OLDHAM SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD & OLDHAM SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

One Chance Rule: So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse Procedure and Guidance

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If you would like to make any comments or suggest changes to this guidance, please contact: OldhamSafeguardingAdultsBoard@oldham.gov.uk.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

This document has been developed to assist practitioners working with children and adults in Oldham to respond to So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse (HBVA) concerns. It is important that this document is used alongside any existing safeguarding policies and procedures within individual agencies.

So-Called HBVA is where the person, families or other social groups are being punished by their family or their community. They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour. In disobeying this correct code of behaviour, the person shows a lack of conformity and therefore brings shame and dishonour to the family who have failed to control them and ensure that they behave in a manner befitting the expectations of their community.

So-Called HBVA can be distinguished from other forms of abuse, as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and community members. Victims will often have multiple perpetrators, not only in the UK. So-Called HBVA is a violation of human rights and a specific category of domestic abuse. So-Called HBVA generally occurs in domestic settings and can involve a range of offending behaviours.

1.2 Defining So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse

There is no statutory definition of Honour-Based Abuse. There is no specific offence of 'honour-based crime'. It is an umbrella term encompassing various offences covered by existing legislation.

The National Police Chief Council and Crown Prosecution Service define 'Honour-Based Abuse' as:

> *'An incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour.'*

Karma Nirvana is a charity for victims and survivors of Honour-Based Abuse in the UK, specialising in providing support for people impacted by Honour-Based Abuse and Forced Marriage. Karma Nirvana's Survivor Ambassador Panel developed their own definition of Honour-Based Abuse:

> *'Honour-Based Abuse is a complex issue that can manifest itself in different ways; includes a range of harms and abuses; and can be perpetrated by a range of people. Honour-Based Abuse is any incident or pattern of controlling; coercive; manipulative; intimidating; or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse perpetrated by one or more family, extended family, and/or community members and/or current/former intimate partners in response to perceived or alleged transgressions of accepted behaviours. While most often perpetrated against women and girls, anyone can experience honour based abuse regardless of age, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, or gender, including men and boys.*
>
> *It can encompass but is not limited to psychological, emotional, physical, sexual, spiritual and faith-related, economic, financial, and hate-aggravated abuse; forced marriage; female genital mutilation; abduction; isolation; threats; murder; and other acts of domestic abuse.*
>
> *People living in the context of an honour dynamic face additional barriers to their ability to speak out against and report abuse for fear of repercussions including further and more severe abuse; shame; stigma; and being shunned/ostracised.'*

There is no 'honour' in abuse or justification for abusing the human rights of others; this is why the terminology is often prefaced with 'So-Called'.

2. Why does So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse Happen?

2.1 So-Called HBVA may occur when the perpetrator(s) perceive that a person (or persons) has shamed the family or community by breaking an honour code ('Izzat' is an Urdu word which means protecting family honour or reputation). It may occur when perpetrator(s) seek to protect perceived cultural and/or religious ideals (misguided or dated) or as a response to family, community or peer group pressure

The violence and abuse used can include planning, premeditation and family or community conspiracy; often the belief held is that the victim(s) is 'deserving' of the punishment.

2.2 So-Called HBVA is perpetrated for a number of reasons:

Refusal of Familial Norms

- To control perceived immoral behaviour including:
  - Defying parental authority
  - Use of drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes
  - Possession and/or use of a mobile telephone
  - Inappropriate make-up or dress
  - Becoming 'westernised' in style of clothes, make-up, behaviour and attitudes
  - Being a victim of rape or other serious sexual assault

Sexual Behaviours/ Relationships

- To prevent unsuitable relationships
- To control sexuality (including perceived promiscuity or being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender)
- To control perceived immoral behaviour including:
  - Kissing or showing other forms of intimacy in public
  - Talking to the opposite sex or having a secret boyfriend/girlfriend
  - Inter-faith relationships

Marriage Customs

- To strengthen family links
- To ensure wealth, property or land is retained within the family
- To assist claims for residence and citizenship in the UK
- To control perceived immoral behaviour including:
  - Sex before marriage
  - Wishing to marry outside of faith
  - Leaving a spouse or seeking a divorce
  - Having sex, relationships and/or pregnancy outside of marriage
  - Rejecting a forced marriage.

2.3 Family honour can be perceived to be damaged by rumours and gossip that is not true but believed to be true by other members of the community.

