



# UCL



## MASIP evaluation interim report

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## Glossary

BCU	Basic Command Unit
CAS	Case Analysis Summary Form
CBT	Cognitive behavioural therapy
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Groups
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Companies
DASH	Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-based violence - risk identification, assessment and management Model
EMMIE	An evaluation framework consisting of the dimensions of <u>E</u> ffect, <u>M</u> oderators, <u>M</u> echanisms, <u>I</u> mplementation and <u>E</u> conomics
FTAC	Fixated Threat Assessment Centre
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies
IASU	Integrated Anti-Stalking Unit (Cheshire)
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advocate
IPT	Interpersonal therapy
LAP	Local Area Partnership
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MOPAC	Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
NGO	Non-government organisation
NHS	National Health Service
OIC	(Police) officer in charge
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PMO	Project Management Office
SASH	Screening Assessment for Stalking and Harassment
SPJ	Structured professional judgement
SRP	Stalking Risk Profile
SCSQ	Stalking Case Screening Questionnaire
SSC	Strategic Steering Committee
STAC	Stalking Threat Assessment Centre (London)
VPA	Vulnerable Person's Assessment

## Executive summary

- The Multi-Agency Stalking Interventions Programme (MASIP) is a proof of concept project which aims to reduce the risk to, and impact of stalking, on victims by developing a multi-agency intervention model. This model coordinates activity around the victim and perpetrator<sup>1,2</sup> and incorporates a pathway which seeks to address the fixation and obsession in perpetrators that might be contributing to stalking offending. Funded by the Police Transformation Fund, and managed by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust (hereafter, the 'Trust'), MASIP seeks to draw expertise and intelligence across the multi-agency spectrum to inform the risk management process associated with managing stalking cases, and to offer interventions with perpetrators, a subset of which are clinical when appropriate.
- The overall evaluation uses a multi-method approach to support the EMMIE evaluation framework. This framework is concerned with drawing out not just whether an initiative works, but how, for whom, and under what conditions. The EMMIE framework has been designed to capture information (and interactions) between the *Effect* of an intervention, the *Mechanisms* causing the effect, the *Moderating* (i.e. contextual) conditions, crucial information on *Implementation* and data on *Economics*.
- This interim evaluation report is based on the findings from qualitative data collected during the early phase of the evaluation process (predominantly October – December 2018). It is a snapshot of the state of development in the partnership in the initial phase of the project and bears acknowledgement that the partnership has matured since. Various methods of data collection were used, which included semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, observations of meetings and analysis of documents provided by the Trust and partner agencies, as well as informal discussions with stakeholders (see section 2). The interview data was thematically analysed using NVIVO and conclusions were drawn as a result of discussion between the evaluation team members. Feedback on the report was solicited from the project Advisory Board, the Trust and all the key stakeholders involved.
- MASIP launched in March 2018 and is being piloted in three police areas: Cheshire, Hampshire and London. Key partners common to all local area partnerships (LAPs) are police, probation<sup>3</sup>, health, and victim advocates. The project is managed by the Trust. Due to their local context, and resources provided by MASIP, the LAPs differ with

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<sup>1</sup> We acknowledge that the terms 'victim' and 'perpetrator' are presumptive and imply that guilt has been found in a court of law. However, we use these terms throughout the report for simplicity.

<sup>2</sup> To conserve words footnotes are presented once - with cross-references made, when appropriate, later in the report.

<sup>3</sup> Albeit probation is not a fully funded partner in Cheshire, and only a part-time partner in Hampshire who works on an ad-hoc basis.

respect to unit composition, workflow process and the stage of maturity that their model has reached. Cheshire and Hampshire are building upon partnership models that pre-date MASIP and were already considered sites of innovative practice for managing stalking. London is an entirely new unit building on the expertise of FTAC, based in MPS premises, with responsibility for dealing with stalking cases pan-London. This responsibility, coupled with a lack of centralised partner agencies (e.g., NHS Trusts) in London, and a large volume of offences, means that the London LAP primarily acts as a hub of expertise that provides advice to partners, with interventions offered to perpetrators within all nine NHS Mental Health Trusts involved in MASIP. Hampshire LAP's remit is the geographical extent of Hampshire Police and has a dedicated mental health arm, through which interventions to perpetrators that are not signposted to existing services are delivered in-house. Cheshire's LAP has responsibility for dealing with stalking cases over the geographical area covered by Cheshire Police. Cheshire LAP is a risk management service which can also deliver in-house health interventions with perpetrators in the Warrington and Halton policing areas (a subset of Cheshire Police) when it is deemed appropriate. The three areas are discussed in more detail in section 3.

- The first six months of the project were designated as a set-up period (described in section 4). This was a period of intense activity to put in place the governance structures and processes required by the project. Many tasks relating to the set-up (e.g., the cascading of funding to partner agencies, the creation of collaborative agreements) had to break new ground and, consequently, this period was more resource intensive than first anticipated. Governance and administrative obstacles in the early stages of the project had a knock-on effect on recruitment, vetting and securing a police premise for the London LAP to work out of. Shared learning events in the early stage of the project, organised by the Trust in their capacity as project managers, served to develop a shared understanding of the vision of MASIP, clarify roles and responsibilities, and processes and outcomes, which contributed to a better understanding of each LAP's theory of change. All staff who had been recruited by the summer of 2018 attended training on the Stalking Risk Profile<sup>4</sup>, a risk assessment tool, which helped to consolidate understanding about stalking as a specific type of behaviour. Some staff recruited after this time have received this training.
- Across the three LAPs similar themes were echoed in the stakeholders' responses to a question on what they thought MASIP was about (the vision). These could be distilled into six general aims: reduction in stalking offending behaviour and improved outcomes for victims; multi-agency working; raising awareness and knowledge; improving crime recording, improving investigations; improving case review and risk

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<sup>4</sup> MacKenzie, R.D., McEwan, T.E., Pathé, M.T., James, D.V., Ogloff, J.R.P. & Mullen, P.E. (2009) Stalking Risk Profile: guidelines for assessing and managing stalkers. Melbourne: Stalkinc.

assessment; and bespoke interventions to perpetrators and bespoke support to victims. These are discussed in full in section 5.

- The process evaluation reported here, drew out causal mechanisms from stakeholders, which helps to explain how MASIP works with respect to two of the key outcome objectives: reducing re-offending and increased victim satisfaction with the criminal justice system (both of these outcomes are defined on pages 19-20). The causal mechanisms relating to the former can be summarised as:
  1. Improved classification of stalking cases and better investigation, aided by informed case review, will lead to better criminal justice outcomes in terms of higher convictions. As well as curtailing the perpetrator's freedom (albeit not necessarily their motivation), custodial and community sentences provide an opportunity for a greater involvement by partner agencies (e.g., probation, health) to work with the perpetrator.
  2. Bespoke health and other interventions designed to address the perpetrator's needs will lead to change in offender behaviour, ultimately leading to a reduction in re-offending.
  3. Multi agency working, by its very nature of information sharing and working together, will lead to a more effective and informed risk management plan and execution thus leading to reduction in opportunities to re-offend. Thus, we see efficient multi-agency working as a precursor mechanism that facilitates the first two mechanisms.

We also identified two mechanisms that were designed to achieve the second intended objective, i.e., increased victim satisfaction (defined on page 20). These were:

4. Bespoke support provided to victims in the form of emotional support, advice on how to collect evidence, legal processes and addressing risk, will lead to better management of risk.
5. A reduction in re-offending through the one precursor and two causal mechanisms identified above will ultimately lead to a reduction in experience of re-victimisation and thus lead to a reduction in fear. This is a more of a circular mechanism and it will be some time before we see any measurable impact.

Based on our understanding of the way in which the three areas have envisaged their programme of work, and guided by their individual theories of change (see Appendix), we present an overarching theory of change for MASIP in the form of a logic model in section 6, which is an iteration of the three theories of change combined.

- The case review process in the three LAP areas followed the same basic structure, but were operationalised with some variations in each area. We divided the case review process into six stages, which broadly describe the main activities undertaken by LAPs, namely: training and consultancy; referrals; triage; initial risk assessment; interventions; and revisiting cases. Whereas we did not detect any immediate benefits or disadvantages of the variations in the case review process in the three LAPs at this early stage, there could be implications for capacity and value-add further down the line. (For detailed discussion see section 7).
- Facilitators of success, that are necessary for the effective and efficient working of LAPs, and the achievement of intended outcomes, were identified from the qualitative data and discussed in section 8. These can be organised into three chronological categories:
  1. **Preconditions:** willingness of organisations to work together as an integrated unit; information sharing agreements in place at the start of the partnership work; joint training on stalking (and perhaps partnership working); and, visionary leadership.
  2. **Operational continuity:** adequate resourcing; shared working space; work in partnership as an integrated unit; and, willingness of perpetrators and victims to work with relevant agencies.
  3. **Ensuring sustainability:** assured funding source; constancy of personnel; long term evaluation; and, the socio-political environment continues to be supportive.
- The analysis of the qualitative fieldwork presented in this interim report serves to highlight the complexity of the MASIP project (summarised in section 9). The three pilot LAPs have common characteristics, for instance, they all deliver interventions to perpetrators, but also are distinctly different in several aspects. For example, at the time of the field research in the early part of the project although all LAPs were involved in providing a similar range of interventions, each LAP has a subtly different emphasis of the aims of their unit; for Cheshire this is centred on risk management, for Hampshire this is the provision of additional health interventions, and for London this is the application of criminal justice responses and signposting to external agencies after the correct classification of stalking offences.
- MASIP has followed a lot of the principles regarding effective partnership working. A shared vision, the 'right' people as partners, strong-team working and trust between partners are all evident in the qualitative data. Decision-making in each LAP appears to be communal, albeit with particular partners with domain expertise taking the lead on specific decisions when appropriate. Due to the close-knit team working and strong

local co-ordination, we did not identify any problems with accountability on delivering actions from the multi-agency clinics.

- As well as many positives, there are also some potential areas of concern within the MASIP project that may impact on the subsequent outcome evaluation. The first is the funding uncertainty, which may compromise the key innovation feature of the project – direct intervention with perpetrators. In addition, the time taken to reach consensus across the three LAPs as to what selection criteria to apply to perpetrators for the purposes of direct intervention, and to what constitutes an intervention, may have complicated the delivery of MASIP’s key objectives and the subsequent evaluation.
- This interim report is based on qualitative fieldwork undertaken in the early stages of the project. We recognise that opinions and workflow processes have matured and evolved over the intervening months and may not be reflective of current state of affairs. We intend to capture the development in the theory of change, and in stakeholder perceptions over the lifetime of the project through a second round of interviews and observations towards the end of the project.
- In our review of wider multi-agency literature, we found no robust tests of the hypothesis that multi-agency working is better than no multi-agency working. Where it has been partially tested (i.e., using simplistic measures) in the area of crime prevention it has been found to have no effect on reducing violent re-offending<sup>5</sup>. This lack of an evidence-base provides an excellent opportunity for MASIP, and this evaluation of MASIP, to contribute to building the knowledge base on multi-agency working.
- In section 10 we present a number of hypotheses generated from the qualitative fieldwork. These are being proposed in advance of the later qualitative and quantitative analysis so that we can set out, prospectively, the trends in the data we would expect to see if the mechanisms specified in the hypotheses are operating as expected. This helps to protect against us subjectively selecting results that bias the findings of the evaluation.

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<sup>5</sup> Chapman, J., Higgins, A. and Hales, G. Slough site report. Police Effectiveness in a Changing World. Police Foundation. Available at: <http://www.police-foundation.org.uk/publication/police-effectiveness-changing-world-slough-site-report/>



## 1. Introduction

The Multi-Agency Stalking Interventions Programme (MASIP) is a proof of concept project that aims to reduce the risk to and impact of stalking on victims by developing a multi-agency intervention model that coordinates activity around the victim and perpetrator<sup>1</sup> and incorporates a pathway that seeks to address the fixation and obsession in perpetrators that might be contributing to stalking offending. Funded by the Police Transformation Fund, and managed by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust (hereafter, the 'Trust'), MASIP seeks to draw expertise and intelligence across the multi-agency spectrum to inform the risk management process associated with managing stalking cases, and to offer interventions with perpetrators, a subset of which are clinical when appropriate.

Stalking is recognised as a “widespread problem with serious economic, social, medical and psychiatric consequences”<sup>6</sup>. Stalking is widely considered to be a gender-based violent crime, since stalking perpetrators are predominantly men and victims are predominantly women. Indeed, research indicates that an overwhelming majority (over 90%) of victims of intimate partner violence report stalking as one of the many kinds of violence perpetrated by partners<sup>7</sup>. A large proportion of stalking incidents are not reported to police<sup>8</sup>, despite the Crime Survey for England and Wales estimating that there are over one million victims each year. And of those stalking offences that are reported to the police, only 12.7% result in a conviction at court (and many of these are not prosecuted at the appropriate severity level). The impetus for this project came from research, published by the Trust, which found that 43.4% of people who have reported stalking to the police did not find the police response helpful.

Responses to stalking by public agencies have to address the complexity of the phenomena, and ensure that perpetrators are, firstly, being correctly identified, and secondly, that the response is appropriate for the situation so that harm to the victim and reoffending by offenders are minimised. This requires distinct expertise, since stalking is a unique crime type which can have deep psychological drivers. Such expertise is not commonplace, and in England and Wales had only really become established in Cheshire and Hampshire prior to MASIP, with other police force areas keen to develop their capacity in this area.

The aims of MASIP are to:

- Reduce re-offending and improve public safety by improving management of stalking perpetrators and, where appropriate providing specific mental health support;

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<sup>6</sup> Owens, J. G. (2016). Why Definitions Matter: Stalking Victimization in the United States. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 31(12), 2196 -2226

<sup>7</sup> Basile, K. C., & Hall, J. E. (2011). Intimate partner violence perpetration by court-ordered men: Distinctions and intersections among physical violence, sexual violence, psychological abuse, and stalking. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 26(2), 230-253.

<sup>8</sup> As evidenced here - <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/apr/18/stalking-cases-recorded-police-data-lilly-allen-charity>

- Increase early intervention, thereby reducing the overall incidence of stalking and levels of fixation and obsession;
- Improve the response to victims of stalking, ensuring they receive consistently high quality service and improving victims' satisfaction with police and across the Criminal Justice System;
- Reduce risk by improving the capabilities of police and partner agencies to manage risk in cases of stalking;
- Enhance communication and relationships between the police and other local services to respond effectively to the risk, harm and vulnerability posed by stalking cases; and
- Capture, analyse and share data on the results of different perpetrator intervention strategies, which will inform strategies (and be applied if successful) across all 43 force areas.

Following a process of competitive tendering, a research team at University College London (UCL) was commissioned to evaluate the MASIP project. This evaluation uses a multi-method approach to support the EMMIE evaluation framework<sup>9</sup>. This framework is concerned with drawing out not just whether an initiative works, but how, for whom, and under what conditions. The EMMIE framework has been designed to capture information (and interactions) between the **E**ffect of an intervention, the **M**echanisms causing the effect, the **M**oderating (i.e. contextual) conditions, crucial information on **I**mplementation and data on **E**conomics<sup>10</sup>.

The final evaluation report will include quantitative<sup>11</sup> and qualitative insights into the effectiveness of MASIP from the perspective of stakeholders, victims and perpetrators. This interim report covers the first wave of fieldwork, which comprises observations of each of the three Local Area Partnership (LAP) multi-agency meetings, information gleaned from documents produced across MASIP, and 24 interviews with stakeholders across the three LAPs and the Trust - who are acting as project managers and provide the victim advocacy provision to the London LAP. The stage in the project lifecycle at which this fieldwork was done lends itself to discussing the set-up and early implementation of MASIP, with focus on the governance and operational processes and partnership arrangements. Consequently, the analysis in this report primarily speaks to the *mechanism*, *moderator* and *implementation* dimensions of the EMMIE framework.

