

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

Decision Record Number: **49/2014**

Title: **Victims Commissioning**

Executive Summary:

A report was presented on various aspects of Victims Commissioning and the commitment to support the VCU at Wakefield at a cost of £180k given at the RCB was noted.

Decision:

- (a) The Commissioner agreed in principle to support local victims' service provision to be arranged through an uncompleted negotiated grant agreement with Victim Support subject to the financial value of the grant to be determined;
- (b) That the proposed Victim Care Strategy be approved;
- (c) That discussions be held with the Force Executive to actively explore the potential and feasibility of creating a Victim Services Centre and how this concept could be delivered.

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

Matthew Grove

Date 4.12.14

**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMBERSIDE**

SUBMISSION FOR DECISION

OPEN

Title: Victims Commissioning

Date: 4th December 2014

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this submission is to determine the Commissioner's preferred approach for the commissioning of local non-specialist victim support services with effect from April 2015 (see appendix 1).
- 1.2 The Commissioner is also asked to approve the Victim Care Strategy for Humberside attached as appendix 2.
- 1.3 Furthermore this report and outline business case (appendix 3) should be shared with the Corporate Governance Group to determine project feasibility for a Victim Services Centre.

2. Recommendation(s)

The Police and Crime Commissioner is recommended to:

- (i) Support Option 3 outlined in appendix 1 i.e. commission local victim service provision through an uncompetitive grant agreement with Victim Support.
- (ii) Approve the Commissioners Victim Care Strategy at appendix 2.
- (iii) Enter discussion with the Force Executive around the idea of a Victim Services Centre for Humberside and how this concept will be delivered.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Government consultation, 'Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses' concluded that victims should experience high quality support tailored according to need and that this would be best achieved through a mixed economy of local and national commissioning. Within this new landscape for victims' services commissioning the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will remain responsible for providing some services at a national level, while Police and Crime Commissioners will become responsible for commissioning the majority of emotional and practical services in their local areas from October 2014.
- 3.2 The provision of services for victims and witnesses in Humberside spans across a variety of agencies and contracts, including police provision of witness care, local authority provision (with the police) of domestic and sexual abuse services, Victim Support provision of emotional and practical services

and some ISVA services and a variety of organisations in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

- 3.3 The Commissioner has made a commitment in his Police and Crime Plan to improve the quality of services for victims. This includes providing funding for both adult and child victims of sexual violence (via the 'competed fund' for young persons' ISVAs, an additional adult ISVA on the North Bank and a two year contribution totalling £20,000 to Hull Rape Crisis) and the creation of a Victim's Fund - a competitive grant funding approach to build the provider base for delivering specialist victim services. So far approximately £249k has been allocated to various voluntary and community agencies during 2014/15.

4. Vision

- 4.1 The Commissioner has recognised that the interests of victims are paramount and must be supported at every point of their criminal justice journey. They need to receive a flexible service that provides all the information, guidance, support and advice according to their specific individual needs. This is articulated in the Victim Care Strategy for Humberside attached as appendix 2.
- 4.2 To enable the vision and strategy to be realised, the proposed model for Victims and Witnesses is instrumental to deliver the following:
- A referral and assessment process for all victims of crime centred on a vulnerability and harm based approach rather than one based on the actual crime type.
 - A service where enhanced support is prioritised/targeted to those most in need i.e. victims of serious crime, the most persistently targeted and the most vulnerable and intimidated.
 - A single umbrella organisation coordinating and providing a range of support and information services linking to nationally commissioned victim services and to local victim liaison services provided by the Police, Probation and the Crown Prosecution Service.
 - To provide a named single point of contact for victims and witnesses from the point of reporting their crime to after the offender's release into the community. [This could be through dedicated 'Victim Care Manager's as advocated recently by the Victims' Commissioner Baroness Newlove of Warrington].
 - To advocate and liaise with community based specialist victim services.
 - To liaise with criminal justice agencies and nationally commissioned services to ensure a seamless service and the needs of victims and witnesses are met.
 - To provide regular feedback on progress, where applicable, through police investigation and criminal justice processes.
 - To provide an access point for victims and cooperate fully with the Commissioners dedicated delivery partner of Restorative Justice Services.
 - Increased numbers of volunteers offering support for victims of low level crime and anti-social behaviour.

- 4.3 The provider will be required to deliver a high quality and efficient service with a commitment to research, evaluation of the impact of services and continuous improvement in addition to ensuring the voices of victims and witnesses continue to be heard.

