unwillingness, amongst officers to pursue 'victimless' investigations. Where there was no victim report, the feeling was there would be insufficient evidence for a successful prosecution, and this was even more likely to be the case given an investigation was about a non-recent incident(s).

A woman rang SYP about an inappropriate relationship between her 12-year-old stepdaughter and an older man but was told that if the survivor would not make a statement, there was nothing the police could do. The woman felt there was no point in reporting the relationship and any future concerns. Sadly, this survivor was sexually exploited for a further three to four years.

A Rotherham Public Protection Unit Detective Constable told us that 'child concern' referrals that were received, where there was no complaint, 'were finalised and written off with no further unit action', and they added that 'this was accepted practice'.

- We found many failures to obtain survivor statements, or to explore frequent missing from home behaviour, where these patterns could be linked to CSA/E. Officers were not proactive in safeguarding victims.
- There were failings in meeting the standards set out in the *Victims' Code*.

An ISVA manager shared with us that when the initial investigating officer went on sick leave, their case was not reallocated and, as a result, no SYP contact with the survivor was made for 18 months until the ISVA chased it up.

Listening to, and better understanding survivor experiences is an important means to raise awareness and develop understanding. For this reason, we made a national recommendation to the College of Policing to include this in training. We also encouraged them to use what we had learned from our Operation Linden case studies as part of its training.

Working with the local community

- We found there was a distrust of SYP and specifically the force's lack of awareness of CSA/E – this was a barrier to effective engagement with survivors, and their families, who felt let down by what they felt were unsympathetic officers, who included specialist CSA/E officers.
- There were missed opportunities to approach community leaders for their views on how to develop community cohesion and/or identify any actions SYP could consider in helping tackle CSA/E. There was clearly some awareness amongst frontline officers of the high proportion of Asian men involved in CSA/E locally.

What survivors told us

‘No matter what bad experience I was going through there was never any concern for me as a child. I don’t recall a single time when the police treated me like I was a vulnerable child. Looking back, I now realise they had ‘adult expectations’ from children regardless of a child’s age. I was age 13 and I was told more than a dozen times I was responsible for my ‘behaviour’ for being sexually abused and exploited by several grown men.’ – a survivor

Between 1997 and 2013, it is estimated that more than 1,400 children were sexually exploited in Rotherham.¹²

Survivors found it traumatic revisiting events during our investigations, particularly after their involvement in police criminal investigations against their abusers. Many survivors came to us with complaints and allegations against SYP following the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997/2013). SYP referred a further 11 conduct matters to us for investigation following its publication.

In addition, media¹³ and TV coverage about CSA/E¹⁴ saw a number of survivors recognising that, sadly, they were not alone in what they had experienced, and many more survivors came forward to make complaints to us.

During our investigation, we had contact with some 75 survivors up until August 2020. The legacy of what happened to survivors runs deep. Sheila Taylor, CEO of the charity National Working Group Exploitation Response Unit,¹⁵ shared with us the long-term effects of CSA/E. These are too numerous to list, but they include issues such as poor mental and physical health, problems with fertility and ongoing sexual health concerns, becoming enmeshed in criminal behaviour, and leaving the place they called home, for good, because of family/community pressure to not report CSA/E incident(s).

¹²Jay OBE, A., (2014). [The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham, 1997–2013](#).

¹³ *The Times*, in 2011, published an article about the police and local council having knowledge of widespread child abuse in Rotherham and their alleged failure to act. Its articles were based on Risky Business Youth Support Agency’s revelations and survivors’ disclosures.

¹⁴ BBC One’s investigative documentary series, *Panorama*, broadcast *Stolen childhoods: The grooming scandal* (2014), and *Stolen childhoods: The legacy of grooming* (2015).

¹⁵ A charitable organisation focused on child exploitation (CE) and trafficking within the UK.

Throughout our investigations, survivors told us about some of these experiences. These included:

- **A mistrust in authority (specifically SYP)** – Some survivors and their families were already ‘known’ to the police for various reasons, and this contributed to, what was seen as officers’ dismissive attitudes, resulting in survivor and family mistrust

‘We was treated like we didn’t matter’ – **a survivor**

- **Trauma** – As a result of a survivor repeatedly having to share their experience(s) – they sometimes understandably received support from the police and other agencies. However, survivors told us that dealing with many professionals, and being involved in a court case, was in some ways worse than what happened to them. They found themselves having to repeat what had happened to them, reliving their experiences and sharing them with a wider number of people

‘The main reason for my distress is having to face this all again when I tried many years ago’ – **A survivor explained that, had they been listened to years ago, they would not have to experience the additional distress of reliving their experiences for the complaints process**

- **A persistent fear of abusers** – Survivors remained fearful of a perpetrator(s), despite the individual(s) since being convicted of CSA/E and/or other offences. These fears were compounded by their distrust of the police.
- **Mental and physical health issues** – In some cases, survivors considered, or tragically attempted, suicide.
- **Behaviour resulting in criminal records** – The coercive nature of CSA/E was not always considered by the police when they responded to survivors’ behaviour. As a result, survivors found themselves in a situation where they were seen as responsible for criminal outcomes with little regard given by the police to their age, vulnerability, or wider circumstances. This left some survivors labelled as ‘criminals’¹⁶, with little trust in the police.

