

## STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD 23 January 2018

**Police and Crime Plan Priority:** *Supporting Victims of crime*

**Title:** *Victims Services in West Midlands*

**Presented by:** *Alethea Fuller*

### Purpose of the Report

1. Crime does not affect just the victim. It has a much wider impact on family and friends. Becoming a victim of crime can be a traumatic experience which can affect people in a variety of ways. It is important to ensure that victims who need support are able to access the right services to respond to their individual needs.
2. The approach to commissioning services for victims in England and Wales forms part of a strategic move towards more personalised services for local people and investment in the voluntary and community sector. As part of this process, since April 2015 we have moved to a model where the majority of emotional and practical support services for victims of crime is commissioned locally, with responsibility transferred to Police and Crime Commissioners. At a national level, the Ministry of Justice continues to commission a witness service, a homicide service, support for victims of human trafficking, victims of rape through national rape support centres, some national telephone helplines and other support for victims of domestic and sexual abuse. We are in consultation with the MoJ regarding the possible devolution of those services to PCCs. The move to local commissioning has given us the opportunity to understand service delivery across the West Midlands, identify pathways and referral mechanisms and to ensure that services respond effectively.
3. The legislative responsibility for services to victims of crime has been addressed in the West Midlands by not just thinking about how to optimise the funding, but by utilising a full range of resources. We have considered many different ways of improving outcomes and partnership working while assessing a range of different services available to try and secure better outcomes, meanwhile considering value for money. The OPCC is focussed on outcome based commissioning to achieve the overarching outcomes of supporting victims to cope with the immediate impacts of crime and recover from the trauma experienced. Cope and recover are the outcomes that the commissioning of services for victims of crime seeks to address.
4. The following objectives underpin the OPCC's approach to the commissioning of victims services:
  - Support will be driven by need that is evidenced

- Specialist support will be available to the most vulnerable victims in the West Midlands
  - Continuity of care is paramount and will be available for as long as it is needed
  - The commissioning approach is consultative and collaborative as partnership working is crucial to ensure that the best services are available for victims
  - The services commissioned as part of this service are one element of a complex and varied network of support which currently exists for victims
  - Where existing baseline services exist, the OPCC will work with partners to ensure resources are appropriately allocated to prevent duplication, and to encourage local innovation in developing responses to those victims with more acute needs. One good example of this innovative approach is the OASIS Support Services being delivered by Community Vision West Midlands CIC, which offers a whole family model of culturally appropriate interventions that combine intensive one to one support with group activities and specialises in BME victims of serious crime
  - Locally, regionally and nationally commissioned services should complement not duplicate. The OPCC will continue to monitor progress in relation to a number of national funding arrangements for services for victims of serious crime, and will keep abreast of any developments as to the wider scope for national services and funding arrangements.
5. In addition to specialist victim services, all PCCs have a statutory duty to have a 1st contact, assessment and referral service for victims. In the West Midlands, this is being delivered by Victim Support.
6. In order to comply with the requirements in the Victims' Code and the EU Directive, services commissioned or provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner must be in the interests of the victim, available whether they report a crime or not, free of charge, confidential, non-discriminatory (including being available to all regardless of residence status, nationality or citizenship), available whether or not a crime has been reported to the police and available before, during and for an appropriate time after any investigation or criminal proceedings.

### **The West Midlands Response**

7. The Victims Commission was launched on 27 January 2015 and is the Police and Crime Commissioners Advisory Group on provision of specialist services. A link to the launch video is [here](#). The group is made up of expert representatives from across the voluntary and community sector and they contribute to and influence the priorities within the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan, and make recommendations regarding funding and service delivery. The Commissioner makes the final decision. The group is independent of the Commissioner, but accountable to him. They are committed to improving services and bringing expertise and experience to the development of policy as they relate to victims of crime. The Victims Strategy is currently being reviewed to include areas including coercive control, stalking and harassment and misogyny. It will also include future plans for 2018.
8. The Commission is also incorporating the Government's refreshed [Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Strategy 2016-2020](#) into the priorities that we are addressing which include:
- Domestic Abuse
  - Sexual Abuse
  - Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence
  - Female Genital Mutilation
  - Child Sexual Exploitation

- Hate Crime
- Modern Slavery
- Volume Crime

We are in the process of refreshing the priorities for 2018/19.