5. Grant or Procurement

- 5.1 The Commissioner has options to commission non-specialist victim services via grant or procurement. The Commissioner secured Restorative Justice Services via the procurement route and specialist victim services via a competitive grant funding arrangement.
- 5.2 The Commissioner can use either a grant or procurement (tender) approach for the commissioning of Victim Services from April 2015. Whatever the decision will depend upon what is most suitable and likely to secure the vision set out at 4.1 above, the wider outcomes of the Commissioners Victim Care Strategy and provide better value for money. There is no hard or fast rule for this, the Commissioner has to weigh up four different factors.

(i) State of the Market

There is really only one established provider in the non-specialist victim services market. This has been confirmed by the experience of those 'early adopter' Police and Crime Commissioners including the Surrey, Sussex and Thames Valley consortium. The Commissioner has signed up to the Surrey, Sussex and Thames Valley Framework agreement.

(ii) Desired future state of the Market

Ideally the Commissioner would want to choose between a number of potential providers to get the best value for money for the PCC and victims. Generally the more competitive the market, the more likely it is that the Commissioner will choose procurement rather than grant as the basis for providing a service. The important factor is competition.

(iii) Capacity Building

Grants are often used to enable voluntary and community type organisations to build capacity to deliver key public services, such as Victim Services. Such a grant can be used to build capacity within the sector and enable organisations to be better placed to participate in an open, competitive process for funding, which could be a procurement process or a competitive grants process.

(iv) Enforceability

The commissioning process will usually result in a financial relationship either through the giving of a grant or the winning of a contract. A grant is effectively a gift or donation with the Commissioner able to attach terms and conditions specifying how the grant is to be spent. Spending the grant on anything that is not specified by the Commissioner would be a breach of trust.

A contract secured through a procurement process is a legally enforceable agreement between the Commissioner and the other party where the other

party agrees to provide services in return for payment. A contract is more enforceable than a grant agreement and this may be an important consideration if the ability to enforce the terms of the financial relationship is a key issue.

Either a grant or contract may provide the Commissioner with a sufficient basis to meet the level of accountability that the PCC needs.

6. Options for the Commissioning of Victim Services in April 2015

6.1 The Commissioner needs to commission accessible, targeted and integrated victim services based on a clear understanding of victim needs that fulfil their expectations and contribute to the 'cope and recovery' agenda. It goes without saying that all victims want to be listened to and taken seriously and services need to be kept as simple and user friendly as possible.

6.2 The Commissioner needs to be mindful of key themes outlined in the Victims Code of Practice and the EU Directive (which becomes operational in November 2015). These include:

- The rights of victims to choose which service best suit their needs.
- The right to be informed.
- Promoting a safe space for victims
- Respecting the right of victim confidentiality

6.3 When considering the options attached at appendix 1 regarding the approach to commissioning the services for victims, the Commissioner will need to take into account the decision made at the Regional Collaboration Board on 26th November 2014 regarding the Victim Assessment and Referral Centre, based at Wakefield.

7. Future service delivery post April 2016

7.1 It is likely that the Commissioner will want to see a different service to that currently provided locally that joins up with the witness care unit (either physically or virtually) providing better outcomes for victims and witnesses whilst increasing resilience and reducing infrastructure and management overheads.

7.2 This can be provided by appointing Victim Support as sole providers of non-specialist victim care provision and working alongside them in the creation of a more integrated service including the development of a Victim Services Centre for Humberside that initially incorporates Victim Support and the Force Witness Care Unit offering one combined service for victims and witnesses. An outline business case is attached at appendix 3 but essentially a Victim Service Centre would offer a 'one-stop-shop' for victims. It would be a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary approach that would develop a more tailored service to victims of crime. This would be the centre into which victim details are referred from the VCU during 2015/16 (as agreed at Regional Collaboration Board) and locally from 2016/17.

- 7.3 A Victim Services Centre could also look to standardise our approach to community resolution / restorative justice / community remedy etc to agreed common standards. The Centre would act as a multi-agency single point of contact and response for victims and provide a case managed approach that assesses victim needs and ensures that appropriate services are engaged at the right time for victims.
- 7.4 An outline business case is attached at appendix 3 to help determine whether such an approach is viable and aligned to current business objectives. If so this could be established as an official project. The business case could be refined further through joint work between the OPCC, Victim Support and Humberside Police representatives. Issues to consider include identifying a suitable site; liaison with the SARC, ISVAs and DV services; liaison with the Criminal Justice Board and co-ordination of the myriad of smaller providers of victim support services etc, but such a centre could truly put victims at the heart of the CJS.
- 7.5 The ambition to create a Victim Service hub will be built into the terms and conditions of any grant agreement that the Commissioner will expect Victim Support to sign in return for funding.
- 7.6 A Victim Services Centre will also require a local assessment and referral mechanism that would therefore mean any further investment in a regional Victim Care Unit post 2015/16 would be potentially unnecessary.
- 7.7 With respect to the funding of specialist support for victims the Commissioner's office will work with local authorities and community safety partners to develop another competitive grants process for specialist victim services. Some, but not all, of the existing third sector agencies will win a grant. By doing this the Commissioner is still attempting to increase the capacity and capability of the VCSE sector.