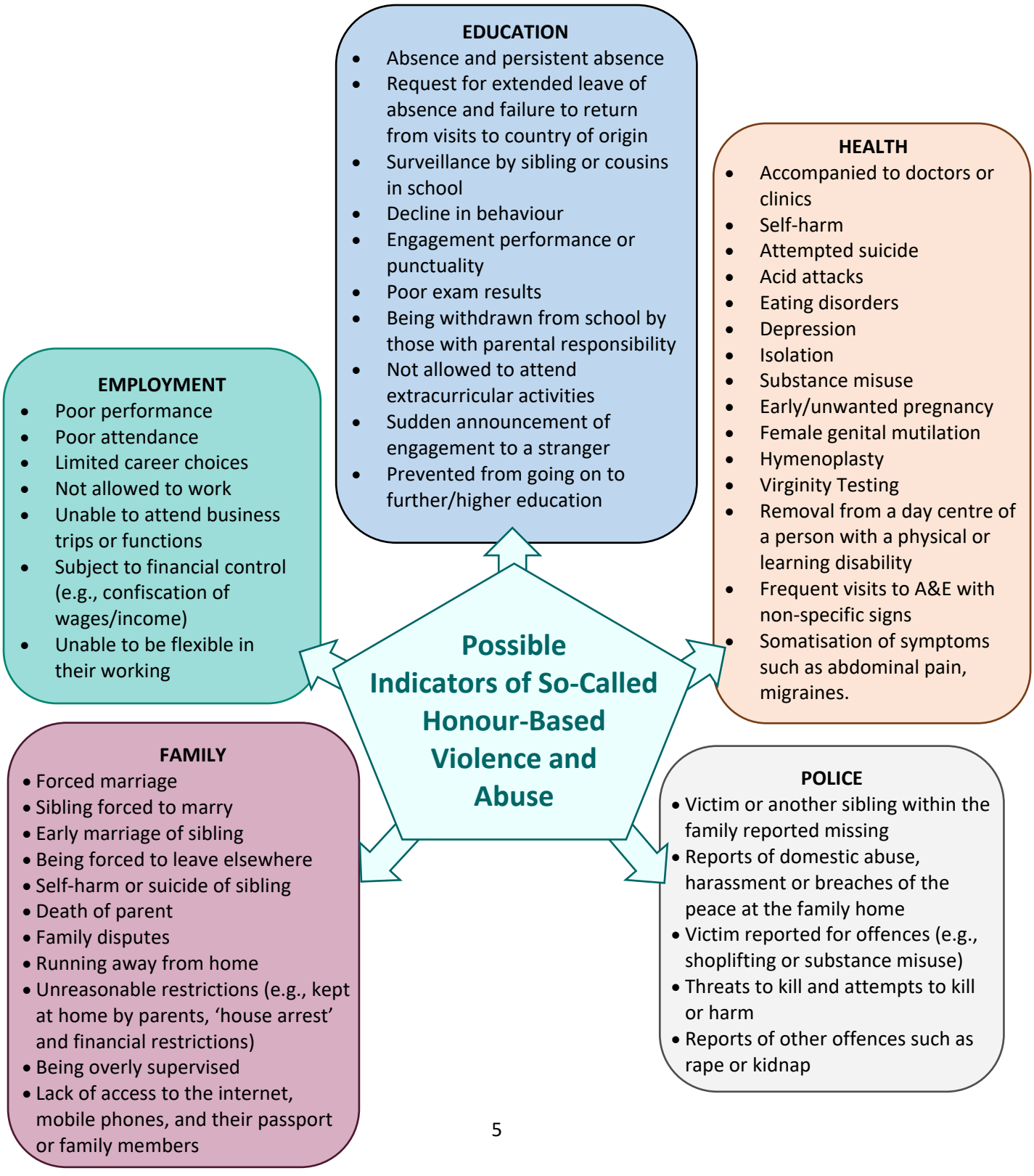
2.4 Marital infidelity, infertility, not being able to get married, epilepsy, schizophrenia, family problems, financial problems and other issues are experienced in every community however, some communities blame everyday problems on black magic or spirit (jinn) possession. This arises from the fact that Muslims believe in jinn (supernatural creatures made from fire) as they are mentioned in the Quran. Genuine beliefs can be held by families, carers, religious leaders, congregations, and the children themselves that evil forces are at work, may have entered a child, young person or adult and is controlling them or that a person is able to use an evil force to harm others and themselves, going against 'honour' codes.

2.5 Connected language includes the use of terms such as black magic, the evil eye, voodoo, juju, demons, child sorcerers, and the spirit world. Families can be deeply worried by the evil that they believe is threatening them, and abuse often occurs when an attempt is made to 'exorcise' the evil. Exorcism is the religious practice of expelling demonic spirits or other malevolent entities from a person. The rituals used can include beating, burning, scalding, cutting, stabbing, strangulation, isolation, starvation or use of a Taveez (an amulet or charm).

3. Possible Indicators of So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse

3.1 Karma Nirvana has developed a useful So-Called HBVA Identification Tool to support practitioners to identify potential So-Called HBVA. It is recommended that practitioners review a guidance document before using the tool. The tool scores the individual's answers for the likelihood of So-Called HBVA being present. It does not evaluate cases for risk. Referrals to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) in relation to forced marriage must be made using the Greater Manchester MARAC Referral Form (see section 7.5 and 7.6).

3.2 Victims can display a wide range of behaviours indicative to any level of abuse and neglect. Practitioners should make themselves aware of the potential indicators related to experiencing So-Called HBVA directly or indirectly. These include:



4. Impact on Victims

4.1 Abusive Consequences of Breaking 'Honour' Codes

Isolation is one of the biggest problems facing those trapped in, or under threat of violence. Many people who experience abuse will not even discuss their worries with their friends for fear their families may find out.

