

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Report of	POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
Date	TUESDAY 22nd MARCH 2016 – 1:00pm
Subject	Victim First update
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Purpose of Report

1. This report updates the panel on the initial progress of the Victim First service

Recommendations

2. The Panel are recommended to note the contents of the report.

Background

3. Responsibility for local victims and witnesses support services transferred to all Police and Crime Commissioners in March 2015. In anticipation of this, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) developed a new bespoke model “Victim First” for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). This model was shared with the Panel in March 2015. The OPCC also issued a bridging contract to the incumbent provider (Victim Support) under the same terms as had been under the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to allow time to procure against the Victim First model.
4. Following a formal procurement process Catch 22 were the successful bidder and worked closely with the OPCC to implement the service by 1st October 2015.
5. The Victim First service was then formally launched at the King Power Stadium on the 28th September 2015 with the majority of Panel members in attendance. In advance of this, the Panel were also updated by way on an urgent additional item at the September 2015 Panel meeting.
6. Some complementary support services were also commissioned under the Victim First model with Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT) delivering clinical mental health advice provision and 24/7 Locks providing target hardening services.
7. Victim First has now been in operation for 5 months and the first quarter monitoring information has been provided to the OPCC.

Executive Summary

8. Victim First has been operating successfully for 5 months now in meeting the needs of victims and witnesses. The headline figures for the first quarter (Oct-Dec 2015) are that 3,712 victims and witnesses have been dealt with by Victim First. This figure includes 242 self/other agency referrals with the rest (3,470) being direct referrals from the Police. Of this 3712, there are 156 victims who have progressed to a full needs assessment and the enhanced support to which this leads.
9. Victim First is further enhancing its outreach work to increase engagement across partner agencies and improvements are being made in relation to capturing the full journey and outcomes for victims.
10. The LPT Clinical Mental Health provision commenced in October and initial indications are that this is working well.
11. The target hardening service delivered by 24/7 Locks commenced on the 1st January 2016 and delivers target hardening to victims referred through both Victim First and the new United Against Violence and Abuse (UAVA) service for victims of sexual and domestic violence/abuse. Again, early indications are that this service is operating effectively in meeting the security needs of victims and witnesses.
12. The OPCC is already beginning to consider how it will go about reviewing the Victim First model with a view to provision from 1st October 2017 (when the current contract ends).

Performance of Service

13. With monitoring only available from the first quarter, a quantitative analysis (provided briefly in 8 above) does not properly reflect the quality of work being delivered by Victim First. The two short “case studies” below are, however, indicative of the very positive impact that the service is having on the lives of vulnerable victims and the significant outcomes being achieved:
 - Victim First offered support to a young woman who had been a victim of sexual violence when she was 13 years old. The victim had been struggling at school and was isolating herself from friends. The Case Worker made contact with the victim’s college, who subsequently allocated her a mentor to support her through this. The Case Worker encouraged and supported the young girl to disclose to her parents and to the police what had happened two years before. The victim stated that she now feels much more confident.
 - Victim First provided support to a client who had been diagnosed with schizophrenia, was self-harming and hadn’t been outside his house for 10 years. The Case Worker offered spiritual support to the service user, which encouraged him to get into contact with his local imam. A referral was also made to the Victim First Mental Health Triage Nurse who offered further support. In a small space of time, the service user managed to take the huge step of leaving his house to go to the local shop. His self-harm incidents have also reduced and he reported that his GP was really pleased with his progress and spoke highly of the service offered by Victim First.
14. In implementing and firmly establishing the service within the local landscape, Victim First has engaged with a wide range of stakeholders and is actively engaging at a strategic level through representation on the following boards:

- Victim and Witness Partnership Assurance Group
- LLR ASB Delivery Group
- LLR Hate Incident Reduction and Monitoring Delivery Group
- Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel
- Young Adult Project (YAP) Delivery Group
- Domestic Violence Delivery Group
- Sexual Violence Delivery Group
- Learning Disability Partnership Board

15. The Restorative Justice (RJ) element of Victim First is currently under-utilised but this is as expected given the fact that it takes a certain amount of time for:

- Victims to move from being concerned about their immediate wellbeing to being concerned about the wider benefits of RJ for both them and the offender;
- A criminal justice outcome confirming an “offender”.

Planned further development of Victim First

16. Victim First has an action plan with the following actions which will ensure that the promising start is continued and that the service is able to grow and develop to its full potential. This plan intends to:

- Embed the new Needs Assessment, Support Plan and Database which are designed respectively to increase uptake of more in depth support, enable more holistic support to be delivered and provide the OPCC with rich outcomes data for future reporting
- Enhance partner and community engagement to increase self and 3rd party referrals
- Increase the take up of more in-depth support from victims through changes to the way in which people are initially engaged over the telephone
- Increase the use of RJ through raised awareness and through a refined approach from the case workers
- Commence the customer satisfaction survey to be conducted by Leicestershire Police’s Service Improvement Unit to understand the true success and outcomes delivered by the service
- Create an independent advisory group consisting of academic experts and victims amongst others to help further steer the development of the service

- Introduce an internal quality assurance framework which will complement the OPCC's own quality assurance processes

17. As fuller and more detailed monitoring becomes available for the other elements which broadly constitute Victim First (LPTs clinical mental health provision and the target hardening service) the OPCC will consider what changes within the existing contract need to be made to ensure the needs of victims are best met.

18. The OPCC will continue with robust contract management and quality assurance procedures to ensure the continued performance and positive development of the suite of Victim First services.

Re-commissioning of Victim First services

19. With the suite of Victim First services ceasing on 30th September 2017 the OPCC needs to start considering what provision is needed beyond this date. The OPCC will undertake these considerations through a collaborative commissioning approach which will begin in earnest once the new Police and Crime Commissioner is in office.

20. With Victim First having only recently been launched, the OPCC is sensitive to the fact that partners and wider stakeholders will be focussed on optimising their working relationship with Victim First services (rather than developing the next ones) and that in many respects it will feel like this is too soon to be considering the next iteration. However, the OPCC is aware of the procurement timescales and the need for a significant implementation period given the evident complexities of the provision. Re-commissioning requires thought now if the outcome is to be a comprehensive system in place from October 2017 onwards.

21. Prior to the new PCC starting, the OPCC will be undertaking the "Review" stage of the commissioning cycle in relation to Victim First services where an understanding from lessons learnt, the gaps or unnecessary overlaps in existing provision and consideration of the potential for regional (Strategic Alliance) collaboration will be gained. This work will be undertaken by the OPCC in conjunction with the Victims and Witnesses Partnership Assurance Group.

22. Once the new PCC is in place a more formal programme structure will be developed to take the re-commissioning of victim support services around the rest of the commissioning cycle (Analyse, Plan and Do) in a collaborative and participative manner.

Implications

Financial:	None
Legal:	None
Equality Impact Assessment:	None
Risks and Impact:	None identified
Link to Police and Crime Plan:	This work is central to the Supporting Victims and Witness strategic theme and has linkages with the other themes.

List of Appendices

None

Background Papers

None.

Persons to Contact

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