

Official

Agenda Item 9.1



Creating a safer
Cambridgeshire

To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Constable

Date: 16 May 2019

POLICE & CRIME PLAN - VICTIMS THEME – CAMBRIDGESHIRE CONSTABULARY WORK TO DELIVER ACTIONS

1.0 Purpose:

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the Business Coordination Board (“the Board”) on the actions taken against the Victims pillar of the Police and Crime Plan (PCP)

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Board note the contents of this report.

3.0 Introduction

3.1 This report summarises key deliverables against the refreshed Victims pillar of the Police and Crime Plan (PCP). While it is not intended to be exhaustive, it outlines Constabulary activity in order to achieve each of the three main objectives.

4.0 Objective 1 - The police respond to an individual’s immediate needs and safeguard them from potential future victimisation

Ensure that victims from the three priority groups (as defined in the Victims Code) are identified and provided with an appropriate response based on their level of risk at the initial point of contact.

4.1 Appropriate training is in place to ensure that all calltakers and response officers have the required knowledge to make risk assessments based on the information in

front of them. This training and knowledge will develop and change as law changes and policy changes to ensure the most vulnerable are best cared for take place.

Ensure victims of crime receive a timely & high quality investigation and are kept informed in-line with the Victims Code.

- 4.2 The Constabulary measure the frequency of timely updates to victims using Victim Care Contracts (VCC). Compliance is monitored monthly at the Operational Performance Meeting (OPM). Recent compliance rates have shown deterioration; and the OPM in April highlighted some issues with how officers are using Athena to log updates. All areas have been asked to report back on their plans to improve the use of VCCs at the May meeting.

To develop a performance matrix which incorporates a qualitative measurement as well as quantitative.

- 4.3 The OPM in May finalised the new approach to performance management; this is focussed on a small number of headline measures, supported by Key Performance Questions (KPQs). These are designed to allow the organisation to ask itself a range of open questions to improve understanding and encourage debate / dialogue. This approach recognises the unintended consequences of a purely quantitative framework.

- 4.4 The KPQs are supported by management information (MI) and the development of these indicators is ongoing.

To ensure we maximise the use of civil powers, for example SHPO's/DVPO's.

- 4.5 The force position is clear. It is committed to using DVPN and has invested heavily in training and toolkits in the last 6 months. Its intention is articulated within the DA policy and despite low numbers issued, has been embedded. DVPN numbers cannot be considered in isolation as analysis of use of bail and conditions is relevant in terms of protective measures.

To ensure investigation strategies record safeguarding measures that have been implemented to protect the victim and they have been assessed as appropriate (for example presumption of bail for DA)

- 4.6 The Constabulary implemented a new forcewide approach to supervision of investigation standards at the start of May. It is anticipated that this will improve the consistency of crime management and result in an improvement across all investigations. The introduction of these standards will be monitored over the first three months.

- 4.7 Further reviews of safeguarding are then completed and ongoing by the OIC and the supervisor throughout the investigation.

Develop a clear understanding of those most at risk from the highest harm, from vulnerable children to those unlikely to report crime (hate/DA) in order to effectively reduce re-victimisation.

- 4.8 Reviews of all vulnerable person forms (DASH/101/102) are reviewed within the MASH and shared with partner agencies to ensure a coordinated response. Those who require further interaction are discussed at relevant meetings and boards in

order to ensure that all agencies are on the same page and that action is taken as a partnership as opposed to individual organisation responses.

- 4.9 There is ongoing work to align neighbourhood and PVP meetings to ensure a coordinated approach across these intertwined work streams provides the best safeguarding and response.

Ensure the 'lived experience of the child has been captured and safeguarding is effective to prevent future victimisation

- 4.10 The updated 101 form now includes a section for the lived experience of the child.

- 4.11 Op Encompass will ensure that all agencies who are involved in the care, support and education of that child are aware of any stresses that have been identified in that child's life so that any changes in behaviour / attitude or wellbeing can be noted and reacted upon quickly as well as proactively putting safeguarding measures in place to support that child.

5.0 Victims and witnesses of crime can access appropriate and proportionate needs-led emotional and practical support at all stages of the criminal justice process

Fully engage with the countywide partnership response aimed at reducing the number of victims of high harm and risk crimes types

- 5.1 The Constabulary continue to attend CCJB, YCJB, LSCB, LSB, MAPPA Level1-3 and MAPPA SMB as well as numerous others. These are used to identify and put in place a partnership response to engage and support current victims.

Ensure effective and efficient use of the referral process into Victim and witness hub/Sexual Assault Referral Centre

- 5.2 In the last 3 months, Jan-March 2019, 1900 victims have been referred to the Hub, of which 621 were allocated to a Victim and Witness Care Coordinator to attempt phone contact. The remainder were sent a letter outlining the support available to them from the Hub.

- 5.3 The mechanism for referral via Athena is not as effective as it was in CrimeFile. The below table highlights the decline in referrals since implementation of Athena (A reduction of over half). The reason for this is the loss of the Initial Victim Needs Assessment that was on CrimeFile, which acted as both a prompt and a guide for referral by the person completing the crime. The referral process on Athena is simple enough provided the person completing the crime remembers to think about a victims need for emotional and practical support. The initial victim needs assessment could not be incorporated into Athena. A significant amount of action is being taken to address this, including training, briefings, emails to staff and a forthcoming Nimbus article. There has been a recent improvement in both numbers and quality of referrals.

	Q1 2018/19	Q2 2018/19	Q3 2018/19	Q4 2018/19
No. of Victim Based Crimes	13,936	14,809	13,772	15,917

No. of vulnerable victim referrals	2,880	1,750	1,404	1,441
% of victim based crimes	20.7%	11.9%	10.2%	9.1%

Ensure suitable forensic and welfare medical facilities are available (SARC) for adult & child victims of sexual abuse.

5.4 The Sexual Assault Referral Centre is fully staffed and operational.

6.0 Victims and witnesses are treated with respect and their needs are acknowledged during the criminal justice process

Ensure that when new Criminal Justice processes are implemented the impact on victims and witnesses is considered and negative impacts mitigated against.

6.1 Whenever new processes are announced whether it be Criminal Justice, new guidance from APP or from HMICFRS this is assessed against all areas of business. An example is the paper before us today on the Stalking and Harassment guidance.

Develop an effective way to measure compliance with the Victims Code.

6.2 The victim and witness hub fulfils the area within the victim code which requires all victims of crime to be contacted by the local victim service. As stated in 3.3, there are some issues to overcome in the referral process and the availability of data to monitor the Victims Hub. These issues are being actively pursued at the time of writing.

Ensure there is a comprehensive victim strategy in place which acknowledges the impact of key timings in a 'victim's journey' from initial report to finalisation through the Criminal Justice system.

6.3 There is a new national victim's strategy which is currently in production. It is at the stage where it has gone out to all Chief Constables for support and feedback before being issued nationally if approved.

Where a criminal threshold is not reached police support partners with civil proceedings.

6.4 If requested by partners, paperwork is produced to assist with civil proceedings.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that the Board note the contents of this report.