



Police and Crime Commissioner  
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**FOI Response**

**Information provided under the Freedom of Information Act**

<b>Freedom of Information Request</b>	
<b>FOI Reference:</b> FOI FOI/OPCC/25-006	
<b>Date of Request:</b> 11/06/2025	<b>Date of Response:</b> 08/07/2025
<b>Information Requested:</b> I am writing to request the following under the Freedom of Information Act, regarding the use of risk assessment checklists in domestic abuse and related services provided or commissioned by your organisation:	
1.	<b>Question:</b> Is it a standard provision or requirement in contracts with third-party providers of relevant services (e.g. domestic abuse services, victim support), for them to use the DASH risk assessment checklist as part of their service?
2.	<b>Question:</b> Is it a standard provision or requirement in contracts with third-party providers of relevant services, for them to use the DARA risk assessment checklist?
	<b>OPCC Response to Questions 1 and 2:</b> The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough provides funding awards to people, services or organisations within the county. The funding is provided to enable the delivery of the objectives set out in the Police and Crime Plan 2024-28. It allows the Commissioner to fulfil

the statutory responsibilities placed upon him and be responsive to emerging local, regional and national issues.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (“OPCC”) follows an approach that is underpinned by the four stages of the ‘Commissioning Cycle’ and this strategy is followed in a way which is proportionate to the funding awarded.

The use of ‘grants’ enables the Commissioner to swiftly award funding to providers and to be responsive to emerging issues. Grants are defined as “*contributions to a specific or broad range of activities*” rather than a contractually agreed service specification. Contracts follow a formal procurement process and legally bind a provider to deliver an agreed service specification for a specified number of years.

Within both victim services grant agreements and contracts, service delivery is outlined within an embedded specification. The service requirements within the specification are developed through the gathering of local needs assessments, engagement with the public, listening to the views of potential service users and partners, and with clearly defined outcomes to be achieved. The provider will be monitored against the delivery of the service specification.

The specific aims of service delivery will vary, but all will include a standard reference to the provider developing operational procedures that include carrying out risk assessments and safety planning where appropriate, with details recorded on an independent ISO accredited Case Management System. Each OPCC victim support service specification will outline that the provider will undertake an assessment of need and risk, and in some service instances that the provider will use the DASH risk assessment checklist tool. Whilst every victim support service specification includes a standard reference to the provider developing operational procedures that include carrying out risk assessments and safety planning where appropriate, only in some service instances is it stated that the provider will use the DASH risk assessment checklist.

DASH and DARA are both risk assessment tools used in cases of domestic abuse, but they serve different purposes. DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking,

and Honour-based violence) is a broader risk assessment tool used by various agencies, historically including police, social services, and other professionals, to identify and understand the risk faced by victims. DARA (Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment) is a tool specifically designed for police first responders to quickly identify immediate risks and patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour.

Cambridgeshire Constabulary adhered to the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) guidelines which stated that DARA should be fully live by December 2024.

There was a two-year lead in period from when the College of Policing recommended forces, in November 2022, should move to DARA as the primary means to identify as assess the risk within domestic abuse incidents. This included a national pilot with three forces which enabled the refinement of DARA. Locally our Constabulary was already striving to improve their initial response to domestic abuse and that, combined with improvements in the local technology used and processes in place, guided the timescale set. As common place in the implementation of new processes, the Constabulary used a staged introduction using pilot teams in the north and south of the county. A force-wide training programme followed and from September 2024 DARA was operationally live in Cambridgeshire and being rolled out to 50 officers each week, risk assessing for all elements of DA, not just intimate partner violence.