8. Psychological support for victims of sexual assault

- 8.1 Professor Alexis Jay's independent report into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham between 1997 and 2013 highlighted the harrowing revelations about the sexual abuse of children. One of the key findings from this report was that the service provision of counselling and victim support for victims of CSE didn't meet the complex needs of victims.
- 8.2 During the review that the OPCC conducted into local service provision there was evidence suggesting that this is not unique to CSE. There are significant gaps in counselling for all forms of sexual abuse. Rape affects victims' psychological health and we need to ensure there are effective therapies available to victims for promoting their long term recovery.
- 8.3 There are treatments available that have been found to be very successful in lessening the number of negative symptoms that can develop after sexual assault and rape such as trauma focused cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and this should be offered to those with severe post-traumatic symptoms after a comprehensive assessment.

- 8.4 This is a specialist area of psychological/therapeutic support for victims and the OPCC will need to research the issue and work closely with our health partners (NHS England and Clinical Commissioning Groups) to develop the service specification.
- 8.5 There is a national working group being set up to help develop the national specifications for both adults and children. This group will link with the clinical reference group for their expertise. The Commissioner will need to be mindful of these developments and in particular who will be asked to pay for such services in any future commissioning exercise.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 The financial implications associated with each option are outlined at appendix 1. The funding available from the MoJ for 2015/16 for the commissioning of victim services, including a assessment and referral mechanism, is £781,000. From this the Commissioner has agreed 'up to £180, 306' for the commissioning of the regional Victim Care Unit (VCU). This leaves approximately £600,000 for the provision of local non-specialist support services.
- 9.2 The Commissioner will however need to be mindful of other potential claims on this funding, not least the continuation funding for ISVA services (adult and young people) and possible continuation funding for those services funded in 2014 as part of the Victims Fund.
- 9.3 In addition the Commissioner will need to be aware of any commitments made in connection with domestic abuse services following the meeting to discuss the recommendations and findings from the CAADA report on 28th November 2014.
- 9.4 Further funding for 2016/17 onwards is likely to be rolled up into the police main grant settlement so the Commissioner will need to set aside some provision in the future and include within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 9.5 There is also the issue surrounding victims of anti-social behaviour. The MoJ funding does not allow for the funding of victims of ASB so the Commissioner will need to consider additional funding to cover this issue.
- 9.6 When the Commissioner sets his budget for 2015/16 it will be prudent to take the above into consideration as he may want to increase the proportion of his budget devoted to improving victim services over and above the MoJ grant allocation. Improving the quality of services to victims is a key element of the Police and Crime Plan 2014-17.

9. Risks

- 9.1 The benefits and risks associated with each option are included at appendix 1.

10. Legal Implications

The Commissioner is responsible for the commissioning of assessment, referral and non specialist victim services with effect from April 2015. The EU Directive, which must be complied with, comes into force in November 2015 and any agreement with Victim Support will cover all aspects of the Directive.

11. Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

12. Consultation

12.1 The Victim Care Strategy has been consulted widely with partners. Indeed it has been the subject of discussion at all four Community Safety Partnership meetings, the Humberside Criminal Justice Board and a meeting of the Force's Victims Gold Group. The Strategy has been amended following this extensive consultation and is presented to the Commissioner for approval.

12.2 The Commissioner has consulted with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector regarding the provision of victim services and these discussions have informed the content of this report and recommendations.

13. Media information

13.1 There will be an opportunity when the details of future services are agreed and all financial information is available to publicise the vision and intent.

14. Background documents

- European Directive 2012/29/EU establishing the minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.
- Victims Code of Practice for Victims of Crime
- MoJ Commissioning Framework.