Realist evaluation – the approach to evaluation that the EMMIE framework was born out of – necessitates working closely and collaboratively with the practitioners involved in the programme being evaluated. This has distinct advantages, in that the programme theory is

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<sup>9</sup> Originally devised to support the UK 'What Works Centre for Crime Reduction'.

<sup>10</sup> Johnson, S. D., Tilley, N., & Bowers, K. J. (2015). Introducing EMMIE: An evidence rating scale to encourage mixed-method crime prevention synthesis reviews. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 11(3), 459-473.

<sup>11</sup> Although it must be stressed that due to the short timescales of operational activity (18 months), quantitative findings will be indicative, and unlikely to capture the true long-term benefits of the initiative.

explicitly considered and contextual conditions are documented. It also allows the evaluators to collect data that best suits the purposes of the evaluation (rather than trying to do this retrospectively at the end of a programme). It does though mean that it is possible that sources of contamination, in terms of information shared across the three LAPs to improve working practices, may have come from us. However, we do not see this as a threat to the internal validity of the evaluation as MASIP is proactively seeking to cross-fertilise best practice across the three sites.

The other critique that could be levelled at a collaborative approach to evaluation is that it might result in a loss of independence and objectivity. For this reason, to maintain the academic rigour of this evaluation, we set out our hypotheses to be tested with the quantitative data at the end of this report, which are informed by the insight provided by the first wave of fieldwork. In doing this in advance of our quantitative analysis we can specify the types of data trends we would expect to see if the mechanisms are working as expected. This helps to protect against us subjectively selecting results that bias the findings of the evaluation. We also intend to invite critical discussion by presenting the findings to external parties (i.e. by publishing journal papers and through our advisory board).

The structure of this report is as follows:

- Section 2 outlines the research methods employed in the first wave of the fieldwork;
- Section 3 provides an overview of the three Local Area Partnerships (LAPs);
- Section 4 summarises the set-up phase of the project;
- Section 5 discusses the vision and aims of MASIP in more detail;
- Section 6 presents a theory of change (ToC) based on individual ToCs from each LAP;
- Section 7 reflects on the case review processes across the three LAPs;
- Section 8 considers the facilitators to partnership working;
- Section 9 discusses the findings as a whole;
- Section 10 proposes a series of hypotheses about the expected mechanisms of MASIP and the data trends we might see in the subsequent outcome evaluation if these are operating as expected.

## **2. Methods**

The interim evaluation report is based on the findings from qualitative data collected during the early phase of the evaluation process. Since then, the partnerships have grown and matured, developments that will be captured in the end of project's final report. Various methods of data collection were used, which included semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, observations of meetings and analysis of documents provided by the Trust and partner agencies, as well as informal discussions with stakeholders.

### **Data collection**

- 1. Semi-structured interviews:** The qualitative findings are based on a relatively modest sample of purposively selected interviews from all the stakeholder groups. Across the project sites in Cheshire, London and Hampshire, all the core staff from the MASIP partner agencies who were involved in the projects at the time when the fieldwork took place were included in the sample. Project management staff from the Trust were also included in this sample. All of the interviewees had the varying degrees of direct involvement with the bidding, development, set-up and implementation of the projects. Some project management staff and partner agency interviewees had only limited experience of MASIP as they had recently commenced in post. As a result, the findings, conclusions and learnings from the stakeholders presented in this report may not fully represent the range of experience, and thus need to be interpreted with a degree of caution. A total of 24 semi-structured interviews were carried out between November 2018 and March 2019 (See Table 1 below for a detailed description). The interviews with the partner agencies explored the aims, barriers and facilitators for the project and identified the conceptual elements of the theory of change<sup>12</sup> model.
- 2. Observations:** This included, in the first instance, observation of meetings, clinics and triage process in the three LAP areas. Extensive notes were made during these meetings and we used this opportunity to clear doubts and ask questions to get a clearer understanding of the processes involved. Another source of rich data came from observations of workshops and training sessions conducted by the Trust, which involved the three LAPs and sometimes external experts, and which were intended to clarify mission goals and objectives as well as develop individual LAP's theory of change. In addition, participation in programme board meetings and regular meetings with the Trust allowed us to observe interactions between the Trust and the LAPs at the programme level and ensure that the evaluation team were kept informed of developments across MASIP. Minutes of these meetings were another source of data. Observation sessions included observing six meetings/clinics across the three LAPs; two workshop sessions; one SRP training course and three programme board meetings.
- 3. Documents:** The three LAPs were asked to provide us with their individual theory of change and process diagrams. These were used to construct the overarching theory of change for MASIP, which is a work in progress, and will develop and change as the individual theories evolve and mature.

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<sup>12</sup> A 'theory of change' explains how decisions and actions are understood to produce a series of results that contribute to achieving the overall intended impacts of a project. For further details see Section 6.

### **Analysis**

Thematic analysis of the data was conducted. Specific themes were inferred prospectively, aimed at deconstructing the process of setting up multi-agency partnerships, and emerging themes were incorporated as the analysis progressed. The interview data was analysed using the qualitative data analysis software NVIVO. The data was coded by one member and checked by another member of the evaluation team and analysed jointly. Conclusions were drawn as a result of discussion between the evaluation team members and were refined by feedback from the project Advisory Board, the Trust and key stakeholders across the project.

Agency	Area				Total
	Cheshire	Hampshire	London	The Trust	
Health	2	3	3	0	<b>8</b>
Police	2	2	3	0	<b>7</b>
Probation	0	1	1	0	<b>2</b>
Project Management	0	0	0	2	<b>2</b>
Social Services	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Victim Advocate	1	1	1	1	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>24</b>

*Table 1* - Breakdown of stakeholder interviewees  
N.B. Project management does not include local LAP leads

### **3. Local Area Partnerships**

After a six-month start-up phase, MASIP became operational in September 2018 across three pilot sites: Cheshire, Hampshire and London. Key partners common to all local area partnerships (LAPs) are police, probation<sup>2</sup>, health, and victim advocates. Below we provide a summary of their salient characteristics and operational set-up.

#### **Cheshire**

Cheshire had piloted an initiative to manage stalking cases prior to MASIP. This Anti-Stalking Clinic Initiative was established in Cheshire in 2015, made up of (unfunded) partners from the police, health, probation, CRC, Refuge IDVA Services and Adult Social Care. This initiative was (and remains) responsible for dealing with stalking cases over the geographical area covered by Cheshire Police, with direct interventions delivered to those victims and perpetrators residing in the subset policing areas of Warrington and Halton. This multi-agency approach centred on a monthly partnership meeting to manage the risk associated with stalking cases, and was considered to have reached a state of operational maturity before MASIP commenced.

Additional resources provided by MASIP have enabled this LAP to enhance the service it delivers through dedicated staffing. It is now called the Integrated Anti-Stalking Unit (IASU)

and is comprised of seven full time core staff: a detective constable; a Business Support Officer; an independent stalking advocacy caseworker, a consultant forensic psychologist, a Unit Manager and two perpetrator outreach workers. Several other partners, such as adult care within social services, IDVAs, NPS and CRC attend meetings without receiving MASIP funding.

Cases referred into IASU are initially triaged by the Business Support Office. Cases that are potentially stalking are then screened by unit members on a daily basis, with cases that would benefit from further discussions at one of the meetings (internal or partnership) being identified. Internal meetings are facilitated by the co-location of core staff and are held regularly within the LAP to support the functioning of the fortnightly partnership meeting. The partnership meeting is where wider partners are invited in to discuss particular cases, to risk assess and provide investigative advice to police officers and bespoke advice to other referring agencies. This involves the completion of a structured professional judgement (SPJ) for risk assessment, of which all partners contribute to. Complementary tasks undertaken at these clinics include signposting to appropriate agencies and the creation of safeguarding plans. The IASU seeks to identify the most appropriate interventions to control the risk in a case, which often integrates sanctions available within the legal framework with inputs from mental health services. Victims and perpetrators are supported directly and indirectly within this partnership model.

### ***Hampshire***

Hampshire has similarly been considered a site of best practice – as highlighted in an HMIC report – prior to MASIP. The Hampshire Stalking Clinic was established in Hampshire in 2012, and comprised of partners from the police, health, probation, the crown prosecution service and Aurora New Dawn (a victim advocacy service). The remit of this unit covered the extent of the geographical area Hampshire Police are responsible for. Clinics were held on a monthly basis to discuss cases of greatest concern (or highest risk), and involved identification, referral, consultation, case formulation, signposting to relevant agencies and risk assessment of stalking cases. The purpose of these meeting was to offer investigative advice to the OIC, to offer advice on perpetrator behaviour and to enhance support offered to victims. A tailor-made risk assessment and management plan was a frequent outcome of these clinics. Two weeks prior to the clinic meeting, a triage meeting was held to assess each report of stalking arising in the past month and to conduct a risk assessment to identify the highest-risk cases (~3/4 a month) to be taken to the Clinic.

MASIP resources facilitated an extension of this operational model to develop a specific mental health arm of the Clinic (the Recolo project) to deliver health interventions in-house and to advise existing services on interventions with perpetrators, and to develop the stalking advocacy service to victims. The full-time staff now include a force stalking co-ordinator in the form of a detective constable, a victim advocate lead, a (job-share) psychologist, a support worker and an occupational therapist. Part-time staff include a detective inspector, an

administrator, a probation officer and a consultant psychiatrist. Other unfunded partners often attend the Clinic meetings and a CPS representative provides prosecution advice on the individual cases.

The Hampshire team are not co-located but depend on strong and mature working relationships. The additional MASIP resources have enabled police case referrals to be reviewed on a daily basis by the force stalking co-ordinator which feeds into the (now) weekly triage meetings, where new referrals, case management and health input into cases are discussed. The outcomes of these discussions then support the monthly clinic meeting. The lead victim advocate has been embedded in the Stalking Clinic since its inception and drives a comprehensive and tailored support service to victims. Similar to the other LAPs, the mental health team (Recolo project) work indirectly with referrers, and other agencies relevant to the case, and directly with perpetrators, when clinically viable, to address the perpetrators' obsessive and fixated behaviours.

### **London**

The London LAP is unique in several aspects, most importantly because prior to MASIP there was no dedicated multi-agency approach to dealing with stalking cases. MASIP resources enabled the set-up of a new unit called the Stalking Threat Assessment Centre (STAC). This is modelled on the London-based Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (FTAC) which was established in 2006 to assess and manage the risk of those who harass, stalk or threaten celebrities, politicians and the royal family.

STAC is situated on MPS premises (staff are co-located) and covers all of the 12 BCUs across the 32 London Boroughs. This pan-London unit operates differently than the other LAPs because of their geographical context. Partner agencies are not similarly centralised across London (e.g., NHS Trusts), meaning that STAC primarily acts in an advisory capacity for police officers and other partner agency staff for the whole of London. Interventions are delivered to perpetrators across London.

STAC is made up of 14 full-time staff: a detective inspector, a detective sergeant, six constables, a clinical psychologist, a psychiatric nurse, an assistant psychologist, an administrator, a probation officer and a stalking victim advocate. Part-time staff include a consultant psychiatrist and a consultant psychologist

On initial set-up an audit of harassment cases in London was undertaken by STAC for quality assurance purposes. This revealed that approximately a third of harassment cases were misclassified, and should be considered stalking. Core STAC staff have since trained the Central Crime Management Unit in the Metropolitan Police to improve awareness and correct crime recording practices around stalking.

Due to the scale of the cases they are referred, STAC have a distinctive daily operating model. Morning weekday case review meetings are held to screen and assess cases referred in since

the previous meeting. Investigative advice is sent out to the OIC of the case, and risk assessments, using the SASH<sup>13</sup> tool, are applied when relevant. Victims are supported by the victim advocate. Bespoke advice is dispensed to referral agencies (e.g. to inform pre-sentence reports for probation). STAC takes an ongoing interest in cases of notably high risk and additionally offers ‘complex case consultations’ with OIC and other referral agencies.

### **Operational summary**

Figures recorded by the three LAPs from 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 to 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 are presented in Table 2<sup>14</sup>. Caution should be exercised when interpreting these figures as they have been compiled from dissimilar operational summaries. For example, Cheshire provided precise numbers of people trained, whereas Hampshire provided approximate numbers and London only enumerated the training delivered to Probation officers, despite also training many other groups. The figures for direct interventions with perpetrators underestimate the true number of perpetrators receiving interventions, since indirect interventions (i.e., where MASIP stakeholders work with NHS or other partner agencies to provide consultation on perpetrators) are also undertaken in all three LAPs. Bearing these limitations in mind, the volumetric differences between the three LAPs for referrals is striking, with London receiving around four and a half times the number of referrals than Cheshire. It is also noteworthy that Hampshire, have the largest number of perpetrators who are receiving interventions.

	Referrals	Victims supported by advocate	Direct interventions with perpetrators	No of people trained
Cheshire	246	53	11	1,193
Hampshire	83		17	>930
London	1,120	52	4	>110

Table 2 - Caseload summary for each LAP (from September '18 to March '19).

Another interesting finding from the initial analysis of the data collected by the three LAPs is that the proportion of *rejected* stalkers (one of the five types in the typology used in the SRP), are much higher than suggested by previous research. This ranged from 67.7% in Hampshire to 78.9% in Cheshire. Rejected stalkers are defined as ex-intimates of the victims, which is why they are the easiest of the stalker types to correctly identify, as the victim is usually forthcoming about this information. The other types are more difficult to correctly determine, and can require a great deal more intelligence on the perpetrator, which is sometimes unavailable. Nevertheless, the high proportion of stalking cases that can be considered an extension of domestic abuse, and potentially coercive control, is important to acknowledge, since tailored provision to support these types of victims has been found by the DRIVE project

<sup>13</sup> McEwan, T.E., Strand, S.J.M., MacKenzie, R.D. & James, D.V. (2017) *Screening Assessment for Stalking and Harassment (SASH)*. Melbourne, Australia: Stalkinc Pty Ltd.

<sup>14</sup> These figures have been taken from the year 1, quarter 4, Home Office return.



to be challenging to implement without stalking expertise<sup>15</sup>. What's more, domestic abuse programmes for stalkers can potentially backfire if they inadvertently reinforce the stalker's belief about their right to have a relationship with the victim. For the other, non-domestic, forms of stalking, provisions are extremely rare across the country, outside of the MASIP pilot sites.

#### **4. The set-up phase of MASIP**

The first six months of MASIP (March-August 2018) were designated as a set-up period. Here we document the key points relating to the governance and the structural processes needed for MASIP to function operationally.

##### ***Programme governance structures and processes***

The Strategic Steering Committee (SSC) is at the top of the governance structure for MASIP. This is chaired by the MOPAC chief executive and includes the PCCs and the Trust. Within these quarterly meetings critical risks and other issues arising from MASIP are discussed, and the finances are monitored.

The next tier down is the Programme Board, which occurs approximately every two months and is chaired by the Acting CEO of the Suzy Lamplugh Trust and comprises two senior decision-makers from each of the LAPs and several Project Management Office (PMO) Trust staff. Here, decisions made at the SSC are communicated, and other programme management messages are disseminated to the LAPs. Complementing this, issues arising from the LAPs are communicated upwards to the PMO and programme-wide solutions are discussed.

The PMO is located within the Trust. A project manager leads this, whose responsibility it is to oversee and coordinate the programme, monitor progress and identify and mitigate risks to performance. A London project lead also sits within this team and additional PMO staff are the acting CEO of the Trust and a project support officer.