Other consequences for the victim include:

- Ostracism/disownment of the victim by their family and community
- Physical/emotional abuse of the victim by family and community
- Restriction of freedom/loss of independence for the victim
- Isolation from their family and community, but also being on 'house arrest' or kept from seeing friends
- Internalisation of guilt/shame by the victim and feeling conflicted for not wanting to hurt or shame their family or community
- Forced marriage
- Being sent (or threatened) to live elsewhere, either in the UK or overseas.

4.2 Ongoing Risk

So-Called HBVA means that the victim is at significant risk of actual physical harm, neglect and emotional harm through the threat of, or witnessing of violence. Families may feel shame long after the incident that brought about 'dishonour' occurred; therefore, the risk of serious harm to a child or adult can persist.

5. Types of So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse

5.1 So-Called HBVA can take many forms, and includes the following crimes:

- **Domestic Abuse** – Various forms of domestic abuse are illegal and are covered under laws aimed at protecting individuals from abuse in all forms, including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse, among others, as well as coercive control (see Oldham Domestic Abuse Policy)
- **Child Marriage** – It is illegal in England and Wales to get married under the age of 18.
- **Forced Marriage** – Forced Marriage is illegal, and Forced Marriage Protection Orders (FMPOs) can be issued to protect individuals at risk (see OSAB & OSCP Forced Marriage Guidance and Procedure)
- **Virginity Testing** – As of 2022, Virginity testing is illegal in the UK under The Health and Care Act 2022.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** – FGM is a criminal offence under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, which applies to performing FGM within the UK, taking someone abroad to have FGM performed (even if the procedure is legal in that country), and assisting, encouraging, or arranging FGM, whether in the UK or abroad.

5.2 Crimes committed in the name of 'honour' include threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional or coercive control). Specific offences they may include common assault, inflicting Grievous Bodily Harm, harassment, kidnap, rape, threats to kill, and murder. Additionally, honour-based crimes could include:

- Attempted murder and murder
- Conspiracy to murder
- Manslaughter
- Procuring an abortion
- Encouraging or assisting suicide
- Conspiracy to commit a variety of assaults.

6. Working with Children, Young People and Adults

6.1 One Chance Rule

All practitioners working with victims of So-Called HBVA need to be aware of the '**One Chance Rule'**. A practitioner may only have **One Chance** to speak to a potential victim and have **One Chance** to save a life. This means that all practitioners working within statutory agencies need to be aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they become aware of potential So-Called HBVA cases. If the victim is not offered support following disclosure that **One Chance** opportunity may be lost.

DO:

- Take them seriously
- See them immediately and alone
- Conduct a risk assessment
- Complete a safety plan
- Respect their wishes and reassure them about confidentiality.

DO NOT:

- Send them away/back to the family home against their wishes
- Approach members of the family or friends or others within their community without their explicit consent
- Share information without consent/Breach their confidentiality, unless this is necessary to ensure their safety.

Mediation arbitration, reconciliation and family counselling involving the family, friends or members of the community can place a person in danger and should not be undertaken as a response to So-Called HBVA concerns. Any unsupervised contact with their family needs to be carefully assessed as it can place the victim at risk of further emotional abuse or lead to pressure being placed on them to return home. However, if the victim does wish to go home or talk to their family all the risks should be explained and a safety plan put in place.

Concerns should not be discussed with the victim's family or friends, and/or information should not be shared with other agencies without the express consent of the victim, unless it is necessary to protect the victim. Practitioners must think very carefully about the need to disclose information and to whom it may be disclosed. Disclosure may lead to the victim's estrangement from the family and increase the likelihood of them suffering significant harm. If approached, parents may deny that the child, young person or adult is at threat of violence or abuse, move the child or young person, expedite any travel arrangements and bring forward any perpetration of violence/abuse.

Do not use family members, friends, neighbours or those with influence in the community as interpreters; victims may feel embarrassed to discuss personal issues in front of them and sensitive information may be passed on to others and place the victim in danger. Furthermore, such an interpreter may deliberately mislead practitioners and/or encourage the person to drop the complaint and submit to their family's wishes. Practitioners should consult their agency's policies and procedures relating to the use of interpreters.

6.2 Identifying So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse

There is a common misconception that So-Called HBVA is confined to certain religious groups and cultures, but this is not the case. So-Called HBVA can happen regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, age, gender, and sexuality.

The primary concern is for the safety of the victim. The nature of So-Called HBVA is such that agencies may have only **One Chance** to respond to the needs of the victim. Ultimately, to fail to do so may result in injury or death.

7. Responding to So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse

7.1 Greater Manchester Police

Whilst there is no specific offence of So-Called HBVA, perpetrators may be prosecuted for a variety of offences, such as threatening behaviour, conspiracy, assault, kidnap, abduction, rape and murder. Greater Manchester Police should be informed immediately on 101 if any child or adult is believed to be at risk of So-Called HBVA. If the risk is immediate, contact Greater Manchester Police on 999.