¹⁶ Examples we have seen include, being arrested/charged for being drunk and disorderly, possession of drugs and/or handling stolen goods when perpetrators provided the alcohol/drugs/goods. Also, instances of assaults when girls were encouraged to assault other girls by perpetrators.

‘No one was to be trusted how can the police have been trusted when they treated us like child prostitutes and troubled children’ – **a survivor**

- **An inability to remember events** – Survivors had trouble recalling specific, non-recent incidents, and their recollections were further hampered by the abuse and disruption they had experienced.
- **Feelings towards their perpetrator(s)** – This could be, amongst other things, a sense of fear, (especially if the person was never prosecuted), or a form of misplaced loyalty.

Throughout Operation Linden, many survivors did not always feel ready to speak to us so we wrote to them explaining how they could contact us when they felt able.

We wanted survivors to trust us but knew that would take time. We always tried to be flexible in our approach. Some opted to speak through their solicitor or support worker about what happened, rather than directly with us.

If a survivor did want to speak to us, we worked with other agencies to ensure there was appropriate support.¹⁷ We always tried to give survivors timely explanations about what was happening by meeting them as soon as possible.

We have used learning from this work to develop our Witness Information Survivor Engagement (WISE) service that ensures we put survivors first, and that each has a dedicated single point of contact. For Operation Linden our wider Survivor Engagement Management¹⁸ (SEM) team ensured survivors, and their families, received the right support, including signposting to guidance and services such as the local Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Service (ISVA),¹⁹ with whom we liaised closely. Our SEM team continues to advise investigators more widely about the best ways to engage with vulnerable people and is an important resource for understanding our CSA/E-related work.²⁰

¹⁷ Throughout Operation Linden, we worked closely with other agencies in contact with survivors and this, amongst other things, helped us to streamline processes for survivors to minimise any distress. We also tried to signpost survivors' families to support, where this was appropriate, such as Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation (PACE) UK.

¹⁸ In 2017, SEM's role was expanded to offer support to all IOPC colleagues carrying out investigations involving vulnerable witnesses and survivors.

¹⁹ Victims and survivors have access to an ISVA who can provide a range of one-to-one specialist support and impartial information. A CSA/E victim or survivor does not need to report an offence to the police, or make a formal complaint, to benefit from the ISVA service.

²⁰ SEM's work includes collaborating with survivors for a personalised plan that acknowledges their individual experience(s) that can often result in complex needs. Plans may include a risk assessment and care plan. SEM team members sometimes accompany investigators to interviews and visit potentially vulnerable people.

Our communications with survivors during and after our investigations have included:

- Personalised monthly updates (sent more regularly when needed)
- Detailed investigation outcome letters sent to each complainant to aid understanding of our investigative findings²¹
- Notifications of all briefings, including those for the media
- Early copies of all public reports related to Operation Linden.

²¹ The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic delayed our plans to hand-deliver some investigation outcome letters to survivors. This had a negative impact on our ability to engage with some survivors. However, we maintained contact with the local ISVA service which helped us understand how survivors were coping and whether they would like to meet with us virtually.

About our investigations

In 2014, the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) started investigations into complaints and allegations received from survivors and others, about SYP's handling of reports of CSA/E. We continued the IPCC investigations and instigated new ones, after replacing the Commission (in January 2018).²²

The challenges we faced throughout Operation Linden included the non-recent nature of allegations making it difficult to:

- identify the right information we needed for evidence
- obtaining individuals' recollections of specific incidents given the time that had elapsed
- survivors' poor health, which had an impact on our evidence gathering.

These challenges were compounded by the complexity of investigations and SYP's poor record keeping.

Our evidence gathering continued throughout 2020/21 after we received two further complaints for investigation, one is now concluded, and the other investigation is ongoing. It is possible we will receive new referrals to investigate, as well as see more survivors come forward to make us aware of matters for independent investigation.

²² This change was made as a result of the *Policing and Crime Act 2017*.