##### ***Infrastructure***

The multi-agency approach of the MASIP consortium is a unique experiment, which has added additional complications to the funding arrangements. The funds were to flow through PCCs, which necessitated the creation of new processes that were not anticipated at the beginning of the project. As one stakeholder explained, "We found it has not been done before, so there was no template. There was no basis, there was no structure." (STH004)

In addition, transferring funding from police partners to other partners had rarely been done previously, which required new contracts and governance structures to be devised. In fact,

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<sup>15</sup> Hester, M., Eisenstadt, N., Jones, C. and Morgan, K. (2017). Evaluation of the Drive Project - a pilot to address high-risk perpetrators of domestic abuse Year 1 Feasibility Study. University of Bristol.

the entire infrastructure, with respect to all of the collaborative agreements that had to be created and ratified was unprecedented:

“It took us a lot of time to piece together various collaborations of the infrastructure that has to underpin the whole programme: the policies, the procedures, the guidance and all the facets of it from data protection, intellectual property, confidentiality.” (STH004)

Governance and administrative obstacles in the early stages of the project hindered essential processes such as recruitment, which then impacted on the vetting processes that were required by the police for new staff and partners:

“My biggest frustration with the Home Office really is the length of time it took to sign off the grant agreement, and that period of inactivity, almost like a phony war, where you're just waiting for things to happen.” (STH021)

This impacted negatively on securing office space for STAC in London, as the funding had not been ratified. The PMO have since pointed out that it was not the grant agreement but setting up appropriate governance administrative processes that delayed proceedings in London.

Other project management requirements in the set-up phase were intense, as expressed by multiple stakeholders,

“it's this middle project management tier, if you like, of finance, HR, recruitment, all that sort of stuff where they are asking us to add input... They are asking me for figures and stats and spreadsheets, invoices. Nothing to do with me, it is beyond my interest and exceeds the limits of my medication, that stuff [laughter].” (STH025)

“We were all quite naïve going into it as well because none of us really knew what the police transformation fund was about, we didn't realise the amount of admin and that's really [laughter] bitten us in the bum now.” (STH021)

### ***Crystallising MASIP***

The bid to the Police Transformation Fund was put together swiftly, with a set of ideas rooted in experience and expertise of working in the stalking area that was deliberately broad to allow the project to develop. The set-up period provided a space for reflection on what had been proposed, and allowed the initial ideas to mature and for the working models to become more grounded in operational practicalities:

“That six-month period was deliberately built in. It was thinking time and research time. We also had money built in for consultants to come in to help partners interrogate what those models might look like.” (STH004)

This period was also essential for clarifying roles and responsibilities across the many partners and tiers of operational and strategic leadership. This happened in parallel with the creation of the governance structure, and was enhanced by the meetings coordinated by the Trust.

### ***Shared learning events***

In the set-up period all of the key partners who had been recruited to date attended a training course to use the stalking risk profile. These types of staff induction and training were cited as being important aspects of effective implementation and operation by most stakeholders. The Trust provided opportunities for training on the SRP, and most stakeholders who had received the training were appreciative of it as they believed it enhanced their knowledge and awareness around stalking as a crime.

“I think MASIP has also given us the opportunity to go on training we would never have gone on before. So I’ve been on that three-day SRP training which was amazing and I found out some information” (STH015)

Even practitioners experienced in working in the area of domestic violence and abuse, which has some similarities, found the additional training useful, as described by one practitioner.

“So that [SRP] was my first training. And I went to the Trust for six weeks on their helpline, prior to coming to MASIP, to understand stalking. Because I come from a domestic abuse background, I had never heard about SASH. I knew about DASH. So that really helped me to understand the other 50% of people who are being stalked, who are not ex-partners...every day I'm learning from my colleagues, because I'm able to have different conversations.” (STH023)

Once MASIP was operational, the Trust organised events to bring the three LAPs together for shared learning to clarify processes, and outcomes and work towards a theory of change. One such event was an ‘indicators of success’ workshop, held in November 2018 and facilitated by a consultant, to encourage reflection and goal setting. This helped to develop the operational models used across each of the sites and found solutions to common problems, such as information sharing. This event also produced key performance indicators that relate to the outcomes sought by MASIP. Discussions in this forum helped to expose the divergences from a common language (e.g., the definition of a ‘triage’) and, just as importantly, served to highlight the similarities across the three sites. As one stakeholder commented, “...so as it came out on that day at The Foundry, we found that we’ve probably got a bit more in common than we originally thought.” (STH021)

Importantly, the ‘indicators of success’ workshop helped to clarify what was meant by re-offending – one of the key outcomes MASIP was looking to impact upon. This is not straightforward as compared to other types of offending, due to the protracted nature of stalking. Stalking research defines a stalking ‘episode’ to be concluded if the stalker ceases contact with the victim for six months. Any contact within a six-month period is a continuation of the offence, rather than re-offending. By this definition stalking re-offending occurs when a perpetrator begins a new stalking episode with either the original victim or a new victim.

Given the length of the MASIP funding, and what was pragmatic to measure within the timescales, a decision was reached between the stakeholders to define re-offending as the number of incidents reported by the victims participating in the LAPs. This naturally depends

on the victim reporting incidents to the police or their advocate contact. Another matter of interest to this evaluation is whether stalking frequency reduces (i.e., frequency of contacts made by the perpetrator to the victim) and whether stalking severity reduces (i.e., the mental or physical harm caused to the victim by the perpetrator). Notably, re-offending here is with reference to stalking behaviour only (either with respect to the same victim or another victim) and no other types of offending.

The concept of victim satisfaction with services and with the criminal justice system needs further unpacking. We suggest victim satisfaction in cases of stalking comprises of several aspects: their complaint being taken seriously by criminal justice agencies; appropriate response from the police; support provided by victim advocates and other agencies working with victims; reduction in experience of being re-victimised; and reduction in fear of re-victimisation. However, the final two aspects can only be measured in the long term, therefore for the purposes of this evaluation, we will focus on the measurement of victim perception of appropriate response provided by the police and support provided by victim advocates and other criminal justice agencies.

## **5. Vision and aims**

MASIP programme aims were clearly articulated in the bid document, and again on page 10 of this report. These aims focused on reducing re-offending (as described above) through provision of mental health interventions where considered appropriate; increasing victim satisfaction (measured for the purposes of this evaluation as described above); improving communication between police and relevant agencies and improving capabilities of relevant agencies for managing risk in stalking cases. Thus, although supporting the victim is at the heart of the MASIP programme, health interventions are aimed at reducing re-offending behaviour in offenders, and risk management is directed toward both victims and offenders.

All stakeholders were asked what MASIP meant to them, in other words, what their vision for the project was. Their responses are structured below, not by order of significance to stakeholders, but in chronological sequence to how a stalking case is managed by the LAP, i.e. the case review process described in section 7 below. It was interesting to note that the answers covered a range of strategic as well as instrumental aims. The overall aims of the programme, as articulated by stakeholders from the programme management perspective were described as,

“It’s really about that multi-agency, multi-disciplinary, proper communication about cases and really understanding cases from all of those different angles. So, taking discrete different cultures and different ways of working and bringing together the best bits of all of them to make sure that victims are kept safer and the perpetrators are either brought to justice or have some interventions with them that change their behaviour. That’s, I think, it, in a nutshell.” (STH010)

Therefore, for many of the stakeholders this was a unique opportunity to apply a multi-agency approach to working with victims and perpetrators of stalking as one dedicated unit, as one stakeholder said - "it's a dream concept trying to be turned into something quite practical." (STH010).

Across the three units similar themes were echoed in the stakeholders' responses to what they thought MASIP was about. We report these, not in order of importance, but more in order of where these aims sit within the response to stalking.

### ***Reduction in stalking offending behaviour and improved outcomes for victims***

There was a clear vision in all three areas regarding the ultimate aims of the MASIP programme, which were to bring about a reduction in offending behaviour and offering better services to the victims. Stakeholders recognised that, "getting a better understanding of how are we going to change this behaviour" (STH022), would be an important aspect of this process. One stakeholder said that for them, MASIP was "very much about how we all work together to reduce the risk of stalking and to improve victim experience" (STH018). Another stakeholder put it succinctly as, "minimising risk, reducing harm, reducing the likelihood of re-offending" (STH019).

From a programme perspective, the overall aspirations of MASIP were described by one stakeholder as,

"From a vision perspective, I think MASIP means a robust, appropriate and long-term solution for victims who are experiencing stalking... when we asked victims what they wanted, they would say for it to stop, whatever that would look like. Whether that's a prison sentence or anything else, they just wanted it to stop." (STH004)

There was a close to unanimous agreement among all stakeholders that they were working together to understand, assess, respond and monitor offending behaviour and manage risk for victims using criminal justice routes, as well as provision of health interventions and support services targeted to meet the specific needs of individuals, either perpetrators or victims.

### ***Multi-agency working***

Although multi-agency working is a means to achieving the desired ends of the programme, it appeared from stakeholder interviews as if the bid objectives of improving communication between police and other relevant agencies and improving capabilities of agencies to manage risk were indirectly addressed through improved multi-agency working. All three areas were very focused on the advantages of working in partnership in dealing with stalking. There was clear recognition of this need by all stakeholders, but the exact description of how they envisioned the partnership were more nuanced. For example, a stakeholder in Cheshire said, "we want it to be integrated" (STH025), and another added, "I am hoping that being involved in MASIP for us is that we can act in a multidisciplinary way in how we support both victims and alleged perpetrators as well" (STH016).

In Hampshire, one stakeholder said, “MASIP is working together in a joint agency partnership...I think that is a really strong message to get out there” (STH019), thus focusing on the outward facing aspect of joint agency working and the impact it has on the other agencies in the criminal justice system, as well as for victims and the public at large, the message is that the stalking is being taken seriously. Another advantage of multi-agency working as identified by a stakeholder in Hampshire would be, “an increase in input into cases from other agencies, so responsibility is shared”. (STH009)

In London, the vision of multi-agency working focused on the information sharing aspect of joint working, “It is more about bringing in some proper shared working and information sharing and breaking down those silos” (STH024). This, arguably, was one of the most important aspect of the partnership for London, given its size and the number of different organisations such as NHS trusts, CCGs, CRCs and other supporting agencies throughout the area.

A number of the other aims articulated by stakeholders were premised on the advantages born out of the multi-agency approach, which included the enhancement of expertise in the team as a whole, consequently leading to improved knowledge and response to the problem as well as better management of perpetrators and victims as the following sections will explain.

### ***Raising awareness and knowledge***

One of the aims articulated by a number of interviewees was to raise awareness about stalking as a crime, which has historically been misunderstood, especially in terms of its effect on victims, and therefore not given the attention it deserves. As one of the stakeholders said, “the aim is to educate others about what stalking is, and trying to understand, analyse and deal with the risk, using the resources we have available” (STH003). Another stakeholder stated, “a lot of what we wanted to do as a unit was around spreading knowledge, sharing expertise, education.” (STH026). One stakeholder viewed the aim of MASIP, “In terms of stalking more widely, I think just contributing to the evidence base and contributing to the knowledge from our experience” (STH017)

It was interesting to note that while some stakeholders were focused on “for us it is about educating our colleagues out there” (STH021) for others it was about educating not just victims about what they should be doing to deal with it, but raising wider awareness about the pernicious impact of stalking more specifically.

“It might not be that we think this person is going to kill you but if you believe that they are going to kill you and they are there day after day after day following you and sending you things, your life is changed forever and I don’t think people understand that. So I do think there’s a lot of work we need to do around knowledge.” (STH022)

Although training and raising awareness were not explicit aims of the MASIP programme, stakeholders clearly felt that it was their role to educate others within their own agencies and

in other agencies on the unique nature of stalking as a crime and how to deal with it. They were keen to emphasise the importance of raising awareness in order to embed appropriate criminal justice responses to stalking systemically, rather than remaining the exclusive purview of the LAP.

***Improving response: Correct crime recording***

Stakeholders were involved in training wider staff in their specific agencies, especially the police, to identify the crime of stalking as distinct from harassment and to raise awareness of correct classification and where they could go for expertise and advice. Interviewees were concerned that stalking was often incorrectly recorded as harassment, thus downgrading its severity and the expected punishment for the offence. This was often due to inability to recognise or have the confidence to apply the appropriate classification. As one senior stakeholder explained,

“I thought I knew what stalking was until I went to the [SRP] training in Canterbury, and shortly before I came on I’d dealt with a job....I reviewed it [a case] and even with my knowledge and experience, I looked at it from a harassment point of view. If I looked at that right now, I’d tell you straightaway that was a resentful stalker, and some of the decisions I’ve made around that and how they should deal with it might have changed. So that’s more important... it’s education that we need and I keep saying this.” (STH020)

The consequence of correct classification at this initial stage was flagged by one stakeholder,

“It [the aim] is better identification and we know that then it follows people right the way through. If they get identified properly, then you get to charge properly, and you get a decent restraining order, and you get a decent involvement with probation...it continues down the line” (STH010)

***Improved response: Investigation***

Following correct classification, the next area identified as a desirable aim for the multi-agency approach was better investigation of cases. Training would lead to “Improving the investigative capacity and the investigative response” (STH019). In continuation of the previous theme of improving education and training with respect to guiding how the investigation should be conducted in these cases, one stakeholder highlighted another aim of MASIP was the importance of the multifaceted expertise and knowledge that different agencies brought to each case,

“What they [police officers] need is that there is science, and there is a justification when we come through with the tactical or investigative advice, that they trust and understand to a degree why is that relevant and why they should investigate in this way, why they should pursue that line of enquiry and not the other, why they should do this tactical safeguarding measure and not the other” (STH026)

Stakeholders were, it seemed, involved in training to improve recognition of conduct as stalking, to emphasise the seriousness of its impact on the victims, to improve referrals, as

well as to improve capability to respond appropriately to stalking in the future (including investigation and risk management). Thus, we conclude that stakeholders were articulating steps that they were taking to achieve the intended aims of the programme, as aims in their own right.

***Improved response: case review and risk assessment***

In all the three LAPs there was a clear consensus that an important aim of the multi-agency approach was an informed case review and risk assessment process, although these were operationalised slightly differently in each, as described in section 7 below. However, stakeholders' vision of the partnership was one where,

“The idea is that we've got to understand what's motivating this individual, not stalkers, this individual and then once we understand what's motivating them, and what they are trying to achieve, all that, then we can begin to develop a formulation upon which we can start to put our risk assessment, and we can hang our risk management for each case” (STH026)

Another stakeholder said,

“So it isn't about people who are committing offences getting punished or getting off, it's about them getting appropriate treatment and intervention, but that also alongside there might be a recognition of the harm that they have done in offending, to the victim [and others]” (STH005)

Therefore, stakeholders considered providing a well-informed response to stalking, which considered the circumstances and motivations of the perpetrator as well as the impact of the offence on the victims and their families, as being a unique feature of the programme.

***Bespoke interventions for perpetrators and bespoke support for victims***

From a programme perspective, one stakeholder envisaged that in an ideal situation MASIP's contribution to a stalking case would include all round bespoke interventions for victims and perpetrators.

“I think the way we interpreted that initially is that the greatest depth would be a full intervention by all those agencies. A full-on police approach, victim services involved and a full health intervention was how I originally envisaged if we're looking at depth.” (STH004)

Thus, if interventions were conceived as being along a continuum with victim focused interventions at one end and perpetrator focused at the other, overall intended outcomes were very much aimed at reducing re-offending and improving the victim's safety, regardless of the level and depth of interventions provided in each case. In fact, one interviewee felt that the programme vision provided, “a pathway for the victim and a pathway for the offender, but was being offender-led” (STH015). Those focused on the perpetrator side of the offence were of the opinion that bespoke interventions might be aimed at,



“Improving the psychosocial well-being of the perpetrators. It is looking at behaviour change, it is looking at giving these individuals skill development opportunities and any sort of psychological therapy that they need to improve their lives” (STH007)

As one interviewee acknowledged, “We have never before had the opportunity to look at bespoke interventions for stalkers” (STH019). Another stakeholder said,

“This is an opportunity to fulfil part of that promise that we move away from putting everything on the victim, questioning the victim, moving the victim, make changes [in lifestyles], all that sort of stuff, and actually doing something about people that are causing this problem” (STH025)

A few stakeholders focused on providing individually tailored support to victims as the unique contribution of this programme. For example, while one stakeholder felt, “It’s about balancing all that workload so that the perpetrator is the core. Our goal is to risk manage that behaviour.” (STH015), another stakeholder was of the opinion that MASIP was mainly about,

“Reduction in risk to the victim obviously, because that is critical.... providing that additional level of victim support is key because we know that stalking victims are priority victims...we need to look at the interventions around court as well: special measures, rights to anonymity, all that sort of stuff. Making sure that holistic approach on victims is really, really focused on them” (STH019)

Interestingly, stakeholders belonging to agencies (such as police or probation), who traditionally worked only with perpetrators got a glimpse of what the impact of the offending behaviour was on the victim and on the other hand, victim advocates were sensitised to some of the deep-rooted issues that might motivate offender behaviour, thus understanding the need to offer interventions to offenders.

