



Cambridgeshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Executive

Date: 11 August 2016

POLICE AND CRIME PLAN DEVELOPMENT: VICTIMS

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Business Coordination Board ("the Board") on the development of the victim section of the new Police and Crime Plan.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Board is recommended to note the update and consider key issues for inclusion in the Police and Crime Plan.

3. Background

3.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner is required to issue a Police and Crime Plan as soon as practicable after taking office - specifically before the end of the financial year which they are elected (March 31, 2017).

3.2 The plan being developed will focus on four strategic themes:

1. Victims
2. Offenders
3. Communities
4. Transformation

3.3 Each theme has its own **aim** and suggests a framework through a series of **shared outcomes to** enable all agencies with a part to play in community safety and criminal justice to strategically direct the future delivery of services through these common goals.

3.4 This paper focusses on the strategic theme of Victims.

4. Context

4.1 The Constabulary and Criminal Justice Partners operate within:

- Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (the Victims' Code) – the statutory code which sets out the minimum level of service victims should receive from the criminal justice system.
- The Witness Charter - which sets out the standards of care a witness should expect.

4.2 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has announced their intention to collect vulnerability data as part of the Effectiveness inspection. This will in particular look at the force's ability to identify vulnerable victims and safeguard them from future victimisation.

4.3 The Commissioner has a duty to ensure an efficient and effective criminal justice system for the county. The National Audit Office Report: 'Efficiency in criminal justice system' summarised: "The system as a whole is inefficient because its individual parts have strong incentives to work in ways that create cost elsewhere". It cites, for example, the multiple listings at courts and the subsequent negative impact on the confidence of victims and witnesses in the system. The Cambridgeshire Criminal Justice Board Victims and Witnesses sub-group provides a multi-agency oversight over the journey of a victim/witness through the criminal justice process.

4.4 In 2015 the number of unique personal victims of crime known to the Constabulary was 29,218. However the true number of individuals victimised is unknown as nationally it is estimated only 42 per cent of victims report their crime to the police.

4.5 Police and Crime Commissioners took over responsibility for commissioning support services for victims of crime in October 2014 with an annual budget of £1m. In Cambridgeshire an integrated model of support services has enabled bespoke support to be provided in a way which meets the needs of each victim. This is provided through a constabulary-led Victim and Witness Hub which includes a restorative justice offer and end to end support through the criminal justice system. The services are also available whether or not the victim has reported the crime to the police.

4.6 The Constabulary's Strategic Assessment considers current and future demands on the Constabulary to inform prioritisation and resourcing decisions, using a risk-based approach. The 2016 Strategic Assessment identified the following strategic priorities:

Six High Priority Areas - Emergency Response, Dwelling Burglary, Child Abuse (including Child Sexual Exploitation), Domestic Abuse, Serious Sexual Offences and Counter Terrorism.

Cross Cutting Themes - Foreign National Offenders, Cybercrime, Organised Crime Groups and Mental Health.

Intelligence Requirement (emerging threats) - Modern Slavery.

4.7 Many of these priorities relate to vulnerability and the safeguarding of potential or actual victims from future victimisation. In particular it is clear that the response to child abuse, domestic abuse and serious sexual offences must be delivered in partnership with other agencies. There is a joined up approach to dealing with the

most vulnerable through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub in partnership with the force's Public Protection Department and the Victim and Witness Hub.

- 4.8 The commissioning of specialist support services for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence is overseen by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Governance Board. In particular the services for victims of sexual violence are being streamlined within the funding envelope available. This has included the recent re-commissioning of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) and relocation (in November) to a new centrally located premises. The commissioning of a single equitable countywide support service for victims of sexual violence will follow. This work is being led by the OPCC through a joint commissioning board with Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 4.9 The demand on the Constabulary from people in mental health crisis is significant. A partnership approach to delivering the right care, at the right time and from the right service has been agreed through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Crisis Care Concordat. The OPCC has funded an Integrated Mental Health Team in the Force Control Room. However the lack of onward referral and support available to these vulnerable people often leads them back to policing as their default crisis response position.

5. Delivery of manifesto

- 5.1 A key element of the Commissioner's manifesto was to 'take a victim first approach'. This included specifically to:
- Support the Victims' Hub and the service it provides to victims of crime and vulnerable victims of anti-social behaviour and look at ways expand and enhance this service
 - Ensure victims are looked after from the moment a crime occurs in particular that there is structured support for victims of domestic abuse to keep them safe. This support must be delivered in partnership with voluntary sector specialist workers.
 - Support initiatives to identify victims – in particular working with health and children's services
 - Work with employers to ensure they have safeguarding policies in place and are aware of the signs of abuse where women see their place of work as a safe space.
 - Providing the opportunity for victims of crime to meet their offender in a restorative justice conference

- Victims of burglary and other serious crime will always be visited by a police officer

6. Next steps

6.1 The Victims' Commissioner Baroness Newlove and the HMIC have both praised Cambridgeshire's model of victim support services. The Constabulary and OPCC are taking part in a four-area peer review in September to enable learning to shared country-wide. It is clear the model provides an excellent base from which to further develop and enhance this wider service over the life of the plan.

6.2 Through a seat on a national victims working group Cambridgeshire OPCC is able to play a part in influencing and shaping government policy on victim-related issues within the Ministry of Justice and Home Office. This group represents Commissioners across the country and ensures the victim's voice remains at the heart of all reform. Further devolution of victims' services is expected within the next 12 months.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 The Board is recommended to note the update and consider key issues for inclusion in the Police and Crime Plan.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document(s)	
Contact Officer(s)	