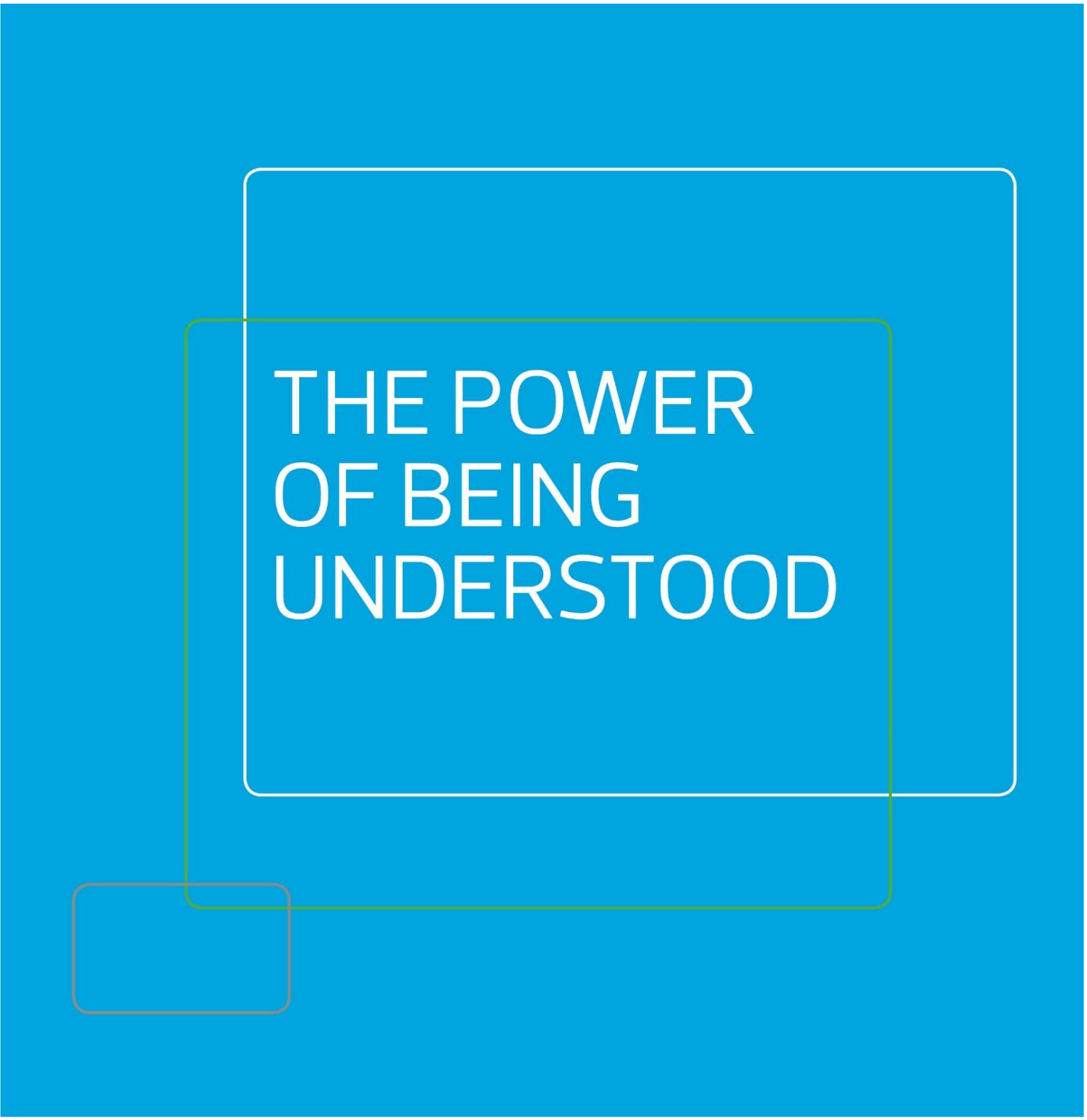

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF VICTIMS SERVICES – RESEARCH FINDINGS

Nottinghamshire Police & Crime Commissioner

11th November 2015

RSM

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

In 2014 the Nottinghamshire Police & Crime Commissioner became responsible for commissioning local victim services. Previously the Ministry of Justice had commissioned the vast majority of victims support services nationally, with the largest single service being delivered by Victim Support. Ahead of the handover of responsibility, in 2014 the Commissioner published his Victims' Strategy, with the vision and aspiration that:

"Victims and survivors in Nottinghamshire are resilient and less likely to be re-victimised; empowered to cope and recover from crime and anti-social behaviour by timely and effective victim-centred support from local services, families and communities."

In line with his Strategy the Commissioner funded the following for 2015-6:

- a victims' service which supports victims of crime, anti-social behaviour, hate incidents, identity theft and road traffic collisions, delivered by Victim Support;
- a victim-initiated restorative justice service delivered by Remedi;
- a support service for victims with complex needs in the city only, delivered by Integritas Advocacy;
- a target hardening service providing support to victims of burglary in the county only with window and door locks and alarms, delivered by Nottinghamshire Police; and
- a support service for elderly repeat victims of scams in the city only, delivered by Age UK.

Of the services above, the Victim Support service is by far the biggest service.

Whilst the Victim Support service delivered in 2015-16 differs from that previously delivered, Nottinghamshire Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (NOPCC) had ongoing concerns that current services were insufficiently targeted to the victims who need the most help; and that the services were collectively not providing best value for money.

As the Commissioner plans to procure new victim support services in 2016 and move to a service model which is more targeted, effective and efficient and which can provide tailored outcome focused support for the victims that need it most, the NOPCC commissioned an independent review of victims services, specifically looking at:

- what victims and stakeholders think about the current services;
- an assessment of the numeric demand for a victims service in Nottinghamshire to include victim type and levels of need;
- learning from best practice in victims services in other police force areas;
- improvements and efficiencies to be made to current victim support pathways, including what changes need to be made to the referral mechanism to victim support services from Nottinghamshire Police;
- how victims of unreported crime with protected characteristics wish to access victim support services; and
- What a new victims support service model should best look like.

The aim of the review was to recommend a new delivery model for victims support services in Nottinghamshire supported with a clear evidence base for change and improvement.

Baker Tilly (now RSM UK) was appointed to deliver this independent review in late August 2015 for completion by early November 2015. The following report presents the findings and recommendations of the research element of the independent review,

2 STRUCTURE OF THE REVIEW AND RESEARCH REPORT

The Independent Review was split into four component parts which, when combined enabled a comprehensive assessment of the current service provided by Victim Support, and the development of evidence based recommendations for a cost efficient, targeted service which would meet the conditions of the Ministry of Justice Grant, needs of local victims and requirements under the Victim's Code of Practice. (VCoP)

The four parts were as follows:

- Assessment of the demand for victim's services – both from reported and non-reported crime in line with the Victims Code categorisation.
- Modelling of the process costs and overheads of running the existing support services, with a particular focus on the Victim Support Service, and subsequent estimates of the costs and model for a revised model.
- Consultation with victims and stakeholders involved in the support of victims, with a focus on victims with protected characteristics, to determine the different needs of victims and the preferred access routes into appropriate support.
- Learning from other PCC areas who have already commissioned victim services.

This report focuses on the findings from the **victim consultation work** outlining key recommendations for improvement for victims, especially those with protected characteristics.

Note: the review did not include the management of victims of domestic and sexual abuse, as the Police and Crime Commissioner had already worked with local authority and health partners to conduct reviews of these specialist services.

3 THE REVIEW

The review took place over a two month period and involved a series of planned review activities with 49 victims, 14 victim related stakeholders, victim support services operational staff, financial and business managers, Nottinghamshire Constabulary Victims Code Lead, its mental health lead, hate crime/incident lead, and over 17 individuals involved in the recording of activity relating to crime and vulnerability. The RSM Victim Consultation work was led by **Darren Hornby and Jae Saleh**

4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - RESEARCH

This report presents the findings from research commissioned by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, dedicated to exploring the identified knowledge gap around individuals and communities with protected characteristics and their provision of support services in Nottinghamshire (Notts) in the context of victims and witnesses of crime. The key objectives were:

- To increase to the evidence base to inform the development of the policies and procedures of future commissioning of victims support services in Nottinghamshire;

- Provide evidence that may be used to influence the evolution of multi-agency services that are accessible for victims and witnesses of crime.