Appendix 1 - Local Victim Support Services Options

| | Option 1 | Option 2 | Option 3 |
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| Criteria for Appraisal Financial Consideration/ Cost | <p>Procure services under Official Journal of the European Union.</p> <p>The cost of the service would be dependent upon whatever the PCC specified for the service.</p> | <p>Proceed with 'call-off' procedures under the Surrey, Sussex and Thames Valley Framework.</p> <p>The illustrative price profile quoted is for the provision of Victim Assessment, Referral and local Non-Specialist Services. Based on information provided (including TUPE) the price for calling-off the service from the framework is largely determined by 2 key factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the level of collaboration and ii) the level of tailoring (i.e. further to the core offer from the framework, what supplementary terms we might look to add. <p>The illustrative annual price profile is:</p> <p><u>£815,647</u> – for a stand-alone Victim Assessment and Referral Centre and Local Support Service.</p> <p><u>£635,127</u> – for a collaborative Victim Assessment and Referral Centre and Local Support Service.</p> <p>The proposed Victim Assessment and Referral Centre would be based out of the Wakefield Office.</p> | <p>Establish a strategic alliance with Victim Support under a 'grant fund' arrangement</p> <p>The price quoted by Victim Support for Local Victim Support Services is:</p> <p><u>£403,299 (inc. inflation at 1%)</u></p> <p>This is addition to the <u>£180,306</u> for the Regional Victim Assessment and Referral Centre at Wakefield.</p> <p>The total price quoted is therefore <u>£583,605</u></p> <p>However it is a matter for the Commissioner to determine the price he can afford and is willing to pay after considering his overall budget and all other priorities for 2015/16. It would seem reasonable to reduce costs so that management costs are no more than 10% of total cost and to reduce the salary costs by 15% to account for the fact that certain staff will no longer be required to support the court based witness service, given that this will be provided by the CAB from April 2015. Victim Support are looking for the Commissioner to outline what he can afford and Victim Support will re-shape the service accordingly. I would suggest no more than £470,000 (this includes the VCU cost).</p> <p>The figures quoted above do not include potential future claims on the PCCs budget for</p> |

Appendix 1 - Local Victim Support Services Options

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| <p>Benefits</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commissioner can determine a cost envelope (and service specification) and expect prospective bidders to outline how they will provide services to the requisite cost and quality standards. • A tender specification can assist with ensuring value for money, efficiency and effectiveness. We will be supported by the Regional Procurement Unit. • A publically procured contract gives the Commissioner more leverage over enforceability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By accessing services through the Framework the Commissioner will have a compliant contract in place which will deliver an outcome focused service. • Performance will be monitored against set indicators and financial monitoring will take place through open book accounting. • The service has been commissioned as a framework agreement, which enables the PCC to access services that have already been through a competitive tender process, saving time and money. (Victim Support was the successful (and only) bidder). | <p>continuation funding for the ISVA and YPISVA posts currently employed by Victim Support (and 'It's My Right') or any continuation funding requested from specialist providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the safest option. Existing resources and infrastructures are in place and it will allow the PCC to form a view of future need and an opportunity to transition to a Victim Services Centre from April 2016. • Capacity and Capability are already in place and existing partnerships, programmes and projects established. • This option will allow the OPCC to work closely with Victim Support to reconfigure service support to align with local needs and potentially allow greater control over how money is spent. The Commissioner will want to see more targeted provision and greater cooperation with specialist service providers. • The PCC (and his office) can work with Victim Support to create a more integrated service and work together towards a Victim Services Centre. • The current provider has a police approved secure case management system to hold victims' personal information, volunteer recruitment, training and support, and HR and financial systems to ensure sound |
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Appendix 1 - Local Victim Support Services Options

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| <p>Risks</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience by 'early adopter' PCCs suggests that there is no real mature market for victim services, so it could be a costly and unproductive process. • Procurement is a lengthy process and there will be a need to temporarily extend the current Victim Support contract by at least 6 months. • Risk the focus becoming more about profit and cost savings rather than quality and victim outcomes. • Appetite for the contract may be minimal due to the length and value and there is a further risk that the secure Victim Support CMS would be lost. • Volunteers in the local area may be lost as they may not want to work with other organisations. • PCC could be seen as being too 'hands off' and therefore not representing public need. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost figures quoted are for the Victim Assessment and Referral Centre as well as Local Support Services. Given that RCB have agreed a collaborative approach to the VCU then we would need to ask for a price for local support services only. • The benefits of the lower price are largely through collaboration with respect to the Victim Assessment and Referral Centre. The more PCCs that sign up the cheaper the price will be. However Humberside has already agreed to collaborate with South and West Yorkshire and economies of scale have already been achieved. • Any additional services will be deemed supplementary to the standard contract and will necessitate additional costs. | <p>management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserves relationships with existing CSP stakeholders and other partners. • The current service provider ('Victim Support') is unchallenged. • Opportunities for joint commissioning with neighbouring PCCs are not driven forward. • If the PCC does not fund according to the Victim Support price then there is the possibility of redundancies. • A 'grant agreement' does not have the same legal status as a publically procured contract. |
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VICTIM CARE STRATEGY FOR HUMBERSIDE