The outcomes of our investigations

As a result of our investigations for Operation Linden, we have:

- Upheld 43 complaint allegations, a summary of allegations is at Annex B.
- Found eight officers had a case to answer for misconduct and found six officers had a case to answer for gross misconduct²³. A summary of the outcome of cases where we found a case to answer for misconduct, or for gross misconduct is at Annex C. The Appropriate Authority (in this case SYP) was responsible for arranging any misconduct proceedings,²⁴ including any requiring an independent panel. You can [read more about our investigation process](#) on our website.
- Identified 14 officers who demonstrated unsatisfactory performance, or who received management words of advice.

Our full report covers the outcome of our investigations in detail, including a description of allegations and complaints.

²³ Of the six cases identified as gross misconduct, two went to a hearing organised by the Appropriate Authority, three officers were retired and therefore we found they would have had a case to answer for gross misconduct, had they still been serving. One officer we could not identify, but, if we had been able to, they would have been served with a notice of investigation at gross misconduct level.

²⁴ It was decided that in relation to the Police Professional Standards of Behaviour, mostly officers had not carried out and fulfilled their duties and responsibilities, although further breaches related to the standard of honesty and integrity not being met and, in one case, confidentiality.

Annex A: Outcomes – key statistics and details about Operation Linden

Full details of conduct matters, complaints and their outcomes, and one managed investigation is available in our full Operation Linden Report.

- A total of 93 investigations to date (92 of which are concluded)
- We upheld 43 complaint allegations
- Eleven conduct matters referred to us by SYP, some from *The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation* by Alexis Jay, OBE
- Eight cases to answer against officers for misconduct and six cases to answer against officers for gross misconduct
- Fifty-one individual complainants
- Two hundred and sixty-five separate allegations made by made by 51 individual complainants comprising 44 survivors, three family members and four third parties
- One managed investigation, referred by SYP, in May 2015, about conduct matters involving a Detective Constable. The IPCC Commissioner²⁵ made the decision it would become a managed investigation
- Forty-seven subject officers
- Consideration of nearly 20,000 documents, 800 investigation statements and more than 1,300 exhibits logged.

²⁵ The assessment unit now decides on the mode of investigation.

Annex B:

A summary of complaint allegations we upheld

<p>SYP did not deal properly with information that could have led to a CSA/E perpetrator being prosecuted earlier for their crimes.</p>
<p>SYP did not take safeguarding action despite officers regularly stopping a car the survivor was a passenger in, and that was owned and occupied by a perpetrator.</p>
<p>SYP did not investigate an older man after they were found undressed in a bedroom with the survivor.</p>
<p>SYP did not respond appropriately in a child abduction case which ended with the survivor being handed over to officers by the CSA/E perpetrator as part of a 'deal' not to arrest him.</p>
<p>SYP's dealings with the survivor were not in line with appropriate policy and guidelines.</p>
<p>Officers did not follow the right procedures when removing the survivor from a CSA/E perpetrator's house.</p> <p>Officers did not act appropriately after questioning a man after the survivor's return trip with him.</p> <p>The force did not do enough to secure a prosecution for men who exploited the survivor, or to obtain a disclosure from them about sexual abuse.</p> <p>That officers who responded to an assault the survivor reported did not take appropriate action, or follow the right procedures, when they told them their assailant had had a firearm.</p>
<p>Police did nothing after approaching a parked car which the survivor and their sister were sat in with a CSA/E perpetrator, and this was despite the perpetrator mentioning that they had just had a sexual act performed on them by a survivor.</p>
<p>The police missed safeguarding opportunities including when a traffic officer stopped a CSA/E perpetrator's car, when the survivor was alone with them.</p>
<p>A survivor's father spoke to the police about their daughter and sexual abuse and told us that the officer said to him nothing could be done because of racial tensions and this had been happening for a considerable time.</p>
<p>SYP was aware of suspects involved in CSA/E from the mid-1990's and, despite this, failed to adequately deal with perpetrators, leaving the survivor exposed to abuse.</p>

The survivor felt they had not been given the opportunity to raise their concerns safely with police after they said they had been befriended by an older woman who introduced them to older men who sexually abused them.

The police took insufficient action to safeguard the survivor after a specific incident.

The police did not safeguard the survivor after an incident involving them being driven to Bristol by two men.

There was police inaction following concerns, in 2008, that the survivor was being sexually exploited, had been raped, and police did not record concerns relating to the exploiters.

The survivor tried to report a rape again in 2011, this time to a specialist sexual offences support officer at SYP's Apollo Unit, but the survivor said the unit was unhelpful.

That the police did not do enough when the survivor, and another survivor, ran away from two men who were being aggressive and followed them by car.