4.1 Key findings and recommendations

- There is a picture of fragmented relevant provision across Notts, and victims, particularly those recognised as having protected characteristics often find help in community services that are not necessarily adequately resourced for supporting victims to cope and recover.

- Engagement in non-traditional support services is high among people with protected characteristics though they are unlikely to perceive these community services and leaders from which they receive support as victim support related.

- There are a significant number of services, particularly within the community based support/ structures sector (in addition to Victim Support) that support victims and witnesses of crime that have protected characteristics. They are often highly valued by their service users and effecting positive support yet are unlikely to be recognised in the current commissioning strategy.

- There is a considerable work needed to make it a clear and more cohesive landscape and community based support/ structures sector should form the basis of any future service delivery model. A community based advocacy service that works with statutory partners throughout the support pathway (and victim journey) should be a key line of thinking. In response to the presently fractured landscape, a strategy with the capacity to draw the two sectors together would add value and support future joined-up working (as well as improve victim outcomes and value for money for the PCC).

- In addition, beyond an advocacy service, a dedicated community based support mechanism that 'hand holds' a victim throughout their journey, perhaps split into categories around faith, ethnicity, gender, mental/physical health. This is happening to some extent in Nottinghamshire already but requires recognising, formalising and funding for it to be effective and harmonise victim support services.

- It should be recognised that a number of community based organisations have been identified by the PCC and have been given small amounts of funding. These seem to be effective cogs in the support landscape and these and others should be considered as part of that wider delivery model in terms of non-statutory support and utilise its existing relationships with marginalised groups and individuals with protected characteristic.

- Particular demographics and cultural influences at times mean individuals with protected characteristics do not see themselves or want to be identified as victims although do identify as having support needs. Future commissioning can challenge this trend through its utilising of non-traditional support services and community organisations.

- The perception of the community based support sector is of little joined-up and effective collaboration with statutory services in supporting victims and vulnerable people with protected characteristics. Community based services often see themselves as undervalued and as a consequence, under resourced and increasingly vulnerable.

- Victims spoke openly about the need to have understanding, empathy, choice and familiarisation as part of a support service and many admitted that 'trust' was central to their likelihood of both accessing and reporting. The police in particular were considered a barrier for many communities with protected characteristics, reinforcing the role of the community based support/ structures.

- The current victim support model was felt to be outdated, not inclusive and not effectively engaging communities with protected characteristics. A reform of the model of existing provision in Notts can enhance the victim journey further and support positive outcomes for marginalised. There was also criticism of other organisations within the CJS especially the CPS.

- Victim Support are considered too keen to terminate support to its service users while there is greater need for a more flexible and fluid model that allows victims to 'dip in and out' of support, similar to their experiences with other community services.

- In addition to any revised victim strategy is the need to recognise further and fund community groups/leaders to deliver low-level support. The opportunity to build capacity and improve skills within these often micro, acute or underrepresented services supports the ambition of early intervention and would serve to challenge unmet demand and non-reporting.

- Victims of crime that are recognised to have protected characteristics often have complex needs that extend beyond their victimisation and therefore a linear approach is often ineffective in supporting them to cope and recover.

- A longer term funding model for services engaging and supporting victims to ensure consistency in delivery is therefore a key consideration.

4.2 The brief

There remains a concern that current victim services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are insufficiently targeted to the victims who need the most help and collectively they are not providing best value for money for the Commissioner.

There is significant concern that vulnerable victims with complex needs are not receiving the support they require across the county. In addition and overlapping is the need to engage with victims with protected characteristics that traditionally under report and have different and sometimes unique needs.

The Commissioner wishes to move to more targeted, effective and efficient services which provide tailored outcome focused support for the victims that need it most.

Therefore the key focus of this section of the project was to gain a better understanding of the needs of vulnerable victims and victims with protected characteristics with a key focus on the following:

- What victims and stakeholders think about the current services?

- What type of service victims need and why.

- What outcomes do victims want and why.

- How victims wish to access victim support services.
- What a new victim's support service model should best look like and how it can be delivered.

4.3 Victim consultation approach

The main approach to this element of the project was an in-depth, qualitative approach which involved a combination of in-depth interviews, friendship interviews and focus groups.

The target sample included stakeholders who worked with individuals with protected characteristics and/or complex and multiple needs and victims with protected characteristics and who in the main were vulnerable and had complex issues.

4.3.1 Stakeholders

Initially (in conjunction with officers at NOPCC) a list of stakeholders was compiled and agreed and the list included both traditional service providers but also organisations or individuals that specialised in services for vulnerable residents and often those with protected characteristics.

Stakeholders were then contacted either via a telephone call or an email and asked if they could spare the time for an interview. All stakeholder interviews were conducted face to face at their location of choice. All interviews were either digitally recorded or a second researcher was present to transcribe.

Due to a challenging timescale, interviews were organised with as many stakeholders who were willing to provide their time in the fieldwork period and a diverse range of stakeholders were included to ensure a comprehensive viewpoint on the issues highlighted in the brief.

A semi-structured script was used for each interview and each interview lasted between 60-120 minutes.

The following stakeholders have taken part in the research:

Stakeholders	Reason for selection	Method of engagement
Victim Support	Current funded provider of victim services	Interview with Olwen Edwards
Remedi	Currently funded by OPCC to deliver restorative solutions	Interview with Toni Jackson, Arlene Jackson and Lisa Clifford
Integritas Advocacy	Provide support services to the most vulnerable residents in the county	Interview with Victoria Burrows
Age UK	Providing support for the elderly and currently funded by OPCC to deliver preventive work around cybercrime and doorstep crime.	Interview with Carol Wilby
Nottingham Mencap	Supporting residents with learning disability or difficulty and responsible for delivering the Smile! Stop Hate Crime project.	Interview with Karen Aspley and Denise Hickman

Notts Club for Young People	To meets the needs of mainly disadvantaged young people in Nottinghamshire	Interview with Lisa Barker and Rebekah Whiting
Chat'bout	A young people's participation network whose aim is to inform and provide a voice for young people to influence local service development.	Interview with Jacqueline Lockhart
AWAAZ	A registered charity that provides a mental health service to individuals from the BME and new emerging communities	Interview with Angela Kandola + 2
Voluntary Action Broxtowe	Helping people from minority ethnic backgrounds to integrate into the local community. Offering support to those with mental health issues.	Interview with Linda Button
Nottingham Citizens	A diverse alliance of community organisations working together for the common good of Nottinghamshire.	Interview with Lydia Rye
Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum	Offering advice and support to refugees and asylum seekers	Interview with Kinsi Clarke
LGBT Switchboard	Providing information and support for the LGBT community	Interview with David Edgley
Himmah	Himmah is a grassroots community based initiative providing services, organising and education to meet the needs and aspirations of the wider community and has a key role in the local hate crime agenda.	Interview with Sajid Mohammed
Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership	The Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood Community Safety Partnership is a merged partnership which aims to bring communities together to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in the local community.	Interview with Ros Theakstone (Chair)
South Nottinghamshire Community Safety Partnership	South Nottinghamshire Community Safety Partnership co-ordinates community safety issues in the three boroughs of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe and Gedling.	Interview with Ruth Hyde (Chair)
Nottingham City Council	Developing policy, training and recommendations at Nottingham City Council around Hate Crime.	Interview with Clive Foster, Hate Crime Project Officer
Nottingham Women's Centre	Offers a safe environment for women to come together to gain confidence, develop skills, take part in training, get support and organise groups, activities and services.	Interview with Melanie Jeffs, Centre Manager
Mansfield and Ashfield Community Safety Partnership	Community Safety Partnership coordinates the activities of those agencies who deliver services to keep people safe in Ashfield and Mansfield.	Interview with Julie Bowler, Tenancy and Estate Services

Safer Nottinghamshire Board (SNB)	The Safer Nottinghamshire Board is a countywide strategic group that is required under Crime and Disorder Regulations 2007 to ensure the delivery of shared priorities and a community safety agreement.	Interview with Sharon May, Trading Standards Officer
Disability Nottinghamshire	Promoting the independence and choice of all persons with disabilities and impairments within the Nottinghamshire County Council area (excluding Nottingham City).	Interview with Lorna Carter, Chair

4.3.2 Consulting victims

Through the network of organisations that have been interviewed as part of this research, a series of in-depth interviews and focus groups have been undertaken with victims of crime.