- The next section of the report details some of the work that has taken place during 2017.
- The number of victims supported both directly and indirectly during 2016/17 is 56,822. Those victims have been supported through the projects that we have funded and include regional consortiums as well as local community groups. We are waiting for the data for quarter 3 for 2017/18, however for the first 6 months of this financial year, the number of victims of crime supported both directly and indirectly is 52,993. The total number to date for 2017/18 and 2017/18 to date is 109,875.

Support agencies that have been funded 2017/18 are set out in the table below:

Organisation	Service Provided	Priority	Total
Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid	Provision of 2 court based IDVAs	Domestic Abuse	£41,778
Sandwell Women's Aid	Provision of 1 court based IDVA	Domestic Abuse	£38,170
Crisis Point	Provision of practical and emotional support to vulnerable victims of sexual abuse in Walsall	Sexual Violence	£29,539
Coventry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (CRASAC)	Provision of outreach, specialist support and counselling services in Coventry for vulnerable groups of BME women and young girls from the age of 11 who are victims of rape or sexual violence	Sexual Violence	£102,498
Community Vision CIC OASIS Support Services	A whole family intervention service or one to one support with group activities specialising in BME victims	Enhanced services for victims of the 3 categories of the Victims Code	£80,620
Domestic Violence Consortium - West Midlands IDVA	Provision of 19 IDVAs - independent and	Domestic abuse	£640,000

Service	impartial support for all victims/survivors of domestic abuse, also MARAC IDVAs service – an enhanced West Midlands IDVA service		
1 <sup>st</sup> contact, assessment and referral service delivered by Victim Support	Provision of the Commissioners statutory duty to deliver a 1 <sup>st</sup> contact, assessment and referral service to all victims of crime.	Support Services for victims of the 3 categories of the Victims Code	£1,038,920
Road Traffic Case Workers – through Victim Support	Fatal Road Collisions	Road Traffic Collisions	£69,820
BRAKE – National Charity	Fatal Road Collisions	Road Traffic Collisions	£2,000
Allies Network Ltd	Female Genital Mutilation	Female Genital Mutilation	£54,869
Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage – DV Consortium	HBV/FM	HBV/FM	£145,000
Crime Stoppers Ltd	Support Service	Support for all categories of crime	£40,326
West Midlands Restorative Justice Service	RJ	Restorative Justice	£450,000
Sexual Violence Consortium	Sexual Violence Support Service	Sexual violence	£430,130
Competitive Victims Fund – application process for community organisations	All categories of crime	All priorities	£133,837 <a href="#">Decision 029/2017</a>
Integrated Support Service for the DVPP - DV Consortium	Domestic Abuse	Domestic Abuse	£200,000
Coventry Haven	Female Genital Mutilation	Female Genital Mutilation	£29,166
WM Anti-Slavery Network	Modern Slavery Co-ordination	Modern Slavery	£15,000
Total			£3,161,67

### Victim Support – 1<sup>st</sup> Contact, Assessment and Referral Service

12. The national and local focus of support to victims is to put the victim and their individually

identified needs at the centre of delivery. The support provision provided by Victim Support is not a standalone service, it links with, and supports access into other support services, provided via both statutory and voluntary organisations across the force area and works closely with the Victims Commission. The funding allocation to Victim Support was reduced by 25% in 2016/17 from £1,385,000 to £1,038,920 based on service delivery, numbers of victims supported and monitoring information submitted.

