

**WEST MIDLANDS POLICE  
AND CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**

**NON-CONFIDENTIAL  
NOTICE OF DECISION  
007/2015**

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Title: Victim Referral, 1<sup>st</sup> Contact, Assessment and Referral – Victims Services

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Police and Crime Commissioners take responsibility for commissioning victim referral, 1<sup>st</sup> contact, assessment and non-specialist support services from April 2015. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands has been working with Victim Support and West Midlands Police to establish a framework for delivery.

**DECISION**

I approve the the framework for delivery for victim referral, 1<sup>st</sup> contact, assessment and non-specialist support services and award the grant of £1,385,000 to Victim Support for the service.

**West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner**

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in this decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for the West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime. Any interests are indicated below.

**Signature.....David Jamieson.....**

**Date.....26 March 2015.....**

## **NON - CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE TO THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands takes on responsibility for commissioning victims services across the West Midlands from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. Funding has been transferred from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in order to facilitate this change, and is a national arrangement.
2. The move from national to local commissioning has presented us with a real opportunity to understand service delivery currently, and to ensure that the service we receive going forward, effectively responds to the needs of all victims who have been referred.
3. Victim Support is a national charity that currently delivers the 1<sup>st</sup> contact, assessment and referral service to victims of crime, and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has been working to establish a framework for delivery of the service for 2015-16. This will ensure that victims of crime are able to get the best service available and that we have a seamless transition into the new arrangements.

### **The Service**

4. 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 will not be a standalone service but will link with, and support access into, other support services, provided via both statutory and voluntary organisations across the West Midlands and work closely with the Victims Commission.
5. Vulnerability and risk is the priority and the scope of service which the OPCC expects Victim Support to deliver is as follows:
  - Referral services – movement of victim details from West Midlands Police to Victim Support, as and when required in a secure manner
  - 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 the crime(s) is likely to comprise of, but is not limited to the service components detailed below. This may include direct delivery by Victim Support, or referral to services provided elsewhere. Evidence-based interventions shall be 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
    - Advocacy support to facilitate access to:-
    - Housing support
    - Financial advice
    - Substance misuse services

- Compensation claims
  - Legal advice
  - Other relevant services.
  - Signposting to appropriate services, such as Community Mental Health Teams
  - Risk assessment
- National helplines and services will provide support for victims and witnesses of homicide, fatal road traffic collisions, some domestic and sexual violence and some interpersonal violence such as human trafficking, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation.
6. Referrals will come from a number of sources including West Midlands Police, statutory agencies, victims self referring, British Transport Police, Action Fraud and third party organisations.
  7. The service will be provided to all victims who want it, whether they report the crime formally or not.
  8. Victim Support will provide a structured support plan to service users which meets their individual needs and is based on risk assessment and safety.
  9. Victim Support will provide one to one support and telephone help lines to meet identified needs and shall incorporate a range of interventions delivered in a safe and effective manner.
  10. Victim Support will provide financial support in the form of:
    - Help with budgeting and paying bills
    - Benefit advice or
    - Referral to organisations able to provide financial support eg debt counsellors, Citizens Advice Bureaux
    - Supporting victims to apply for hardship funds and to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA)
  11. Victim Support shall help victims to access specialist support services eg mediation, counselling, drug and alcohol treatment and mental health support.
  12. Victim Support will refer high risk victims to specialist services that can meet the specific needs and risk associated with that crime.
  13. The service shall support victims from diverse populations, e.g. including young victims, and those from non-English speaking backgrounds.
  14. The Service shall be delivered in ways deemed suitable for individuals' different circumstances, e.g. age-appropriate, culturally sensitive etc.
  15. Victim Support shall make child protection referrals to Children's Services where there is concern for the welfare of a child or children involved, and shall attend child protection conferences as required.
  16. Victim Support shall make an adult safeguarding referral to Adult's Services where there is concern for the welfare of a vulnerable adult, who is either a victim or is cared for by a victim, and shall attend safeguarding conferences as required.

17. Victim Support will share personal and non-personal data on clients with relevant stakeholders, where required, to improve victim safety, reduce risk and support wider working practices.
18. In cases where the victim requests support with their Witness Statement for the Police, this assistance will be provided.

The above list outlines the expected service and should not be considered exhaustive. The OPCC will expect Victim Support to consider and recommend any additional services which will ensure the successful delivery of the service and the new service will be monitored quarterly by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

## **Areas of consideration**

### **Consultation**

19. The process has included a comprehensive programme of consultation including stakeholder engagement, consultation with victims of crime and representatives from victims organisations, the Victims Commission, as well as consultation with the Ministry of Justice and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.

### **Other options considered**

- 20. Developing a full service specification and competitively commissioning a new provider in the open market.**

Due to the fact that a number of Police and Crime Commissioners in other force areas, and those in the early adopter group, took this approach and had a very limited response from the market which led them to award these services to Victim Support this approach was ruled out (due to an immature market place) in relation to being a viable option on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2015. The approach may be considered in the future if the market is considered to be more competitive.

- 21. Developing a full in-house model run by force and/or PCC staff**

Due to the fact that this approach might pose a risk in relation to continuity of service delivery and a business as usual transition from a national service provided by Victim Support to a new local service on the 1st of April it was ruled out as being a viable option on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2015. This does not mean the approach would not be considered in the future.

### **Contribution to Police and Crime Plan outcomes**

22. Service delivery associated with this decision will significantly contribute towards Section 2: Stronger, Safer, more prosperous communities by ensuring vulnerable victims of crime are identified and referred into enhanced and specialist support services; and Section 3: Protecting People from harm by ensuring that victims of crime most in need are offered the opportunity to have their individual support requirements assessed and met through commissioned services focused on enabling them to cope with the immediate impact and recover from the harm caused.

### **Financial implications**

23. The cost of the specified services in the West Midlands will be £1,385,000. The Ministry of Justice has indicated that it will grant the OPCC for the West Midlands £2,344,273 in 2015-16; the cost of service therefore is well within the overall budget

provided for victims' services and allows significant investment in specialist victims' services.

### **Legal Implications**

11. The funding will be issued as a grant under s56 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.
12. 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 and wider priorities.