Victim details were either passed to the team from the organisation following permission from the victim or the organisation itself arranged the interview or group on our behalf. Often the interviews or groups were held on the organisations premises to ensure the victim felt comfortable and safe.

The majority of interviews were conducted face to face with three undertaken over the telephone at the request of the respondent.

As per the stakeholder interviews all interviews and groups were either digitally recorded or a second researcher took full and comprehensive notes. A semi-structured script was used for all interviews and groups. Each interview lasted between 30-45 minutes; with each focus group lasting approximately 2 hours.

The victim engagement profile is as follows:

Reason for selection/ Organisation	Method of engagement	Number of victims involved	Experience of Victim Support
Young people with learning and or physical disabilities (Notts Club for Young People)	Two focus groups (one male and one female)	19	0
Young BME people including several with learning difficulties and gang background (Chat'bout)	Focus group	8	0
BME residents with mental health support needs (Awaaz)	One to one interviews	6	0
Complex and multiple needs (mental and physical disabilities)	Focus Group	8	0
Learning difficulties (Mencap)	Friendship interview	2	0
Mental health support needs (Integritas)	Telephone interview	1	1
Mental health support needs (Integritas)	Telephone interview	1	1
Mental health support needs (Integritas)	Telephone interview	1	1
Hate crime (Remedi)	One to one interview	1	0

Hate crime (Remedi)	One to one interview	1	0
Hate crime (Mencap)	One to one interview	1	0

NB:, In addition and to ensure a broader scope of opinion a questionnaire has also been designed to capture the feedback of recent victims and it also gives those who haven't been a victim to have their say on future delivery.

The questionnaire will be disseminated where possible to communities with protected characteristics and in the main will be disseminated as an online link; the results of this strand of the work will be reported separately.

Protected Characteristic	Number of victims involved
Young people	27
BME residents	15
Mental health	19
Physical disability	7
LGBT	5
Religion/ belief	5
Sex	5

NB (1): Due to the often complex and/ or multiple needs of the participants engaged in the consultation process respondents often represented multiple protected characteristics. Therefore the number of protected characteristics represented in the research is greater than the total number of victims engaged.

NB (2): To our knowledge, no respondents experienced victimisation or discussed support services in the context of Gender Reassignment or Pregnancy and Maternity.

In addition and to ensure a broader scope of opinion a questionnaire has also been designed to capture the feedback of recent victims and it also gives those who haven't been a victim to have their say on future delivery.

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Throughout the report the phrase 'community based support/ structures' is used. This is a fairly broad term and in the case of this research it is more often than not in reference to those community and voluntary organisations or individuals that are not acknowledged as specific or traditional victim support led services and wherein specific victim support is not their key priority.

4.4 Current support - findings

An overwhelming number of community services that were consulted did not consider their provision to be victim specific although acknowledged they did (and in some cases frequently) explicitly support victims of crime. Through consultation it appeared that this was two-fold, primarily the victims and witnesses of crime presented with complex needs and therefore held support needs in other areas (that were appropriate to a particular service which was not victim specific).

Secondary to this was the impact of the current commissioning structure insomuch that services received funding for service delivery outside of victim support provision, as this demographic was not reflected in the organisations monitoring commitments or were they working towards outcomes related to victimisation, delivering support to victims

was routinely overlooked. On occasion it was evidenced that stakeholders only considered their services as supporting victims once prompted through the consultation process.

"What we're trying to do is build social capital so that once young people have made some progress they're then in a position to give something back, which is what is happening and it's strengthened their confidence. But if they fall off the horse, they get back on again because we've created something to support them to do that, all our cohorts are victims of crime in one way or another"

"We've got a lady that xxxx has seen, she's been a victim for god knows how many years now and she's got cameras at her house. She can't even go in the garden – she's been a victim for years. She can't even go up the stairs because of her condition but there's nobody there to support her apart from us".

"Non-traditional services which challenge social poverty should be relevant to victim support. Social contact reduces the need to seek inappropriate attention which makes people more vulnerable, particularly in the older population. There are probably quite a lot of services that are supporting victims in that sense but do not see themselves are victim support services".

There were exceptions to this observed in a number of the services consulted which did recognise their service delivery in relation to supporting victims. Primarily this was acknowledged as 'added value' or 'just part of what we do' and not viewed as specific delivery in response to specific victim related funding streams.

"We're not a victim support service but we support individuals who are vulnerable. We have a couple of tiers to our service, we've got people with mental health issues and housing issues, debt issues, eviction issues, health and wellbeing issues and in there they can also be a victim. With the housing issues, they could be victimised by their neighbours, racism, all that comes with it so we support them in there. We've been doing floating support services for nearly over ten years and Victim Support's never contacted us".

"I think the only thing with Victim Support is it's just institutionalised; the police come in then they pass the case onto someone. They send a leaflet out. If the person wants to see them, fine, but if they don't, then tough. You need to be able to hold their hand. You need to do more than that. We do this – people are dependent on us when they initially come to our service because they're vulnerable. But our aim is to make them independent. So as the first point of call, they want us and they're dependent on us, but when we do the assessment we look at how to make them independent"

This was supported by victim feedback which often reflected a much more positive evaluation of the service delivery (support as a victim) through community based support/ structures than that of the statutory sector, with many being

critical of organisations including the police, Victim Support and housing (services). This was primarily due to a more personal and understanding service and a more accessible layer of support.

“I wish I had found them sooner”.

“I won’t go to the police I would go to xxxx every time”.

“They are my guardian angels”.

“The youth workers here give me more support for what I have been through than anyone else”.

“They have organised and provided me with everything I needed; it’s not in our culture to report this kind of crime, so they have helped me through it a lot”.

It was clear that for certain victims, community support was key; in the main this was through peers and family members; however there was a view that community leaders and groups could and should play a more active role in victim support and be given the knowledge to refer, signpost, and advocate and deliver low-level support when necessary.

“The church is a good example, one of the congregation had been a victim of a serious hate crime and the Pastor listened, supported and other members of the church regularly checked and looked after her until she was okay”

“I would gravitate to my local community leader at the mosque or somewhere like here through friends and the support workers available”

It is important to recognise that a number of stakeholders interviewed have been identified and funded by the PCC as delivering a key service in regards to supporting victims or delivering proactive and preventative support which is both well received and deemed encouraging by many. There are clear signs that these services are making a difference to victims and their communities.

"That's specific on the Safe Places scheme. It's not a reporting scheme; it's more to do with people when they're out in the community, making them feel safe so they know there are certain places. So we've been setting it up; we've got about getting on for 100 places now. It's quite new for us but they are specifically funding that. We go in and do training, they put up a sticker and then we log it on their website".

"It's sort of two fold really; we're hoping that it will build up people's confidence in the community so that people with learning disabilities will feel more able to access the environment, but also to give people if they do need to report, a bit of confidence and support in contacting the police".