7.2 Children

7.2.1 Safeguarding Procedures

Any individual or agency who receives information or has reason to believe that a child or young person is at risk of, or subject to, So-Called HBVA has a duty to contact/refer to the police and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for children. The Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual must be followed.

How to Make a Child Safeguarding Referral

Who should you contact?

Contact the Oldham Child Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):
Tel: 0161 770 7777 (8:40-17:00, Monday-Friday)
or Out of Hours Tel: 0161 770 6936

Email: child.mash@oldham.gov.uk

Online Referral Form

If known, you should speak with the Children's Social Care team involved in the child's care.

- Contact the police immediately if you think a crime has been committed.
- In an emergency telephone **999**
- Report non-urgent police matters via telephone **101** or via the GMP 'Report a Crime' webpage

7.2.2 Risk Assessment

All cases should involve a risk assessment using the DASH-RIC risk model. For those age 15 years old or younger, complete a Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-Based violence (DASH) Checklist for Young People**.** For those age 16 years old or older complete a DASH Checklist.

7.3 Adults

7.3.1 Adults with Care and Support Needs

The Care Act 2014 states that adult safeguarding duties apply where a Local Authority has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area (whether or not ordinarily resident) and that adult has:

a) needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs) and

b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

The Care Act states an adult has needs for care and support if they are over the age of 18; their needs arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness; as a result of their needs they are unable to achieve two or more specified outcomes; and as a consequence there is, or is likely to be, a significant impact on the adult's well-being.

7.3.2 Duty to Undertake Enquiries

If an adult who may have needs for care and support or who may lack capacity is believed to be at risk of So-Called HBVA, this is a safeguarding adult issue (as well as a criminal matter). Where this is suspected, under Section 42 of the Care Act the Local Authority has a duty to undertake (or cause others to undertake) enquiries (following the OSAB Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures) to establish if this is the case and if so, determine what steps should be taken to stop or protect the adult from abuse. if there is reasonable cause to believe that the person has care and support needs then a referral should be made to Adult MASH.

How to Make an Adult Safeguarding Referral

Who should you contact?

Contact the Oldham Adult Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):
Tel: 0161 770 7777 (8:40-17:00, Monday-Friday)
or Out of Hours Tel: 0161 770 6936

Email: adult.mash@oldham.gov.uk

Online Referral Form

If known, you should speak with the Adult Social Care team known to be involved in the adult's care.

- Contact the police immediately if you think a crime has been committed.
- In an emergency telephone **999**
- Report non-urgent police matters via telephone **101** or via the GMP 'Report a Crime' webpage

7.3.3 Adults without Care and Support Needs

In cases where an adult does not have care and support needs and is at risk of So-Called HBVA, the case will be dealt with by police in accordance with the local MARAC procedures and the Oldham Domestic Abuse Policy.

7.3.4 Non-Statutory Enquires

Non-statutory enquiries may be carried out by the Local Authority on behalf of an adult who is believed to be experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, but does not have care and support needs. Local Authorities are not required by law to carry out enquiries for these individuals and do so at their own discretion. This may include adult victims of forced marriage, so-called honour-based violence and abuse and anti-social abuse behaviour.

7.3.5 Risk Assessment

All cases should involve a risk assessment using the DASH-RIC risk model. For adults complete a DASH Checklist.

7.4 Agency Safeguarding Leads

All organisations should have a lead person with overall responsibility for safeguarding children and adults and protecting victims of domestic abuse. The same person should lead responding to So-Called HBVA concerns. Although frontline staff should contact their agency lead as soon as possible, there may be occasions when they will need to gather some information from the victim to establish the facts and assist with referrals.

7.5 So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse as Domestic Abuse

So-Called HBVA is a very specific form of domestic abuse. The Government definition of domestic violence and abuse, which is not a legal definition, includes So-Called Honour-based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. This procedure and guidance should therefore be read in conjunction with the Oldham Domestic Abuse Policy.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as abusive behaviour of a person over the age of 16 towards another person over the age of 16 to whom they are 'personally connected'. Abusive behaviour can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological or emotional abuse.

Controlling Behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive Behaviour is an act of a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation, and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim.

Economic abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services.

Whilst men can be victims, statistics consistently show that women and girls are disproportionately affected by crimes of Domestic Abuse and So-Called HBVA. Controlling or coercive behaviour is primarily a form of violence against women and girls and is underpinned by wider societal gender inequality. This can contribute to the ability of the offender to retain power and control and ultimately the ability of the victim to access support and leave safely. It is therefore important to consider the role of gender in the context of power and control in a relationship when identifying controlling or coercive behaviour in heterosexual relationships.