1. Purpose of the Strategy

- 1.1 This strategy has been informed by the Code of Practice for Victims of crime and the Ministry of Justice's 2012 'Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses'. Outcomes have been devised following consultation with stakeholders from the Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), Humberside Criminal Justice Board (HCJB) and the voluntary sector.
- 1.2 It is intended to provide a corporate and consistent approach for local agencies and partnerships that have a legal and moral responsibility to provide support services to victims of crime and anti-social behaviour. Whilst it is not prescriptive in defining actual actions or activities that need to be implemented, the belief being that this is best determined at a local level; it does provide some areas where more concerted effort might help achieve the desired outcomes for victims.
- 1.3 The needs of victims are complex, dynamic and wide ranging, which is why a partnership approach is required to firstly understand these needs and secondly to tailor support services that are responsive to these needs. This strategy will help to shape local policies and practices across the full range of partnerships and individual agencies, including communities, from initial contact with victims to final healing and restoration.

2. Scope of the Strategy

- 2.1 This strategy is aimed at all victims of crime and anti-social behaviour but centred on a vulnerability and harm based approach rather than one focused on the actual crime type. With that in mind particular support should be prioritised to:
 - a) **Victims of serious crime** – rape, sexual and domestic violence, violent crime such as robbery, wounding or grievous bodily harm with intent are areas where the impacts of crime can be far reaching for victims.
 - b) **The most persistently targeted** – crime and anti-social behaviour, even where seemingly less serious, can have a devastating impact on victims when committed again and again over a period of time, particularly where a victim is deliberately targeted. This should be taken into account as individual needs are assessed, and support provided.
 - c) **The most vulnerable and intimidated** – these are the people who are most likely to become victims, or who need particular assistance in coping with the consequences of crime or to engage with the criminal justice system. They might include people who are isolated, or lack social and family support; those who need assistance in managing their own affairs; those who are more likely to be a victim of crime than members of the community generally

(for example because of age, race, disability or a medical condition) or less able to cope with the consequences if they do.

2.2 This strategy should be adopted by all those providing a service to victims of crime or anti-social behaviour, including statutory criminal justice agencies such as the police; generic victim services providers such as Victim Support and specialist providers from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors.

3. Victim Needs

3.1 Whilst this strategy is predicated on understanding that each individual victim is unique with their own particular circumstances and needs the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) have identified, during the consultation 'Getting it right for victims and witnesses' eight categories of need that support services should aim to help victims with during the course of their intervention. These categories of need are:

- Mental, physical and emotional health
- Shelter and accommodation
- Family, friends and children
- Education, skills and employment
- Drugs and alcohol
- Finance and benefits
- Outlook and attitudes
- Social interactions

3.2 It is important that any victim who has needs can get the help they require as soon as possible. They should be made aware of the extent, range and applicability of services available and that these services are professional and of high quality.

4. Aim of the Strategy

4.1 There is a need to ensure the voice of victims is heard in developing services. If services are provided in accordance with what victims' needs are then there is every likelihood that the usage of victim services will increase as victims feel more confident that they will receive the service(s) that they require.

4.2 As such the aim of the strategy is:

To provide accessible, targeted and integrated victim services based on a clear understanding of victim needs that fulfil their expectations and contribute to the broader outcomes.

5. Outcomes of the Strategy

5.1 This strategy is intended to galvanise partnership working with respect to the provision of services to victims that will:

- Enable the victim to cope with the immediate post victimisation experience
- Ensure the longer term recovery of the victim is managed through a range of support services
- Contribute to empowering the victim in order that they might 'get their life back' to how it was prior to the victimisation
- Leave the victim satisfied with the efficient, effective and seamless provision of support services from the statutory and voluntary sector
- Strive to ensure the victim feels as safe as those who have never been a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour.

5.2 If all agencies work towards the above aim the likelihood that specific victim support services will be effective (i.e. the interventions will have the desired impact) is heightened.

5.3 The outcomes identified above are those which all statutory and voluntary agencies, working in partnership, should aim to achieve and evaluation of the success of this strategy will be against these outcomes. These outcomes should ensure the holistic needs of victims are met.