"We also give a service to vulnerable victims. That is we then act as their case holders where if we've got a vulnerable victim and if they're under the age of 17 and they've got special needs, if they've come from BME community, anybody over the age of 65, anyone like that – we'll give them a service which initially will be phone calls, initial home visits, one of the VLOs will call in at the paper shop and buy them a bottle of milk and deliver that for them"

It is worth considering that due to the vulnerabilities in funding, particularly across the community based support services, that while services may recognise the support they offer to victims of crime, their framing of this as 'added value' was undertaken as a mechanism to allow them to be more competitive in a crowded and unstable marketplace. The consequence of this is likely to be a perceived increase in the numbers of victims of crime not accessing support or victims and witnesses not arriving at the most appropriate source of support for their needs. For example, Age UK delivers a 'scams' project in conjunction with Trading Standards, funded as a 12 month pilot through the PCCs office. In this regard they acknowledge supporting victims of crime explicitly. Another strand to their delivery includes a social inclusion project, 'Men in Sheds', supporting retired, often bereaved elderly males. This cohort of service users is likely to reflect those participating in the 'scams' initiative and are vulnerable to door-step crime and possibly victims in their own right. But as they present with a primary need which centres on social poverty (and not victimisation) any victim support needs arise as a product of alternate provision. While Age UK captures this added vulnerability in service users, it increases the risk of

- Additional demand on what is in effect a non-victim focussed service
- Increases the level of non-reporting and hidden harm figures
- Individuals with protected characteristics (PC) not arriving at appropriate support at speed (or at all).

4.4.1 Challenges and issues (in the current landscape)

When considering the actual (rather than perceived) delivery of support to victims within community based support/ structures, the landscape was fractured, often volatile yet with examples of effective and far reaching practice. The profile community based support/ structures in Nottinghamshire appears to mirror other sub-regional areas as well as the larger UK landscape. This includes micro-services, at times described in the consultation as 'one-man-bands', a tier of similar sized SMEs that have experienced moderate growth or conversely reductions in size through reduced funding or loss of contracts as well as a finite number of larger, long established organisations. At times these may be nationally affiliated charities with regional or local entities, i.e. Victim Support and Age UK.

While the presence in the sector of such diversity may be a strength representing choice and variation to the service user, its lack of cohesion and connectivity represents a greater likelihood of duplication, postcode lottery and inequality

of provision. Additionally, it creates a greater opportunity for smaller and micro-services to be further vulnerable, SMEs prone to fluctuations it their capacity for delivery and the larger organisations to potentially dominate and influence a 'one-size-fits-all- model created in their/its image. In Nottinghamshire there is evidence of each of these elements which results in at times good practice while at others a happenstance outcome in relation to victim support services.

"Funding is the biggest problem. Charities seem to absorb a lot of work because they are in the middle of communities and offer this service at a fraction of the cost. The VCSE sector is getting more and more fragmented because it cannot cope with the increasing demand when it isn't able to support itself financially and a small number of larger charities are taking up a lot of commissioning money available. These organisations have bid writers, HR Departments glossy publications and the commissioners trust… it doesn't always translate into the best service for marginalised communities though"

"While there is strong LGBT provision in the City there is little support beyond this boundary. In the context of supporting victims, there should be generic services in place already as a foundation for marginalised groups to access which can become narrowed down to victim support as and when required"

"It's almost perpetual and we hoped the onset of commissioning would see that change but actually that machine seems to be grinding along slowly. Then what you get is voluntary organisations with a long established relationship with the City Council and other service providers tend to be the ones who get invited to the table. So, innovation happens within the voluntary sector but it's very difficult to get it recognised. In my case in terms of the money game, as we call it, we're not really in it".

Somewhat typical of community based services are examples of silo organisations operating in isolation, small networks of services that through some commonality i.e. geography or similar client profiles communicate effectively and a finite number of larger organisations which either gate-keep support for victims or pose as an obstacle which other (non-commissioned) services have begun to work around in order to support vulnerable people.

In addition, many cited the 'common challenges' facing community based support/ structures including limited funding and resources and uncertainty over both. Many referenced the competitive nature of the sector which at times challenges the idea of co-delivery or shared delivery. Many felt the statutory services did not value their input or recognised their current delivery of victim support.

"We are the third sector; third sector equates to amateurs, don't know what you're doing; we aren't the professionals. It's breaking those barriers down which we find very, very difficult".

“One of the things that I see is that there is a lot of lip service paid to the voluntary sector but in reality, there seems to be something going on regarding retaining statutory functions and not really moving into a realistic engagement with the third sector”.

“I suppose a lot of that again comes down to funding; you know I haven’t got a budget for publicity and our website is hotch potch and if xxx computer stops working, I have to fix it. We don’t have an IT department – there is no money for any infrastructure. We are hand to mouth and that is a massive issue with things that other people take for granted. A leaflet design – we’re getting a volunteer to do it for us and then trying to persuade a printer to make it look better. Do you see what I mean”?

“I have never come across so many sharp elbows – I thought the entire third sector would be lovely and everybody would be nice to each other. There’s more backstabbing than there is in any corporate business”.

Duplication in support was felt to be evident in the sector although is difficult to evidence due to the level of disconnect between organisations at present. As a consequence of the intricacies of supporting individuals and communities with protected characteristics, their often complex needs mean they are likely to require several and distinct strands of support. This was supported by victim feedback that highlighted that they often had a range of needs both practical and emotional and quite often strong and diverse communication needs.

“There needs to be much more joined up and coordinated approached between services that support the BME and refugee communities and other services. There is very little of this at present, particularly between the voluntary and statutory sector”.

An illustration of this is a male refugee, having fled persecution as a consequence of his sexuality. Typically, as a refugee, he may experience difficulty in accessing Nottinghamshire health services, partly due to language barriers and partly due to his Home Office status and health care exemption certificates. Predominantly it appears his overarching need relates to his refugee status and therefore he would engage with the Refugee Forum as someone desiring a right to remain in the UK. Although his health and support needs from the LGBT community are acknowledged the organisation only offers targeted health provision alongside their citizenship services. Anecdotally, he would receive low-level and emotional support from the Refugee Forum which is sympathetic to his issues relating to sexuality, but this is not targeted or specialist support. Meanwhile, services such as the LGBT Switchboard in Nottinghamshire remain un-accessed by this individual. There are alternative examples of this again in the Refugee Forum, supporting victims of military/ political torture though they are perceived to be in need of generic refugee services, despite being victims of serious crime also.

“…because there are not enough specialist services supporting groups with protected characteristics they access support services they know and trust in their community, probably services that are under resourced and not sufficiently skilled. These organisations listen and help but it also serves to store up problems for the future because ultimately not enough people are getting the support they need”.

4.4.2 Barriers to access

The movement and migration of service users is challenging across both community and statutory sector services. This increases in complexity when considering the often acute and/or specialist needs of groups with protected characteristics. Often seen as somewhat 'typical' in youth service provision and relating to issues of 'trust', children and young people often view youth services in which they are involved with for support, or socially, as a panacea. They present their needs indiscriminately within these organisations when there are often more appropriate services within their locality. Need can vary between housing provisions, welfare entitlement and is prevalent in victims of most crime types.

"There is a lot of confusion within the refugee community about where to go for support. Their preference is usually to receive support from one service or organisation if they are already successfully engaged with it".

"You're highly, highly unlikely to have got those stories outside of this building; you just wouldn't get it. So interviewing people in their own environment is absolutely critical. Because they knew us and I knew they'd talk about it, but if you'd gone in and said would anyone like to talk about their hate crime experience, I don't think you'd have got anybody. It's the same when they want to speak to someone about support as a victim"

"Victims that come through our system tend to go to care workers, youth workers or friends and family. There's then a pressure for those people to get them into the support system".

Fundamentally this is reported as being underpinned by levels of trust they experience from existing relationships with services and often viewed as a valuable commodity when considering it is not a common experience they have. The outcome is often a dismissal of other, suitable services as they place greater value of the existing relationship than they do on an unknown, albeit appropriate service elsewhere. When considering the services supporting victims (with protected characteristics) of crime in Nottinghamshire, the characteristics themselves were reported as an obstacle to any fluid movement between services. The young people's participation forum, Chat'Bout expressed the benefit of the peer to peer support available to them within their network (as victims of crime) and the challenge they perceived in accessing effective support from traditional victim focussed services. The LGBT Switchboard and hate crime victims highlighted similar challenges, identifying victims created as a consequence of their sexuality 'would have to out themselves' if they wanted to access Victim Support via the police, 'which may be a step to far for them at that time' and therefore would be denied, specific support.

