

<b>For Information / Consideration / Comment / Decision (delete as appropriate)</b>	
<b>Public/Non Public*</b>	
<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Strategic Resources and Performance Meeting</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	
<b>Report of:</b>	
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<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>4</b>

\*If Non Public, please state under which category number from the guidance in the space provided.

## **VICTIMS' CODE COMPLIANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To provide information on the work taking place by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to monitor whether victims have received the service they are entitled to under the Victims' Code from Nottinghamshire Police.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the meeting note this report.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Victims' Code sets out the services and information victims of crime are statutorily entitled to from criminal justice agencies from the point of reporting to conclusion of court proceedings. The Code came into force in December 2013 and was revised and expanded in October 2015.
- 3.2 The PCC chairs the Nottinghamshire Victims' and Witnesses Board which now meets bi-annually. Previously a sub-group of the Local Criminal Justice Board, the Board provides a forum for criminal justice agencies to agree strategic priorities and to work in partnership to improve services for victims and witnesses. As part of this, the Board provides independent oversight of quality assurance work in relation to the Victims' Code.
- 3.3 A new model for victim services (Nottinghamshire Victim CARE) was introduced in Autumn 2016, followed by commissioning of a new service provider (Catch22) from January 2017.
- 3.4 Training for all Nottinghamshire Police officers in relation to the Victims' Code and related issues was provided between January and May 2017.
- 3.5 Nottinghamshire Police have until recently, undertaken Home Office mandated surveys of all victims to gauge their satisfaction with the service received. The high level findings of the survey are published as part of Nottinghamshire Police's Performance and Insight Report<sup>1</sup>. These surveys

<sup>1</sup> 1.1 Percentage of victims of crime that are completely, very or fairly satisfied with the service they have received from the Police; and 1.5b To monitor satisfaction levels of victims of Domestic Abuse through the force victim surveys.

are no longer mandatory, except for victims of domestic abuse. There is therefore, no longer consistent, comparable reporting between Forces for other offence types. The decision was made to cease surveying victims of offences other than domestic abuse and hate crime from April 2017.

#### 4. Summary of Key Points

##### 4.1 Telephone Survey Development:

Work to develop a telephone survey of a sample of victims each month to monitor and quality assure the service victims receive from Nottinghamshire Police was originally commissioned by the Nottinghamshire Victim and Witness Board in 2016. The decision was taken to focus on non-enhanced victims initially. Three volunteers were identified as suitable and have been trained to undertake the telephone survey with victims. Questions have been identified using the Victims Code and consulted upon with partners. A database has been constructed and tested.

##### 4.2 Sampling:

Nottinghamshire Police provide the OPCC with an electronic random sample of non-enhanced victims who have consented to be contacted. We receive approximately 150 contact details each month.

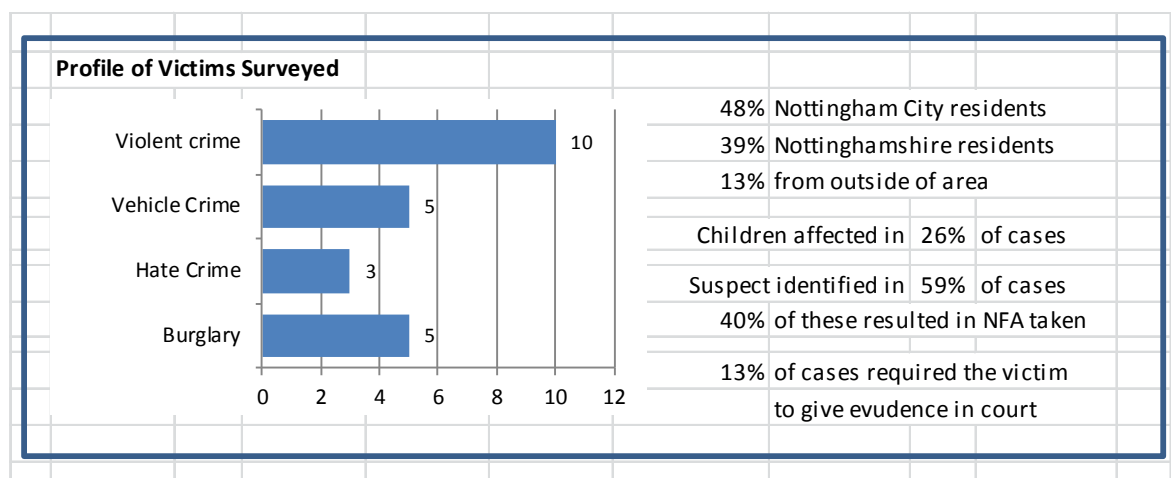
##### 4.3 Responses:

There is a significant 'no response' rate (c.92%), as so far we have only contacted victims during working hours. This should increase with further contact attempts being made by volunteers and an early evening session is being planned, subject to volunteers' availability.

##### 4.4 Findings:

Surveying started in May 2017, contacting victims of offences committed in January & February 2017. As at 14<sup>th</sup> June, we had 23 completed surveys.

It is very early days and the training for officers only began in January. However, to provide a few of the initial headlines:



Only 44.4% of victims were asked by the police about their needs, however, 73.7% felt that the Police took their needs into account. Similarly, only 38.1% were told about the Victims' Code, but 68.4% were told about Victims' Services.

#### 4.5 Going Forward:

With the conclusion of Police surveying for offences other than domestic abuse and hate crime, from July onwards we will need to consider an alternative data source for consenting victim contacts. To avoid duplication, yet maintain attention on Police performance in relation to meeting VCOP obligations, some questions from the survey could be the subject of a periodic performance report (e.g. questions relating to needs assessment and offering referral to Nottinghamshire Victim CARE). The remaining data could continue to be obtained by telephone survey, if we were to agree consent and contact arrangements with Nottinghamshire Victim CARE.

In addition, the Victims' Commissioner, Ministry of Justice and APCC are proposing to work together to develop a non-mandatory dashboard of key measures of compliance with the Victims' Code that could be used by PCCs to monitor the provision of entitlements for victims in their area. We will keep informed of this work and together with partners, explore the options for the most efficient and effective means of monitoring Victim Code compliance.

### **5. Financial Implications and Budget Provision**

5.1 Volunteer expenses.

### **6. Human Resources Implications**

6.1 Staff development time (in relation to identifying the questions, constructing the database and agreeing access to Nottinghamshire Police data). Going forward: reviewing quality assurance arrangements to enable comparison of data and avoid duplication, together with establishing new data source(s).

6.2 Volunteers' time in delivering the survey.

### **7. Equality Implications**

7.1 Due to the terms of consent, we currently only receive contact information and offence type. Information relating to protected characteristics would enable us to further explore apparent differences on the basis of victim characteristics.

### **8. Risk Management**

8.1 This is proactive work to monitor compliance with the Victims' Code.

## **9. Policy Implications and links to the Police and Crime Plan Priorities**

9.1 This quality assurance work links to Priority 1: Protect, support and respond to victims, witnesses and vulnerable people; and Priority 2: Improve the efficiency, accessibility and effectiveness of the criminal justice process; in the Police and Crime Plan.

## **10. Changes in Legislation or other Legal Considerations**

10.1 No further amendments to the Victims' Code are currently expected.

## **11. Details of outcome of consultation**

11.1 Not applicable.

## **12. Appendices**

12.1 None.