6. Objectives of the Strategy

6.1 These objectives are designed to bring some additional focus to help guide the resources and efforts of individual agencies and partnerships to provide the best possible chance of achieving the strategy aim and ultimately the strategy outcomes.

1. Improve flexibility of response and quality of information

There is a need to adopt the new Victims Code of Practice and be more responsive to the rights as well as the different needs of victims. For example victims have a right to be kept informed at all key stages of the process, from investigation, court proceedings through to custody and release of the offender and of the services available to them. The ability to relate to victims as individuals independently of the case itself is just as important as solving the case and bringing offenders to justice.

There is a need to better inform victims about what will happen or could happen following their victimisation and to better raise awareness of the services that are available to them. The adoption of 'track my crime' for example would help keep victims informed and an online directory of services hosted on the Police and Crime Commissioner's website could help promote current service provision. Such tactical actions and the manner of the response could contribute to the desired outcomes.

2. Protect victims from further victimisation

The evidence suggests that for crimes such as domestic abuse, burglary or hate crime there is a significantly high probability that one will be re-victimised in the short term, suggesting that victimisation is the best single predictor of future victimisation. High crime rates and hot-spot areas are as they are primarily because of rates of repeat victimisation. Agencies should ensure they have systems and processes in place that enables them to identify cases of repeat victimisation and provide appropriate interventions to minimise a repeat occurrence.

Protecting victims from further victimisation, particularly the most vulnerable makes eminent sense in that focusing on repeats automatically concentrates on individuals at greatest risk of future victimisation. Adopting a concept of repeat victimisation is, in essence, a form of victim support service.

3. Develop restorative justice interventions

This objective is about developing the referral pathways to specialist support when the victim needs it focusing specifically on restorative justice at each stage of the criminal justice system. There is now significant evidence in relation to how restorative justice can have a positive impact on victim satisfaction. Restorative Justice can reduce crime victims' post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms and related costs, provides victims and offenders with greater satisfaction with justice and reduces victims' desire for violent revenge against their offenders.

Restorative Justice is not appropriate for everyone so the selection of cases is critical to success and delivering a positive victim experience. Obviously there needs to be an offender to make the process work and the offender should be approached first as to their willingness to participate, to avoid raising the victims' expectations unnecessarily.

4. Engage communities in addressing victim needs

To support the creation of communities with low crime rates and therefore a reduction in the number of victims it will be necessary for a wide range of agencies to play a part in supporting and engaging communities to help deliver early intervention and preventative work. The idea of communities playing a more active part in the identification and solution of community problems is a central plank of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan. This objective could involve an exploration of the merits of Community Impact Statements, Neighbourhood Justice Panels and the Community Remedy.

6.2 Each agency should develop an improvement plan to help deliver these objectives or construct an interagency plan to ensure co-ordination and coherence and to ensure victims are given appropriate access to support.

7. General Operating Principles

7.1 Evidence of 'what works' in relation to victim services suggests that the following principles are critical to the success of such services which ought to inform future policies and practice. In effect these can be referred to as a set of common ground rules for all those organisations dealing with and supporting victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.

- Victim support services must always seek to meet the needs of victims.
- Systems and processes should be able to clearly identify victim needs.
- Service providers and partnerships need to take account of factors influencing victim need when designing and delivering services.
- There is a need to respond fairly, respectfully and compassionately to all victims.
- Victims should be protected from re-victimisation.
- Where required victims should be referred to support services as soon as possible after victimisation.
- Victims should be kept up to date with developments in their case in a timely manner.
- The provisions of the Code of Practice for Victims and the EU Directive on Victims should be embraced (see appendix 1).
- The right of victim confidentiality will be respected.

7.2 It goes without saying that all victims want to be listened to and taken seriously and that services to victims need to be kept as simple and user friendly as possible, particularly for those victims who might be viewed as vulnerable.

8. Victim Rights

8.1 Key themes outlined in the Code of Practice for Victims and the EU Directive includes:

- the rights of victims to choose which service best suits their needs.
- the right to be informed.
- promoting a safe space for victims.
- respecting the right of victim confidentiality.

8.2 In addition to the above operating principles these tenets need to be embraced by all agencies providing services to victims and in so doing agencies must recognise their responsibilities to victims.

9. Partnership Based Interventions

9.1 As mentioned at the outset the complex and dynamic nature of victims needs means that a multi-agency partnership approach will be more effective than single agency, single strand approaches. The Community Safety Partnerships and the Humberside Criminal Justice Board could and should play a critical role in giving direction to the specific activities and action plans needed to effectively implement this strategy. They could also (in conjunction with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner) provide quality assurance, ensuring that victims are supported efficiently and effectively.