"If the support processes for a young victim starts with the police it is a very one dimensional approach which lots of young people will either be excluded from or will exclude themselves from"

“If you are from the LGBT community and a victim of hate crime, accessing services often means you have to out yourself to engage in support. For many, this is too much to ask so they go without much needed help. Support for victims should not have to be a trade-off like this”.

“No young person wants to be classed as a victim. The name Victim Support would turn some young people off already. It does not sound like a young people friendly service from the name alone”.

Key barriers to effective support identified by both victims and stakeholders were as follows;

- Lack of reporting to statutory/traditional services or lack of acceptance/acknowledgement of victimisation

“The relationship with BME residents and the police is a complex one, particularly the refugee population. Many refugees bring their past experiences of the police with them into Nottinghamshire, often as victims of police brutality from the country they have fled. It takes time to challenge this. We seldom contact the police and it has been know that people have stopped engaging with the Forum, saying, ‘We can’t access a service anymore if it talks to the police”

“Young men are regularly stopped by the police and also experience difficulties around their family life and what happens to them on the street. So they tend to be very paranoid people – they call this system the matrix and that’s how they see it because there’s nowhere to go for help. If they’re having these difficulties, they go to each other and that’s ok except they all see things in a similar way”.

“I would not report to the police on my own as they are too scary”

Trust in the statutory services

“We want to be taken seriously based on our ethnicity so we come to people we trust, I didn’t actively engage services for two years as they didn’t meet my cultural needs, there is no empathy around culture or religion”

“I have no trust in the system”

“I have trust issues with the services – they have wrecked my head”.

“There is a fundamental lack of confidence and trust in the CJS with the minority groups in Nottinghamshire”.

“I guess for a lot of people statutory services are scary because they think they’re going to make them do something or share information about their history; there’s quite a big fear factor”

Labelled a victim / seeing themselves as a victim

“I would refuse victim support I don’t want to be seen or known as a victim”.

“As soon as you say the word victim, my defences come up and I think I will deal with this on my own, I ain’t being known as a victim”.

Image/reputation e.g. seen to contact police

“I didn’t want Housing Officers or the Police to come around in case she (offender) saw them, it’s embarrassing”

“You are dropping them in it if you ring the police – you just don’t do that around here”

Fear and discomfort of strangers / different unknown support organisations

“The idea of having strangers at every stage when you are victim is just hugely off-putting”

“They offered me them (Victim Support). I just didn't feel comfortable talking to people. It's to do with my Asperger’s; I just don't feel comfortable talking to people unless I know them”

“I think people don’t know what to do. Yes and I think there’s a fear that people don’t want to report anything to the police because they don’t want them to look into anything which might be going on in their home. People worry about benefits and they don’t always think rationally”

Language

“Language is a barrier and also I didn’t want to grass on anyone, it’s not worth it where I live”

“We get so many who bring their victim support letter as they don’t understand what it means. There is huge language barrier in general across the CJ pathway”

Normalisation

“I didn’t report it because sometimes I’m OK to deal with things like that because I’ve learned over the years with my disability that life doesn’t come so easy; you’ll get some people calling you. I’ve got used to it”

The police (e.g. reputation)

“I didn't feel safe with the police at all because they didn't help. He was just having a laugh with the police - all three of them were. I was on my way out when he'd thrown a brick at the back of my head and I went into a police station and they weren't interested”.

“It’s really hard dealing with the police when they’ve got their uniforms on, it’s scary. They (victims) would rather put up with the abuse (hate crime) sometimes than actually talk to them”.

“Also is there still a lot of mistrust? This brings me back to talk about a client I was supported – part of his stress management would be to do exercises like Thai Chi. He was doing this in a field – the police came round. He’s a big, tall black guy, 15 stone. Saw him acting strangely – long story short, he was arrested. He didn’t even have the opportunity to explain this is part of my rehabilitation…no it’s this guy looks threatening. It’s unfortunate – that set us back then in terms of building his confidence so things like that – it’s all about better police training”.

Awareness of how to access Victim Support / statutory organisations

“I don’t get any support, it’s never been offered, I don’t know who to talk to or where to go – I just feel alone”

“Who are Victim Support? Nobody knows who they are or what they do. They are faceless”

Stigma / embarrassment

"No, I think a lot of them don't and I think they see – I guess if you've got a mental health problem a lot of them see that as being a stigma anyway and that will be the barrier. They don't want to report because they don't want someone telling them that they're mad. (How do you overcome that"?

"It's weird but I don't like talking to the police, I find it embarrassing and the way they talk to me is not very nice. I don't like people to know I have problems"

Fear (e.g. being 'outed'/ forced disclosure)

"If you take the time to review the online literature of victim support services you realise that they are not very LGBT friendly. It goes to show the gaps in knowledge about engaging certain groups. There is an example of a residential care home than independently sought the free the LGBT training on offer. Its website now displays the LGBT rainbow logo to show it is an LGBT considerate organisation"

"There are many barriers to accessing support if you have LGBT protected characteristics; outing yourself, a mistrust of the police, a critical lack of information or having the information but believing the support process is a waste of time"

"The state welfare for refugees is £36.00 per week, which means people walk everywhere because they cannot afford an alternative. This causes its own problems in relation to health and is probably a barrier for victims connecting with the right services. We applied for a small amount of funding to be able to issues bus passes at our discretion and challenge this problem, but we were unsuccessful"

4.4.3 The victim experience

Consistently, stakeholders considered the current victim pathway to be unsuitable for both victims with high levels of vulnerability and those with protected characteristics. It was broadly considered to be an outdated model which had evolved in response to a commissioning process (as it moved away from traditional grant funding) but not necessarily in in response to changing victim need. There was a fledgling evidence base in Nottinghamshire which suggested stakeholders and victims of crime believed in the need for reform and a 'root and branch' review of the offer made to residents (and future victims). Of some note, Victim Support, the largest beneficiary of financial support in this area and most established victim service too felt that both its own organisation and the wider service now required change.

"Why not devolve the money used for victim support services into community services that are already engaging young people… is it because it would be too difficult to manage? That doesn't seem like a strong enough reason to perpetuate the same system that isn't working"

"Is that they're there and they're getting good money to support victims, but they don't support victims. And they won't take any new cases because they say you're doing it or the youth offending team are doing it"

“Victim Support just sat in my front room, with no understanding of what I needed – it was uncomfortable the best they could say was “don’t people carry around some terrible things”

“Victim support is misleading and it’s confusing, I don’t know what they are there to do”

“The thing is a lot of them haven’t had victim support. For the ones that did have support there was no point. It doesn’t do anything for them. I don’t think Victim Support has really worked in partnership with the third sector”

Of the 49 victims consulted, three described meaningful engagement with Victim Support (VS) as a consequence of their victimisation. A further five participants described explicitly declining the offer of support from VS as fundamentally they did not feel it was congruent to their support needs. Due to the nature of the individuals consulted, considering their vulnerabilities and often complex and/or multiple needs it is possible that greater numbers received invitations from VS to engage in support though were not aware of this at those times. The three individuals who reported engagement with VS described elements of the service in a positive light;

“Victim Support came in and he was a great guy, he really tried to help and understand my problems”

“He came round to my house once a week and even though I wasn’t it more, when he did come it was great to be able to chat to someone”

“Victim Support were good at offering practical help such as advice and where to go”

While the scope and scale of the offer of victim support services would benefit from increasing, the single largest criticism of the current model was its rigid and ‘one dimensional approach’. It is concerning that while victims, witnesses and stakeholders identified several weaknesses and gaps in the current approach with regard to supporting residents with protected characteristics, they typically perceived it to be insufficient for the mainstream population also. The majority of those consulted described the experience (and idea) of the current model to be skewed in the favour of the commissioned service while questioned if this was a consequence of the contract they were delivering. The offer is seen to be narrow insomuch as it was not felt to be inclusive, typically output focussed, illustrated by the early termination of support.