The police actively recorded concerns the survivor was at risk of CSA/E but did not investigate a number of incidents they were aware of.

The police disclosed personal information about the survivor during a 2010 investigation into abuse of another survivor by the same man.

When the survivor formally complained about the above, they were assured the officer responsible would be reprimanded but that the survivor was not advised this had happened.

On three separate occasions, the survivor was in a CSA/E perpetrator's car when he was approached by the police, and officers failed to safeguard them or investigate the incidents further.

The survivor complained that SYP knew the perpetrator was involved in CSA/E but failed to stop them.

The survivor who had been found after going missing, was taken to a police station but was, unacceptably, transported and locked in a small room.

The survivor also complained that police officers regularly saw them in older men's cars, but usually left them with them, sometimes in remote locations, unless the survivor had been reported missing from home.

Police did nothing after approaching a parked car they were in, with another survivor, and a CSA/E perpetrator.

The survivor was groomed and sexually exploited by a network of men and that SYP did nothing to protect them despite the force knowing of some of the perpetrators' links to CSA/E.

The survivor complained that police allowed the man to make a phone call from the police station and that he rang them, although their mother answered, and made further violent threats.

A survivor's mother heard about their daughter's risk via social services as opposed to the police, despite the survivor being involved in SYP operations.

A formal referral was not made to social services, after a survivor was discovered by police at a house after they had responded to reports of a gunshot.

Officers failing to recognise a survivor's vulnerability and did not submit 'concern for child' forms, to PPU, following incidents.

The force should have done more to protect the survivor earlier than they did, when they became a witness in Operation Central.

Police did not conduct an effective investigation into the survivor's suspected rape.

An unidentified officer told the survivor's father that they might 'learn her lesson' after a suspected rape had happened.

SYP did not do enough to find the survivor after they went missing from home.

The survivor felt 'blamed' by officers they came into contact with.

While some efforts had been taken to respond to instances of abuse, there was an overall failure by SYP to understand CSA/E and take action to address it more strategically and consistently.

Where we did not uphold a complaint the main reasons for this were:

- Lack of evidence to prove allegation(s).
- We could not identify subject officers and witnesses.
- Older policies and procedures were either not available or unclear to us.
- Evidence of police action was found but the survivor was unaware of the action(s) that the police had taken.

Annex C: Outcomes where there was a case to answer

Please see notes for an explanation of this table.

Case	Our findings, agreed with SYP ²⁶ where there was found to be a case to answer	Outcome ²⁷
1 finalised	Case to answer, gross misconduct – hearing organised by SYP	Final written warning issued April 2021
1 finalised	Case to answer, gross misconduct – hearing organised by SYP	Case dismissed – no case to answer
3 finalised	Case to answer, gross misconduct	No further action – individual retired
1 finalised	Case to answer, misconduct – misconduct meeting organised by SYP	Written warning issued August 2018
1 finalised	Case to answer, misconduct	Management action – words of advice issued January 2017
1 finalised	Case to answer, misconduct	Management action – words of advice issued December 2017
4 finalised	Case to answer, misconduct	No further action – individual retired
1 finalised	Unsatisfactory performance	Management action – words of advice issued November 2017

²⁶ Under the *Police Reform Act 2002* (PRA) our findings, resulting from our independent investigation(s), and relating to individual officers, can be reviewed by the Appropriate Authority (the relevant police force). In some instances, this can result in a final decision of ‘no case to answer’ or an outcome recommended, where ‘management advice’ is given.

²⁷ This is determined, in the case of gross misconduct, by an independent panel, chaired by a legally qualified individual

Notes

- (i) *In some instances, only specific allegations were found to have a case to answer, and these are included in the Table. Allegations where there was no case to answer are not included.*
- (ii) *In some instances, it is agreed that the officer should receive 'words of advice/management advice' and where this is the case this, it is not always recorded by SYP and is not included in the Table.*
- (iii) *Where an officer transfers to another force then an outcome is not recorded against SYP's figures, despite our investigation findings/recommendations. The outcome is then recorded against the new police force.*

Published June 2022

© IOPC 2022

OGL This is licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0
except where otherwise stated.

This does not include material on this site as belonging to third parties.
Authorisation to use such material must be obtained from the copyright holders concerned.

To find out more about our work or to request this report
in an alternative format, you can contact us in a number of ways:

Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC)
10 South Colonnade Canary Wharf London E14 4PU
Tel: **0300 020 0096**
Email: enquiries@policeconduct.gov.uk
Website: www.policeconduct.gov.uk
Text relay: **18001 020 8104 1220**

We welcome telephone calls in Welsh
Rydym yn croesawu galwadau ffôn yn y Gymraeg