Stakeholders felt that understanding the overall risk levels better would help them offer more informed support to allay victim fears as also appropriate advice. There was recognition of the importance of understanding the interaction between the stalker and the victim and the particular circumstances that surround the stalking behaviour is highlighted by the integrated working of various agencies in offering bespoke interventions. As this stakeholder explained,

“We need to understand what makes stalkers tick, what motivates them, what are they trying to achieve and it’s only when we begin to understand that individual under that circumstance with that relationship with that victim. What’s their psychology? What’s their motivation? Understanding what feeds into that distorted relationship will allow you to begin to put together a hypothesis to manage that risk of those particular individuals” (STH016)

And this in turn would indicate appropriate intervention pathways for both perpetrators and victims.

Whilst some of these comments might be taken as being slightly at odds with the victim-centred approach envisaged at the MASIP level, this is a natural focus for agencies whose core business is working with perpetrators (e.g., police and probation). None of the stakeholders

we interviewed appeared to be downplaying the importance of the victim in comparison to the perpetrator. However there was a clear recognition that to stop the victims from suffering, something needed to be done to address the perpetrator's fixation on them. The focus on perpetrators was therefore logical, since this is the primary means of protecting current and future victims (since many stalkers have multiple victims).

Overall, it was observed that there was a fair degree of consistency between the three LAPs about the shared vision. While some of the aims expressed by stakeholders, admittedly, extended their remit beyond the articulated goals of the programme, none of them seemed contra-indicated, but were seen as necessary precursors for the achievement of overall goals. As we shall see in the next section, stakeholders often conflated activities with aims (i.e. outputs with outcomes), for example, training and awareness raising for better classification and investigation of cases are activities intended to achieve the ultimate outcomes of reducing re-offending. This conceptual confusion, we believe, was not detrimental to either the working of the LAPs, nor the achievement of end outcomes, but would, nonetheless, benefit from being clarified at this interim stage to hone the focus on achieving stated aims of the programme.

## **6. Theory of change**

Robust evaluation requires a theory of change, which is intended to simply, but elegantly, explain how and why an initiative works. The first step is to determine the intended outcomes of the initiative, which in the case of MASIP are reduction of re-offending and increase in victim satisfaction with criminal justice response (both as defined in section 4). The second step is to determine what activities and resources are required to implement that initiative; and the final step is to identify the contextual factors that might affect the achievement of the intended outcomes. Articulating a theory of change before conducting any programme of work has the advantage of identifying what inputs are required for conducting a set of activities in order to achieve interim outcomes that, over time, will have the desired overall impact. Furthermore, the clear articulation of a theory of change helps to sharpen the understanding of an initiative's conceptual origins, as well as to design appropriate measurement points to assess the outputs and outcomes at various stages of the process for the evaluation. In addition, it promotes agreement between various stakeholders as to the causal chain of events between activities and outcomes.

The process evaluation we report here was designed to draw out how MASIP works so that the causal mechanisms can be tested in later analyses. To these ends, it is important to establish what is considered to be an intervention within individual LAPs and the causal mechanism by which it is intended to achieve the agreed upon, shared outcomes.

### ***Causal Mechanisms***

Based on our understanding of the process workflow diagram generated from the stakeholder interviews (and the research literature<sup>16</sup> on multi-agency partnerships dealing with high-risk cases), three possible causal mechanisms could bring about the first aim of MASIP, i.e. reduction in re-offending. One of these is a pre-cursor mechanism to facilitate the first two main causal mechanisms. These are:

- 1) Improved classification of stalking cases and better investigation, aided by informed case review, will lead to better criminal justice outcomes in terms of higher convictions, thus ensuring the offender is restricted in re-offending for the time period they are in custody or under court mandated restrictions. Stakeholders are aware that conviction is unlikely to address the underlying obsessive fixation underlying stalking behaviour. Interviews indicated that stakeholders representing different agencies highlighted the importance of improved conviction for different reasons:
  - Police stakeholders believed that an increase in convictions would restrict stalkers' freedom to commit offences while incarcerated and improve public confidence in the criminal justice system.
  - Probation stakeholders believed that an increase in convictions would generate more opportunities to supervise and work closely with perpetrators.
  - Health stakeholders believed that an increase in convictions would generate more opportunities to assess whether the perpetrator would benefit from some health interventions and/or for the court to mandate conditions or treatment that might address the fixated behaviour (provided the perpetrator is willing to engage with it).
  - Victim advocate stakeholders believed that an increase in convictions would reassure victims that their complaint is being taken seriously and because it could limit contact from the perpetrator whilst they were incarcerated or under court mandated restrictions.
- 2) Bespoke health and other interventions designed to address the perpetrator's needs will lead to change in offender behaviour, ultimately leading to a reduction in re-offending.
- 3) Multi agency working, by its very nature of information sharing and working together will lead to a more effective and informed risk management plan and execution thus leading to reduction in opportunities to re-offend. This is, as we said above, a process mechanism to facilitate the previous two mechanisms.

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<sup>16</sup> Robinson, A. L. (2004). Domestic Violence MARACs (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) for Very High-risk Victims in Cardiff, Wales: A Process and Outcome Evaluation. Cardiff University School of Social Sciences.

We also identified two mechanisms that were activated in order to achieve the second intended objective, i.e. increased victim satisfaction (defined above). These were:

- 4) Bespoke support provided to victims in the form of emotional support, advice on how to collect evidence, legal processes and risk management techniques will lead to an increase in victim satisfaction with the services provided by criminal justice agencies.
- 5) A reduction in re-offending through the causal mechanisms identified above will ultimately lead to a reduction in experience of re-victimisation and thus lead to increased victim satisfaction with the criminal justice system. This is a more of a circular mechanism and it will be some time before we see any measurable impact.

Unusually for a multi-agency initiative<sup>17</sup>, stakeholders in the three partnership areas mentioned early in the project that they were developing their theory of change, which was encouraged during the project set-up phase through various meetings and consultancy sessions set up by the project managers.

### ***Overarching MASIP logic model***

Each partnership area was requested to provide a theory of change which guided their particular partnership working and approach. (See Appendix for individual Theory of Change for the three LAPs) Although our observations and subsequent developments in the working of the partnerships themselves have shown some refinement of these theories. Based on our understanding of the way in which the three areas have envisaged their programme of work, and guided by their theory of change, we present a consolidated version of a theory of change for MASIP in the form of a logic model in Figure 1, which is an iteration of the three theories of change combined.

There are certain variations between the overarching theory presented in Figure 1 and the individual theories of change that are worth commenting on. Our theory has emerged from the data itself, including interviews with stakeholders, observations of proceedings in each individual LAP, observation of training sessions, other workshop sessions and the Programme Board meetings. Our observations and comments are not intended as a critique of individual theories of change, but will be highlighted here to demonstrate that the theory presented in Figure 1 is data driven and is therefore, we hope, more comprehensive, with greater conceptual clarity and with a view to produce a template to guide the setting up of future multi-agency partnerships in other areas. The main areas of departure from the individual theories lie in conceptual understanding of the four aspects of the logic model – inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Rosenbaum, D. (2002). Evaluating multi-agency crime prevention partnerships: Theory, design and measurement issues. Evaluation for Crime Prevention.

<sup>18</sup> See W.K Kellogg Foundation, 2004 for a simple logic model. In our adaptation of this model, we have combined what is termed as activity and outputs into one section titled Outputs.

1. **Inputs:** These refer to the resources and all the planning activities that are required to put the programme into operation. Thus it includes representation from all relevant agencies, experienced staff with expertise, access to relevant data and data sharing agreements, understanding of roles and responsibilities and inspirational leadership.
2. **Outputs:** These refer to all the activities undertaken by the partnerships as part of the programme of intervention. It includes training and awareness raising activities, liaison and consultancy with other agencies both within and outside of the partnership, risk assessment, as well as services provided to victims and treatment to perpetrators.
3. **Outcomes:** If the planned activities and their objectives are achieved then the outcomes are the interim results and benefits for the intended recipients. In our model, therefore, the impact of the activities undertaken by partnerships will be seen, for example the training and consultancy activities will lead to improvement in wider understanding of stalking by other relevant actors, thus leading to improved criminal justice outcomes and better risk management of cases, but also in changes in perpetrator behaviour and improved personal safety for victims.
4. **Impact:** If the expected outcomes are achieved then it will lead to wider systemic changes and overall impact on individuals, organisations and society. Thus, the three main intended effects – of reducing re-offending, increasing victim satisfaction with the CJS, and improved public safety can be achieved.
5. **Assumptions and Measurement:** Several assumptions underpin the identified inputs and outputs to ensure that the identified resources and activities are conducted in an environment that is conducive to shared working in terms of physical space; and supportive of partnership work, in terms of systems and processes. In essence, the assumptions highlight those conditions that need to be in place for the programme to begin operations and continue as planned. These include conditions such as: ensuring that relevant protocols are set up to enable multi-agency working; there is commitment of adequate resources and support from the participating agencies; there are committed and motivated staff members and the funding stream is adequately protected; there is provision of relevant training to all stakeholders in the partnership to ensure they have a shared understanding of the problem, shared language and are equipped to undertake joint risk assessments. There is also an assumption that agencies beyond the core partnership will engage and follow-up on signpost actions. These assumptions are crucial for the success of the programme, as we will discuss further in section 8.

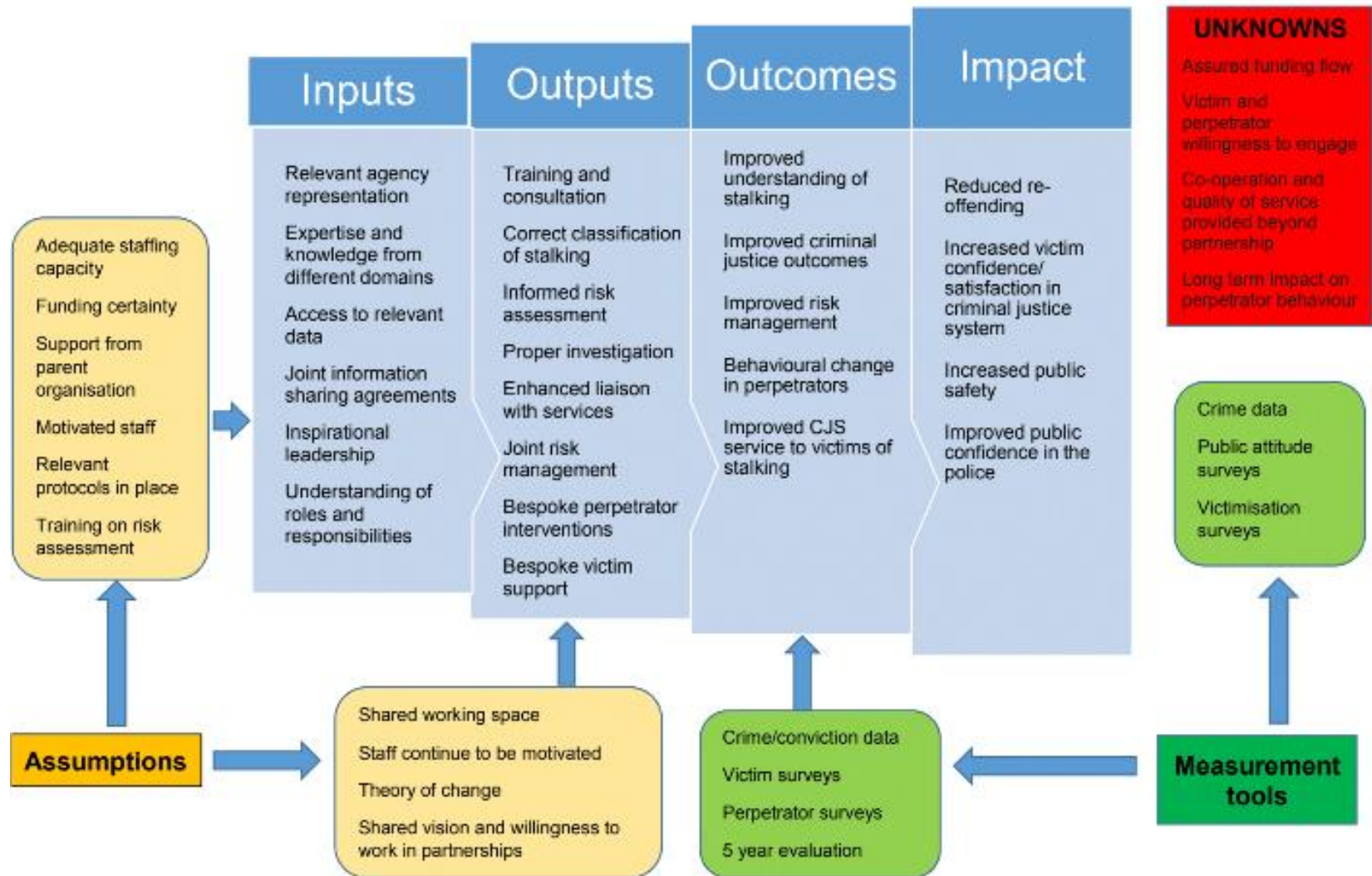


Figure 1 - Overarching MASIP logic model – see Appendix A for key

What's more, the identification of outcomes (as interim outcomes) and impact (as final outcomes) help identify which outcome (interim or final) is to be measured when, and using what measurement tools. Although these measures can be both qualitative and quantitative, we have identified mainly the relevant quantitative measures in the diagram above. Qualitative measurement tools (interviews with the stakeholders, victims and perpetrators) are rich and informative sources of data, as this interim evaluation shows, but there needs to be awareness that in many cases victims and perpetrators might not be aware of the role and involvement of MASIP in their individual risk management. Thus, interviews with them might be less reliable for measurement purposes, but more illuminative of the experiential aspect of partnership working.

6. **Unknowns:** Every programme or project faces certain unknowns on which the success of the programme hinges. In this case, the willingness of perpetrators and/or victims to engage with stakeholders was an unknown factor. Similarly there were concerns at the individual partnership and programme levels about the future of the programme as continued funding was uncertain. All the partnerships involved were signposting risk assessed individuals to other appropriate services and agencies and were aware that they could neither vouch for nor follow up on the quality of services provided by these other agencies. Finally, although MASIP is a bold and unique attempt to provide bespoke interventions to perpetrators (in fact Hampshire's experiment of including the expert services of an Occupational Therapist is the first attempt of its kind to provide requisite skills and therapy to enable perpetrators to be able to better look after themselves), the actual long term impact of these interventions is not really known.

Some of the differences between the overarching model and individual models presented in Appendix 1 stem from lack of agreement or clarity around the four concepts (inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact) or from these logical steps being implemented in practice but have been left out of the model due to oversight<sup>19</sup>.

Although as a team each LAP covered all the aims identified in section 5, and were working towards fulfilling the overall outcomes identified above, in reality the model in each of the three LAPs was focused on slightly different aspects of the process. For instance, Cheshire was focused on risk management, whereas Hampshire was concentrating on provision of health intervention, which was the added element funded by MASIP to their pre-existing stalking clinic. The newly set up London STAC had a number of people working in the area of stalking for the first time. Consequently, this LAP was keen to ensure that there was greater awareness about stalking among practitioners, both within the team and more widely, so they could recognise and respond with appropriate criminal justice responses, explore possible

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<sup>19</sup> It is fairly common when someone develops expertise that they take certain things as a given.

health interventions for perpetrators and work with victims to provide support in the early stages of the project. However, as mentioned above, we believe that all the LAPs were aligned to the overall programme vision, but were focusing on different aspects of the process at the stage when stakeholders were interviewed.