7.6 The Domestic Abuse, Stalking, and Honour-Based Violence Risk Identification Checklist (DASH-RIC)

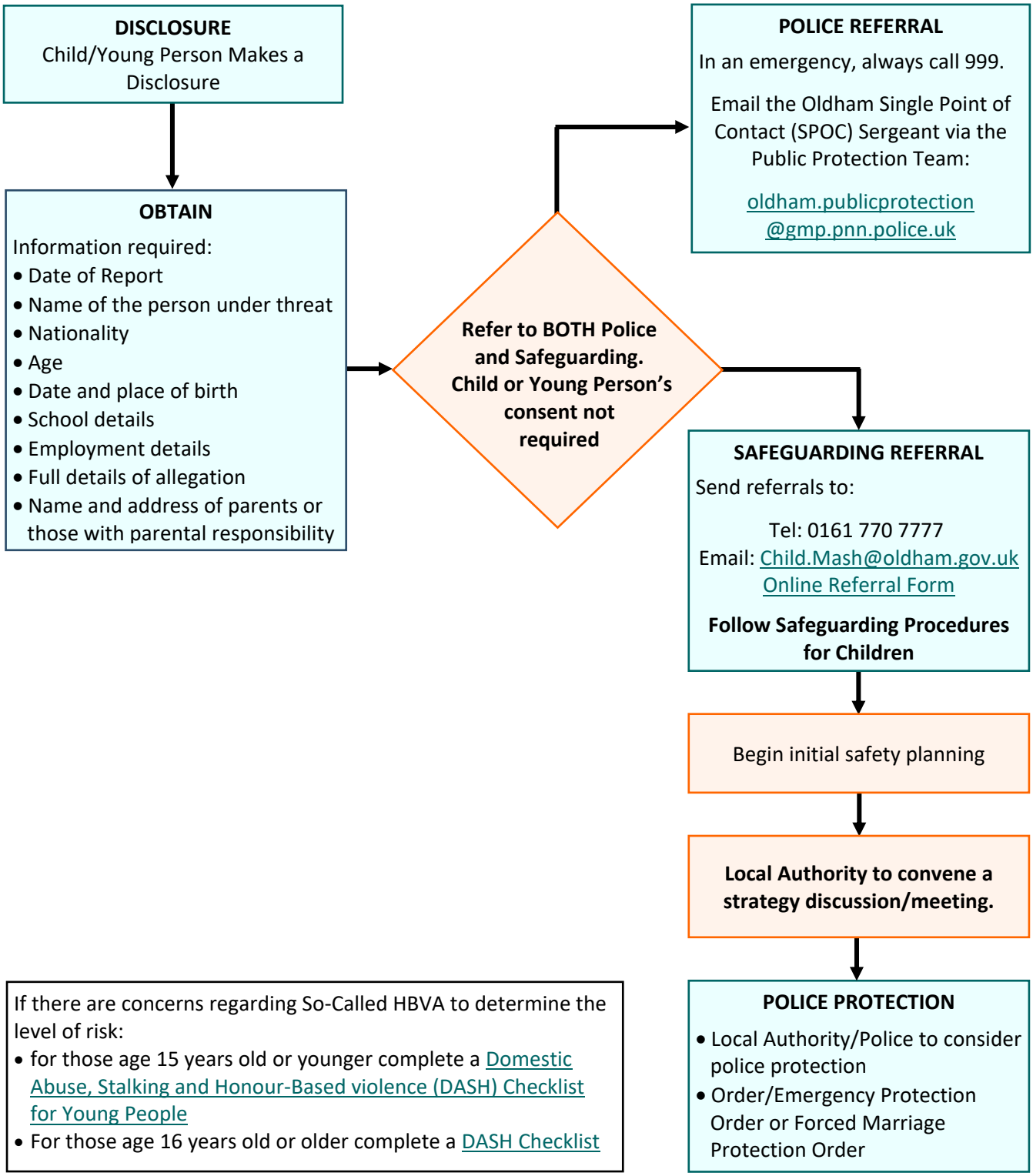
The DASH-RIC Risk model is a risk assessment tool for all practitioners who work with victims of Domestic Abuse including So-Called HBVA. The purpose of the DASH risk assessment checklist is to provide a consistent and simple tool for practitioners who work with adult victims of Domestic Abuse to identify those at high risk of harm and cases which should be referred to MARAC in order to manage the risk.

The DASH-RIC is an evidence-based list of questions about which factors are present in a domestic abuse situation. Professional judgement is a key factor in considering the points score from the DASH-RIC especially when it has resulted in a lower score than expected as this may be indicative that the victim is too afraid to disclose certain aspects of abuse. Any risk assessment is likely to benefit from information sharing between agencies and the personal judgement of practitioners.

