

**OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMBERSIDE
DECISION RECORD**

Decision Record Number: **46/2014**

Title: **Victims Fund – Further Investment**

Executive Summary:

The report made further recommendations of investment of money from the Victim's Fund.

Decision:

- (a) That funding of £15k per year to PNLD in order that they build, host and populate a 'Humberside Help for Victims' website within their existing Help for Victims infrastructure be approved in principle, and
(b) that further information be provided regarding the establishment of a 'community remedy fund'.

Background Report: Open

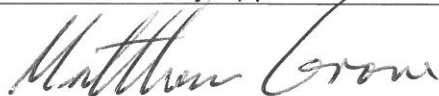
Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside

I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with my code of conduct.

Any such interests are recorded below.

The above decision has my approval.

Signature



Date 12.11.14

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMBERSIDE
SUBMISSION FOR: DECISION**

Title: Victims Fund: Further Investment

Date: 12 November 2014

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to make further recommendations of investment of money from the Victim's Fund in line with:

- our commitment to building locally accessible and well-informed victim's services, and
- to contribute, practically, to the community-based justice and remedy process.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that you:

- i. Approve funding of £15k per year to PNLD in order that they build, host and populate a 'Humberside Help for Victims' website within their existing Help for Victims infrastructure.
- ii. Approve £5k being used to set up a 'community remedy fund' to provide tools and resources to be held within the Community Safety Unit for administration purposes.

3. Background Information – PNLD Help for Victims (H4V) Website

3.1 The Help for Victims website has been created by the Police National Legal Database (PNLD) with the support of the West Yorkshire OPCC and in collaboration with Yorkshire and Humber Victim Support. The PNLD is wholly owned by the PCC West Yorkshire and has been providing online information resources since 1994.

3.2 Based on the success of PNLD's 'Ask the Police' website, and the local support of Yorkshire and Humber Victim Support, the Help for Victims database is intended to provide an online resource of questions and answers for victims and witnesses of crime based on the Victims Code, and, where the answer can't be found, an ability to ask a relevant question.

3.3 The site has recently been launched and is now 'live', it provides:

- A focal point for victims and those involved in the CJS process
- A two-way communication tool, by e-mail, that can be managed by PNLD in cooperation with Victim Support staff
- Automatic collection of qualitative and quantitative data for analysis
- Compliance with Equality Act 2010 requirements
- Potential for the website to be translated immediately into 5 different languages commonly spoken by communities across Humberside whose first language is not English (Gujarati, Urdu, Punjabi, Polish and Arabic)
- A scheme for self-referral without the necessity to make contact with the police
- A content management system which can be used as a platform to other appropriate sites
- Opportunity to identify and separate victims and witnesses who, on occasion, are not the same person and who have different needs and rights
- Allows for local perspectives to be added
- Stores local and national information and permits access to authorised users.

3.4 PNLD have offered PCCs across the country the opportunity to host their very own 'local' site within the Help for Victims platform, at a cost of £15k per year. Included in these costs are the functions/features listed above (further translations into any languages over and above the five already listed will be costed at 14p per word)

3.5 If we were to take up this offer, some further preparatory work would need to be undertaken, as follows:

- Mapping of the local victims services in the Humberside area into a spreadsheet format (the bulk of this work has already been done). This spreadsheet will be embedded into the H4V site, with each service being allocated a separate page on the website.
- We would need to appoint a SPOC from within the OPCC who will be responsible for reviewing the content of 'our' pages (information, FAQs and responses) and responding to local questions, queries and e-mails.
- The SPOC will receive training from PNLD and be authorised to add local perspectives to the generic questions on the site.
- We would need to provide an e-mail address for self-referrals made from the website to Victim Support
- Website management information data is available from the site, we would need to identify what data we would want to receive on a regular basis.
- Consider whether we would want any additional language translations.

3.6 There are a number of benefits to us, and local victims, of 'buying into' this, already built and developed, process:

- We need somewhere to host our directory of victim's services, where it can be edited and updated and remain a 'live' document, while at the

same time be publicly accessed by victims and our partner agencies and stakeholders.

- It will provide local communities and victims with information about local, regional and national services, thus giving them enough information to be able to make an informed choice about the kind of services they need.
- Local people will be able to 'self-refer' and make direct contact with victims services themselves.
- Local victims will be able to make some kind of assessment of the service they have received by using the 'Q&A' section and by leaving direct feedback to us.
- It will be an additional tool for us to collect feedback on the quality and appropriateness of services we may be funding.

3.7 Further, once the site is up and running we can choose either post a link directly to the Help for Victims site from our website, or have the whole site 'embedded' into our site for a small fee – this means that users would not have to leave our website to access the Help for Victims service.

4. Background Information - Community Remedy Fund

4.1 The Community Remedy process has now been rolled out across Humberside, in line with Home Office requirements we consulted with the public and partners on the menu of community remedies to be used by perpetrators of ASB and minor crimes in order to make reparations to victims and the wider community.

4.2 Training is currently being delivered to partner agencies, police officers and staff by the Community Safety Unit. During one of these training sessions delegates queried whether a fund could be set aside to purchase small hand tools, paint, brushes, etc, to enable perpetrators, who do not have the resources themselves, to be able to carry out the 'remedy' chosen for them by the victim. While the presumption will always be that the perpetrator is responsible for reparation payments and making amends, this may not always be possible, especially if the perpetrator does not have the financial means to do so. If there was a tool or equipment store available through Humberside Police they could provide the tools to ensure that the 'remedy' job was completed and delivered.

4.3 The Community Safety Unit (via Eddy McGee) will take responsibility for the equipment, ensure that it is accounted for and returned in good order, and, working with partner organisations and police officers, making sure that it is accessed and used by those genuine cases where the perpetrator cannot afford to provide the tools themselves. Initial scoping of the type of equipment that may be needed would suggest that a fund of £5k would be sufficient to purchase appropriate equipment and set up a logging in/out process in the Community Safety Unit.

4.4 The benefits of this approach include:

- It shows practical commitment and support to the community remedy process by the PCC via investment of his own money in providing tools/equipment to the scheme.
- Once the tools/equipment are made available, perpetrators cannot be excused from carrying out a community remedy due to lack of equipment or funds to provide them.
- If a perpetrator genuinely cannot afford to supply their own tools in order to carry out reparations they can be supplied from a central repository.
- The equipment 'store' will be administered, monitored and cared for by the Community Safety Unit – a centrally located unit, easily accessible to police officers and teams across the area.

5. Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The financial information is included above, but in summary, the Help for Victims website will require an annual investment of £15,000 and the Community Remedy Fund an initial investment of £5,000.

6. Legal Considerations

- 6.1 The MoJ Grant Funding for 2014/15 stipulate that the funding must be used for services for victims of crime and any associated costs that arise in the process of commissioning the provision of victims' services. Both of the services detailed in this report are aimed at ensuring victims receive the information, advice, guidance (and reparation) they need in order to cope and recover.

7. Equality Considerations

- 7.1 The services are available to all victims irrespective of any 'protected characteristics' and the information will be available in the most common languages spoken across Yorkshire and the Humber.

8. Publication

- 8.1 The report has been marked as Open.

Victoria Wise
Principal Strategy and Partnerships Officer