The importance of specifying what the exact interventions are for the programme as a whole and as adopted individual by each LAP cannot be stressed enough. This is because each individual intervention would require its own logic model in order to determine whether it worked and how. For instance, the mechanisms activated for a court mandated drug abuse treatment for perpetrators might be different from the offer of cognitive behavioural therapy to perpetrators on a voluntary basis. Similarly focusing on risk management of cases would require more elaborate pathways; individually focused on perpetrators and victims or manipulating the environment<sup>20</sup> to reduce re-offending, as compared to just concentrating on improved criminal justice outcomes to reduce re-offending. In section 7 we discuss how each LAP's conception of what an 'intervention' is differs and what the possible consequences of that might be on the evaluation as a whole.

This is not to suggest that the partnerships were not seeing stalking cases through the entire work flow process identified above, but instead to highlight that the interim goals for each partnership were weighted towards individualised areas of the work flow process. There was nothing to suggest that any particular focus is better or worse than the others at the time of the analysis, but is merely an observation that each LAP is inclined to measure interim success in terms of their outputs mainly in these areas.

Overall, the analysis of stakeholder interviews, documents provided by the LAPs, and our observations indicated that the importance of a theory of change was well understood. This was operationalised not only at the programme management level, but at the level of each individual LAP, and the essential ingredients were present to a smaller or greater extent in all the models which showed a remarkable degree of shared vision at individual LAP level.

## **7. Case review processes**

Based on section 5 we have constructed a visual depiction of the various aims identified by the interviewees in their vision of how they think MASIP will contribute towards the achievement two of the important outcomes of the programme - reduction in re-offending and improved satisfaction with the criminal justice system for victims of stalking. It is interesting to note that a reordering of the aims provides a clear pathway for how stakeholders envisage the various aims relate to each other, and also illuminates the process that will be followed within the context of multi-agency working (see Figure 2). Figure 2 depicts the various activities undertaken by all three LAPs, however in this figure we also

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<sup>20</sup> For example, changing phone and email contact details, relocating the victim to a new address or resettling a perpetrator in a half-way home away from where the victim lives to prevent physical contact.



highlight our understanding of the different emphases for each LAP, as discussed in section 6 above. London's emphasis is shown in yellow, Cheshire's in pink and Hampshire's in light blue. Our analysis indicates that although the processing of stalking cases follows the same basic structure, there are some variations in practice. The case review process is divided into 6 steps: training and consultancy services; referrals; triage; initial risk assessment; interventions; and revisiting cases.

### ***Training and Consultancy Activities***

Stakeholders interviewed were of the opinion that training to increase awareness about the unique nature of stalking as a crime was essential not only amongst the staff within the LAP, but it was essential to educate practitioners in relevant agencies outside of the partnerships. Conversations with stakeholders elicited that they interpreted one of the aims of the programme to imply training and awareness raising activities<sup>21</sup>. Thus, training and education activities were divided into two types: those conducted to train staff within the LAP to deal with stalking and to work in partnerships. The second type was training conducted by staff to external practitioners to raise awareness of stalking. This section will discuss specific training activities delivered by LAP staff members, the purpose of these exercises, as well as additional needs and benefits of training realised by partners.

### ***Training - Inward facing***

While the Trust provided opportunities for training on the SRP (please refer to set-up section), a few stakeholders from each LAP were able to deliver training workshops around multi-agency working and how stalking could be tackled through this approach. There was a consensus amongst stakeholders, that greater awareness and understanding of stalking offences was essential in order to respond appropriately to the seriousness of the offence and to address victim concerns. In order to achieve some of the overall outcomes of the project, LAP staff members who had expertise in particular knowledge areas would deliver workshops for newer LAP staff on understanding stalking classification and the joint risk assessment process to promote shared understanding.

The benefits of providing training around stalking was twofold. Firstly, it offered staff members an evidence-informed approach to dealing with stalking and would assist in their decisions around classifications and devising risk-management plans. This, in turn, would have a knock-on effect on the advice and consultancy they would provide to external practitioners to guide the subsequent investigation and prosecution of these cases. Secondly, regular training would update all staff on the legal powers and procedures and understand the roles and responsibilities of all the partner agencies, so as to enhance their assessment of a case and the recommendations for interventions they make. For example, shared

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<sup>21</sup> Stakeholders in all three LAPs were convinced that one of the original aims i.e. '*Enhance communication and relationships between the police and other local services to respond effectively to the risk, harm and vulnerability posed by stalking cases*' implied that 'training and awareness raising' were integral outputs of the project.

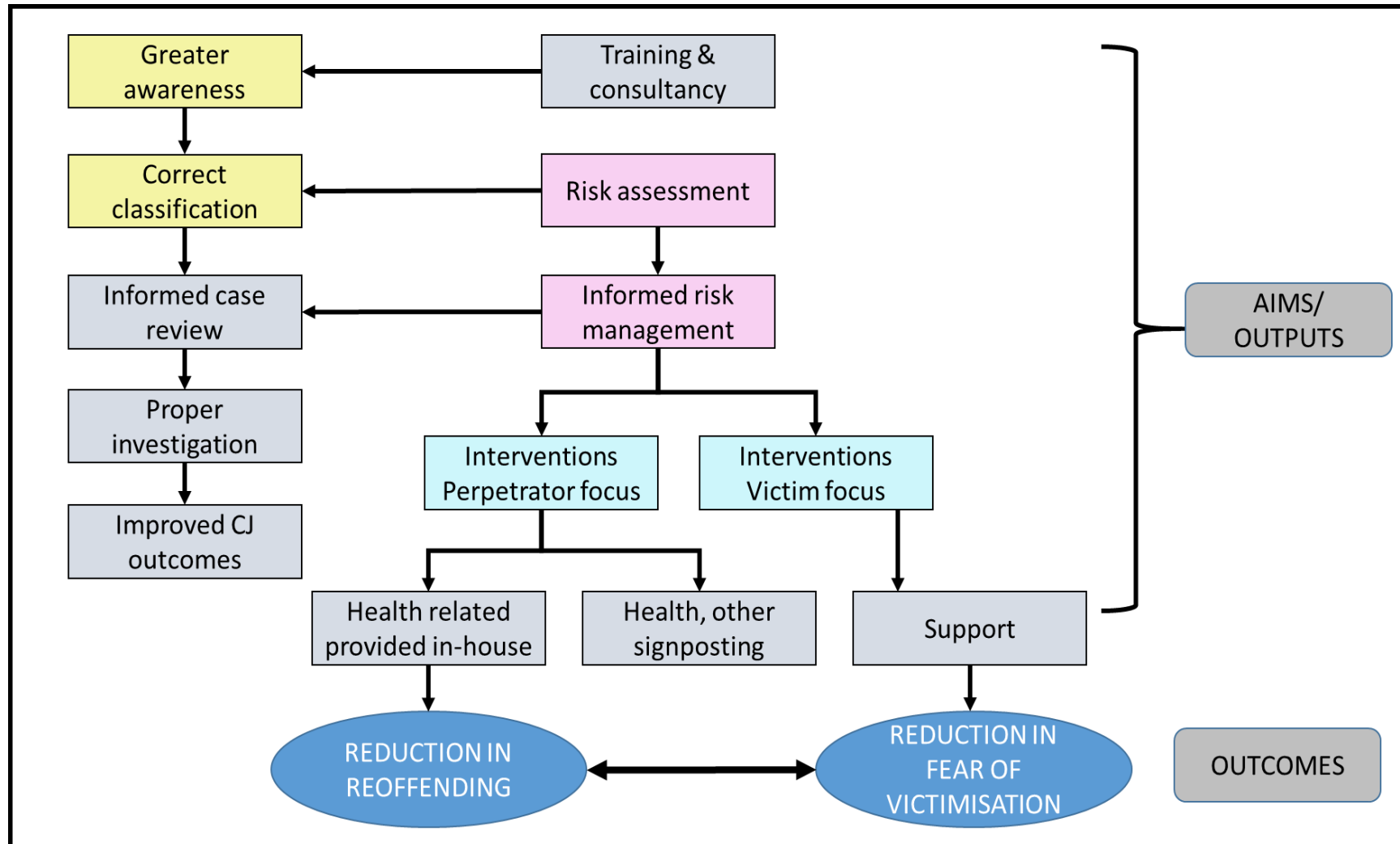


Figure 2 – Generic workflow diagram of MASIP in each partnership area *N.B.* While all three LAPs follow the generic workflow process, London emphasises the yellow stages, Cheshire the pink stages and Hampshire the light blue stages.

knowledge from police, probation and the CPS may be drawn upon by a health psychologist while making recommendations around interventions available in custody. Thus, LAPs recognised the need for training as vital to better functioning of the partnership.

“I went to the training...every time they did it, for the first couple of weeks, which I found really helpful because you are learning the basics in a way, and the viewpoint that they come from and you’re learning the values of what the service is. Which has been really useful. And then you are facilitated to then start making your own judgements and understanding.” – (STH012)

Another aspect of training discussed by partners was around the multi-agency working. There was a lack of specific training around partnership working and every agency generally felt that the current LAP model within MASIP would be able to function without it. The assumption being that each staff member would be able to adapt due to their previous experience in multi-agency work. Many partners had never received multi-agency work training in their long-standing careers and felt they did not need the training, indeed were sceptical of whether such training could be designed, as expressed by these stakeholders,

“I can’t remember ever being offered training in 20 odd years in how to work in a partnership.” (STH016)

“...whether or not you can train someone on how to work in partnership, I have no idea where you would start with that.” (STH008)

Other stakeholders however, did express their desires for some form of training around partnership work to clear up their understanding of their role within the MASIP model and how the body was supposed to operate.

“Multi-agency working is the core of my role and it is a number of the other agencies, obviously, but I think from my perspective, coming into this role only a couple of months ago and not really knowing how it was going to work, I probably could have benefited from something like that.” (STH007)

“Potentially there could have been some scope for, yes, some sort of training or briefing or whatever on how this multi-agency would work from our perspective.” (STH009)

### ***Training and consultancy- outward facing***

Similar training around stalking and the MASIP model was delivered to external practitioners, outside of the partnership by senior members of the LAP. For example, in Hampshire, the police partners within the LAP were delivering training to police, victim advocates and probation to increase awareness around stalking and tighten up the knowledge around the referral process of stalking cases into the LAP.

“Since the beginning of autumn, we have delivered to five different response teams. That’s about 800 police officers. They are all aware of that referral process...We are just identifying a date to really get into the probation service, to train them up and make them more aware.” (STH019)

In London, the need to train not only practitioners in police and probation but also court staff and legal practitioners was highlighted. However, there was a question of resource capability in order to provide this service to all concerned professionals who are working in the area of stalking.

“I think if we have the time and ability to train all field officers, if we can train court staff so they can better identify stalking cases, even if they’ve not been convicted of stalking but they are identifying behaviours and therefore making appropriate recommendation”. (STH022)

These training workshops are delivered with the intention to better inform outside agencies around the subject of stalking, reporting, and the functional role of MASIP and the LAP in the stalking prevention process. Since these agencies have the power to enhance the risk management plan of victims and perpetrators, training was highlighted to be vital to the process.

Cheshire on the other hand, as the forerunners of a multi-agency stalking unit, were involved in training practitioners within and beyond their force area.

### ***Referrals***

Each LAP operated slightly differently in terms of how they receive referrals, hold meetings to assess cases and decide on the best way to manage each case amongst partner agencies.

In Cheshire, most case referrals are made from the police, but also come from IDVAs, MARACs, and other agencies. Due to the pre-existing stalking initiative in Cheshire there is considerable awareness of stalking within the force and processes in place to screen harassment and stalking related cases.

In Hampshire, most referrals are made through the police via an AD344a form. Southern Health, social services and external mental health services can also refer cases. Each case is screened by the force stalking co-ordinator.

In London, cases are referred in to STAC mainly via the police, NHS, or probation. Officers within the unit (usually the DS) will scan all cases registered as harassment or stalking on the police computer system overnight, conduct a risk assessment and discuss at a daily morning meeting.

The Trust, who receive cases through their dedicated Stalking Helpline, also refer cases to the three LAPs.

Referrals seem to be made in similar ways as all LAPs get referrals from same avenues, have some sort of form or processing system to organise cases and have a main point of contact screening and distinguishing stalking cases to be discussed at partnership meetings.

### ***Triage***

The key nuances which are important for understanding the referrals and multi-agency involvement, lie in each LAP's conception and definition of a Triage and Clinic. Triage as understood in the MASIP context loosely means determining what would be the best course of action to be taken next and was undertaken either by a team of people (as in STAC) or a single person (Hampshire or IASU). Clinics, on the other hand, are generally consultancy sessions with inputs from various agencies but vary across each LAP depending on the expertise and stage of the case process.

The point of triage for Cheshire is where IASU receives case referrals from the Police Referrals Unit (PRU) and a member of IASU staff contacts all relevant services to collect historical information on the victim and perpetrator. If there appears to be stalking behaviour present, a stalking case screening questionnaire (developed by the operational and health leads in Cheshire) is completed. The results of this questionnaire assist in deciding whether value can be added to the case by being heard at the Clinic (where advice on case management and health is provided if appropriate). More complex cases are discussed at a separate clinic meeting for purpose of gathering additional information. Successfully screened cases are discussed at monthly partnership meetings. Partners present at one of the partnership meetings observed included representatives from the NPS, CRC, IDVA representatives, adult safeguarding social services, other agencies addressing substance misuse and primary care health workers.

The force-stalking co-ordinator in Hampshire assesses the information referred in and decides if it is indeed a stalking case, delivers investigative advice to the OIC, and in certain scenarios, sends it on to be triaged at the weekly meeting<sup>22</sup>. This meeting is where all of the (funded and unfunded) partner agencies review the case as a team and decide whether it needs to receive a broader perspective at the stalking clinic. Investigation of cases dealt by the clinic and Recolo clinic are tracked and monitored up until it results in a charge or other outcome that concludes the police investigation.

The Recolo clinic reviews high risk cases bi-weekly and decides on an appropriate health intervention. The main distinction between the stalking clinic and Recolo clinic is that the former provides holistic consultancy to each case, whereas, the latter is a specialised mental health arm of the project which provides advice on cases within which a mental health problem is present. In this sense, the word clinic refers to guidance and consultancy.

In London, one police member of STAC reviews cases that come through every morning and screens out cases which are tagged as stalking but are incorrectly classified (e.g., where a harassment charge would be more appropriate than a stalking one). The officer conducts a

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<sup>22</sup> Our observations in some LAPs indicated that even though a case might be diagnosed as not stalking (i.e. not underlined by obsessive fixated behaviour), the seriousness of the incident would necessitate advice being given to the OIC.

SASH assessment and all cases deemed as high risk by this tool are discussed in a daily morning meeting with all agencies. Each partner gives their input and advice. This may be in the form of previous information known on the case or recommendations for more information which is needed to assess the seriousness of the case if something was missed. The sheer volume of cases in London requires a swift response and discussions on cases occurs every day amongst the relevant partners. For example, if probation requires a health perspective, the probation officer will sit down with one of the health psychologists to review mental health history and plausible interventions.

In all LAPs, each partner provides input and advice at the triage stage after all relevant information available on partner systems is shared. This includes, for example, any relevant health concerns about the victim or perpetrator that are flagged up on the health database or whether there is any previous offending history of the perpetrator on the probation systems. In some cases, more information is needed to assess the seriousness of the case. In London, consultancy clinics are offered at the point of referrals from the probation service where, for example, a perpetrator may be released from custody and guidance is needed on the sentence reports or possible interventions that they could provide before referring in for a triage.