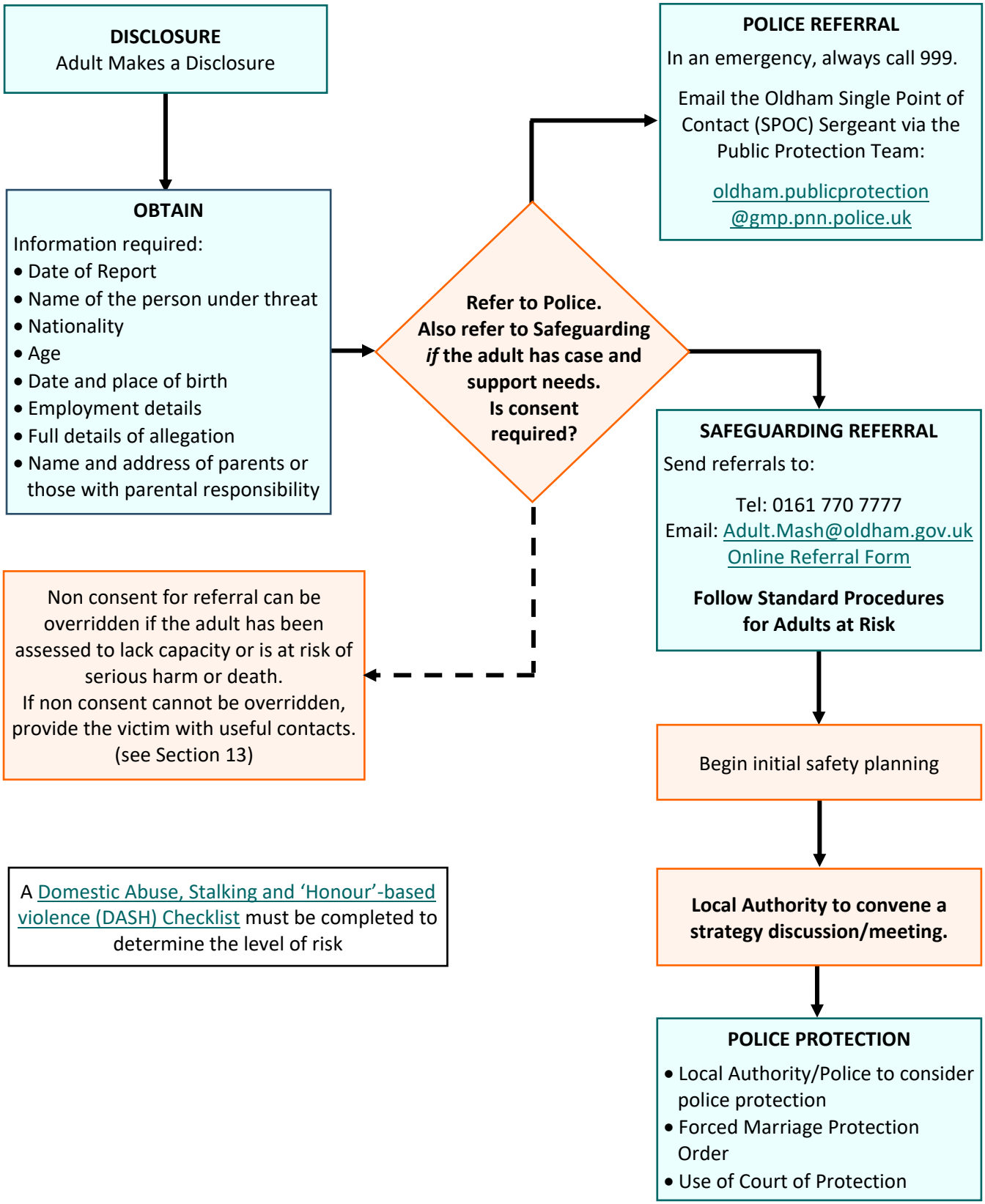
In addition, practitioners working with adults who have care and support needs should be aware that the DASH-RIC was designed to assess the risk to women and children and is known to have limitations for identification of the risk factors experienced by disabled and older people.

For further information see the Greater Manchester MARAC Referral Form and Domestic Abuse Support in Oldham - Questions to Ask Victims and Pathways.

8. Child/Young Person So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse Flowchart



9. Adults So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse Flowchart



10. Procedures Following Initial Reporting

10.1 Medical Assessment

It may be necessary to arrange an investigative Medical Assessment for emotional or physical illness or to give attention to injuries, this should be undertaken with the necessary consents. However, there must be consideration as to whether using a medical practitioner from the local ethnic community may jeopardise or threaten the security of the victim. If potential risk is identified, medical assistance is to be sought through another route.

If a medical is being considered contact either the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust duty Safeguarding Children Team on NCAchildrensafeguarding@nca.nhs.uk or the duty Safeguarding Adults Team: adult.safeguarding@pat.nhs.uk, up to 17:00 and discuss the timing of the medical. If the medical is felt to be urgent and needs to be completed that day and it is too late to conduct a medical at a Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust site, the duty team will liaise with the relevant hospital doctors. If the medical can wait until the following day an appointment will be agreed.

If a child is under 18 months or it is out of office hours, contact must be made with relevant hospital.

10.2 Specialist Honour-Based Violence IDVA

Oldham has a team of specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advisors in addition to a specialist Officer who deals with cases of So-Called Honour-Based Violence and Abuse (including forced marriage and FGM). The team can be consulted with if you have any concerns that you would like to discuss:

- General Duty Tel: 0161 770 1572
- Email: idaa.service@oldham.gov.uk

10.3 Strategy Discussion/Meeting

In line with the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures and the OSAB Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures, following receipt of the referral concerning So-Called HBVA for a child or adult with care and support needs, the partners within Adults or Children MASH must convene a strategy discussion/meeting.