The service that Victim Support delivers is based on vulnerability and risk as the priority, and the scope of delivery includes:

- Referral services – movement of victim details from West Midlands Police to Victim Support, as and when required in a secure manner
- A named and dedicated single point of contact for each service user
- Telephone support, advice and guidance about the experience of victimisation and the journey through the criminal justice system and other services where appropriate
- The scope of provision to victims to assist them to cope and recover from crime(s) is likely to comprise of, but is not limited to direct delivery by Victim Support, or referral to services provided elsewhere
- Evidence-based interventions being provided whenever possible and may include: key working, one-to-one support, befriending, support groups, peer support, talking therapies, health promotion/harm reduction advice and information and advocacy support.

Referrals come from a number of sources including West Midlands Police, statutory agencies, victims self-referring, British Transport Police, Action Fraud and other third party organisations.

The service should be provided to all victims who want it, whether they report the crime formally or not and should be provided with a structured support plan to service users which meets their individual needs and is based on risk assessment and safety. Police Officers make an assessment as to whether or not a victim is referred on the basis of vulnerability and risk. Referrals made are therefore victims who we know are in need of support. If a victim decides that they do not want support at that time, they are left with information that ensures they can access the service should they wish to do so at a later date. Prior to the change in referral mechanism, the Force had a policy of automatic referral to Victim Support who would then screen out the victims that did not fit the relevant crime types. The change has led to a substantial reduction in the number of referrals that are made. West Midlands Police now refer approximately 20% of the total referrals that were made prior to April 2015. This has allowed us to consider how we design and offer a more bespoke and individual service to victims.

It has also allowed us to determine areas of duplication and get a better understanding of the way in which Victim Support works. The OPCC working with the Force have also decided that high and some medium risk victims of domestic abuse should not be referred to Victim Support but should be referred immediately to specialist providers through the Public Protection Unit. West Midlands Police also refer victims of fatal road traffic accidents directly to BRAKE and other support services.

### **Monitoring of the Service**

Monitoring takes place quarterly by the Strategic Police and Crime Board Lead for Victims, Cath Hannon, and West Midlands Police Head of Criminal Justice with OPCC officer support. The monitoring meetings are used to ensure that Victim Support are delivering the desired outcomes for victims that are referred, the referral mechanism is working, that outcomes are being met and

that we are getting value for money. The biggest consideration for the OPCC is that the monitoring reports fail to inform us about the numbers of victims that are being supported, victims' outcomes and victims' satisfaction with the service. We have expressed concern about the monitoring information as it doesn't answer our key questions and there are areas of performance in which we are looking for improvements.

## **Future Provision**

The OPCC is currently considering how the service will be delivered in the future and potentially there are a number of options available. These include:

- Continuation of the Service through Victim Support for 2018-19
- Re-commission Victim Support for part of 2018/19 and go to market for a new provider

The OPCC is currently exploring the options available.

## **The Victims Commission**

13. The role of the Victims Commission is to ensure that services have a positive impact on victims by improving their circumstances around coping with the effects of crime and recovering from the harm they have experienced, the victim experience is improved and their voice is put both at the heart of the service and delivery; victims know what to expect at every stage of their journey.

In addition the Victim Commission is building a culture of ownership for victim care by the voluntary and community sector and partners so that victims experience quality support from the first point of contact.

Members of the Victims Commission bring expertise, knowledge and experience to the development of policy related to victims of crime and have been selected by the voluntary sector to represent the different priorities.

The priorities for 2017/18 have been determined using the Commissioners' Police and Crime Plan as the foundation. This has been informed using intelligence from the West Midlands Police Strategic Assessment, Local Police and Crime Plans, local consultation, consultation with victims of crime and the West Midlands wide consultation process.

The priorities include: Domestic Violence, Child Sexual Exploitation, Human Trafficking, Rape and Serious Sexual Offences, Hate Crime, Female Genital Mutilation, Honour Based Violence/Forced Marriage, Fatal Road Traffic Collisions and Volume Crime.

