



Progress with achieving Objective 4 in the Police and Crime Plan

- 1 Objective 4, Caring for victims and vulnerable people, sits alongside three other key objectives in the Police and Crime Plan. I directly support this objective through the services I commission for victims, the decisions relating to which are on my website.
- 2 As the Panel is aware, I have had responsibility for commissioning services for victims of crime since 1 October 2014. My focus has been on services and initiatives which support the victims of the most serious crimes as defined in the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and which support those victims to cope and recover.
- 3 Since April 2015, I have funded two significant services. The Victims Referral and Assessment Service (commissioned in consultation with PCCs regionally) is available to any victim of crime and enables victims to ask for a needs assessment if they feel they need support. The annual cost of that service is £292k. The other service is the Countywide IDVA service which is operating effectively across the county and enables early assessment and safety planning for high risk cases of domestic abuse. The value of that grant is £407.5 in 2015/16. The commissioning of these services has consumed the majority of my victims' services grant with the remainder devoted to services for victims who are entitled to enhanced services.
- 4 My Ministry of Justice (MoJ) victims' services grant in 2015/16 was £817.5k (which included some funding for Restorative Justice). I have not yet had confirmation from the MoJ of the grant allocation for 2016/17.
- 5 The Panel has asked that this report focus on the issues arising from its workshop on 2 December.

PANEL QUESTIONS:

- **With reference to the discussion about the UCS report at the Panel meeting in April 2015, what is the current status regarding Suffolk agencies involved in supporting victims of domestic abuse collaborating and engaging with each other, and working collectively on addressing the issues in the Report (and subsequent research), and for strong overall leadership to drive it forward to bring about real change in Suffolk?**
 - **How does the PCC feel that the relationship with Suffolk County Council and the Domestic Abuse Forum is now working?**
- 6 The UCS research was commissioned to understand the perceptions of victims of domestic abuse in Suffolk and their experiences of the criminal justice system. The findings were of relevance to all partners who support victims of domestic abuse and who have responsibilities for safeguarding adults and children.

- 7 The Constabulary has made progress with the recommendations relating to its service and those have been reported to my Accountability and Performance Panel in September and to the Domestic Abuse Partnership in October. A further update is due to my Accountability and Performance Panel in February 2016. Key actions are as follows:
- A joint review by the Constabulary and the Local Children Safeguarding Board of the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process has taken place. Findings and recommendations will be fed back to the MARAC steering group and the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. The Constabulary has also been in liaison with SafeLives, a leading national body supporting action for domestic abuse, to consider an external review of the arrangements in Suffolk.
 - The MARAC Strategic Group is now in place and a chair has been elected and terms of reference agreed. A draft action plan has been created. A MARAC mapping day is taking place at the end of January to look in detail at the end to end MARAC process and where improvements and efficiencies can be made.
 - Meetings have been held between the Detective Inspector Protecting Vulnerable People and the Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) manager to progress embedding domestic abuse and MARAC processes within the MASH. The MASH Strategic Board has agreed this piece of work. Police Domestic Abuse Team members will soon be located within the MASH.
 - Co-location of the Independent Domestic Advisory (IDVA) service with the Constabulary's Domestic Abuse Team has been agreed and this will facilitate better use of technology and assist in reducing the demand arising from transfer of cases; which should in turn lead to a more seamless service for victims.
 - The College of Policing and SafeLives have given a presentation to the force and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) on the '25 Days of Action' training. Early indications are that this training has gone down well in the pilot areas and the Constabulary and the OPCC are considering roll out of this training in Suffolk. The training will upskill front line Constabulary staff and officers and will refresh attitudes and behaviour in relation to domestic abuse. The training will broaden perspectives around progressing investigations and working with victims and will cover more complex areas such as risk assessing coercive and controlling behaviour.
 - A revised 'Investigative Supervisor Check List' is being developed using good practice from a range of sources including the College of Policing. This checklist will support supervisors to establish that the investigating officer has taken all the appropriate action to secure and gather evidence.
 - The Constabulary has discussed the recommendations relating to supporting children with Suffolk County Council's Head of Safeguarding Children Service and is now in consultation the LSCB with a view to seeking their support to progress these issues.
- 8 In answer to the Panel's second question, the Office of the PCC is working with Suffolk County Council's Head of Community Safety, and through the County Domestic Abuse Partnership, to progress a whole system review. Initial consideration of how this work will be taken forward was discussed by the County Domestic Abuse Partnership on 18 January 2016.

- 9 The system review being undertaken by the partnership should provide further evidence of what services are needed in the county and will potentially highlight opportunities for joint commissioning.

PANEL QUESTION:

- **What is the PCC's view regarding how effectively and successfully Restorative Justice is working in addressing the needs of victims and vulnerable people?**

- 10 There is some useful evidence to support Restorative Justice as an effective way to support some victims to cope and recover. Several studies have been undertaken and there are a number of success stories where victims and perpetrators have both been supported to positively move on from their experience.

- 11 The Ministry of Justice commissioned University of Sheffield to evaluate restorative justice schemes between 2001 and 2008. The results of the research, was published in four reports.

Key findings from the evaluation included that:

- *Restorative justice led to a 14% reduction in the rate of reoffending.*
- *85% of victims were satisfied with the process of meeting their offender face to face, and 78% would recommend it to other people in their situation.*
- *62% of victims felt that restorative justice had made them feel better after an incident of crime while just 2% felt it had made them feel worse.*
- *For every £1 spent on delivering a face to face meeting, £8 was saved through reductions in reoffending. (Restorative Justice Council website)*

- 12 The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has made funding available to Police and Crime Commissioners to provide restorative justice services in their areas. In issuing the statutory Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, the Ministry of Justice has included the requirement that victims should receive information about Restorative Justice and how they could take part.