The strategy meeting/discussion should recognise the police responsibility to initiate and undertake a criminal investigation as appropriate. Advice regarding decisions relating to legal proceedings should be sought from the Local Authority Legal Advisor.

No contact should be made with the family until strategy has been an agreed with the police due to the need to consider the possible protection of the victim from abuse/disappearance.

Following the strategy meeting/discussion, Social Care and the police should arrange to see the victim on their own in a secure and private place. Consideration should be given to the practitioners allocated to talk with the victim. The victim may want to be seen by a person of the same gender and may also want to talk to someone from their own community - or to avoid talking to someone from their own community.

Social Care must:

- Give the victim advice on personal safety
- Consider the possible need for immediate protection and placement away from the family
- Discuss with police any concerns for the safety of any other child, young person or vulnerable adult and any suspicion that a crime may have been committed.

Where the practitioners involved in the strategy discussion/meeting consider the victim is not in immediate danger, arrangements should be made for a Child Protection Enquiry (Section 47 of the Children Act 1989) or

Safeguarding Enquiry (Section 42 of the Care Act 2014) to be undertaken and also for the victim to be provided with information on rights, choices, and support services in relation to So-Called HBVA.

For children, where an initial Child Protection Conference is convened and for adults, where a Case Conference is convened, care must be taken to manage information about the whereabouts of the victim. The Social Worker and their manager must discuss the arrangements with the Conference Chair and consider whether the family should be present at the same time as the victim.

At the close of the strategy discussion/meeting a date should be agreed to reconvene and discuss the outcomes. The date of this meeting should be dictated by the circumstances. Minutes from the strategy discussion/meeting should be circulated as soon as possible after the meeting. Any disagreement with the meeting or actions should be clearly recorded and any arrangements made for escalation. If a medical is to be arranged, a copy of the minutes should be taken to give to practitioner conducting the medical.

11. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

11.1 It is important for Police, Children's Social Care and Adults Social Care to obtain as much information as possible when a victim is first referred, as they may only have **One Chance** to speak to the referrer. A record should be taken of immediate personal details and the family details including any information about the need for an interpreter. Full details of the allegation should be recorded, including details of any threats or hostile actions against the victim. A record should also be made of the details of the person making the initial referral, including contact details and their relationship to the victim.

11.2 The practitioner interviewing the victim should:

- Discuss the range of options available to them and the possible consequences of each course of action
- Signpost them to an appropriate adviser and/or make the victim aware of rights to seek legal advice and representation
- Develop a 'cover story' - a plausible alternative reason for the victim to be at the social work office, police station etc, in case they are seen there.

11.3 At all times confidentiality and discretion are vitally important. Information about the victim and their whereabouts must be kept confidential. Access to all records should preferably be restricted to named members of staff to ensure that other employees cannot view information which may be subsequently unlawfully disclosed to the family and lead to family members being able to trace the victim.

11.4 Before making any enquiries, practitioners should consider whether there is a risk that the family will become aware that these enquiries are being made. When considering disclosure of confidential information to another person or agency, the victim should be informed, the reasons explained, and their consent sought as appropriate.

11.5 Practitioners should be aware that some families will be intent on finding the victim and private investigators have often been used to do this. Many times, the family may approach a third party such as a local Councillor or MP with an apparently reasonable request to contact the victim. Information must not be provided without checking with a manager and the victim first.

12. Support and Advice for Victims

12.1 Victims who Stay at Home

Victims who stay at home should be offered support regarding safety and escape plans including how to raise the alarm if there are concerns about increased risk to safety and having access to emergency money.

Consideration should be given to offering them the option to deposit their DNA, passport number, fingerprints and photograph with the police. It is essential to devise a discreet way of contacting them; this could include a code word to ensure that contact has been made with the right person. Consideration should also be given to the possibility that written communications including emails may be intercepted and that telephone communications may be detected, for example, through phone bills.

12.2 Victims who Wish to Leave Home

A victim who wishes to leave the family home will need a leaving strategy including where they could go in an emergency. If they are in immediate danger, it may be necessary to consider admission to Local Authority accommodation, an Emergency Protection Order or Police Protection. It would not be appropriate to rely on the extended family to provide a place of safety unless the victim can identify a relative who they absolutely trust. It may be necessary to place the victim outside their community and in a different Local Authority area.

12.3 Overseas Travel

A victim may be taken overseas to protect honour and/or they may be forced to marry. Any such concerns should be taken seriously. However, arrangements of an extended holiday should not be assumed to imply violence or that a forced marriage is planned.