“They terminate early so they (Victim Support) can work through their case load, inflexible and ‘not very dynamic”

“There should be a dedicated post or team to support the BME communities. Money is unlikely to allow this across every area of need but it may be possible to finance targeted support for BME residents that have been victimised. Often the language and cultural needs require specific support in order for any intervention to be effective”.

“There is not enough training to make services LGBT friendly which would be a response to people from the community not wishing to report crimes and accessing support. Victim Support has not participated in the free training provision”.

The concept of outcomes relating to cope and recover services being personal and both varied between individuals and further still between communities represented the starkest contrast to the current offer in Nottinghamshire. The current structure was felt to be a linear offer, one which can be somewhat narrow in terms of ‘when and how support takes place’ and limited in its reach to groups with protected characteristics. There were explicit challenges to the current model, describing it as ‘rigid’ and ‘not sympathetic enough to diverse communities’.

“About five years ago, approximately 50 per cent of the people coming into Nottingham from overseas spoken English. Now it is about 20 per cent of that population. GP practices say, ‘don’t send them (refugees) to us, they are too much hard work’”.

“Language barriers and culture are some of the biggest problems as you need to be able to speak English at the front desk. A lot of services then signpost individuals back to the Refugee Forum but it was us which referred them in the first place”.

“Older people want a one stop shop and they are not getting it. We are developing a strategy that which is more comprehensive that aims to move people into appropriate support faster”.

Consequently, community based support/ structures both through targeted funding (the minority) and often simply their presence at the right time are the ones delivering meaningful support to both vulnerable victims and those with protected characteristics. There was broad criticism of statutory organisations lack of understanding of the needs of victims and that the services were ‘fundamentally not fit for purpose’. There were many examples from victims themselves of being a ‘victim of the system’ and the statutory pathway proving to have a negative impact on their ability to cope and recover and a catalyst for non-access to services. Anecdotally though widely observed, victims of crime appeared to describe Victim Support as a statutory service despite its charitable purposes and viewed it less favourably as they did other statutory publics services against their non-statutory partners.

Stakeholders were critical of Victim Support, particularly in terms of their low referral-on figures and its perceived failure to recognise the strengths within the community based support. Therefore it was considered they did not recognise the full or holistic support needs of victims. Many felt the rigidity of the organisation and the lack of specialist knowledge of protected characteristics issues exasperated the situation. While Victim Support acknowledged their historical presence in the region, and the positive impact this has on understanding communities of difference, this did not translate to victims and potential victims of crime.

"I think the problem is not moving with the times; when they first set up years and years ago, there was nothing else like that so it was wonderful and there was nobody else to help victims. Whereas, as time's gone on, like life in general for anyone you expect more out of it. They haven't improved with the times and they haven't put more into it and it's still as it maybe was 10 or 15 years ago and now the voluntary sector are doing most of the supporting".

"She said we support victims. I said well there are 26,000 victims a year and you're saying you only work with 10 per cent of them, but exactly what do you do? All this money and what do they do? Why don't they ever refer to other, more suitable organisations"?

Beyond the Victim Support model were other challenges, with a deep rooted feeling that other statutory organisations throughout the victim pathway had little or no understanding of the needs and challenges facing victims with protected characteristics, with examples at every stage highlighted by victims of crime.

"I supported another lady through into the Magistrates' Court – I don't know if you've ever been to that building in central Nottingham – it's a modern building so when you go up you can see four or five floors above you – designed to impress and dare I say intimidate a tad. And getting the lady into the building – the amount of conversations I had to have with her in advance sat outside 'this is what will happen, don't worry. They're going to look in your bag'. Looking in your bag when you've got various issues..."

"This wasn't a lady with a large support network and a lot of people with a low level learning disability living independently in the community have got less and less of a support network. They can't turn to people, especially if they've got autism; they may not be able to make those relationships with others so they're not naturally people who'll always have a group of people around them to say 'don't worry, I'll come with you to that'. A particular lady I had to move her out of the building in stages because she was crying and balling with relief of pressure, so we had to move her outside of the direct court building, then we had to get her downstairs in the lift to the café in the court building and she's decompressing as we're going and then finally we were able to leave. But for every one person that we know about like that there's probably hundreds more"

"We had one a few years ago; a young lad in a wheelchair got badly beaten up – he wanted to meet them. He was only about 14, two lads and they agreed yes. It went to panel – we got it all organised, we got a special venue organised so he could get up on his crutches. We picked him up with his mum and he just wanted to

say to them – do you think I like being like this? I want to play football and all I get is you bullying me and taking the micky because I'm on crutches. Get to the venue and they say you're not coming in. It's like rubbing it in that he's a cripple and that's the point. I said he's got feelings and emotions"

"My granddaughter was raped and attacked, her time at court was awful, a victim rep was supposed to meet her at court and support her and nobody turned up, imagine if that happened to a refugee or someone with mental health issues or both"

Unmet demand was explored through the engagement process and revealed varied, complex and at times community specific reasons for unreported crimes. The overarching theme for this was underpinned by perceptions of the police. Victims (and at times stakeholders) of crime described a general lack of confidence in the police, specifically perceiving that they would minimise the issues of a victim, often through their own prejudices. Young BME residents reflected on black males being the victim of violent crime and how they felt the police 'would label it all as gang crime and be less interested'. Other examples included older residents 'seen as stupid for being victims of certain crimes, particularly fraud or doorstep offences' while a consideration within LGBT services was that prejudices on the grounds of sexuality are 'relatively recent' and that is a barrier to not reporting.

"The police seem to see all black on black crime as gang related so victims of these crimes probably do not get the support and service that they should. If the police bring these prejudices into their work then young people will develop their own perceptions of the police in response".

"I want to feel safe, safer than I feel now anyway. There is lots of negative press about people with disabilities and how they are treated by the police, recently a blind man with a cane which was confused for a weapon was tazered and he was arrested mistakenly. When you are blind and you hear of news like this it can make you feel increasingly vulnerable".

While there were many challenging views elicited about the police, they were considered specifically in relation to their capacity and experience of engaging individuals with protected characteristics. While sympathetic to the polices own challenges this was reflected against;

- An expectation of equality of service for those with protected characteristics
- Support for victims of crime begins with the police

Both victims and stakeholders perceived the police as central to the support process and expressed that an individual's experience of the police would influence their motivation to engage in support. Additionally they identified the need for the police to be appropriately resourced and skilled to engage marginalised groups effectively.

“We like the police and they have a very difficult job to do under difficult circumstances but reduced resources are not an excuse to offer a diluted service to people with protected characteristics”.

“For young, BME victims, there is not a lot of mistrust in police process, but it is the only one available”.

“Sometimes it feels like when you have a disability the police find it harder to engage with you so it is easier to ignore it and you don’t get the support you need”.

Two residents which participated in the consultation described their repeated victimisation of hate crime as a consequence of a property dispute with neighbours which led to their own conviction relating to antisocial behaviour. Their perception of the police is now distorted based on their lack of support despite their willingness to engage in discussion and their ultimate criminalisation.

“We have had a dispute with a neighbour that has been ongoing for nine years. We have been victims of crime but treated as offenders so we have not received any support”.

“Because I am a repeat victim and I have mental health issues they don’t take you seriously”.

4.5 Victim need / outcomes

Positively services consulted in Nottinghamshire championed outcomes above outputs when measuring the journey of a victim or witness of crime (though did acknowledge the importance of outputs, particularly as a commissioned service).

Outcomes are impacted on significantly in a disjointed marketplace and often adversely. Feedback elicited from both stakeholders and victims reinforced that when services are allowed to dominate aspects of support and the organisations responsible for such delivery do not collaborate, the victim journey may be limited to the scope of that particularly service.

Stakeholders within community based services/ structures not directly commissioned to deliver support to victims identified that achieving a positive outcome for a client may require the contribution from multiple services and if organisations are unable/ unwilling to co-operate it has a detrimental effect on an individual’s ability to cope and recover.