9.2 With reference to those voluntary organisations providing specialist services in one particular area it would make sense, to plug any obvious gaps in service provision, if separate (but complementary) services worked together as a possible 'consortia' to offer a broader range of accessible services.

10. Challenges

10.1 Effective partnership working rests on the following challenges being addressed:

- Funding and resourcing issues that could affect the sustainability of multi-agency approaches.
- Diverse agency cultures, both within and across sectors.
- Competing agendas and priorities across agencies

10.2 A reminder of the mechanisms associated with more effective partnership working is provided at appendix 2.

11. Strategy Evaluation

11.1 It is very difficult to measure outcomes for victims of crime and anti-social behaviour. They are influenced by several factors; the difficulty of defining 'cope' and 'recovery' as well as 'empowerment' in a measurable way; the variation between each individual's ability to manage their own recovery; concerns that seeking feedback from victims on the effectiveness of services could re-traumatise them.

11.2 It may be the case that we need to place greater reliance on gaining assurance over the quality of services delivered to victims. Processes need to be established that can measure both the impact and the quality of the services delivered. An inability to do

this could, in the future, place pressure on service deliverers to demonstrate the impact of the services required.

APPENDIX 1 – EU Directive

Article 8 refers to Member States taking measures to establish specialist support services in addition to, or as part of, the more general victim support services which are offered. Services should be available to victims in accordance with their specific needs and to family members in accordance with their specific needs and the degree of harm suffered as a result of the offence committed against the victim. As with general support services, access to specialist support should not depend on whether the crime has been reported.

Article 9 describes what support services must, as a minimum, be provided and these are set out in a list. The list includes:

- Information, advice and support relevant to the rights of victims including how to access national compensation schemes and the victim's role in relation to the trial;
- Emotional and, where available, psychological support;
- Advice on financial and practical matters including, unless available elsewhere, advice relating to the risk and prevention of re-victimisation, intimidation and retaliation.

APPENDIX 2 – MECHANISMS ASSOCIATED WITH BETTER PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Leadership

- Shared vision, values and norms of partners involved to establish collaborative advantage.
- Strong leadership and strategic direction (focused on proving a central co-ordination effort, getting buy in from partners and managing the project).
- Full integration of project aims into partner organisations
- Clear project brief, roles and responsibilities.
- Core groups to oversee problem solving approach.

Data Sharing and Problem Focus

- Clarity regarding the problem(s) being tackled through focused analysis to ensure a properly problem focused intervention.
- Regular exchange of relevant information.
- Having focused interventions in each area.
- Including researchers within the partnership.
- Continual evaluation to review and inform activity of the group.

Communication and co-location

- Regular face to face contact and communication between partners
- Co-location of agencies, partners and staff
- Presence of partners at a local level

Structures

- Flexibility of structures and processes.
- Having a research partner as an active member of the partnership
- Clear monitoring, accountability and integrity mechanisms.
- Having operational groups to implement strategies
- Involvement of the most appropriate agencies.

Experience

- Prior experience in working together in partnership i.e. established partnerships.
- Secondment of skilled officers into joint teams.
- Careful selection of appropriate partners
- Joint training of team members.

OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DEDICATED VICTIM SERVICES CENTRE

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside, Matthew Grove, is responsible for commissioning most of the practical and emotional support services for victims of crime. In commissioning such services the Commissioner needs to take account of the requirements of the EU Victim's Directive and the Victim's Code of Practice.
- 1.2 The Commissioner has agreed to grant fund the organisation Victim Support to deliver the bulk of these services. However as part of this agreement the Commissioner wants to develop a dedicated Victim Services Centre – effectively a 'one-stop-shop' victim and witness care centre. Such a centre will bring together a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary team of experts who can offer a be-spoke service to victims of crime. In time, such a centre could also house restorative justice / community resolution experts as restorative justice is expanded and embedded across the Humberside area.
- 1.3 In addition, the Commissioner will continue to build the provider base of specialist victim service providers through competitive grant funding arrangements and will explore the possibility of developing this in 2015/16 in conjunction with Local Authorities and Community Safety Partnerships.