As much of the following information as possible should be gathered so that action can be taken, if necessary:

- Obtain details of the person under threat:
  - Date of disclosure/initial concern
  - Name of person under threat
  - Full details of the allegation
  - Name of potential spouse and date of proposed wedding
  - Nationality
  - Age
  - Date and place of birth
  - Identify any distinguishing features such as birthmarks and tattoos
  - First language
  - Religion
  - Name and address of parents or those with parental responsibility and their dates of birth
  - School details
  - Employment details
  - Address oversees if the person is leaving the UK
  - Particular needs (i.e., hearing/visual impairment, Learning disability)
  - Passport details including passport number and place of issue.
- Every attempt should also be made to obtain:
  - Recent photograph
  - National insurance number
  - Driving licence number
  - Details of any travel plans (i.e., dates, flight numbers, airline, destination and date of departure and return)
  - Any addresses where the victim may be staying while overseas

Consideration should be given to taking the following actions:

- Giving the victim the address and phone number of the British Embassy in the country to which they are travelling
- Establishing a safe means to make contact with the victim, e.g. a mobile phone that will work overseas
- Encouraging the victim to memorise at least one telephone number and e-mail address
- Asking the victim for details of a trusted person in the UK with whom they will keep in contact whilst overseas, who will act on their behalf and who can be approached if they do not return
- Taking a written statement from the victim that they want the social worker (or another person) to act on their behalf if they do not return by a certain date
- Asking the victim to make contact on their return

- Recording some information that only the victim will know; this may help later in confirming their identity.

If there is a clear risk of violence or Forced Marriage and the risk is imminent, it may be necessary to take emergency action to remove a child or young person from home in order to protect them and prevent the travel abroad.

13. Resources and References

- 24 hour Women's Domestic Violence Helpline: Telephone: 0808 2000 247
- Asian Family Counselling Service: 020 8574 0912
- Careline: 0808 304 4525
- Child Line: 0800 1111
- Children's Legal Centre
- Forced Marriage and Learning Disabilities Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines - HM Government
- Forced Marriage of People with Learning Disabilities – Ann Craft Trust Podcast
- Forced Marriage Resource Pack - Home Office
- Forced Marriage Survivor's Handbook - Forced Marriage Unit
- Forced Marriage Unit: 020 7008 0151 or email: fmu@fco.gov.uk
- Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline/End the Fear: 0800 254 0909
- Greater Manchester Law Centre: 0161 769 2244
- Greater Manchester Victims' Services: 0800 876 6155
- Karma Nirvana: 0800 5999247
- Manchester Women's Aid: 0161 660 7999
- Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation
- NESTAC: 0161 975 6009
- NSPCC: 0800 800 5000 or Text: 0800 056 0566
- Oldham Citizen's Advice Bureau: 0808 278 7803
- Oldham Domestic Abuse Policy
- Oldham Domestic Abuse Strategy
- One Chance Rule Leaflet – Savera UK
- Reunite International Child Abduction Centre: 0116 255 6234
- Saheli Asian Women's Project: 0161 945 4187
- Savera UK: 0800 107 0726
- Southall Black Sisters: 020 8571 0800
- St Mary's Sexual Assault and Referral Centre (SARC): 0161 276 6515
- The Lotus Hub: 07894443756
- The Right to Choose: Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Forced Marriage

Appendix A: Greater Manchester Police Policy Statement

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) is committed to providing victims of 'Honour'-Based Abuse (HBA) and Forced Marriage (FM) with a level of service that fosters trust and encourages reporting. These forms of abuse are recognised as serious violations of human rights and are categorised under domestic abuse. Officers and staff must approach all incidents with this understanding, ensuring alignment with both the HBA policy and the overarching domestic abuse policy.

While the national definition of domestic abuse applies to individuals aged 16 and over, GMP will continue to treat all cases involving individuals under 18 as child protection matters.

A poor police response to HBA and FM can significantly undermine public confidence. Therefore, GMP's approach must be transparent, victim-centred, and free from bias or assumptions. We are committed to recognising HBA and FM as fundamental breaches of human rights and responding accordingly.

Victims of HBA may experience a wide range of harms, including serious physical assault and, in extreme cases, homicide—often perpetrated by family members. GMP is dedicated to developing safeguarding strategies that protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable, without stereotyping or stigmatising individuals or communities.

Offences Covered Under the GMP HBA Policy (August 2025):

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Virginity Testing and Hymenoplasty
- Forced Marriage
- Child Marriage
- Spiritual and Ritual Abuse
- 'Honour' Killings
- The One Chance Rule – Officers may only have one opportunity to engage with a potential victim and safeguard their life.

Policy Aims:

- Empower victims and survivors to report incidents and ensure their safety from further harm.
- Enhance the quality of service provided to victims and survivors of HBA.
- Ensure thorough investigation of incidents, placing the needs of victims and survivors at the centre of our response.
- Conduct comprehensive risk assessments to prevent future harm, including serious injury, homicide, or continued abuse.
- Strengthen collaboration with partner agencies to improve victim and survivor safety.
- Identify and engage with communities across Greater Manchester affected by HBA.
- Ensure all GMP personnel understand their responsibilities under this policy.
- Comply with national guidance on the reporting and recording of HBA, FM, and FGM-related crimes.

(GMP, August 2025)