“I would prefer specialist support after being victimised but I would prefer one of the key workers I have to help me access it. Because of my mental health I would like someone involved in the process to know me and what my needs are”.

The effects of this can be wider reaching and on several occasions throughout the consultation process, stakeholders referenced the importance of building social capital within groups with protected characteristics. This reinforced the consequences of a lack of collaboration or underperforming services, as if the individual does not achieve the outcomes aligned to their support needs, the capacity for building such capital within a particular group is reduced.

The cost of this promotes increased vulnerabilities among residents, a prolonged disconnect between marginalised groups and a costlier remedy at a later date.

Engagement with stakeholders and victims explored specifically the outcomes and support needs which victims of all crime types are felt to desire most. This can be defined in three categories and was not confined as being exclusively post-support:

- access in/to support services;
- experience of support;
- impact on their cope and recover process;
- Access in/to support services.

Central to this theme was the belief that access to support should be dictated by the individual and not the convenience of the provider. Although person-centred, characteristics of appropriate access were defined as the ability to access 'when and where needed'. Victims recalled frustrations at receiving 'time slots' or 'certain allocated days for support', when actually the 'unexpected moments of need' or the reassurance that access was available when required was of more value.

Consequently existing community provision was observed as the predominant access route into support, which for many was felt to be more congruent with their needs.

"I was assigned a VS worker but could only access them on certain days and had just one visit each week. If you can't access them when you need them what use is that"?

"They (Integritas) were a life saver; a god send. It helped me offload and rationalise it all. It was important that they were not judgemental. You need that understanding throughout the process. You need to be able to express what you are feeling and lose the anger".

"Choice is really important; you need an element of choice and to be able to exercise it".

"I've got one (victim) that I support but she can't actually chat about it in the usual way as she finds social interaction difficult with other young people. She's very, very damaged and so we communicate through Facebook and we meet for the occasional coffee, we are able to be flexible".

"One of the reasons they talk to us is because we're a culturally specific service; we can understand their needs, we can relate to their needs and we can understand where they're coming from. If something needs turning round to say, I'll be with the victim and meet with the family member and we can

understand why they're not going forward. So what we'll do is look at alternatives of getting them out of that situation".

4.5.1 Experience of support

Participants in the consultation exercise described support as required to be 'easy to find', free at the point of entry and flexible in its offer. In addition, the ability to have trust in an organisation was significant for victims and as mentioned previously without a high level of trust, support would be less or non-effective.

Support should be open ended 'within reason' insomuch as individuals should be able to 'take a break' in support when required but resume when deemed necessary. While support was considered a specialist service it was not seen as being necessary to be facilitated by a specialist organisation but rather practitioners with particular skills, supporting the belief that support should span sectors, geography and communities.

"Just having someone to speak to is so important as is trust and empathy".

"I have serious mental health issues and just to have somebody there who is not going to let you down is fundamental, otherwise you end up not trusting anyone. Although I will never be the same again the support was massive".

4.5.2 Cope and recovery

Fundamentally, victim support services tended to measure their performance against their ability to support individuals to cope and recover from victimisation, albeit there was not necessarily a direct association with the cope and recover concept; for service providers and users it was just a focussed often one to one support that only considered the need of the victim. Victims defined what they 'need from a service' in its simplest form, as;

- Recognition (as a victim/of having a need).
- Advocacy (within the current pathway or with third-party agencies).
- Clarity/ to be communicated with (in terms of the support process to help manage expectations).
- To be heard.
- Familiar and safe environments (including service location and support workers).
- Understanding/empathy.
- Confidentiality.
- Respected and not judged.

"It's also the lack of understanding in that they send young, male police officers to my house that scares me and makes me feel uneasy"

“It’s being able to have that one to one especially when it is a sensitive subject”

“They need more empathy and understanding of individual needs. I was an emotional wreck but nobody seemed to realise”

“I was on my own, my husband was in Afghanistan and I attempted suicide because no-one had been there to support me throughout the constant and long term harassment”

“They need to recognise I am a victim otherwise you get no support. (Female, mental health)”

“People need more practical and emotional support and the right referral or in fact any referral at the right time (Female, mental health)”

“They say the post-traumatic stress of exiting a gang is the equivalent of coming out of Afghanistan and therefore support needs are high”

“I link up – one of our directors because we had to have a couple – one of them is a guy called *** and he’s a qualified counsellor. He’s also an ex-drug user who comes from the streets. So, he’s somebody who’s gone into situations where services have not been able to engage a young person at all, particularly young offenders and he’s had two words with them. He’s used the right language and they’ve said ‘I’m not talking to you, I’ll talk to him’, so he’s got that kind of fight round him”**

“I think also within the voluntary sector we’ve got a luxury of being able to focus and commit– you know the lady who had the depression before. She’s very talented, but every so often I’ll get this phone call where she’s slipping back again and she needs this boost. For her it’s a longer term relationship. It’s not like we’ve had you on the books for six months, you’re done”

“One of the reasons they talk to us is because we’re a culturally specific service; we can understand their needs, we can relate to their needs and we can understand where they’re coming from. If something needs turning round to say, I’ll be with the victim and meet with the family member and we can understand why they’re not going forward. So what we’ll do is look at alternatives of getting them out of that situation”

“A lot of vulnerable victims are going through trauma and that’s what we help them with”

"Men are embarrassed by mental health and often men like to receive support from men. There was a man who closed down for 3 years after being a victim of crime, he wouldn't even unpack his bags until he met us, he still hasn't recovered but it is very much about rebuilding confidence"

"…and also I'm just thinking, the people with learning disabilities - it's like the support has to be different in a way. Partly why they're coming to us is because we know them or certainly the people here, but sometimes other types of support – like we had a talk from the local advocacy organisation and it was much more about someone phoning in. But I really don't think that's an option. What they want is someone going out, seeing them where they are because they might not even be able to get to an office. It's a different type of support; it's about communicating and asking the right questions. It's not a traditional advocacy because traditional advocacy you are representing the views of that person. I think it's much more active process than that. It's asking the questions that individual doesn't know to ask – so it's saying to the police 'have you done this, have you done that? Is this in place? Is Victim Support there when you're going through into the court process? I want someone there to enable them to get into the building"

The component parts to this process were described as being most susceptible to individual preference and ranged from:

- To not repeat the experience of being victimised.
- To feel safer.
- To gain closure (not always linked to prosecution).
- To improve confidence, self-esteem, dignity and resilience (emotional stability).
- To reduce anxiety.
- To know support is still available beyond a trail/exit.

"Fundamentally, older people want support to stop them having to repeat any experience of being victimised".

"You lose all self-confidence and trust and you doubt and blame yourself and you need to be able to not feel like this".

"You need a resolution and you need closure or you cannot move on. Someone to talk to is crucial, someone who is relatable, trustworthy, who listens and who understands"

"You get used to being a victim, it becomes everyday life and you blame yourself, you need help to be able to stop blaming yourself".

"I want my confidence and self-belief back"

"As far as I'm concerned in the case of that young lady and the young man I spoke about earlier – I think we've achieved the right outcome for them. And I think they've built up enough resilience that if they fall flat in future they will know how to pick themselves up and go forward. Because that's the trick – if they fall – I mean I had one going deeper and deeper into depression because there was no bounce"

In terms of utilising restorative approaches as an outcome support mechanism, feedback was mixed and many felt that there are clear challenges around certain vulnerabilities and protected characteristics. It was clear for some that it could be detrimental to the cope and recover process and there were examples of a lack of understanding of the challenges and the needs of these groups.

"Restorative Justice might be a step to far for a lot of the refugees. Their backgrounds and experiences are likely to mean RJ is ineffective. This reinforces the idea that support for victims must be tailored to groups with protected characteristics, if not individuals. A single approach is not enough".

