

CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL	Agenda Item No. 13
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Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner

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UPDATE ON PROGRESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VICTIMS' HUB

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To respond to the Panel's request for an update on work to develop and implement a police-led Victims' Hub in Cambridgeshire that will deliver a victim services and referral mechanism and provide a gateway for the integrated management of victims of crime.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Panel note the contents of the report and the direction of travel being taken by the Constabulary.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 From October 2014 Police and Crime Commissioners will be responsible for commissioning the majority of emotional and practical support services for victims of crime locally.
- 3.2 In the second formal variation to my Police and Crime Plan, which the Panel endorsed in February 2014, I said how a joint Victim Strategy for Cambridgeshire would direct the commissioning of victim-driven support services. I also set out how work to support victims of crime in Cambridgeshire would benefit from an integrated management approach. (See page 7 Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Plan).
- 3.3 Decision Record CPCC 2014-004, which I brought to the March Police and Crime Panel, signalled my decision to move out of Ministry of Justice national funding arrangements with Victim Support to local commissioning of victim referral mechanisms from October 2014 in an early adopter capacity. The notice also informed the Panel that I was working with the Constabulary to support them to provide this referral service through a police-led Victims' Hub providing integrated management of victims of crime.
- 3.4 The Constabulary's Implementation Team has since been developing the Hub model. As an 'early adopter' they have been actively engaging with the Ministry of Justice and other 'early adopter' forces to address issues of interoperability and share solutions. This work has enabled them to present me with their preferred model for the Victims' Hub which will provide an enhanced service for victims of crime in Cambridgeshire.

4. VICTIMS' HUB MODEL

- 4.1 The Hub will work alongside existing crime recording, criminal justice, witness care and investigation management functions at an existing police estate Copse Court in Peterborough. This approach in most parts mirrors a victim's journey from point of report and investigation through to any court process and beyond.
- 4.2 Every victim of crime, bereaved relatives, spokespersons or parents of victims under 18 will have access to the Hub service. The Initial Victims Needs Assessment will determine whether that contact is by letter, electronically or by personal contact from a Victim Care Co-ordinator. At present existing services will only consider approximately 70 per cent of direct victims of crime even before a needs assessment has been completed. In addition businesses, where there is named point of contact, will be entitled to access services and provisions under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.
- 4.3 The Victim Care Co-ordinators will contact all victims with a need identified and carry out a Detailed Victim Needs Assessment (DVNA). This will establish whether a victim is entitled to an enhanced service under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and shape a bespoke care plan, which may or may not include emotional or practical support to enable them to cope and recover. Hub staff will also have access to a far greater range of information compared to existing providers to answer questions from victims and keep them updated on their case.
- 4.4 The support provided by the Hub will generally fall into four broad categories;
- Emotional and practical support including signposting to services
 - More detailed/longer term emotional and practical support
 - Support and referral to existing services that can help a victim cope and recover
 - Referral to victims' services commissioned by my office.
- 4.5 A Victims' Hub website will signpost victims of crime, both those who choose to report their crime to the police and those who don't, to the local and national support services available. Access to support services for people who do not wish to report crime to police is a key requirement under the EU Directive on the Minimum Standards, Rights, Support and Protection of Victims of Crime (specifically Articles 8 and 9).
- 4.6 A recruitment process has already begun to bring in local staff, with local knowledge to work in the Hub. The office space has been secured and a new case management system based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM is being developed in-house specifically for the Hub. This system has a full suite of automated business processes such as notifications, email and letter generation. Existing force systems will automatically populate the system with the information needed by the Hub staff.

5. LONGER TERM EMOTIONAL AND PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS

- 5.1 From October 2014 I am looking to award Victim Support in Cambridgeshire a grant, from the Ministry of Justice Victims Fund, to support the transition and development of the Hub. They currently employ a network of volunteers who have extensive training and experience of providing support to victims of crime and the grant would enable this to continue.
- 5.2 The use of volunteers extends the reach of the Hub and enables the wider community to support each other and create safer, stronger communities. The Constabulary will at the same time continue to develop its own volunteer network to support the Hub over the transitional period to April 2015.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 A wide range of providers of victims' services have been consulted throughout the design of the Hub through an OPCC Provider Forum and existing engagement opportunities. These organisations have shared their views as providers and ensured the victims' voice is heard. This engagement and consultation process will be an ongoing part of the Hub's work to ensure its services, and those it signposts and refers to, constantly respond to the changing needs of victims of crime in Cambridgeshire.

7. NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 The Hub will begin operating in a shadow format from September 1 and will take over responsibility for all victim referrals from October 1, 2014.
- 7.2 I will continue to scrutinise the work of the Victims' Hub through my Business Co-ordination Board to ensure it is delivering a service which victims of crime in Cambridgeshire are entitled to.

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Plan <http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Cambridgeshire-Police-and-Crime-Plan-10-June-2014.pdf>

Strategic Vision of Support for Victims of Crime in Cambridgeshire
<http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/police-crime-plan/victims-witnesses/>

Code of Practice for Victims of Crime
https://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/victims_code_2013.pdf

EU Directive on the Minimum Standards, Rights, Support and Protection of Victims of Crime
<http://www.justice.org.uk/data/files/resources/340/Protecting-Victims-EU-Competences-and-mechanisms-for-safeguards.pdf>

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