### ***Initial Risk Assessment***

Each of the LAPs have their own individual risk assessment forms which are either an adapted version of the SRP tool or the more conventional DASH<sup>23</sup> tool for domestic violence and SASH<sup>3</sup> tool for stalking. The formal risk assessment itself is conducted at different points in the three areas.

In Cheshire the referring officer/staff completes their own DASH, Stalking Screening Tool, or other risk assessment tool as part of their Vulnerable Person's Assessment report (VPA) into the referral unit (MASH) before the case receives a secondary assessment. A risk profile then evolves throughout case meetings. The Case Analysis Summary (CAS), developed within IASU, helps to guide conversations around risk, adding value, perpetrator types and motivations which in turn help the practitioners collectively decide the most appropriate course of action. The SRP or SCSQ is only completed if necessary once a case has been triaged into the unit. Health partners who are involved may have their own assessment tools and have the right to conduct these to improve the risk management plan.

In Hampshire, initially the S-DASH (AD344a) is completed by the police and this is reviewed by the force stalking co-ordinator. The DASH/SASH is completed at the point of triage in the stalking consultancy clinics. The SRP is then applied to cases at the clinic meetings where all partners contribute information to inform this process. The history of the suspect, history between the suspect and the victim, the likelihood of re-offending, likelihood of persistence,

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<sup>23</sup> Sheridan, L. & Roberts, K. (2011) Key questions to consider in stalking cases. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 29(2): 255-270.

and likelihood of violence is discussed at the clinic meetings to contribute further to an informed assessment of risk.

London's standard risk assessment tool is SASH; the DASH is used where appropriate and a condensed version of the SRP, which is conducted at the point of screening, before the triage meetings. These are completed by a police officer in the LAP. Cases which appear to be high risk are then discussed at the morning meetings, and if any mental health assessments are deemed necessary, they may be conducted to inform an appropriate risk-management and safeguarding plan.

### ***Interventions***

The concept of interventions also varied dependant on the philosophical position of and resources available in each LAP. The primary focus of interventions was to provide improved case management and treatment of the victim and/or perpetrator. Interventions involving the perpetrator can be delivered in two forms: indirect and direct interventions.

#### *Perpetrator focused interventions*

Direct interventions for perpetrators consisted of providing the necessary therapeutic treatment by health professionals within the LAP. Hampshire's Recolo arm of the partnership, which included two psychologists and one occupational therapist, was very active in this regard. Both Cheshire and London had some capacity to provide psychological interventions but were more inclined to signpost to other services outside the partnership, but for different reasons. Cheshire deliver brief therapeutic interventions via their Outreach Practitioners when it is clinically indicated and viable. However, they were open in admitting that they did not have the capacity or expertise to provide deep schematic-based therapies, and instead support perpetrators to access existing services when this is assessed as necessary. On the other hand, London's remit was too wide and there were too many cases for the health team to provide therapy to all those assessed as requiring it.

Direct interventions for perpetrators also involved a range of other actions such as moving the perpetrator to another area far away to reduce opportunities for physical contact with the victim, or assisting in securing employment, or providing a legal remedy to monitor or reduce risks of re-offending. For example, in London and Cheshire there is a desire to explore the legislative basis for electronically tagging those perpetrators on a voluntary basis, who want to address their problem behaviour, in order to monitor their movements so as to safeguard the victim. One stakeholder explained the aim was to "...to provide victims with that early warning that they're in an area" (STH020).

Indirect interventions for the perpetrator usually involve actions such as providing some sort of tactical advice to the investigating officer, referring the perpetrator for treatment from an alternative service, and providing consultations to external agencies who engage with the perpetrator. For example, referring cases to the most appropriate external agencies is the

current main form of intervention. The health partners may be concerned with the psychological factors of a case and what tailored treatment for each offender will be crucial in reducing the stalking behaviour. Based on the health assessment, there is a conscious effort to divert the treatment to a service which can provide suitable assistance (e.g. an NHS specialist in CBT or IPT). This way, the perpetrator's mental health condition (if they have one) could be treated by indirectly referring them back (if already under care) or anew to an external service who is equipped to treat them. Due to the volume of cases in London, and the resources available within STAC, this may be the most efficient way to deal with a case.

“If somebody is here with a mental illness that's untreated, the theory of change would be that if we divert them to a service where they are treated, there would be a change, their mental illness would be treated and their behaviour would change.” (STH005)

In Hampshire, the first consideration for an intervention was whether the case could be dealt with through MAPPA, which is a multi-agency body which ensures the management of sexual or violent offenders. If a case does not qualify for this, but the offender is classified as a danger to the public, he may benefit from a multi-agency approach and be referred into the Recolo clinic. At the Recolo clinic, cases are signposted to health agencies for appropriate psychological intervention, either when the perpetrator is already receiving some mental health care, or where appropriate community health facilities are available. Health professionals at Recolo take on those cases where appropriate psychological intervention cannot be provided by external agencies. The importance of signposting cases to existing mental health agencies for provision of appropriate health intervention was expressed across other LAPs as well.

“Signposting is really important as well. Just because it won't fit under the Recolo project or any sort of additional police work, are there other departments within the mental health world or the NHS world or other partner agencies that might be better placed to support an individual and try to intervene in that sense?” (STH019)

### *Victim focused interventions*

Victim interventions are slightly more complex as the perpetrator interventions are in place with the overall aim to safeguard the victim. Each LAP though does recognise what they can do for the victim given their capacity and access to valuable information. Direct intervention is provided in the form of direct and consistent contact between the victim advocates in each LAP and the victim. Through the advocate the following could be deemed as interventions: information on a possible residential move, advice on limiting their contact with the perpetrator, contacting social services if there is a risk to children involved, and diversion into other agencies who may assist with their mental health if it has been affected by the perpetrators stalking.

“So we had an offender who was sectioned. They had no idea a criminal investigation was going on, no idea of the safeguarding implications of allowing the victim to visit the offender on the ward. We saw it as part of our research. The institution we contacted,



victim visits were stopped, safeguarding was implemented, so child social care was contacted.” (STH015)

Another example of supportive intervention was provided by Cheshire where victim advocacy has provided inputs during case hearings making the case that there is a high risk of violent contact between the perpetrator and the victim, in order to secure more stringent restriction orders to protect the victim.

Advocacy also involves LAPs providing input to the criminal justice process whereby partners give advice to courts, OICs and solicit input from the CPS into case management. The intention of these interventions is to place the victim at the centre of all decisions and secure an outcome which best manages the safety of the victim. In this sense, the focus is on dealing with the offender’s behaviour, as it is in the best interests of the victim’s safety.

“It’s going to mean that we have more to offer victims really. It is about making sure that we are saying that we will safeguard and risk assess only from the victim’s viewpoint, and it’s about making the court process, if possible” (STH014)

“We then increase the support that’s available to victims because that victim previously may not have been able to access the support that the original partnership between police and victim advocacy have.” (STH007)

### ***Revisiting Cases***

There are significant differences between the three LAP areas with respect to how they follow up on prior cases (i.e., cases that pre-date MASIP or have been managed already). This could be of significance further down the line, when the long-term impact of MASIP is monitored and evaluated.

The IASU in Cheshire has three systems which track and monitor the risks/behaviour of victims and perpetrators. The police track the criminal activity of every referred perpetrator on their system, and flag up concerning behaviour. The NHS has an online database which monitors the mental health of any perpetrator who has engaged with them upon the referral from the LAP. The Victim Advocate monitors the victim’s experiences through regular contact and records this on a spreadsheet. If anything changes while the case is at IASU the risk of the case is re-assessed at the clinic. For example, if a perpetrator is involved in a violent assault, the incident will be added to their police record, and possible contributory mental health conditions will be highlighted on the NHS system. Such a case is discussed at a clinic meeting and possibly deemed a higher risk. If the victim needs further safeguarding measures, advice is provided. At this point, a fresh risk assessment is completed, if deemed necessary.

“We case track anyway for the life of any case we work with and for the six months after, so we’re always monitoring somebody who has been involved in the unit.” (STH015)

“So if something changed, there was a new incident or anything happened that we thought we need to review this case again, it would come back into clinic and at the clinic a new CAS form would be created.” (STH012)

In Hampshire, cases are usually tracked everyday but not typically revisited in a partnership meeting unless there is a significant change in the information received by the case review officer. This is due to the capacity of staff time to reflect and also due to a resting assumption that the LAP will be notified about a change in risk status due to their involvement in the case. Risk assessments may be conducted post-intervention to realise if there is a behavioural change, but this usually depends on if direct interventions were completed through the Recolo clinic and if there is enough information on and access to diversion services to follow-up.

“We would not necessarily go back unless there is any dramatic change in information that came to us that would require it or a further offence, for example, that might need to be revisited.” (STH019)

“There isn’t a concrete time frame or point that we would do another risk assessment. Generally, when we would do another one would be post the intervention... (if diverted to an agency outside of the partnership) we will follow up where we can to see if any action has been taken and we’ll follow that up with a phone call or with a letter to the GP.” (STH007)

In London, there is no formal follow up process in place considering the amount of cases which are diverted and, more importantly, due to the fact that the LAP has not been set up for a significant period of time where checks post-intervention are feasible (e.g., psychological interventions can take up to six months to take an effect). The ability to follow up with external agencies is also difficult. There are rare instances where cases are re-assessed but these are the high-risk cases where the team believe it is absolutely vital to follow up to avoid risks of escalation. Usually the victim advocate will keep in contact with the victim until the case has been dealt with through the courts, but may decide to support them after a few weeks if need be. The victim advocate can bring a case back to the partnership’s attention if there is concern that a follow up is necessary to better safeguard the victim.

“If there’s one we feel that we need to monitor, that’s noted. What we’re doing now as well, is we’re getting a spreadsheet where all the crimes where we’re quite involved in are all noted down, and that will be fed back through the supervisors and for all the partners so that they are aware of what we are deeming as potentially high risk and what has been reviewed.” (STH003)

“We are not there to supervise people and we are not there to go in and say, “Oh I’m just going to come and check you are doing it right,” because that’s not our job either...we wouldn’t routinely go back every couple of weeks or something like that” (STH005)

The presented case processes are undergoing refinement and changes as the project matures and the theory of change evolves. It would be interesting to compare the early processes

described here to the processes closer to the end of the project and the perceptions of the stakeholders in the final report to draw conclusions about best practice based in the evidence.

## 8. Facilitators of success

This section draws together a number of findings from this interim report and identifies factors that are necessary for the effective and efficient working of LAPs, and the successful achievement of intended outcomes. These have emerged from the qualitative data on what has worked well and is intended as a checklist to guide the replication of a MASIP inspired model of partnership working.

Facilitating factors are grouped into three sets: Essential preconditions; Essential for continued performance; and Essential for ensuring sustainability. It is worth noting here that most of these factors are within the control of the agencies and the public sector, but there are a few that are dependent on external factors, outside the remit of MASIP.

### *Essential preconditions*

1. **Willingness of organisations to work together as an integrated unit.** This includes support from the senior ranks in the partner organisations and commitment of adequate resources to the partnership for the lifecycle of the project.
2. **Information sharing agreements in place prior to or at the start of the partnership work.** These often take longer than expected and can act as an impediment to integrated working. In the three areas we observed, the partnerships were, six months into the project, still in the process of getting official data sharing agreements signed. It is indeed a testament to their motivation that stakeholders had found ways of working together despite this limitation. The importance of the role of project management in setting up protocols and licence agreements and templates to enable innovative funding solutions and data sharing protocols cannot be stressed enough.
3. **Joint training on stalking (and perhaps partnership working):** Participation by the evaluation leads in the two day Stalking Risk Profile (SRP) training course held prior to the official start date of the project, revealed the importance of team members having a shared language and shared understanding of the problem in order to conduct joint risk assessments. It is important that all new staff who join the project should be provided with appropriate training to consolidate shared understanding and be given some training on partnership work if they haven't had experience of working in partnerships. Although each of the partnerships use their own risk assessment tools, stakeholders were appreciative of the training which gave them a new perspective and fresh insights into stalking, even if they had considerable experience in the same or related areas (see section 4).

4. **Visionary leadership** – Our interactions with the three partnership areas indicated the pivotal role of one or two individuals (from different agencies) in conceptualising and driving the project forward, with a clear vision of what the aims and activities of their partnership were to be. They were also instrumental in shaping the working environment and in setting up processes suitable for their local contextual conditions. We argue therefore that such leadership is an essential aspect for establishing rapport and cementing trust between stakeholders from different agencies.

### ***Essential for operational continuity***

1. **Adequate resourcing:** The interim evaluation revealed that although LAPs felt they had been adequately resourced at the start of the project, it quickly became evident that certain aspects were inadequately funded or the work load far exceeded current capacity. To begin with, the Trust, in its capacity as programme manager found that they had severely underestimated the project management cost and resources required for setting up a unique project of this kind – (the scope of which is discussed in section 4). It is therefore essential to provide adequate resources and time for the project set up phase. The current imbalance in resources has meant a reconfiguration of the funding distribution in the budget, which has caused some tensions between the various stakeholder groups. Secondly, individual LAPs found that perhaps they had not provided adequately for certain agencies, for example Hampshire's experience indicated that they needed a full time dedicated member of staff from probation, instead of the current arrangement which includes one officer working part-time (a small percentage of their time) on the project. Similarly, in London, STAC's experience shows that they would need more than the one dedicated victim advocate and probation officer, given the volume of cases they are dealing with. In the absence of these additional resources, the units might find providing a high quality of service for the increasing volume of cases unsustainable in the months to come.
2. **Shared working space:** There are three aspects to ensuring that the most facilitative environment is created for the partnership element to work at its best. These are:
  - The first is the shared ethos and values, which requires partners to trust one another and be willing to share information in order to achieve the best results for both victims and perpetrators.
  - The second refers to the physical environment that makes shared working possible. This might take the form of co-location (as in STAC and IASU) or a defined shared working space (as for the Recolo clinic in Hampshire) so that partners can easily access relevant expertise from partner agencies and take joint decisions.

- The third refers to virtual shared space where an integrated data base or access to data from other partners and relevant agencies makes partnership working smooth.
3. **Work in partnership as an integrated unit:** There are two aspects to building trust and ensuring that all participating agencies and staff feel included if a truly integrated approach is the aim.
- It was evident that the three models were at different levels of maturity, and the length of time each partnership had been working together impacted on the levels of trust, and how fine-tuned their response was to not only new cases but following up on previous cases and working with a wider range of partners. Two of the three LAPs had long standing relationships both within the partnership and also with wider agencies, for instance Cheshire had a close working relationship with social work, other IDVAs, MARAC representatives who regularly attend the clinics and make valuable contributions to the working of IASU. Thus, it was clear that building this kind of trust to develop close working interpersonal relationships needs time and nurturing.
  - The other aspect that encourages integrated working is appropriate governance structures and mechanisms to resolve disagreements. Although almost all stakeholders from the three LAPs felt that they had a flat governance structure and a very democratic way of resolving disagreements with discussion and debate, not everyone shared this opinion. It is therefore important to ensure that all agencies and staff feel that their voice is heard and that no one agency or person dominates proceedings to encourage partnership working.
4. **Reflective practice:** Shared learning events are essential for ensuring that stakeholders get the opportunity to reflect on their experience and learning with other members not only within their unit, but also between LAPs, so as to pool together lessons learned. For example, we observed STAC meetings that included an element of reflection on their experience of team working and working with other agencies. Programme wide shared learning events and workshops organised by the PMO were also seen as useful by stakeholders to keep the different components of the programme focused on the shared aims and vision.
5. **Willingness of perpetrators and victims to work with relevant agencies:** Although experienced stakeholders suggest that some perpetrators would like to address their obsessive fixated behaviours, to seek help for other psychological issues, and/or require other coping techniques, there are several instances where the perpetrators refuse to engage with the programme or treatment. Without voluntary co-operation from perpetrators, often it is difficult to help those who refuse to help themselves. This can be a serious impediment to the effectiveness of interventions in such cases.