"It can mess them up. You know the person is already vulnerable as a victim. What if the service user has paranoia and the perpetrator is sat there apologising, they're going to get more paranoid. Is that person going to attack them? So it depends on individual cases but a big health warning when talking about mental health"

There were many who supported the restorative concept as a positive mechanism for achieving a road to recovery and achieving an outcome. In addition several organisations referenced the importance of language, faith and religion in terms of cope and recovery with forgiveness and understanding often at the heart of many religious beliefs. Religion was said to be used for reassurance and feelings of safety and that the language of religious justice gives hope and certainly supports the restorative concept. This however was reinforced by the need to ensure the right organisations are working with victims of those with strong faith to ensure that level of cultural understanding is there.

There was feedback that restorative approaches still needed to be better recognised locally and that its stock value was yet to reach the right levels.

"I think it's a lack of awareness from stakeholders, yes and the way they sell it as a concept and what it can achieve"

"I think in a way public perception of what Restorative Justice is, is a big one – people think you're do-gooders or just doing it to get people off. Better understanding needs to get over to victims and the big one really is Victim Support because under our contract and Victim Support's contract now under PCC, the majority of referrals should be coming through them"

4.6 Future design of Victims Services

The consultation evidenced that there is a desire and a need to see future service delivery for victims and witnesses of crime redesigned in Nottinghamshire. While many key words were used to describe what this should look like – inclusive, fluid, robust etc… there were equally many tangible suggestions relating to change, and considerations of maintaining any elements of current good practice in the wake of any reform.

The overarching theme for this, specifically with the ambition of engaging and supporting residents with protected characteristics was to use existing community resources within community based services/ structures being central to any new landscape. The belief is that the use of existing services and their adoption into a victim support strategy would represent a more inclusive offer as it would capitalise on the existing relationship between services and diverse sections of the Nottinghamshire population.

The use of services which have already engaged individuals with protected characteristics would create a culture that is indiscriminate of service size with greater value placed on the relationship in the first instance. Of those consulted, many considered the financial implications of their suggestions and described the need to challenge the current approach. Not always directed at Victim Support as an organisation, but rather the idea that one organisation should be so dominant with regard to their financial award. The feedback supported the devolving of the current financial arrangement in favour of a 'greater spread' of financial support with the ambition of positively effecting less prevalent yet equally deserving communities.

A variety of themes emerged in terms of the potential model including the use of geographical hubs that had specialist voluntary support in each area of the county or the concept of a key central hub with co-habitation across the key services based on the identified need, which could act as a reporting centre, support hub and signposting unit. This could then be rolled out at a more local level to ensure closer liaison with the communities and their representatives.

"I think the key is joining it all up and having support and an overview of the whole thing and not tickling about here and tickling about there, but joining everything up and from a victim's point of view, track that person from start to finish and make that an active process".

"I think it needs more of a community focus and I know that's going to be tough because they've got less people but I think if they had a bit more… it is a cheaper more effective solution. Make sure they're known and then you might get more people reporting".

"I'll tell you what it should look like, they should have hubs in every area linked into organisations where that service – that organisation's raised awareness on that service – and provided a drop in on that service so the ones that don't report themselves to the police – even includes the ones that do – can access them locally in their areas.. But hubs everywhere for everyone- you've got libraries, health centres, you've got the communities, third sectors – if they have that kind of model everywhere in those particular areas, you could collect the data, you could offer the support and you could come up with some results as well because victims – how far do they want to travel? And then with that organisation being in that area, you could find out how to get that service to those people who are too scared to come out of their house"

"…I think it would be easier let's say if the police commissioners said we are looking for a consortium of organisations that can support BME or young victims of crime who are perhaps in certain difficult situations. They can come together as a consortium to bid for funding"

The positive feedback from victims around these services and the challenges they have faced in accessing or utilising traditional victims support services only heightens this argument. Victims and witnesses of crime described the value of broader channels into support than they perceive to currently be in place. This includes the access to acute, targeted victim specific support through existing, often generic services. The perceived 'opening' or increasing the routes into support by adopting existing pathways into services was felt to improve opportunities to cope and recover. Generic, non-victim support services, particularly those within community based services/ structures were viewed as having a greater 'open-door' culture and less focus on the length of time a particularly can be engaged in.

Similarly, when describing reforms to the current model it was discussed that consideration should be given to apportioning financial support to the training and development of existing community assets. While 'not all services and community leaders' were viewed as having the capacity to facilitate specialist support, they were viewed as having the capacity for low-level interventions and advocacy. While governance and quality standards were seen as integral and a common consideration in relation to safeguarding vulnerable people and effective support, it was discussed that governance should also reflect the diverse communities in which the support is offered, including its cultural sensitivities.

Additionally, the caveat to any reforms was that the existing skills within the sector should be protected. Particularly a consideration from across charitable organisations was the value in retaining skilled staff within a sector, particularly in response to changes in contractual awards. One community based service representative reinforced the point that in 'a changeable marketplace like ours', heavily invested in staff with specialist and high skill-sets are prone to leaving the sector as employment is often insecure and the outcome of this is a 'reduced menu of services for victims or reduced quality of support'.

Others argued that a specialist panel should be involved in any future delivery model to support PCC decision making.

4.7 Recommendations for service delivery

- Dedicated community based support that hand holds a victim throughout their journey, perhaps split into categories around faith, ethnicity, gender, mental/physical health. This is happening to some extent in Nottinghamshire already but requires recognising further, formalising and funding for it to be effective and harmonise victim support services.

- A longer term funding model for services engaging and supporting victims to ensure consistency in delivery.

- A community based advocacy service that works with statutory services throughout the support pathway (and victim journey). In response to the presently fractured landscape, a strategy with the capacity to draw the two sectors together would add value.

- Significant resource is required to ensure a clearer and fluent landscape that would truly support future joined-up working

- To work with existing resources (community based services/ structures) to support VS in the delivery of support. A delivery model that is far more flexible in its approach and less driven by targets and termination of support.

- In addition to any is the recognition of and funding of community groups/leaders to deliver low-level support. The opportunity to build capacity and improve skills within these often micro, acute or underrepresented services supports the ambition of early intervention and would serve to challenge unmet demand and non-reporting.

- The potential to tie all of these concepts into a central hub layered with community based service delivery across the need spectrum is a model that would meet all of the aforementioned objectives and could be delivered using a co-habitation model. This could then be extended out to community based micro hubs for access and signposting.

5 APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Victim need variable stakeholder contacts

Stakeholders	Reason for selection	Method of engagement
Victim Support	Current funded provider of victim services	Interview with Olwen Edwards
Remedi	Currently funded by OPCC to deliver restorative solutions	Interview with Toni Jackson, Arlene Jackson and Lisa Clifford
Integritas Advocacy	Provide support services to the most vulnerable residents in the county	Interview with Victoria Burrows
Age UK	Providing support for the elderly and currently funded by OPCC to deliver preventive work around cybercrime and doorstep crime.	Interview with Carol Wilby
Nottingham Mencap	Supporting residents with learning disability or difficulty and responsible for delivering the Smile! Stop Hate Crime project.	Interview with Karen Aspley and Denise Hickman
Notts Club for Young People	To meets the needs of mainly disadvantaged young people in Nottinghamshire	Interview with Lisa Barker and Rebekah Whiting
Chat'bout	A young people's participation network whose aim is to inform and provide a voice for young people to influence local service development.	Interview with Jacqueline Lockhart
AWAAZ	A registered charity that provides a mental health service to individuals from the BME and new emerging communities	Interview with Angela Kandola + 2
Voluntary Action Broxtowe	Helping people from minority ethnic backgrounds to integrate into the local community. Offering support to those with mental health issues.	Interview with Linda Button
Nottingham Citizens	A diverse alliance of community organisations working together for the common good of Nottinghamshire.	Interview with Lydia Rye
Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum	Offering advice and support to refugees and asylum seekers	Interview with Kinsi Clarke
LGBT Switchboard	Providing information and support for the LGBT community	Interview with David Edgley
Himmah	Himmah is a grassroots community based initiative providing services, organising and education to	Interview with Sajid Mohammed

	meet the needs and aspirations of the wider community and has a key role in the local hate crime agenda.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

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