2. Reasons

- 2.1 In the Police and Crime Plan the PCC vowed to improve the quality of services for victims. One of the objectives supporting this aim was to support victim recovery through the commissioning of local emotional and practical support services for victims of crime that are provided by the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. On its own however this will not be enough to offer the kind of seamless service that victims have told us they prefer.
- 2.2 The Commissioner, as part of an enhanced service is keen that all victims of crime have access to a dedicated point of contact who will take them on their 'journey' through the Criminal Justice System and remain present until no longer needed. A single point of contact was identified in the Victims Advocate Report 'Listening and Learning' as well as the victim workshops organised by the OPCC in May and June 2014. Indeed, at these workshops there were several conversations about having all key services under one roof; some kind of 'one-stop-shop' for victims where there is access to professional, expert and sympathetic staff who can accurately assess need, deliver interventions or refer to the most appropriate specialist providers.

3. Business Options

- 3.1 The **first option** is to 'do nothing'. However given the requirements of the Victims Code of Practice and the new EU Victims Directive and the aspiration of the Commissioner to raise the quality of services available to victims this is not feasible.
- 3.2 The **second option** is to reconfigure the service delivery model of Victim Support and the Witness Care Unit to ensure they are more aligned to the needs and expectations of the user and that the work of both is more integrated. In the first instance this could be specified as part of the terms and conditions of any grant agreement that the PCC enters into with Victim Support. In terms of the Witness Care Unit a review of systems, processes and procedures in line with lean management principles could be conducted by the Force's Assessment and Review team.
- 3.3 The **third option** is the most ambitious. It is a new public service that joins up all the intricate bits in the system through the creation of an integrated and dedicated victim and witness service ('The Humberside Victim Services Centre'). Initially this will include Victim Support and the Witness Care Unit co-located but in time additional services can be added. It is feasible that some specialist service provision could be enhanced and housed within the Victim Services Centre, for example specialist provision to child victims or high risk victims of domestic violence. Such a centre will listen and respond to victims, provide advice, information and advocacy services, signpost victims to specialist community provision and champion the victims cause as part of their involvement with the Criminal Justice System. It will be a service that looks at issues from the victims' perspective and see Victim Support and Witness Care working together as one integrated team offering a seamless and responsive service. The Centre will develop a consultation and engagement model, working with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, to ensure victims and witnesses have influence in the design of future services so that services are in tune with their needs and expectations.

4. Expected Benefits

- 4.1 If option three is selected some of the expected benefits include:
- Victims only need to tell their story once.
 - Overarching coordinated response to victims from time of offence to resolution.
 - Improved inter-agency communication.
 - A single dedicated point of contact for victims and witnesses.

- A service that is accessible and available to all.
- Better consultation, engagement and communication with victims.
- Better outcomes for victims.
- Increased capacity and resilience.
- A needs and harm based approach in assessing and delivering support (as opposed to crime type) would be more effective in reducing the impact of crime on victims.
- Victims receive advice and information quickly about what other specialist services are available.
- Minimum standards of service defined.
- Reduced overheads and management costs.

4.2 In terms of a robust project management approach some of these expected benefits will need to be defined in quantifiable terms so that measurable improvements can be assessed after the project has been completed. Once the service is fully promoted and communicated benefits should start to materialise almost immediately.

5. Expected Disbenefits

5.1 Some of the anticipated disbenefits include:

- Possible loss of productivity/service quality during transition arrangements.
- Loss of identity of the Victim Support brand.
- Identification of suitable premises that are accessible and appropriate for victims may be problematic.

6. Timescale

6.1 The Commissioner has agreed to commission Victim Support through an uncompetitive grant funding arrangement for 2015/16. The value of the contract is £xxx,xxx and as part of the agreement the Commissioner expects Victim Support, from April 2015, to work with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), Humberside Police and other partners to establish a Victim Services Centre that is fully operational by 1st April 2016. The timescale for expected benefits to materialise, allowing for any initial teething problems, is three months hence.

7. Costs

- 7.1 The project to establish a Victim Services Centre will be run by the Humberside Police Programme Management Unit based at Derringham Street and funded through the Police and Crime Commissioner's budget that is delegated to the Chief Constable to establish an efficient and effective police service.
- 7.2 There will be additional training costs that will be incurred as staff will be required to undertake new functions and responsibilities in connection with the needs assessment of victims.

8. Major Risks

- 8.1 A dedicated Victim Services Centre in Humberside will need to include a referral and assessment mechanism. This is currently provided by the Victim Care Unit at Wakefield and funded by the Police and Crime Commissioners of the Yorkshire and Humber region.
- 8.2 By bringing the assessment and referral mechanism into a dedicated Victim Services Centre there is a risk that business continuity is impacted. For example staff may not be competent enough to deal with the assessment process. This should however be addressed through targeted training.