It is also important to gain the trust and confidence of the victims in order for them to engage with the partnership services and seek the necessary advice and support. Support can only be offered but it would require victims to also comply with the advice provided, especially to manage risk. This is not a given, as shown previously in the experience of MARACs<sup>14</sup>, which although not the same as MASIP are a useful evidence base to draw from.

***Essential for ensuring sustainability***

6. **Assured funding source:** One of the greatest concerns that stakeholders across all three units had is the prospect of an uncertain future when the funding period for MASIP concludes. This interim evaluation clearly indicates that considerable time is required for setting up new partnerships (London STAC) or enhancing existing partnerships (Cheshire and Hampshire), which includes time taken for recruiting and vetting new personnel and for them to be in post, for working partnerships to be established, shared data protocols to be agreed and new processes and systems to settle. Health interventions, such as CBT or others, if indicated for the perpetrators, require at least six months to provide and to follow up. Given the 18 month operational phase of MASIP, LAPs are concerned about whether they will be able to achieve tangible results in this short period to demonstrate effectiveness and whether they will be able to survive as a unit at all if future funding is not forthcoming.
7. **Constancy of personnel:** The above point naturally leads on to this one; acquiring knowledge and expertise in dealing with a complex crime such as stalking requires considerable investment by individuals in terms of time and resources. It would therefore be advisable if stakeholders who had equipped themselves with the necessary skills and expertise in multi-agency working and had established relationships of trust with other partners were relatively stable in the post. A regular churn of personnel could prove to be a significant challenge to the smooth and efficient working of MASIP partnerships.
8. **Long term evaluation:** It was clear from the opinion of stakeholders and from our observations that stalking, unlike other crimes, is often rooted in some deep-seated psychological obsessive, fixated behaviours that have a serious impact on the lives of victims and those around them. Evidence indicates that determining the cause of the behaviour and providing appropriate treatment requires time and co-operation from the perpetrator, and often comes towards the end of any criminal justice outcome, i.e., after the investigation when prosecution and conviction is complete. The other approach to stalking via managing risk for both the perpetrator and for the victim can be spread over a considerable period (often years) because of the perpetrator's continued obsession. Thus, in order for any LAP to evidence their effectiveness and value for money, the project and evaluation should cover a longer period of time (at least five years).

9. **The socio-political environment continues to be supportive:** LAPs and NGOs working in this area have raised the profile of stalking and its traumatic effects on victims and people around them over the past few years. Legislation to recognise stalking as a distinct crime is a recent phenomenon in most developed countries. It was only in this decade stalking has been defined as a specific crime in England and Wales in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, following on from the recognition of harassment itself, only as recently as the Protection from Harassment Act 1997<sup>24</sup>. Raising awareness of the pathological and harmful nature of stalking as a crime, and recognising the need for providing support to victims is only now gathering momentum and receiving the attention of policymakers. In order for MASIPs to succeed it would require continued patronage and support from government, policy makers and criminal justice agencies as well as the health sector in the future.

## 9. Discussion

### *Key findings*

The analysis of the qualitative fieldwork presented in this interim report serves to highlight the complexity of the MASIP project. The large number of partnership agencies involved, at numerous tiers of management and responsibility, and the geographical dispersion of the activity being done, requires considerable co-ordination and governance. Much of the governance structures and processes for the project needed to be created at the beginning of MASIP. This was a sensible, albeit intensive, investment of resources<sup>25</sup>, since the evidence-base on multi-agency working suggests that partnerships are more effective when they have formalised rules, roles and processes underpinning their work<sup>15</sup> and a steering group<sup>26</sup>. It should not be underestimated how important, but time-consuming, this stage is, with one of the project managers commenting that, "This is the first piece of advice I would give anyone: triple that budget and at least double the time on just that part alone." (SVA023). It is our view that the ongoing project management function of MASIP has supported many of the facilitators of success identified in section 8.

The three pilot LAPs have common characteristics insofar that they all approach stalking case management holistically and deliver interventions to perpetrators, but also are distinctly different in several aspects. For example, although each LAP contributes to investigation of cases, offender management and provision of health interventions where indicated, as well as providing victim support, our research indicated that each individual LAP appeared to have a subtly different emphasis on the aims of their unit; for Cheshire this is centred on risk management, for Hampshire this is the provision of health interventions, and for London this

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<sup>24</sup> Source CPS website: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/stalking-and-harassment>

<sup>25</sup> Which was not originally provided for in the bid, but was recouped through a re-profiling of the budget.

<sup>26</sup> Sloper, P. (2004). Facilitators and barriers for co-ordinated multi-agency services. *Child: care, health and development*, 30(6), 571-580.

is the application of criminal justice responses and signposting to external agencies after the correct classification of stalking offences. These differences in emphasis are to be expected given the dissimilar context within each LAP is situated and the resources at their disposal. Similarly, the case review processes are different across the three LAPs, with those in Cheshire and Hampshire simply being a refinement on what was previously followed in their pre-MASIP days, with London having to set up entirely new processes for case review, and continually revise them as caseload increased. It is too early in the project to assess whether there is a benefit to any particular model of working.

It strikes us, when looking at the research literature on multi-agency working, that the MASIP project has, whether by intuition or design, followed a lot of the principles of effective partnership working. The fact that the MASIP vision is shared by all provides a strong foundation on which all other aspects of the project can be built<sup>6</sup>. Care has been taken to include the 'right' kind of partners. This includes consensus-style leadership<sup>27</sup> with expertise in the area of stalking, staff with experience of multi-agency work, and staff recruited without such work experience possessing the qualities of openness and flexibility that multi-agency partnerships thrive on.

Strong team-working in each LAP is evident. A crucial ingredient in multi-agency working is trust<sup>14</sup>, which has been built, either over time in Cheshire and Hampshire with their prior multi-agency partnerships, or in London through an intense period of shared learning and through reflection activities, which can help to alleviate 'interprofessional stereotypes'<sup>24</sup>. Co-location of partners in Cheshire and London is seen as a facilitator of expediting communication and decision-making – as is seen in other multi-agency partnerships<sup>28</sup> - whereas in Hampshire the existing historical working relationships are believed to be strong enough to not be hampered by being separately located.

Processes in each LAP have been devised carefully to holistically 'join-up' services, preventing the types of duplication of effort and bottlenecks in the referral places reported to happen in some MARACs<sup>29</sup>. Due to the close-knit team working and strong local co-ordination, we did not identify any problems with accountability on delivering actions from the multi-agency clinics.

Decision-making in each LAP appears to be communal, albeit with particular partners with domain expertise taking the lead on specific decisions when appropriate. This style of decision-making is not a given in multi-agency partnerships, it can instead be predominantly

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<sup>27</sup> Higgins, A., Hales, G. and Chapman, J. (2016). Multi-agency case management: evidence and orthodoxy. Police Effectiveness in a Changing World. Police Foundation. Available at: <http://www.police-foundation.org.uk/publication/multi-agency-case-management/>

<sup>28</sup> Hester, M., Eisenstadt, N., Jones, C. and Morgan, K. (2017). Evaluation of the Drive Project - a pilot to address high-risk perpetrators of domestic abuse Year 1 Feasibility Study. University of Bristol.

<sup>29</sup> Home Office (2011). Research into Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs). Home Office Violent and Youth Crime Prevention Unit (VCYU) and Research and Analysis Unit (RAU).



police-led or suffer from a ‘too many cooks’ problem whereby there are too many diverse perspectives to accommodate<sup>15</sup>. There are also the problems of key partners being abstracted from duty<sup>14</sup> or otherwise unable to regularly attend meetings<sup>27</sup> that has been avoided by the funding of full-time posts in each LAP.

### ***Concerns raised by the fieldwork***

As well as many positives, there are also some potential areas of concern within the MASIP project that may impact on the subsequent outcome evaluation. Firstly, programme fidelity is at risk if all LAPs do not directly align their efforts towards achieving the articulated outcomes of the MASIP programme bid. Although stakeholder interviews and observations indicated a fair degree of shared vision, there is a danger of mission drift if LAPs focus their resource allocation and efforts on activities that contribute to what we would call intermediate outcomes<sup>30</sup> – such as to “enhance communication and relationships between the police and other local services; and to respond effectively to the risk, harm and vulnerability posed by stalking cases”. Training and awareness raising undertaken by all LAPs in the first half of the operational phase of MASIP contribute to this outcome, but could potentially pull resources away from delivering the other outcomes such as reductions in reoffending and improving stalking victims’ experience of the criminal justice system. A delicate balance between the outcomes articulated in the original bid therefore needs to be struck and the strategy to achieve this needs to be agreed across the programme as a whole.

This brings us to the second concern, as mentioned in section 8, funding uncertainty may compromise the ability of LAPs to deliver health interventions, since it is not clinically ethical to begin working with an individual but not complete their therapeutic intervention. In addition, core practitioners may leave MASIP before the end of the project to secure a new job. As interventions (both health and otherwise) are a central component of the innovation offered by the MASIP project, this is likely to compromise the effectiveness of the project.

Related to this, consensus across the three LAPs on the selection criteria for perpetrators to receive direct health interventions has taken a long time to achieve (indeed, this came after the fieldwork reported here). This was perhaps hampered by the discretion given to each LAP at the beginning of the project about these criteria. Similarly, the concept of intervention is understood differently across the three areas, which relates to the different mental health specialists which exist in each site. This discord with one of the key objectives of MASIP (to work directly with perpetrators) may undermine some of the project’s aims<sup>24</sup> and mean that the effect of the project – with reference to the outcomes of reducing stalking re-offending and increase in victim satisfaction – may be less substantial than was envisaged. What’s more, given that direct health interventions are needs-based and intended to reduce the perpetrator’s fixation and/or obsessive thoughts so that the stalking behaviour might reduce,

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<sup>30</sup> Although admittedly these are two of the six intended outcomes of the bid.

even when these interventions are delivered the benefits of MASIP may not be realised, or measured, within the scope of the initial timescales.

Other potential issues with evaluating the effectiveness of MASIP surround the nature of the actions taken by LAPs. Indirect case management actions (e.g. signposting) are not measurable within the scope of this evaluation as we cannot reliably determine what was done differently (than what would have happened without the MASIP involvement) and what difference it made to the outcomes at the individual case level<sup>15</sup>.

The complexity of MASIP, and how it is operationalised in each of the LAPs is partly due to the nature of the problem being tackled (i.e., stalking). But it is also somewhat dependent on the ambitious goals set by MASIP; too many aims in a strategy can dilute the programme focus<sup>31</sup>. The focus here on tackling deep-rooted obsessive and fixated behaviour in perpetrators, whilst also striving to improve the safety and feelings of safety of victims, in tandem with improving how the entire criminal justice system responds to cases of stalking is noble, but challenging to deliver in practice.

### ***Limitations of the fieldwork***

The interim report is based on interviews with key stakeholders from the project management team and individual LAPs in the early stages of the project, along with observations of early meetings and clinics in the three areas. The interim report therefore describes the opinions and processes that emerged from the data collected early in the project. We recognise that these have matured and evolved over the intervening months and may not be reflective of current state of affairs. We intend to capture the development in the theory of change, and in stakeholder perceptions over the lifetime of the project through a second round of interviews and observations towards the end of the project.

Secondly, the findings, especially regarding clarity of vision and shared understanding of issues, and challenges involved in responding to stalking are based on interviews with key stakeholders and experienced members of the three LAPs. However, since then the LAPs have grown and new staff have joined the team. We are unable to say whether the findings about shared vision and understanding are generalisable to these newer staff.

We are aware that tensions within and between partnerships; and partnerships and the project management exist, and a lot of work has gone on behind the scenes to resolve some of the more pressing disagreements. We are not, however, in a position to comment on the

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<sup>31</sup> Crawford, A. and Cunningham, M. (2015) Working in Partnership: The Challenges of Working across Organizational Boundaries, Cultures and Practices. Ch. 4. In Fleming, J. (ed.) Police Leadership – Rising to the Top, pp. 71-94, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288488191\\_Working\\_in\\_Partnership\\_The\\_challenges\\_of\\_working\\_across\\_organisational\\_boundaries\\_cultures\\_and\\_practices](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288488191_Working_in_Partnership_The_challenges_of_working_across_organisational_boundaries_cultures_and_practices)

processes involved in resolving these (if at all) internally. These are natural issues that arise in complex multi-site projects and should not be taken to be unusual.

In addition, despite our efforts to collect information through various sources, documents and our own observation, there is still a certain lack of conceptual clarity around some of the processes, mainly because certain terms, such as triage, clinic and intervention are used inconsistently by the three LAPs and the Trust to describe how each model conducts its proceedings. As a result, there might be some inaccuracies in the description of the process in individual LAPs.

Finally, inputs from victims and perpetrator interviews would have complemented the stakeholder's perspectives in this interim report, but are missing due to the delay in setting these interviews up. Consequently, the interim report presents just the perspective of stakeholders.

### ***The evidence base for multi-agency working***

A final note to end this discussion on is the accepted wisdom that pervades the MASIP project that multi-agency working is superior to single-agency working on a complex, protracted area of criminality such as stalking. This is an assumption commonly made across the criminal justice policy area, and has many valid features which we document below, but it is important to stress that there is no evidence base that strongly supports this universal belief<sup>25</sup>. That is, there have been no robust tests of the hypothesis that multi-agency working is better than no multi-agency working.

Here we break down this assumption into its component parts:

- Multi-agency working is assumed to avoid duplication of efforts across different agencies, and presents a unified response to service users<sup>25</sup>.
- Multi-agency working is assumed to improve case knowledge<sup>25</sup>, and a diverse range of information is required for informed risk assessment<sup>14</sup>. This may be especially relevant to the area of stalking, since it requires unique expertise not possessed elsewhere within public services. For example, the DRIVE project, which works with high-risk domestic violence perpetrators, specifically identified that stalking cases were the most challenging to work with and recommended that they be outsourced to a more specialist service<sup>26</sup>. Our interviews with stakeholders revealed that sophisticated risk assessment was believed to lead to improved risk management.
- Multi-agency working is assumed to provide a better *quality* of response to service users – due to the synthesis of diverse perspectives on how to respond and the potential to target multiple causal mechanisms driving the problem – and/or a better *quantity* (i.e., dosage) of response to service users<sup>15</sup>.

It is clear that these aspects of multi-agency working are valued by practitioners<sup>14,27</sup>, however, these do not inevitably translate to improved outcomes on the ground<sup>4,25</sup>. Here we think it is useful to distinguish between multi-agency working, which brings agencies together to address a specific problem, and ‘inter-agency’ working, which involves a fusion and synthesis of relationships and decision-making<sup>32</sup>. The latter is what we believe is operating in the three LAPs, which encompasses *transdisciplinary working*, which is thought to produce better outcomes for service users<sup>24</sup> (at least in other policy areas).

The lack of an evidence base supporting the belief that multi-agency working is preferable to single-agency working is both a blessing and a curse. MASIP, and this evaluation of MASIP, provide an excellent opportunity to contribute to building the knowledge base on multi-agency working.

## 10. Hypotheses and expected data trends

Robust evaluations usually use counterfactuals (i.e., data indicating what would have happened in the absence of the initiative) to make credible claims about the effect of the intervention. For this evaluation of the MASIP pilot a counterfactual is elusive. Other police areas responding to stalking in the traditional way, i.e., doing ‘business as usual’, are less likely to be correctly classifying all eligible stalking cases, often recording them as harassment, as the STAC assessment of the Metropolitan Police crime recording data at the beginning of MASIP revealed (see section 4). This raises the strong possibility that the data on stalking from other police areas may be unreliable. Nonetheless, we have selected three comparison areas, in consultation with the Trust, based on a number of key characteristics<sup>33,34</sup> in order to provide a degree of robustness to the quantitative analysis that will be reported in the final evaluation report. However, whilst these may provide some insight into the outcomes for reported stalking cases elsewhere, these areas are unlikely to be a satisfactory counterfactual<sup>35</sup>.