There are a number of strategic objectives that underpin the work that we have been doing; increasing our organisational knowledge and understanding of what 'vulnerability' is, improving our ability to take proportionate action in support of the recommendations made to the Commissioner by the representatives on the Victim Commission, as well as giving victims the confidence to report crime by raising awareness while commissioning services to ensure that there are support services in place.

## Victims Summit 2017

14. The Victim Summit took place on Tuesday 28 November and had 160 attendees. The event was opened with the showing of the video <http://endviolence.un.org/> It represents the annual United Nations' Orange the World campaign which takes place over 16 days between 25 November (which is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls) and 10 December, (UN Human Rights Day). As a bright and optimistic colour, orange represents a future free from violence against women and girls. Orange Day calls upon civil society, governments, and United Nation partners to mobilize people and highlight issues relevant to preventing and ending violence against women and girls – the Commissioner supported the campaign.

The day was a very informative, inspiring day with a mix of speakers and was chaired by our SPCB lead member for victims, Dr Cath Hannon. The Commissioner started the day by giving an overview of the work that has taken place since he took over responsibility for Victims Services three years ago. Some of the highlights included:

172,245 victims have been supported through the services since 2015, (either by direct contact or referral) which have been funded below:

First Contact, Assessment and Referral (Victim Support)	£3,532,660
Domestic Abuse	£1,135,034
Sexual Abuse	£1,756,627
Honour Based Violence/Forced Marriage	£ 255,000
Female Genital Mutilation	£ 393,162
Modern Slavery and Child Trafficking	£ 331,889
Restorative Justice	£1,392,038
Other Support Services	£1,094,467
Total Spend to date:	£9,440,877

Baroness Newlove of Warrington was our keynote speaker and talked about her experience as a victim when her husband was murdered. She talked about the trauma she and her girls went through, the experience of the criminal justice system and is advocating a joined up approach to providing victims services – which is the ethos of the Victims Commission.

Speakers included representatives from the Victims Commission who were showcasing some of the work that they do. One of the inspirational speakers was Joan Campbell, who is the Director of Community Vision – one of our services that provides support to BAME families of victims of crime through whole family interventions and individualised support. They are doing some work around supporting African Caribbean women experiencing domestic abuse and are having a conference during International Women's Week in 2018 around this. [Visible Relevant Woman](#) is the link to the video that they showed at the conference.

A report from the day is being developed, and all the feedback is being collated. One of the key issues that has come out of the Summit is the need for us to be more visible – more events, more work in local areas, and building more partnerships with local community organisations. That will be one of the aims for 2018.

## Future Plans

15. Next steps include raising the awareness of the work of the Victims Commission. In addition we are going to:

- Review the Victims Budget allocation for 2017/18 in order to reassess the priorities for

2018/19

- Work with community organisations in order to build stronger links with them. This includes capacity building of the voluntary sector working with victims of crime to enable them to apply for Victims Fund. The first phase of this will be a consultation process to make stronger links with organisations working locally on our identified priorities.
- Develop the Victims Voice – a sub-group of the Commission that will keep us up to date on victim's satisfaction with support services and the work that is taking place. The victims experience/journey will help us to gain an improved understanding of the quality and impact of victim services across the West Midlands. This will also give us an insight into the best way of embedding the victim's voice into the commissioning process in the future.
- Assessment of all our funded projects for 2017/18.
- Allocation of the Victims Fund 2018/19.
- A campaign this coming year that will raise the profile of services that have been commissioned, what services are available to victims of crime, and improving the information available on the WMPCC website.

### **Financial Implications**

16. The Victims Fund budget for 2017/18 is £3,321,557.

### **Legal Implications**

17. The funding is issued as a grant under s58 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.

18. Schedule 9 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 provides Commissioners with the powers to award crime and disorder grants to any organisations and projects they consider will help them achieve their crime prevention aims and wider priorities.

Alethea Fuller – Policy and Commissioning Manager, Police and Crime Commissioner West Midlands