For this reason, and in keeping with realist evaluation philosophy, we are outlining our hypotheses about how MASIP works here. To recap, in this evaluation we are using the EMMIE framework, which considers the effect, mechanisms, moderators, implementation and economics (see section 1 for a more detailed description). The hypotheses we outline here have emerged directly from the qualitative fieldwork presented in this report and relate to the mechanism, moderator and implementation dimensions of the EMMIE framework. The advantage of this approach is that it allows us to predict, in advance, what trends in the data

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<sup>32</sup> p.119 Crawford, A. (1997). *The Local Governance of Crime: Appeals to Community and Partnerships*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

<sup>33</sup> Such as recent trends in stalking case volume and whether the Police and Crime Commissioner has specified funding specifically for stalking.

<sup>34</sup> We will also, where data permits, conduct a before and after analysis of MASIP resourcing in Cheshire and Hampshire in the form of an interrupted time series design.

<sup>35</sup> This is acknowledged as a challenge for all comprehensive multi-agency partnerships by Rosenbaum (2002 – see footnote 5).

we might expect in the subsequent quantitative and qualitative analysis. This promotes researcher objectivity when this analysis is undertaken, and protects against subjectively selecting particular results to confirm a presupposed position. The triangulation of data trends from different sources (e.g., quantitative results combined with insight from victim and perpetrator interviews) can, if they corroborate one another, reduce the chance of interpretive error and the threat of bias to the findings of the evaluation<sup>36</sup>.

Hypotheses are testable statements. Here, we structure these into three categories; those that speak to the *mechanisms* (the way in which MASIP exerts its effects), those that speak to the *moderators* (the pre-existing contextual conditions) and those that speak to the *implementation* (conditions introduced by MASIP and the evaluation). It is worth noting that a number of hypotheses we would wish to test require longer-term data that will not be obtainable within the timescales of the evaluation<sup>37</sup>. We focus here on hypotheses that, should data permit, we intend to test within the scope of this evaluation.

### ***Mechanism hypotheses and data trends***

1. Greater awareness of the stalking expertise available at the three LAPs, due to the training provided by the LAPs to external practitioners, will result in an increase in referrals over time to each LAP.

If mechanism 1 is operating as expected, the data will show an increase in referrals to each LAP by agencies other than the police over time, particularly after a training or awareness-raising event is held by stakeholders from the LAP to a wider group of practitioners. This trend may be more pronounced for London where there has been no previous centralised expertise, compared to Cheshire and Hampshire, where there has been. We may also see an increase in ‘false negatives’ across the three LAPs – that is, referrals that aren’t stalking offences. This may indicate how well the messages communicated in the training events are being understood by external practitioners.

2. Investigative support provided by LAPs will result in better criminal justice outcomes, such as an increase in arrests, restraining orders, and charges and prosecutions for stalking at an appropriate level of severity<sup>38</sup>.

We would expect to see an increase over time in arrests and restraining orders in the data if mechanism 2 is activated. Given that charges and prosecutions take longer to come into fruition, we might expect to see a weak, albeit similar trend for these criminal justice

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<sup>36</sup> See Farrell, G., Tseloni, A., & Tilley, N. (2016). Signature dish: Triangulation from data signatures to examine the role of security in falling crime. *Methodological Innovations*, 9, 2059799115622754.

<sup>37</sup> For instance, that improved criminal justice outcomes will lead to an increase in public confidence in the criminal justice system.

<sup>38</sup> For example charges as 4A instead of 2A.

outcomes within the timescales of this project. Of particular interest will be if there are any increases in the proportions of stalking cases charged and prosecuted at the 4A classification level (with threat of violence), as compared to the less serious 2A level.

3. An increase in criminal justice outcomes will, at least temporarily, reduce the likelihood of stalking re-offending.

If mechanism 3 is working in the proposed direction we can expect to see either a) a reduction in stalking re-offending, or b) an interruption to the stalking frequency and/or severity in cases where a criminal justice outcome has been achieved. We will test each (CJ) outcome separately in the quantitative analysis.

4. An increase in criminal justice outcomes will lead to an increase in victim satisfaction with criminal justice agencies.

An increase in victim satisfaction (with CJ agencies) *may* be detectable in the interviews with victims and the victim perception survey. Where possible, we intend to draw out the reason for this increase to establish which mechanism was operating.

5. Bespoke needs-based interventions (health and otherwise) will lead to a change in perpetrator behaviour which will subsequently lead to a reduction in stalking re-offending.

Should mechanism 5 be activated, we would expect to see a lower rate of stalking re-offending in cases where a direct intervention was made with a perpetrator (from any MASIP partner agency), compared to cases where a direct intervention did not happen. This contains an implicit assumption within it that behaviour change has happened, which *may* be discernible from the interviews with perpetrators. Behaviour change may also be assessed through comparing follow-up risk assessment (e.g., the SRP) with the original risk assessment judgement.

6. Victims feel supported by Victim Advocates and consequently feel empowered to support investigation of stalking cases and/or collect evidence in support of the prosecution, resulting in an increase in charges and prosecution.

If, when interviewed, victims tell us that they would not have been able to support an investigation into their perpetrator without the help provided by the Victim Advocate, and a subsequent charge and prosecution occurs, then we will consider this evidence in support of hypothesis 6.

7. Victims feel supported by Victim Advocates which results in an increase in victim satisfaction with criminal justice response.

The expected data trends for mechanism 7 are very similar to mechanism 4, however it is entirely possible that victims may indicate an increase in satisfaction in the absence of

criminal justice outcomes due to the support they receive from Advocates. We will endeavour to tease out the reasons underpinning any increases in victim satisfaction to determine whether a singular or combined mechanism is operating.

8. Reductions in stalking re-offending (as a consequence of one the above mechanisms) will lead to an increase in victim satisfaction.

The expected data trends for mechanism 8 are very similar to mechanism 7.

#### ***Moderator hypotheses and data trends***

9. Intervention actions taken by LAPs will work better for certain stalker types than others.

This is an exploratory hypothesis as there is no current evidence base on which to draw from to make a more specific statement. We intend to draw from stakeholder experience in the second wave of interviews if they have noticed any patterns of success (or otherwise) with particular stalker types. We will then perform quantitative analysis which compares the re-offending rates of different types of offenders, using the intervention actions as predictor variables.

10. Increased caseloads (per LAP staffing) will be associated with fewer reductions in re-offending rates.

Large caseloads have been found to be a threat to case management quality in other areas of multi-agency working<sup>16</sup>. It is logical to assume that time and resources spread over more cases may compromise the quality of the case management (and risk management). If this hypothesis is operating as proposed we would expect to see re-offending rates have a linear relationship with caseload (per LAP staffing), that is, a smaller caseload per staff member in each LAP would be expected to be associated with better gains in re-offending reducing than a larger caseload per staff member in each LAP.

#### ***Implementation hypotheses***

11. Co-located teams will lead to greater reduction in re-offending rates for perpetrators, and a greater increase in victim satisfaction, than non-co-located teams.

Co-location is often cited as a facilitator of effective multi-agency working<sup>26</sup>, but our fieldwork presented in this report suggested that the one non-co-located unit (Hampshire) did not perceive it to be critical to how they operated. If this mechanism is working in the proposed way, we would expect to see more positive outcomes (with regard to re-offending and victim satisfaction) in the data from Cheshire and London than Hampshire. We would like to state that we are neutral on this issue, since nothing in our fieldwork suggested that Hampshire were impeded by their non-co-location.

## 11. Appendix – individual LAP theories of change

### **KEY**

**Inputs** – Refer to resources, e.g., additional personnel, co-location etc.

**Outputs** – Refer to activities of the partnership e.g., advice, referral to health, risk assessment etc.

**Outcomes** – Refer to interim outcomes e.g., better multiagency co-operation, quicker disposal of cases, successful detection, prosecution, etc.

**Impact** – Refers to final desired outcomes e.g., reduction in stalking, increase in victim satisfaction with the CJS.

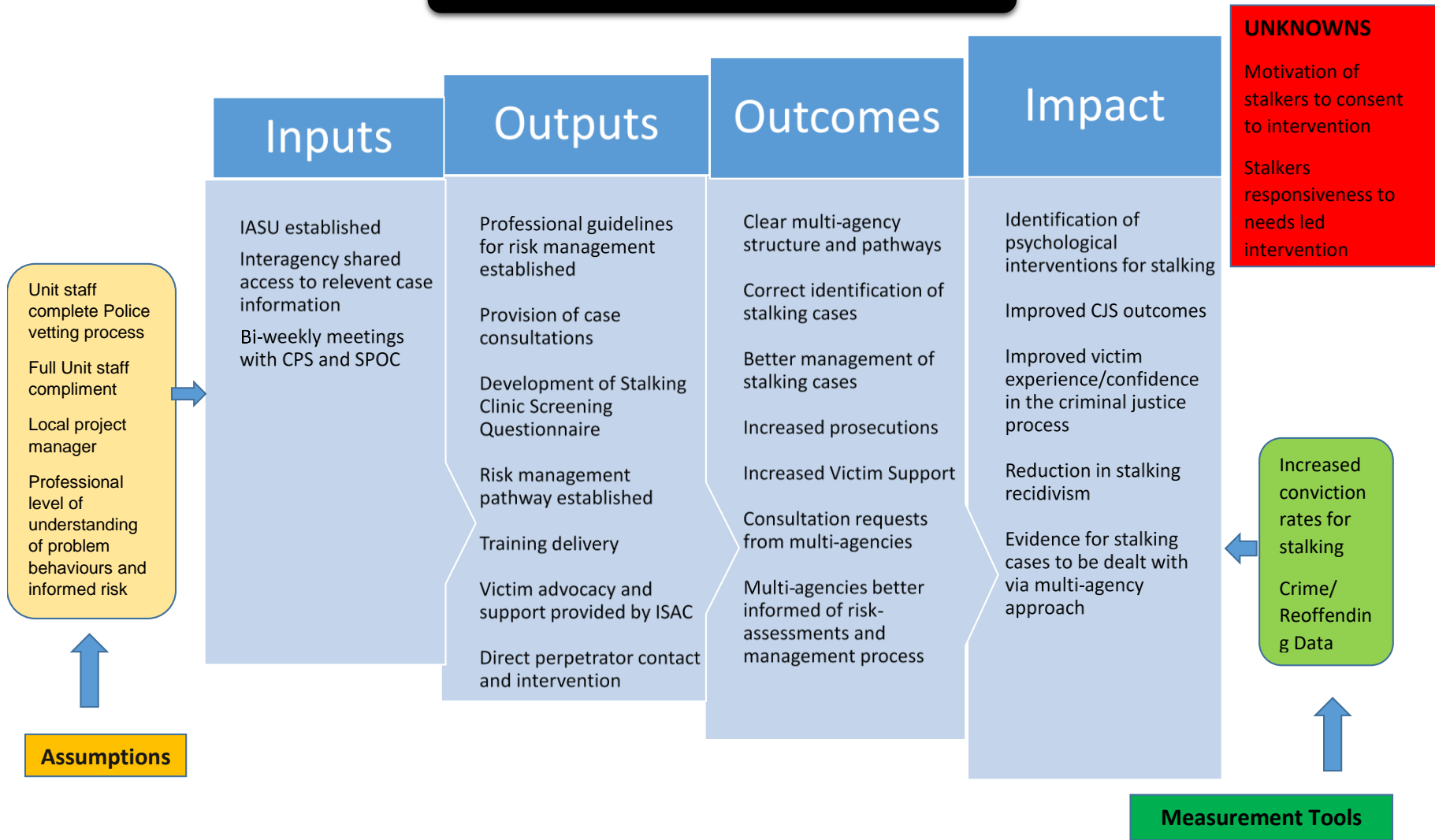
**Assumptions** – refer to conditions that should be in place for the intervention to work e.g., data sharing agreements, availability of suitable personnel etc. [To be filled out as applicable]

**Measurement tools** – refers to what you might be measuring (and how) at the interim and final impact stages.

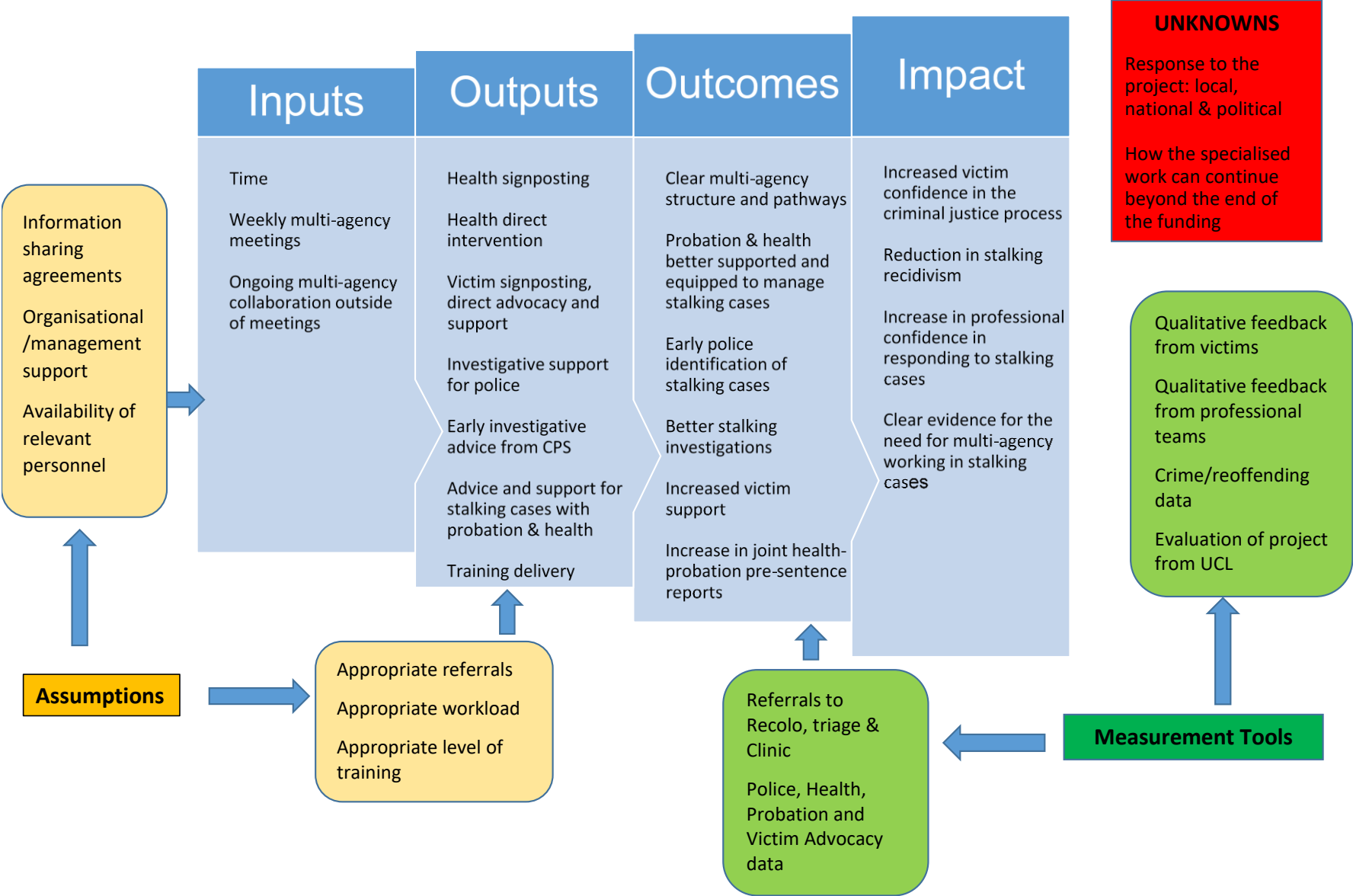
The aim is to be able to see at a glance how a resource (input) will be involved in a specific activity (output) that will produce a specific outcome in the short and medium term (outcome) and will contribute towards the overall final outcomes (impact).



# CHESHIRE



# HAMPSHIRE



# LONDON

